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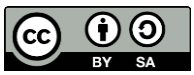

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The EFL Students' Perception of Blended Learning Towards Students' Motivation in English Subject at Junior High School

*Ernawati Sihombing[1], Erika Sinambela[2], Sahlan Tampubolon [3]
*Corresponding author: Ernawati Sihombing (ernawati.sihombing@student.uhn.ac.id)
[1,2,3] Universitas HKBP Nommensen, Medan, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the perceptions and motivations of EFL students at SMP St. Ignatius Medan who apply blended learning in English subjects. he research design used in this study was descriptive qualitative research, with data collected in the form of words and images rather than numbers. The research findings show that EFL students have a positive perception of the use of blended learning in learning English and an increase in their learning motivation after using this method. This is because 72.9% of students are more comfortable using technology in the classroom, and 53.1% of students have a more interactive and interesting learning experience, even though student feedback is considered to be of lower quality; namely, from the data obtained, only 24% of students easily get feedback from teachers. The main problem for students is that 57.3% of them feel there is a lack of social interaction with classmates and teachers, and 71.9% have problems with poor internet connectivity, which causes them to not fully understand learning material. Student motivation in blended learning is influenced by two factors: the first is the intrinsic factor, where it was found that 57.3% of students felt learning English with blended learning was more interesting and fun. Student motivation related to the extrinsic factor; researchers found that 67.7% of students felt motivated to learn English with blended learning because they could access learning materials more flexibly. From these data, it was found that the impact of learning English using blended learning was due to the intrinsic factor: 94.8% of students felt that English was important for their future, and 84.4% of students felt that learning English was a necessity. from the extrinsic impact factor of blended learning with students' motivation to learn English, 86.4% of students feel that they will get a better job in the future. The research findings show that the use of blended learning can be applied more broadly and effectively in increasing the learning motivation and English skills of EFL

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students.

Keywords: *EFL students, Perception, Blended learning, Motivation, English Subject*

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the quality of learning because, while teachers and students could initially communicate and interact directly in the classroom, interactions were limited to virtual spaces during the pandemic. With these conditions, the teacher must be able to effectively develop the learning process to maintain the quality of student learning.

Teachers must create an engaging learning process that makes use of technological advancements to motivate students to learn. Motivation is the first stage in learning that is required to encourage someone to be enthusiastic about learning something (Manggabarani et al., 2016: 85). In such conditions, teachers must be able to package effective learning while also prioritizing learning quality to arouse students' enthusiasm for learning and achieve learning objectives.

According to Akkoyunlu and Aoylu (2008:184), teachers can use blended learning, which is a combination of face-to-face and online learning, to achieve optimal learning objectives. Students are facilitated in this learning model to be able to learn and repeat material independently for one part of the session using online learning materials and resources and for one part of the session face-to-face in the classroom (Staker & Horn, 2012:3). This learning model has the advantage of allowing students to get direct explanations from the teacher and interact with their classmates during face-to-face learning activities in class. Meanwhile, because the time and place are more flexible when learning online, they can learn anywhere and at any time.

Blended learning cannot be directly accepted by students in learning, particularly in English learning. Teachers should understand how to integrate online learning with face-to-face learning when designing blended learning models. Several skills must be mastered in the process of integrating these two learnings, according to Graham et al. (2019:173), including the ability to use data on student characteristics, teaching techniques, and techniques to facilitate individual and group learning, the ability to develop online interactions, and the ability to apply combinations of these three abilities to the practice of learning the blended learning model.

Based on an initial interview with the deputy principal of SMP St. Ignasius Medan on November 12, 2022, SMP St. Ignasius Medan implements blended learning using the Learning Management System from Scola Bandung in the academic year 2021–2022. There are many limitations in the process of teaching and learning activities during online learning, such as not meeting teachers with students, limited internet packages, network limitations, and limitations of electronic devices owned by students, such as gadgets, because students must take turns using cellular phones with other family members.

Based on initial interviews with English teachers at SMP St. Ignasius Medan on November 12, 2022, it was discovered that the average English learning outcomes of SMP St. Ignasius students in grade VII in the even semester exams for the 2021/2022 academic year were 55.30, the average English learning outcomes of SMP St. Ignasius Medan class VIII

in the even semester exams for the 2021/2022 academic year were 55.42, and the average English learning outcomes of SMP St. Ignasius Medan class IX in the same semester exams for the 2021/2022 academic year were 57.84. Even when students are learning English online, the teacher must observe their behavior while collecting assignments. All subject teachers believe that students' behavior in collecting assignments is inefficient because they are sometimes late and do not even submit assignments by the deadline. Students also have different perceptions regarding the collection of assignments; therefore, an in-depth study of students' perceptions of conducting online learning is required, ranging from the condition of students while studying to the results obtained by students.

Perception is a fundamental communication process in which a person creates meaning when communicating with himself and with others (Wood, 2011:70). Perception is at the core of communication; if perception is incorrect, it will be difficult to communicate effectively. Sensing (sensation) through sensory organs (touch, sight, smell, taste, and hearing), attention, and interpretation are all components of perception (Mulyana, 2020:168).

To determine the extent to which indicators of learning activity (Sudjana, 2016:61) can be used to assess students' learning motivation, consider the following: (1). Students participate in carrying out their learning assignments during teaching and learning activities (2). Students want to participate in problem-solving activities as part of their learning (3). If students do not understand the material or encounter difficulties, they may want to consult with friends or the teacher (4). Students want to try to find information that will help them solve the problems they are experiencing. (5) Students conduct group discussions as directed by the teacher. (6) Students can evaluate their abilities and the outcomes they achieve. (7). Students practice problem-solving skills and (8). Students have the opportunity to use or apply what they have learned to complete tasks or solve problems. Learning motivation exists based on the ability or attempt of someone to obtain the expected results, and the existence of motivation is marked by certain indicators, according to the understanding and indicators presented above.

Based on the background described above, the authors are interested in conducting research with the title: "The EFL students' perception of blended learning toward student motivation in English subject at SMP St. Ignasius Medan." Based on the background above, the researcher wish to carry out a research and to deeply investigate In this study, the problems are defined as follows: What is the perception of students at SMP St. Ignasius Medan about blended learning in English? What are the students' perceptions of the factors that limit and support blended learning in the English subject at SMP St. Ignasius Medan? and How is student motivation impacted by blended learning when learning English?

Method

The research design used in this study was descriptive qualitative research, with data collected in the form of words and images rather than numbers. According to Bogdan and Taylor in Lexy J. Moleong (2000:4), qualitative research is a research procedure that generates descriptive data from people and observed behavior in the form of written or

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spoken words. This type of descriptive qualitative research that was used in this study was intended to obtain information about the perceptions and motivations of Grade VIII students in blended learning at SMP St. Ignasius Medan. This research was conducted at SMP St. Ignasius Medan Jl. Karya Wisata Number 6 Medan Johor. The subject of this research was the students of SMP St. Ignasius Medan, and the researcher chose to use a sample of students in grade VIII. The data collection instrument was an e-questionnaire created with Google Forms. The questionnaire takes the form of a statement question, with 70 questions implicitly grouped into three sub-topics. The first was about student perceptions of blended learning, the second was about student supporting and inhibiting factors in using blended learning in English subjects, and the third was about student motivation in English subjects using blended learning. A data collection method is a technique used by researchers to collect data. This research data was gathered by distributing or filling out questionnaires on a Google form. The researcher distributed a web-based questionnaire to 96 students. After students complete the e-questionnaire, their responses are automatically sent to the researcher's email address. Finally, the researcher checked the students' answers. The data analysis used is a descriptive-analytic method, which describes the collected data in words, pictures, and not numbers. The data that comes from the questionnaire is then described so that it can provide clarity on reality (Sudarto, 1997:66). The analysis started with formulating and explaining the problem before going into the field and continued until the writing of the research results.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The questionnaire results suggest that respondents have a positive view of the application of the BL technique to EFL students at SMP St. Ignatius Medan, as explained in the findings. The results of the questionnaire explain this. Detailed responses to the research questions are provided below.

Questionnaire Results of Student Perceptions of Blended Learning

The results of the student perception questionnaire on blended learning are shown in the data summarized in Table 1 below

Table 1. Summary of the Results of The Student Perception Questionnaire on Blended Learning

Aspect	Indicators	Percentage (%)				
		Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
Blended Learning Conditions	Comfortable with using technology to learn.	0	2,1	25	42,7	30,2
	Get a more interactive and interesting learning experience through blended learning.	1	14,6	31,3	39,6	13,5
	Easy-to-understand learning material is available through blended learning.	3,2	15,6	34,4	33,3	13,5
	The use of technology in learning makes students more motivated to learn.	4,1	18,8	44,8	24	8,3
	It is difficult to be actively involved in learning because of limited technology or	4,2	17,7	26	29,2	22,9

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	a poor internet connection.					
	Physical presence in class is still important for getting the maximum learning experience.	3,1	2,1	9,4	32,3	53,1
	It's easier to get help and feedback from teachers or classmates through blended learning.	8,2	36,5	31,3	17,7	6,3
	It's hard to stay focused during a blended learning session because of the many distractions around.	5,2	2	18,8	39,6	34,4
	Lack of social interaction with classmates during blended learning.	3,2	13,5	26	27,1	30,2
	The time spent learning through blended learning is more effective	6,2	18,8	45,8	22,9	6,3

	and efficient.					
Learning materials	Feel confident in your English skills.	10,4	20,8	35,4	24	9,4
	Feel motivated to learn English.	2	6,3	31,3	43,7	16,7
	Comfortable when speaking or writing in English.	5,2	18,8	37,5	26	12,5
	Easily understand English grammar and vocabulary.	5,1	19,8	36,5	31,3	7,3
	Feel confident in using English vocabulary in different situations.	10	30,2	25,4	25	9,4
	Motivated to keep learning new English vocabulary and grammar.	0,1	7,3	33,3	38,5	20,8
	I feel helped by the blended learning model that I use to learn English.	3,2	20,8	42,7	20,8	12,5
	Difficult to understand English vocabulary or grammar.	7,3	22,9	35,4	25	9,4
	It's hard to express	4,2	19,8	38,5	30,2	7,3

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	yourself in English.					
	Find it helpful to speak or write English in everyday life.	1	20,8	36,5	30,2	11,5
Student Participation	Actively engage in learning through a blended learning platform.	3,1	16,7	47,9	25	7,3
	Do regular assignments and quizzes on the blended learning platform.	1,1	3,1	32,3	47,9	15,6
	Participate in online discussions on blended learning platforms.	4,1	18,8	35,4	37,5	4,2
	Using the online resources provided on the blended learning platform to deepen my understandin g of the learning material	2,1	12,5	35,4	42,7	7,3
	Find it easy to communicate with teachers	6,3	17,7	38,5	33,3	4,2

	and classmates through the blended learning platform.					
	Make good use of discussion time in physical classes to discuss material that has been studied online through a blended learning platform.	3,1	22,9	40,6	27,1	6,3
	Feel that they have obtained the maximum benefit from using the blended learning platform for learning.	3,1	14,6	47,9	27,1	7,3
	Feeling involved in learning in the same or better way than when learning is done physically in class.	10,4	36,5	36,5	13,5	3,1
	Feeling that active participation in blended	5,2	8,3	38,5	34,5	13,5

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	learning has a positive impact on learning outcomes.					
	Feel helped to develop independent abilities and confidence in learning through blended learning experiences.	5,2	5,2	36,4	43,8	9,4

Student Perception Questionnaire Results Regarding Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Blended Learning in English Subjects

The results of the student perception questionnaire regarding supporting and inhibiting factors in blended learning in English subjects are shown in the data summarized in Table 2 below this.

Table 2. Summary of the Results of The Student Perception Questionnaire Regarding Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Blended Learning in English Subjects

Aspects	**Indicators**	**Percentage (%)**				
		Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
Factors that influence	Feel that English blended learning material is easy to understand.	4,1	19,8	44,8	24	7,3
	Blended learning helps improve English skills effectively.	3,1	16,7	39,6	37,5	3,1
	Feeling higher learning	4,2	26	45,8	21,9	2,1

	motivation with blended learning.					
	Blended learning allows for more flexible learning.	6,3	19,8	33,3	35,4	5,2
	Feel helped by the support of technology in learning English.	1	2,1	17,7	52,1	27,1
	Online learning provided in blended learning can be accessed and used.	0	4,1	32,3	52,1	11,5
	Interaction with the teacher in blended learning helps to understand the material better.	4,1	16,7	45,8	27,1	6,3
	Interaction with friends in blended learning helps improve English skills collaboratively.	5,2	26	40,6	21,9	6,3
	Blended learning provides opportunities for discussion and question-and-answer activities.	3	12,5	41,7	36,5	6,3

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	The use of multimedia in blended learning helps students understand the material more visually.	1,1	5,2	47,9	33,3	12,5
Inhibiting factors	Find it difficult to understand English blended learning material.	7,3	20,8	36,5	28,1	7,3
	Having difficulty maintaining my learning motivation in blended learning.	4,1	11,5	42,7	34,4	7,3
	Difficulties adapting to blended learning.	2	19,8	46,9	25	6,3
	Poor internet network quality often interferes with blended learning.	4,2	6,2	17,7	39,6	32,3
	Experiencing difficulties in interacting with teachers in blended learning	5,2	13,6	40,6	30,3	9,4
	Feeling less helped by the online learning materials provided in blended	5,2	22,9	43,6	19,8	8,3

	learning.					
	Blended learning often creates technical problems that interfere with the learning process.	1,1	13,5	25	46,9	13,5
	Lack of social interaction with friends in blended learning makes you feel less motivated.	6,2	9,4	42,7	34,4	7,3
	Find it difficult to organize time and schedules in blended learning.	5,2	10,4	30,3	33,3	20,8
	Find it difficult to strike a balance between online and offline learning in blended learning.	2,1	11,5	39,6	33,3	13,5

Questionnaire Results of Student Learning Motivation with Blended Learning in English Subjects

The results of the student learning motivation questionnaire with blended learning in English subjects are shown in the summary of the data in Table 3 below this.

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Table 3. Summary of the Results of The Student Learning Motivation Questionnaire with Blended Learning in English Subjects

Aspect	Indicators	Percentage (%)				
		Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
Intrinsic Factors	Feel that learning English is something interesting and fun.	1,1	13,5	28,1	39,6	17,7
	feeling that the material learned in English lessons is important for the future.	0	0	5,2	34,4	60,4
	feeling that learning English is a necessity to improve language skills.	0	2,1	13,5	49	35,4
	Feel challenged to learn better English grammar.	0	2,1	31,3	45,8	20,8
	Feel happy when you can understand the meaning of new words in English.	1	3,1	10,4	41,7	43,8
	I feel that learning English makes it easier to understand foreign cultures.	0	6,3	22,9	50	20,8

	I feel that learning English helps me communicate with people from other countries.	1	3,1	7,3	44,8	43,8
	Feel that learning English enriches life experiences.	0	5,2	24	47,9	22,9
	feeling that learning English provides a sense of accomplishment and personal satisfaction.	0	3,1	36,5	42,7	17,7
	I feel that learning English improves my ability to learn another language.	2,2	3,1	32,1	43,8	18,8
Extrinsic Factors	I feel that my parents, siblings, and family encourage me to learn English.	1	1	18,8	47,9	31,3
	I feel that a good teacher or instructor can motivate me to learn English.	2,1	1	18,8	53,1	25
	Feeling forced to learn through	9,4	24	42,7	13,5	10,4

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	blended learning by the demands of assignments or school assignments					
	can access subject matter more easily and flexibly.	0	1	31,3	55,2	12,5
	I felt that learning English made it possible to get a better job.	0	3,2	10,4	47,9	38,5
	Learning English increases the chances of getting a scholarship or participating in a student exchange program abroad.	0	1	24	45,8	29,2
	Learning English can help improve social status in society.	1	2,1	32,3	49	15,6
	Learning English increases the chance for a future international career.	0	2,1	25	42,7	30,2
	Learning English provides an advantage	0	1	18,8	55,2	25

	when accessing information.					
	Blended learning makes it possible to obtain a more interactive and enjoyable learning experience.	0	2,1	39,6	42,7	15,6

Discussion

Descriptive research on students' perceptions of blended learning can provide valuable information for teachers and educational institutions looking to improve the quality of learning. This descriptive research aims to collect data on students' perceptions of blended learning in detail and systematically and to analyze the results objectively. The method used in this descriptive study was a questionnaire given to students to measure their perceptions of learning English with blended learning.

Students' Perceptions of Blended Learning

Based on the questionnaire on student perceptions of blended learning in terms of learning quality, we can provide an overview of how students perceive the quality of learning they receive through blended learning. On the aspect of blended learning, based on the questionnaire obtained, 72.9% of students were comfortable using technology in learning, and 53.1% had a more interactive and interesting learning experience. However, student feedback is considered to be of lower quality; only 24% of students feel it is easier to get feedback, so efforts can be made to improve the evaluation and feedback provided. Interaction is considered to be of poor quality; 57.3% of students feel they lack social interaction with classmates, so efforts can be made to improve interactions with teachers and classmates. The aspects of blended learning material based on the questionnaire found that 60.4% of students were motivated to learn English, and 59.3% of students were motivated to continue learning new vocabulary and English grammar. Blended learning attracts students' interest in learning English. However, student involvement in blended learning needs to be improved (only 38.5% of students are comfortable speaking or writing in English).

Blended learning is learning that combines online learning and face-to-face (offline) learning. This learning has been widely used by educational institutions and has provided benefits for students and teachers.

Several factors influence students' perceptions of blended learning, namely that students need direct interaction (physical presence at school) to obtain the maximum learning experience. The trigger for external distraction in online learning makes students less focused on learning. Interaction between students and teachers and between

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classmates directly helps in gaining a better understanding of the learning material. In overcoming this problem, several steps can be taken, including (1) providing direct interaction with teachers through discussion forums or online consultations; (2) ensuring that the material presented is appropriate for the level of understanding of students; and (3) assisting in understanding the material, if necessary.

Student perceptions regarding supporting and inhibiting factors in blended learning in English subjects

Blended learning combines online and face-to-face learning. Based on the questionnaire, 71.9% of students have poor internet quality. In blended learning, students feel a lack of direct interaction with the teacher because most of the learning is done online. This condition shows that students have difficulty being constrained by the unstable quality of the internet connection, causing them difficulties in understanding the material presented. In overcoming this problem, several steps can be taken, namely improving the quality of the internet connection used. Blended learning requires supporting technology, such as easy-to-use software or applications, a stable internet connection, and adequate technical support. Good technology will help students have a smooth learning experience and not be distracted by technical problems.

Student Learning Motivation with Blended Learning in English Subjects

Questionnaires on student learning motivation related to blended learning in English subjects can provide a useful understanding of the factors that influence student motivation when learning online and offline. Based on the questionnaire, the aspects of intrinsic factors are as follows: (1) 57.3% of students find learning English interesting and fun; (2) 94.8% of students feel that English is important for the future; (3) 84.4% of students feel learning English is a necessity; (4) 66.6% of students feel happy understanding new words in English; (5) 70.8% of students feel that learning English makes it easier to understand foreign cultures; and (6) 88.6% of students feel learning English enriches life experiences. Intrinsic factors such as interests, needs, ability improvement, and life experience are very important in motivating students to learn English. Therefore, teachers and educational institutions need to pay attention to creating a learning environment that supports and motivates students to study English more actively and effectively. In the aspect of extrinsic factors, as follows: (1) 67.7% of students can access subject matter more flexibly, and (2) 86.4% of students feel that learning English makes it possible to get a better job. (3) 72.9% of students feel that learning English makes it possible to get a better job.

Based on the results of the questionnaire, it was found that: (1The first study question is answered by the students' perceptions about the use of the blended learning method in the English subject at SMP St. Ignasius Medan, which is optimistic. Positive reactions came from students' perceptions of their feelings after being taught English using the blended learning technique. According to the questionnaire, the majority of the students were motivated to study English using the BL approach, particularly in terms of vocabulary and grammar in English courses. Furthermore, individuals gain new learning experiences because it is not only monotonous in face-to-face learning but also in online learning. (2)

The next section discusses students' perspectives on supportive and limiting factors for the use of blended learning in English. Students feel helped by the support of technology in learning English, which is the most significant supporting element experienced by students in the implementation of blended learning. The next most important point is that online learning in blended learning can be accessed and used more efficiently. A decent internet connection is one factor that helps students with blended learning; however, most students have variable internet connection quality, which makes it difficult for them to absorb the material presented by the teacher. Another barrier that students face is the perception that engagement with the teacher is less than optimal when using blended learning. (3) Next, based on the student's answers, blended learning can motivate students in English subjects. This can be seen from two factors that can influence student learning motivation: The first is the intrinsic factor. Most students feel motivated because learning English with blended learning is interesting and fun. Furthermore, students also feel motivated because they feel that English is a necessity and important for their future, so blended learning makes it easier for students to learn foreign cultures and new vocabulary and can enrich their life experiences, especially in English subjects.Extrinsic factors that motivate students in English subjects with blended learning are that most students can access subject matter more flexibly, students feel that learning English with blended learning makes it possible to get better jobs because a lot of information can be accessed using technology, and students also feel that learning English with blended learning allows them to get better jobs in the future.

Conclusion

Researchers have researched blended learning models, as discussed in the following chapter. The following can be concluded based on the results of data collection that have been analyzed by researchers with the title "The EFL Students' Perception of Blended Learning Toward Students' Motivation In English Subject at SMP St. Ignasius Medan": 1) Based on a questionnaire about student perceptions of blended learning, it appears that blended learning increases student involvement in learning even though it is done offline and face-to-face. In blended learning, students also show comfort in using technology in learning, and they also get a more interactive and interesting learning experience. However, student feedback is considered to be of poor quality due to the student's lack of social interaction with teachers and classmates. 2) Blended learning shows that students have difficulty being constrained by the unstable quality of the internet connection, causing them difficulties in understanding the material presented. The biggest supporting factor is that students feel helped by the support of technology in learning English. 3) Blended learning can increase students' motivation to learn English because: (1) students feel that learning English can improve their ability to understand foreign languages and cultures, which is an additional motivation for learning English using technology; (2) Students have a high interest in learning English through blended learning because learning is more interesting and fun. (3) Time flexibility in blended learning is also an intrinsic factor that is considered important by students.

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