



High School EFL Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Using Blended Learning during the Pandemic

Alfinda Febriani (*Corresponding Author*)

alfinda.18067@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia

Rahayu Kuswardani

rahayukuswardani@unesa.ac.id

Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia

Abstract: After the COVID-19 cases were reduced, blended learning was used as a learning method in Indonesia. This study aimed to determine high school EFL students' attitudes about using blended learning to aid them in learning English during the pandemic. This research used a quantitative research design with a survey questionnaire as a data collection method and a Likert scale as the data measurement. The participants were collected by convenience sampling method. They are consisted of 32 senior high school students from SMAN 16 Surabaya, SMAN 20 Surabaya and SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Surabaya. This study used descriptive analysis to analyze the findings. The result showed that high school EFL students in Surabaya presented a neutral attitude toward blended learning. In addition, the students showed the best results for the teacher's learning media and the lowest effects for virtual learning. Based on these findings, high school English teachers should improve their online learning practice since the results showed students' disinterest in it.

Keywords: *Blended learning; English as a Foreign Language; EFL students; attitudes*

A. INTRODUCTION

In September 2021, after the Joint Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture, Minister of Religion, Minister of Health, and Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia about guidelines for the implementation of learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic, schools in Surabaya used blended learning as a teaching method. The teaching and learning activities were conducted by combining online and face-to-face learning. Blended learning is the solution to help prevent the spread of the virus and keep students having the opportunity to learn from their teachers face-to-face (Wright, 2017). High school EFL students in Surabaya had experienced blended learning for one



semester. These students may have an opinion about how the mixed-learning method is used in their school, especially when learning English. These attitudes occurred due to their familiarity with learning English using blended learning (Kenneth S. Bordens Irwin A. Horowitz, 2008).

Blended learning is a teaching method that combines traditional (face-to-face classroom) with online lessons (Beaver, J.K. Hallar, Brittan H, 2014; Hrastinski, 2019). Even though this method is well-known, it is still relatively new and evolving. There are five elements of blended learning; time, pace, place, path, and teacher-of-record. The time of blended learning is flexible; students manage their time at home for studying. Students can set their own pace in studying; they can take more time when needed or take less time if they feel like they can understand the material quickly. Students can also learn anywhere outside the classroom. The instructional approach for the learning activity can be varied. Teachers teach their students face-to-face and virtually. The concept of blended learning is appropriate for use in the pandemic era because it limits face-to-face interaction between students and teachers (Beaver, J.K. Hallar, Brittan H, 2014). Hence, after using blended learning to learn English for a semester, EFL students must have a certain attitude towards it.

Attitude is a mental and neurological state of readiness formed by experience that exerts a directive or dynamic impact on the reaction of the person to all things and circumstances with which it is associated (Kenneth S. Bordens Irwin A. Horowitz, 2008). In the context of research and practice, an attitude may be described as how likely one is to use a particular activity favorably or positively (Fishman et al., 2021). Attitude is commonly interpreted as an underlying variable or theoretical notion. Due to its impassability to direct observation, it must be inferred through measurable responses, which, due to the nature of the construct, must represent positive or negative assessments of the attitude object.

There are various subcategories of attitude-relevant responses. The most common classification approach categorizes reactions as cognition, affect, and behavior. Responses in the cognitive category represent information and opinions about the attitude object. Attitudes are cognitive in the sense that they involve or are made up of concepts about life and the relationships between socially meaningful elements. The affective response is related to how you feel about the attitude object. Attitudes are



effective because they elicit emotions about the topics covered by the attitude. This affective aspect of attitudes measures desirability and desirability, or how much we like or dislike the attitude object. Behavioral inclinations, intents, commitments, and actions are examples of behavioral responses to an attitude object. Finally, the behavioral perspective on attitudes examines how we tend to act, which may or may not correspond to our cognitive and emotional judgments (Garrett, 2010; Grubor, 2021).

Because of the unfair use of traditional methodologies in the language teaching context previously, blended learning is a revolution in teaching and learning EFL. Moreover, while student-centered learning is a concern for most institutions, it is not widely used. As a result, aspects of using blended learning will also facilitate student-centered learning by providing learners with collaborative tasks and assisting teachers in designing more student-centered learning activities. Within the context of EFL education, the blended learning strategy promotes learning English anytime and anywhere. In contrast, the flexible learning platform is a challenging teaching and learning module in twenty-first-century education (Rahim, 2019). As a result, the blended learning approach gives EFL teachers this chance and encourages them to practice the language both within and outside the classroom (Rahim, 2019). Blended learning in English lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as virtual synchronous classes, online tests, and learning materials displayed on Blackboard, benefited EFL students by improving their writing skills and encouraging them to search more broadly online (Dahmash, 2020). Through the interchange of written information and access to numerous online reading materials, blended learning assists students in developing their written communication skills, self-esteem, and interest in learning English writing (Rahman et al., 2020). Rather than taking direct instruction, blended learning pushes students to the more independent practice of English writing. Using an online learning environment to teach writing can be meaningful and student-centered (AlRouji, 2020).

Previous research revealed that EFL students had shown a good attitude towards the usefulness of blended learning and supported the implementation of blended learning (Munir, Maemuna Muhayyang, Sunarlia Limbong, 2021). Students viewed face-to-face lessons as helpful for their comprehension, while online lessons were for the flexibility of time, place, and learning pace (Wright, 2017). Students gave a positive attitude and

revealed that blended learning could develop an effective learning environment (Wang et al., 2021). Students perceived blended learning positively and improved their English skills (Simbolon, 2021). These studies revealed that university EFL students had positive feedback on implementing blended learning, and that blended learning was essential to help them learn distantly.

In previous studies, students gave positive feedback towards blended learning. However, all were studying university students, and there was no information about high school students' attitudes toward blended learning during the pandemic. (Bordoloi et al., 2021; Munir, Maemuna Muhayang, Sunarlia Limbong, 2021; Pinto-Llorente et al., 2017; Simbolon, 2021; Wang et al., 2021; Wright, 2017). Understanding high school students' views toward blended learning are essential for high school teachers and people in the education field to help improve instructional design and teachers' performance. This research intends to know the demeanor of high school EFL learners when they learn English during the pandemic using blended learning to give some information to people in the education field and future researchers. Therefore, this research seeks to answer “How do high school EFL students' attitudes toward learning English using blended learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?”

B. RESEARCH METHOD

Study Design

This study used a quantitative research method, and the data was primarily collected to answer the research question. Quantitative method was used in this research to gather the sample data online to determine students' attitudes towards blended learning (Sugiyono, 2013).

The Subjects of The Research

The subject of this study was grade 10 high school EFL learners in Surabaya. These students encountered blended learning in their first semester. Thus, from their experience, we analyzed their attitude. The number of participants was 32 students from 3 different high schools; SMAN 16 Surabaya, SMAN 20 Surabaya and SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Surabaya. The samples were collected by using the convenience sampling method.



Research Instruments

The research instrument used in this research was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was made based on the three attitude responses theory; cognitive, affective, and behavior (Garrett, 2010). There are eight cognitive, four affective, and two conative questions. In the questionnaire, the research participants were asked to choose from scales ranging from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. The more they agree with the statement, the higher the score. All the questions have passed the validity tests with a score above 0.01 and the reliability tests with a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.601 (Khidzir et al., 2018; Pallant, 2016).

Table 1. Correlation Result

	Cog1	Cog2	Cog3	Cog4	Cog5	Cog6	Cog7	Cog8
Pearson Correlation	.649**	.540**	.520**	.485**	.423*	.827**	.717**	.658**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.002	.005	.016	.000	.000	.000
N	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32

	Aff1	Aff2	Aff3	Aff4	Aff1	Con1	Con2	Total IAI
Pearson Correlation	.623**	.571**	.617**	.627**	.623**	.770**	.840**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
N	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2. Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.601	15

Data Collection Techniques

To collect the data, researchers used Google Forms as the media for the participants to fill out the questionnaire. After the Google form was made, the researchers contacted the teachers from the school to ask their permission to use their students as the participants. Afterward, the Google form link was delivered to the class representatives,



who then sent it to the students. We collected the data in the second semester when high school students in Surabaya started whole face-to-face learning.

Data Analysis Techniques

This study used a Likert scale in the questionnaire to measure the data. The answer choices were: strongly disagree with 1 point; disagree with 2 points; neutral, 3 points; agree, 4 points; strongly agree, 5 points. We compute the collected data using descriptive analysis in SPSS which afterward, the mean result is determined by this scale:

Table 3. Result Catogorization

Scale	Category
1.00 – 1.80	Very bad
1.81 – 2.60	Bad
2.61 – 3.40	Fair/Neutral
3.41 – 4.20	Good
4.21 – 5.00	Very Good

(Sugiyono, 2013).

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings were based on the data collected by Google Form and the analysis by the SPSS program. This research use tables to present each part of the questionnaire. The tables contain the questions, the results of each answer, and the mean. The mean is the indicator of attitudes, which is explained down below.

Cognitive Responses

The statements in the cognitive section asked how high school EFL students view blended learning after learning English with it for one and a half semesters. As shown in Table 1, the highest result was for the second question about the blended method's learning environment. The lowest was the question about assignments and teacher communication. The rest of this section received moderate results.

Table 4. Cognitive Responses Results

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Indicator
1.	Blended/hybrid Learning Provides a Flexible Pace of	6.3%	12.5%	40.6%	31.3%	9.4%	3.25	Neutral



Learning English								
2.	Blended/hybrid Learning Can Take Place Anywhere. (At Home, in The Library, cafe)	0%	3.1	15.6	46.9	34.4	4.13	Good
			%	%	%	4%		
3.	The Learning Media Used During Blended/hybrid Learning Vary (Quizizz, Kahoot, Jamboard, Youtube, etc).	9.4%	9.4	9.4	40.6	31.3	3.75	Good
			%	%	%	3%		
4.	The English Lesson Was Taught With Blended Learning and Teaching Techniques That Fit My Ability.	3.1%	9.4	34.4	40.6	12.5	3.5	Good
			%	%	%	5%		
5.	Blended or Hybrid Learning Makes Me More Active In Contributing To Class Activities (Answering/asking Questions).	3.1%	21.9	40.6	15.6	18.8	3.25	Neutral
			%	%	%	8%		
6.	Blended or Hybrid Learning Makes Working on English Assignments Easier.	6.3%	12.5	50%	18.8	12.5	3.19	Neutral
			%		%	5%		
7.	Communication With My English Teacher Was Carried Out Well During Blended/hybrid Learning.	9.4%	6.3	50%	25%	9.4	3.19	Neutral
			%			%		
8.	Communication With Classmates When Working on English Assignments Using The Blended/hybrid Method Was Carried Out Well.	3.10	18,8	31.3	28.1	18.8	3.41	Good
		%	%	%	%	8%		

SD=Strongly Disagree;D=Disagree;N=Neutral;A=Agree;SA=Strongly Agree

The first statement about learning pace earned the highest score at neutral (40.6%) and the lowest at strongly disagree (6.3%). The second statement about learning places received 46.9% of agreeing on answers as the highest score and 0 strongly disagree as



the lowest. The highest score that the third statement about learning media received was 40.6% agree, while strongly disagree, disagree, and neutral received an equal score of 9.4%. Participants gave the highest score of 40.6% in the fourth statement about teaching methods and students' learning capability and the lowest score of 3.1% in strongly disagreeing. The fifth statement about class contribution received the highest score at neutral with a 40.6% score and the lowest at strongly disagree with a 3.1% score. In the sixth statement about assignments, 50% of high school EFL students gave neutral answers as the highest score, and 6.3% of students gave strongly disagree as the lowest. The seventh statement about communication between teacher and students received the highest result at neutral with a 50% score and the lowest at disagree with 6.3%. The last statement got the highest score of 31.3% for neutral and the lowest score of 3.10 % for strongly disagree.

The mean score for the first statement was 3.25, which indicates a neutral attitude. The second statement's mean result was 4.13, which indicated a good attitude. The third statement's mean result was 3.75, which means a good attitude. The fourth statement result indicated a good attitude with a mean of 3.5. The mean result for the fifth statement was 3.2, which indicated a neutral attitude. For the sixth statement, the mean result was 3.19, which signifies a neutral attitude. The seventh statement means result was 3.19, which indicates a neutral attitude. Finally, the eighth statement signified a good attitude with a 3.41.

Overall, the findings of the cognitive response indicated that the students believed that blended learning could be taken anywhere (for remote learning). Their teacher's learning media varied; the teaching method was suitable for their learning level, and the communication was good. They do not, however, have a strong opinion about the pace of blended learning. When it comes to assignments and class contribution, they thought blended learning did not have much effect on it. The communication between them and their teachers was also not bad.

Affective Responses

The affective response section questioned how high school EFL students felt about implementing blended learning in learning English. As shown in Table 2, the highest mean score was for the statement about taking an exam in a blended way. Meanwhile, the statement about remote learning received the lowest mean score.



Table 5. Affective Responses Results

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Indicator
1.	I Like to Learn English Remotely.	9.4 %	9.4%	46.9 %	31.3 %	3.1%	3.09	Neutral
2.	I Like The Media That The Teacher Uses When Teaching English Using Blended/hybrid Method.	0%	25%	31.3 %	34.4 %	9.4%	3.28	Neutral
3	I Like To Do English Assignments Given In A Blended/hybrid Method.	3.1 %	15.6 %	40.6 %	25%	15.6 %	3.34	Neutral
4.	I Like Taking The English Exam Given In A Blended/hybrid Way	0%	9.4%	43.8 %	12.5 %	34.4 %	3.72	Good

SD=Strongly Disagree;D=Disagree;N=Neutral;A=Agree;SA=Strongly Agree

The first effective response statement received the highest score at neutral with 46.9%, followed by agreeing with 31.3%, and the lowest at strongly agree with a 3.1% score. The second statement about the learning media their teacher used received the highest agree score with 34.4% and 0% strongly-disagree as the lowest. The highest score for the third statement about assignments was "neutral," with 40.6%, and the lowest score was "strongly disagree," with 3.1%. Finally, the fourth statement about the exam received the highest result at neutral with a 43.8% score, followed by strongly agree with a 34.4% score, and 0% strongly disagree as the lowest.

The mean result for the first affective response statement was 3.09, which indicates a neutral attitude. For the second statement, the mean result was 3.28, which signifies a neutral attitude. The third statement's mean result was 3.34, which indicates neutral attitudes. Finally, the last effective response statement's mean result was 3.72, which signifies a good attitude.



In brief, the participants of this research neither like nor dislike learning English remotely, the learning media their teacher used, or working on their assignment in a blended way. However, they liked the exam that was taken in a blended mode.

Behavioral Responses

The behavioral response section questions how high school EFL students would act towards the implementation of blended learning. Half of the participants gave neutral answers to the statements in this section.

Table 6. Behavioral Response Results

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Indicator
1.	I am able to support if Blended learning is used to learn English	0%	18.8 %	50 %	12.5 %	18.8 %	3.31	Neutral
2.	I am able to improve my English skills using the Blended method.	6.3 %	15.6 %	50 %	15.6 %	12.5 %	3.13	Neutral

SD=Strongly Disagree;D=Disagree;N=Neutral;A=Agree;SA=Strongly Agree

The first behavioral response statement about supporting blended learning as a method to learn English received 50% neutral as the highest result, and 0% strongly disagree as the lowest. The last statement about improving English skills using a blended method received 50% neutral as the highest and 6.3% strongly-disagree as the lowest. The mean result of the first behavioral response statement was 3.31, which indicates a neutral attitude. The second statement's mean result was 3.13, which signifies a neutral attitude. Thus, the participants of this study would not act or commit to implementing blended learning.

Discussion

The students' cognitive responses about their beliefs in blended learning are somewhat positive. Most students do not firmly believe how fast or slow their English lessons went when they used blended learning. This can be seen as a sign that they are OK with it. Meanwhile, they showed a positive attitude towards their teachers' learning media. This means that they believed the learning media were varied and interesting. The teaching technique that the teachers used also received a positive attitude from the students. However, the students have a neutral attitude toward communication between students and teachers. This might be because they were trying to adapt to their new

school environment. The research participants showed a good attitude towards communication during blended learning. Since they could meet their classmates after a month of online classes, the face-to-face meeting helped them communicate better.

For the affective responses, the students displayed impartial attitudes. They appeared to be fine with implementing blended learning, and their attitude towards taking exams in a blended format was positive. However, their response to the implementation of remote learning was the lowest of the entire questions. The reason for this attitude might be that they had started learning in a full face-to-face class. As a result, they might have felt comfortable and preferred their current learning method.

All students presented a fair attitude in the behavioral responses. The students seemed not to want to commit to implementing blended learning, considering that they had started full face-to-face learning at school when the questionnaire was given. The students also think that their English skills remain the same by using blended learning. This is shown by the results, where most students gave a low mean score of 3.13.

Based on the results of this study, nine out of fourteen statements received a neutral outcome. From the two lowest scores, this research discovered that students were not fond of remote class (score 3.09), and blended learning did not give a big difference in their English language skills (score 3.13). Therefore, we can conclude that high school English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Surabaya had a neutral view of using blended learning to learn English at their school. The students' attitude towards blended learning was neither negative nor positive. This result came out to be different from the previous studies, where the results of the students' attitudes were positive (Bordoloi et al., 2021; Munir, Maemuna Muhayyang, Sunarlia Limbong, 2021; Pinto-Llorente et al., 2017; Simbolon, 2021; Wang et al., 2021; Wright, 2017). Thus, students' fair attitude towards learning English using the blended learning method in all responses can be seen as a sign that they were fine with it. They accepted the blending method, although they might prefer their current learning method.

D. CONCLUSION

The overall result of this study showed that high school EFL students had neutral attitudes towards blended learning. The result of the cognitive response section indicates that the students' beliefs about blended learning were good. The affective response



section's result indicated that they were fine with it. However, despite still being regarded as neutral attitudes, the students scored the lowest on the statement about online learning. This can be a suggestion for teachers to improve their online meeting teaching techniques. Finally, the behavioral response section indicates that the students' did not have any interest in the continuation of blended learning. Since blended learning has been taken out of schools in Indonesia, it is suggested that research be done to compare how students feel when they are learning in a blended setting and when they are learning in a full face-to-face setting.

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