Exploring ESL Students' Qualitative Insights on Learner-to-Learner Interaction in Blended Environment

Sangeeth Ramalingam [ab], Melor Md Yunus [a], Harwati Hashim [a]

[a]Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia
[b] Language Department, Kolej Poly Tech Mara Bangi, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Sustainable Development Goal 4 aims to achieve good quality education and in order to achieve SDG 4, it is very crucial for English as Second Language tertiary learners to have strong English language competency. Verbal communication ability is highly related to English language competency. Learners must possess effective verbal communication skills in order to acquire good employment and carry out their job duties effectively at workplaces (Sathiyaperba et al., 2021). However, lack of verbal communication particularly less interaction between the learners has become a grave concern (Fariza Puteh et al., 2019; Janitha, 2021; Ting et al., 2017). Several scholars have sought to solve the verbal communication problems among ESL tertiary learners through face-to-face approaches and online approaches. Face to face approaches have been criticized by previous scholars due to learners have less responsibility for their learning (Alsaaty et al., 2016; Mongwaketse, 2018). ESL learners' verbal communication problem also has been extensively researched using online strategies like gamification and mobile integrated approaches. Nevertheless, face to face or online approach alone could not help to enhance ESL learners' verbal communication problem particularly learner-learner interaction. The 9th shift of Malaysian Education Blueprint emphasizes on technology integration in teaching and learning (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). Thus, blended learning approach has been widely applied in tertiary institutions including in ESL classrooms. However, learners complain about the challenges they face during verbal communication learning in blended environment. Hence, the aim of this study is to explore ESL students' qualitative insights on learner-to-learner interaction in a blended environment.

Keywords: Blended Learning, English as a Second Language, Learner-To-Learner Interaction, Qualitative