THE EMINENCES OF USING E-LEARNING FOR MINING EMPLOYEES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

There are many ways for people to learn language currently. For those with enough time, they will be able to attend some scheduled courses or language private classes. However, limited time is being a matter for other people who want to do so, such as people working in mining. In fact, language competency is highly needed to support their job. They do not have enough time to attend 1-1.5 hour of language class for each session. There are two kinds of language training in E-learning portal at Batu Hijau project: English and Bahasa Indonesia. Language Unit (LU) of Training Department in Batu Hijau project provides the TOEIC practice for English and Lentera Indonesia for Bahasa Indonesia. This study aimed to investigate the advantages (and disadvantages) of using language E-learning for employees working in mining. This study used multiple research tools: observation, questionnaires and semi structure interview. The findings reveal that there are some advantages of using E-learning: it is easily accessed at any time, in class or out class; it also provides score that help trainers in monitoring trainees' progress; moreover, there is no limit time in each exercise.

Keywords: *e-learning; technology integration; media; distance education; language teaching and learning process.*

INTRODUCTION

21st century brings us to the much more complex changes and challenges that are extremely different from others previous century did (Suherdi,2012) including all aspects of human life especially information and communication technology. It is undeniable that the development of science and technology plays crucial roles in those changes specifically in education. Todays, students grow and live in the digital era in which the internet and digital advices cannot be separated from their daily activities (Suherdi,2012). Several researchers such as Alsunbul, Altbach and Coffman James also believe that the advent of the Internet technology, integration of the Information technology (IT) tools into higher education stream has become an easy task (cited in Elango, et.al., 2008) Therefore, their behaviour is different from those previous generations especially in learning language. Learning English language, as English is one of the most important tools in this era, people with different needs in their circle are dragged to deal with this development of information and technology. For instance, working people ought to

organize their time between working times and learning time, meanwhile dividing time is not easy at all especially for employees who works under pressure and deadlines. For those who have enough time, they will be able to enrol in some scheduled courses or attend language private class. However, limited time is being a matter for other people who want to do so. Employee who works in mining area is an example among many kinds of busy workers. There are various kinds of jobs found in mining company, with different level of bustle as well. It was observed that the student options are no longer constrained by boundaries and, therefore, it paved the way for the emergence of new internet-based borderless virtual education, distance learning and educational franchising (Phillips, 2001, cited in Elango, et.al. 2008). In consequences, it challenges the practitioners of education to recognize and develop the appropriate approach for their learning pattern, characteristics and behaviour.

Employees at mining company highly need to learn language to support their job. In Batu Hijau project, West Sumbawa, West Nusa Tenggara, there are some language classes provided by Training Department to support the employees in learning language. They need to learn language in order to help their job, such as to communicate with the expatriates and to upgrade their skills if they want to have a new position. The way they communicate is not only spoken, but also written. They learn how to speak and how to write correspondence properly. In addition, for those who already have basic skill in language, they will improve their skills to upgrade the language proficiency for supporting their job. As Chen (2014) remarks that the cornerstone of better service and efficiency derives from good quality human resources.

Based on the observation, there are two types of language classes at Batu Hijau project: English class and Bahasa Indonesia class, and most of language classes are English. The learners can be categorized as adult learners, according to Harmer (2007), adult learners is learners on the age over 19 years old, because 90% of learners are dominated with participants between >30 years old. Adult Learner tend to be more focus, keep creativity power, have a lot of experience, more discipline, appeal to multiple senses, , are more able to handle abstract rules and concepts, are global self-esteem and have a clear expectation or goal (Brown,2001).It means that they have clear expectation, purposes, goals and motivation in learning English. Therefore, the company, especially instructor should recognize and cover their needs based on their motivation and goals. Each participant is facilitated with module and computer access, but not all of them have laptop that can be brought to the class.

There are also various kinds of participants with different needs. For some classes, they are categorized based on their needs, such as a class of admin staff needs email English, a class for engineer needs technical terms and emergency response team needs first aid terms. Moreover, there are several classes divided based on their level of competency with mixed participants, such as basic class, intermediate class, etc. There are some classes which are already try e-learning for more than once. In those classes, questionnaire about the e-learning was given to collect learners' perspective against the e-learning.

E-learning refers to the use of internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhanceknowledge and performance (Rosenberg, 2001). It has become preferable alternative media against traditional classroom instruction (Bernard et al., 2004; Tallent Runneld

et al., 2006; cited in Artino & McCoach, 2008). Because most of employees who join the language class are adult, e-learning seems suitable for them to cover their incapability to join the class. Adults who primarily have busy schedules want to take the convenience of the advantage of online learning environment (Tweedell, 2000; cited in Cercone, 2008). With online learning as a type of e-learning, students generally can access online courses at any time and at any place they have intranet access (internet which only supported by Wi-fi in Batu Hijau).Therefore, the distance education can be managed within this E-learning for language. They do not have to worry about their absence for the language class or for them who do not take the language class somehow.Online learning is a kind of media which allow both synchronous and asynchronous communication between learners and instructors.

Back to the initial issue, the major problem of mining employees for learning language is limited time. Because they have different roster, they are not able to attend language classes provided intensively. Many employees work with shift, like day shift and night shift with different off time. According to Harasim and Sigala, the potential of online courses to foster the current trend of pedagogies and learning environments especially designed according to constructivist principles (cited in Mi, 2015). Therefore, the belief about the technology development utilization come up dealing with this phenomena which is not impossible to believe that IT-based learning is useful for learning language, specifically by E-learning.

METHOD

This study applied mix methods in which referring to Cresswell (2014) as cited in Malik & Hamied (2016) proposes that method research composed by quantitative and qualitative approaches including purposing to develop more complete and detail understanding of study than either one approach. This study was conducted through observation, interview and questionnaire on September 2016. The data were gathered via questionnaire for 20learners from various sections and departments, also through interview with an instructor of E-Learning for language classes in Batu Hijau mining company. Some employees are also interviewed to explain about their class atmosphere. This study focused on the intermediate level of learners since based on their result of observation, the students using E-Learning in this area are intermediate learners having more competence and are more compatible with the design of E-Learning material. The questionnaires were adapted from Mi (2010) by determining and classifying the students' perception engaging with the factors probably affecting. The sample of this study, purposive sampling technique will be used to select 20E-Learning learners with intermediate level as the sample as based on Polkinghorne (Ashari2013) stating that the purposive sampling should provide rich and varied insights into the phenomenon and the quantity for the samples are from 5 to 25 people.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This phase of this study provides the learners' perception about the eminence of E-Learning based on learners' perception about E-Learning which will lead the result to the benefit of E-Learning for mining employees. The questionnaire is a close ended questionnaire

consisting of 55divided into two basic indicators: learners' beliefs toward E-Learningand the quality and usefulness of E-Learning. In addition an instructor of E-Learning were involved in this study to gain their perception about the benefit of using E-Learning in teaching. Thus, the result of this study is gathered from both major sources of perception: learners and teacher or instructor. The result of the analysis in this research was found based on statistical calculation using computer program (Anates) with guidelines by some other journal, and also it rechecked by manual calculation.

Section 1. Learners' beliefs toward E-Learning, in general.

The first indicator can be claimed that learners have positive belief and perception about E-Learning in general. It is revealed by the data showing that 85% learners assume that E-learning is convenient. 80% of them believe that E-Learning can help them increase their productivity. In terms of the perception about its suitability with their life style, 75% of them feel that it is suitable with their life style. 65% claim that E-Learning is enjoyable. 65% of them also believe that E-Learning can save their time. Yet, about 40% of themshow their disagreement about the more intercity of learning using E-Learning. Thus, in short, in terms of learners' belief toward E-Learning, this study reveals that learners of E-Learningshow their positive responses in giving their perception about E-Learning including: its conspicuousness, its convenience, its tameable, its fits with their life style, its resources and its effectiveness comparing to face to face learning.

Section 2. The quality and usefulness of E-Learning.

This section assesses this study in describing the quality and usefulness of E-Learning by dividing it into five sub-indicators:

a. **Usability**

In terms of usability, this study shows that the E-Learning is useful for them. It is revealed by the number of learners believing that E-Learning is easy to learn, is 95%. The same percentage also emerged on the perception about its easy to navigate and the perception about fast browsing speed. Surprisingly, 100% of the learners find the easy to use it. In term of the site of conveys a sense of competency, 90% of them are with this perception. Furthermore, 80% of learners agree that E-Learning can create a positive experience for them. Hence,in general, most of them are agree that E-Learning for language is easy to learn, to navigate, appropriate for the type of E-Learning site, also it creates a positive experience for learners.

b. **Information or content Quality**

For the information quality, dealing with its content that isTOEIC preparation, the result of questionnaire shows that E-Learning for language has a good information quality. In terms of E-Learning accuracy, 85% learners agree that the content of E-Learning is accurate and 75% learners claim that its content supports their goal achievement. The same percentage, it is 80% learners show their agreements about the relevancy of its content, the easy of content understanding, the content's appropriateness with their level

and the content's appropriateness with the format used. Thus, based on the quality content, learners believe that the content of E-Learning is accurate, supports the course goal, is easy to understand and provides the right level of information or content.

c. **Service Interaction**

According to the learners who already access the E-Learning, the service interaction is effective. 100% of learners believe that their E-Learning has good reputation. 95% of them agree that E-Learning can secure their personal information and its service and instruction will be delivered as promised. Otherwise, 60% learners feel the good sense of community developing. So, over all, it can be seenbased on their perspective that E-Learning has a good reputation, it secures personal information, and helps learners feel connected each other, also makes them easily communicate with other and fulfil their needs with the company.

d. **Instructor Interaction**

The role of instructors is also important in this E-Learning, as they are the facilitator to help learners if they have matters related to it. From the questionnaire, learners think that he instructor's interaction is effective in helping them doing E-Learning. In the point of the instructor feedback or response, 55% learners strongly agree with it, the same percentage also given by the learners who strongly agree that their instructor gives fast feedback or response. The instructor also helps the learners by counsellingthem proven by 55% of learners' agreement with it. 60 % learners stated that their instructor frequently offer opinion to them. In short, learners have positive response about their instructor interaction.

e. **Usefulness**

In this term, the result of the questionnaire indicates that E-Learning is useful for the mining employees. It is proven by the number of learners who believe that E-Learning can help them to develop a clearer idea of the future career plans, is 80%. 70% of them also claim that E-learning is helpful to develop their skills including verbal and writing skill. More specifically, 80% learners stated that E-Learning helps them to develop their skills needed to get better job. Moreover, E-Learning is useful to increase their knowledge more comprehensively specifically in mining domain proven by 75% learners agree with this statement. Thus, generally, the believe that E-Learning is useful to develop a clearer idea of their future, to developskills needed to get better job/position, to gain general education in mining company, and to improve their learning performance.

After gathering the result from the learners, then the instructor was interviewed. There are several questions asked to the language instructor related to how E-Learning works in class and out class, also how it is evaluated. According to the statements, instructor said that E-learning is very helpful in language learning. It is effective to use this learning as the alternative learning because it does not need classroom facility, face to face, and scheduled time. Instructors monitor the learners' progress through the system. E-Learning system is able to record student's result and score, so instructor may record their activity and give feedback

directly to the learners in class or via e-mail. However, the language E-Learning is only available for intermediate and advanced learners for now.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of those students' perceptions is crucial to identify the advantages of using E-Learning based on their positive responses and belief. Their number of the date with positive response led to the answer of the benefit of using E-learning for mining employees. The data shows that they explores their positive response through the questionnaire answered in which divided into two major domains: learners' beliefs toward E-Learning, in general and the quality and usefulness of E-Learning. In the domain of learners' beliefs toward E-Learning, in general, they believe that E-learning is an interesting, attractive, effective, convenient and practical way of learning rather than face to face learning. Furthermore, in terms of the quality and usefulness of E-Learning, it reveals that the quality of E-learning helps students of mining employees to be prospered in achieving their learning goals and objectives. Thus, relying on the result of the study, it is concluded that mining employees believe that E-Learning proposes positive advantages for their comprehensive learning of English, specifically TOEIC.

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