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Im, Kyungbin*

Ⅰ. Introduction

We live in an age where globalization is accelerating due to the development of the Internet and communication technology. Now we consider that it is very natural to communicate and share information with people around the world through English. This is possible because of the development of IT technologies and widespread of smartphones among people around the globe. Most of the people passing by are doing something with their smartphones. They are using their smartphone to do many things such as talking on the phone, shopping online, finding a map, searching public transportation, reading newspaper articles, reading novels, and more. They are checking their smartphone as soon as they open their eyes in the morning to check their daily schedule and time. They also do their job at work, reserve a movie for the weekend, listen to music, and play games with their smartphone. Like this, the functions of smartphones have been developed so highly and became a very useful tool for us, and it is very natural and necessary to look for ways to learn English using it. Various multimedia platforms and tools which

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were developed for smartphones for English learning can give learners and lecturers more opportunities for communication and interaction, which can enhance the effectiveness of learning and increase learners' self-directed and self-regulated learning skills. (Wu, Tennyson & Hsia, 2010; Shih, 2010).

In the field of English learning, learners have different English skills and preferred methods of learning English, and many English teachers and researchers have spent a long time studying what is the most effective way of teaching/learning English for their students. Of course, there may not be one answer that is perfect for these concerns. Nevertheless, in accordance with the changing times and conditions, English teachers and researchers have endlessly tried various teaching/learning methods to find the most effective method and shared their findings in the past few decades.

Many studies have shown that blended learning, which blends online and offline learning, not only enables the knowledge creation, information distribution, and individual learning at each level, but also enhances the quality of education by promoting active interactions (Graham & Dziuban, 2007; Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). However, like many previous English teaching methods and approaches, blended learning will not work until it is combined with English education in an appropriate way. Vignare (2007) and Shea (2007) argue that multi-faceted research on how blended learning works in the classroom is required and students and teacher satisfaction will be key to the successful implementation of blended learning. From this perspective, blended learning can provide an appropriate learning environment for the times, but much research is required to maximize the learning effect.

The purpose of this study is to find out the effect of blended learning method for the class for the TOEIC test. For this study, 50% of general lectures were conducted, and 50% of the lessons using blended learning methods were provided to 117 university students. Their progress was tested twice and the students' satisfaction with the method was surveyed.

Ⅱ. Theoretical background

2.1 The Concept of Blended Learning

Like most other terminology, the concept of blended learning is difficult to define in one word and can be defined differently depending on the situation. Some scholars, including Driscoll (2002), used the term blended learning in terms of a mix of different learning environments, and apply different learning methods, skills, and resources to an interactively meaningful learning environment. The term "blended learning" often refers to a learning method or activity that combines online and traditional face-to-face education (de Leng et al., 2010). In blended learning concept, online learning integrates with traditional face-to-face education to provide a more effective experience for both instructors and students.

So & Brush (2008) suggested that blended learning is effective in promoting online collaborative learning. Collaborative learning also includes carefully organized activities for group members, allowing students to make suggestions for reflecting, evaluating and improving their learning in the group (Liao, 2006).

Blended learning means mixing different learning environments. This has various specific meanings depending on the context in which it is used. Blended learning provides a potential environment for learners and teachers to learn and teach more effectively. It is assumed here that blended learning continues to use face-to-face education as a basic building block of learning experiences, which are enhanced and improved by integration with teaching and learning experiences acquired through the Internet and outside classrooms.

According to Osguthorpe and Graham (2003), blended learning complements the limitations of e-learning by blending it with offline learning, providing

learners with a variety of educational experiences, providing effective access method of knowledge, as well as social interaction. Moreover, modifications can be made for the effectiveness of learning and are effective in terms of time and cost.

Mixing different learning styles, strategies and opportunities is not new. The most effective teaching-learning methods have always used a variety of methods, approaches and strategies to maximize knowledge acquisition and skill development. In addition, good teachers always use more than one teaching method or approach, and good learners always combine different learning strategies in their learning. Good learning programs combine lectures, seminars, group projects, and level tests to provide students with a variety of learning opportunities. Traditional distance learning courses have long provided mixed learning through a combination of content that students can access themselves (print / video / TV / radio and face-to-face phone support).

Sweeney, O'Donoghue and Whitehead (2004) interviewed learners who learned through blended learning to learn the characteristics of online and offline learning. As a result, the students said that their opinions, discussions, and flows were regulated in face-to-face learning with the instructor, and the involvement and role of the instructor were important. Therefore, Blended Learning, which combines online and offline learning, complements the shortcomings of both learning environments and provides an environment with the potential to increase the effectiveness of learning. However, the blended learning environment can effectively achieve the learning goals only when the elements of online and offline classes are systematically linked (Bersin, 2003).

In conclusion, although many educators do not know that an integrated approach to language education is commonly used, English education is no longer simply comprised of traditional face-to-face classroom instruction. However, the research on blended learning has not been conducted abundantly until

now, so the necessity of research on this is very meaningful.

2.2 Pros and Cons of Blended Learning

Language learning using blended learning (i.e., integrating the use of technology into classroom-based learning and education) is still a new concept, but researchers (Pena-Sanchez & Hicks, 2006; Stracke, 2007) suggest that when it is implemented "properly" students' learning outcomes can be greatly improved.

Liang (2010) and Warschauer (1996) suggested that online peer feedback can increase learner motivation, engagement and collaboration as an alternative to face-to-face communication.

Lee (2008) noted that L2 teachers should be aware of the impact of feedback on student expectations and attitudes. A supportive learning environment with interactive peer feedback can also help learners to consider their own occupational evidence-based practice (Tan, Ladyshewsky & Gardner, 2010).

Blended Learning provided a way to address the implementation and development of each student's potential abilities, one of the main challenges of contemporary traditional education. Based on the concept of blended learning, it can be assumed that the introduction of this type of training into educational practice can improve the efficiency of the curriculum in the changing paradigm of modern education. This assumption is based on the research analysis of many researchers on blended learning (Bersin, 2003; Matukhin et al., 2014; Veledinskaya & Dorofeeva, 2014).

Ono and Ishihara (2012) investigated a new blended learning model based on a platform that provides Wi-Fi-connected mobile tools (iPod Touch, 2nd generation) and learning management systems (LMS) to traditional Japanese classrooms. The results of this study demonstrate the impact of the proposed

blended learning model on learner's vocabulary acquisition and suggest that the use of mobile tools in the classroom stimulates the learner's awareness of language learning strategies and promotes learning motivation.

In a study to find out whether blended learning is effective in the teaching-learning environments, Collopy and Arnold (2009) designed three different learning environment and made 80 preservice teachers take part in one of the three; online learning environment, a partially blended learning environment, and a completely blended learning environment. The results showed significantly better skills of the students who took part in the two kinds of blended learning environment in putting into action what they learned. The students also said they felt comfortable and satisfied with the class, and blended learning was a very high level of learning.

Larsen (2012) surveyed awareness of blended learning among 41 ESL adult students who took writing lessons using blended learning in the Intensive English Program (IEP) for one semester. The results showed that they were more responsible and more focused on their learning. The students also preferred a blended learning environment over traditional teaching methods.

Kim & Rha (2014) conducted a five-week English learning program using blended learning for second-year middle school students, which showed improvement in speaking, writing, and reading areas. Among them, the advancement in reading area was very significant. In addition, the study found that over 80% of students responded positively to their satisfaction with blended learning, and more than half of them said that blended learning could be a very effective supplemental learning.

The followings are the advantages of language learning using blended learning presented by Marsh (2012).

- Provides a more personalized learning experience.
- Provides more individualized learning support.
- Support and encourage independent and collaborative learning.

- Increase student participation in learning.
- Accommodating a variety of learning styles
- Provides a place to practice the target language outside the classroom.
- Provides a stress-free practice environment for the target language.
- Provide flexible learning anytime, anywhere to meet the needs of learners.

Help students develop valuable and necessary 21st century learning skills.

The results of the above studies on blended learning all presented positive effects of blended learning, and it was unable to find an experimental study that reports a negative impact on students' academic achievement in the classes using blended learning. However, in order to maximize the effect of blended learning, the blended learning of online and offline should be planned and executed in a balanced manner, but students and teachers who are familiar with traditional teaching methods have different ideas. Lopez-Perez, Perez-Lopez, and Rodriquez-Ariza (2011) and Jeffrey et al. (2014) suggest that both students and teachers consider the face-to-face portion has more value than the online portion and this can be one of the challenges of blended learning.

Also, technical problems for online classes can still be a difficult part of blended learning. Shand & Farrelly (2018) argue that extended time to learn new technology tools, a lack of support for learning critical functions of the LMS, and discomfort with understanding and implementing effective online pedagogy are the main obstacles of implementing blended learning properly.

2.3 Previous Study

Lee (2015) examined the learning effects of blended learning in TOEIC classes by using blended learning approach. In his study, students took an online class of mock TOEIC, homework, and video lectures, and offline

TOEIC course consisting of 75 minutes of lessons per week. He compared the simulated TOEIC scores conducted in the first class and the simulated TOEIC scores in the last class, and reported the effects of blended learning to the students' achievement.

According to the result of his study, there was a difference of 30.05 points in pre-post achievement test and the difference was statistically significant ($p<.05$). In addition, the difference was 44.50 points difference in the mean score in the upper group and 18.08 points difference in the mean score in the lower group, indicating higher improvement in the upper group. This suggested that the learning effect of blended learning was effective for both upper and lower group of students.

These results are consistent with the findings of Lopez-Perez, Perez-Lopez, and Rodriguez-Ariza (2011), who reported that final exam scores were improved through learning using blended learning. He also argued that the results of the five-week English learning program were consistent with the findings of Kim and Rha (2014).

In this study, the TOEIC RC questions were studied in order to induce students' self-directed learning in the online class, and in the offline class, the TOEIC RC questions that the students studied through self-directed learning online were solved with supplementary explanations in the same way as the Lee's (2015) study.

Ⅲ. Methodology

3.1 Research participants

This study was conducted on a total of 117 second-year A university students in the non-capital region of Korea who took the 'TOEIC' course in

the spring semester of 2016. Participants were 82 nursing and 35 occupational therapy majored students who attended classes to prepare for the TOEIC exam. The participants' information is shown in the Table 1 below.

Table 1. The information of the participants

Gender	Frequency	Grade	Major
Male	28	2	Nursing / Occupational Therapy
Female	89	2	Nursing / Occupational Therapy
Total	117		

Students took classes to solve the TOEIC RC part questions in preparation for the Reading Comprehension (RC) area except for the LC (Listening Comprehension) part of the TOEIC problem. For the purpose of this study, one hour of class was conducted with TOEIC problems that students presented as homework in advance through online and the other one hour was a class that solves the TOEIC problem using textbooks in the traditional way.

3.2 Data collection tools

Participants were asked to solve 10 TOEIC questions online and 10 TOEIC questions offline each week. The online problem was solved in the free time for a week after class, and the offline problem was also solved in the free time for the homework in the free time for the week after class.

The online TOEIC questions were also extracted from the offline TOEIC textbook, so there was no difference in difficulty. However, there was a difference that the way to solve the problems between the two. They solved the problems with a book in the case of offline, and solved them using a smartphone or a PC in the case of online.

When the assignment was solved online, it was checked with the results

appeared online, and the offline assignment solved by the book was checked in class. In this way, for 13 weeks, students were asked to solve the TOEIC RC problems as a task. In class, the RC problems were solved one more time with additional explanation.

Two tests were used to measure students' achievements on the TOEIC questions solved online and offline. Each test question consisted of 30 TOEIC RC questions and included 50% of the questions students solved online and offline respectively.

The participants were also asked to answer a survey which asks their previous experience with studying with blended learning method, their preferences, and their preferred way of solving TOEIC problems.

This questionnaire was revised and supplemented to this study based on a questionnaire asking satisfaction in Lee's (2015) study. It consists of 9 questions. The questions of the survey are shown in the 'Table 10' of the Result chapter, all questions were produced in 5-point Likert Scale except the first question.

3.3 The Tests

The first test was conducted in the 8th week after the students started the TOEIC class, and the second test was conducted in the 15th week. Each test consisted of 30 questions, the questions were the same or slightly different from the ones they solved in the textbook. The 10 questions consisted of the blank filling problem in the short sentence of the TOEIC Part 5, of which 5 items were learned offline and the remaining 5 questions were solved online.

The remaining 20 questions were reading comprehension questions and consisted of Part 6 and 7 questions of the TOEIC RC part. Of these, 10 questions were learned offline and 10 questions were learned online. Like the questions

in Part 5, they consist of questions that are the same as or slightly altered.

Ⅳ. Result

4.1 1st and 2nd test result

Comparing the first and second exams, most students performed better on the second exam than on the first exam. The total score of the first exam was 2359 and the total score of the second exam was 2885. The average score was 20.16 for the first exam and 24.66 for the second exam. The mean score of the second exam was 4.49 higher.

The students who scored higher on the second exam than the first exam were 106 students (90.6%) out of a total of 117 students, and 11 students (9.4%) scored the same or rather lower on the second exam.

Students who achieved higher on the second test scored as high as at least 1 to as high as 10, as shown in the table below. The most frequent score was a six-point increase, for a total of 22 students. The second highest frequency was 5 points, and 20 of them were included.

Table 2. Frequency differences between the 1st and 2nd test

Difference	Frequency	%
-3	1	0.9
-1	2	1.7
0	8	6.8
1	6	5.1
2	6	5.1
3	13	11.1
4	17	14.5
5	20	17.1
6	22	18.8

7	9	7.7
8	7	6
9	5	4.3
10	1	0.9
Total	117	100

As a result of statistical analysis of the 1st and the 2nd test with the paired sample T-test using the SPSS 25 statistical program, the 1st and 2nd test results of the students were statistically significant as shown in the table below ($p < .05$).

Table 3. T-test result for the 1st and the 2nd test score

Division	Average	SD	t value	p value (<.05)
1st test	20.16	3.617	-19.109	.000
2nd test	24.66	3.113		

The above result is the result of combining the problems learned online and offline, so the results were separately analyzed by its studying method.

First of all, the results of the 1st and 2nd test on the questions that were studied offline showed that the average of the 1st test of the offline problem alone was 9.42 points, and the 2nd test had an average of 10.65 points, which was 1.23 points higher.

The frequency of the score difference was that 24 students scored lower than or equal to the first test as shown in the table below. In the case of lower scores, 1 point was lowered by 9 students, and 2 points were lowered by 1, and 14 students had the same score in the 1st and 2nd tests.

On the other hand, in the case of higher scores, 1 point higher was the most frequently by 44 students. Also, 36 students scored 2 points higher.

Table 4. Frequency differences between the 1st and 2nd test (Offline)

Difference	Frequency	%
-2	1	0.9
-1	9	7.7
0	14	12
1	44	37.6
2	36	30.8
3	13	11.1
Total	117	100

The SPSS 25 Paired sample T-test results for the offline 1st and 2nd test results are shown in the table below.

Table 5. T-test result for the 1st and the 2nd test score (Offline)

Division	Average	SD	t value	p value (<.05)
1st test(Offline)	9.42	1.758	-12.085	.000
2nd test(Offline)	10.65	1.849		

As can be seen from the results table above, the difference between the 1st and 2nd t-test results of the offline-studied problems was statistically significant.

The following are the results of the problems studied online. The average score on the first exam was 10.74, and the average of the second exam was 14.01, which was 3.26 points higher.

The frequency of the score difference was that the 13 students scored less than or equal to the first test, as shown in the score difference frequency table below.

On the other hand, in the case of higher scores, 4 points higher was the most frequently by 22 students. Also, 21 students scored 3 points higher. The highest score was a 9 point increase, which included two students.

Table 6. Frequency differences between the 1st and 2nd test (Online)

Difference	Frequency	%
-2	1	0.9
-1	1	0.9
0	11	9.4
1	13	11.1
2	18	15.4
3	21	17.9
4	22	18.8
5	13	11.1
6	5	4.3
7	8	6.8
8	2	1.7
9	2	1.7
Total	117	100

The SPSS 25 Paired sample T-test results for the 1st and 2nd online test results are shown in the table below.

Table 7. T-test result for the 1st and the 2nd test score (Online)

Division	Average	SD	t value	p value (<.05)
1st test(online)	10.74	2.174	-15.921	.000
2nd test(online)	14.01	2.111		

As can be seen from the results table above, the difference between the 1st and 2nd t-test results of the online-studied problems were statistically significant.

So far, the t-tests of the integrated, offline and online scores have shown statistically significant results. It can be interpreted that both the offline method and the online method have a positive effect on students' learning outcomes.

However, when comparing the average score, it can be seen that the average score of the second exam for the questions studied online was 2.03 points higher than the average score of the second exam studied offline.

To determine whether this difference is statistically significant, t-tests were also performed on the first and second results of the offline score and the online score.

The paired sample t-test results for the offline and online methods in the first test are shown in the table below.

Table 8. T-test result for the offline/online test score (1st test)

Division	Average	SD	t value	p value (<.05)
Offline 1st	9.42	1.758	-8.976	.000
Online 1st	10.74	2.174		

As can be seen from the result table above, the difference between the scores of the problems learned by the offline method and online method in the 1st test is found to be statistically significant.

The paired sample t-test results for the offline and online methods in the second test are shown in the table below.

Table 9. T-test result for the offline/online test score (2nd test)

Division	Average	SD	t value	p value (<.05)
Offline 2nd	10.65	1.849	-14.760	.000
Online 2nd	14.01	2.111		

As can be seen from the result table above, the difference between the scores of the problems learned by the offline method and online method in the 2nd test is found to be statistically significant.

To summarize the results obtained above, both the offline and online methods had a positive effect on the students' learning. The positive effect on the problems studied online was slightly higher, which was statistically significant.

4.2 The Survey result

The participants in this study were asked to answer to a questionnaire asking what they think about learning with blended learning method.

The questionnaire was designed based on the questionnaire used in the study of Jung (2012) and consists of 9 questions. The survey results are shown in the following table.

Table 10. Survey Results

Questions	Options	%	No
1. This semester, we studied by combining offline and online methods. Have you studied like this before?	Yes	0%	0
	No	100%	117
2. Have you satisfied studying in this way (by combining offline and online methods)?	Very satisfied	32%	38
	Satisfied	38%	44
	Average	30%	35
	Dissatisfied	0%	0
	Very dissatisfied	0%	0
3. Are you familiar with studying using IT devices such as computers or smartphones when studying?	Very agree	20%	23
	Agree	33%	39
	Average	30%	35
	Disagree	17%	20
	Very disagree	0%	0
4. Do you think that studying the TOEIC questions online will help you learn them?	Very agree	18%	21
	Agree	34%	40
	Average	41%	48
	Disagree	7%	8
	Very disagree	0%	0

5. It was great to be able to learn English online using IT devices such as computers and smartphones.	Very agree	20%	23
	Agree	30%	35
	Average	41%	48
	Disagree	10%	11
	Very disagree	0%	
6. The TOEIC problem solved using a computer or a smart phone is good to remember.	Very agree	15%	17
	Agree	23%	27
	Average	46%	54
	Disagree	16%	19
	Very disagree	0%	
7. Solving problems with a smartphone is easier than solving with a pen and paper.	Very agree	14%	16
	Agree	32%	37
	Average	29%	34
	Disagree	19%	22
	Very disagree	7%	8
8. I hope to continue to solve problems with smartphones or PCs in the future.	Very agree	23%	27
	Agree	25%	30
	Average	38%	44
	Disagree	10%	12
	Very disagree	3%	4
9. I think it is necessary to learn English using IT equipment to live up to the changing times.	Very agree	28%	33
	Agree	33%	39
	Average	32%	37
	Disagree	7%	8
	Very disagree	0%	0

The first question was about the experience of learning using blended learning, and at the time of the survey, all the students said they had never studied using blended learning.

The second questionnaire is the result of surveying satisfaction with learning with blended learning method. Many students answered very satisfied (32%) or satisfied (38%), with the remaining 30% responding moderately, with no negative responses.

The third question is about the familiarity with learning using IT devices

that are essential for students to study online. The survey found that 53% of students are familiar with learning using IT devices. Whereas 47% of the participants were not used to learning using IT devices.

The fourth question asked whether the students thought that solving the TOEIC problems online would be helpful for learning. The results showed that 52% of students think positively and 7% of the students think negatively.

The fifth questionnaire surveyed students' preferences for learning using IT devices, with 50% of students responding positively and 10% responding negatively.

The sixth question asks students what they think about the effectiveness of online learning. 38% of students responded positively and 16% responded negatively.

The seventh question is about the convenience of online learning methods, with 46% of students saying that it is easier to solve TOEIC problems online, while 26% of students answered negatively.

The eighth question asked students, whether they would like or not to learn about online learning in the future. 48% of the students responded positively and 13% answered negatively.

The final ninth question asked the opinions of participants about learning using IT devices in preparation for the future. 61% of the respondents answered positively and 7% of the respondents answered negatively.

Ⅴ. Conclusion and Suggestions

In summary, the results of this study showed that students improved their learning results in both on-line and off-line learning in TOEIC learning using blended learning method. In particular, it was found that the students showed more progress with the problems studied on-line than offline. The results were statistically significant.

Although this study did not compare the blended learning method with

other learning methods, it was found that the blended learning method has a statistically significant effect on students' TOEIC learning.

The survey results show that students have no experience in blended learning, but many students answered that they are satisfied with learning using blended learning methods which includes online and offline learning methods.

In addition, students who were familiar with IT devices were slightly more than students who were not, and students who thought that learning online would improve their TOEIC skills were slightly more than students who would not. About half of the students said they loved learning using IT devices, and 40% of the participants said that the TOEIC problem they learned using IT devices online was well remembered.

Another half of participants said that solving TOEIC problems using IT devices are more convenient than using paper and pens. A similar number of students said they would like to continue learning using IT devices. In addition, about 60% of respondents believe that it is necessary to learn online using IT devices in preparation for the future society.

As a result of this study, the effects of the blended learning method on the improvement of TOEIC scores were examined. Overall, the participants in this study showed significant improvement in TOEIC achievement performance. These results are in line with the previous research results suggested in the above. However, this study did not find out what kind of interaction there was between online learning and offline learning. It may be meaningful to study this through subsequent studies.

In addition, the textbooks were the same and there was only the difference between online and offline methods, but students showed higher achievements in online methods. However, It is also unclear whether students have better remembered what they have learned online, or whether they have been able to study more often because they are more convenient to study online. Finding a clearer cause for this is also important to clarify the cause of the

learning effect through a follow up study.

Finally, since this study was conducted with a small number of participants due to the research conditions, generalizing the results of this study would be unreasonable, and further research should be conducted to support this study and yield general results.

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<Abstract>

The Effects of Blended Learning on University Students' TOEIC Achievement

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The purpose of this study is to find out the effects of blended learning method for the class for TOEIC test. For this study, 50% of general lectures

were conducted, and 50% of the lessons using blended learning method were provided to 117 university students. Their progress were tested twice, and the students' satisfaction with the method was surveyed. The results of this study showed that students improved their learning results in both online and offline learning in TOEIC learning using blended learning method. In particular, it was found that the students showed more progress with the problems studied on-line than offline. The results were statistically significant. The survey results showed that students have no experience in blended learning, but many students answered that they are satisfied with learning using blended learning methods which includes online and offline learning methods.

Key words : blended learning, language learning & technology, online learning, teaching approach, self-directed learning, TOEIC

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