

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discussed the background of the study why the writer conducted the topic, research rationale, the urgency of study, the formulation of the problems which were the key of the study, and objectives of the study.

1.1 Background Of Study

The use of technology and communication in educational teaching systems around the world has changed, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a part of our daily lives in the 21st century and it has an important role in human development including education. Information technology (IT) or also known as ICT, is a broad term that emphasizes the value of communication and the integration of telecommunications (phone lines and wireless signals), computers or laptops, audiovisual systems, and software that allows users to create, access, search, transmit, and change data (Selvan Tamil et.al, 2012).

Based on the integration of ICT, the field of education causes a paradigm shift from traditional models to new models, ICT use is an essential component of learning curricula in schools, universities, and training facilities. ICT is becoming a second alternative for enhancing an effective and relevant educational process, in addition to growing in specific educational activities, because of that blended learning is considered the most promising learning approach and believed to be productive style of learning (Krasnova, 2015; El-deghaidy, 2012 & Lubkov et al., 2020)

In light of the recent restrictions put on by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID 19), blended learning approach has the potential to be employed in education. Online learning can improve student learning in addition to offering time and location flexibility, also students can obtain a better comprehension of the content of the lessons (Cakrawati, 2017; Okaz, 2015) because the online method

allows students to extend their learning experience outside of the classroom (Lauren et al., 2014). Moreover, ICT tools can give students access to digital learning methodologies (Cakrawati, 2017; Kim & Bae, 2019), when integrating ICT into the curriculum, educational institutions must find solutions to a number of issues. Some of the challenges that teachers currently face for teaching and learning among students and higher education include the growing management approach that measures education against cost, efficiency, and measurable outcomes, as well as the potential of new technologies to deliver personalized learning and encourage students to be more creative and interesting during the teaching and learning process.

According to national policies, educators in Indonesia cannot always rely on the use of blackboards in their classrooms to facilitate teaching and learning (Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia, 2012; Nuh, 2013), according to earlier studies, many colleges continue to employ traditional teaching methods where the teacher is the main source of knowledge and students spend a lot of time in class just listening to lecture, that is make students bored and inactive in their learning. Similar cases still occur in Indonesian universities, according to Zainuddin, Z. et al. (2018), where lecturers try to be dominant in the classroom and take over the class by lecturing and holding traditional question and answer sessions with students.

When it comes to the issue of a shortage of learning media, according to Torrisi-Steele (2011) cited in Alaidarous, K. and Abeer, A.M. (2016), the blended learning method can provide a learner-centered learning experience that is integrated by different learning strategies by mixing face-to-face instruction with information and communication technologies. Blended learning methods can promote and develop English language learning through active methods and practical activities (Chambers & Gregory, 2006, p3) as cited in Dwaik, R. & Jweiless, A. & Shrouf, S. (2016). Various curriculum activities and traditional materials used in English teaching can be effectively accessed through blended learning. Furthermore, students can develop their English language skills through

blended learning because they can access various physical education in electronic form when they are online. .

Ali and Sofa (2018) have conducted research the use of blended learning has a positive effect, and students are very satisfied with the teaching and learning process. They also receive positive comments from students that blended learning encourages them to improve their language skills. In addition, research conducted by Yang, Xoaofei (2019) showed that to be effective and useful for learners, blended teaching requires proper planning and research, particularly when teaching English. It necessitates a connected skills development process in communication via teacher preparation and support based on literature research.

According to researcher' experience, due to the restrictions of the COVID-19 disease, blended learning was experienced at Gunung Jati university, particularly at the fourth grade. All lecturers switched to blended learning as a teaching approach. Students can learn virtually using blended learning methods such as Zoom, Google Classroom, Edmodo, Schoology, and other online platforms. The advantages of blended learning is that the learning time is more flexible than full face-to-face learning and can be done anywhere and at any time; the problem is usually technological in nature. If technology is properly integrated into teaching practice, blended learning can be one of the most effective and useful learning methods for learners. Because lecturers do not always rely on whiteboards in the classroom to support learners teaching and blended learning processes. Consequently, this study attempts to investigate EFL learners' perceptions of blended learning through their learning experiences. Since the topic is important to know in order to give information and suggestion for quality improvement.

1.2 Research Rationale

This present study entitled “Blended Learning Implementation In English Language Course : EFL Learners’ Perceptions and Learning Experiences”, blended learning is defined as Gutierrez (2006) and Tucker (2012) as cited in Altay, İ.F., & Altay, A. (2019) blended learning, which is essentially a combination of delivery

methods, is the pairing of web-based courses or computer-mediated communication practices with in-person teaching. Blended learning is built on a flexible environment in which learners actively participate in the formation of their own knowledge, with the lecturer participating as a guide throughout the process.

English is one of the most popular language in the world as used of communication in daily life. English foreign language is very important to learn and provides benefits for many people. Benefits that can be seen today's technological advances and mostly using English as the language identifier and communication.

Perception is an important psychological factor because it allows us to understand the many phenomena that exist in our surroundings. Learners' perceptions are formed as a result of activities related to the learner environment. The way in which students perceive an object can be positive or negative. Perception, according to (Slameto, 2010: 102) is a process in which a person constantly interacts with his or her surroundings while accepting information via the human brain. While, Mulyana (2007: 179) stated is an internal process that allows us to chose, organize, and interpret stimuli from the world. These processes, however, can influence our behavior.

According to Thorndike (1928) as cited ini Malik and Dad (2010), learning is a long-lasting change in behavior carried on by experience, and the behavior includes both the individual's internal and exterior activities that are seen by others and those that are not. Furthermore, it covers the various perspectives that people have on how they see, comprehend, or experience the world.

Gunung Jati University became one of the universities that updated the curriculum in the context of hybrid learning, also known as blended learning. It is a combination of in-person class meetings and online learning approaches. The increasing use of technology devices has changed the way people learn and many education providers, especially universities in Indonesia, are currently responding

to the millennial era by adapting or updating their curricula to include digital gadgets in the learning process Zubaidah, (2018).

In this research, the researcher wants to know EFL Learners' perception of the implementation of the blended learning method in the English language course. In blended learning, it has benefits and difficulties. The researcher focuses on students' blended learning experiences, therefore, the study's results relating to how students perceive something and whether they do so positively or negatively have an impact on how they behave. It has an impact on identifying the educational advantages of online learning for future education and students' opinions who have used blended learning.

Some previous study Ja'ashan (2015), Alebaikan et al., (2010), and Alaidarous, K. and Abeer, A.M. (2016) are three studies that look into learners' perceptions of blended learning. The results on their studies students have positive perception of blended learning. In contrast, the researcher discovered that a study found that Sezen (2015) the integrated learning technique did not improve learners' vocabulary proficiency when teaching vocabulary. As a result, face-to-face learning is still preferred. Previous study has been done in many countries, and levels such as university and high school.

Learners' perception about blended learning implementation in English language course can be positive or negative depends on their experiences. By using a qualitative case study approach, this present study investigate EFL learners' perception toward blended learning implementation in language course through their learning experience.

Furthermore, the aforementioned circumstances provide potential for additional research on this topic in Indonesia, particularly in Cirebon, West Java Province. As a result, in order to fill this gap, this research examines how fourth-grade learners' perception toward blended learning application in english language course used google classroom as learning management system.

1.3 Urgency Of Study

This research looks at how students perceive learning models that combine learning in EFL students with their learning experiences, the process of experiencing an item or event by inferring information and interpreting messages captured by the five senses is known as perception, so we can interpret a particular object by perceiving it with our senses or inferring information about it from our experience or from other people.

Numerous research have been done that relate to the usage of blended learning in learning English. Alaidarous, K., and Abeer, A.M. (2016) investigated blended learning in technical and vocational colleges in Saudi Arabia. In a study, the use of a learning management system called Doorob was used to examine how EFL students perceived blended learning. Doorob is a platform that helps technical college students learn in a blended learning environment. Students' perceptions of English learning in a blended learning environment were very positive, according to prior studies, because blended learning offered various advantages, including system convenience, material richness, instructor qualities, and the applicability of learning activities. Undergraduate students' perceptions of blended learning using Instagram in English for business class were the subject of another study using the blended learning approach by Sari M. Fatimah and Wahyudin Y. Achmad (2019). The goal of this study is to ascertain students' perceptions of utilizing Instagram while taking an English for Business course and learning the language. The majority of students, according to the study's findings, view using Instagram for studying as beneficial because it affects their motivation, interactions, and attitudes.

Learners' perceptions can be positive or negative, and it can improve the quality of active teaching and learning. Learners' perceptions can be used as evaluations for lecturers and can find out about the perception of lessons regarding the blended learning method. That way, lecturers can apply blended learning methods better based on student needs.

1.4 Research Questions and Objectives

1.4.1 Research Questions

Based on the preceding information, the researcher develops the following question:

1. What are fourth-grade students' perceptions on the use of blended learning implementation in English language classes?
2. What factors can influence learners' perceptions of blended learning?

1.4.2 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study as follows:

1. To explore fourth grade learners' perception towards implementation blended learning method in English language course
2. To investigate what factors can influence learners' perception in blended learning

This study aims to explore the perceptions of Indonesian university students about blended learning that was applied in their EFL course toward their learning experiences and researcher know the benefits of blended learning method in English language course for the learners' based on the learners' perception. Also, this study provided readers with knowledge and comprehension of blended learning and its advantages for students. Furthermore, this study might be utilized as a reference for other researchers who are interested in conducting additional teaching methodology research, particularly in the area of blended learning. For lecturers, this research revealed students' attitudes regarding integrating blended learning in English language courses, allowing them to provide learners' with new learning method options. It can be used as a kind of lecturer evaluation, as well as making lecturers more effective in their teaching. For the students, they learned about innovative teaching and learning methods, as well as more about blended learning as a teaching style.