

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on introducing the study. There are six sub-chapters in this chapter consisting of the background of the study, formulation of the problem, objective of the study, focus of the study, significance of the study, and operational definition.

A. Background of the Study

Over the past few years, learning technologies and methods have evolved; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has infected Indonesia, traditional learning methods, such as face-to-face learning, have been hampered and restrictions have begun to be imposed. These restrictions include working from home, schooling, and shopping, all of which are done by staying at home; travel restrictions, closed shops, offices, and public transportation are also imposed due to the pandemic, learning in schools is conducted virtually, and students are introduced to learning methods that are not familiar. This method is called the blended learning method. Blended learning is an enhanced learning method of an e-learning system. E-learning means the utilization of information and communication technology to enable people to learn anytime and anywhere (Dahiya et al., 2012).

Blended learning became very popular in Indonesia after the COVID-19 pandemic hit. This method is used to help Indonesian students to focus more on learning, especially learning at home and school. The

concept of blended learning has been discussed since the beginning of the 21st century (Banditvilai, 2016). Early learning was conducted due to face-to-face interaction between lecturers and learners. When audio-visual learning resources were discovered, lecturers began to combine offline and online learning (Husni, 2011). Blended learning can be referred to as a method of face-to-face learning (traditional learning) that is carried out simultaneously with online learning. It is also commonly defined as a combination of face-to-face and online learning. From Garrison's (2008) point of view, the term blended learning in English language learning has received a lot of attention from various studies over the past few years. The concern is on how blended learning impacts the field of education and English language learning.

Since language has a vital role in daily life, the desire to learn a foreign language must come from within. English is an international language that must be learned. Indonesia is a developing country that makes English a compulsory subject for students; English is taught at all levels of education in Indonesia, from the lowest level to the highest level of education (Rokhayani et al, 2014.). Learning English demands mastery of four basic skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In Indonesia, a lot of people underestimate someone that is good at English. Learning English is very important for everyone. English learning in some schools is also less effective; the majority of EFL/ESL lecturers still focus on students memorizing dialogues or repeating exercises. The most vital aspect of

learning a language is speaking. Research conducted by Brown (2004), said that speaking is the skill that most students and pupils in the world do.

Speaking skills can be a benchmark of a person's ability to communicate (Setyonegoro, 2013). According to Setyonegoro (2013), speaking is a skill that must be mastered by everyone and is a skill that must be mastered by students majoring in English education. Speaking proficiency is very necessary for English education students because when they graduate, they will become a lecturer who will educate their students in the future. Lecturers have to provide English Language Learners (ELLs) with communication skills so that they can communicate more fluently and well in everyday situations. Hence, it requires students to be able to speak English and have proficient communication skills. However, online learning has various hurdles that students go through. The learning process and learning outcomes that students receive when participating in online classes have a not-so-good impact (Ramdaniah, 2021). For example, in a research conducted by Diana Lestari (2021), there are several factors that make students feel obstacles while joining online learning, like lack of interaction, unclear material, and lack of internet.

English education study program students first experienced the implementation of blended learning at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan in the 2019/2020 academic year. Speaking in English is a basic skill that every English education student must master. In the meantime, speaking skills have been introduced to students since the initiation of their language

acquisition journey, progressively refined throughout their academic pursuits at the tertiary level. Blended learning has an impact on English education study program students, especially in the enhanced speaking skills of the 2019/2020 academic year's students.

The reason for conducting this research is because of the popularity of blended learning during the COVID-19 pandemic; many students complained about problems in the internet network, the divided focus of lecturers, and the lack of student attention when participating in blended learning via online classes. At the same time, researcher also hear a lot about the fact that students feel helped by blended learning; they feel more flexible in terms of time and place and reduce the anxiety of speaking in the learning process. Based on the background that has been explained, researcher conducted this study to find out the opinions of the English education study program students at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, class of 2019/2020 academic year about the impact of blended learning on their speaking skills

B. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background of the problems described, the problem formulations in this study are;

- a. How is students' understanding of the use of blended learning?
- b. What is the impact of blended learning on the speaking skills on students of the English education study program of 2019/2020 academic year at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan?

C. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is;

- a. To find out the student's understanding about blended learning.
- b. To find out the impact of blended learning on English education study program students at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan of 2019/2020 academic year speaking skills.

D. Focus of the Study

This research focuses on the impact of blended learning on the speaking skills of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan's English education study program students of the 2019/2020 academic year.

E. Significance of the Study

The result of this study is a research contribution that has both theoretical and practical benefits. This study is expected to increase knowledge for researchers, students, and lecturers about the impact of blended learning on students' speaking skills. The results are expected to help:

1. For researcher:

To serve as a guideline for future research on the impact of blended learning on students' speaking skills.

2. For Student

This survey is important because it helps them find success in learning

English speaking skills. They can learn English more easily and make wise decisions on how to behave to use it in their daily lives.

3. For lecturer:

The results of this study will serve as a reference for English lecturers' plans and materials to emphasize the effectiveness of blended learning in English language skills, especially speaking skill for Universitas Ahmad Dahlan's English education study program students. As a result, lecturers are beginning to move towards integrating technology into their classes.

F. Operational Definition

Blended learning according to Bersin (2004) is a combination of various activities using e-learning technology media to create learning programs that are able to optimize the potential of specific learners.

E-learning involves learning with support from web-based training facilities, including virtual universities and classrooms that enable digital collaboration and distance learning with the help of technology (S. K. Sharma & Kitchens, n.d.)

Speaking is an oral language skill that is useful in daily interactions (Rokhayani et al., 2014).