

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

As the first international language, English has become widely used in the world. Along with the globalization era, people around the world compete and cooperate to build business and network. To win the competition and cooperate well, communication plays an important role. Language is the communication tool, and specifically, English is the one used by people around the world. In other word, without English mastery, it is less possibilites to survive in the globalization era.

Unfortunately, in some countries, English has never been the first language, or in other word, English is not the language used in daily conversation. Thus, they need to be taught or to learn English. To find the best and suitable way to teach and learn English, many strategies of teaching and learning English have been applied and still many researches conducted until now. The goal of mastering a language itself indicated when the learners are able to accept the information through reading and listening, then respond it by writing and speaking.

In Indonesia, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has given a challenge to be taught and to learn. English has become neither first nor second language in Indonesia, but Foreign language, indicated from none community in Indonesia used English as daily conversation. Knowing that language should be adapted as a habit in order to master it, English has been taught since few years ago to pupils

from Elementary School level, even the kindergarten level, up to university level as one of the main subject in Indonesia. This policy is one of the efforts to improve students' English mastery. However, the success of this long-term English learning depends on many factors, such as, curriculum, facilities provided, students' opportunity to practice, teaching methodology used, etc.

Many researches have been done to find an effective way in teaching and learning English. Various approaches, strategies, and methods have been discovered and researched. Along with the progress of information technology (IT), the tremendous educational changes has been brought all over the world. Teaching and learning process no longer limited to a classroom setting. The use of technology in teaching and learning extends beyond the classroom and consists of material and communication over the internet access directly from the learners' PCs (personal computers). This phenomenon has experienced an obvious growth in recent years based on the responses not only from teachers but also from learners and academia.

Specifically, in the past years, there has been considerable studies into the use of synchronous (live training online-realtime) learning activities in education either in general or in EFL in particular. One of the studies has been to investigate the learning strategies that implement online along with the advantages of face-to-face instruction, from which the concept of Blended Learning (BL) has emerged. Based on the study, BL can be applied to improve pedagogy, increase cost-effectiveness, accessibility, flexibility, and simply revision (Graham, 2006).

To place this research within BL framework, the combination of online synchronous and asynchronous activities and face-to-face instructions have been conducted by English Teaching Study Program (ETSP) of Christian University of Indonesia (CUI) and iTDi (International Teacher Development Institute) into a course called CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) in the odd semester of 2013/ 2014 academic year. Essentially, the researcher wants to retain both the benefits of face-to-face class instruction and online learning. If only we have appropriate empirical data on this issue, we will be able to raise our awareness of CALL course. This current study was a trial to provide such necessitated data.

B. Questions of The Study

Based on the discussion in the background section above, the implementation of Blended Learning in CALL course to EFL learners appears, in some ways, to be beneficial for learning and teaching English. It has also been learned that online learning has some advantages, but some critical issues identified, such as integration, students' satisfaction level, and support. Therefore, due to a great urgency regarding the issues, a study will be conducted. By having appropriate empirical data concerning the issues, the researcher will have more solid basis to decide what methodology is best for the students. The problem to be addressed in this study is students' perception toward blended learning program in CALL course conducted by ETSP of CUI and iTDi. More specifically, the study tries to seek answers to the following questions.

1. What is students' perception toward BL use in improving English language skills and components?
2. What is students' perception regarding the advantages using BL?
3. What is students' perception regarding the limitations using BL?
4. What do students suggest to improve blended courses?

C. Objectives of The Study

Based on the discussion on the previous sections, this study will be carried out to get the empirical data about:

1. Students' perception toward BL use in improving English language skills and components.
2. Students' perception regarding the advantages of BL use.
3. Students' perception regarding the limitations of BL use.
4. Students' suggestion to improve blended courses.

D. The Significances of the Study

The findings of this study are hopefully useful to the following four groups:

1. English teachers can make use of the findings and become aware of the role of computer technology plays in teaching and learning English.
2. Teacher educators could make use of the findings to reexamine their foreign language teaching methodology at the teacher training and development centers.

3. Material writers and syllabus designers-may make them to consider CALL technology while preparing teaching materials or designing the syllabus.
4. Researchers might be stimulated to conduct further research in the area which may open the way to the development of a new ELT method and techniques that work to incorporate the use of CALL technology in the EFL classroom.

E. Scope of the Study

Due to budget and time constraint, the writer limited the study into the students at English Teaching Study Program who enrolled in CALL course 2013/2014. This study explored students at English Teaching Study Program of Christian University of Indonesian for their perception of Blended Learning in CALL course 2013/2014. The samples were chosen using Convenience Sampling. The data were collected using questionnaire and interview, then the data were analyzed descriptively.