

Chapter One

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, limitation of the study, research question, and the objective of the study. The significance of the study and the organization of the study are also discussed in this chapter.

Background

In recent decades, the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for educational purposes has increased, and the spread of network technologies has caused E-learning grow significantly (Kahiigi, Ekenberg, Hansson, Tusubira, & Danielson, 2008). According to Stockley (2003), E-learning is the delivery of learning programs, training or education related to the use of computers or electronic devices electronically. Abbad (2009), however, has a narrower definition that stated E-learning means any learning process that is applied electronically.

E-learning has provided some contributions to education. E-learning has brought changes to education in common, distance learning in specific, and become a significant tool for teaching and learning process (Holsapple & Lee, 2006). One of the contributions of E-learning is it helps teacher and students to save time and place. According to Smedley (2010), the implementation of E-learning provides flexibility of time and place to the institutions as well as the teachers and students to deliver and receive the learning material. Another contribution is related with its function as a supportive learning tool (Carlyle, 2016). When teachers cannot hold the face-to-face meeting or attend the class,

there are some teachers who usually will ask a representative of class to spread the additional task for the students instead of making a make-up class. In this case, it makes the teaching-learning process became less effective. With E-learning, teachers who are on an urgent situation that make them cannot go to the college to do the make-up class, they can conduct E-learning instead as the alternative way. Teacher and students do not have to go to the school or college to do the make-up class because the teaching-learning process can be done online. Teachers just have to change and arrange the make-up class with the students and held the replacement class via E-learning. What teachers should do is only make an appointment time with the students to do the class on virtual basis. Likewise, by using E-learning, the students can also work with their own pace and time, where teachers provide teaching materials or ask the students to complete the task by utilizing one of the E-learning tools, and then the students can do it anytime and anywhere they want before the due date.

Many universities in Indonesia have applied E-learning. One of them is English Language Education Department (ELED) of a private University in Yogyakarta. In many contexts, the implementation of E-learning in school or institution is applied either as equipment for full online course, mixed or blended course and web-assisted mode (Anastasiades & Retalis, 2010). Based on the preliminary observation that the researcher has completed, the use of E-learning in ELED of a private University in Yogyakarta is applied in blended and supporting mode. In order to know the function of E-learning in ELED, there are some brief explanations from some experts about the definition of full online course, blended course, and web-assisted mode. According to Sener (2015), a full online course is a process of learning that fully conducted online. In this case, E-learning

is used as the major tool for learning. Another application of E-learning is in blended course. Singh (2003) defined blended course as a mixture of offline and online learning while online learning is conducted using internet and offline learning is conducted in traditional way or face to face meeting. In agreement to the definition above, it is clear that E-learning is used as a semi-major tool in ELED of a private University in Yogyakarta. As it was mentioned above that the use of E-learning is to support classroom learning. Equally, Brady, Holcomb, and Smith (2010) stated that an online platform of E-learning that is used to support face-to-face learning has usability as supplementary tool. Web-assisted mode makes use of the synchronous tools, where course website and tools are used, in order to enhance teaching and learning. Web-assisted learning is operated much in the same as the fully-online class with the exception that it includes online discussions and interactions between the learners and the instructors.

The research which related with E-learning class activity was actually being conducted in ELED of a private University in Yogyakarta. However, some of the existing studies are focus on the different terms. For example, a study by Yanti (2012), focused on students' perception on the use of *Edmodo* toward their writing skills. The study showed that most of the participants have positive perceptions toward the use of *Edmodo* and its usage in writing skills because most of them were familiar with the features of *Edmodo* and they agreed that *Edmodo* help them in their learning activities and their writing skills.

In this study, the researcher will focus on ELED students' perception toward E-learning. There are several reasons why this study is being conducted. First, the importance role of students in teaching and learning process. Besides teachers, the students also took the most crucial part of education (David, 2013). The role of students

in teaching and learning process is so important because the students are the one who receive the lesson (Nurhadi, 2004), which means it is important to know their perception about learning system they used. Through this study, the researcher expects to know how the students perceive the use of E-learning in educational activities.

Second, the students' interest and technological skills when learn through E-learning. In fact, not all the students are interested in learning with technology. Wools, Dowlin, and Loertscher (2002) found that students' achievement in E-learning depends on several relevant factors: technology, course materials, and the self-characteristics of students. When the students are familiar of the complication in using computers, the result is more pleased and effective the students (Piccoli, Ahmad, & Ives, 2001).

In conclusion, based on the aspects which are mentioned above, it could be concluded that E-learning has several challenges experienced by the students. It can be seen that it is important to do the research about students' perception toward E-learning. By conducting this study, it is expected that it will give solutions or strategies to overcome the challenges mentioned above.

Statement of the problem

The researcher has concluded the brief explanation about what is E-learning and what are the uses of online course, blended course and web-assisted mode above. Here, the research will show some problem that the students faced in E-learning. Based on preliminary observation, the researcher found that the absence of teachers in the class has become one of the issues regarding the students' willingness to learn. Based on the researcher experience, most of the students will be more focus to learn something under the presence of someone who was in control of their actions, which in this case is the

teacher. It means that there have to be someone in charge to control and make sure the teaching and learning process run well.

Traditional class activity allows teachers to directly reach the students in order to give best classroom learning experience to the students. On the other hand E-learning only provides efficient time and setting to conduct a learning activity. This can enunciate problem in providing students' need. Every student need different amount of time and information to learn about one thing. E-learning is usually conducted in the short period of time with the same amount of activity and information to all of the students which means that every student are expected to understand those amount of information in the same time. If we look from the students' point of view, this can be rather challenging because they have to catch up with everybody else aside from the fact that they need more time to get their own understanding. For this reason, students' involvement in E-learning is not as adequate compare to face to face learning.

The other problem that aroused in ELED context which frequently faced by the students is their understanding in operating all of the related requirements. For the students who are familiar with the technology, they would not find any difficulties in learning through E-learning. But for the students who are still unskilled with those things, then they would find that E-learning is a hard thing to do. Then in a word, it can be said that there is significant differences opinion between the techno-geek students and the techno-illiterate students. For the techno-geek students, they would feel ease and enthusiasm whenever they learn through E-learning. It opposites with the techno-illiterate students, because they are unfamiliar with E-learning, they feel anxious and did not feel enthusiastic at all.

Limitation of the problem

This research will focus on what is students' perception of E-learning, students' opinion about the activities that they have experienced as the students in their college department, the advantages of E-learning, and the challenges that the students face in E-learning. This research will take place in ELED of a private University in Yogyakarta. The participants of this study are the students in that department of batch 2015, now in semester 6, who have already taken the subjects that integrate technology or apply E-learning. The finding results from this research will represent the perception of students at ELED only, and not those students of other department of University.

Research Questions

Based on the limitation of the problem, the research question of this study is formulated as below, "How do the ELED students perceive the use of E-learning?"

Objectives of the Research Questions

Specifically, this study is aimed to explore English Language Education Department students' perspective on the use of E-learning including activities in E-learning, benefits of E-learning and challenges that they might face while learn through E-learning.

Significance of the Research

This research would give some significances to the students-teacher, teachers and the researcher.

The teachers. This research is expected to inspire teacher to maximize the implementation of E-learning. The results of this study are also hoped to inspire teacher to create attractive teaching activities using E-learning, so that the students can perceive

that E-learning is interesting. Additionally, the finding on the problems and the challenges of students in this study could be a reference for teachers to find a solution to minimize the challenge that the students might face in E-learning.

The students. Every student has their own speculation and perception towards E-learning. Therefore, this research intends to give information for the students to know more about E-learning and its influence in teaching-learning process. This study also can be beneficial for the students especially for English Language Education Department Students. As a future teacher or lecturer, the English Education Department students can take the result of this study as a reference for them when implementing teaching by. Moreover, the result of the study can motivate the students to optimize the benefit of E-learning to support their learning.

The researcher. This research will also give much information and more awareness for the researcher in operating E-learning in the future. The result of the study can be a source for the researcher when implementing teaching and learning using E-learning in the future. This study also can be used as a compliment to fulfill a requirement to be graduated from the English Language Education Department.

Future researchers. The final result, findings, theories and limitation of this research could be beneficial for future researcher to investigate another issue dealing with the use of technology in language classroom. Another benefit for other researchers is that they can use this study as one of their sources if they conduct a similar study about E-learning.