

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

This paper will explain the general topic that will be written in the background of the research. The problem statement and problem limitation will be used to determine the topic. Then the researcher will provide the research questions and also the objectives of the research. The significance and chapter outline of the research will also be explained in this chapter.

### **Background of the Research**

Blended learning has gained popularity in recent years as a teaching approach that combines face-to-face teaching with online learning to improve the quality and flexibility of learning (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). With the increasing use of technology in education, blended learning has become an effective way to engage students in active learning and improve their academic performance.

There are several definitions of blended learning according to experts' opinions. The definition of blended learning is related to the traditional classroom and the implementation of digital tools into learning. According to Tynan (2017), blended learning is an instructional approach that combines traditional face-to-face classroom teaching with online and digital resources to create a more personalized and flexible learning experience. Blended learning

methods can motivate students' learning activities. According to Rahim (2019), blended learning is an approach that can motivate learners to take responsibility for their learning strategies. Blended learning activities contain online and offline class activities that can make students excited to learn because they get the opportunity to meet and discuss virtually with classmates and make it possible for students to have a variety of learning styles.

Different people acquire and process knowledge in different ways, referred to as learning styles (Felder & Silverman, 1988). The four dimensions of learning styles identified by Felder and Silverman are sensing-intuitive, visual-verbal, active-reflective and sequential-global. Learning style is an approach or way of learning that differs from person to person including visual learning style, auditory learning style, reading/writing style, and kinesthetic learning style (Fleming, 2006). Learners with different learning styles have different attitudes towards online learning, so it is necessary to design complex materials and focus on the concentration of learning objectives to be achieved (Beres et al., 2012). The four learning styles can be adapted as a basic foundation for delivering more varied materials when given to learners. So, in summary learning styles are the special characteristics of each person in an attempt to respond to or acquire material in learning.

The application of varied learning styles into blended learning provides quite a variety of benefits for the learner. By fulfilling learners' learning styles, learners become more engaged and motivated. According to Kolb (2014), matching teaching style with learning style can increase student motivation and engagement, thus providing better learning outcomes. The suitability of learning methods based on the suitability of learning styles in students will make students feel new experiences and get perfect learning satisfaction. According to (Dinther et al., 2011), serving students' learning styles can foster motivation, engagement, and satisfaction with the learning experience and can increase academic success.

Previous studies have been conducted by Cimermanová (2018) to find out whether students' learning styles and forms of teaching produce interaction effects on students' learning achievement. In this study, it was found that students with different learning styles did not statistically significantly differ in their academic performance based on their form of study. Since learning style becomes one of the important factors in the success of learning conducted through the blended learning method. In this case, the application of learning styles into blended learning needs to be considered, especially by teachers. There have been quite a lot of related studies conducted in

the Western environment, but there are still few conducted in the Asian environment, especially in Indonesia.

The English Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta has been implementing blended learning for five years. Unfortunately, not much is known about how these lecturers perceive the incorporation of learning preferences into blended learning methodologies and what the challenges they may have experienced so far. In the context of the English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, this study intends to explore lecturers' perceptions of integrating learning styles into a blended learning approach.

### **Identification of the Problem**

Blended learning has been implemented in the English Education Study Program of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta for five years, and learning styles have been incorporated into the students' blended learning activities. However, although learning styles have been incorporated into blended learning techniques, little is known about how educators perceive the inclusion of learning styles and what difficulties they may face.

As a step to explore the existing problems, an initial interview was conducted with a lecturer. After the interview activities, the researcher found a significant effect of learning that implemented

learning styles into blended learning. The views of lecturers in carrying out learning related to the implementation of learning styles with blended learning need to be discussed.

Therefore, this research aims to address the following issues. First, to explore the best practices for incorporating learning styles into blended learning that are most effective for student learning. Second to explore what are the challenges of incorporating learning styles into blended learning.

### **Delimitation of the Problem**

This research will be limited based on the research focus that has been determined. In this research, there will be two research focuses to investigate lecturers' perspectives in integrating learning styles into blended learning approach and the challenges faced. The place that will be chosen for the research implementation is a private university in Yogyakarta. The number of participants involved in the research has been determined as three lecturers.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the best practices for incorporating learning styles into blended learning that are most effective for student learning?
2. What are the challenges of incorporating learning styles into blended learning?

### **Research Objectives**

1. To explore best practices in incorporating learning styles into blended learning that are most effective for student learning.
2. To investigate the challenges of incorporating learning styles into blended learning.

### **Significances of the Study**

This study can benefit for students, teachers, and future researchers.

**Students.** Students can explore further learning styles that are suitable for the learning activities they do. There are at least three kinds of learning styles that can be used: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Providing students with knowledge about their preferred learning style tendencies gives a high probability of success in learning.

**Teachers.** Learning styles are very important to consider for a teacher in conducting learning for students. The teacher can provide varied types of learning to increase students' interest in learning. After knowing this, teachers can combine learning materials that contain various aspects of learning styles for learning English.

**Future researchers.** The researcher hopes that this study can be useful for future researchers so that it can be used as a reference for the utilization of blended learning that affects students' learning styles. With this study, hopefully future researchers can find other benefits of using blended learning that can be used in learning.

## **Organization of the Research**

The research will consist of five chapters. The first part will explain the background of the research, problem statement, problem limitation, research questions, and research objectives, and the last is written in chapter one is the significance of the research.

Then chapter two will explain the content of the research in more detail. The first discussion will begin with the definition of learning styles and various learning styles. The next chapter will explain blended learning, the elements of blended learning, and the types of learning styles. Review of previous research related to the research will be the last thing explained in chapter two.

Chapter three will be about the research method. This section will discuss in detail how the research will be conducted. The detailed language will consist of the research methods used, the instruments to be used, the place of research implementation, and data collection techniques. How to analyze the data will also be described in this chapter.

Then chapter four will contain an explanation of the findings and discussion of the research results. Data analysis of the research is the subject matter that will be given.

Chapter five is the last part of the research. This section will contain conclusions and recommendations. Recommendations based on

the research that has been done are given to teachers, students, and future researchers.