CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents: (1) background, (2) research problems, (3) research objective, and (4) significance of the study

1.1 Background

In this globalization era, English is an important language to be learned. According to Nishanthi (2018), English is the most widely spoken language in the world. According to Grabe and Stoller (2002), English language is international communication activities that affect as one of the important factors. In addition, English is an international language which is very important to learn, for students especially.English teaching can arouse students' interest in learning English as well as make full use of students' potential in learning English and make English learning of students in school become a kind of enjoyment at the same time.

One of the most important skills in English, writing, is widely used inhigher education and in the workplace. According to Zainuddin (2004), writing is an important ability that entails a whole existence ability. In addition, in teaching English as a second language in Indonesia, writing is a really important impact as one of the four primary language skills. The ability to write in English is one of the basic requirements for those who choose to be interested in technical or tutorial roles as well as in foreign life (Nirwani, 2007).

Since the covid 19 pandemic teaching and learning activities have been disrupted, because it is prohibited to gather and are encouraged to study at home. Thus face-to-face teaching and learning activities are not allowed. In addition, the development of technology in the world is increasingly rapid so that it can be used for learning media, especially in English subject. To overcome this, teachers used online application to enhance teaching and learning activities.

One of the applications, WhatsApp, is used to enhance writing activities during the pandemic. According to Mistar and Embi (2016), WhatsApp has many benefits to the student, it also allows enhancement to the students' learning performance in the way promoting an active learning development in WhatsApp conversation or discussion. Furthermore, Ma'ruf, Basof, Fadilah and Akmal (2019), proposed four benefits of using WhatsApp in writing activities, they are: first, offering possibility of peer view, since peer review refers to sharing information in paragraph written to support learning practice. The second, independence from time and location, since WhatsApp makes participants free to carry put activities anywhere. The third, perceive progress of vocabulary, since they can view the paragraphs of their friends as well as their vocabulary and enrich their vocabulary. And the last grammatical improvement, since by using WhatsApp students can improve their grammar.

Despite its benefit, WhatsApp has same limitations. Ma'ruf, Basof, Fadilah and Akmal (2019), proposed two major problems faced by students on

the use of WhatsApp for learning activities, such as: internet connection and costly to use.Internet connection is an important factor in order to use any kind of social networking service. It is challenging for the participants to have a good connection in their school especially in their area. The participants agreed that they have to prepare a good-expensive operator which only used for paragraph writing class purposes such as doing and sending assignments

Preliminary study was conducted at SMPIT Al-Fatah Mekar Jaya through informal interview with one of the teachers of English. The result of the interview indicated that SMPIT Al-Fatah Mekar Jaya has been using the WhatsApp to enhance learning and teaching activities during the Covid 19 pandemic, because it is not possible to administer face-to-face learning. For writing activities, the teacher post the learning materials and assignment through WhatsApp group. The teacher also provides discussion of the materials by asking the students to answer some question on the materials. For the materials, assignment, and discussions, the teacher uses photos, videos, or written of files (MB, Personal Communication, October 26[th]2020)

In addition, there have been numerous previous studies which focused on students' perceptions toward the use of WhatsApp in writing activities. A study conducted by Ma'ruf, Basopi, Fadilah and Akmal (2019) revealed that the participants are familiar with various social networking service and they are actively using them, especially WhatsApp. Social networking has advantages for students. In addition, all participants agree that WhatsApp can be used to improve their language and learning activities, in paragraph writing classes, especially.

Secondly, a study conducted by Izyani and Embi (2016) revealed that the use of WhatsApp is significant to help students understand the language better and develop their English language skills. This research implies that the use of WhatsApp should be promoted to include internet facilities for students and universities as a top priority in today's education. Thirdly, a study conducted by Linda and Ri'aeni (2018) revealed that the use WhatsApp attracts the students interest, also get a positive response and learning to use group WhatsApp has been effective in developing creativity in writing skill. On the other hand, students can learn out of the classroom. Besides the private use of WhatsApp, it can be used for the education of students. For their ability to learn English, the learners will use their gadget positively. They should improve their knowledge of Information and Communication Technologies.

From the explanation above, the researcher was interested in conducting a case study entitled "Students' Perceptions on The Use of WhatsApp in Writing Activities: a Case Study at SMPIT Al-Fatah Mekar Jaya"

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background above, the research problem is formulated in the following question: What are students' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in writing activities at SMPIT Al-Fattah Mekar Jaya?

1.3 Research Objective

In accordance with the problem above, the objective of this study is find out students' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in writing activities at SMPIT Al-Fatah Mekar Jaya.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to contribute to certain ideas in a beneficial way. This study provide an explanation of students' perceptions toward the useof WhatsApp in writing activities. After finding out students' perceptions about online learning, it is expected that teachers can find the right strategy in the learning process through WhatsApp.Secondly, for students who have conveyed their perceptions also benefit in the form of improvements learning processes that have been deemed unsuitable for their conditions and situations, this also increase their motivation and learning quality through WhatsApp.Third, for the researcher herself, this study is expected to provide many advantages and information about what students think about learning writing skills through WhatsApp.Last, this study intended to lead to the understanding of intelligence students by other researchers to the use of WhatsApp in writing and to the extension of information to help other researchers improve their research in the same area.