CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents : (1) Background, (2) Research Question, (3) Research Objective, (4) Significance of the study.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In this digital era, while technologies are rapidly developing. People get benefit from many conveniences that the technologies have provided. Communication and interaction have become easier due to the invention of Internet technology and communication devices. These have some effects on various fields including education as well as teaching and learning (Low, 2017). According to Livingstone (2012), the potential of technology is that it may liberate teachers and pupils from the rigid hierarchies which have locked them to their desks, curricula and assessment straight jacket, mobilising multiple activities as mediators of learning – not only reading and writing but also creating, designing, performing, searching and playing. Technology also has a significant impact on education in terms of knowledge acquisition and absorption and skills for foreign learner.

In this pandemic era, online learning become alternative form of distance learning that could be implemented during COVID-19 emergency. One example of an easy social media application that is easy to apply, and widely used today in the world of education is the WhatsApp. According to Susanti (2020), WhatsApp is a smartphones application intended for sending instant messages. Messages can be sent both personally and in group form such that it is possible to communicate with several people simultaneously. In addition, Cetin (2017), claims that WhatsApp adds to peer support, which entails being informed of assignments and duties, as well as receiving messages for the purpose of solving difficulties and feeling of

belonging through mutual connections. So, WhatsApp is an application that takes advantages of the internet network during the corona virus pandemic.

Writing skills are crucial for every English foreign language student because students can express anything about their own ideas, feelings, thoughts and emotions to communicate with others. Harmer (2004) stated that writing is a way to produce language and express ideas, feelings, and opinions. Writing can stimulate English students to concern themselves with the right suitable language use, they can check out their own dictionary, see the grammar book and other 2 references. It means that in learning writing is not only about an idea for the topic but writing on the paper is more complex in choosing vocabulary, using convenient structure and grammar correctly. It is how the English students express these ideas in writing correctly. From this fact, writing skill needs a process and practice. Therefore, Prasojo et al., (2018) stated that it is worth to analyze whether technology forms teacher's part of helping activities from the first time of teaching to change learning to suit the 21st century technology-oriented ways. The government's policy urges the community to carry out their daily activity from home including all activities in educational institutions. Teaching and learning activities must be continued by distance from home to prevent the spread of coronavirus, especially in education institutions. Kemendikbud (2020) stated that the implementation of education during the emergency pandemic covid 19 and the policy of learning from home. Teaching and learning activities carried out online by using some educational applications that are used in learning English that have perceptions for students in the use of learning applications. This also happened at MAN 1 Palembang.

Whatsapp is one of several learning methods that capture the public's attention, respond, and give an entertaining learning environment for students. Ho (2011) stated that WhatsApp is a free messaging tool that may be used to send and receive short messages between individuals and groups. Therefore Dunlap (2006) stated that students can freely comment, and the teacher

can promptly answer students' queries or criticisms. Students in the same class also find it simpler to communicate with others when deciding on themes or to debate a certain issue. Other students and teachers can provide feedback or responses directly, making communication more fluid and effective (Trentin & Repetto, 2013). Bouhnik and Densen (2014) stated that there are several reasons why people use the Whatsapp application as an important communication tool. The first is the "low cost of the application", the second is "its advantages in sending messages in large numbers", and the third is "want to be a part of which is popular now because the people closest to them have already used the WhatsApp application", The fourth "provides a new environment in utilizing social media", the fifth "the space utilized for communication can take place with many people at the same time", and the sixth "can assemble togetherness with family, friends, community, and a sense of privacy toward other social network users".

In relation to this, a preliminary study was conducted at MAN 1 Palembang through an informal interview with one of the teacher. she found that teachers who teach eleventh grade use the WhatsApp to learn to teach writing during the pandemic. Then, by using WhatsApp, she could manage study schedules, and students who missed studying could still access it (Desi, informal communication, August 26, 2021). In addition, the teachers assumed that using WhatsApp was easier to operate than other application. In addition, the teacher also assumed that today was sophisticated era and definetely every students had a smartphone and using WhatsApp as a simple application to communicate and it could be tool or media for teaching and learning writing process. Therefore, the teacher chose WhatsApp for teaching writing.

In addition, there have been numerous previous studies that show students perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in learning writing. The perception of students is very important to know the mechanism of online learning because it can evaluate online learning systems in the school. It means that teachers can evaluate the learning process by social media after knowing the results of students' perceptions. Several previous studies showed the use of WhatsApp in

writing learning. The first related study by Zidni (2019) entitled English Students' Perceptions of Using WhatsApp in Paragraph Writing Class. The results of this research showed that all of the participants agreed that WhatsApp can be implemented to support their learning activities in language learning, especially in paragraph writing class.

The second was written by Dedi (2016) entitled Utilizing Whatsapp Application For Teaching English Language: Why And How. The results of this research showed that the students will feel confident, independence, enthusiasm, and had a positive attitude to learn English language. In addition, students do not only access the WhatsApp in the classroom but also outside the classroom. It helps students to learn English in 24 hours. They can read and write the materials times that is given by their teachers more than one time whenever they wants. Students are free to ask their classmates and their teachers through WhatsApp when she/he gets difficulties or there is something not clear enough about the learning material given.

The third was written by Noer (2018) entitled the contribution of chat using whatsapp on the student's ability in developing english writing sixth semester of english department at UINSU. The result showed that using chat WhatsApp contribute on student's ability in developing english writing are developing ideas in writing english through chat in WhatsApp, besides increase knowledge also broaden insight and communication more useful.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background of the study the main problem is formulated in the following questions: What were students' perceptions on the use of Whatsapp for writing activities at MAN 1 Palembang ?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study was to identify the students perceptions on the use of Whatsapp for writing activities at MAN 1 Palembang**.**

1.4 Significant of the study

The significance of this research is to explore students perceptions about the use of WhatsApp in learning to write. The results of this study are expected to contribute useful ideas.

This study provides an explanation of students' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp for writing activities and also finds out what students' perceptions are encountered in learning to write. After knowing everything, this will encourage the teacher to find good strategies and concepts to solve all aspects of the problems of students learning to write.

For students, this research is also useful for students because it can be a reference for them about using online learning applications. It is hoped that students will understand how social media can be useful for the teaching and learning process. Students can also find out the differences in the perceptions of other students and can get new information about the use of WhatsApp in learning to write.

This research has many advantages and information about how students perceive the use of WhatsApp in learning to write. The results of this study will help researcher to determine the feasibility of WhatsApp as a means of learning English in the COVID-19 pandemic situation. In the future, students will be more interested in learning English.

The last, this research gives much information about using WhatsApp in learning to write and can be a reference for other researchers to write their research on online learning, especially the use of WhatsApp in learning to write.