

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter represents the following subheadings: (1) Background, (2) Research Problem, (3) The Objective of the Study, and (4) The Significance of the Study

1.1 Background of the Study

Education gives humans the tools to change their lives. According to Bhardwaj (2016), education is a vital human virtue, a social obligation, a basis of good life and a sign of independence. Education is crucial for people. Additionally, education is the responsiveness and planned attempt to create the atmosphere on learning process in order to make students to be active to increase their potential in spiritual, self-control, personality, intelligence, morals, and also the skill that will be needed for themselves, society, and the nation (UU No 20, 2003). In conclusion, education is an inseparable aspect and will always surround social life.

In Indonesia, education plays important role to develop the country. According to Johan and Harlan (2014), the ability of a country to develop can be determined by whether its citizens have a good education or not. The better a country's educational quality, the faster it is likely to develop. Improving the quality of Indonesia's education system has been a key priority for the Indonesian government in terms of formal policy and planning. The government has made maximum effort for education. As a result, the government and citizen should cooperate to improve a better education system in Indonesia.

English is the integral of educational system in Indonesia. According to Mappiasse and Sihes (2014), English is regarded as a useful communication tool. Overall, the English language has become the de facto standard medium of communication throughout the world. In addition, Hamra (2010) indicated that English is the first foreign language learned in Indonesia. It is the only language taught in Indonesia from elementary school to university level. In English there are four skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of the skills that must be learned in learning English is writing.

Writing is one of the important skills in learning and teaching English. According to Afrin (2016), writing skills are important part of academic because they allow to organize feelings and ideas clearly as well as convey meaning through well-constructed text. Khairy (2013) argued that writing is a thinking tool for language development, for critical thinking and, extension, for learning in all disciplines. Thus, writing has a unique position in language teaching.

Despite its importance, writing is a difficult skill to teach among the other skills. According to Rao (2020), writing is the most challenging skill among the four language skills for many ESL/EFL learners, where it is difficult in spelling, grammar, vocabulary and grammatical structure, as there is no one-to-one connection between the spelling and pronunciation of English words. In Indonesia, Husin and Nurbayani (2017) found that two reasons why EFL students struggled with writing, which are the result of a combination of internal and external factors, with the internal factor being their low English writing proficiency and the external factor being their insufficient quality in studying

writing skills. In conclusion, the difficulties faced by students come from internal and external factors themselves. Students and teachers must cooperate in learning to write for better writing.

In this time, Covid-19 has spread around the world, and it has changed system of education. Over 120 countries have implemented social distancing, affecting 1.6 billion students worldwide. Early in March, Indonesia closed all school, leaving nearly 60 million students out of school. Using a range of government and private digital platforms that provide distance and online learning content and opportunities across the country, schools have been asked to promote home-based learning (UNICEF, 2020). Additionally, In response to school closures, universities recommended the use of distance learning programs and open educational applications and platforms, which can be used by schools and teachers to access learners remotely and reduce educational disruption (Mustafa, 2020). This causes students and teachers to do social distancing and learning from home in learning English.

ICT is supporting tool of learning and teaching in social distancing of the pandemic era. According to Nartiningrum and Nugroho (2020), students and teachers can study anywhere and at any time using ICT. Because of Indonesia's diverse online learning practices and heterogeneous learning environment, students and teachers have a varied readiness to face online learning. In addition, ICT makes a considerable influence to supporting of learning, students can be active learners by using technology in their learning. They will know what information they need, why they need it, and how they can get it (Suryani, 2010).

In short, teaching by using ICT makes it easy for students and teachers to study in flexible time and find they need. One of technology used in ICT is social media.

One of the social media used by teachers and students is WhatsApp. It is useful application in learning process. WhatsApp makes students more creative and increases their communication in learning. According to Bouhnik and Deshen (2014), WhatsApp in school allows learning outside the classroom, as it helps to easily and quickly pass links compared to other technology to study materials and the use of WhatsApp to submit study materials means that the message intended for class is sent to everyone in every form, even if it is sent after school hours. In addition, Mulkalwar et al. (2019) stated that WhatsApp can provide a channel through which educators can communicate with their students more quickly and smoothly. In short, WhatsApp can improve the level of student communication and provide another room for learning.

WhatsApp, one of the social networking services, is beneficial to be used to enhance writing activities. According to Bouhnik and Deshen (2014), WhatsApp has academic advantages, such as teachers availability and accessibility sending the materials and the chance for students to assist one another. So, it is easier for the students to get the materials from WhatsApp. Furthermore, Fattah (2015) claimed that using WhatsApp is easier to communicate and WhatsApp's effect can provide students with a chance to learn better, free opportunity to practice the language, an opportunity for students to share their opinions with others, and a more comprehensive relationship between

lecturer and students. It means the effect of WhatsApp is making time effectively and making a good learning and teaching process.

However, WhatsApp has lack compared to face-to-face learning such as miscommunication and loss of signal among students and teachers. Malecela (2016) found that the use of WhatsApp as a learning tool had the following limitations: it did not include face-to-face communication, time-consuming, miscommunication, limited by rule of telephone etiquette, relied on Wi-Fi connectivity, it cannot use by students with silent mode phones. In short, Whatsapp has advantages and disvatages; it depends on the perceptions used by the teachers and students in determining the learning method.

Presently, at SMPN 44 Palembang, the teachers started to taught the students through online interaction. The teacher use digital technology as a tool to share information and material for teaching and learning. Concerning this, the writer has conducted a preliminary study via interview by asking the teacher who teach at SMPN 44 Palembang using WhatsApp. The writer found that it is true that they use WhatsApp as a application in teaching (FD, Personal communication, April 08, 2020). In this school, this online learning started from March 2020. The English teachers of this school used some application in teaching process such as WhatsApp and Google Classroom. One of teacher conveyed that online learning never done before in this school. So, this is something new for her to have teaching online. She claimed that she used WhatsApp in teaching English because in her opinion WhatsApp is one of the familiar application and that is easy to use. Also, WhatsApp have same features

that can be used in teaching process (FD, Personal communication, April, 08 2020). Therefore, as the result of the preliminary study about English teaching online and because in this school English Whatsapp is familiar application the writer interested to carry out a research about the teachers' perception in teaching by using WhatApp.

Deal with this study, there were some studies conducted about the use of WhatsApp in learning writing. First, a study conducted by Fattah (2015) that aimed to know the effectiveness by using WhatsApp as mobile learning technique to develop students writing skills. Students were interested in using the smart phones in learning. They were already using these phones for a variety of purposes, such as chatting with each other, writing comments to their friends, free in time and place to learn something new was effective. Second, a study was conducted by Ma'ruf et al. (2019) which aimed to investigate students' perceptions by using WhatsApp in paragraph writing class in one public university. The results found social networking services have the potential to provide significant benefits to students in higher education. WhatsApp could be used to supplement their language learning activities. However, WhatsApp had limitations, such as a poor connection, which prevented them from completing their assignments in some locations. Third, a study conducted by Prasajo et al. (2017) which aimed to examine how effective and what impacts dealing with students and teachers in learning and teaching experiences as well as the problems faced by the students in writing using WhatsApp. This study discovered the benefits and drawbacks of using WhatsApp for teaching and learning.

Therefore, according to the description above, to investigate the teachers' perceptions toward the use of WhatsApp in writing, the writer is interested in conducting a research entitled "Teachers' Perceptions on the Use of WhatsApp in Writing at SMPN 44 Palembang".

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background, the problem of this research is: How are the teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp on writing at SMPN 44 Palembang?

1.3 Research Objective

In accordance with the problems above, the objective of this study is: to investigate the teachers' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp on writing at SMPN 44 Palembang.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to be beneficial to some parties. The teachers know the perception in writing by using WhatsApp. The result of this research can help the teachers to determine the use of WhatsApp in the teaching process.

Second, for the writer herself, this research give many benefits and information about teachers' perception in teaching writing by using WhatsApp.

The writer hopes this research can help shape the writer's mind as she is going to be a teacher of English in the near future.

The last, this research is also expected to give information for other researchers about teachers' perception in teaching by writing using WhatsApp and to expand the general information knowledge to help the other researchers to use the study as guidance in developing in the research in the same field.