

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents (1) background, (2) research problem, (3) research objective, and (4) significance of study.

1.1 Background

At the beginning of 2020, all countries in the world are shocked by cases of a global phenomenon, namely a new virus called the corona virus disease or COVID-19. Corona virus is a virus that attacks the human respiratory system which initially attacked China which was discovered in November 2019 precisely in the city of Wuhan. Herliandry, Nurhasanah, Suban, and Kuswanto (2020) claimed that Corona virus has become a global pandemic with positive cases confirmed in 216 countries around the world. Zahara, Kirilova, and Windarti (2020) found that corona virus is a very dangerous virus for humans that can spread very quickly, with symptoms that resemble flu, runny nose, cough, fever and runny nose or nasal disorders. It can be concluded that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused various problems in human life.

The COVID-19 pandemic needs teachers and students both interact and transfer knowledge via online learning. The practice requires both educators and students to interact and transfer knowledge online. According to Basilaia and Kvavadze (2020), online learning is defined as information and communication technology to gain knowledge transfer experience using video, audio, image, text communication, software. Ahmed, Shehata, and Hassanien (2020) defined that as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, educators began to take advantage of available technology to implement and transform information in online learning. Gunawan,

Suranti, and Fathoroni (2020) mentioned that online learning can take advantage of various platforms available in the form of applications, websites, social networks and learning management systems as a medium for delivering material or collecting assignments. Briefly, these various platforms can help facilitate problems in the learning process supported by various discussion techniques and others.

In people's life, smartphone becomes an important thing. Smartphone is a technology to assist teachers and students in the process of learning via the internet. Gasaymeh (2017) indicated that there are many people who use personal technology that is carried wherever they go and anytime it is a smartphone. Machmud (2018) discovered that with the many features offered by a smartphone, it is not only limited to making calls or sending text messages but also for doing many things such as chatting, sending emails, browsing information, watching movies, doing business, playing online and offline games. According to Mbukusa (2018), on smartphones there are many social networking and social media applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Line, Twitter, WeChat, offering scenarios to expand learning outside the classroom. Teachers and students have used their smartphones for teaching and learning outside of the classroom and they can even take advantage of the many social media applications that are available on smartphones. Hence, the use of smartphones in this global communication era has been able to build the English learning process.

In line with current the pandemic, the goverment has moved to the process of learning and teaching at home through social media. Haquas and Bouakaz

(2018) found that social media is growing rapidly in everyday life, social media makes electronic communication as a website for social networks an easy task of sharing information, ideas, personal messages and other content such as videos meaning it is not limited by time or location. Additionally, Arif (2019) stated that social media was very beneficial for students in improving their ability of critical thinking, because they can make a discussion and communication both oral and written English language. Hence, the use of social media in the teaching and learning process at home has increased the learning independence and thinking abilities of students.

Additionally, WhatsApp is an application that provides many benefits to support teaching and learning activities, especially in teaching reading. Napratilora, Lisa and Aristocrat (2020) revealed that teachers were sent the material to students anytime and anywhere even before starting class, the teacher also easily informs students about schedule changes or giving reading assignments, additional assignments and homework. Ahmed (2019) discovered that the development of reading skills had reflected that whatsapp chats and other activities shared in groups helped them improve reading comprehension. Briefly, WhatsApp has provided useful facilities for teaching and learning English activities in teaching reading.

In educational activities, learning English there is one language skill that must be mastered is reading. According to Grabe and Stoller (2013), reading one of the language skills that at the time of this pandemic is very important taught to students. Reading can be considered as a way to take information from a text and

to form interpretations of that information. In addition, Pang, Muaka, Bernhardt and Kamil (2003) stated that for children and adults, the ability to read opens up new worlds and opportunities to gain new knowledge. Dreyer and Nel (2003) claimed that teaching reading through technology facilitates the development of students' reading comprehension and increase motivation to learn. Erni (2021) mentioned that technological advances have influenced foreign language learners' online reading strategies in academic reading during the Covid- 19 outbreak. All in all, learn reading skills is beneficial for a student in exploring information and knowledge.

Concerning this, a preliminary study conducted at SMP N 48 Palembang discovered that WhatsApp is used in the classroom. In this school, the researcher chose one teacher who taught in the ninth grade. In line with what the teacher said that he used the WhatsApp when he could not teach face-to-face during pandemic COVID-19, WhatsApp is also a simple application to be able to easily provide English subject matter because many students today use social media such as WhatsApp. It is line with supported the learning process through WhatsApp, the teacher could distribute the materials and assignment for reading class such distributes the photos, videos, audios for students during learning process (NH, personal communication, July 23, 2020). This statement was also supported by one of the students who preferred to use WhatsApp when he learned online at home, it because this application was very easy to use and all my friends use WhatsApp on their android phones. (WS, personal communication, november 14,

2020). Therefore, SMP N 48 Palembang has evident of the use of WhatsApp in teaching and learning process, especially for English language learning.

Previous studies showed that WhatsApp has a positive influence in teaching and learning on reading. Firstly, Susanti (2020) mentioned that the results of this research from questionnaire and interview illustrated that the use of WhatsApp on mobile phones in learning reading skills for second semester students of the Informatics Engineering Program at STMIK Pontianak showed unsatisfactory results. So, it requires facilities from other institutions for convenience and access to WiFi or Internet Network to use "WhatsApp" in mobile-assisted learning.

Another previous study was conducted by Ahmed (2019). The results of this research showed that WhatsApp was an extremely efficient tool for motivating pupils to improve their reading and writing skills. It aided them in improving their vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and writing skills. According to the findings, EFL teachers should use WhatsApp as a pedagogical tool and encourage their students to develop and join WhatsApp English-medium groups for natural interactions and contextualized language use that are difficult to come by in traditional classrooms. Then, WhatsApp was positively considered by students as a pedagogical tool for their learning of English.

The last previous study was conducted by Fathi (2018). The result of this research revealed that mobile learning makes students use technologies like Telegram and Instagram more conveniently and effectively anywhere and anytime. This technology is extremely beneficial to education and learning.

Mobile learning nowadays, as a result of the Internet and mobile devices, encourages students to use technologies such as Telegram and Instagram to make learning more interesting and effective anywhere and at any time. As a result, SNS can provide an engaging environment for language learners and teachers can use to avoid these problems and make the most of these social networking apps.

As the result, according to the description above, this phenomenon prompts me to conduct research on teachers' perceptions on the use in reading activities at SMP N 48 Palembang. This study aims to describe WhatsApp as a learning medium in reading activities. Then, this research is based on making WhatsApp groups with English media can be an easy and effective tool to motivate students to develop students' reading skills. Such WhatsApp groups will provide students with the opportunity to learn English from one another in a fun and friendly way. Therefore, this research is entitled **“Teacher’s Perceptions on The Use of WhatsApp in Reading Activities : A Case Study at SMP N 48 Palembang”**.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the background, the research problem is formulated in the following question : How were the teacher’s perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in reading activities at SMP N 48 Palembang?

1.3. Research Objective

Based on the research problem above the objective of this study was formulated as follows: To find out the teacher's perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in reading activities at SMP N 48 Palembang.

1.4 Significance of the study

The results of this study are expected to give helpful contributions for some parties. First, this study will give an explanation and clear information for educator about the use of WhatsApp in teaching language learning especially for reading skills. Then, the use of WhatsApp can be a powerful educational and motivational tool in teaching language learning process. Therefore, it will make teacher and students easier to connect each other although they are not face to face in the school.

Second, the teachers will know and comprehend their perceptions towards the use of Whatsapp. They will relish the process in learning, as well as they can give assignments or task anytime, the teacher also easily informs students about schedule changes and homework. After that, WhatsApp can provide many benefits to support teaching and learning activities in reading skills.

Third, for the researcher, this research will give many benefits and deeper information about learn English using WhatsApp especially reading. The results of this study will help the researcher to find out the teacher's perception on the use of WhatsApp as a learning process to improve reading skills. In the future, the researcher will be a teacher and can apply the WhatsApp in language learning for reading classes.

The last, this research is also expected to give information for others researcher about the use of WhatsApp in reading activities. The next researchers can use this research as a reference and expand the general information knowledge to help the other researcher as guidance in developing their research in the same field.