CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are very popular these days. Social Networking Sites is a communication medium that is widely used by students for various purposes such as communication, exchanging media and entertainment (Gasaymeh, 2017). Apart from these several purposes, one of the functions of the SNS is as a medium for learning (Raza, et.al 2017). Therefore Gasaymeh (2017) explained that SNS would be such suitable tools that could be used for educational purposes.

Nowadays, the term Social Networking Sites (SNS) is better known as online learning. Online learning has become a popular learning medium during the COVID-19 pandemic. Then online learning is not a new learning method that is implemented without a reason and foundation by the education unit. However, online learning was implemented because of a decree and regulation that had been made by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 4 of 2020. The decree explained that each educational unit must carry out distance learning activities to cover the spread of the corona virus.

Online learning methods are considered the most suitable for use during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is because the online learning system is more flexible. Hence, the learning activities can be accessed anywhere as long as there is smooth internet access (Gasaymeh, 2017). Online learning makes teachers and students more familiar with various technology tools, both software and hardware (Ansori, 2017). As stated by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2020), there are some online learning media used by the school to implement online teaching and learning processes namely Zoom, Moodle, Edmodo, Google classrooms, and WhatsApp.

In response to the online learning media, Gasaymeh (2017) explained that WhatsApp messenger is a social network with the most potential to be used as a medium for teaching and learning. this is because WhatsApp has easy access and is more familiar to teachers and students

(Tang and Hew, 2017). Besides that, as a learning media, WhatsApp also provides many features to make it easier for teachers to implement learning. According to Izayani (2016), WhatsApp messenger is messaging software that allows the users to share information using several media such as text, picture, call, video and audio.

There are several advantages in using WhatsApp as an online learning medium. According to Izyani (2016) by using WhatsApp students are more flexible to express their opinions and understandings through writing, links, files, videos or photos and so on. Besides that, research conducted by Malecela (2016) reveals that WhatsApp is able to help students to follow the online learning process due to students' already familiar with it. Besides according to (Maphosa et.al 2020), WhatsApp is one of the simple online learning media because it does not require substantial training to use. Thus (Bouhnik, et.al 2014) also explains that WhatsApp is a technology that can be used as a learning medium without having to provide special training to teachers, students and administrators regarding its use. Barhoumi (2015) highlighted that the use of WhatsApp provides several conveniences for students, namely low cost, ease to use and unlimited instant messages.

However, based on the results of a review of previous studies, researchers have found that the previous literature used more quantitative methods in terms of looking for students' perspectives on the use of WhatsApp. Then previous research also investigated more about the use of WhatsApp as an online learning media in public schools. However, there is still a lack of literature review related to students' perception toward the use of WhatsApp application using qualitative research methods and researched in vocational schools. In response to this matter, the researcher thinks that it is worthy of further investigation. Therefore, this research was conducted to fill the gap from previous research. As for this research, it is about students' perceptions toward the use of WhatsApp as a learning medium in the EFL classroom during online learning in the vocational school.

1.2 Research Question

In regard to the explanation above, the researcher has a curiosity to find out students' perception in using WhatsApp application as online learning media in EFL classroom during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, here are some formulations of problems related to this:

1. How do vocational school students' perceive toward the use of WhatsApp as online learning media during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What are the problems experienced by vocational school students in using WhatsApp as the online learning media in SMKN 3 Jambi city during the COVID-19 pandemic?

1.3 Research Purpose

Based on the problems above, this study aims to examine three things. Firstly, this research aims to see the way students used WhatsApp application as a tool for learning during online learning in the Covid-19 pandemic. Secondly, this research aims to investigate students' problem experienced by vocational school students in using WhatsApp as the online learning media in SMKN 3 Jambi city during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.4 Limitation of the Research

This study was conducted in one of formal school, namely SMKN 3 Jambi city. Therefore the subject of this study was the students who learn in eleventh grade and experienced learning through WhatsApp during the COVID-19 pandemic. Then the participants in this study amounted to three people from the same class, namely electrical engineering (teknik listrik). The three participants are recommendations from English language teachers at schools for certain reasons. The main reason is that these students are students who are considered capable of providing explanations related to research problems. Then in this study, the researcher only focuses on the finding of the perception in using WhatsApp application as online learning media during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.5 Significances of the Research

By implementing this study, the researcher hopes that it can be source of literature that contained information for scientific contribution in the field of education. Thus the researcher also hopes this study give other teachers outside the deeper general information regarding what students' think about the process of learning which implemented through WhatsApp application. In addition, the result of this study is also excepted can provided source of information for anyone who interested in the same field to conduct the new research.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a communication medium used by people to communicate with each other and exchange short messages. WhatsApp merupakan salah satu instant message yang dapat diakses melalui smartphone dan memiliki beberapa fitur didalamnya seperti; text, images, video, voice notes, calls, and video calls (Church & de Oliveira, 2013; Sahu, 2014).

Online Learning

According to Aurora (2019) online learning is a learning process that is carried out remotely with the help of online communication media to carry out the learning process. The learning activities rely heavily on internet connections and adequate technology to access several things, such as computer-based learning, web-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration. There are several types of technology that play a role in the smooth process of online learning including smartphones and computers or laptops.