

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, research problem, objective of the study, significances of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and definition of the key terms.

A. Background of the study

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning process has been around for years. The media used in English as Foreign Language classes has evolved in some countries, along with the development of technology. Some face to face classroom are slowly progressing into online classes (Nugroho& Mutiara ningrum, 2020). In response to the pandemic of Covid-19 in the beginning of 2020, Indonesia is one of many countries which tries out the implementation of EFL online classes. The application of online classes was decided nation wide in Indonesia since the education policy makers decided to apply a rule to change the offline classes into online classes in mid-March, 2020. Covid-19 pandemic encourages the lecturers to teach at home and students to study from home, so online learning becomes a new alternative.

The occurrence of new behavior changes in learning has a wide impact on various aspects of campus life such as the change of work system in which the lectures must carry out learning process from face to face learning to online. This phenomenon can't be accepted easily by lecturers and students because they are not ready to adapt to the digital climate but it is inevitably. In the covid-

19 outbreak, online learning or e-learning becomes a new trend and thought as the most relevant method in today's teaching learning process where people are recommended to apply social distancing and avoid the crowds as a strategy in minimizing the spread of Covid-19 virus (Mardiah, 2020).

Online learning or E- Learning have in common the ability to use a computer connected to a network that offers the possibility to learn from anywhere, anytime, in any rhythm, with any means. Online learning can be termed as a tool that can make the teaching-learning process more student-centered, more innovative, and even more flexible (Dhawan, 2020). Online learning is defined as "learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices (e.g., mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access. The synchronous learning environment is structured in the sense that students attend live lectures, there are real-time interactions between educators and learners, and there is a possibility of instant feedback, whereas asynchronous learning environments are not properly structured.

Furthermore, online learning or e-learning in the universities especially in English departmen of state islamic institute of Kediri must be conducted by online learning in many classes, one of them is essay writing class. Most students consider writing is difficult, especially when it comes to writing in a foreign language (Asrobi, &Prasetyaningrum, 2017). Writing is one of the productive skills which need to be learned by language learners. They learn writing as an essential component not only for their academic practice but also later. in their professional life. Later on, they will have appropriate background

knowledge about writing. Many learners think that writing is the most difficult skill to be mastered. Writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners, the difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas but also in translating these ideas into a readable text. The skills that are involved in writing are highly complex. Second language writers have to pay attention to their skill of planning and organizing as well as their skill of spelling and giving punctuation (Richards and Renandya, 2002). Learners realize that writing is not a simple activity, it is an activity that should be done continuously.

Using online platform seems to be one of challenges for teachers to conduct their online classroom. Not only it will test their capacity on conducting online platform of teaching and learning, they need to choose proper platform to teach certain course and topic (Azzahra, 2020). With the corona virus in the world, more and more applications are being used to help teaching and learning activities remotely applications that help learning online such as WhatsApp, Zoom meeting, Google meet and many more, the various applications that have been mentioned, of course, have their advantages and disadvantages (Amin & Sundari, 2020; Famularsih, 2020). The use of WhatsApp itself as an online medium in the world of education is increasing every year along with the increasing need for students and teachers to interact with someone or a group of people who are physically distant (Abidah et al., 2020).

Some lecturers in IAIN Kediri use the WhatsApp messenger as a learning platform during online learning for teaching and learning process as

well. There are some researchers who had taken the same topic with this study “perception of using WhatsApp messenger”. (Ma’ruf et al, 2019) have ever researched *English student’ perceptions of using WhatsApp in paragraph writing class*. This research used qualitative method with a case study approach explores the perceptions of English students on the benefits and limitations of using WhatsApp during their learning activities. The findings of this research are indicate that there were positive perceptions of the students in using WhatsApp in paragraph writing class to enhance teaching and learning process. The next study is about the students’ point of view of using WhatsApp messenger. (Handayani and Aminatun, 2020) have researched *students’ point of view on the use of WhatsApp group to elevate writing ability*. This research aimed to find out students’ perspectives towards the use of WhatsApp group in improving students’ writing ability.

The researcher chooses this title based on the current situation which is required for students to carry out with government rules regarding studying at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Besides, the researcher chooses WhatsApp Messenger because the lecturer who teaches essay writing uses the WhatsApp messenger as an their learning platform. Therefore, the researcher wants to know about the students' perception about online learning using WhatsApp during study from home, which was conducted with face-to-face class before.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher aims to get some information about the students' point of view in using the WhatsApp group as

an online learning platform in essay writing class. Therefore, the researcher conducts research entitled **“EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF WHATSAPP GROUP IN ESSAY WRITING CLASS”**

B. Research problem

Based on the background above, this study specifically aims to find answers to the following question:

What are the students' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp group in essay writing class?

C. Objective of the study

Based on the research focuses above, the objective of the study is formulated as follows:

To know the students' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp group in essay writing class.

D. Significances of the study

1. For the lecturers

It is hoped that this research can provide inspiration or ideas to lecturers in teaching English through WhatsApp group. The lecturers can use WhatsApp group as an alternative medium for teaching English without having to face to face directly in the classroom. Then from the perception of students the lecturer can know the extent of student understanding of the material delivered through WhatsApp group, whether there are obstacles or not.

2. For students

The students can get more knowledge about the development of communication by using modern technology in an educational environment. The students can use WhatsApp group as an online learning platform to learn the material related to essay writing courses even though distantly without face to face directly in the classroom.

3. For the future researcher

This study is expected to give some information and experiences related to the use of WhatsApp group as an online learning platform in essay writing class. Therefore, they are expected to conduct better research.

E. Scope and limitation of the study

The scope of this study is the students' perception of using WhatsApp group as an online learning platform in essay writing class; it is only the students' perception, not teachers' perception. This study also focuses on the perceptions of using the WhatsApp group as an online learning platform in writing class. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews to find the data. This study is limited to third semester English students (2019) in writing class.

F. Definition of the Key Terms

1. English students' Perception

Perception is the process of getting information or responses from different individuals in order to provide an overview and understanding of something. In this study, the researcher wants to know about the students'

perception of using WhatsApp group as an online learning platform in the third semester of IAIN Kediri.

2. WhatsApp Group

WhatsApp group is a platform that can be used for online learning. It can be used for teaching and learning by all of the students and the lecturers of IAIN Kediri as well.

3. Writing class

Writing Class is a technique in teaching writing which is the English students write the essay based on their level, are they at beginner, intermediate, or advanced.