CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Education is currently undergoing a significant transformation with the integration of technology in the learning process. Wang et al., (2024) cites that this extreme change is being witnessed across all aspects of education, from the traditional classroom learning to more dynamic and interactive virtual spaces. More tailored and adaptive learning experiences are now possible with the incorporation of digital technology and platforms such as interactive simulations, web collaboration software and language learning applications. In addition, a study by Zhou and Wei (2018) indicated that technological changes have significantly influenced the language learning paradigm, with increasing use of technology as an auxiliary channel in task-based learning. Technology aids in generating and presenting many real-life tasks that simulate real communication situations in task-based teaching. For example, computer-based learning environments facilitate teachers to prepare collaborative tasks that engage students in real work projects, such as online searching, multimedia presentation making or posting on virtual forums (Guerrero-Quiñonez et al., 2023). Technology, students can access more learning materials and actual resources, such as videos, articles and podcasts, which can be integrated into learning activities to enrich their learning experience.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a new phase in language teaching. CLT is a method in language learning that emphasizes communicative

behavior in the learning process. CLT is a learner-centered language learning method that focuses on meaningful communication and interaction in the target language (Pohan et al., 2016). This teaching method focuses on functional language. The goal is for learners to be able to communicate and understand messages in real-life situations. CLT activities imitate real-life communication situations, such as role-plays, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks. These activities encourage students to use the target language in a practical, interactive way. Additionally, as Thuratham (2022) maintain, CLT also promotes learner autonomy and collaborative learning such that learners are active participants in their own language learning. Teachers act as facilitators and establish the direction, providing guidance and help as students practice and improve their communication skills. Through emphasis on fluency and not accuracy, CLT makes learners fluent in the use of language as well as possess the ability to communicate in different communicative contexts. Generally speaking, CLT is a focus on a more interactive and pragmatic approach to language teaching consistent with contemporary educational goals of enabling global communicative competence. After the acknowledgement of the development of communicative language teaching (CLT) method during the past 20 years, an emerging pedagogy referred to as task-based language teaching (TBLT) has been formed Jeon and Hahn (2006).

TBLT focuses on utilizing communicative activities or tasks to learn a language. This method aligns with the CLT method, which emphasizes communication and interaction in language learning (Pohan et al., 2016). Addis & Yigzaw (2018) state that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is "an approach

based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching.". In addition, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a productive approach to teaching that focuses on real-world language use and the exchange of meaning. This teaching method is effective and efficient in enhancing learners' participation and developing their communicative skills (Zhang, 2021). TBLT focuses on real-world language use and the exchange of meaning. By focusing on tasks, TBLT enables learners to acquire language skills more naturally and authentically, as they are encouraged to engage in meaningful communication with their peers and instructors. Over time, students require enjoyable learning experiences. These experiences include designing authentic, student-centered tasks that use technology to enable meaningful interactions, promote communication in the target language, and enhance language skill development, which aligns with technology-based learning.

According to Chong and Reinders (2020) technology-based learning is the use of technological tools and resources to improve the learning of languages. This article draws attention specifically to the implementation of technology-based learning in language classrooms, noting that authentic, student-centered goals should be crafted; technology should be managed with appropriate instructions and scaffolding; and sufficient professional development geared toward advancing teachers' technology skills should be offered. Effective tech integration in task-based language teaching, as noted by Chong & Reinders (2020), requires a motivating context; clear task guidance; and properly trained and experienced educators. This facilitates meaningful language learning and improves educational outcomes for students. According to research by Overland

et al., (2011) have conducted research proving positive outcomes on student engagement and academic performance after the use of technology in language learning. As educators explore innovative ways to integrate technology into language teaching, a particular approach that is gaining popularity is Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Learning (TMTBL).

According to Chong and Reinders (2020) Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching (TMTBLT) is an approach to language teaching that integrates technology into task-based language teaching practices. It combines the principles of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) with the use of various technological tools and platforms to enhance language learning and communication skills. TMTBLT aims to use technology to create meaningful and authentic language learning tasks that engage learners in interactive and communicative activities, ultimately facilitating language acquisition and proficiency. Based on preliminary observations conducted at SMPN 6 Singaraja, two English teachers in grade 7 said that they had implemented TBLT mediated by technology such as e-books and learning videos during the learning process which was deemed necessary to level the tasks given. The learning process carried out by the teacher in the classroom is first, the teacher reviews the learning in the previous meeting, then after that the teacher provides an explanation of the material to be learned, then the teacher directs students to record the learning material and then the teacher gives assignments to students to be done in groups or individually. When students are working on the task, the teacher supervises students and also directs students to ask if there are things that are not understood

when doing the task. After students have finished working on the task, then the teacher directs students to discuss the task together.

According to Skehan cited in Ellis (2018), there are several criteria that must be met for a task, namely: first, meaning must be the main focus; second, there must be a goal to be achieved; third, activities must be evaluated based on results; and finally, there must be a connection to the real context. In the initial observation made by the researcher while teaching English, the teacher started the lesson with a questions and answer session that involved all students to actively participate. After that, the teacher gave tasks that were relevant to the subject matter and related to students' daily lives. For example, when discussing description texts, the teacher asked students to describe traditional Balinese food that they often consume and make in their daily lives. After completing the task, students were asked to present their work in front of the class, and the teacher gave feedback on the presentation.

Furthermore, Smith & González-Lloret (2021) stated that teachers can use technology to create real-life tasks that are more interesting and creative. In SMPN 6 Singaraja, especially in Grade 7 English, teachers have implemented technology-mediated TBLT methods in their teaching. In class, teachers are also seen utilising existing technology, such as using Canva to design materials and creating interesting videos as additional information related to the lesson. However, although TMTBLT has been implemented, teachers recognise that they still have a lot to learn in order to implement it effectively. Success in practicing and implementing TBLT mediated by technology is influenced by how the teacher perceives, if they are not convinced of the effectiveness of the new

technique, they will not make the effort to implement it in the class. This insight came from direct experience in the field, where teachers faced various challenges and obstacles, both technical and pedagogical. For example, projector malfunctions and time constraints meant that not all students were able to present their work to the class. As a result, students' work was only collected without direct feedback from the teacher. Therefore, it is important to further investigate teachers' perceptions of TMTBLT as well as the extent of TMTBLT implementation in the school.

Although the TMTBLT method has received considerable attention in the context of language learning, it is mainly focussed on upper secondary and higher education. The focus remains on studying the impact of TMTBLT on learning outcomes. However, there is a gap regarding detailed practice descriptions of how teachers apply TMTBLT to mediate technology in various stages such as pre-task, main task as well as post task. In addition, there is a dearth of research focusing on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia regarding teachers' perceptions of TMTBLT at the junior secondary school level. Therefore, this study extends further by analysing the practices and perceptions of Grade 7 English teachers from SMPN 6 Singaraja regarding TMTBLT. This school is one of the schools in Buleleng Regency whose English teachers, particularly in grade 7, have implemented technology-mediated TBLT in the learning process. With a teacher-centred framework, this study aims to advance the understanding of the mediation of technology into task-based language teaching at the junior high school level and simultaneously provide practical insights useful for developing task-based teaching strategies in this era marked by digitalisation.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the literature review, which identified some important findings regarding the implementation of TBLT in English language teaching, teachers generally have a positive view of TBLT, teachers perceive TBLT as an effective approach to developing students' language skills and fostering an interesting and interactive learning environment (Addis and Yigzaw, 2018; Amini et al., 2019; Pham and Nguyen, 2018; Pohan et al., 2016; Zhang, 2021). Nevertheless, teachers also encounter numerous challenges in the implementation of TBLT (Liu & Ren, 2021). The challenges comprise insufficient in-depth understanding of TBLT fundamentals, challenges in task design and assessment, large class sizes and lack of sufficient training and support. Moreover, the contribution of technology in facilitating TBLT is paramount since technology offers tools and platforms that can immensely assist in TBLT implementation (Ahmadi and Heudari, 2023).

The implementation of Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching (TMTBLT) in English language teaching has great potential to enhance the language proficiency and motivation of students through engaging and contextualised task-based learning experiences. However, there are a series of challenges in practice that militate against the maximisation of this potential. While TMTBLT is promising in theory, the gap between theory and practice is usually manifest in educational settings, particularly regarding the perceptions and preparedness of teachers.

Based on the observation conducted at SMPN 6 Sinagaraja and interviews with 7th grade English teachers, they said that the TMTBLT method has been carried out in class but not consistently. English teachers use several technologies

such as YouTube, PPT, learning video, and learning audio into TBLT. Against this background, some key issues were identified in relation to the implementation of TMTBLT, namely that it is important to explore how technology-mediated task-based language learning is implemented by teachers in the classroom. The implementation of TMTBLT requires teachers who not only understand the principles of TBLT, but are also able to effectively integrate technology into learning. However, many teachers may not feel competent to use technology or may not have received adequate training. This may make them reluctant or inconsistent in implementing TMTBLT. Then investigate the teachers' perceptions of a learning method influence the way they implement it. Teachers may have positive perceptions of TMTBLT as an innovative method, but such perceptions do not always translate into practice due to certain limitations, such as lack of confidence or negative experiences in using technology. Further research is needed to understand teachers' perceptions of the implementation of TMTBLT.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

The data collection stage of this research will be conducted in a junior high school in Buleleng Regency. The junior high school chosen as the research site uses task-based language teaching (TBLT) as a learning method. The location chosen for data collection is SMPN 6 Singaraja. The research participants were two language teachers who taught in grade 7. In addition, the teachers in this study were English teachers who had used the TMTBLT approach with technology in the classroom. The study was limited to identifying how teachers implemented this method in the classroom and the perceptions of English teachers at SMPN 6 Singaraja about the technology-mediated TBLT method.

1.4 Research Questions

In consideration of the historical context of the research, two key issues have been identified for further investigation. Accordingly, the objective of the research is to investigate the following:

1. How is the implementation of technology-mediated task-based language teaching performed by teachers at grade 7th SMPN 6 Singaraja in the classroom?

2. How do English teachers at grade 7th SMPN 6 Singaraja perceive the implementation of technology-mediated task-based language teaching?

1.5 Research Objectives

In relation to the aforementioned research problems, the objective of the study is to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, in line with the research background. The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To explore how the teachers practice of technology-mediated task-based language teaching is performed at grade 7th SMPN 6 Singaraja.

2. To investigate how English teachers at grade 7th SMPN 6 Singaraja perceive the implementation of technology-mediated Task-Based Language Teaching.

1.6 Research Significances

The results of this study are expected to be a source of motivation for educators and other scholars working in the field of English language studies. The results have theoretical and practical implications. Among the most important advantages of this research are the following:

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This research contributes to the theoretical understanding of English language learning activities conducted using the technology-mediated task-based language teaching method. The objective of this research is to enhance the quality of English language teaching through innovation and the utilisation of technology. It is thus hoped that the findings of this research will provide new insights into the effectiveness of this method in supporting better language learning.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

For English Language Education Stakeholders

It is hoped that the findings from this research will serve as a valuable reference for practitioners and teacher trainers conducting workshops on the implementation of TMTBLT.

For the English Teachers in the Junior High School

It is hoped that this study will enhance the understanding of English language teachers with regard to the numerous advantages that can be derived from the implementation of a technology-mediated task-based learning (TMTBLT) approach in the classroom.

For the other Researcher

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the expansion of scientific understanding by providing fresh perspectives, trends, or references that could be investigated further and improved upon in subsequent research projects.