

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Technological advances in the 21st century impact human life, including children, parents, teachers, and students. Digital literacy has become an important skill to deal with increasingly complex technological advances in the 21st century (Jacqueline, 2024). Over time, technology has influenced various aspects of life, including education. The use of rapidly developing digital technology is one of the characteristics of the development of 21st-century education (Dariyono et al., 2023). In addition to impacting daily life, technological advances also play an important role in language teaching. For example, designing teaching materials such as textbooks, videos, and animated images and utilizing internet access can support the teaching and learning process so that a good learning process is created (Apipah, 2023). As we know, the Indonesian education system has implemented the Merdeka Curriculum, where in this curriculum, understanding and implementing digital is also one of the main requirements for creating a good teaching and learning process.

The Merdeka Curriculum gives teachers the freedom to plan their own learning tailored to students' learning characteristics (Nisa et al., 2023). Learning based on students' characteristics will produce more meaningful and enjoyable learning and will improve students' abilities. In the Merdeka curriculum, learning spaces can be transformed into more than just classrooms. All places available for learning can also be used as learning spaces. The Merdeka curriculum also focuses on a comfortable student learning environment (Cahayani et al., 2024). This allows students to spend more time interacting with various teaching materials rather than just listening to the teacher talking. Learning outside the classroom helps teachers explain and builds the character of students who are brave, independent, sociable, polite and competent (Pratiwi, 2021).

In the learning process, a teacher must generate a spirit of motivation in students by using various interesting learning methods. Therefore, currently, teachers must be more creative in developing media and methods and also look for varied learning sources so that students' enthusiasm for learning continues to be built. One way is to use technology as a learning medium in conveying knowledge or material. One of the competencies teachers must have is

the ability to utilize information and communication technology (Kharisma, 2017). By utilizing digital technology, teachers will have varied digital-based learning methods and media to create fun and interactive learning. Apart from that, the negative impact of digital developments in education can also be minimized.

In previous research, several weaknesses in the current English learning process that are often encountered are that teachers do not innovate with the learning resources/teaching materials used, so the material delivered by teachers is not up to date or outdated (Salam et al., 2023). Apart from that, the teacher's lack of competence in using appropriate learning methods can also make students easily bored because they are only instructed to note down vocabulary, translate, and memorize, and then given homework assignments with unclear instructions so that the answers become ambiguous (Farhana et al., 2021). A pre-observation was conducted in SDN Sumber Pandan 01. The results of the pre-observation show that many teachers still using conventional methods, so many students felt bored when learning language, teachers also only used teaching materials such as textbooks obtained from school, without being balanced with digital teaching materials, apart from that, the lack of school facilities such as LCD and Projector as well as poor WiFi signals make it difficult for some teachers to use digital teaching materials. Therefore, this research is important to be conducted because elementary school students are still considered quite early in learning English, so that in learning English it needs to be combined with technology so that students do not get bored during the teaching and learning process.

Nowadays, many students enjoy exploring various forms of digital technology. Therefore, many educational institutions are trying to find the best ways to use digital media to enhance student learning (Muyasaroh et al., 2020). Of course, this is a challenge for teachers in the 21st century to integrate digital literacy into the teaching and learning process. Digital literacy is gradually becoming an important part of almost every aspect of human life, including English language teaching (Rahman et al., 2023). Digital literacy is not only a skill that must be mastered by students but is also a skill that must be mastered first by teachers (Supratman et al., 2017). Therefore, continuous and consistent efforts are needed to improve good digital literacy. This effort begins by measuring how well teachers understand and master digital literacy. Perception is a benchmark for teachers' understanding of digital literacy and their level of digital literacy. Listyana and Hartono (2015) in Mawarni et al. (2021) state that perception

is a process to identify and evaluate the extent to which we know others. In this case, the researcher used perception to measure the extent of SDN Sumber Pandan 01 teachers' understanding of digital literacy and the use of digital teaching materials in language learning and teaching. The reason for choosing teacher perception is because teachers function as a link between material and learning objectives, teachers also play a role in helping students understand the learning materials. With digital literacy knowledge and skills in English learning, it is hoped that teachers can be motivated to apply their skills in learning so that students are also motivated and do not get bored of learning.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the background of the problem above, the following problems can be identified:

1. There are still many teachers who use conventional methods so that many students feel bored during language learning
2. Teachers only use teaching materials, such as textbooks obtained from school, without balancing them with digital teaching materials
3. The lack of school facilities such as LCD and Projector as well as poor WiFi signals make it difficult for some teachers to use digital teaching materials

1.3 Research Question

1. What is elementary teachers' perception of using digital teaching materials in language learning and teaching?
2. How does such perception promote teachers teaching and learning activities in the classroom?

1.4 Research Objective

1. To describe elementary school teachers' perceptions of the use of digital teaching materials in language learning and teaching
2. To analyze how such perception promotes teachers' learning and teaching activities in the classroom

1.5 Significance of Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

Adding to the study of English language education related to research on elementary school teachers' perceptions of digital literacy in language learning and teaching, it is hoped that the results of this research can become a rationale for further research. The results of this study are also expected to be a basis and reference for further research related to elementary school teachers' perceptions of digital literacy and to be used as material for further study.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

To provide data as recommendations for parties related to the research problem, namely regarding elementary school teachers' perceptions of digital literacy in language learning and teaching.

1.6 Explanation of Terms

1.6.1 Perception

Perception refers to the process of receiving information through the five senses, then organizing and interpreting this information by the brain to understand and give meaning to stimuli or the environment. According to Wibowo (2013), perception is a process that allows us to organize information and interpret impressions of the surrounding environment. Perception occurs through a process that begins when impulses are received through our understanding. Most of the impulses that attack our understanding are filtered out, the rest is organized and interpreted.

1.6.2 Digital literacy

Digital literacy is understanding and using information from various digital sources. It includes reading skills and requires a critical thinking process to evaluate information determined through digital media (Gilster, 1997). Digital literacy is not only about the skill of finding information but also about using it in life. The core skills in digital literacy are not technical competence in using computers but rather the ability to think critically and evaluate the use of technology appropriately.