CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter was divided into six sections. Those sections are the background of the study, identification of the study, limitation of the study, statements of the study, purposes of the study, and the significances of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is one of the skills in the core competencies that are learned by students. It is one of the four majors' skills in English that is important for the students. It is because reading is the act of gathering information and comprehending it to gain knowledge (Shea & Ceprano, 2017). Reading can help the students to find new things through it because it is one of the receptive skills in English. Students can earn so much information whether they are at school, at home even on the way to somewhere. Students can develop their knowledge through words they read as long as they can understand and comprehend the words, sentences, or text that they read. Junior high school students did not only read the text but they have to comprehend the text they read.

Reading comprehension is a process of interaction between readers' background knowledge with the information from the text while they are reading (Astarilla & Warman, 2017). It is the process of comprehension of the text. Through reading comprehension, the students can get both the explicit and implicit meaning of the text that they read. This reading comprehension is known as inferential reading comprehension. The students use their critical thinking to be able to connect the information to the other information that they get while reading a text. By comprehending the words in the text that they get while studying, the students are going to be able to share their new knowledge with the people around them. It is also the goal of the lesson where the students should be able to get more information and knowledge to be able to apply it in a real situation or life.

SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja is one of the private schools which offer students so many facilities such as projectors, Wi-Fi, sound speaker, and laboratories. There were several studies showed that the schools that used ICT tools gave significant differences toward reading comprehension after the treatment of both the web-based and non-web-based tools of ICT (Rinji, 2017; Yusuf & El-Yakub, 2020). It showed that by using ICT the students become motivated more for the fun method of learning. Besides, it also uses curriculum latest curriculum in the teaching and learning process of 2013 (revise 2017). The curriculum's indicators needed students to be able to comprehend the text they were given at each meeting. Each indicator was developed to a higher level to increase the students' level of knowledge. The students were given a task with various topics that would help them to think critically. When the students try to look for the sources that relate to the theme of the course, they would try to find a text, read it, and comprehends it with help from the teacher.

Based on the preliminary research, the teacher used a projector in delivering the material in the classroom. The teacher showed pictures, short videos, or audio related to the topic to give the brainstorming to the students. The teacher also showed some slides of the material for the students to help them in taking notes of the teaching and learning process. Besides, the teacher also used technology in assessing the students. Sometimes the teacher gave a task by using the PowerPoint on the projector with limited time to avoid the students from cheating. The teacher showed a short text or conversation that would be answered by the students on a piece of paper.

However, the students are not able to go to school because there is a pandemic named COVID-19. COVID-19 or known as Coronavirus Disease-2019 is a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) due to the significant increase in confirmed new cases in various countries (Cortegiani et al., 2020). The virus spreads from person to person through respiratory droplets and direct contact (Nasir et al., 2020). Therefore, the government made a lot of laws to reduce the impact of the spread of the virus. One of them described "minimal" restrictions as school

and workplace closures, restrictions on physical worship, public meetings, social-cultural events, modes of transportation, and other explicit defense and security-related activities (Andriani, 2020).

The teacher and the students are not able to do face to face learning process until the pandemic has gone. The teacher should work from home and teach the students from home by sending the materials, tasks, and assessing the students online. The students should stay at home and learn from home by using the internet. It made the students become lazy and feel some pressure because they do not only have one task but a lot of it from different courses. Nurjanah in 2018 stated that EFL students do not have a good habit of reading because they are less motivated. Other techniques or media should be available to the teacher to inspire students. Based on PISA World Rank in 2019, the reading rank of Indonesia is still low. Indonesia is in 72nd place out of 77th, which means the EFL students' interest in reading is still low (FactsMaps, 2019).

The teacher and the students are facing a new condition where they have to do the learning process online without the face-to-face meeting. This situation forced both teachers and students to be able to adapt by using technology such as ICT to do the teaching and learning process. The teacher should give the materials and tasks to the students online when the students should use their critical thinking to be able to accomplish the assignment from the teacher. Even if there is a pandemic, the teaching and learning process should be remained to help the students to study at home and keep getting the education from school. Furthermore, the relationship between students and teachers should be preserved. It should remain to avoid awkwardness when the pandemic is over.

Information and communication technology is one of the basic building blocks of modern society (Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018). There are two types of ICT, namely web and non-web-based. The teachers can choose one of them to teach the students. Students would be more motivated to learn something when they use the internet, which is becoming more popular in this age. Based on the problem that exists, the online or web-

based learning tool of ICT such as WhatsApp became the key for the teaching and learning process. WhatsApp as the web-based learning tool was chosen to help the online process of teaching and learning. In this case, it helped the students in SMP Laboratoium Singaraja to be able to develop their reading comprehension. WhatsApp is the media social platform that is used to do the teaching and learning process. Several studies showed that WhatsApp gave some differences toward the students' result of learning (Astarilla & Warman, 2017; Susanti, 2020). Based on Hootsuite (Kemp, 2019), WhatsApp was the second application that was mostly used by people in Indonesia. Hootsuite (S. Kemp, 2020) also showed that WhatsApp was the third social media platform that was used by people all around the world to exchange information. Besides, the students would be able to sharpen their skills in reading and in their critical thinking to find new information.

Considering the situation that happened, this study was exploring the implementation of WhatsApp for reading comprehension. The students are already used to ICT tools in their daily life, especially the non-web-based tools. Based on Mafuraga & Moremi (2017), the use of ICT at schools in the teaching and learning process helped improve education standards. This research focused on the advantages and disadvantages of WhatsApp in the process of online teaching and learning. By using WhatsApp as a social media platform in the teaching and learning process, the students would be able to get more information such as new vocabulary also understand and comprehend the text well. Reading comprehension is different from only reading the text. The students were asked to be able to understand the text's context, whether explicitly or implicitly.

Based on the bloom taxonomy, understanding the implicit meaning of the text can be categorized as higher-order thinking. Therefore, the critical thinking of the students is necessary for reading comprehension. The critical thinking used in comprehending the reading skill helped the students to be more critical in defining the meaning of something in the text and able to answer the questions related to the text. The students also would be able

to answer the question and even tell others about the specific event that they get from comprehending the information through reading. Besides, this kind of learning process hopefully can help the teachers and the students to carry out industry 4.0.

1.2 Identification of the Study

Reading comprehension is one of the English skills which can help the students in getting new knowledge. Reading comprehension is included in the lesson plan for the students to be able to comprehend the materials and hopefully, the students can apply them in real life. The junior high school students are asked to be able to understand the explicit and implicit meaning of the text to be able to conclude the text. There are several ways to do the teaching and learning process of reading comprehension. It can be the conventional way or the modern way by using tools such as ICT. There are two kinds of ICT: web-based and non-web-based, which can be used in the teaching and learning process. However, based on the phenomenon that exists where the teacher and the students have to do the online learning process and a web-based tool is the most suitable tool that can be used by the teacher and the students. WhatsApp is the social media platform that is used by the teacher to do the online learning process of giving the materials and for the students to submit the tasks. This study focused on the use of WhatsApp in inferential reading comprehension. This study explored the advantages and disadvantages of WhatsApp in reading comprehension for the eighth-grade students in SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

This study is limited only to explore the use of WhatsApp in inferential reading comprehension for the eighth-grade students of SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja. The students are going to be observed and interview to gather the data. The students' responses towards the instruments were compared and connected from one to the other to get the most suitable data. Each instrument consisted of four indicators to check the advantages and disadvantages of WhatsApp use in learning inferential reading online. It took place at SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja.

1.4 Statements of the Study

Based on the background, the identification of the study, and the limitation of the study, there are two statements of the study that can be formulated:

1. What are the advantages of using WhatsApp for the eighth-grade students at SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja for their reading comprehension?
2. What are the disadvantages of using WhatsApp for the eighth-grade students at SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja for their reading comprehension?

1.5 Purposes of the Study

Based on the statements of the study above, can be taken two purposes of this study:

1. To explore the advantages of the WhatsApp of the eighth-grade students at SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja for their reading comprehension.
2. To explore the disadvantages of the WhatsApp of the eighth-grade students at SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja for their reading comprehension.

1.6 Significance of the Study

By conducting this study, it gave some contributions to the people that conducted or were included in the process of collecting the data. There were two main significances, such as practical significance and theoretical significances:

1. Theoretical Significance

   This study tells about the advantages and disadvantages of the use of WhatsApp as the social media platform used during the pandemic of COVID-19, especially for inferential reading comprehension.

2. Practical Significance
   a. The Students

   This study helped the students in being aware of the technologies which should be majored in the 4.0 industry. It helped them to gain new knowledge.

   b. The Teachers

   This study showed whether WhatsApp would be appropriate to be used by the teacher to teach reading comprehension to the students or not. It showed the advantages and disadvantages of using WhatsApp for reading comprehension.

   c. The Other Researchers

   This study also gave some advance to the other researcher who wants to develop the theme or topic of this study.

   d. The School

   This study gave some advances toward the school about the use of ICT, especially for WhatsApp for the student's grades in the teaching and learning process.