

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter consists of some important parts. The researcher provides the background of the research, including the reasons why she is interested in studying this topic. Moreover, the chapter portrays the identification of problems and delimitation of the research. This chapter also presents the research questions, research objectives and significances as well as the organization of the chapters.

Background of the Research

English as a foreign language has been considered important. It has been taught from elementary school level to university level for several years. It is one of the subjects tested to graduate. Therefore, students should master English skills, including speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills. English skills are required to communicate and express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions to others. To achieve those English skills, students need to learn attentively. Hence, they have to find a way in their activities to practice and improve their English skills.

Meanwhile, nowadays, technology has a positive effect on both teachers and especially learners. According to Harris (2016), there is a lot of demand to provide a quality education for students. These requirements involve students' technological and informational abilities necessary to succeed in their future world which will be driven by technology. Haleem (2022) asserted that technology allows students to control their own learning processes and gives them quick access to knowledge. As the examples,

social networking platforms let students express their creativity more freely and improve their abilities to create real oral and visual texts. The students today including Thai students who are studying in Indonesia rely heavily on the internet and social networking WhatsApp Chat application for daily contact; they spend the majority of their time on these platforms and text messaging.

Moreover, they can use a variety of mobile applications by using their Smartphone for practicing English while studying English through WhatsApp. This new method of language acquisition is considered a major development for the twenty-first century. According to Lew (2018), it seems that, regardless of the medium, changes in interactivity may be linked to a number of significant interpersonal perceptions and results. Previously, learning a foreign language was only possible in a classroom setting with textbooks. However, in the new modern information and communication technology, language learners now have access to a wide range of applications and programs that can help them advance their English skills through online communication outside the classroom.

Filatova (2021) mentioned that some possibilities for learning a foreign language include online communication, reading email, viewing foreign-language movies, and listening to audio e-books in that language. Online communication tools can be employed to support the students' learning. Students can immerse themselves in a setting that is similar to a genuine environment using online communication technologies. The increased usage of online communication technologies for both

ordinary classroom instruction and foreign language study points to a technology update for the educational process. Additionally, students see online communication as a secure space for learning and self-expression. According to Revinova (2021), several Russian colleges demonstrate how online communication tools are useful for them in their learning process.

Chen C. L (2018) asserted that online communication tools, especially online chatting allows for the real-time transmission of text messages from sender to recipient. Chat messages are often brief in order to allow other users to respond quickly; for further learning, if students are accustomed to chatting with their classmates by using English texts, it might indirectly help them improve their English abilities, especially in writing. Online chatting lets students learn languages outside of the classroom. The ability to interact in real-time with friends or foreigners is made feasible for them by information and digital literacy. Students feel more in control of their time and location, allowing them to take an advantage of free time to learn a second language wherever they are (Nezarat, 2012).

WhatsApp Chat application as one of media for online chatting are mostly used by students and teachers during the online communication. The use of WhatsApp Chat enables to improve communication between students and teachers. WhatsApp as an instant messaging program for Smartphone (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014) has skyrocketed in popularity recently. Their study examined how WhatsApp groups affected the level of engagement among university students. The impact of WhatsApp

instant messaging on the English abilities of undergraduate students was examined by Allagui (2014).

Therefore, related to the importance of English language learning process, the emerged problems, the use of technology for learning, and the explanation of WhatsApp usages as an online communication tool, the researcher is interested to explore the students' perception on the use of WhatsApp chat in supporting English communication and learning. The students' perception on this research topic is important to recognize especially related to the advantages whether it brings appropriate advantages for the university students' English learning during their communication through WhatsApp Chat application. Moreover, there might be not many studies which highlight this research topic. They might focus on online communication tools for learning, but it might not be specifically discussed.

Identification of the Problems

This section describes the problems that inspired the researcher to explore Thai Student's Perception on the Use of WhatsApp Chat in Learning English. According to Sulasti (2003) and Pratiwi (2016), due to learning English as a foreign language, university students have problems to enhance their four English skills, including speaking, reading, writing, and listening. As the use of WhatsApp Chat dominates the students including Thai students in communicating each other, it is useful if the use of WhatsApp Chat can be maximized in supporting English learning. However, not all students are aware of the advantages of using WhatsApp for English learning. Another problem occurs because there might be limited learning strategies used by students

outside the classroom, whereas according to Pupuh and Sobry (2014), variation becomes diversity which makes things not monotonous for students. Therefore, the use of WhatsApp Chat application to support English learning is needed to be researched.

Delimitation of Study

Based on the problems mentioned in the previous section, this researcher focuses the research on finding out the advantages of the use of WhatsApp Chat application in supporting the students' English learning. The communication in this research refers to the WhatsApp in learning English and is related to their learning English process. The research also investigated the topics that the students involved in their English communication through WhatsApp Chat application. The research is delimited only that the participants were six Thai students from two Islamic universities in Yogyakarta in Indonesia. This research was based on the Thai students' perceptions, and solely used a qualitative approach, through interviewing participants as the data collection method.

Research Questions

1. What are the advantages of WhatsApp Chat among Thai students in learning English?
2. What topics do students usually involve in their English communication through WhatsApp Chat?

Research Objectives

1. To find out the advantages of WhatsApp Chat among Thai student in learning English?
2. To find out the topics that Thai students usually involve in their English communication by using WhatsApp Chat.

Significances of the Research

The researcher provides beneficial information and knowledge in this study. The findings of this study are expected to give benefits for some parties as students, teachers and other researchers.

Students. This study is expected to make students aware of the use of online chatting namely WhatsApp Chat which is not only for online communication, but also can be used as the learning media. Online chatting can be used to practice writing English and encourage them to learn and improve their writing skills. Thus, they understand this usage and how to use it wisely for learning English.

Teachers. Based on the findings, Teachers are able to know and use WhatsApp as teaching media for engaging the students in learning English. They can benefit from this communication tool for learning because WhatsApp is easy and accessible to use as well as it is the most popular social networking among today students. This study might be beneficial for them because they may know how to implement it appropriately for learning experiences.

Other Researchers. The researcher expects that this research is going to be the chief source of enlightenment that other researchers may need in their future studies. They might use it to accomplish their future study or to further discuss about the use of WhatsApp in learning English either with similar or different contexts.

Organization of the Chapters

First chapter is introduction. This chapter includes many important points. First, the background of study provides the reason why the researcher is interested in this the topic, the context of learning English, the problems faced by students in educational system, the importance of learning English through online chatting, especially WhatsApp. Then, there will be the research questions, the objectives of the research, the significances of the research and organization of the chapters.

Chapter two discusses the theories and the technical terms related to English Language Learning, online chatting, the definition of online chatting and WhatsApp, the students' perception through WhatsApp, the advantages of WhatsApp, and what topics do students usually involve in their English communication through WhatsApp Chat. The chapter also presents the review or related studies and then the conceptual framework.

Chapter three presents the research methodology. This research covers the used research design, the research setting, the research participant, data Collection Technique, the research instrument, data collecting procedure and Data Analysis. The

researcher also gives the reasons why the researcher selected those actions to be implemented in this study.

Chapter four contains the findings and discussion. This chapter explains the points as the findings, involving the advantages of using WhatsApp chat in learning English and the topics Thai students usually involve in their English communication through WhatsApp Chat. In this chapter, the researcher provides the data from the interview entries that were completed by participants. The researcher also provides the discussion which related the findings to other previous studies and adds some related theories.

Chapter five includes the conclusion and recommendations. The conclusion explains the important information and the result of the research. In the end of this part, this research provides the recommendations for some particular parties, including the students, teachers and other researchers.