CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Chapter one provides the introduction part of the research. It contains background of the research, proposed research questions, research aims, significance of the research, and clarification of terms. Each of them will be described as follows.

1.1. Background of the Research

Teacher quality is one of the most critical elements influencing student accomplishment (Bissessar, 2014). Providing chances for professional development to teachers is one approach to enhancing their quality as a teacher.

Any professional development program would be advantageous not only for acquiring new information (basic knowledge) but also for sharing and interacting with fellow teachers, who will broaden their knowledge and improve their professional skills (Lengkanawati, Setyarini, Sari, & Moecharam, 2015). The workshop is one of the most popular professional development programs for teachers (Meng & Tajaroensuk, 2013). It provides intensive programs and short-term learning activities to develop professional knowledge and skills (Richards and Farrell, 2005). Workshops could successfully assist teachers in gaining hands-on experience with a particular topic and have a follow-up teaching practice in the actual teaching context. Teachers also get support from other fellow teachers in their process of learning. Indeed, it depends on much preliminary thought or planning (Meng & Tajaroensuk, 2013). However, only some teachers have participated in productive workshops over their careers; they found it ineffective (Dickey, 2008). Workshops have even been criticized for being brief, decontextualized, and apart from real-world classroom circumstances (Schwille & Dembélé, 2007).

Various professional development programs have been introduced to foster teachers' professionalism. However, these programs might not accommodate the

needs of teachers. Due to the rapid pace of knowledge renewal, career-long professional learning is essential for teachers (Xue et al., 2019). Teachers need flexible learning opportunities that allow them to learn at their own pace and their own teaching schedules. Moreover, the learning opportunities should be situated in their work contexts. This implies that learning opportunities should be created to address difficulties that teachers face in their classrooms daily. The ongoing program is also necessary for the teachers to continue developing their skills and knowledge (Webster-Wright, 2009; Hallissey, 2011; Trust et al., 2016).

Community of practice (CoP) is a continual learning program that benefits teachers to support their professional development, which can meet the teachers' needs. CoP is a group of people who share an issue related to what they do and learn how to improve it as they interact regularly (Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). CoP provides teachers with opportunities to engage in continual learning and professional growth and connect with other teachers and experts in their field. Through a community of practice, the teacher gains knowledge to the surface, share experience and expertise, provide continuous learning and support, develop meaningful knowledge, and solve the problem related to their work (Baran and Cagiltay, 2010; Glazer, Hannafin, & Song, 2005; Wenger and Snyder, 2000; Barab, Makinster, & Scheckler, 2003). In addition, the community of practice (CoP) model has been identified as a promising method for assisting English teachers in their professional development (Murugaiah et al., 2012).

CoPs serve as the basis for establishing a professional development program for teachers. Many studies have been conducted to demonstrate the benefits of CoP programs. A study by Huang and Huang (2021) emphasized that participating in CoP encouraged the EFL teachers' pedagogical knowledge and teaching practices. It is also found that CoPs provide teachers with the opportunity to reflect on their teaching and receive feedback from their peers or expertise. Kong (2018) emphasized the efficacy of CoP at vocational institutions, while Huiyin (2019) recognized CoP as a way of promoting English language teacher professional development from the periphery to the center.

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With the advance of technologies, CoPs have undergone massive transformations. Information and communication technologies (ICT) in education, including interactive and reflective practice features, have accelerated the development of rich online environments that encourage sharing professional strategies (Murugaiah et al., 2013). The increased accessibility and popularity of Web 2.0 tools and apps and the rise of social networking have resulted in more opportunities for professional learning online (Xue et al., 2019). Various studies explored how CoP works in an online environment. Bissessar (2014) discovered, for example, that Facebook groups might be utilized as an informal medium for English language teacher professional development. Rosell-Aguilar (2018) explored continuous professional development programs through Twitter as a community of practice tool and evaluated the impact of the network on their teaching practices. By using a hashtag on Twitter, a hundred and sixteen language teachers involved in using the hashtag engage in collaborative practices, and it is considered a community of practice.

Furthermore, Xue et al. (2019) revealed that WeChat has been demonstrated as a community of practice tool to support teacher professional learning in three dimensions: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. It can be noted that teachers' teaching practices have been transformed positively. However, they stated that maintaining the online community of practice might face several challenges, such as building rapport with teachers, performance anxiety, time pressure, and technical frustration. Trust and Horrocks (2017) explored teachers' experiences in a blended community of practice through in-depth interviews with 26 K-12 teachers. According to the findings, numerous modes of interaction, face-to-face learning activities, and leadership responsibilities all play essential roles in shaping participation and learning in a blended community of practice. Participation in a blended community of practice fosters chances for reciprocal growth, allowing teachers to advance as professionals across different disciplines.

Several research studies have explored various topics related to teaching-learning activity in the classroom in their community of practice. However, teachers

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face challenges in extending their technological knowledge in this digital era. In a way that students nowadays are digital natives, the demand for deeper and more complex student learning has increased. Thus, the integration of technology in teaching has become critical. Nevertheless, some teachers would prefer to incorporate technology into their daily teaching activities, and they explain a few difficulties that prevent them from doing so. These problems include a need for knowledge and skills, access to technology, assistance, and insufficient training. Teachers also need help to use technology in the classroom, since they find it challenging to keep up with the times (Fitria & Suminah, 2020; Sahito & Khoso, 2021). Thus, technology integration necessitates a thorough grasp of the technological knowledge, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge. CoP may resolve this issue by offering teachers a social and collaborative platform to share their technological knowledge integration experiences, ideas, and resources (Drajati et al., 2018; Ulla & Perales, 2021).

As mentioned above, technology integration has become an essential component in the classroom. Teachers need to explore it to cope with the rapid pace of technology. It can be maintained by a continuous learning process that can be assisted through community of practice. With the technology itself, the program for the teachers can also be done through online mode. It also aligns with the condition where the teachers need flexible learning opportunities situated in their work contexts and ongoing (Trust & Horrocks, 2016).

Despite a growing amount of research on the benefits of CoPs for EFL teacher professional development, much is still to be discovered regarding the specific dynamics of how EFL teachers engage and learn within community of practice environment. While the literature extensively investigates CoPs in many educational contexts, there has been little focus paid to understanding the intricacies of CoPs for EFL teachers, particularly in the context of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) development. In this context, it relates to how CoPs assist English teachers in developing their technology-integrated learning process.

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Therefore, this study is proposed to explore how CoP assist teachers to learn and develop their technological knowledge through the collaborative environment.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background of this research, this research is intended to explore the community of practice within the EFL teachers and how it promotes their professional development. Therefore, the research questions are:

1) How does CoP facilitate teachers' learning in developing technology-integrated learning media?
2) What technological pedagogical content knowledge is reflected in their teaching media as the outcomes of the CoP?

1.3. Research Aims

As stated in the research questions above, the research aims to portray the process of EFL teachers learning during the CoPs program in developing technology-integrated learning media. Moreover, the research intends to investigate teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge reflected through their teaching media.

1.4. Scope of the Research

The research focuses on exploring the community of practice and how it supports teachers' learning in developing learning media. It delves into various dimensions of CoPs, examining the modes of interaction, the nature of knowledge exchange, and the collaborative mechanisms within these communities. Additionally, the research specifically focuses on how technology integration is navigated by EFL teachers within the online CoP environment, investigating the challenges faced by the teachers, the strategies, and the outcomes.

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1.5. Significance of the Research

This research is expected to make theoretical, practical, and professional contributions. Theoretically, it contributes to developing an online community of practice that supports teachers' technological knowledge because this study attempts to enrich the reference for research in those areas. It offers practical insights into effective strategies for integrating technology into their pedagogical practices. Furthermore, it benefits scholars and teachers from a nuanced understanding of how CoPs contribute to the professional development of EFL teachers, especially in the context of TPACK.

In practice, the findings of this research serve as a helpful reference and guide for teachers to conduct an influential online community of practice. Professionally, the results will be good insight for education stakeholders and school parties to promote and build a community of practice for teachers, use the research outcomes to inform the design of tailored professional development programs that align with the dynamic needs of language educators in the digital age.

1.6. Clarification of Key Terms

1. Community of practice (CoP)

   A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. The members of CoP support each other by sharing information, experiences, and best practices. It aims to continuously improve the quality of their work and enhance their understanding of their field (Wenger, 1998). Within the context of the research, a CoP consists of EFL teachers coming together to collaboratively enhance their teaching practices, exchange ideas on their best practice in the classroom, and collectively develop their knowledge and skills on teaching and learning.

2. Teacher Professional Development

   Teacher professional development (PD) refers to the continual process of learning and skill development that teachers engage in to enhance their

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knowledge, abilities, and effectiveness in the classroom. The purpose of teacher professional development is to assist teachers in improving their teaching abilities. In this context, it encompasses the collective efforts made by EFL teachers within the CoP to improve their teaching methods, increase their linguistic knowledge, and stay current with efficient language education practices.

3. Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)

The term TPACK refers to a conceptual framework that describes the knowledge and abilities needed for effective technology integration in teaching and learning. It emphasizes the significance of integrating content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technology knowledge in order to enable effective teaching and learning in specific circumstances (Mishra, & Koehler, 2006). Within the context of the research, it denotes how the learning environment within a CoP contributes to EFL teachers' acquisition and integration of technology in the classroom. It focuses on the intersection of technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge to enhance teachers' teaching practices.

1.7. Thesis Organization

Chapter I presents the background of the research, research questions, aim of the research, significance of the research, clarification of the key terms, and thesis organization.

Chapter II elaborates the framework of teacher professional development, community of practice, technology-integrated learning media, technological pedagogical content knowledge, and English Language teaching in Indonesia.

Chapter III explains the research methodology in detail including the research design, the site and the participants, the data collection, and how to analyze the data.

Chapter IV reports the results of the data and discusses the findings based on the framework provided in the previous chapter.

Chapter V presents a conclusion based on the research findings. The suggestion for future research is explained in this chapter.

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1.8. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this research investigates the vital role of community of practice in supporting EFL teachers' professional development, particularly in technology-integrated learning media. The study aims to shed light on how CoPs facilitate teachers' learning, foster technological pedagogical content knowledge, and contribute to enhancing teaching methods and student learning outcomes. This research holds theoretical, practical, and professional significance, offering insights for educators and researchers interested in harnessing the power of CoPs to support teachers' technological knowledge and expertise.

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