CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study including the issues happening in the context of the research and the gap presented. Additionally, this chapter presents the research questions, the objectives and scope of the study, the significance of the study, the clarification of the key terms, and the organization of the paper.

1.1. Background of The Study

The world is currently growing in digital era where all activities can be carried out in a more sophisticated way (Payton & Hague, 2010). In general, the digital era is a time that has experienced developments in all aspects of life to become completely digital (Fraillon et al., 2014). The development of the digital era also continues to run without being stopped because it is actually the people themselves who ask and demand that everything can be more practical and efficient (Sharpe, 2011).

Digital era is formed by information and communication system which dominate almost every aspect of society including education (Payton & Hague, 2010). Education people including teachers and students are now being surrounded with digital technology which is now seen as one of the key educational media for the 21st century (Fraillon et al., 2014). Technology basically changes the nature of knowledge in the sense that it enables more creative, active, collective and personal ways to build a more interactive and effective educational process (Sharpe, 2011).

In recognition of the rapid advancements in technology and their implications for education, all educators as well as students are obligated to continuously upgrade their digital literacy (Dashtestani, 2014). The term digital literacy appears to have been used in a broad sense since Gilster (1997), where he describes, what it means to be 'digitally literate': Digital literacy is "the ability to understand and use information in various formats from various sources when it is presented via computers" (Gilster, 1997, p. 1). This idea has become a central definition for most understandings of digital literacy. In the same way, Son et al. (2011) define digital literacy as "the ability to use computers at an adequate level for creation, communication and collaboration" (p. 27). By the definition, related to teaching process,

digital literacy offers teachers the ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share, and create content using information technologies and internet (Beckingham & Belshaw, 2011).

Related to the language teaching and learning, because of the complexity, opportunities, and challenges in acquiring students' language skills, it is imperative for language teachers to continuously develop professionally, especially in the aspect of digital literacy (Izzo et al., 2015). Technology has strong potential to promote interactive language classes including EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom (Parvin & Salam, 2015). It enables real time connectivity and creates online English courses, virtual learning language environments, and other language resources including those that can be accessed openly (Eaton, 2010).

Technology in EFL class can increase students' participation in the learning process (Azmi, 2017). Many technology learning platforms are used by teachers in order to be able to balance technology tools during the learning process (Nguyen, 2017). Majority of students utilize English Online Dictionary in the concern of language translation and the internet to find out any English material (Nguyen & Tri, 2017). In addition, many applications from Google Play store can be accessed by teachers as learning tools, such as Google Classroom, Quizziz, Grammarly, YouTube and Google Podcast (Dashtestani, 2014).

Furthermore technology is officially included by the government in the Indonesian educational curriculum (Ammani & Aparanjani, 2016). Thus, in the educational institution, the existence of technology is necessary to be developed by each teacher (Ammani & Aparanjani, 2016). English teachers are supposed to be capable to organize new innovations of technology (Nguyen & Tri, 2017). Not only using the technology but the implementation of the website or perhaps any other social application should be appropriate in the learning process of English (Nguyen, 2017).

However despite an abundance of reports illustrating how increased digital literacies can improve the quality of teaching and learning, there are international reports of contemporary language teachers having low levels of digital literacies. In a survey of Iranian English teachers, Dashtestani (2014) reported that Iranian teachers did not have a sufficient level of digital literacy for language teaching and the implementation of TELL (Technology-Enhanced Language Learning). At a Japanese university, Milliner and Cote (2018) looked specifically at English teachers' implementation and use of a course management system (CMS). They found that the teachers' depth of application was limited or unsophisticated. A

survey of Indonesian English teachers by Son et al. (2011) also found they lacked a number of core digital competencies. Moreover, the aforementioned dearth of opportunities to learn how to use technology for language teaching (Hubbard, 2008; Kessler, 2006) foreshadows a potential shortage of teachers who can effectively use technology, or TELL, in the language classroom.

In response to the concern above, various programs needed are expected to be conducted to enhance digital literacy of English teachers. However based on the literature review conducted by the researcher, it appears that there is less systematic investigation so far that have been elaborated regarding the teacher professional development done by English teachers in enhancing their digital literacy especially in Indonesian context, leaving an obvious research gap. The majority of previous studies tended to focus only on analyzing teachers' level and perspective of their digital literacy (Dashtestani, 2014; Son et al., 2011) and the teachers' current use of technology in their classroom practices (DelliCarpini, 2012; Farooq et al., 2012) in the context of junior and high school level. Based on the information gained from those previous studies, thus this study is aimed to gain information from Indonesian English teachers regarding digital literacy and it is limited to senior high school context. Aside from exploring Indonesian English teachers' perspective of digital literacy and their integration of technology in classroom practices, this study is expected to specifically contribute to the teacher professional development programs in increasing digital literacy.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the issues raised in the background of the study above, then this study examines some problems which are formulated in the following questions.

1. What are the current perspectives of Indonesian English teachers regarding digital literacy?

2. What is the current situation of technology use in teaching practice of Indonesian English teachers?

3. What kind of professional development programs do Indonesian English teachers need to enhance their digital literacy?

1.3. Objectives and Scope of The Study

Following up the research questions above, the overall aim of this study is to explore Indonesian English teachers' current digital literacy. It covers the perspective of English teachers regarding digital literacy, the teachers' current use of technology in their classroom practices and the programs implemented by the teachers in developing their digital literacy.

For the scope of the study, first, this study aims to examine the understanding of English teachers regarding digital literacy. Therefore more specifically, the study is intended to find out the teachers' knowledge and perspective about digital literacy including the basic definition of digital literacy and the role of digital literacy in teaching English.

Another purpose of the study is to look into how the teachers integrate technology into their classroom. It explores technology tools frequently used by the teachers as well as their strategies in using those tools in their classrooms. Furthermore the researcher also tries to identify and study deeply the difficulties experienced by the teachers in their technology-integrated teaching.

Finally, the main concern lies on how the English teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their technology use based on their experiences. It explains whether the teachers can develop their digital literacy effectively so that it can support their professional practice. In other words, the study is determined to find out information about the teacher professional development implemented by the teachers in increasing their digital literacy; whether they have received or done any formal and/or informal education and training in this aspect. Additionally, the advices and suggestions of the teachers regarding their programs are also investigated.

1.4. Significance of The Study

The findings from this study have the potential to provide better information regarding current situation of English teachers' digital literacy. Specifically, this study work could potentially benefit leaders, teachers, as well as students. For leaders, the study can help better design the organizational plan for technology integration as well as improve the implementation of programs in increasing digital literacy in their schools. For teachers, the study might offer a good opportunity for their voices to be heard and their needs related to technology use and digital literacy programs to be identified and considered. This can also be beneficial to students in the sense that they could benefit from a more effective TELL journey.

1.5. Clarification of Key Terms

Technology

Bain (1937) proposed a basic definition of technology. He said that "technology includes all tools, machines, utensils, weapons, instruments, housing, clothing, communicating and transporting devices and the skills by which we produce and use them." (p. 860). Meanwhile Barbour defined technology as follows: "technology may be defined as the application of organized knowledge to practical tasks by ordered systems of people and machines." (p. 3). As highlighted by Fitzpatrick and Davies (2003), technology produces devices that can be more compact, faster, lighter and more versatile. Huge amounts of information can be stored locally or remotely and moved around virtually instantaneously; even the term "information" has expanded to include media such as photos, audio and video, and no longer refers to just words and numbers (Fitzpatrick & Davies, 2003).

TELL (Technology-Enhanced Language Learning)

TELL (Technology-Enhanced Language Learning) refers to the use of computer technology, including hardware, software and internet to enhance the teaching and learning of languages (Bush & Terry, 1997). TELL enables real time connectivity and creates online English courses, virtual learning language environments and other language resources including those that can be accessed openly (Eaton, 2010).

Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is "the ability to understand and use information in various formats from various sources when it is presented via computers" (Gilster, 1997, p. 1). This idea has become a central definition for most understandings of digital literacy. In the same way, Son et al. (2011) define digital literacy as "the ability to use computers at an adequate level for creation, communication and collaboration" (p. 27). Related to teaching process, digital literacy offers teachers the ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share, and create content using information technologies and internet (Beckingham & Belshaw, 2011).

Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development (PD) is conceived as an essential mechanism for enhancing teachers' knowledge and instructional practices professional development (Borko, 2004 & Desimone et al., 2002). Bringing about changes in teachers' attitudes and beliefs is another major objective of PD (Guskey, 2002). PD has the potential to impact many aspects of teachers' professional and personal lives, impacting on teachers' knowledge,

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competences, and values (Opfer & Peder, 2011). In addition, the focus and ultimate goal of teacher PD should be the benefit of students' learning and achievement (Avalos, 2011).

1.6. Organization of The Paper

This paper consists of five chapters. The first chapter presents: (1) background of the study; (2) research questions; (3) objectives and scope of the study; (4) significance of the study; (5) clarification of key terms used in the study; and (6) the organization of the paper. Chapter Two focuses on the literature review and some previous related studies that are used to analyze the data. This chapter primarily presents the theories and findings related to the definition of digital literacy, the importance of digital literacy, technology for teaching English, and digital literacy professional development program. Chapter Three provides detailed information about the research methodology. The research design, research setting, research participant, data source, data collection, and data analysis are also discussed in this chapter. Chapter Four presents the result of the data analysis, highlighting the English teachers' perspectives regarding digital literacy, the teachers' current use of technology, and the teacher professional development done by the English teachers to increase their digital literacy. In addition, this chapter also discusses the result of the findings and relates it to the supporting theory. Finally, Chapter Five presents the conclusion of the overall discussion, an implication of the research, puts forward some suggestions for school readers, English teachers, students, and future researchers, and the limitation of the study.