CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the study. The elaboration focuses on the background of the research, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, the study's scope, the definition of key terms, and the paper's organization.

1.1 Background of the Research

The CoronaVirus (COVID-19) was declared a worldwide public health emergency and a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020, and an international public health emergency on March 11, 2020, by the World Health Organization (WHO) (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020). Many countries choose to close schools, universities, and colleges as a preventive measure against the spread of the disease. The situation is made worse by the fact that school closures occurred on an unprecedented scale, causing concern about the future of education in Indonesia, which has not been spared from the consequences of these developments. The President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, declared on Monday, March 2, 2020, that the Covid-19 virus has been found on the country's territory (Abdillah, 2020). Because of this, guidelines for running an online school for students from early childhood through higher education have been established and promulgated (Regulation of Indonesian Government No. 21, 2020, 2020).

The whole educational institution quickly followed the central government policy in Indonesia. This has confirmed the transition from e-learning sites and others of all traditional (face-to-face) teaching practices to online learning types and practices. Not all schools are ready for the sudden shift, especially those equipped with a sort of technology embedded. Many teachers and students are not ready yet to challenge their online learning and teaching skills in time. Moreover, many teachers are not yet qualified in providing the correct method, media, and material in online teaching. Teachers were informed that they had to contend with limited knowledge and abilities and the burden of teaching online (Iivari, Sharma, & Ventä-Olkkonen, 2020). Simultaneously, teachers play an important role in student learning success in online

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learning (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). Zhou et al. (2018) discovered that the teacher-student interaction is the critical element affecting student performance using large-scale academic monitoring data. While technology aids students in improving their performance, the excellent face-to-face connection between professors and students remains vital and serves as a critical link in the students' learning process.

Online learning has many impacts, particularly in teaching EFL young learners. Putri et al. (2020) found that students have a lack of engagement in learning. Meanwhile, students' engagement is an important aspect of successful online learning (Keaton & Gilbert, 2020). Moreover, Putri et al. (2020) found that teachers have a high challenge in the choices of teaching methods that had less coverage of the curriculum content, especially in teaching the young learner. Teachers should provide teaching materials that are straightforward, clear, and appropriate. The work should be based on goals and sequentially structured in tasks that represent realistic circumstances to attract and motivate students (Gonzalez & Louis, 2018). Besides, teachers need to acknowledge discontinuity, present meaningful work, offer questions and answers, and offer icebreakers to continue engaging students. The students must also be given sufficient challenges, resources, and feedback (Green, 2016).

Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic affects policies regarding home education. Certain schools continue to allow students to learn at home. Students who learn at home require parental assistance in order to succeed. The authors' preliminary analysis revealed that online learning is still viewed as a means of delivering tasks via the internet. It is prudent to consider that teachers and parents should mentor online learning, not by spoon-feeding children's knowledge, but by allowing students to choose their own. Students are urged to develop greater independence. In other words, teachers serve as a source of motivation and role models for students. Teachers must be equipped with methods/techniques, psychological awareness of their students, and the capacity to manage effective English teaching-learning processes. Eventually, teachers may become more skilled and develop students' English ability. For Kindergarten children who often receive an online lesson with a parent guide, the

activities should be enjoyable, including family members, be tailored to the child's interests, and avoid monotony. In terms of language learning fluency and accuracy, Krashen's theory asserts that the most excellent strategy to assist students in developing is to expose them to a significant amount of intelligible material (Musthafa. 2010; Mubar, 2015).

According to Indriani (2021), teaching English to young learners is a difficult and time-consuming endeavor. The teacher noted that, despite giving various activities that might include their young learners, they believe that teaching young learners is challenging and takes a sincere commitment to keep them motivated throughout the learning process. Teachers of young learners can encourage pupils to participate actively in the activities by introducing creative activities and interactive learning media into the learning materials. Teachers of English online for young learners, in particular, must concentrate on how to teach young learners effectively using appropriate materials for their age and stage. In addition to things they can find in their immediate vicinity and things they can investigate with their senses, they can also readily locate them. Taking into consideration that young children are interested, active, easily distracted, and have a short attention span, teachers of early learners should place a greater emphasis on providing quick activities that maximize each child's potential. Another component that adds to each child's learning success is utilizing learning resources appropriate to their qualities, interests, and requirements as young learners. Therefore, the teacher needs to apply suitable online teaching media that covers all the curriculum objectives.

As one of the agendas stated in curriculum 2013, Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) play an important aspect that should be applied in the teaching process. Although English language curriculums are non-official or prescribed, some schools still apply them to their curriculum. Therefore, these two things need to be underlined, especially in today's online learning. According to Setyarini, Muslim, Rukmini, Yuliasri, and Mujianto (2018), HOTs are still not optimally applied in learning English. Hence, it is necessary to provide a media capable of engaging students in learning

English, especially promoting HOTS in EFL young learners as one of the agenda Curriculum 2013. Teachers in teaching EFL young learners use many digital media. According to research by Busa, Agusriandi, Elihami, and Mutmainnah (2020), many teachers used *Youtube* and *Zoom* in their teaching, which collaborated digital media into the learning process. Besides, many teachers use *WhatsApp*, especially in uploading materials (Sutarto, Sari, & Fathurrochman, 2020).

Digital Storytelling (DST) has emerged over the last few years as a powerful teaching and learning tool that engages teachers and their students (Robin, 2008). The distinction between DST and conventional storytelling is in the way DST is composed, which incorporates narrative illustrations via visuals, music, sound effects, and narration into a video to give students a real sense of the stories they are watching (Frazel, 2010). Additionally, Setyarini (2018) found that the content of storytelling can engage students in learning English, especially promoting HOTS. Much research has discussed the impact of DST on the students' English learning (Lisenbee & Ford, 2018; Nassim, 2018; Liu, Tai, & Liu, 2018; Syafriadin & Salniawati, 2019; Yang, Chen, & Hung 2020; Chen & Chuang 2021). It was found that DST can engage and explore students' abilities in English learning. Meanwhile, this research's challenge is in the implication of DST in a specific area, especially in promoting HOTs to EFL young learners, which is still rarely conducted. Therefore, this research was urgently conducted to enrich the discussion and advise promoting HOTs in EFL young learners through Digital Storytelling in Indonesia.

1.2 Research Questions

To fulfill the objectives of the research, the researcher set up these research questions:

1. In what ways does Digital Storytelling promote HOTs of EFL young?
2. What are the benefits and challenges in implementing DST to promote HOTs for EFL young learners?

1.3 The Objectives of the Research

Based on the research questions, the aims of the research can be stated as follows;

1. To analyze in what ways does Digital Storytelling promotes HOTs of EFL young.
2. To investigate are the benefits and challenges in implementing DST to promote HOTs for EFL young learners

1.4 The Significance of the Research

The research answers the research problems concerning promoting HOTs in teaching English to young learners with Digital Storytelling. It is expected that the result of this research will be useful for:

1) Inform the education curriculum developers regarding strategies to promote HOTs among young learners.
2) Serve as a reference for teachers to help them promote HOTs in teaching English to young learners.
3) Give some meaningful contribution and valuable strategy in promoting HOTS in teaching English to young learners for the teachers' candidate.
4) Offer learning experience to EFL young learners in promoting HOTs through Digital Storytelling.

1.5 The Scope of the Research

This research focused on promoting HOTs with Digital Storytelling (DST) in teaching English to young learners, mainly how DST promotes HOTs. Meanwhile, this research identified what challenges in promoting HOTS with DDS. Specifically, this research focused on promoting HOTs proposed by Anderson, 2001; Bloom, 1984; and Alkhatib, 2019 and specified by Saifer (2018) about HOTs in young learners.

This research was conducted in the sixth grade of one of the private elementary schools in Sukabumi, involving one English teacher and 15 students. The main reason for choosing the school is the curriculum that implements English as the main subject.

Besides, the school also supports the development of digital use in students' learning process.

Moreover, the researcher's reasons for choosing these participants were the students' experiences and capability to learn. Besides, the teacher's experience in teaching is also taken into consideration. The researcher assumed that the teacher's experience utilizing technology in teaching English also supports the research.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of some key terms, the terms will be defined as follows.

1) Digital Storytelling (DST)

   Digital storytelling (DST) is a technological application that is used as a teaching strategy. It is well-positioned to leverage user-generated content while also assisting teachers in overcoming some of the barriers associated with teaching, most notably the inability to effectively incorporate technology into their classrooms (Robin, 2008). DST is a term that refers to a teaching strategy that is utilized in the classroom to assist the teacher in teaching.

2) Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

   Anderson's (2001) concept of HOTS is the ability to apply information in a meaningful way, represent problems, make decisions, innovate, and produce something.

3) EFL Young learners

   The English foreign language learners (EFL) are young students between the ages of 6-12. They can be divided into two groups: the younger (6-8) and the older (6-8 years old) (9-12 years old). According to their level, they are named lower-level students (first, second and third grades) and higher grades (four, fifth, and sixth years old). In the meantime, Scot and Yterbeg (1990) split into two classes (5-7 years old) and the second and first stages (8-10 years old). In this research EFL young learners are the sixth-grade elementary students between the ages 9-12 years old.

1.7 Organization of the paper

The arrangement of this thesis proposal is made up of three chapters. The sequential structure of the chapters focuses on the various interrelationships and complete questions.

The first chapter provides a brief overview of the overall structure of this study. It is divided into seven subheadings classified as the background of the research, research questions, research objectives, significance of the research, research scope, the definition of the research's terms, and organization.

The second chapter elaborates on the relevant theories, principles, and previous studies related to this research subject. The methods used to evaluate the data in Chapter four are also included in this chapter.

The third chapter concerns the research methodology defined as research design, data collection process, and data analysis. They provide specific elaboration of how the research is conducted, how the data are obtained, and what is involved in the research.

The fourth chapter elaborates finding and discussion defined as the implementation of Digital Storytelling in cycle 1 and cycle 2. Later on, it also elaborates that the teacher faced challenges in implementing DST to promote HOTs of EFL young learners. It also provides the discussion from the finding to the theoretical perspective. It is finished with concluding remarks.

The fifth chapter elaborates the conclusion and recommendation defined as the conclusion, the study's implication, recommendation, and limitation. They provide the conclusion of the study and recommendations to the future researcher. Moreover, they also briefly explain the study's limitations for the future researcher