

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

COVID-19 pandemic has spread globally and affected almost every sector, including education. Based on the data obtained from the UNESCO website, this pandemic has affected 990,324,537 learners or about 56.6% of total enrolled learners worldwide and causing 130 country-wide closures per January 2021. Schools start using online teaching methodology which is supported by learning or video meeting platforms. In Indonesia, the condition is relatively similar. The government, in this case, is the Ministry of Education and Cultural (MoEC) has shifted the way schools conduct the learning process into online learning. Consequently, teachers need to adapt several video meeting platforms to use, such as Zoom or Google Classroom. MoEC answers this challenge by cooperating with private sectors, such as Zenius, Ruang Guru, Google Indonesia, Quipper, Sekolahmu, and Microsoft. As a result, they need to provide the access to school materials for free (MoEC, 2020). This is one of the ways how the government ensures that learning is still running despite the pandemic outbreak and shift of teaching methodology.

English is now widely recognized as one of the most important skills to possess in order to compete on a global level. As part of the globalization, English can be taught by utilizing various digital media which can be accessed freely. Due to the open source of knowledge and frequent updates on digital transformation, the competition is becoming highly competitive. The existing educational system should encourage students to take on new challenges, be prepared for their future jobs, and learn for the rest of their lives (Binkley et al., 2012). Furthermore, there is a necessity in fulfilling students' English proficiency to assist them in dealing with the development of present era. Another key reason for teaching English is that it allows students to grow and strengthen their communicative skills. It is also in line with the mandate from the Ministry of Education and Culture, No. 58 year 2014 which states that English is taught to develop students' potential to have communicative competence in the interpersonal, transactional, and functional discourses through both oral and written English.

Rong & Noor (2019) state that exposure to technology is critical for today's generation to prepare for the future. Technology also fills in gaps in a number of areas, including student knowledge and learning (Kress, 2003). Therefore, it is important to be able to provide a method that can integrate technology while accommodating student abilities. Digital Storytelling becomes alternative learning that combines these elements. As a response to this current situation where online or distance learning is the main thing in the administration of education, digital storytelling can bridge technology integration as well as be a fun medium. The use of digital stories is welcomed by students because of the opportunity to create their own digital stories (Skouge & Rao, 2009). Also, the use of technology and media development as a source of learning can be useful to increase awareness of cultural differences and understanding (Shorkey & Uebel, 2014). Because of the progress of the modern era, critical thinking skills are essential for students to improve their literacy skills and interests. The use of technology is also important for students to comprehend in order to prepare themselves for greater global competition. Setyarini et al (2018) support this argument, claiming that storytelling can help students develop critical thinking abilities by creating an enjoyable learning environment.

One of the foci to achieve at the end of learning is to provide impactful and interesting learning. Digital storytelling is a learning method that may help students think critically, develop understanding and abilities about culture, and assist students in voicing their ideas in a learning environment (Burgess, 2006; Ohler, 2008; Rule, 2010; Sadik, 2008; Wang & Zhan, 2010). The use of digital storytelling may lead to improving children's critical thinking skills such as analyzing, explaining, and evaluating, to create a learning atmosphere full of ideas and input from students to create an active and competitive learning environment. Furthermore, digital storytelling, which combines digital elements with a story, may provide students with the opportunity to establish a deep link between the subject and their own lives as well as outside world experiences (Hung, Hwang, Huang, 2012). In the context of virtual learning, the teacher faces additional obstacles in keeping students motivated and actively participating in the learning process. As a result, more research into how digital storytelling might assist students enhance their critical thinking skills in online learning is needed.

Several previous studies on the implementation of digital storytelling were conducted in a face-to-face learning situation or direct meetings in the classroom (Lestari, Siswandari, & Indrawati, 2019; Rong & Noor, 2019; Dalimet al.,2019). The gap this research attempts to fill is that this study focuses on the process of how digital storytelling is implemented to help improve students' critical thinking skills which specifically occur in an online classroom situation as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic which happens globally. Since most previous studies were conducted in a face-to-face classroom situation, this research seeks to find another angle of what is happening in the global situation lately. Schleicher (2012) mentioned that there are several skills that a person needs to master in the 21st century such as communication, decision making, problem-solving, as well as critical thinking skills. In line with the rise of learning from home, this research can be used as a basis for further research in the realm of online learning.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the background explicated above, this present study attempts to seek answers to the following research question.

- 1 How is digital storytelling implemented to promote students' critical thinking in online classroom?
- 2 What promoted component of critical thinking skills can be identified from the implementation of Digital Storytelling?

## **1.2 Aim of the Research**

Considering the research questions above, this research aims to:

1. To explain how the implementation of digital storytelling in an online classroom can promote students' critical thinking skills.
2. To find out what component of critical thinking skills promoted from the implementation of Digital Storytelling.

## **1.4 Scope of the Research**

This research focuses on the implementation of digital storytelling in an online classroom to help promote students' critical thinking skills. The term digital storytelling in this research means the media used by the teacher in the classroom by optimizing video, audio, or even verbal assistance or even the combination of them.

In terms of critical thinking skills, this research focuses on six elements of critical thinking skills, namely Interpretation, Analysis, Evaluation, Inference, Explanation, and Self-Regulation. The implementation of digital storytelling will be observed to find out how it may affect students' critical thinking skills specifically in those five elements of critical thinking.

## **1.5 Significances of the Research**

This study has several significances covering the theoretical, the practice, as well as professional aspects. Theoretically, this study will contribute to enriching the literature and publications in the area of digital storytelling and critical thinking skills, especially in the online classroom context. This research also offers several inputs for stakeholders who are relevant to the study of digital storytelling and its relation to students' critical thinking skills at the secondary school level.

From the practical aspect, this research will contribute to helping teachers in identifying ideas and particular ways of how to implement digital storytelling in an online classroom. In addition, this research also can give a vision for teachers on students' critical thinking skills on the implementation of digital storytelling.

Lastly, from the professional aspect, this study will give insight for English Teacher Association or broaden the context, policymakers, and scholars on the implementation of digital storytelling and its effect on helping students' critical thinking skills at the secondary school level.

## **1.6 Clarification of Terms**

Some related terms in this study are elaborated as following.

- a. Digital Story Telling

Digital storytelling in this study refers to the story telling which optimizes application

and contain images combined with a person's narration. The Digital storytelling was delivered by optimizing the Power Point Presentation. The story was taken from an online source such as Let's Read Application. Some supporting illustrations taken from the e-book were copied and pasted to the slide containing pictures and texts. These slides were shared in Zoom Meeting by optimizing screen sharing feature.

b. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking in this study refers to the ability of the students to think beyond and provide further analytical evidence towards a particular issue which is relied on several skills. Critical thinking becomes an ability that students need to have that is equipped by teachers through utilizing an effective, interesting, and meaningful learning process. This study focuses on the sub-skills of critical thinking proposed by Facione (1990) namely *Interpretation, Analysis, Evaluation, Inference, Explanation, and Self-Regulation*.

c. Promoting Critical Thinking Skills

The promotion of critical thinking skills in this study refers to the combination of Digital Storytelling Elements optimization which was delivered by utilizing the 5-steps-of promoting critical thinking skills proposed by Duron, Limbach, & Waugh (2006). The process of each phase was observed to discover the critical thinking promoted from the learning process, such as students' answer, arguments, and discussion. These data were classified based on the critical thinking sub-skills which was the focus of this study.