

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter of this research provides the introduction of the study. This chapter is divided into seven sections: the background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significances of the study, clarification of terms, and the organization of thesis.

### **1.1 Background of The Study**

Literacy is not a new term in our society. It is very essential to note that it helps people understand the world. An effective literacy skill can help people to acquire the opportunity to be more educated and to get better job. Literate people can pull themselves out of poverty and rapidly adjust their life with the pace of change. In 21<sup>st</sup> century, literacy is considered as a skill to be mastered. According to Trilling and Fadel (2009) students need to obtain the skills to access, evaluate, use, manage, and add information to their knowledge in the digital era where media is in their hands. Moreover, American Library Association (1989) considers literate person as someone who can identify the required information and are able to trace, assess, and use the information needed effectively.

Literacy learning in 21<sup>st</sup> century is closely related to the skills that students need in 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are four forces which affect the learning in 21<sup>st</sup> century era namely knowledge work, thinking tools, digital lifestyles, and learning research (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). Those forces have built up the skills that students need in learning in this era. Students need to have innovation skills such as thinking creative, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication to master the subjects being learned (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2009).

The literacy form in 21<sup>st</sup> century has elaborated technology as the media of literacy. In 21<sup>st</sup> century world, technology has given opportunity to re-evaluate communication, global awareness, and exposure to cultural and linguistic diversity. The communication nowadays is not only in the form of verbal communication but also in multimodal forms namely pictures, graphics, website, video, sounds, and other semiotic resources. This technological issue has

shifted literacy as different entity. The literate demands on youths have become increasingly more complex due to a technological revolution, increased local diversity and a stronger connectedness with our global neighbours (New London Group, 1996). Generally, literacy is defined as an ability to read and write (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English). However, literacy in 21<sup>st</sup> century is defined as the use of technology to acquire information. As stated by Pilgrim and Martinez (2013) literacy is the ability to utilize technology as media to gather and communicate information.

The emergence of technology and the diverse culture in our society have made a group of scholars discuss about the new form of literacy. The New London Group invented the word multiliteracies in 1996. There are six multiliteracy domains which build up the term according to Miller (2015). They are institutional literacy, digital literacy, social and cultural literacy, critical literacy, language literacy, and academic literacy. However, digital literacy has become the main issue nowadays since the increasing importance of digital literacy was found in various places (Riddle, 2015).

Digital literacy can be interpreted as an ability to make and share meaning using the help of digital tools. Gilster (1997) defined digital literacy as an ability to understand and utilize multiple forms of information from diverse sources presented via computer. However, Burton, Summers, Lawrence, Noble, and Gibbings (2015) stated that acquiring technical skills in using computer is not enough in digital era and people need to know how to go online for searching or sending email. On the other hand, Ng (2012) expanded the technology used for digital literacy that was not only computer and internet connection. He also emphasized that digital literacy construed multiple literacies related to the use of digital technology including hardware and software devices to facilitate humans' activities in educational, social, and entertainment purposes. In line with Ng (20012), Son's idea (2015) also defined digital literacy as an ability needed in digital society to create, communicate, collaborate, and find and evaluate information by using digital technology.

The term digital literacy is shifted recently as the technology becomes more advanced. It is not only limited to the use of computer and digital tools but also employing internet to gain information and to practice literacy. Jones and Hafner (2012) defined digital literacy as

communicating, relating, thinking, and having interaction with digital media. As internet technology has rapidly improved, people also need to change the way they approach digital literacy. On the other hand, Hague and Payton (2010) interpreted digital literacy as an ability to create and share meaning through different format, communicate and collaborate effectively, and to know the time and the way technology used to support the process. Among all definitions about digital literacy, it can be seen that all of them put the use of technology and internet as the main component of digital literacy. However, only Hague and Payton put technology as the support system during the process of digital literacy. Therefore, Hague and Payton's idea (2010) was highlighted and used to refer digital literacy in this study.

Digital literacy has many contributions in our everyday life which closely related to people's ways in reading, writing, and communicating. People communicate frequently using language in multimodal forms which involves not only verbal but also images (Suherdi, 2015b). Concerning how people immerse in reading, writing, and communicating through technology, digital literacy should be included as a way to re-shape the new literacy learning (Tour, 2017). This is because digital literacy can equip people with abilities and knowledge to participate actively in social, cultural, economic, civic, and intellectual life (Hague & Payton, 2010). In education context, digital literacy was proven to be able to improve students' performance in classroom such as improving learners' performance in class, facilitating students to access virtual services, fostering learner-centered learning, supporting students to have interaction with web-based learning environment, and involving students in digital environment (Angelino, Zwilliams, & Natvig, 2007). Furthermore, it is also essential to note that digital literacy provides technical competencies of using virtual libraries, selecting information carefully, and finding various and myriad journals (Jeffrey, Hegarty, Kelly, Penman, Coburn, & McDonald, 2011; Murray & Pérez, 2014) which help students to fulfill all their needs of information.

Even though digital literacy was proven to improve students' performance, Indonesian students' digital literacy skill was considered low. This was proven from the result of PISA in 2015 which indicated that Indonesia was ranked 62 out of 70 countries in the world. This could be interpreted that Indonesia's literacy level is below the average (Rohmawatiningsih, Rahman & Yayoi, 2020). Further, Indonesian students' digital literacy aspect, especially in the content

evaluation, is still in the ground level (A'yuni, 2015). This can be caused by Indonesian students' dependence on printed material such as textbooks and other kinds of books more than the materials in digital form (Pratama, Sopandi & Hidayah, 2019). Hence, there were limited sources for learning as they limited themselves to the printed ones as they had limited internet connection (Zulkarnain, Heleni & Thahir, 2020).

The merits that digital literacy offers have directed many practitioners and researchers to conduct studies on the practices of digital literacy. Several studies on digital literacy practices have been conducted to young children (Marsh, 2011; Bjorgen & Erstad, 2014; Marsh, Hannon, Lewis, & Ritchie, 2015; Scott, 2016; Bako & Tokes, 2018), and adolescents (Bulfin & North, 2007; McLean, 2010; Mnyanda & Mbelani, 2018; Abrams, Schaefer, & Ness, 2019). However, there were limited digital literacy practices studies on adults. Moreover, studies on learners' digital literacy practices focused on young children and adolescent learners (Blikstad-Balas, 2012; Kabali, Irigoyen, Nunez-Davis, Budacki, Mohanty, Lesiter & Bonner, 2015; DeCarlo, Grant, Lee, & Neuman, 2018). However, available literature for digital literacy practices of adults' learners was limited and required more exploration (Jacobs, Castek, Pizzolato, Reder, & Pendell, 2014). In the context of digital literacy practices in adults' learners, there were limited studies exploring ESP students' literacy practices. Most of the studies were focusing on English subject (Meurant, 2007; Kajee & Balfour, 2011; Son, Park & Park, 2017; Nabhan and Hidayat, 2018; Thoms & Poole, 2018). Therefore, this study attempts to explore ESP students' digital literacy practices, especially in Indonesia context to enrich the literature on adult learners' digital literacy practices.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

As elaborated in the background of the study, this research thus intends to focus on the following questions.

1. How do ESP students practice digital literacy in classroom setting?
2. What are the factors affecting ESP students' digital literacy practices in classroom setting?

### **1.3 The Purposes of The Study**

Referring to the research questions mentioned above, the study is intended to achieve the following aims:

1. To find out ESP students' digital literacy practices in classroom setting.
2. To find out the factors affecting ESP students' digital literacy practices in classroom setting.

### **1.4 The Scope of The Study**

The study intended to explore ESP students' digital literacy practices. This study investigated the students' practices around digital literacy in classroom context. Moreover, the factors affecting students' digital literacy in ESP context were also explored

### **1.5 The Significances of The Study**

This study intended to give contribution in English Language Teaching in Indonesian context, predominantly in portraying ESP students' digital literacy practices. Theoretically, it is hoped that the study can support theories related to digital literacy practices in ESP context. The result of the study is expected to enrich the literature studies related to ESP students' digital literacy practices in Indonesian setting.

The result of the study is expected to provide information and suggestions related to digital literacy practices in ESP context. Therefore, the study is expected to be a reference for lecturers to incorporate digital literacy in ESP context. This study is also expected to be used by stakeholders in education to develop policy which is related to students' digital literacy practices and promote lecturers to employ digital literacy in ESP classrooms.

### **1.6 Clarification of Terms**

There are several terms which will be mentioned frequently in the study. To avoid misunderstanding, the following are the definition of key terms:

1. Digital literacy is defined as activities such as communicating, relating, thinking, and being associated with digital media. Developing digital literacy is more than becoming proficient in using digital tools. It means using digital tools to do something in social world which

include managing social relationship and identities in various situations (Jones & Hafner, 2012).

2. Literacy practices are the general cultural ways of utilising written language which people draw upon in their lives. In other words, literacy practices are what people do dealing with literacies. (Barton & Hamilton, 2000)

## **1.7 Organization of Thesis**

The thesis is divided into five sections, specifically introduction, literature review, research methodology, findings and discussion, and conclusions and suggestions. The organization of every chapter is presented below:

### **Chapter I: Introduction**

The first chapter of the study presents the background of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of terms, and the structure of the research.

### **Chapter II: Literature Review**

This chapter expands the theoretical foundation which is relevant to the study and the problems investigated in the study. The theories were used as the bases which guide in conducting the study, developing instruments, analysing the data, and drawing conclusion.

### **Chapter III: Research Methodology**

This chapter presents detail information of how this study was conducted. It includes research design, the research site and participants, data collection, and data analysis.

### **Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion**

This chapter presents the research findings and the discussion which are integrated with theories and previous research.

### **Chapter V: Conclusions and Suggestions**

This chapter provides conclusions and suggestions for ESP teachers, higher education institutions, and further researchers who are interested in delving similar topics.