

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter reveals the background, problems identification, research question, research purpose, scope of the study, and significance of the study. The explanations of these parts are presented below:

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in all aspects of life has characterized the growth of the twenty-first century. Redhana (2019) cites its change needs to be anticipated by mastering twenty-first-century skills. In the world of education, the current role of teacher as one of the development methods that are in step with the demands of career and schoolteachers in the twenty-first century (Beare, 2001; Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, 2000; Hargreaves, 1997). Teachers must also be able to become learners throughout their careers to increase the effectiveness of the student learning process along with the times. Therefore, teachers also should have 21st-century skills, especially English Teachers.

According to Palupi & Mayuni (2019), teachers have several challenges to prepare students to become literate and independent learners. Teachers must ask students to access information efficiently, especially from the internet. Students also must be able to evaluate this information critically and competently and be able to use it well and creatively. On the other hand, students must determine

several strategies to improve literacy skills including honing thinking skills through real-world contexts such as experiences; build higher order thinking by developing your capacities through speaking, listening, visualizing, observing, and reading and writing; learn to analyze, evaluate, and produce texts across various of language; and develop various literacy by collaborating in solving a problem.

The 21st-century skills empower students to learn independently (Zubaidah, 2017). The 21st-century learning paradigm emphasizes the ability of students to think critically, be able to connect knowledge with the real world, master information communication technology, and collaborate (Trisdiyono & Muda, 2013). The accomplishment of these skills can be achieved by applying appropriate learning methods in terms of proficiency in materials and skills. The learning process to prepare students to have 21st-century skills requires the readiness of teachers to plan, implement, and evaluate learning. The teacher plays a leading role as a facilitator of learning. Zubaidah (2017) also said that students are facilitated in the process of mastering teaching materials with various prepared learning resources at the same time to foster basic literacy.

Over the last few years, literacy has been noticed and becomes an important thing for students in schools as one of the skills of the 21st century. Literacy is characterized as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute in a variety of contexts using printed and written materials (UNESCO, 2004; Montoya., S., 2018). It is a lifelong process of learning to achieve their goals and expand their knowledge in society. In 2016, the government created a program called the *Gerakan Literasi Sekolah* (GLS) which

was used as an effort to increase Indonesian students' literacy. According to Mitasari (2017), GLS is the ability to understand and use something through a range of activities that includes reading, viewing, listening, writing, and speaking (Faizah, et al, 2016). Nevertheless, GLS does not appear to have a significant impact on increasing the national literacy index and improving the quality of education in general. Also, the literacy ability of students is closely related to the demands of reading skills which lead to the ability to understand information analytically, critically, and reflectively (Faizah et al., 2016). Based on that, students are expected to master the ability to understand the information contained in a reading text, for instance a descriptive text.

In addition, descriptive text is a kind of reading text of English lessons to be mastered by the junior high school. A descriptive text explains something, a circumstance, or the appearance of an entity, or place (Asrifan, Nadira, Haedar; 2018). The text also is one of the materials in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. It involves KI (*Kompetensi Inti*) and KD (*Kompetensi Dasar*) (3.7 / 4.7). Descriptive material is necessary for the development of English language proficiency (Jumiarti, 2020). According to Beavis (2013), the texts used in the topic English have evolved to include multimodal, media, and daily texts in addition to literary texts. Descriptive text is also one of the texts taught in English to improve literacy. Thus, English literacy skills in junior high school students are crucial in this era.

On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the government canceled the implementation of *Ujian Nasional* (UN) in 2020 (Laksana, 2021). According to Kemendikbud's article (2019), Minister of Education, Nadiem Makarim,

replaced the benchmark for student success with *Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum* (AKM). This AKM will test students' literacy, numeracy, and character skills that will be implemented in the middle 2021. Mayuni et. al (2020) quotes that "*Pola pendampingan literasi dalam kondisi pandemi COVID-19 ini memerlukan adaptasi digital yang sejalan dengan kebutuhan dan kesiapan calon peserta.*" They also found that out of 150 SMPN teachers from 16 provinces in Indonesia, 93% of teachers admitted that they needed literacy assistance programs. It means that teachers are encouraged to participate in online literacy mentoring programs. Certainly, this is also a challenge for teachers to improve literacy from school.

In facing the 21<sup>st</sup> century, students must master digital literacy. Students need a tool to enhance their digital literacy. One of the tools to support students in enhancing digital literacy is the digital students' worksheet (*Liveworksheets*). Digital students' worksheet is one of the learning tools based on students' need that is used to engage students in active participation in the teaching and learning process. Several researchers claimed that the use of students' worksheets can help students in enhancing literacy skills. Hayati, R., Hadi, W., & Purba, E. (2019) found that students' worksheet has been obtained to improve students' literacy activities in elementary schools. The results showed that 74% of students experienced an increase in literacy activities after using the developed student worksheets. That is a remarkably high classification. Another research was done by Prabawati, Herman, Turmudi (2018) also found that the problem-based students' worksheets can improve mathematical literacy skills and attract the student's interest. In addition, well-designed worksheets will help students enhance

their science literacy skills. It can be seen from the paired t sample test results in a value of 0,000 which means students' science literacy abilities have increased (Sari, Abdurrahman, Herlina; 2019). Based on that, it is proven that students' worksheet is helpful for students to improve their literacy skills, especially in mathematical literacy skills and science literacy skills. Nevertheless, no one has yet proven that digital students' worksheets can improve English literacy skills at junior high school students' level.

The content of English digital students' worksheets influences what teachers and learners learn. If the digital students' worksheet is too simple for students, the teacher will be faced problems because it reduces reading interest in students. It is difficult to get English digital students' worksheets which have good materials and suitable with the curriculum, especially in the *Liveworksheets.com*. Riyadi et. al. (2018) in the research entitled "*The Analysis and Design of Guided Inquiry E-Worksheet Based to Develop High Order Thinking Skills*" found that 72% of students were interested in electronic learning media. He also said that the appropriate e-worksheet will help students in leading their learning and thinking scientifically. High order thinking skill or critical thinking is one of the elements to be mastered in the twenty-first-century skills which also contribute to literacy. Hence, digital students' worksheets can be a means to improve Indonesian students' literacy, especially in junior high schools in English lessons.

In the previous studies above, the researchers only measured the development of students' worksheets in certain cases, not mentioning digital students' worksheets explicitly. Moreover, researchers rarely conduct that a digital students'

worksheet in enhancing English students' literacy skills, especially for content analysis. Consequently, this study seeks to address this gap and find out "*The Relevancy of Materials in the Digital Students' Liveworksheets for Seventh Graders of Junior High School.*"

## **1.2 Problems Identification**

Literacy has become one of the century's most urgent global issues. In Indonesia, illiteracy is one of the most serious issues. Indonesia is ranked 60th out of 61 countries with low literacy levels. Low interest in reading in students could be one of the contributing factors. This is proven by looking at the results of PISA 2018 released by the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) showing that the ability of Indonesian students to read, achieved an average score of 371, with an average OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) score of 487. This problem is increasingly worrying because the opportunity to access literacy materials is not evenly distributed in the country. Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Anwar Makarim in Kemendikbud's article (2019) said that the results of PISA 2018 were a good perspective for advancing the quality of education in Indonesia. Therefore, it should be one of the reasons for the government to reduce illiteracy in Indonesia, especially for students.

Meanwhile, teachers also have a key role in enhancing students' literacy because it relates to the latest curriculum (2013 curriculum). Teachers must be aware of the current curriculum since it is one of the most important resources for teaching and learning standards. Pratiwi (2019) found that curriculum changes in

Indonesia are very much in line with PISA which addresses literacy learning. On the other hand, descriptive text is one of the materials that exist in the 7th-grade curriculum (KD 3.7 & 4.7). The objective of this text is to describe and reveal a particular person, place, or thing. Additionally, the government also make a program namely *Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum* (AKM) which aims to develop self-capacity and positively participate in society. AKM presents problems in various contexts that are expected to be solved by students using their literacy and numeracy competencies to measure competencies in-depth, not just content knowledge. In this case, teachers should be aware to use certain methodologies and techniques in enhancing students' literacy. Thus, students' worksheets can be a method and technique for teachers to assist students in learning, especially in cultivating literacy in students.

Rahim (2016) argues that students' worksheets book has several weaknesses. First, lack of a more detailed explanation. It means that students not really understanding the material when learning is carried out. Second, there are not enough images to help students appreciate the materials in the LKS book. An attractive worksheet will make students feel free to measure their ability to answer the questions that given by teachers. Hence, a digital students' worksheet can be a tool that can motivate students to improve literacy.

Based on that, teachers must be more active and varied in making interesting worksheets based on the coverage of it in KI/KD, for example with digital students' worksheets (*Liveworksheets*) so the students are happy and not bored while doing the tasks especially for descriptive texts. In fact, several teachers have made digital

students' worksheets by using *Liveworksheets*, especially in the descriptive text material on the website. The goal is to help students access students' worksheets anywhere when online classes are implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There are 20 digital students' worksheets contains descriptive text on the website that will be analyzed for the content of descriptive text based on KD (*Kompetensi Dasar*) 3.7 / 4.7. Thus, this study investigates the relevancy of materials in the digital students' *Liveworksheets* for seventh graders of junior high school based on *Kompetensi Inti* and *Kompetensi Dasar* (K-13) as a tool for students to master digital literacy.

### **1.3 Research Question**

How is the relevancy of the materials in the digital students' *Liveworksheets* for grade VII junior high school in terms of the content of descriptive text based on KI (*Kompetensi Inti*) and KD (*Kompetensi Dasar*) (3.7 / 4.7)?

### **1.4 Research Purpose**

The purpose of the study is to find out the relevancy of the materials in the digital students' *Liveworksheets* for grade VII junior high school in terms of the content of descriptive text based on KI (*Kompetensi Inti*) and KD (*Kompetensi Dasar*) (3.7 / 4.7).

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

As mentioned in the background study above, a digital students' worksheet is one of the alternatives for teachers as teaching material to help students in mastering digital literacy. This present study will be focused on investigating the



relevancy of the materials in a digital students' worksheet that exists in *Liveworksheet.com* based on *Kompetensi Inti* and *Kompetensi Dasar* (3.7 / 4.7) in 2013 curriculum (K-13) related to descriptive text.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to give a recommendation for teachers to use a digital students' worksheet (*Liveworksheets*) in teaching descriptive text as an alternative in this digital era to help students mastering digital literacy while supporting government programs (AKM) so students will be actively engage in getting information in a descriptive text.

