**CHAPTER I**
**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reveals the background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, scope, and significance of the study.

## 1.1. Background of the Study

The foundation skills for effective and successful participation in the social and the economic life are literacy, numeracy, and problem solving (OECD, 2012). As for literacy, it allows someone to read, write, speak, and listen to communicate effectively and comprehend the world. Literacy builds human communication through oral or written language systems (Howells, 2018) . Moreover, literacy can be defined as a person's ability to engage the effectiveness of his or her activity and the community's development through reading, writing, and calculating (Carr-Hill, Roy A & UNESCO Institute for Statistics., 2008) . As the world develops, literacy has recently grown into hundreds of types, and the most frequently cited is information literacy and digital literacy (Stordy, 2015).

In this 21st century where technologies have spanned all over the world and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have developed rapidly, digital literacy has been an important skill to be acquired to sustain social life. This is because digital literacy covers all the skills and behaviors that people should have in this new environment which is called "digital environment" (Egeli & Sağdinç, 2021, p.260). Hague & Payton (2010) also mentioned that digital literacy is about skills, knowledge, and understanding

that enables critical thinking, creativity, intelligence, and safety in using digital technologies for daily activities.

Ng (2012) mentioned that digital literacy includes three intersecting dimensions: (i) technical, (ii) cognitive, and (iii) social-emotional. Technical dimension means possessing technical ability to use ICT tools for learning purpose. Cognitive dimension covers an associated ability to think critically, evaluate, and create cycle digital information from internet sources. The social-emotional dimension means being responsible to use internet for socializing, communicating, and learning. Digital literacy is divided into two levels: the basic level and the deeper level (Techataweewan & Prasertsin, 2018). They explain that the basic level consists of basic skills needed in one's daily life such as searching for information through the internet and communicating with other people. The deeper level can be defined as the cognition or skills we need to develop one's career.

A study conducted by Tinmaz et al. (2022), reveals that digital literacy revolves around and is in connection with the concepts of computer literacy, media literacy, and cultural literacy. This study shows that being digitally literate includes the more global tasks such as computer operation and media use in a cultural context (Tinmaz et al., 2022). Being digitally literate is a need for students in this 21st century where students are in a blended learning environment (Tang & Chaw, 2016). Tang & Chaw (2016) then mentioned that students who are digitally literate can adapt well in a blended learning

environment as they would find it easy to maximize the technology effectively in educational purposes.

The use of internet in Indonesia is undoubtedly massive. The latest data from Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) shows that the total number of internet users in Indonesia reaches 77,02% between 2021-2022 (APJII, 2022). Another information from APJII (2022) is related to main purpose of Indonesian people surfing the internet. The result shows that most of respondents use the internet to access social media, to communicate via chatting online, to play games, to access public services such as online transportation, and to access online. However, the high number of the internet users in Indonesia is not followed with Indonesian digital skills. Digital skill performed by Indonesian people is at an intermediate level by 60% (World Economic Forum, 2020).What is meant by digital skills according to World Economic Forum, (2020) are data analysis, computer science and information technology.

The young generation is considered as the generation that can use technology fluently and is emotionally attached to digital environments, which is recently called "Generation-Z" (Turner, 2015). He described Generation Z as youth born in 1990s through 2010s who never experienced life before internet. Young people regard technology such as smartphones, computers, or laptops as part of their daily life (Ahn & Jung, 2016). However, the condition mentioned earlier does not really represent their actual performance of technology. Porat et al. (2018) conducted a study which focused on measuring junior high school

students' digital literacy competencies such as (i) photo-visual, (ii) reproduction, (iii) information, (iv) branching, (v) social-emotional, and (vi) real time with their actual performance. The result of the study showed that students' actual digital literacy skills were mediocre-to-low (Porat et al., 2018). This shows how important digital literacy is to be implemented for junior high school students. A study conducted by Agustina et al. (2022) reveals that the mobile learning application enhances junior high school students' critical thinking skills in the EFL classroom. Hence, digital literacy should be implemented in the EFL classroom (Agustina et al., 2022).

A study conducted by Pratolo & Solikhati, (2021), aims to reveal how digital literacy is implemented in an EFL classroom at junior high school in Temanggung, Central Java, Indonesia. One of the results from this study shows that the learning process in this school has still a lack of technology sources since the school prohibited the use of smartphones and only allowed computers and projectors as digital literacy sources. This study also proves that students need more experience to use technology well for learning. Improving students' digital literacy skills, especially in using ICT tools, is a necessary condition to enhance students' learning performance and achieving success and better results in the learning process (Shopova, 2014).

It is in line with what Saripudin et al. (2021) have mentioned that the more frequent use of technology will enhance students' digital literacy skills as they will gradually become used to it. Therefore, it is important to integrate

digital literacy in education as the first step to improve students' digital literacy skills.

There are various techniques that can be implemented to increase students' digital literacy skills. One of the techniques mentioned by Rakimahwati & Ardi, (2019) the study shows that the use of interactive games affects students' digital literacy skills where students are more interested in learning through games. The games not only gain children's knowledge but are also capable of stimulating students' ability of digital literacy.

Another study conducted by (Munawir & Hasbi, 2021) aims to find out students' engagement toward the use of Quizizz in EFL learning. The study shows that the use of Quizizz has a positive impact to encourage students' motivation for success in language learning. Churchill, (2020) reveals the development of students' digital literacy skills through digital storytelling with mobile technologies. The result of the study suggests that digital storytelling with mobile devices enables them to (i) access information through internet anywhere and anytime, (ii) test their assumptions and thoughts on internet sources, (iii) represent, share their ideas, and solutions to the problems, and (iv) receive feedback from peers and teachers (Churchill, 2020). As a result, it is in line with what is stated by (Kemendikbud, 2017) that utilizing digital technology as the learning material could help improve students' digital literacy and promote lifelong learning. Hence, one of the ways to enhance digital literacy is through the incorporation of digital literacy in learning materials in EFL (English for Foreign Language) learning.

Agusprayuningtyas et al. (2022) have conducted a study focused on the incorporation of digital literacy in EFL learning materials for senior high school students. The digital learning materials analyzed in the study consist of 5 books, 8 PowerPoint slides, 4 handouts, 6 worksheets, 7 videos, 4 e-modules, and 2 web articles. This study discovered that digital literacy is not yet optimally incorporated into learning materials. Only 16 of the 36 English learning materials appear to incorporate indicators of digital literacy, while others do not include digital literacy at all.

Another study with a similar topic is conducted by (Iskandar et al., 2022), which aims to explores the traits of the authentic academic digital practices in the course outlines of English language skills conducive for digital literacy development, examines the extent to which digital literacy are infused in the authentic academic digital practices of the English courses and proposes the procedure of infusing digital literacy in the authentic academic digital practices of English language teaching. The study analyzes the traits of authentic academic digital practices in fifty-five course outlines of English language skills subjects from six English Language Education and English Literature Study Programs in Jakarta and West Java. The findings show that the traits of authentic academic digital practices in the digital academic products, such as the answers to open-/closed-ended questions, essays, presentation slides, papers, videos, podcasts, recorded audio-visual presentations, and reports diversely used across the courses. For the digital literacy, it is infused in the authentic academic digital practices of English language teaching.

According to the above review, some research has been conducted to examine the benefits of digital literacy in EFL (English as Foreign Language) learning. However, only a few research has examined the incorporation of digital literacy in learning materials for EFL students, especially for junior high school students. Consequently, investigating digital literacy in EFL teaching materials for junior high school students is the main emphasis of this study. Discussion of this subject is now necessary because students' ability to acquire languages more effectively increases when they are digitally literate. As mentioned by Hussain, (2018) that ICT-Based Learning could enhance junior high school students' vocabulary mastery (Hussain, 2018).

Hence, the present study aims to fill the gap from the previous study by investigating the extent to which digital literacy is incorporated in the English learning materials for junior high school students, specifically for students in grade 7, 8, and 9 at SMP Islam Al-Azhar 12 Rawamangun.

## 1.2. Research Questions

Based on the problems above, this study focuses on gaining insight for these questions:

1. To what extent is digital literacy incorporated in the English learning materials for grade 7, 8, and 9 at SMP Islam Al-Azhar 12 Rawamangun?

2. How is digital literacy incorporated in the English learning materials for junior high school students for grade 7, 8, and 9 at SMP Islam Al-Azhar 12 Rawamangun?

## 1.3. Purposes of the Study

Based on the research questions above, this study serves purposes which are to investigate the extent to which digital literacy is incorporated and to describe the ways digital literacy is incorporated in English learning materials at SMP Islam Al-Azhar 12 Rawamangun.

## 1.4. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on investigating the incorporation of digital literacy and the way it is incorporated in English learning materials at SMP Islam Al-Azhar 12 Rawamangun from the grade 7, 8, and 9.

## 1.5. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute significantly to digital literacy. In a theoretical way, it can be a reference for future research pertinent to the incorporation of digital literacy, particularly, in English learning materials. The indicators compiled by the researcher can also be utilized by education stakeholders or fellow university students majoring in English education to select materials that incorporate digital literacy within. In a practical way, the presence of this study is expected to raise the awareness of the cruciality to incorporate digital literacy in any kind of learning materials.