**CHAPTER 1**

**INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 Background of the Study

During the pandemic of the COVID-19, the mode of learning has been changed into online classrooms. Students are forced to study from home and in a remote area. There are many learning platforms that teachers use to provide online interaction with their students. Social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube, and many more can be used as a means to develop students' language skills (Nurwala, 2020). Based on the results of previous research, some social media can be used as a learning tool in developing language skills, especially in learning English. One of those social media is WhatsApp.

In ways to the implementation of online classes, Carrillo & Flores (2020) explained that the use of technology in supporting online learning depends on pedagogical factors, one of which is the learning design factor which includes learning flexibility. Based on this statement, learning must be in accordance with the individual needs of students, social context, learning process, and the use of appropriate tools and technology. The use of WhatsApp is one example of the benefits of technology to overcome learning difficulties. According to Surahman (2020), the challenges of online learning in facilities and infrastructure include: internet networks in rural areas, unstable internet networks, internet quota fees. Therefore, these challenges greatly affect student learning when online using social media. As Byun & Slavin (2020),

although the school facilities are adequate and the national curriculum facilitates online learning, an imbalance of the education obtained by each student is also due to the influence of family and financial problems that interfere with the learning process. Thus, based on these factors, there are many difficulties students dealt with in learning English online. I witnessed some students found learning English online at home boring and stressful, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For this reason, the researcher try to dig deeper into the experience of learning English using WhatsApp, which helps students make the learning process interesting and helps them continue what they are learning in class through the use of their smartphones. Students can master grammar, vocabulary and listening in English lessons using WhatsApp. Dewi (2019) found that the WhatsApp application can be used as a useful tool to help students in integrated English classes. Therefore WhatsApp makes it easier for English classes to help teachers exchange information with their students and to send learning materials without arrangin a face to face meet. WhatsApp also makes students relaxed in learning English. For example, making students feel comfortable and easier to understand the material.

In September 2020, when researcher started teaching practicum at a high school during the pandemic, online learning was chosen as the learning mode. The problem researcher faced was that many students did not have adequate facilities to be able to learn online. Apart from that, they always complained about internet access in their area. Researcher started thinking, a learning platform that facilitas text messages audio and video sharing. Researcher decided to use WhatsApp as it is the most commonly used social media among students, no need to own a computer, it is achievable and less costly. After getting approval of the students and teachers of English to use WhatsApp for learning researcher started to open discussions for groups, videos upload, documents sharing, and power point sharing. Therefore, the researcher will explore the experiences of high school students learning English using WhatsApp.

Prajana (2017) investigated the use of WhatsApp at university, it was not only for chat and broadcasts chain messages only, but more than that. WhatsApp can be used for collaboration and information sharing so that the purpose of e-learning is very applicable. From these facts it can be concluded that WhatsApp has many features that can be used for online learning. In the WhatsApp application, there are many optional features to help you learn English, such as chatting voice messages or video calls share information by uploading documents, listening to audio or can record voice using voice notes for pronunciation practice. Thus WhatsApp as a medium that is quite complete in providing learning to students to get what they need in learning English, such as writing, reading, listening and even speaking exercises. This research is very important because it will explore and analyze various experiences of students in learning English using WhatsApp.

This research is different from previous research in the form of research design and research participants. The author conducted this research through semi-structured interviews where researchers tried to explore the experiences of students learning English online using WhatsApp through interviews. The author did interview study to dig deeper into the experiences of tenth grade high school students learning English using WhatsApp in Banjar Regency.

## 1.2 Research Question

How was the experience of students in learning English online using WhatsApp?

## 1.3 Research Purpose

This study aims to explore students’ experiences in online English classroom using WhatsApp.

## 1.4 Benefit of Research

The benefit of this research is as a learning evaluation material as well as an analysis of student learning needs for online English classes during the COVID-19 pandemic.