CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The Covid-19 pandemic outbreak from the beginning of 2020 until late 2022 forced many academic institutions to remain closed temporarily. Many schools and universities all around the world have discontinued in-person teaching, including in Indonesia (Supriadi, 2020). In March 2020, large-scale social restrictions were adopted in Indonesia due to the increasing number of people infected with Covid-19. These restrictions are followed afterward in the form of working from home for workers, praying from home, and homeschooling for students ranging from the early childhood education level to higher education (Regulation of Indonesian Government No.21, 2020, 2020). Thus, scenario planning on how to deal with these circumstances is an urgent need for academic institutions (Rieley, 2020). The most logical response was to implement fully online classes (Bailey, 2020). In this case, online learning for students is opted for during this ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

At first glance, online learning is a graceful solution to current circumstances. Even before the Covid-19 pandemic situation, online learning has become an important component of education, and it is believed to provide unique advantages in the learning process (Appana, 2008; Dolence & Norris, 1995; Katz, 1999; Shopova, 2014). Online learning has many benefits to students' well-being in the learning process; students can study anywhere at any time, have more time for thinking and response, and increased flexibility in learning (Xia et al., 2013).

However, moving offline conversation classes to a fully online environment poses several challenges for students, especially during this Covid-19 pandemic. Several factors can affect the course of online teaching-

learning activities. Burns (2011) mentioned three barriers to online/web-based distance education implementations in education: lack of high-speed internet and durable technology, lack of trainer and student skills, and lack of support services. Davis, Gough, and Taylor (2019) stated that student barriers to online learning might be a misinterpretation of expectations, time management, and interpersonal communication; while teacher barriers might be related to the identification of expectations, providing feedback, and interpersonal relations.

In Indonesia, this circumstance also occurred and was very prominent. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, online learning was used in a very limited number of schools in Indonesia, and it was used minimally as a platform to provide extra exercises and to administer classroom management such as filing students' grades (Lie et al., 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic made online learning a necessary and vital learning approach for students (Guo et al., 2020). In this situation in Indonesia, students' sense of learning may be different because the online implementation is much longer and more prominent than before. Students at the secondary school level, for example, have the most effect on this continuous online learning, as most of them before this Covid-19 pandemic is mainly focused on the traditional in-person teaching-learning process compared to higher education (university) students where the online courses are more familiar for them. However, in the context of language learning, the mobility and flexible advantages of online learning make it easier for students to learn languages without carrying heavy books or dictionaries in traditional classroom schools, especially in learning the English language. In the English language context, students now have so much freedom in learning English such as in vocabulary learning (Levy & Kennedy, 2005) and improving listening skills (Banister, 2010) as they have no degree of restriction on access to unlimited sources as when they are in the classroom. Still, with all the limitations, online learning becomes a new challenge for students and teachers in this situation (Yuzulia, 2021).

In all of the problems presented above, the writer found that the most important problems to note are the teacher barriers/unpreparedness of teachers for online learning. It is noted that teachers play an important role in the teaching-learning process. Hattie (2009) said that teachers' teaching strategies and methods have a significant impact on student performance. The transition from conventional learning systems to online systems occurred suddenly because the Covid-19 pandemic was not preceded by mature preparation (Efriana, 2021). As such, a few teachers might be do not have ICT skills, so they are unable to adapt to the change, namely technology and information-based learning.

This mish-mash situation is interesting to be studied, especially looking at how students experience on online learning during this Covid-19 pandemic, as it is important to see how well they are satisfactory in learning during severe harsh condition. This study focused on understanding secondary school students' experience with online English learning during the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. In line with the teachers' unpreparedness problem stated above, the background of this research is the writer sees the phenomenon where the teacher only gives assignments without explaining the material to students during online learning in this Covid-19 situation. This is a big problem as in this situation, the role of the teacher is becoming increasingly important to contribute, even if it as well as a tough challenge in providing distance learning, paying attention to and supporting vulnerable groups, reopening schools, and ensuring an effective evaluation of student learning outcomes (Moko, 2020).

Several studies have been conducted regarding these related issues. In China, Guo et al., (2020) addressed this in the study of students' perception of mobile-assisted English learning in rural secondary schools during the Covid-19 pandemic. A bit similar study is conducted by Yan et al in 2021, titled Students' Experience of online learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A province-wide survey Study. Most of the related study of this case related to students' experience seems to use quantitative and survey design approach

(ex: How students' perspectives on online learning amid the COVID-19 pandemic? (Agustina & Cheng (2020); High School Students' Online Learning Ineffectiveness in Experimental Courses During the COVID-19 Pandemic (Hong et al., 2021)). In Indonesia, Supriady (2020) conducted research on an analysis of the effectiveness of WhatsApp in improving online English learning during Covid-19. There are also "Secondary school language teachers' online learning engagement during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia" by Tamah et al, (2020) and "The Effect of The Covid 19 Virus and Online Learning on English Subjects In Junior High School" by Irianto et al. (2021).

Looking at those previous studies, the writer found that most of them tend to focus more on the effectiveness of the gadget that was used in this pandemic situation or more focused on the university students, especially in the English subject context. The purpose of this paper is to fill the gap in the existing studies; the writer is focused more on secondary school students' experiences. There is a similar study concerning students' experience that was conducted by previous researchers, however, it used quantitative and survey design, while this study is using design of this research is a descriptive case study and collects the data using semi-structured interviews, it allows the researcher to study and describe the distribution of one or more variables, without regard to any causal or other hypotheses, more may not be captured through experimental or survey research (Zainal, 2007). This research aims to describe Indonesian secondary school students' experience with online English learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. As the writer previously stated, the design of this research is a descriptive case study, and collecting the data using semi-structured interviews. Afterward, the data were analyzed utilizing thematic analysis. This research reveals one of the core problems of this sudden shift to online learning, is the teacher's unpreparedness and there were eight online learning experiences faced by the students themselves: (1) Disappointing; (2) Confusing; (3) Exhausting; (4) Stagnating; (5) Individual; (6) Collaborative; (7) Comfortable and (8) Suggesting.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

The research question addressed in the present study is "How is Indonesian secondary school students experience on online English learning during the Covid-19 pandemic?"

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding the terms set out in this study, the researcher provides some definitions related to this study, as follows:

Online Learning : an internet-based learning environment that can connect students of diverse backgrounds who boast different perspectives. Dabbagh & Ritland (2005) said online learning is an open and broad learning system using pedagogical tools (educational aids), which is made possible through the internet and network-based technology to facilitate the formation of learning processes and knowledge through meaning.

Students experience : how students perceive interactions with their institution, primarily the nature of the engagement of students with learning and teaching. How students create knowledge through interaction between themselves, the teacher, and their environment, allows and indeed forces them to assume their respective roles in their learning process (Rivera & Cano, 2021).

Case Study : a research methodology that helps in the exploration of a phenomenon within some particular context through various data sources, and it undertakes the exploration

through a variety of lenses in order to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

1.4 Aim of the Study

The present study aims to describe Indonesian secondary school students' experience on online English learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.5 Significances of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Use

This research sheds light on what secondary school students experienced in online learning English during the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.5.2 Empirical Use

This research expands the research scope of the view of students on online learning during Covid-19, emphasizing students' experience.

1.5.3 Practical Use

This research results on the view of students on online learning can assist academic institutes in making pedagogical decisions when designing, delivering, and assessing their online content, which will lead to achieving good outcomes with respect to learning objectives.