

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher would like to present the background of the study, formulation of the research question, objective of the research, the significance of the study, scope and limitation of the research, and the definition of key terms.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic that started in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 has had many global impacts. The virus that spreads almost all over the world impacts practically all people's lives. According to Wajdi (2020), President Joko Widodo announced the first case of Covid-19 in Indonesia on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 with two cases. With that reported, Indonesia has now been added to the list of countries affected by Coronavirus. Since the first report, positive cases have continued to increase every day.

We have lived in this pandemic for a while, and it expects us to work, learn, and do everything from home. Covid-19 has had several impacts on education. Initially, face-to-face meeting in schools had to be changed to online distance learning from home. It was done to prevent the virus from spreading. In this case, the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Anwar Makarim issued Circular Number 4 of 2020 on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 about the implementation of education policy amidst of Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) outbreak as stated in [pusdiklat.kemdikbud.go.id](http://pusdiklat.kemdikbud.go.id). There were six major policies linked to education in the circular, one of them explained the process of distance learning would be done from home or online learning.

The implementation of distance learning has done about a year and has many complaints. The learning process requires students to independently find the material and information by viewing videos or websites. For elementary and junior students, it was a problem. They need collaboration with their families to make the learning process run well. Basar (2021) stated that teachers, students, and parents all expressed dissatisfaction with the

implementation of distance learning. Some teachers express dissatisfaction with their limited ability to use online learning media and Internet access. This was most likely caused by a lack of thorough preparation due to the sudden change in learning environment.

Online/ distance learning that began in March 2020 started to change with the issuance of a joint decision on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 by the Minister of Education and Culture, the Minister of Religion, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Domestic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 03/KB/2021, Number 384 of 2021, Number HK.01.08/MENKES/4242/2021, Number 440-717 of 2021 in kemdikbud.go.id regarding guidelines for the implementation of learning during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic. The first point of the joint decision explained that the learning process was carried out by limited face-to-face learning while still implementing health protocols; or distance learning. It was in line with the desire of most students to carry out the learning process in school again.

Aside from the joint decision, the Minister of Domestic Affairs issued instruction Number 35 of 2021 in Java and Bali about implementing community activity restrictions (PPKM) at levels 4, 3, and 2 of the Covid-19 disease as one of the regulations on covid19.go.id. In the fifth and sixth points of the instructions, it was explained that the implementation of learning was carried out according to a joint decision of the Minister of Education and three other ministers in decision Number 03/KB/2021 regarding limited face-to-face learning with a maximum capacity of 50% (fifty percent) at PPKM (Enforcement of Community Activity Restrictions) levels 3 and 2. This regulation starts on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and every week or every two weeks, the PPKM level from each region can change.

With the issuance of the decisions, Indonesia's learning process implementation cannot be separated from a new era of civilization in the Covid-19 pandemic, also known as the "New Normal." According to Fatimah (2020), New Normal is a way of life in which people go about their daily lives as usual while adhering to the government's health protocols to fight the Covid-19

virus's spread. Habibi (2020) stated that New Normal was done by avoiding handshakes or replacing them with new habits such as using elbows instead of palms, social distancing in crowds, and, most importantly, wearing masks. In terms of education, New Normal follows strict health protocols such as keeping a physical distance between student desks and wearing masks while teaching and learning. New Normal means a new normal life with a new lifestyle. The new lifestyle includes implementing health protocols such as wearing masks and diligently washing hands.

In Suprijono (2020: 28), one of the education observers in Lampung, Prof. Karwono, said that teaching and learning activities in the New Normal period must be carried out using blended learning. It means that the learning activities are a mix of face-to-face and virtual. Blended learning was an option and alternative for overcoming the process of learning implementation throughout the Covid-19 period. In supporting online learning, there are many applications or Learning Management System (LMS) that can help learning activities, such as Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Zoom, Google Meet, Edmodo Ruang Guru, and many others. It was explained in the circular letter of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 15 of 2020 regarding the points of distance learning facilities.

SMPN 3 Srengat applies blended learning itself in the New Normal situation. The researcher conducted pre-observation during the internship on April 13<sup>th</sup> 2021 and found that blended learning used at the school was a one-week face-to-face and one-week online or rotation model. In English subject class, the teacher conducted blended learning with the help of Google Classroom and WhatsApp applications as the Learning Management System. The learning was carried out face-to-face for one week in this first observation by dividing one class into two classes, such as IX-A into IX-A1 and IX-A2, each with about 15 students. Seventh and eighth grades were similarly doing that in the following week. Ninth-grade students participated in an entirely online session from their homes. Blended learning was not optimal due to insufficient performance support materials, such as the lack of a wifi

connection in each class and there was no computer or projectors to facilitate learning and teaching process.

That method also continued when the researcher did her second internship on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021. As well as the first observation made, blended learning was used in a rotational model with seventh and eighth grade only entering half of each class. Students with absence number one until 15 entered in the first week, while absence number 16 until the last followed online sessions. In English subject class, the teacher conducted blended learning via WhatsApp, Google Classroom, and Google Meet in the same week. For online sessions, the teacher sent the material files and questions to the Google Classroom application earlier. Google Meet was used to the students who were at home could synchronously listen to the teacher's explanation. The used of this model was expected to make students not feel bored and still have a good quality of learning, but the students encountered difficulties and lost motivation to attend classes. Except for that, the used of the blended learning method was to reduce the spread of Coronavirus in the school environment. The move from a face-to-face learning model or rotation blended learning model into online learning and during limited face-to-face (PTM terbatas) used blended learning more or less affected students' learning process.

Previous research has shown the implementation of blended learning in several condition and different levels. In the study that has been conducted by Ambarwati (2021) about "The Implementation of Blended Learning in Teaching English During Covid-19 Pandemic at SMP Negeri 2 Tengaran". In this research, the implementation of blended learning according to teachers' point of view has several problems, but it could be an alternative model to teach English. Another research by Ja'ashan (2015) about "Perceptions and Attitudes towards Blended Learning for English Courses: A Case Study of Students at University of Bisha" found that students' perceptions of blended learning were positive in the questionnaire. This research also concludes that blended learning was effective in improving knowledge. Then, the difference with this research was the subjects and the method used was quantitative approach.

Related to this, the researcher wants to know how the perceptions of ninth-graders students of SMPN 3 Srengat regarding the use of blended learning methods in their learning activities for English subject class in the New Normal situation because students' perception was significant to know by teachers because it could influence the learning effectiveness and student acceptance of the provided material. Besides that, students' perception is important because it allows teacher to learn what students really think about the use of blended learning. Students who have a positive perception are more likely to be able to follow and comprehend the teaching and learning activities with blended learning. Then, the students' perception also was an essential factor in measuring learning outcomes according to Petegem, et al (2007). Thus, the researchers took the title *'Students' Perception toward the Implementation of Blended Learning Methods in New Normal Situation of Covid-19'*.

## **B. Formulation of the Research**

Based on the background of the study, the researcher found a research problem that could be answered through the research in SMPN 3 SRENGAT. The research question was formulated below:

1. How are the students' perception toward the implementation of blended learning in new normal situation of Covid-19 in English subject class at ninth-graders of SMPN 3 Srengat?

## **C. Objective of the Research**

From the problem mentioned above, this study aimed at:

1. To find out about the students' perception toward the implementation of blended learning in new normal situation of Covid-19 in English subject class at ninth-graders of SMPN 3 Srengat.

#### **D. Significance of the Research**

By conducting this research, it was hoped that there will be benefits practically and theoretically for teachers (especially at SMPN 3 Srengat) and other researchers. The description was as follows:

1. Practically

This study hopefully provides information about students' perception of the implementation of blended learning in the New Normal situation of Covid-19 for English teachers of SMPN 3 Srengat and give an overview of the implementation of blended learning if the school continues later to use this learning method for students.

2. Theoretically

This research was expected to contribute to further research about students' perception toward the implementation of blended learning especially in English subject class and add insight also information for other researchers to conduct other studies in this topic with different participants and under different situation.

#### **E. Scope and Limitation of the Research**

In this research, the researcher sets the scope that focused on students' perception toward the implementation of the blended learning method in New Normal of Covid-19. Then, the researcher limits concentrate and observation on the students' perception of blended learning in English subject class. The subject of this research is the ninth grade of SMPN 3 Srengat academic year 2021/2022, who have study using the blended learning method.

#### **F. Definition of Key Term**

1. Students' perception: Process of student treatment of information about an object/ Students' view. In this case, it means students' opinions on the implementation of blended learning.
2. Blended learning: It was a learning method that combines online learning and face-to-face learning.

3. Covid-19: A virus infects the respiratory system and was transmitted through droplets.
4. New Normal: During the Covid-19 period, people carry out their activities by complying with health protocols, including learning activities at school.