CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English is the language that is not only used in business domains but also for students and job seekers nowadays (Rao, 2019). So it can be concluded that English is an international language used in various fields. Crystal (2003, p. 7) stated that a language attains a thoroughly global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country.

According to Ke (2015) a global language serves the needs of people around the world who appropriate their usage of this communication tool for their purposes and business relations. Global language is almost known, used, and studied by most people from many countries worldwide. When people travel in a foreign country, they will understand the English language, and there will be an English menu in the restaurant, even though the guide and direction are found in an English language (Crystal, 2003). Therefore, a language that becomes a global language is not measured or seen from the number of language users. However, a language can be a global language because almost all people in the world know that language even if they do not use that language for their second language. Learning English for Indonesian people is not easy because it is not a first or second language, but it serves a foreign language. English is very different from Indonesian (Panggabean, 2015). Riadi (2019, p. 44) states that "the English education curriculum in Indonesia followed current developments in ELT

around the globe". Therefore, learning English in Indonesia should continue to follow the evolution of time.

In learning English, speaking is a crucial language skill that must be mastered by the students. According to Syakur (2007, p. 4), there are at least five components of speaking skills related to comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Based on those five components, this study focuses on pronunciation. Pronunciation is when people use the same speech organs to produce certain sounds with the right way. Kelly Gerald (2000), states that pronunciation is one of the important things in order to make comportable communication. To make comportable communication people need to pronounce the words correctly. If not, it can cause misunderstandings in capturing the meaning of a word or sentence that is spoken. Additionally, Harmer (2001) argues that many students believe that learning pronunciation is too difficult, worse, and boring.

In the digital era, there are many ways for people to cope with difficulties to learn speaking in particular pronunciation and most people like a simple way to learn by using their smartphone. The rise of the smartphone is needful part in daily activities such as playing electronic media. Using a smartphone can construct valuable transformation in learning practice; it is an attractive way to encourage the student to improve their speaking skill quickly. Thus, in the digital era people easy to train anything from the internet platform such as using online learning with applications, one of them is U-Dictionary.

This research will center on application U-Dictionary. This application was

released on March 24th, 2016, offered by Youdao, Hong Kong. In 2019 U-Dictionary has been downloaded by more than 50 million users worldwide. The advantages of using U-Dictionary are unique, fun and simple to get in the application. For Apple smartphone users, it can be downloaded from App Store, and is also available for Android users it can be downloaded from Play Store. There are features which can help and notice how to pronounce the words or sentences when people use this application.

To get the preliminary data, on November 19th, 2022, the researcher visited SMA Negeri 7 Binjai and conducted an observation and interview with the teacher and the students in year x. This helped the researcher gather the preliminary data. The teacher and the students were asked a few questions. Based on the teacher's comments connected to the interview session, it has been established that the students have a more critical requirement for pronunciation education.

Furthermore, the teacher explains that they could have used more supporting resources for the learning process, such as learning media like online application, audio, or music. Students frequently experience boredom and lack motivation when learning English because the time for utilizing media is severely limited. For students to feel more driven to study pronunciation it is anticipated that English teachers will be able to devise a specific technique that may incorporate all of the students in some way. To deal with thid problem, the English teacher in year X at SMA Negeri 7 Binjai asked students to use electronic dictionary such as U- Dictionary to encorage and facilitate students to learn pronunciation.

The researcher also conducts interviews with the students in addition to the English teacher. The purpose of this session was to acquire information from the students. The information is about the learning content and its activities that they had done while learning English, their obstacles, especially in learning English pronunciation. Based on the student's responses about the learning content, they also often feel less motivated when learning in the classroom. However, when they use U- Dictionary they are more enthusiastic and understand more about what is being taught.

Perception is an essential phychological feature. According to Sahrawi (2017), Perception is a cognitive process of selecting, analyzing, organizing, interpreting, and integrating stimuli of any kind of information received by someone that is useful and various/different from one another. Therefore, each people have theit own perception. As stated Syah Muhibin (2010), students' perception has an essential role in students' achievement because they can convey what they want to do. It is crucial thing in supporting the creation of an effective learning in the classroom. Knowing the students' perceptions are crucial to the success of teaching and learning process (Chen, 2003). Thus, by knowing students' perception, teachers can apply the learning method appropiately.

Based on research conducted by Juwita et al. (2020) on students' perceptions of the use U-Dictionary in learning pronunciation at STBA Pontianak which took 36 participants from one class. They found that 35 of them believe that "perfect English pronunciation features" is practical to cope with obstacle in learning pronunciation in a right and fun way. U- Dictionary also gives benefits for the

STBA students because the feature is useful, helpful, and easy to access. Therefore, there are modern electronic dictionary applications such as the U-Dictionary application which has features to support learning pronunciation of the college students in STBA Pontianak.

From the background above, the researcher aims to conduct a research on what are students' perception on the use of U-Dictionary in learning pronunciation for descriptive text, which will be explained in the research entitled "Senior High School Students Perception on The Use of U-Dictionary in Learning Pronunciation."

B. Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem of this study is "What are senior high school students' perception on the use of U-Dictionary in learning pronunciation?"

C. Objective of the Study

The primary objective of the study is to answer the question mentioned in the problems of the study, The objective of this study is "To investigate senior high school students' perception on the use of U-Dictionary in learning pronunciation."

D. Scope of the Study

Based on the background of the study, this study focuses on students'

positive or negative perception on using U-Dictionary in learning pronunciation.

E. Significance of the Study

First of all, findings are expected to be impactful for the development of theory and practice. The significances of this study are written as followed:

1. Theoretical Significances

   a. The research expects this research can provide more knowledge.

   b. The research expects this research to improve the quality of teacher's methods in learning pronunciation.

   c. The research expects this research can be used as a reference for further research.

2. Practical Significances

   a. For Researcher

   Hopefully, the result of this research will be useful to improve her knowledge about perception, especially senior high school students' perception on using U-Dictionary in learning pronunciation.

   b. For Reader

   Hopefully, the result of this research can enrich the readers about perception, especially in English learning media such as U- Dictionary for learning pronunciation.

   c. For the Next Researcher

   Hopefully, this research will be useful for other researchers with the related issue and the next researcher can get the reference from this research that can be used for their research in the future.