CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Nowadays, many languages from around the world are generally studied or just favorite, one of them is English. English is a language that we commonly find almost in everyday life. Such as the use of the word *push* on the ATM door. According to Juriana, the combination of the use of English and Indonesian is a sign that English has gradually started entering every aspect of human life, especially in Indonesia.[1] English is one of the international language subjects that must be studied and included at every school level almost all around the world. Even starting from the kindergarten level, parents deliberately send their children to school with English as a second language that must be used as a communication tool at the school. However, according to Ahmad, the influence of students' attitudes and motivations will determine how well they learn in the process of foreign language learning activities.[2] As a result, the environment around students plays an important role in the teaching and learning process, because if the surrounding environment supports it, it will have a good impact that can determine the attitudes and motivation of students in learning.

In the era that always brings updates in science and technology along with the progress from year to year, including disease findings, education or work field. In science such as the Covid-19 pandemic era which has entered the third year so far because Covid-19 was first reported to appear in Wuhan, China in 2019. Based on *Merdeka.com,* Covid-19 began an epidemic in Indonesia on March 2, 2020. This was revealed because a Japanese citizen visited Indonesia and met two Indonesian citizens, a mother aged 64 years old and her daughter aged 31 years old who is a friend of a Japanese citizen. After coming from Indonesia, a Japanese citizen lived in Malaysia and tested positive for

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[1] Juriana, "Pentingnya Penggunaan Bahasa Inggris dalam Komunikasi Dakwah pada Era Global," *Mawa'izh: Jurnal Dakwah dan Pengembangan Sosial Kemanusiaan* 8, no. 2 (2017): 246, accessed on 20 February 2022,
https://www.lp2msasbabel.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/maw/article/view/773

[2] Ismail Sheikh Ahmad, et al., "Attitudes and Motivation toward Learning The English Language among Students from Islamic Education System Background: Exploring the Views of Teachers," *Journal of Education and Learning* 8, no. 3 (2014): 196, accessed on 21 February 2022,
https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/803a/946442ad7e9a219f929584909163b9231301.pdf

the Coronavirus.[3] With the publication of this news, restrictions on outdoor activities as early anticipation in handling Covid-19 to minimize its spread. This had a big impact on every field. One of them is the educational field. According to Purwanto, et al., the increasing number of Covid-19 cases in Indonesia had a significant impact on all educational institutions. The direction to conduct teaching and learning activities from home canceled face-to-face classes and replaced them with online learning.[4] Therefore, we must follow the procedures that have been instructed by the government to reduce the number infected by this virus.

When the infected cases have begun to decrease, a new method of learning model that is suitable for the needs of teachers and students starts to apply. Based on Commission X of DPR RI with Four Ministries about Guidelines for the Implementation of Learning in the Academic Year and the New Academic Year during the Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) Pandemic, the first instruction that allows face-to-face learning is higher education levels, the second stage is secondary education, then the third stage is elementary levels. This must be done by the predetermined time stages. However, *kemendikbud* explained that if any infected cases rise again, the education unit must be closed again.[5] At the beginning of January 2021, *kemendikbud* issued a policy of face-to-face learning which implemented a limited basis with a shift system, strict provisions, compliance with health protocols, and parent approval.[6] Thus, if at the beginning of the pandemic the learning model was only online learning which made the

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[3] Tantiya Nimas Nuraini, "Kronologi Munculnya Covid-19 di Indonesia hingga Terbit Keppres Darurat Kesehatan," *Merdeka.com,* April. 02, 2020, https://www.merdeka.com/trending/kronologi-munculnya-covid-19-di-indonesia-hingga-terbit-keppres-darurat-kesehatan-kln.html

[4] Agus Purwanto, et al., "Exploring The Covid-19 Pandemic Impact on The Indonesian Students Performance," *Journal of Critical Reviews* 7, (2020): 1974, accessed on 21 February 2022, https://search.bvsalud.org/global-literature-on-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov/resource/en/covidwho-830190

[5] "Panduan Penyelenggaraan Pembelajaran pada Tahun Ajaran dan Tahun Akademik Baru di Masa Pandemi Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19)," *kemendikbud*, 15 June, 2020, https://www.kemdikbud.go.id/main/index.php/blog/2020/06/panduan-penyelenggaraan-pembelajaran-pada-tahun-ajaran-dan-tahun-akademik-baru-di-masa-covid19

[6] Stepanus Sarji, "Blended Learning Sebagai Upaya Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh di Masa Pandemi Covid-19," *Guru Berbagi*, June. 30, 2021, accessed on 06 March 2022, https://ayoguruberbagi.kemdikbud.go.id/artikel/blended-learning-sebagai-upaya-pembelajaran-jarak-jauh-di-masa-pandemi-covid-19/

learning process not maximal, now the blended learning model can be done in all educational institutions.

Minister Nadiem Makarim conveyed the term *"Merdeka Belajar"*, which means teachers and students are free to innovate and be creative to learn independently. Innovative learning using blended learning model can be an alternative done by teachers by utilizing the development of Information and Communication Technology, it allows students to learn freely because of the millennial generation's tendency with gadgets as a fun learning medium.[7] According to Huang and Qiang, the definition of blended learning model is to combine face-to-face learning environments and online learning where face-to-face learning refers to traditional learning instructions in the classroom, while online learning is instructions and materials delivered online through group chats or video conferences.[8] According to Ja'ashan, the definition of blended learning is a combination of face-to-face learning and online learning in the educational process, which is one of the important applications using information and communication technology.[9] While definition according to Simamarta blended learning is a learning model with a combination or mixing between one learning model with other models.[10] So, it can be concluded that blended learning is the combination of face-to-face learning and online learning using internet services and technology.

During Covid-19 pandemic era, at SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus considered implementing blended learning model with face-to-face learning and online learning. In this case, certainly still paying attention to the health protocols before entering school, such as wearing masks, checking body temperature, washing hands, and

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[7] Ati Rosidah, "Merdeka Belajar Melalui Model Pembelajaran Blended Laerning," *LPMP DKI Jakarta,* January. 27, 2020, accessed on 06 March 2022, https://lpmpdki.kemdikbud.go.id/merdeka-belajar-melalui-model-pembelajaran-blended-learning/

[8] Huang and Qiang, "Learners' Perceptions of Blended Learning and the Roles and Interaction of f2f and Online Learning," *Ortesol Journal* 33, (2016): 15, accessed on 17 February 2022, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1152429

[9] Mohammed Nasser Hassan Ja'ashan, "Perceptions and Attitudes towards Blended Learning for English Courses: A Case Study of Students at University of Bisha," *English Language Teaching* 8, no. 9 (2015): 40, accessed on 06 March 2022, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1075497.pdf

[10] Janner Simarmata, "Pembelajaran Campuran (Blended Learning)," Universitas Negeri Medan, (2017): 1, accessed on 06 March 2022, https://osf.io/preprints/inarxiv/4v59a/download

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bringing a bottle or tumbler if want to buy a drink in the canteen.[11] In learning English at SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus, the teacher use Whatsapp application, such as in the eighth grade.[12] Whatsapp is one application widely used and has quite complete features as a supporting media in learning. According to Qamar et al, the Whatsapp application can be used in online learning as a medium for discussion to make a learning environment for students outside the classroom when blended learning is applied.[13] However, there are obstacles to online learning. The reason is not all students use cell phones all the time because some students live in the Islamic boarding school so the teacher re-implements face-to-face learning process which is carried out in turns. Face-to-face learning is conducted in one class divided into two study groups and if any additional materials, assignments, or information, the teacher conveys them via WhatsApp group.[14] Therefore, the researcher is interested to know how the implementation of blended learning in English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era at the eighth grade of SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus.

B. Scope of The Research

In this research, the researcher wants to know the implementation of blended learning model in English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era. This scope focuses on investigating the English learning process by applying blended learning in the eighth grade of SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus.

C. Research Problem

Based on the background of the study, the research problem can be formulated as follows:
1. How is the implementation of blended learning model in English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era at the eighth grade of SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus?

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[11] Rizky Widya Fitriani, The Teacher 1, The Interview from The Researcher, 22 February 2022.

[12] Rizky Widya Fitriani, The Teacher 1, The Interview from The Researcher, 22 February 2022.

[13] Kawakibul Qamar, dkk., "Utilization of whatsapp application as discussion media in blended learning," *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)* 13, no. 3 (2019): 372, accessed on 22 February 2022, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1315682.

[14] Rizky Widya Fitriani, The Teacher 1, The Interview from The Researcher, 22 February 2022.

2. What are the obstacles and the solutions to obstacles in the implementation of blended learning model in English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era at the eighth grade of SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus?

3. What are the benefits of implementing blended learning model in English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era in the eighth grade of SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus?

D. Research Objective

Based on the research problem above, the objective of the research is to know:

1. To know the implementation of blended learning in English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era at the eighth grade of SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus.

2. To find out the obstacles and the solutions to obstacles in the implementation of blended learning in English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era at the eighth grade of SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus.

3. To find out the benefits of implementing blended learning model in English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era at the eighth grade of SMP NU Putri Nawa Kartika Kudus.

E. Research Significant

Based on the objectives above, the result of this study is expected to be useful:

1. For the researcher to get valuable experience about blended learning model in English learning during Covid-19 pandemi era.

2. For other researchers, this research can be used as a reference especially related to the blended learning model in English learning.

3. For the teachers, it can be evaluated by applying the blended learning model based on the students' needs.

4. For the students, this research makes them know about alternative ways of English learning during Covid-19 pandemic era using blended learning model.

F. Definition of Key Terms

In this section, the writer defines words or phrases used in the study to clarify concepts and avoid misinterpretation. The followings are terms:

1. New Normal of Covid-19 Era: behavior change to carry out normal activities by implementing health protocols to prevent Covid-19 transmission.
2. Blended Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic Era: in early January 2021 the Ministry of Education and Culture issued a policy to allow schools to conduct face-to-face learning with strict provisions in the period leading to the new normal of the Covid-19 pandemic.

G. Organisation of Thesis

The researcher arranges this study into five chapters. The followings are how it is organized.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the research, the limitation of the research, the problems of the research, the objectives of the research, the benefits, and the organization of the study.

CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL REVIEW

This chapter includes the theoretical review related to the research, previous research, and framework of thinking.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the research type design, setting of the research, subject of research, source of data, data collection, checking validity, and data analysis techniques.

CHAPTER IV: FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter explains the finding and discussion of the research.

CHAPTER V: CLOSING

This is the end part of the research. This chapter consists of conclusions and recommendations.