

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I presents the background of the study, problems identification, limitation of problems, research questions, purpose of the study, product specification, significance of the study. The rationale of this present study is explained in the background of the study. The rationale led into problem identification and research problems. The research questions proposed in this study direct the purpose of the study, product specification and significance of the study.

1.1 Research Background

English plays an important role in several sectors as it is considered as global or international language (Jayanti & Norahmi, 2015; Lauder, 2008; Prihatin, 2015). English is used for academic purposes, tourism, entertainment, business and finance, information, political, interpersonal relationships and many other international purposes (Sulistiyo, 2016; Yusny, 2013). It is used by people with different first languages to communicate. English has different position based on Kachru's three circles of English. In expanding circle countries, English is considered as foreign language (Lubis et al., 2019). It occupies the dominant role in education system. Indonesia as one of expanding circle countries considers English as foreign language. English is taught at schools as one of the school subjects (Iskandar, 2018; Lauder, 2008). It is included in the Indonesian National Curriculum for Junior High School and Senior High School (Jayanti & Norahmi, 2015; Maili, 2018).

English language teaching in Indonesia, especially in Junior and Senior High School level was conducted based on the syllabus provided by the government (Prihatin, 2015). In its practice, the traditional English language teaching practices in Indonesia employ memorization and form-focused instruction (Jayanti & Norahmi, 2015; Marcellino, 2015). It is proven by

some studies ineffective (Jayanti & Norahmi, 2015). English language teaching in non-English-speaking countries, especially Indonesia should enable students to use English to interact and communicate with other English speakers (Lubis et al., 2019; Prihatin, 2015). Therefore, English language teaching should be literacy based. It should promote the development of four skills namely listening, reading, speaking and writing (Fuchs & Katzir, 2021; Gezer, 2021).

Recently, due to the pandemic outbreak of Covid-19, teaching and learning process should be moved from face to face learning to online learning. The advancement of technology has facilitated this sudded shift in teaching and learning process (McPhee & Pickren, 2017). It allows the shifting or combination of offline and online mode of learning which possibly serves many advantages as well as challenges (Sun & Qiu, 2017). Blended learning leads to the continuous changing of language teaching practice and pedagogical approach which combines face to face sessions and online space for learning (Antwi-Boampong, 2020; Mahalli et al., 2019). The implementation of blended learning in EFL classrooms has increased in the past few decades (Antwi-Boampong, 2020; Long & Van Hanh, 2020). Blended learning gives positive impacts on students' attitude, motivation as well as their English skills and proficiency (Ikhwan & Widodo, 2019; Sun & Qiu, 2017).

In this digital era, English language teaching can be conducted through the integration with technology since it supports self-directed learning and instant access to reading resources (Antwi-Boampong, 2020; Long & Van Hanh, 2020; Namyssova et al., 2019; Syaifudin, 2017). Blended learning is seen as an innovative approach that bridges the needs of face to face interaction and online learning to support the development of students' English skills (Syaifudin, 2017). Some studies found that the implementation of blended learning for elementary level students is not implemented successfully and effectively in some elementary schools due to challenges that are encountered by teachers (Namyssova et al., 2019; Wichadee,

2018). It is caused by the lack of training about the implementation of blended learning and the access to devices and technology (Namysova et al., 2019; Smith & Hill, 2019). The ability to skillfully utilize the technology and to provide engaging as well as more individualized instructions are the keys of effective and successful blended learning (Stefanic et al., 2020).

In elementary school, English is not included as main subjects in the Curriculum 2013 that is implemented in Indonesia (Maili, 2018; Prihatin, 2015). Based on decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 67, English is not mentioned in the course groups in Curriculum 2013 for elementary school. After the revision, English is included as local content subject which has 2 x 35 minutes time allocation per week (Iskandar, 2018; Prihatin, 2015). Its implementation can be started from first grade of fourth grade (Maili, 2018; Prihatin, 2015). It depends on the policy made by each schools. The position of English as local content subject contributes to the absence of syllabus as the guidance for English teacher (Iskandar, 2018). It becomes a challenge for English teacher who teach English for elementary school level. It influences the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.

Based on preliminary observation, it was found that English language teaching in Indonesia, especially at the elementary school level does not promote the development of four skills. In some public elementary schools in Bali, English is commonly taught by exposing students with English vocabulary instead of encouraging students to use English for communicative purposes. Therefore, English literacy for elementary school level should be implemented. Preliminary observation conducted by the researcher also found that English teachers does not have English syllabus or other guidances for their teaching. The topics taught to the students are based on the resources from the internet. The absence of syllabus as guidance becomes a serious issue that should be faced by teachers. Moreover, the challenge in conducting engaging online learning environment also occurs when the teacher is not skillful in using the technological devices and designing an online instruction. The development of a

teacher's guide to teach English is very important because in general elementary school teachers who teach English had not get teacher training. In Indonesia, English teachers training is missing. The availability of teacher's guide becomes the only source that provides pedagogical guidance for English teachers in Elementary schools. Therefore, it is important to develop a teacher's guide to promote English literacy.

This present study was a research and developmental study to design a teacher's guide to promote English literacy using blended learning for level 1 beginners. The development of this teacher's guide was motivated by the challenges encountered by teachers in teaching English through blended learning for level 1 beginner students. Level 1 beginners are considered as students who start to learn English and they have no prior knowledge about English. Therefore, the activities and tasks provided should be appropriate with the characteristics of the target learners who just start to learn English and have no prior knowledge about English. The fact that English in elementary school has not been taken as national curriculum contributes to the absence of textbooks that can facilitate English learning in general and specifically in this pandemic era in which all teaching and learning process is done through technology based instruction. It becomes a new challenge for teachers to teach English in online or blended setting.

This study was a part of a bigger research which aims at producing guidelines for teachers in conducting blended learning in teaching English literacy for beginners. This study focused on developing the guideline for level 1 beginners. This present study generated a teacher's guide in implementing blended learning for English literacy which enables blended learning conducted in a simple yet engaging way for students who just start to learn English. It become guidelines for English teachers of level 1 beginner students to conduct a blended learning approach to promote English literacy.

1.2 Problems Identification

English is considered as a local content subject in elementary school level based on the Curriculum 2013. The position of English as a local content subject contributes to the absence of syllabus as guidance for teacher to teach English. It also leads to the absence of English textbooks for elementary schools to support students' learning. On its practice, English teachers decide the lesson topics based on the online resources found in the internet. It makes the topics taught in every schools different to one another. The availability of teacher's guide is essential as the only source of pedagogical practice for English teachers at the elementary school level. English language teaching that have been conducted in some public elementary schools in Bali is not literacy based. It does not support the development of English skills namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The teaching and learning that has been conducted only exposing students with English vocabulary and structure without telling the students how to use English in their communication.

Recently, the learning process has been conducted fully online and blended due to the pandemic outbreak of Covid-19. It requires the development of a teacher's guide to support both online and off-line learning. Therefore, a teacher's guide to promote English literacy using blended learning is important to be developed to respond to the identified problems.

1.3 Limitation of Problems

This present study was limited to developing a teacher's guide to promote English literacy using blended learning for level 1 beginners. Teacher's guide developed in this study was in the form of manuals for teaching English for level 1 beginners. Level 1 beginners referred in this study was elementary school students. The teacher's guide contained in-class and online instructional activities and worksheets. The activities were designed and developed to teach English and promote the development of English skills for level 1 beginners. The in-

class and online instructional activities and worksheets were designed based on learning activities for level 1 beginner students in elementary school. This present study adopted research and development model by Thiagarajan et al. (1974). This R&D model was considered as the most suitable model for this study because this 4D model was aimed at developing handbook for teachers training. Although the stages involves the development of learning materials, 4D model is more into the development of handbook for teachers training. This reason makes 4D model fits this present study. 4D model consists of 4 stages including Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate. In the “Define” stage, front-end analysis, document analysis and learners analysis were conducted. Then, lesson scopes and units, teaching frameworks, teaching procedures, and worksheets are designed in order to generate initial draft of the product. In the “Develop” stage, the quality of the teacher’s guide was checked through quality judgement and product testing. The quality judgements involved 3 expert judges. The product testing was conducted by implementing only one unit in the developed teacher’s guide to see its implementability. Last, the dissemination stage included product packaging.

1.4 Research Questions

There were three research questions proposed in this present study. The research questions were as follows.

1. What are the components of teacher’s guide for teaching English using blended learning in elementary school level?
2. How is the design of the developed the teachers’ guide to promote English literacy using blended learning for level 1 beginner?
3. How is the implementation of English language teaching using the teachers’ guide to promote English literacy using blended learning for level 1 beginner?

1.5 Research Objectives

There were three purposes of the study proposed in this study. The purposes of the study were as follows.

- 1) To define the components of teacher's guide for teaching English using blended learning in elementary school level
- 2) To describe the design of the teacher's guide developed to promote English literacy using blended learning for level 1 beginner
- 3) To investigate the implementation of English language teaching using the teacher's guide to promote English literacy using blended learning for level 1 beginner

1.6 Research Significances

This study gave contribution theoretically and practically in relation to the blended learning based English literacy model developed for first grade students of elementary school.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

The result of this study provided a learning based English literacy model for level 1 beginner which is promoted through a blended learning environment. It contributed to the theory of combining online and in-class activities for English learning and literacy.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

The result of this study, which is in the form of a teacher's guide contributed practically for teachers, students, and other researchers.

- For teachers

The result of this study, which is in the form of a teacher's guide provided English teachers with guidance in conducting their English language teaching through blended learning strategy. The teacher's guide book generated from this study provided

reference of online and in-class activities that can be implemented by an English teacher for students who are just starting to learn English.

- For students

The result of this study provided a series of learning activities that support students' English learning in a blended learning environment. Students were trained to be literate in reading, listening, speaking and writing English.

- For other researchers

This present study provided inputs for more refined research on blended learning based literacy models. It could be a reference for other researchers to develop related topics for different levels of education.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Conceptual and operational definition of blended learning, literacy and level 1 beginner are presented as guidance to give clear theoretical foundation in conducting the study.

1.7.1 Conceptual Definition

1. Teacher's Guide

According the International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP), teacher's guide refers to a set of guidances on how to teach and assess the students. It becomes mentor of the teacher on how to deliver the lesson to the students so that teachers can convey messages clearly. Teacher's guide also includes a set of learning materials that becomes constant reference for students and teachers. Teacher's guides are manuals which are full of notes and ideas about organizing the instruction which are designed to be flexible so that it can be adapten in varying context (Cunningswoth, 1995; Harmer, 2007).

2. Blended Learning

Blended learning is defined as an innovative learning approach which combines online and face to face instruction (Mulyono et al., 2020; Suartama et al., 2019). It allows the combination of face to face teaching methodologies to be supplemented with online learning components.

3. English Literacy

English literacy deals with activities which promote the development of English skills that enable students to understand and produce meaningful text in communication. English literacy promotes the development of students' listening, reading, speaking, and writing (Bauer & Arazi, 2011).

4. Level 1 Beginner

Beginner refers to English learners who understand only a few subjects and academic words, simple descriptive texts and simple sentences which are familiar with their social needs expressions (Mallillin & Castillo, 2016). Beginners still read through familiar words and simple sentences.

1.7.2 Operational Definition

1. Teacher's Guide

Teacher's guide referred in this study is a set of learning materials and teaching procedures for teacher to teach English. It is designed for teaching English through blended learning mode for level 1 beginners.

2. Blended Learning

Blended learning refers to a learning approach that combines components in face to face and online learning. Blended learning referred in this present study is the combination of asynchronous online and in-class instruction.

3. English Literacy

Literacy refers to activities which develop the ability to understand and produce meaningful text in communication. In this present study, English literacy includes four English skills namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing.

4. Level 1 Beginner

Beginner level 1 referred in this present study is English language learners who do not speak English and have not taught English at all. In Indonesian context, English is introduced as local content subject in elementary school level based on Curriculum 2013. It is taught in year 1 or year 4. It depends on the policy in each schools. The level 1 beginner referred in this study is the first grade students of elementary school.

