CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the explanation related to the background of the study, problem identification, limitation of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1   Background of the Study

In the 21st century, the process of learning has changed significantly due to the impact of globalization and technology development (Wiraningsih & Santosa, 2020). The economic world shifted from an industrial-based to more advanced information and technology-based system which demands the educational sector to follow suit and adjust accordingly to prepare students to be ready and survive (Griffin et al., 2012). Skills such as digital literacy are needed to be emphasized as it is a concept of not merely using technology as a tool in education, it involves deeper to implement the information provided by the digital media (Buckingham, 2010). The 21st century also demands students to focus on specific skills known as 4C which consists of Communication, Collaboration, Critical thinking and Problem solving, and Creativity, and Innovation (Widodo & Wardani, 2020).

In the preparation for fulfilling the demand and emphasizing the learning outcome on the application of digital literacy and 21st-century 4C skills, the learning should become more student-centered (Permatasari & Oktiawati, 2021; Pratama et al., 2019; Santosa et al., 2021; Widodo & Wardani, 2020). Student-centered learning is an education design that takes into account the student's interests, styles of learning, and personalities in the balance of preparing students for the economic world (Kaput, 2018). Responding to students' needs and interests, the learning process should encourage students to take an active role, and engage them in their learning process (Enriquez & Oliver, 2020). According to Keiler (2018), in student-centered learning, teachers act more as a facilitator than the source of knowledge, and teachers should create a safe and comforting space for students to explore and discover knowledge by themselves. These changes in education require both students and teachers to adapt to the dynamic situation for the learning process to make it effective (Looney et al., 2018).

As the students' centered learning focuses on the students' interest and personality, one of the factors that help to identify those are the Student's Approach to Learning (SAL). The theory of the Student's Approach to Learning (SAL) was first introduced by Marton and Saljo (1976). According to their study, SAL is an approach developed by students in the consideration of three major reasons: their interest, motivation, and personality; the number and types of tasks given in the learning process; and their teachers' context of teaching. Marton and Saljo identify two types of learning approach namely, surface and deep approach. These approaches may differ depending on the learning context, orientation, and students' personalities. Hence, when a student develops a specific approach, it is a decision

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made by the students personally according to the task they are handling and their teachers' style of teaching. The surface approach refers to the strategy to learn and finish the assignment with as minimal effort as possible and focusing on instant gratification (Marton & Saljo, 1976; Santosa, 2018). On the other hand, a deep level approach has a high self-motivation in the learning process which establishes meaningful and critical thinking through the transformation and integration of the knowledge acquired (Mensah et al., 2019; Smarandache et al., 2020). The deeper approach is implied to be applied in the 21st learning process as it will help students to apply the acquired knowledge meaningfully to real life (Mishra & Mehta, 2017). Depending on the SAL, it will affect students' performance and academic achievements (Mensah et al., 2019; Puteh et al., 2018; Izabella G. Smarandache et al., 2020).

Previous researchers have found that students in Indonesia tend to choose a surface approach to achieve success in learning (Emilia et al., 2012; Mansir & Karim, 2020; Santosa, 2018). The result of their study indicates that students in Indonesia lean towards surface approaches to learning which includes low critical thinking skills, passive unreflective learning, and focus on grades or passing the class. Thus, the surface approach may affect the quality of the learning process and clash with 21st-century learning principles (Santosa et al., 2021; Wiraningsih & Santosa, 2020). In the 21st century, in which the students are demanded to be the center of learning, they have to be able to think critically (Mishra & Mehta, 2017).

The vast development of technology also affects students' learning approaches in a certain context (Chaya & Inpin, 2020). Changes in recent years have transformed the learning process, in which the utilization of technology as a

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learning tool becomes more common (Maspul & Amalia, 2021). Technology is able to help teachers and students to interact virtually and access massive sources of information through search engines, especially during the pandemic situation where face-to-face learning should be limited, technology becomes the solution for the education sector. (Aditya, 2021; Herwin et al., 2021; Zakso & Agung, 2021). Many schools have shifted their learning process through the incorporation of the internet, social media, and various online learning management systems as one way to cope with the sudden COVID-19 outbursts (Amir et al., 2020; Putri et al., 2020).

The sudden changes from face-to-face to full virtual learning have the potential to affect students' learning approach which contributes to the process of learning (Pinto et al., 2020; Prayudha, 2021; UNICEF, 2020; Wayne et al., 2020). According to studies (Pinto et al., 2020; Prayudha, 2021; Wayne et al., 2020), this unprecedented event has caused many problems since an abundance of pedagogy adjustments and trial and error of the tools was conducted. Such as the problems with operating the learning tools, unstable connection, students' losing interest, and the feeling of not communicating well since the interaction is done virtually. Teachers are also affected by the pandemic situation as proven by Aditya (2021). Teachers are having trouble adjusting and adapting to the online situation because they need to change their way of teaching to online in a short amount of time. As many factors in learning are affected by the situation, the research conducted would be beneficial to have a better view of the effect of the pandemic on the English learning process, especially in North Bali.

A previous study by Pasaribu and Dewi (2021) conducted at the university level during the pandemic situation analyze the changes from face-to-face to full

online learning makes teachers and students aware of the importance of autonomous learning and engaging communication in the online classroom. The study also found students are experiencing hardships to do their tasks in terms of online learning amid COVID-19. Santosa, et al. (2021) did similar research on the higher education level and found students still tend to depend on their teachers in their learning process. Another study in one of Indonesia's junior high schools found students are facing problems in the adaptation from face-to-face learning to full online learning such as a decrease in motivation, problems with connection, incomplete learning material, and lack of communication (Prayudha, 2021). A study by Meşe and Sevilen (2021) shows that online learning during a pandemic situation affects the learning and teaching experience. Their study shows the online course gives a negative implication on the students' motivation, students' engagement, lack of communication, and decrease in self-discipline.

In *Sekolah Menengah Atas* (SMA) Negeri 1 Singaraja, there has not been any research that identifies the students' learning approach. Teachers in SMA N 1 Singaraja are not truly aware of the students' learning approach. They notice the lack of enthusiasm in the classroom but do not change the approach of their teaching method. They find it hard to ask students what causes them to be more active and enthusiastic in online learning and lack self-discipline as they are more prone to delay submitting their assignments. Furthermore, supporting the result of Meşe and Sevilen's (2021) study, teachers in SMA 1 Singaraja believe the sudden changes to the full virtual learning in the pandemic situation, need further knowledge and skills to adjust their teaching which becomes a hindrance for them to explore. Therefore, the current research investigates students' learning approach, the supporting factors

that play an important role in students' learning approach, and the inhibiting factors to their learning approach found in the process of English for Foreign Language (EFL) learning on the senior high school in Singaraja, Bali to help understand better factors that build students' decision in their learning process, hence SAL.

1.2   Problem Identification

Theoretically, senior high school students who learn English as a foreign language is in a high need to be able to develop a deeper and more meaningful application of English specifically since the 21st-century world requires them to be able to transform knowledge and develop various skills to survive in the field of work (Mašková1 & Nohavová, 2020; Yueying & Xiaodong, 2016). Yueying and Xiaodong (2016) found that students' achievements are often linked to their intrinsic motivation such as learning style, interest, and learning approach. According to the theory of SAL by Marton and Saljo (2005), there are also correlations between teachers' decisions in the process of teaching, students' meta-cognitive awareness as part of the deep approach, and students' achievement. Teachers, as someone who manages the class, influence students learning styles in accordance with the way of their teaching.

In the Indonesian context, to cope with the 21st-century demands, few curriculums have been developed such as the emergency curriculum which is implemented during the pandemic (Hasanah et al., 2021), Merdeka (Freedom to Learn) curriculum (Dirjen Pendidikan Tinggi, 2020; Krishnapatria, 2021), and the 2013 curriculum are all expecting the learning methods to be student-centered models such as implementing problem-based learning, project-based learning, inquiry-based, and other methods that would help in engaging students on an active

discussion whilst teach them to implement the skills needed in the 21st century (Maskur et al., 2020; Pringgarata & Tengah, 2021). Saputra (2019) describes teachers are having difficulty structuring and preparing a lesson plan as they need adequate knowledge and sometimes experiment with choosing the method that works to fulfill the students' needs. As the statement is also supported by Prihantoro (2014) that it is a challenge to implement the curriculum as it focuses on the real-life competency as the outcome.

The dynamic learning process is changing and adapting to the situation in the world. Rianto (2021) found that university students change their learning strategies before and after the pandemic. The study found students are using more metacognitive awareness reading strategy, which is a strategy that involves self-reflection, evaluation of the contents, and active process of thinking while using it for learning in the pandemic situation. According to Atmojo and Nugroho (2020), the changes in the pandemic situation also affect the school policy, learning management, lesson planning, and the task given to students in the context of EFL learning.

Thus, an educator needs to understand their learning approach and develop a teaching style in accordance with SAL (Leiva-Brondo et al., 2020; Malik et al., 2019; Mensah et al., 2019; Yin et al., 2018). Especially the changes in the situation during the pandemic are worth noting for the research to be done since it shifts the learning environment condition. As these changes surely affect the learning process (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Rianto, 2021).

1.3   Limitation of the Study

1. Students are assumed to implement a personal learning approach while learning EFL

2. The present research findings are limited to students in 10th grade of SMA Negeri 1 Singaraja

1.4   Research Problems

In this research, the writer proposes the following statements about the problems:

1. How is the Student's Approach to Learning (SAL) in SMA Negeri 1 Singaraja in the context of EFL online learning during a pandemic*?*

2. What are the supporting factors that influence Student's Learning Approach in SMA Negeri 1 Singaraja in the context of EFL online learning during a pandemic*?*

3. What are the inhibiting factors that influence the Student's Learning Approach in SMA Negeri 1 Singaraja in the context of EFL online learning during a pandemic*?*

1.5   Research Objectives

Based on the statements of the problem that have been mentioned previously, the purposes of this study are as follows.

1. The general research objective is to analyze SAL and its relation to their achievement in the process of EFL online learning at one of the senior high schools in Singaraja, Bali.

2. The specific research objectives are: 1) to describe SAL in the process of learning English as a foreign language at SMA Negeri 1 Singaraja, 2) to identify the potential challenges influencing student's approach to learning and possible ways to cope with these challenges during the intervention and 3) to identify the supporting factors that encourage students to a specific approach.

1.6   Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is related to the theoretical and practical contribution of this study. The significances are divided into the theoretical significance and practical significance.

1.6.1   Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of this research is to become a theoretical basis for students' learning approaches for SMA Negeri 1 Singaraja in the process of learning English as a foreign language and as a base of the theory that may be used for further research related to SAL.

1.6.2   Practical Significance

This study is expected to give significance for:

a. Teachers

The result of this study is expected to be useful for the teachers to adjust their learning methods by SAL. Further, the result of the study will help teachers to create a learning environment that will lean toward the student-centered process.

b. Students

The result of this study is expected to give students a better overview of their approach. Later, the result of the study is expected to make other students who are still adopting a surface approach lean towards a deep approach as it will be beneficial for their survival in the globalization era.