

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Besides teaching, one of the essential teachers' roles in teaching and learning is assessing learning. Assessing learning determines the quantity of learners' learning achievement (Wijayanti, 2019). This process is known as assessment. Assessment is the process of collecting, analyzing, recording, and applying data on students' responses to educational tasks (Lambert & Lines, 2013). In addition, assessment refers to educators' different methods, including evaluating, measuring, and documenting the learning progress and skills acquisition (Perrotta & Whitelock, 2017). Therefore, assessment can be defined as a systematic process of evaluating through gathering students' learning progress by various methods.

Assessment is part of teachers' lives, which is impossible to separate due to its importance. The assessment can be considered a tool to assure student learning or as a goal in and of itself (Rowntree, 2020). It would become the evidence of learning and use for further learning planning. In line with this statement, Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) stated that assessment could also serve as a boundary for identifying students' future learning requirements. The assessment result enables the teacher to determine the quality of a student's performance and supports the student in focusing on the desired objective during revision or a future assignment (McMillan, 2013). Accordingly, the

essential assessment would positively impact the teaching and learning even more for future learning.

Assessment is also fundamental in English learning. Four skills, including reading, listening, speaking, and writing, are emphasized in the English learning assessment. Assessment is essential in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) since it determines the students' achievement at a particular level of language skills (Mauludin & Ardianti, 2017). Assessment in English learning could give students understandable information and support their cognitive and language needs. It also provides feedback on students' strengths and weaknesses and includes information for teaching and learning that helps their performance in English language learning (Pierce, 2002). As a result, assessment in English learning influences learners' productivity in each skill by providing feedback on their English learning processes.

The maximal impact of assessment implementation on the students in English learning cannot be separated from the English teachers' ability to implement the assessment, usually called teachers' assessment literacy (TAL). The English teachers hoped to be assessment literate to improve assessment implementation in English learning (Rad, 2019). Implicitly, the TAL influences the assessment practice result in the classroom. TAL enables teachers to assess students effectively and significantly impacts learning efficiency and effectiveness in English Foreign Language (EFL) learning (Marhaeni, Paramartha, et al., 2020). Therefore, the quality of education in the EFL learning process is closely related to implementing assessments (Rad, 2019). Thus,

assessment in practice, teachers' assessment literacy (TAL), and the value of teaching and learning the English language are linked.

Assessment literacy is defined as how teachers know how to assess, what they consider, why they assess, identify the assessment's problem that might appear, and prevent it (Stiggins et al., 2004). Assessment literacy is the knowledge of assessing the students' understanding, interpreting the result, and applying it to promote effective learning (Webb, 2015). Assessment literacy is also known as understanding the learning goals and assessment types to choose the most appropriate type for a particular learning purpose (Ainsworth & Viegut, 2006). So, assessment literacy refers to the ability to decide what will be assessed and how it will be assessed based on specific learning objectives and what decisions will be made to assess student achievement.

Teacher assessment literacy could be beneficial both for the teachers and students. Teacher assessment literacy helps the teacher interpret the assessment data, communicate it with the students, and engage the learning goals (Gottheiner & Siegel, 2012). As teachers improve their assessment literacy, they gain confidence to utilize various assessment methods in their assessment capabilities (Ainsworth & Viegut, 2006). By assessment literacy, a teacher can collect data, communicate with students about their understanding, use that data to set short and long-term goals, and change instruction depending on the outcomes of classroom assessments (Siegel & Wissehr, 2011). Hence, competent teachers with assessment literacy assist them in applying the suitable assessment method in the teaching and learning process and gaining the assessment data based on students learning objectives.

EFL teachers perceived they have met the standard or have a good level of assessment literacy. Yet, several studies still find differences between the teachers' perspectives in implementing the assessment to achieve the benefits mentioned above with the assessment practices in the field. For example, Wahyuni et al. (2021) observed that teachers thought they had tested students' speaking competence through prepared conversation. Still, the teacher did not let the students convey their thoughts in their performance by creating their dialogue. This assessment activity could not assess the essential competencies authentically. This phenomenon shows a misunderstanding about how the authentic assessment should be conducted. In other practice, a study by Anggariza (2018) discovered the teacher is having trouble applying and constructing the rubric assessment to fulfil the authentic assessment criteria. It may be inferred that the teacher's lack of preparation and comprehension of authentic assessment resulted in higher challenges than benefits for the teacher. The cases happened since they had less assessment literacy even though they perceived that.

Several studies found that the teachers' assessment literacy is influenced by professional development, professional experience, and institutional support. Teachers' professional development is significantly linked to assessment as learning (Said et al., 2013). Teachers who have received assessment training will improve their attitude favourably when implementing assessments (Noh et al., 2013). Professional experience also showed a significant difference between teachers' total score of assessment literacy with more teaching experience and teachers with less teaching experience (Nurfirdawati et al., 2020). For example,

teachers with more than ten years of experience indicated greater self-perceived skill levels in interpreting test items, conveying assessment findings, writing test items, applying performance assessment, and grading than teachers with less than ten years of experience (Alkharusi, 2011). Thirdly, institution support is also an influencing factor for the motivation and implementation of teacher assessments (Yan et al., 2021).

A preliminary observation of EFL teachers in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, found differences in the teacher's self-development experience in assessment. Not all teachers have attended training, workshops, or seminars about assessment. In comparison, the experience of following professional development is affected the teachers' abilities to apply assessment in the classroom or add their background knowledge about assessment. This statement was also supported by Padmadewi et al. (2019), who found that the assessment workshops for EFL teachers held in Buleleng by providing models and examples in each type of assessment made teachers understand the concept of literacy assessment. The workshop also increased the teachers' perception, understanding, and quality of the instruments that the teachers made. In addition, after finding a gap between new language assessment policies and teachers' assessment practices, Firoozi et al. (2019) discovered that the teachers need training on language assessment knowledge and abilities to improve the assessment practices.

In addition, from the preliminary observation, it was found that the teachers also experienced difficulties when implementing assessments in the classroom, such as confusion in choosing an assessment method when the



number of students is large. Meanwhile, the assessment practice and results can affect student improvement and performance in learning. This statement was also stated by Mellati & Khademi (2018), who found that teachers' assessment literacy significantly impacts learners' ability because classroom settings will be based on the learners' interest, dynamic assessment, and feedback if the teachers are assessment literate. In addition, a study by Rad (2019) also found significant differences between teachers with assessment literacy and teachers with low assessment literacy in the classroom practices. It meant the lack of teachers' assessment literacy (TAL) became a reason for the difficulties faced by the teachers because if EFL teachers in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, understand enough assessment or are assessment literate, they could overcome or minimize the challenge in assessment practice.

Based on the identified problems, this research aimed to describe EFL teachers' assessment literacy (TAL) in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, and the factors that influenced it. A close study by Marhaeni et al. (2018) also discovered that English Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' authentic assessment implementation in Bali was not yet satisfying and needed improvement. But, the previous study was not specified in the Denpasar area, and the result was too wide to conclude the condition in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia. Moreover, another study in the targeted context is challenging to find. Those strongly became an urgent need to investigate EFL teachers' assessment literacy and its factors in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia.

## 1.2 Problem Identification

Assessment has become an important part of a teacher's life. From the previous study, assessment literate teachers had also been shown to affect students positively such as could become a reflection of learning, a foundation for giving feedback, and references for future learning planning (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Mellati & Khademi, 2018; Newfields, 2006; Rad, 2019). To get the benefit of assessment, the teachers need to be assessment literate. In contrast, it was found that the English teachers' assessment literacy level in Bali was acceptable (Marhaeni, Padmadewi, et al., 2020; Marhaeni, Paramartha, et al., 2020). In addition, it also found obstacles to implementing assessments in the Indonesian context. For example, the teachers were a misunderstanding of the authentic and formative assessment practice in the classroom, and the teachers also faced difficulties in creating lesson plans, blueprints, and assessment attitudes while implementing assessment (Dewi & Aman, 2019; Marhaeni et al., 2018; Wahyuni et al., 2021b; Wijayanti, 2019).

From preliminary observations of EFL teachers in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, it was also found that not all EFL teachers had attended assessment self-development events such as assessment training, seminar, or workshop. They also experience difficulties implementing assessments due to many students in a class. Teachers also often apply monotonous assessment processes such as only giving multiple-choice questions to assess the students. When they understood the principles of assessment or were literate and understood the positive impact of exemplary assessment implementation, such as improving the quality of students, they could reduce those obstacles (Morteza Mellati &

Khademi, 2018; Rad, 2019). Conversely, it was also found that teachers who followed professional development could develop their motivation, awareness, and confidence to implement assessments (Brink & Bartz, 2017; Kremmel et al., 2018).

Therefore, the study to describe the EFL teachers' assessment literacy level of English teachers in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, was needed from the identified problems. This study also described the factors that cause the teacher assessment literacy level, seen from professional development, professional experience, and institutional support.

### **1.3 Limitation of the Study**

The study was limited to two aspects to avoid bias in this study. First, this study discussed the EFL teachers' assessment literacy level in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, for all stages; elementary, junior, and senior high school. Second, this study also discussed the factors that influenced EFL teachers' assessment of literacy level results.

### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

Based on the background of the study above, the research questions can be formed as follows:

1. What is EFL teachers' assessment literacy level in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia?
2. What factors influence EFL teachers' assessment literacy level in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia?



### 1.5 Purpose of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the purposes of the study can be formed as follows:

1. To describe the level of EFL teachers' assessment literacy in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
2. To describe the factors that influenced EFL teachers' assessment literacy level in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

### 1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study were considered to have theoretical and practical implications such as:

#### 1. Theoretical Significance

This research was expected to contribute to teachers' assessment literacy development. The theories in this study were expected to describe the problems faced by EFL teachers and help evaluate the application of the assessment of EFL teachers in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia.

#### 2. Practical Significance

The study is expected to give positive significance to English teachers, the English Language Education Department, the government, and other researchers.

##### a. For English Teachers

By reading this study, the English teachers might improve their awareness of seven teachers' assessment literacy standards for boosting their assessment literacy and practice quality. English teachers may also

learn more about the reason for the lack of the assessment literacy level from the finding of this study.

b. For English Language Education Department

The study's findings might provide some insight and contribute to lectures on English language education, especially in the assessment and assessment literacy field. In addition, this department might improve the quality and quantity of learning materials provided to prospective English teachers regarding assessment.

c. For Government

The result of the study might become the government's consideration to improve the English teachers' assessment literacy, especially in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, through free training, seminars, and workshops that are easily accessible about assessment and able to involve teachers as audience and creator in these activities.

d. For Other Researchers

The study might be a consideration, literature review, and guide for future research about teachers' assessment literacy in Indonesia or a bigger context.