

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provided an explanation of the research background, problem identification, research limitation, research questions, research objectives, and significances.

### 1.1 Background of The Study

The teacher's role as a knowledge source changes in the process of learning. This is along with the rapid development of technology in the 21st-century era where are several skills needed in today's era that known as 4C skills (Communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity) (Ma et al., 2019). Nowadays learning is no longer about how teachers can transfer knowledge to students but how students can understand new concepts and have broad insight. It engages into guides students in applying the knowledge that has been gained in developing skills and competencies to compete in today's rapidly growing global world (Keiler, 2018). It also develops students to have active participation, independent, collaborative, and reflective role in the learning process (Sanoto, 2021). As time goes by, the education aspect change, especially the learning process. Technology that is increasingly developing requires humans to be more sensitive to development. The more accessible learning resources, the emergence of platforms that facilitate autonomous learning, immediately provide opportunities for students to develop their curiosity. They can satisfy their curiosity by autonomous learning that guides by the

teacher (Wiraningsih and Santosa, 2020). It is introduced to the world of education as student-centered learning. The shift in the role of teachers also directly proportional to the demands of the generation of students with good quality and ready to face this 21st-century era. Teachers not only take a role as resources but also facilitators. The rapidity of technology becomes a new wind to the world of learning in this era.

Concerning learning English as a foreign language, English is now known as a global language which is one of the important aspects of education in this 21st-century era. As a global language, an important aspect of learning English related to 21st-century skills is communication (Ma et al., 2019). A Chinese study on student learning approach in the area of English was focused on a surface approach that seeks to improve grades rather than competencies in deep mastery (Yueying and Xiaodong, 2016). In four English skills which include reading, writing, listening, and speaking, the deep learning approach needs to be applied. The reason was the deep learning approach can help the students to have good language mastery in communicating in the real world.

The pandemic situation experienced by the world today also affects the entire learning process at various levels of education. Large-scale adjustments that must be applied regarding the occurrence of the Covid-19 pandemic must inevitably occur to decrease social interaction (Sanoto, 2021). Face-to-face learning has begun to be abolished to prevent the spread of the virus. For this reason, an online learning system was initiated. It is not something new that online learning implemented.

However, in this case, online learning in Indonesia carried out entirely and related with a program called “Merdeka Belajar” which gives students freedom of learning to explore their curiosity and support autonomous learning (Abidah et al., 2020). This new concept affects many aspects of learning. Among them are the teaching and learning process between teachers and students, facilities and readiness of educators, and student approach to learning. It is not only a challenge in the current pandemic situation but also a research area to find out students’ learning approach used during implementing learning at this time.

The learning approach describes as the way students learn and absorb material in the learning process (Biggs et al., 2001). This was one of the interesting aspects that can be further investigated for its application in this situation. The reason because the learning approach affects the achievement of learning (Ahmad and Inayat, 2014; Turdjai, 2016). Besides, it affects the way students absorb the knowledge gained and then apply it during the learning process. They added the approach implemented differentiates each student from another. According to Biggs et al. (2001), there are two types of learning approach that influence the learning process. The two approach are the deep learning approach and the surface learning approach which used to process knowledge during learning process. These two approaches were distinguished from the learning objectives that students want to achieve. In the surface learning approach, the motive is to understanding literal concept of the a task

(Biggs et al., 2001). Meanwhile in the deep learning approach, the motives are based on fulfilling curiosity to reach understanding.

Several studies found regarding to the learning approach that has been carried out (Alkhateeb and Milhem, 2020; Hulreski et al., 2020; Meeks et al., 2013). That shows the high number of surface learning approach applied by students. In the implementation, the surface approach is being implemented by students to avoid failure during the lesson with minimum effort. In this learning approach, students' learning styles tend to be relaxed, mostly remembering material in a short time or only the night before the exam. Besides that, students tend to ignore material that is not understood because they avoid asking questions. There are differences between the learning approach implement by one student to another found in the research (Hulreski et al., 2020). Those affected by many factors such gender, generation, and student's learning field that exist on the research. During this pandemic situation, the number of factors that affect students' approach to learning was increasing. In line with education in the 21st era, where students are required to have skills in several aspects, it would be better if students use a deep approach in absorbing material and dealing with problems.

Different results on several studies conducted in countries such as China, Korea, and Malaysia at different levels found that students tend to pursue a deep learning approach (Hussin et al., 2017; Rachmatullah and Ha, 2019; Yang et al., 2019). This is due to factors such as learning pressure, cultural differences, and the quality of education that is upheld in

countries with advanced achievements. Students tend to want the long-term application of knowledge in subjects such as mathematics, science, and mechanical engineering. The high qualification of educational requirements in countries such as China and Korea support students to master concepts in learning that refer to application in the real world.

In the context of Indonesian education, several studies have found varying results between a deep approach and a surface approach. Students with higher education levels, especially medical programs, tend to apply a deep learning approach that is oriented towards active learning for the long-term understanding of knowledge (Arini and Malik, 2019; Hermasari et al., 2019). In another major, namely English education, a deep approach was found that was used by students at one of the universities in Bali (Santosa, 2017). In addition, students at the secondary education level have the same tendency that is oriented towards a deep approach compared to Korean students in science subjects in processing science assignments (Rachmatullah and Ha, 2019). Contrary to these findings, students majoring in English at a university in Makassar are oriented towards a surface approach in vocabulary learning and tend to learn English vocabulary by remembering (Hulreski et al., 2020).

The implementation of policies to implement distance learning by the Indonesian government which is online-based certainly affects the learning approach used by students. Besides helping in reducing social activities such as face-to-face teaching and learning, it also can bring learning space for students (Febrianto et al., 2020). This influence several

factors such as student learning styles, learning strategies that support students applying a deep approach, and almost all aspects of teaching and learning activities experienced by students. Other factors such as independent learning, collaboration skill, and confidence can certainly be more developed in the breadth of student learning resources in online learning (Hermanto and Srimulyani, 2021). This is a situation that has not been widely studied in the context of student learning approach.

Despite the fact that there have been many studies on student learning approaches, particularly in Indonesia, research on student learning approaches for junior high school students is still limited. Previous research has mostly examined higher education students and some high school students. Especially in the context of learning English as a foreign language in online learning during the pandemic in Indonesia, it is still rare to find. Interesting findings were found at SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja, especially involving eight-grade students who seemed to adopt the surface learning approach where they are reluctant to ask questions about material that they did not understand or become passive learners. This information was obtained through preliminary observations of students. Their learning goal is to use a fast way to succeed in exams without being concerned with deepening the concept of the material. This is influenced by several factors such as the media and learning strategies used. This result was consistent with findings from the surface approach about student characteristics, namely the goal to get good results in exams, and memorizing habits (Ilhan Beyaztas and Metin, 2019; Qureshi and Larson, 2021). Based on

this background, this study has aim to investigate the learning approach used by eight grade students in the context of learning English during online learning at SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

Junior high school students currently study English as a foreign language as one of the subjects tested and considered important. Therefore, studying it in depth will be highly recommended in student learning. In deep learning there are several student behaviors in learning such as independent learning, having a critical mind, being active in learning, and having the high motivation to learn (Biggs, 1987). This is in line with the study of Nurhayati and Samiati (2018) regarding the current education guidelines in Indonesia namely the 2013 curriculum that supports student-centered learning. In addition, the study by Ma et al. (2019) on skills that play an important role in the 21st era also related to the characteristics of deep learning. In addition to supporting students to have the skills needed in the 21st-century, the deep learning approach also supports students with their academic achievement (Herrmann et al., 2017; Takase and Yoshida, 2021). As a result, teachers need to understand the learning approach used by students because then the learning process can encourage students to learn deep in the future and supporting teachers in comprehending concepts that can improve students' learning. Deep learning can also create a generation that would be prepared to compete in the 21st century. It has an effect on students' learning approach and was relevant to the current online learning environment. The study found that the use of

technology in online learning makes it easier for students to explore knowledge, but also has an impact on the complexity of the learning approach adopted by students (Chan et al., 2021; Ellis and Bliuc, 2019). Based on the studies mentioned above, research on student learning approach was interesting to study. Although there have been various studies on learning approaches around the world, there have only been a small number of studies on learning approaches in the context of online learning in Indonesia and Bali. Furthermore, research is generally performed on university students, with only a few exceptions on junior high students. The research approach employed in this study is interesting since it employs two data sources to increase the credibility of the research findings.

### **1.3**

#### **Problem Limitations**

1. Students are assumed to implement the certain learning approach while in the process of learning EFL.
2. The present research findings are limited to students in SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja.
3. English Teachers in SMP Negeri 2 did not know and never exactly measured SAL and address it accordingly.

### **1.4**

#### **Research Questions**

Based on the background of the study, the research questions for this study are stated below:

1. How is the Students' Approach to Learning (SAL) in SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja in the context of EFL Online Learning?



2. What are the supporting factors that influence students' deep learning approach in SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja in the context of EFL Online Learning?
3. What are the inhibiting factors that influence students' deep learning approach in SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja in the context of EFL Online Learning?

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

There were two research objectives of this study, as follows:

1. General Research Objective:
  - a. General research objective was to analyze students' approach to learning and its relation to their achievement in the process of online learning at one of the Junior High School in Singaraja, Bali.
2. Specific Research Objectives:
  - a. To identify the potential challenges influencing students' approach to learning and possible ways to cope with these challenges were observed during the intervention.
  - b. To identify the supporting factors that encourage students to a specific approach.

### **1.6 Research Significance**

The study's significance determines by its theoretical and practical contributions. The significances separate into two categories: theoretical and practical.

#### **a. Theoretical Significance**

The theoretical significance of this research is to become a theoretical basis for the learning approach of SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja students in the process of learning English as a foreign language and as a theoretical basis that will be useful for further similar research.

#### **b. Practical Significance**

##### **1. Teacher**

The results of this study expected to be useful for teachers to adjust their learning methods to student learning approach. Furthermore, the results of the research will help teachers to create and facilitating a learning environment that will lean towards student-centered learning.

##### **2. Student**

The results of this study expected student to better grasp their approach. In the future, the results of this research are expected to make other students who still adopt the surface approach leans towards a deep approach because it will be beneficial for their self-development in the era of globalization.

##### **3. Other Researchers**

The result of the study would be as guidance and reference for the future research of students learning approach during online learning.