

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses this study introduction that covers 1) research background, 2) problem identification, 3) research limitation, 3) research questions, 4) research objectives, 5) research significances and 6) definition of key terms.

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Assessment has to be implemented in every class. Assessment refers to all activities conducted by teachers and students to assess themselves providing information that can be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities (Black and Wiliam in Cheng and Fox, 2017; Ekua and Sekyi, 2016). It includes the teacher's observation and analysis of students' work, such as homework, essays, tests, classroom discussion, reports, and others which are concerned with information about what students may or may not know (Ekua & Sekyi, 2016). Brown & Priyanvada (2018) added that teachers can also subconsciously assess the student's performance whenever a student offers a comment, responds to a question, or tries to participate at class. Therefore, according to Ratminingsih et al. (2018), one of the teachers' role during or at the end of the lesson is to carry out assessment in order to know the achievement of students towards the learning objectives. Moreover, assessment also let the teachers know whether students have understood, whether the teaching strategy has been effective, and which students are

doing well or performing poorly (Ghorbanpour et al., 2021b; Schellekens et al., 2021).

Regarding assessment practices, assessment takes three approaches including assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning (Earl, 2003). Assessment of learning is typically done at the end of an instructional unit, course, term, or semester as a summative function (Earl, 2003; Karadag, 2022; Sujana et al., 2020). Meanwhile, assessment for learning and assessment as learning are carried out during the teaching and learning process in order to identify the learning needs and adjust teaching as a formative function (Earl, 2003; Muradkasimova, 2018; Vero & Chukwuemeka, 2019). As stated in *Permendikbud No. 104 Tahun 2014*, assessment outcomes by educators in Curriculum 2013 is carried out to fulfill both formative (assessment for learning and assessment as learning) and summative (assessment of learning) functions. In line with this, Vero and Chukwuemeka (2019) emphasize that formative and summative assessments are interdependent, as formative assessment feeds into summative assessment and enhances the quality of information in which the final judgement is made.

Meanwhile, in common practices in Indonesian educational context, most teachers only focused on the assessment of learning and assessment for learning (Indasari et al., 2019; Trisnawaty et al., 2017). In fact, the key assessors in these two assessment approaches are the teachers themselves (Earl, 2003). Teachers normally assess the students' works instead of involving them actively to assess their works (Ratminingsih et al., 2018).

Students often get their score without knowing what mistakes they have made relating to their works. Whereas, students should be given a chance to do the assessment for their own work in order to know what their abilities are, what mistakes they have done, and how much progress they have made (Trisnawaty et al., 2017). For this reason, assessment as learning, in which the students are the key assessors, needs to be given more attention so that they do not have to entirely rely on their teachers (Indasari et al., 2019; Ratminingsih et al., 2018; Trisnawaty et al., 2017).

All of the assessment approaches including assessment as learning are demanded in assessing students' literacy. Thanyathamrongkul et al. (2018) define literacy as the ability to discover, comprehend, infer, and connect both written and spoken information in an effective way. It can be in a form of knowledge, competence, and skill in a certain context or field (Mkandawire, 2018). This is in line with Rintananingrum (2009) mentioning that literacy is not only the language ability including the ability to read and write well, but also the ability to use the knowledge and ability in the real-world context. Further, the importance of literacy is emphasized by Begum (2020) stating that literacy skills allow individuals to process information, express our thoughts, solve problems, and understand the world around us much better. It gives people knowledge and abilities to express and share this knowledge with different people. Moreover, being literate is fundamental needs for both successes in school as well as in life (Rintananingrum, 2009).

In line with the fundamental need of literacy, literacy becomes the center of education (Kalantzis and Cope, 2000 in Khairuddiniyah, 2018). In the educational field, literacy refers to the real-world activity where students' skills in reading and writing will be used for their real-life purposes, like reading food menus, reading brochures, writing letters to friends, and many other things (Purcell-Gates et al., 2012). Students' literacy in schools can be applied to all subjects, including English lessons. In relation to this, Indonesia is facing AEC (ASEAN Economic Community) so that students are required to master English as the global language. It is widely known that English literacy has an important role in global competency that is needed by every individual to be able to compete in the global community (Begum, 2020). Although the benefits of English literacy have been understood for a long time, the literacy of Indonesian students is below average based on the results of PISA (2020) (Ayunin et al., 2013; Rosana et al., 2020). Argina et al. (2017) add that Indonesia got almost the lowest rank among countries from year to year since firstly joined PISA in 2000. The results obtained by Ritonga (2018) shows that the English literacy competency of students in Universitas Negeri Medan varied from low (60 %), medium (30%), and high (10 %). Its low literacy is also supported by Ratminingsih et al. (2020) who found that Indonesian students do not have a good reading habit. This becomes worse since the results of observations state that English literacy in Bali is also identified as not optimal yet. Based on the condition above, the

improvement of the English literacy skill is really needed (Padmadewi et al., 2019).

The importance of having English literacy skill leads to students' English language competency. In the educational context, competencies refer to the useful abilities including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors acquired by students in doing the real-world tasks (Shobikah, 2020). Shobikah (2020) then defined English language competency as the communicative competence between teachers and students in the form of interaction outside and inside the class as the realization of language use for communication. It involves 4 language skills, namely writing, reading, speaking, and listening. This competency undoubtedly becomes a core or a survival skill for students for sustaining in their job world in the future, especially to obtain more competitive advantages and exciting opportunities across the world (Jain, 2019). Sarudin et al. (2013), in their research, found that the majority of the respondents showed their agreement with the importance of English language competency over other languages (99.7%), in the workplace (96.5%), as well as employees' core knowledge and skills (80%).

One of the important non-linguistic factors affecting students' language learning is students attitude (Al-Sobhi et al., 2018). Attitude refers to an evaluative reaction to any attitude objects or referent that is inferred on the basis of individual's opinions or beliefs (Gardner in Tódor and Dégi, 2016). In the language learning context, the attitude object can be the teacher, class,

language, book, and homework that are within the situation of the school and within the frame of reference of learning (Oroujlou and Vahedi, 2011). Padwick in Syafrizal et al. (2018) emphasize that besides the intellectual aspect, the nature of language learning has social and psychological aspects and it depends on the students' attitude in learning the target language. In line with this, the students' ability to master a target language is not just influenced by the language skills and mental competencies, but it also depends on their attitudes toward the target language.

Some relevant studies have investigated the assessment as learning practices at class. A study related to the assessment as learning was done by Darmawan and Jaedun (2020) resulting in assessment as learning model in the mobile-based module can improve students' learning achievement, especially in terms of students' HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills). In addition, students also show their positive attitudes in the implementation of self-assessment (Febriyanti et al., 2018; Tsurroya, 2020). In line with this, Lesmana and Rokhyati (2020) found that self-assessment benefits students in the higher education to introspect themselves in the learning process. Students can evaluate what they had been done so that they can enhance the sense of their learning obligation. A similar finding occurred related to peer assessment studied by Syafrizal and Pahamzah (2020). They found that peer assessment through Google Classroom enables students to interact and share with their friends in both learning models for offline or online mode for eleventh-grade students.

Based on the explanation above, the present research attempts to investigate the implementation of assessment as learning in the Indonesian educational field. Meanwhile, since the conventional teaching and learning process changes into online learning mode due to the Covid-19 pandemic, carrying out the online assessments became a requirement (Fitriyah and Jannah, 2021). As time goes by, schools in Indonesia have started to conduct blended learning. A study done by Tsuroyya (2020) showing that students tend to be relaxed when doing peer correction, especially in the online mode, since they can provide more comments for peers as well as get self-reflection to detailed mistakes as done by their peers. In the offline mode, Ratminingsih et al. (2018) found that the self-assessment has a positive effect towards the seventh-grade students' independence and writing competence. However, little attention is given to the studies which analyze the effects of implementation of literacy-based assessment as learning in the blended learning. Blended English literacy-based assessment refers to the assessment that incorporates English literacy instruction in a blended learning context through enhanced communication by the use of any flexible online platforms (Padmadewi et al., 2022). Therefore, this study attempted to analyze the effect of the implementation of blended English literacy-based assessment as learning, particularly for seventh-grade students in Bali.

The explanation above showed that all of the assessment approaches are demanded in assessing students' literacy regarding the importance of literacy. In fact, the quality of students' literacy in Indonesia, particularly in

Bali is still below average. Regarding the assessment practices, assessment of learning and assessment for learning are normally used than assessment as learning. The situation becomes worse due to the Covid-19 pandemic that forces teachers to conduct the blended learning. Therefore, teachers or practitioners in the blended learning context might use integrative assessment to examine the interaction between computer-assisted and traditional activities and their impact on the learning experiences. This study was the second-year research that has been preceded by the development of blended English literacy-based assessment for Grade 7 in SMP Negeri 4 Tabanan. The previous research has developed the ready to use literacy-based English assessment instruments for blended learning. These instruments need to be implemented and the effect of the implementation on students' English language competency and attitude was also conducted.

1.2 PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The importance of assessment in English language learning is not questionable. Regarding assessment approaches, teachers only focused on the assessment of learning and assessment for learning in common practices in Indonesian educational context (Indasari et al., 2019; Trisnawaty et al., 2017). In fact, the key assessors in these two assessment approaches are the teachers themselves (Earl, 2003). Teachers normally assess the students' work instead of involving them to assess their work as the principle in the assessment as learning. Moreover, all of the assessment approaches including

assessment as learning are demanded in assessing students' literacy. Students are required to be literate in all subjects, including English subject, in this 21st century era. Meanwhile, the result of PISA (2020) indicated that literacy in Indonesia is still poor. The results of the preliminary observation also showed that literacy, particularly in Bali, still becomes a problem. This situation becomes worse due to the Covid-19 pandemic since it gives limitations for teachers to conduct the teaching and learning process, particularly in giving assessments (Divayana et al., 2021; Rapanta et al., 2020). Teachers are forced to conduct the blended learning system while assessing students using synchronous, asynchronous, and face-to-face modes. The teachers in the blended learning context might use integrative assessment to examine the interaction between computer-assisted and traditional activities and their impact on the learning experiences. In relation to this, this study is an attempt as the second-year research that preceded by the ready to use blended English literacy-based assessment for Grade 7 developed by Ratminingsih et al. (2021). Therefore, the instrument needs to be implemented in order to analyze its effect on seventh-grade students' English language competency and attitudes.

1.3 RESEARCH LIMITATION

Based on the problem identification, this study focused on implementing blended English literacy-based assessment as learning, particularly for the seventh grade students in SMP Negeri 4 Tabanan. The

assessment instrument implemented is adopted from literacy-based assessment instruments for blended English learning developed by Ratminingsih et al. (2021). Furthermore, the instrument implementation was limited to analyze the effects of assessment as learning on students' English language competency and attitudes.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the previous explanation, the research questions are constructed as follows.

1. Is there any significant effect of implementing blended English literacy-based assessment on students' English language competency in SMP Negeri 4 Tabanan?
2. Is there any significant effect of implementing blended English literacy-based assessment on students' attitudes in SMP Negeri 4 Tabanan?
3. Is there any significant simultaneous effect of implementing blended English literacy-based assessment on students' English language competency and attitudes in SMP Negeri 4 Tabanan?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of this study are composed as follows.

1. To analyse the effect of implementing blended English literacy-based assessment on students' English language competency in SMP Negeri 4 Tabanan
2. To analyse the effect of implementing blended English literacy-based assessment on students' attitudes in SMP Negeri 4 Tabanan
3. To analyse the simultaneous effect of implementing blended English literacy-based assessment on students' English language competency and attitudes in SMP Negeri 4 Tabanan

1.6 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCES

This research is expected to be able to offer theoretical and practical significances which can be proposed as follows.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significances

This study is expected to enrich the study of TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and assessment courses, especially relating on the effects of blended English literacy-based assessment on students' English language competency and attitudes. Moreover, it is also expected to add the study of authentic assessments in English learning, especially assessment as learning approach in which students becomes their own assessor.

1.6.2 Practical Significances

a. For Teachers

This research would be able to provide insights for English teacher regarding the assessment techniques used to assess students' English language learning.

The teachers could maximize the assessment authenticity in conducting the learning process so that it can improve the learning outcomes.

b. For Post-Graduate Program of English Language Education

This research would be able to give benefits as learning materials and an empirical study for English Language Education post-graduate program.

c. For Students

This research would be able to provide students opportunities to use English more authentically and contextually in order to increase students' English language competency and attitudes.

d. For Further Researchers

The findings of this study could be treated as the first-hand reference for further research in blended English literacy-based assessment and prior information in attempting their future studies with relevant topic.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

All the key terms used in this research need to be conceptually and operationally defined to avoid misunderstanding. The followings are the definitions.

1.7.1 Conceptual Definition

a. Assessment as Learning

According to Berry (2011), assessment as learning can be defined as one of the assessment approaches that occurs when students are their own assessors.

b. English Language Competency

According to Shobikah (2020), English language competency as the communicative competence between teachers and students in the form of interaction outside and inside the class as the realization of language use for communication.

c. Attitude

According to Gardner in Tódor and Dégi (2016), attitude is defined as a set of beliefs and psychological predispositions to act or evaluate behavior in a particular way.

d. Blended Learning

According to Zamzami and Keumala (2018), blended learning is defined as the combination of virtual and non-virtual interaction between students and teachers.

e. Blended English literacy-based assessment

According to Padmadewi et al. (2022), blended English literacy-based assessment is defined as the assessment that incorporates English literacy instruction in a blended learning context through enhanced communication by the use of any flexible online platforms.

1.7.2 Operational Definition

a. Assessment as Learning

In the context of the present research, assessment as learning is defined as self-assessment and peer-assessment provided in the blended English literacy-based assessment. The instrument used to collect data on assessment was the

blended English literacy-based assessment developed by Ratminingsih et al. (2021). (see Appendix 1)

b. English Competency

English competency in this research is defined as the results of a test that covers English reading, writing, speaking and listening. The instrument used to collect data on assessment was the English language competency post-test designed by the researcher of this study (see Appendix 6). This post-test included four English language skills, namely reading, writing, speaking and listening.

c. Attitude

Attitude is defined as a set of students' beliefs to act or evaluate their behavior towards English language learning in a particular way obtained from the attitude questionnaires. The instrument used to collect data on assessment was the language learning attitudes questionnaires designed by the present researcher (see Appendix 6).

d. Blended Learning

Blended learning is defined as a combination interaction between computer-assisted and traditional classroom activities.

e. Blended English literacy-based assessment

Blended English literacy-based assessment is defined as the assessment that incorporates English literacy instruction in a blended learning context.