

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

In exploring the literature, it is believed that the 21st century world is characterized by the emergence of globalization and digitization (Fandiño, 2013; Apriani, 2016; Prakoso, Yuliarti, & Anggreni, 2017). It is an era that would bring more significant changes than everything that had gone before. For this reason it comes along with new interests and demands of our learners and our society (Charleroy, 2011; Fandiño, 2013; Suwono, 2016; Winahyu, & Agung, 2018). They are expected to demonstrate mastery of the academic, social-emotional and workforce skills such as being able to adapt with technology, critical thinking, and work collaboratively in the future which experts have called 21st century skills (CISCO, 2008; Jacobson-Lundeberg, 2016; Suwono, 2016; Maryam, 2018; Syawaluddin, 2018).

According to Briffa (2015), Apriani (2016), and Maryam (2018), the 21st century skills are a blend of content knowledge, expertise, specific skills, and literacies necessary to be more globally competitive. Therefore, the 21st century skills are essential because students are now posed to more challenging world which requires that each individual be literate to expand their mind in understanding other systems of living to succeed at school, work, and life (Jacobson-Lundeberg, 2016; Suwono, 2016; Maryam, 2018). In other words, in

this globally interconnected world, the educational paradigm has begun to shift from a major emphasis on core subject knowledge, to the 21st century learning. Students are mandated to develop their foundational skills to be readily engaged in the 21st century. Considering this, literacy can be seen as one of the essential skills that should be used by students comprehensively as a gateway to proficiently develop the other 21st century skills (Geske, Ozola, 2008; David, & Choo, 2012; Suwono, 2016; Hasanah, & Sholihah, 2017; Maryam, 2018; Noortyani, 2018; Syawaluddin, 2018). It is because literacy is the ground of all processes of learning.

Traditionally, literacy is viewed as the ability to read and write in a language (Richards & Schmidt, 2010; Maryam, 2018; Erwinsah, Solin, & Adisaputera, 2019). So that literacy can be seen as a unitary process with two complementary aspects, reading and writing because as stated by Lawrence (2013), and Kisyani-Laksono et al, (2017), and Gustine (2018), both language skills are the basis for the development of literacy in various ways. For this reason, in the past people can be considered as literate when they are capable of reading and writing.

As we go through the 21st century, the term literacy has been widely viewed as having various definitions. Some researchers have attempted to conceptualize, characterize, and redefine literacy (Kurbanoglu, 2004; Lawrence, 2013; Ahmadi, & Yulianto, 2017; Maryam, 2018). Sometimes it refers only to reading, sometimes to reading and writing and more rarely, to reading, writing, speaking and listening, it is a multidisciplinary context which experts have called

as a set of basic literacy skills (Kisyani-Laksono & Retnaningdyah, 2017; Erwinsah, Solin, & Adisaputera, 2019). Basic literacy covers the complex of knowledge and skills of an individual which enable them to demonstrate the ability to use and understanding the language in an analytical way (Ferguson, 2005; Maryam, 2018; Gustine, 2018; Syawaluddin, 2018). In the same vein, Kurbanoglu, (2004), Hobbs (2016) and Tavdgiridze (2016) argue that literacy is the ability to interpret varied form information critically. In a nutshell, it is a process of acquiring meaning from an analytical understanding of information. Overall, at least it can be arguable that literacy is defined as the valuable skill regarded by the public to live in the 21st century. The reason is that for being literate students can expand their opportunities to access wider understanding and can hugely affect their employability since it can be used for a range of purposes in a range of contexts. Hence, literacy is inseparable from the world of education because anyone who does not literate, they will not fit with the fast-moving world development.

The question then arises considering the lack literacy skills of Indonesian learners. The academic results in Indonesia indicated that there is a high number of academic and personal failure. Numerous studies have consistently revealed Indonesian students have low literacy skills. TIMSS and PIRLS have conducted a survey study on literacy ability of learners in Indonesia in 2011 (Suwono, 2016; Lengkanawati, 2017; Abidin, Mulyati, & Yunansah, 2017). The finding indicates Indonesia was ranked 42th of the 45 countries. Additionally, the low rate of Indonesian reading interest can be seen from the statistics data from UNESCO in

2012. It reveals the Indonesian reading interest index was on 0.001. This index means that there is only one person who has an interest in reading from 1000 community in Indonesia. In 2016, Central Connecticut State University relished a report entitled *“The World Most Literate Nation Study”* (Abrori, 2018). This study did not only use the PISA assessment result but also add other information from the size and library availability and information access. From 61 countries which were observed, Indonesia was the second-worst and only higher than Bostwana (Abrori, 2018). The study also reveals that Indonesia was lower than Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand for the South East Asia Country (Abrori, 2018). More ironically, the latest PISA report in 2019 reveals that there was no significant improvement since Indonesia joining the international program by consistently remaining at the bottom of the rankings. Based on the report, it was known that Indonesian students were ranked 74th out of 79 participated countries around the world in the term of reading skill (OECD, 2019). It can be inferred Indonesian learners still lack literacy skills, especially in basic literacy skills. Thus, as a developing country, Indonesia needs to make a lot of improvements because Indonesian students underperform compared to their regional and global peers. Otherwise, they will be left behind from the competition of human resources.

Judging from the fact that literacy becomes the national problem in Indonesia, students' achievement will continue to be in poor condition and may result in bad civilization. Recognizing the need of improvements of students' literacy, the Central Government through the Minister of Education and Culture

Regulation No. 23 of 2015 has arranged a program called the School Literacy Movement (Abidin, Mulyati, & Yunansah, 2017; Khairuddiniyah, 2017; Suryawati, 2018). It consists of three stages namely (1) habituation stage (2) development stage and (3) learning stage. The main goal of this program is to familiarize and motivate students to form of reading habits by using schools as the front line in the development of literacy culture (Suwono, 2016; Khairuddiniyah, 2017; Abrori, 2018). It can be said that the Government seriously concerned about Indonesian current illiteracy level.

The implementation of school literacy movement program, however, is expected to improve students' literacy skills and at the same time improve quality of education in Indonesia to develop human resource quality in this country (Hasanah, & Sholihah, 2017; Erwinsah, Solin, & Adisaputera, 2019). The reason is because literacy can be seen as one of the strategic tools of achieving a stronger and competitive nation (Street & Lefstein, 2007; Tavgiridze, 2016; Arbarini, Jutmini, Djoyoatmojo, & Sutarno, 2017). The Government believes that literacy plays an essential role in improving the lives of individuals. Subsequently, every school is expected to support this program by implementing and promoting this program to all school cavities. This program can be implemented effectively only when it incorporates into the teaching-learning process that applies an essential literacy development model that appropriate to the students' developmental needs. (Beers, 2009; Hasanah, & Sholihah, 2017).

According to Padmadewi and Artini (2017), independent reading literacy is one of the four stages of literacy development model. It is the highest level of

students' literacy development. Generally, the characteristic of this stage is to give students an opportunity in developing their literacy skills independently in which the teacher assistance is minimized to achieve students' independence in learning since they already have a better ability in interpreting the information (Padmadewi & Artini, 2017; Diana, 2018; Noortyani, 2018). In other words, it directs an individual to be analytical, critical, in understanding, communicating, and using the various form of information independently and intelligently. As a result, the literacy program that uses this literacy development model offers a complete mastery of basic literacy skills which relates to students' ability in language proficiency and comprehends printed material. Therefore, it is essential to implement the school literacy movement by adding the enrichment of the independent reading literacy program to optimize students' literacy development.

Reflecting on this fact, the implementation of the school literacy movement needs more maintenance and support from various parties to be well implemented. Therefore, it can be in accordance with the condition in the field since the condition of schools in Indonesia is not the same across region (Kisyani-Laksono & Retnaningdyah, 2017). According to Kisyani-Laksono and Retnaningdyah (2017), in its implementation, many schools in Indonesia cannot implement the program accurately or even not executing the program at all due to lack of adequate literacy resources such as varied reading material, literacy team to run the program and teacher competence to design the appropriate literacy development program to stimulate students' interest as well as promote students' literacy skills. Moreover, the availability of the program that specifically designed

to strengthen students' English literacy is very limited in Indonesia. That is very unfortunate considering that it becomes one of the main factors to create a literate nation to be more competitive globally. As a result, it is necessary to provide a model that can be utilized as an example to promote students' English literacy skills.

SMA N Bali Mandara is one of the schools that has implemented the program properly. Based on preliminary observation it is captured that the implementation of the independent reading literacy program called "*Silent Reading*". The activity is held five days a week for 45 minutes before the learning activities take place by involving students, and the school staff. On Thursday, students are directed to read English literature to broaden up their horizons and become more familiar with other cultures. Thus, it serves as a platform for enhancing their English literacy and a good activity to make students build a habit to love reading. The interesting thing is the school has conducted the independent reading literacy program since the school was established in 2011, long before the literacy movement was promoted in 2015, and the notion of literacy movement module launched in 2016. As a result, all of the subjects, including English are integrated to the promotion of literacy program by implementing the independent reading literacy program. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that SMA N Bali Mandara is the pioneer of a literacy program in Buleleng regency, or even in Bali Province.

The present study aimed at describing the implementation of independent reading literacy program at SMA N Bali Mandara. This study was conducted at

SMA N Bali Mandara because it is a special high school that has won International and National prizes (See Appendix 2). Moreover, literacy in English has been introduced as the first step to have a global and multicultural understanding and high literacy skills. Thus, most possibly, the implementation of independent reading literacy program at SMA N Bali Mandara can inspire the other school in Indonesia, specifically in Bali on how education can accomplish levels far beyond the mandated public school curriculum.

1.2. Problem Identification

Broadly speaking, literacy skills are a foundation of learning to gain broad insight to be readily engaged in the 21st century. Illiteracy, however, is a pervasive problem throughout the world, including in Indonesia. Several studies reveal that Indonesian students still lacks literacy skills, especially in basic literacy. In other words, their abilities are lower intermediate level. Considering this, the Central Government through the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 23 of 2015 has arranged a program called the school literacy movement which is aimed at enhancing the capacity of students' literacy skills for the better future of Indonesian citizenships. However, it must be incorporated with appropriate literacy development that suits students' characteristics. Independent reading literacy is one of the four stages of literacy development model. It is the highest level of students' literacy development as it directs an individual to be analytical, critical, in understanding, communicating, and using the various form of information independently and intelligently. As a result, the literacy program that

uses this literacy development model offers a complete mastery of basic literacy skills which relates to students' ability in language proficiency and comprehends printed material.

Unfortunately, in its implementation, many schools in Indonesia cannot execute the program properly or even not executing the program at all due to lack of adequate literacy resources such as varied reading material, literacy team to run the program and teacher competence to compose the appropriate literacy development program to stimulate students' engagement in reading as well as promote their' literacy skills. There is a school named SMA N Bali Mandara already implementing the program by embedding the independent reading literacy program to create the synergy in cultivating the national literacy movement. For that reason, the present study aimed at describing the implementation of the independent reading literacy program at SMA N Bali Mandara to give positive contributions in supporting and succeeding in the implementation of the school literacy movement program by adding the enrichment of the independent reading literacy program. Therefore, it can be used as a model by other schools in Indonesia to develop students to become literate.

1.3.Scope of the Study

This study was restricted on describing the process of implementation of independent reading literacy program at SMA N Bali Mandara in academic year 2019/2020. For this reason, this research was restricted on several points of the topic to be described related to the implementation of independent reading literacy

program at SMA N Bali Mandara. The first, the kinds of independent reading literacy program implemented at the school was reported as the main data to get in-depth description of each programs. The second, the process implementation of independent reading literacy program was prioritized because it can show the whole picture of the program. The third, the impacts of the programs toward students' literacy skills was used as supportive information to draw the conclusion about the effectiveness of the program. This scope of the study guided and simplified the discussion.

1.4. Research Problems

Related to the background of the study previously presented, the researcher formulates the statement of the problem as follows.

1. What kinds of independent reading literacy programs are implemented at SMA N Bali Mandara?
2. How is the independent reading literacy program implemented at SMA N Bali Mandara?
3. How does the independent reading literacy program affect the students' basic literacy skills?

1.5. Purposes of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems above the objective of the study could be formulated as follows:

1. This research aims at investigating the kinds of independent reading literacy program implemented at SMA N Bali Mandara.
2. This research aims at describing the implementation of independent reading literacy program at SMA N Bali Mandara.
3. This research aims at analyzing how the independent reading literacy program affects students' literacy skills.

1.6. Significance of the Study

Essentially, the significance of this study aims at giving positive significances about the implementation of independent reading literacy program for both theoretical and practical. The following are the theoretical and practical significance of this research.

1.6.1. Theoretical Significance

This study was expected to contribute to the theoretical aspect for literacy programs in a formal institution (i.e school). In other words, it is expected to give an enrichment of the implementation of independent reading literacy program. For this reason, the result of this study can add the current theory dealing with the implementation of literacy program to improve the quality learning process and to develop students' literacy skills. The findings of the study may give information on how to develop students as literate learners by using appropriate literacy program and about the knowledge and skills these students need to succeed at this level.

1.6.2. Practical Significance

There are some practical significances of this research which are divided into three groups. They are for the teacher, for the students and for other researchers.

1.6.2.1. For Teacher of English as a Foreign Language

The result of this study was expected to be used as a resource for the teaching of English language especially in promoting students' literacy skills. The reason is that this study is expected to provide teachers with a new insight that might be taken as a guideline in implementing literacy programs in the school. So that through this study, teachers can implement meaningful and joyful activities to

empower students' English literacy by ensuring that their literacy instruction and classroom practices address the needs and experiences of all students. In turn, the literacy culture will grow.

1.6.2.2. For Other Schools in Indonesia

The result of this study was expected to give a contribution in providing model of literacy programs for other schools in Indonesia. Therefore, it may be adapted as a policy to enhance students' appreciation of the value or the power of literacy. In turn, the literacy culture will grow throughout their lives.

1.6.2.3. For Other Researchers

The result of this study was also highly expected to be used as a resource for further researchers of English as foreign language learners who have an interest in a similar topic. This, however, significantly can be used as a reference for the implementation of independent reading literacy program.

