

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the background of the research on EFL junior high school students' satisfaction with online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and the students' expectations of blended learning in the post-pandemic era. This chapter also identifies the problems found along with the research limitations, problems, objectives, and significance.

### 1.1 Research Background

COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world's life system, affecting many sectors, such as the health, economic, and education sectors. According to Adedoyin and Soykan (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has shut down world activities, especially educational activities that forced schools to conduct education through online learning. In Indonesia, online learning was forcedly implemented by the Minister of Education and Culture to cope with the spread of COVID-19 (Huwaidi et al., 2021). The regulation was about emergency remote teaching that made all students must learn at home. Therefore, according to Nurwidiyanto (2021), the regulation during the COVID-19 pandemic explained that educational activities are divided depending on the level of restriction policy called PPKM (*Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat*) in each district. In levels 1, 2, and 3, the schools could provide blended learning for 50% of students with several terms. However, if PPKM is level 4, the learning activity must be conducted entirely online.

Meanwhile, besides preventing students from being infected by the coronavirus, online learning provides an improved learning experience and saves

atmosphere, flexibility in learning, and student-centre learning (Basuony et al., 2020; Mukhtar et al., 2020). Furthermore, during the COVID-19 pandemic, internet use increased by 72%, and 96.2% of respondents used their gadgets to access the internet (Siste et al., 2020). Therefore, all schools must replace traditional learning with the emergency of remote learning, which is called learning with the online method. It was indicated by the teaching and learning activities conducted online through each device of students in their houses. Thus, the role of online learning is to replace traditional learning to prevent the students from getting spread by COVID-19.

During the implementation of online learning, several factors such as the technology used, socio-economic factors, intrusions of humans and pets, digital competence, assessment and supervision, heavy workload, and compatibility become the challenges (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). According to Sholichin et al. (2020), in the study about challenges in online learning of junior high school students in Indonesia, 63.2% of the students have problems with an unstable internet connection and no mobile internet data. In addition, according to Basar (2021), the teachers also have problems with the material delivery, interaction with the students, and the media used. Thus, these problems affect the quality and effectiveness of online learning.

Therefore, besides the problems in online learning, EFL learners also have problems in learning the language, which is the English language. According to Hibatullah (2019), several challenges were found in the study of EFL students' challenges in learning English in a non-English speaking country. The result stated problems with receptive skills, problems with lecturer's resources, problems in

learning strategy, problems in vocabulary mastery, problems in motivation (Alsalihi, 2020), problems in exposure, and problems in culture affect the acquisition of the English language as their foreign language (Hibatullah, 2019). In addition, Muslem (2021) added that EFL students have difficulties with the internet data and connection, difficulties in doing the assignments given, instruction, and lack of experience in using technologies, interaction, and comprehending the EFL lesson. Furthermore, Carmanita et al. (2021), in their study of the use of online discussion for EFL University students in North Bali, resulted in EFL students' engagement in the discussion being at the Ritual Compliance level, which means the students did the discussion was just for the sake of compliance. Thus, besides the problems in online learning and the English learning challenges, the effectiveness of online learning for students should be known, especially in the EFL context.

Satisfaction terms can measure the effectiveness of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The students' satisfaction is the degree to measure whether the students are delighted or not with their involvement in online learning (Ranadewa et al., 2021). Furthermore, Ranadewa et al. (2021), in their study about learners' satisfaction and commitment towards online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, have resulted in several factors that can affect students' satisfaction with online learning. The affecting factors were academic issues, accessibility issues, technological skills, mental well-being, lecturer commitment, and online learning efficiency. Trisanti et al. (2021) added in their study that student behaviour engagement, student cognitive behaviour, and student emotional engagement

affected the satisfaction in online learning. Those factors affected the effectiveness of online learning.

For the implementation, several studies on online learning satisfaction had different results. According to Basith et al. (2020), in their study about the investigation of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, most students were satisfied with online learning. The study was conducted at the tertiary level that consisted of 357 respondents with a simple random sampling technique. The result was proven by the satisfaction in interaction (89.4%), course technology (61.1%), learning objectives (87.4%), assessment and measurement (82.4%), and learning material (82.4%). Those results were categorized as high satisfaction in each aspect.

Then, research conducted by Dahlan et al. (2021) at SMP Negeri 1 Pamijahan showed the students' satisfaction with distance learning obtained 67%. It is classified as quite satisfactory. Moreover, according to Aureza and Ardin (2021), in their research on the effect of online media on learning satisfaction in the social science subject at SMPN 35 Bekasi showed that online media affect the learning satisfaction of the students.

On the other hand, according to Hettiarachchi et al. (2021), the result of students' satisfaction in online learning is generally low for the aspects of summative assessment (39%), the method used (38%), and technologies used (28%). In addition, the research conducted by Utami (2021) showed that students in the basic physics course had dissatisfied with online learning. Of the 60 undergraduate students, 54% of the respondents showed dissatisfaction, and 25%

were less dissatisfied with online learning. Moreover, the research conducted by Elshami et al. (2021) showed 68.7% (n = 246) of the total respondents (n = 370) of college students were less satisfied with online learning.

In EFL (English as Foreign Language) context, EFL students, especially at the postsecondary level in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), have reached satisfaction with the implementation of online learning (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020). The satisfaction referred to the institution support, online learning environment, and media used. The result also stated that the students were satisfied with the learning management system (LMS), Google Classroom, and Google Hangouts as online learning tools. Therefore, the research conducted by Putri et al. (2021) about EFL students' perception of social presence and satisfaction in online learning stated that the 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students from junior high school (SMPN 3 Banjarmasin) were satisfied with the time to deepen their understanding at home but also dissatisfied to the well understanding to the material given. Moreover, learning with the PPT material shared through WhatsApp only and without enough explanation resulted in the students not wanting to have online classes anymore.

Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has ended, and the era changed into the post-pandemic era. It meant the emergency online learning ended because there was no need to conduct online learning continuously. However, online learning is not be switched instantly into face-to-face learning because of the worries about the new variant of the virus. Therefore, alternative learning is needed to be conducted, which can be conducted under the circumstances of both online and face-to-face learning. Thus, the learning adaptation in the post-pandemic era or 'post-pandemic' adapted blended learning.



According to Ginting et al. (2021), Blended learning is the pandemic solution for educational institutions, teachers, and students because students need face-to-face learning to learn more effectively. However, the advantages of online learning are kept. Blended learning combines the best face-to-face and online learning characteristics that uses e-learning to avoid boredom and improve learning achievement (Khoiroh & Lilik Anifah, 2017). Meanwhile, blended learning in the post-pandemic has the same combination that online learning is authentic (Tom Foley & Alicia Curtin, 2022). They stated that online learning is authentic because it is after the emergency of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Masrom et al. (2019), undergraduate students in Malaysia reach satisfaction in general with the implementation of blended learning that is conducted at their institution. The students were satisfied with perceived quality, personalized learning climate, prior learning experience, perceived value, course management, technology, and overall satisfaction. Meanwhile, they were less satisfied with the interaction, instructor, and instruction factors.

However, little or no research explains the students' satisfaction with blended learning in post-pandemic era. It is because blended learning is the new implementation in post-pandemic era. And not all education institutions have implemented blended learning as their learning system. Therefore, what is needed for effective blended learning that potentially reaches the students' satisfaction should be known.

The satisfaction level is determined by the expectation of something (Madison, 2022). It meant that if the education institutions knew the expectation of the students toward blended learning, they would reach a higher level of

satisfaction. According to Pinto and Anderson (2013), the students' expectation significantly correlated to the students' satisfaction. Thus, the expectation of the students can be used to design effective blended learning that provides satisfaction.

Furthermore, based on the preliminary observation conducted in a junior high school at SMP Negeri 1 Rendang, Karangasem, Bali, the EFL students preferred face-to-face learning rather than online learning. However, they seemed like face-to-face learning combined with technology. This observation was conducted on several EFL students of SMP Negeri 1 Rendang during the online learning and after the online learning ended (face-to-face learning). A preliminary interview was also conducted to provide clear information. Based on the interview, the students did not like online learning because the material delivery was task-based, which means the students mostly just made assignments for the learning. The students also have problems with the internet connection, which affect the learning experience. But the students liked the flexibility in learning. Moreover, the students liked face-to-face learning because they could interact directly with other students and the instructor during the learning, and they hoped that they could learn English integrated with technology such as WhatsApp group discussions, online quizzes, etc. Therefore, the students' online learning satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic and blended learning expectations in the post-pandemic era at SMP Negeri 1 Rendang need to be investigated.

Thus, from several previous studies about online learning satisfaction, little research explained the EFL junior high school students' online learning satisfaction in Indonesia, especially in Bali. Furthermore, there is little or no research explaining the students' expectations of blended learning in the post-pandemic era. Therefore,

to fill the empirical gaps, the author conducted a mixed-method research that aimed to describe EFL students' online learning satisfaction in a junior high school at SMP Negeri 1 Rendang, and the EFL students' expectations toward blended learning in post-pandemic.

## **1.2 Identification of the Problems**

COVID-19 has been impacting all life sectors. One of them is the education sector. In the education sector, all schools had been shut down, making huge changes in the learning implementation. All schools moved traditional learning into online learning. The emergency of online learning has challenges such as internet connection, lack of facilities, the technology used, and teachers' pedagogical skills. Based on the preliminary interview, the students of SMP Negeri 1 Rendang have similar problems, especially the EFL students. The students did not like online learning because of problems with the internet connection and devices. But, they liked the flexibility given. Therefore, the effectiveness of online learning at SMP Negeri 1 Rendang should be measured with satisfaction terms. On the other hand, since the pandemic changed into the post-pandemic era and educational activities were conducted through blended learning, the students' expectations must be investigated to know their expectations of blended learning. Thus, this study aims to determine the EFL students' satisfaction with online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and to delve into the students' expectations of blended learning in the post-pandemic at the junior high school level at SMP Negeri 1 Rendang.

## **1.3 Limitation of the Research**

This research was limited to investigating EFL junior high school students' online learning satisfaction in English subjects. Moreover, the investigation was



based on online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and blended learning in the post-pandemic era.

#### **1.4 Statement of Research Question**

1. How is the online learning satisfaction of EFL junior high school students during the COVID-19 pandemic in SMP Negeri 1 Rendang?
2. What are the EFL students' expectations toward blended learning in the post-pandemic era in SMP Negeri 1 Rendang?

#### **1.5 Purpose of the Research**

1. To investigate online learning satisfaction of EFL junior high school students during the COVID-19 pandemic in SMP Negeri 1 Rendang.
2. To delve into the EFL students' expectations toward blended learning in the post-pandemic era in SMP Negeri 1 Rendang.

#### **1.6 Significance of the Research**

a. For The Teachers

This research is expected to help English teachers design suitable and effective online and blended learning for their students in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Hence, the relationship between teachers and their students must be connected by considering aspects of satisfaction in online learning, supporting factors during the implementation of online learning, and the students' expectations towards blended learning.

b. For Other Researchers

This research can provide data about EFL students' online learning satisfaction in their research, especially at a junior high school level. Furthermore, other researchers can use the data on students' expectations of blended learning in the post-pandemic era.

