CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research background, problem identification, research questions, purpose, limitation of the study, and significance of the study

1.1 Research Background

Face-to-face learning has been a learning system implemented by every school in Indonesia for a very long time. Students and teachers come to school to meet in one room and carry out joint learning activities (Rahmatullah, 2021). However, the spread of Covid-19 that has occurred in Indonesia since mid-March 2020 has changed the education sector and learning system. All levels of education, starting from elementary, junior high, high school, university, and even other educational institutions were closed for more than two years, which caused around 68 million students to study at home using online learning platforms (Jamilah & Fahyuni, 2022). Not only Indonesia has had to change the education system and close schools, but also around 1.5 billion students in 190 countries have experienced a very significant impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic (UNESCO, 2020). They are forced to adapt as quickly as possible to new forms of learning, including online and hybrid learning models, as well as adjusting student learning assessment and evaluation methods (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020).

After struggling with the COVID-19 crisis situation, in the middle of 2022 in April to be precise, green zone areas in Indonesia started to open schools. At this time, the educational transition period in Indonesia has started to hold face-to-face learning with various regulations and health protocols to prevent the spread of

COVID-19. The recovery from the impact of COVID-19 shows that the post-COVID-19 education landscape looks very different from before COVID-19 emerged. This difference can be seen from the learning process which involves more use of technology when compared to the implementation of learning before the occurrence of COVID-19 (Ratten, 2023). In addition, the return of students to school also brings new problems for students, teachers and schools. The most significant problem experienced by students is learning loss (Patrinos, 2022). Then, the problem teachers face is readjusting learning strategies and assessment strategies in assessing the abilities of students with COVID-19 (Prastya, 2022). In addition, schools must adjust their curricula to conditions, patterns and learning systems that have begun to adopt many educational technologies and provide learning support facilities (Oranga & Matere, 2022).

Students experience little to almost no progress in learning because of the drastic changes that occur in the learning process (Engzell et al., 2021). Moreover, students who have little access to the use of technology and the internet need to struggle hard in the learning process and have difficulty staying motivated in unfavourable conditions (Agung et al., 2020). In addition, the change in the learning system from face-to-face to online learning and then back to face-to-face learning forces teachers to study various modes of teaching and learning to provide meaningful learning experiences for their students (Aliyyah et al., 2020). Teachers must adapt their teaching strategies to suit the situations in which students have to learn in different situations. In other words, the class must have innovation, especially in designing learning and assessment activities that are appropriate to the new learning context (Syahria, 2020).

COVID-19 has also brought positive impacts on the post-COVID-19 education sector. This positive impact can be seen in the number of teachers and students who are familiar with the use of educational support technology (Tosik & Hebebci, 2022). In addition, many students learn more through learning applications used during the time of COVID-19. Students can still carry out learning anywhere and anytime according to their capacity, speed, and schedule (Salas-Rueda et al., 2022). Another potential effect of the pandemic on education is the increased use of technology in classrooms. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of technology in education, and many educators are now looking to integrate technology more fully into their teaching practice (Tosik & Hebebci, 2022). This can result in a more interactive and engaging learning experience for students as the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on education systems around the world. Schools and universities have been closed, and millions of students have been forced to adapt to a new form of remote learning. As we begin to emerge from the pandemic, there is an urgent need to assess the impact of this disruption and explore how education can be reimagined and scaled up for a post-COVID-19 world.

During this transitional learning period, the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) designed and launched a new curriculum, namely the Merdeka curriculum which aims to support and provide flexibility for teachers in designing learning after COVID-19 *(Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2022)*. However, schools are still given the authority and freedom to adopt the new curriculum or continue to apply the old curriculum, namely the 2013 curriculum. The 2013 curriculum still appropriate to be implemented

in post-COVID-19 because the essential point of this curriculum is to trained student master 21st century skills. The main focus is on developing 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, communication, and collaboration. Teachers can make this happen by implementing project-based learning, experiential learning, and other approaches that promote the development of these skills. Additionally, there is a need to rethink assessment practices. Traditional assessment methods, such as standardized tests, are often criticized for their narrow focus and lack of alignment with real-world skills. To overcome this problem, more innovative and holistic forms of assessment are needed, such as performance-based or portfolio-based assessments.

After more than two years of having to carry out online learning due to the pandemic, in September 2021 schools in Gianyar began implementing onsite learning, namely carrying out face-to-face learning but with limited participants. Schools carry out learning with Hybrid learning mode using online and face-to-face learning platforms in the classroom. Implementation of limited face-to-face learning is based on the positive status of Covid-19 in Gianyar Regency down to level 3 as well as a policy issued by the government regarding "Limited Face-to-Face Learning" (Gunarta, 2021). However, in January 2022, the Bali Tribune reported that onsite learning in Gianyar was closed again, due to an increase in positive cases of Covid-19 (Gunarta, 2022). This closure does not only refer to positive cases of Covid-19 in Gianyar Regency but can be seen from the many cases of Covid-19 in many districts in Indonesia. As reported by Kompas (Pancawati, 2021) in December 2021, many positive cases were found in various schools in West Sumatra, Jakarta, Central Java, Banten, West Java

and the Special Region of Yogyakarta. However, on March 28 2022, face-to-face learning with 100% capacity began to be implemented in Gianyar (Wirnaya, 2022). This was done to follow up on the joint ruling of four Ministers, namely the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, Minister of Religion, Minister of Health, and Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, regarding Guidelines for Implementation of Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The easing of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia has opened a new chapter for the world of education by starting to make the transition from online to onsite learning.

At SMAN 1 Sukawati, teaching and learning activities are becoming more 'normal' by the way students come to school, learn with teacher facilitation in class, and there is the direct interaction between teachers and students. The difference observed was only in the implementation of the learning process carried out with vigilance for both teachers and students while continuing to use health protocols to prevent the spread of Covid-19 such as wearing masks, washing hands, and maintaining social distance. This difference is because there are still cases of Covid-19 in Indonesia and it is not 100% free from the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the application of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in learning loss for students who took part in onsite learning.

Based on preliminary interviews conducted with English teachers at SMA N 1 Sukawati, this school has 100% implemented face-to-face learning by implementing special arrangements for preventing Covid-19, namely wearing masks, washing hands, and keeping a distance. However, a preventive effort that is emphasized more to all school members is the obligation to wear a mask while in class. Then, a learning system that is carried out slowly has begun to be implemented like the learning that was carried

out before the pandemic. Even though the learning system is carried out under normal conditions, the disadvantages of learning and changes in class setting make English teachers have to make adjustments to teaching and assessment methods to meet learning demands. Based on the results of interviews conducted, the English teacher at SMA N 1 Sukawati said that the implementation of learning during this transitional period certainly requires some adjustments because learning can already be done by direct interaction with students in class. Adjustments are made to the lesson plans used and the selection of activities carried out. Likewise, with the implementation of assessments, teachers must make adjustments to meet the demands of the respective curricula, the 2013 curriculum.

Given that face-to-face meetings between students and teachers are not the same as normal classes before the pandemic, it is felt important to describe the strategies teachers use in teaching during this transitional period. Because teaching and assessing cannot be separated, it is also very important to explore how teachers assess their students while they are learning (assessment as learning), during the learning process (assessment for learning), and after learning (assessment of learning).

This research was conducted because of the urgency of empirical data regarding teacher strategies in teaching and assessing students in English classes during onsite transitions period. Also, the problems that may be encountered during onsite learning. Based on these issues, this study aims to describe the teaching strategies, assessing strategies, and problem encountered by English teachers in SMAN 1 Sukawati during the transition period of onsite learning. However, studies on teaching and assessment strategies in English classes for senior high schools during the online and onsite transitions were almost non-existent.

1.2 Problem Identification

There are three interesting phenomena related to learning English during the transition period of the Covid-19 pandemic, namely:

a. As a result of the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia, the learning system has become very different from the learning process before the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers must adjust their teaching and assessing strategies to meet the learning loss that occurs in students. The changes caused by COVID-19 are very challenging for teachers because they have to fulfil many gaps and the learning process has utilized more technology.

b. Language teachers readjust many things in designing teaching strategies. For example, the learning materials and various tasks given are flexible. The materials and assignments should be easily accessible to students through various learning resources, such as books and the Internet. To be able to carry out meaningful learning during the onsite learning transition, teachers should at least be able to design a student-centred learning process by applying their adaptive skills.

c. Language teachers need to combine traditional assessment such as multiple-item tests with other assessments such as performance based or portfolio-based assessment to encourage students use the skill in daily life and capable of meeting real-worlds need and skill. Therefore, teachers must adjust the assessment system in this transition period with more innovative and holistic assessments that are able to assess students' overall performance, skills, and knowledge.

1.3 Problem Limitation

In accordance with the problem identification examined in this study, the problem under study is limited to the teaching and assessing strategies used by the teacher of SMAN 1 Sukawati in the onsite transitional period and the obstacle faced by English teachers in teaching and assessing students learning at SMAN 1 Sukawati. The data collection method used in this study was the qualitative analysis technique. For data collection, this study used Interviews and Classroom Observation supported by instruments for data collection such as Interview Guides and Observation Sheets.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the problem identification and problem limitation of the study, this study is conducted to describes the effort of English teachers in carrying out learning in the onsite transitional modes. So, the research question is formulated as follows:

1. What strategies are used by the teacher in teaching English during the onsite transition learning?
2. What strategies are used by the teacher in assessing English during the onsite transition learning?
3. What are the problems encountered by the English teacher in teaching and assessing students learning in SMAN 1 Sukawati?

1.5 Research Objective

In line with the research questions above, there are three objectives of the research:

1. To Describe the strategies used by teachers in teaching English in the onsite transition modes in SMAN 1 Sukawati.

2. To Describe the strategies used by teachers in assessing English learning in the onsite transition modes in SMAN 1 Sukawati.

3. To Describe the problem experienced by the teachers when teaching and assessing the students in the onsite transition modes in SMAN 1 Sukawati.

1.6   Research Significance

The result of the research will disseminate empirical evidence about how English teachers conduct their classes in the transitional period. This will be beneficial for teachers, future teachers, and researchers to know about adaptive skills that they need to have in facing every learning situation. Then, the result of the research will be beneficial as a resource in the Teaching English Foreign Language course since it is related to innovative learning, the teaching strategy, and also the assessing strategy. In addition, this research can be treated as first-hand empirical evidence to support further research, related to the improvement of English teachers' professionalism, especially in teaching and assessing strategies.