CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The role of a teacher has become increasingly multifaceted, underscoring their deep responsibility to ensure that "No Child Left Behind (NCLB)", in which emphasizes the critical importance of creating equitable learning environments. Teachers play a significant position in ensuring that every student, regardless of background or ability, has the opportunity to thrive (Mertler, 2004). Beyond academics, teachers have diverse responsibilities, such as controller, planner, facilitator, role model, class manager, counselor, motivator, and assessor. These roles reflect the complexity and significance of their work in fostering both the academic and personal growth of students (Dudley & John, 1998).

As a prospective teacher, who is also a college student, it is a big challenge to implement all existing roles, especially being literate in carrying out assessments in the current online learning era (McGee & Colby, 2014). Literate in carrying out assessment especially in online learning situations gave significant obstacles toward prospective teachers, not only in regard to designing the online assessment but also implementing technology in every students assessment process in which needing a lot preparation in it (Husain, 2021).

Assessment literate here means that teachers should be able to answer W+H questions, which are what to assess, why this assessment conducted, when to assess, what type of assessment needed, how to conduct the assessment, also how to face, prevent and find the solutions in every obstacle (Stiggins, 1991).

Assessment is crucial because it can provide valid information regarding the results of each student's performances, so that it can have a positive impact toward student achievement and quality in the future (Abell & Siegel, 2011). It is urgent that prospective teachers to possess assessment skills and abilities, which require them to have good assessment literacy. Assessment literacy refers to the capability or knowledge that a person has regarding assessment, not only regarding how to assess, but also being able to choose the right method and provide clear information regarding why the value was given to the students (Stiggins, 1999). The significance of assessment in education is likewise underscored by the research of Pierce (2002) which emphasizes its critical role for educators. Assessment not only informs teachers about the subsequent steps required in the learning process but also enables them to support student development through effective feedback. Moreover, it assists teachers in selecting appropriate teaching strategies aligned with students' learning styles and in choosing suitable tests for various tasks to accurately assess student performance and provide deserved results.

Assessing students learning especially after facing the covid-19 pandemic situation is no longer about giving red/black marks on student's papers but through online assessment with technology as the supporting tools. In this pandemic, students' learning experience will be entirely different, as all classes will be held from home, so the communication and interaction process will be conducted

through e-learning or other online platforms (Xie, 2021). Online assessment or also known as e-assessment refers to the process of transforming traditional assessment (formative and summative) into online, in which using Information Communication Technology (ICT) as the media to assess the ability of students' learning performances (Ridgway et al., 2004). Nowadays, this online assessment is not just used when online learning occurred but even in offline learning situations, it can be implemented (Mirza, 2021).

Online assessment has its challenges and opportunities toward the educators. Kitishat et al., (2020), stated that in online learning situation, most of the teacher problems is regarding the assessment process. Those assessment problems including the process of giving the students feedback for their online tasks, analyzing the progress shown in the online learning process, also give them the final academic result with a clear explanation in it through online way. Reading those problems, Khatoony & Nezhadmehr (2020) research shown different perspective and stated that online learning, despite its challenges, offers unique opportunities for enhancing assessment literacy among teachers. Their findings suggest that with proper training and support, teachers can develop innovative strategies for providing timely and constructive feedback, utilizing data analytics to monitor student progress, and effectively communicating final academic results. This approach not only addresses the immediate assessment challenges but also equips teachers with valuable skills for the future of education.

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Federation of Teachers, National Council on Measurement in Education, and National Education Association (1990), outlined seven broad skills for educators'

competence in educational assessment that essential to develop skills in selecting and creating suitable assessment methods for making instructional decisions. These skills are administering, scoring, and interpreting both externally developed assessments and those created by the educators. Additionally, educators must be able to use evaluation outcomes to make informed students-specific decisions, plan design instruction, and develop the educational program. Teacher must also create reliable students grading methods, convey evaluation outcomes clearly to students, parents, educators, and other stakeholder, also identify unethical and unsuitable practices involving assessment data.

As an English Language Education student, who potentially becomes an educator, the biggest challenge in implementing online assessment is no longer about technology, but online assessment literacy itself. Lack of in-depth knowledge to study and prepare assessments is one of the problems that ELE students face, so it will be difficult for them to provide positive feedback to every stakeholder affected by the assessment process, such as students, teachers, schools and parents (Pastore & Andrade, 2019). Seeing the urgency of the online assessment literacy problem amidst the large number of ELE students who will become prospective teachers eventually, this study seeks to explore the level of online assessment literacy of the second semester of English Language Education students. The level of assessment literacy here means that this research will seek deeper toward the level of mastery of each student has over online assessment literacy, that will be measure from the 28 questionnaires and the scale from very high until very low. These questionnaire for this study was developed by the researcher's supervisors, ensuring its reliability.

The focus of this research on the online assessment literacy is based on the development of digital education that requires teachers especially English language educators to understand regarding the use of online platform and tools used for assessment (Gikandi, 2011). Futhermore, Shute (2008) also strengthened this argument that online assessment literacy is not only about measurement but learning strategies itself. It is the ability to design and deliver the feedback in online environment with digital tools in a meaningful way. This research tries to be emphasized that literate in online assessment is not only about technical proficiency but also the knowledge of the assessment principles in pedagogical context. Therefore, online assessment literacy needs to be explored especially for pre-service teachers who will enter the education environment with the increasement of technological used in teaching-learning process.

Despite investigating the level of online assessment literacy, this research will provide the statistical analysis regarding the influence of gender in assessment level of the prospective teachers. This analysis is important as the previous research from Saleem et al. (2022) stated there is a significant difference of Choosing Appropriate Assessment Method (CAAM), Developing Appropriate Assessment Method (DAAM) and Recognizing Unethical Methods of Assessment (RUMA) of teacher. It is also supported by Asamoah (2019) that revealed a significant difference between male and female senior high school teachers, that male teachers do better in their formative assessment knowledge than their female counterparts. On the other hand, research from Xu & Brown (2017) shown different result that there is no significant different within gender and English teacher assessment literacy level. These different findings influence the need of statistical analysis

regarding the influence of gender in online assessment literacy level of second-semesters prospective teachers.

The novelty of this research is demonstrated by its focus on second-semester students from A class to the international class (IKI) within the English Language Education study program at Ganesha University of Education. Second semester student is chosen as the main subject in this study, due to the need of targeted training for the assessment course in the third semester. The assessment course needs to be conducted in a meaningful way focusing on the students' weaknesses in the limited time for one semester. This is crucial realizing the fact that the quality of learning experience and training program can lead to the academic and education quality in the future (Jay et al., 2021). Therefore, before this student conducted the assessment course, lecturer need to ascertain the prior knowledge and basic understanding of online assessment from the students, to strengthen the student's strength and improve the weaknesses in online assessment itself. On the other hand, this research novelty can also be seen from the research subjects who have not received assessment materials before. Although they have not studied assessment, these second-semester students have learned regarding *Wawasan Kependidikan* and *Perkembangan Peserta Didik* subjects, which provide a basis for understanding of student needs, characteristics also the importance of implementing technology to strengthen students's life skills in the 21st century (Dantes et al., 2020). This knowledge is closely related to assessment, as it helps them to design assessments that are aligned with the developmental level of the students and integrating real-world task to improve life skills to strengthen students' ability in 21st century. On the other hand, gender difference in online assessment has not been widely explored

in current research, therefore it will be a new finding to expand the scope of future research.

1.2 Problem Identifications

Online assessment literacy is the standardized of educational competency, ensuring educators to effectively evaluate student learning in digital environments (Husain, 2021). As prospective English teachers, literate in carrying out assessment is a crucial part that need to be developed while conducting formal education. In Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha) curriculum, this assessment-related course is delivered in the third semester. However, this raises concerns regarding their readiness to design and implement assessments that align with evolving educational demands, particularly in online and hybrid learning settings. The readiness of this second-semester prospective teachers needs to be considered by lecturers due to the limited time that can be allocated in one semester to achieve students' literate in conducting online assessment. This is urgent to be solved, because in the fifth semesters these students will conduct a real teaching program like *Kampus Mengajar* and *Praktik Pengalaman Lapangan* that will require a proficient ability in assessing students. These programs, part of Indonesian Ministry of Education initiative called "*Merdeka Belajar*", aim to provide university students across the country with hands-on teaching experience in elementary to senior high school for a duration of 3-4 months. During this period, prospective teachers are expected to solve school-related challenges in their assign locations, as well as assist classroom teacher in both teaching and assessment processes (Resti et al., 2024). Therefore, before second semester students take part in this program,

universities must enhance the quality of their training programs to strengthen both teaching and assessment competencies.

Assessing the level of online assessment literacy of this students is one the impactful way that can make lecturer effectively maximize the seventh dimension of online assessment literacy. Despite the limitation exist that these students have not received formal education regarding assessment, broader understanding toward student needs, characteristics and the implementation of technology to strengthen students's life skills in the 21st century have been obtained in their previous semester through *Wawasan Kependidikan* and *Perkembangan Peserta Didik* courses. Those courses are essential in bridging the understanding in designing assessment effectively that they can connected the previous insights that they have received toward students' needs (Dantes et al., 2020). It is strengthened by research from Westley (2011), that highlights the importance of prior conceptions in shaping how prospective teachers organize their learning. These prior experiences serve as a starting point for developing more advanced competencies, including online assessment literacy (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Identifying existing knowledge and gaps will allow instructors to focus on specific areas that need improvement, making future teaching more targeted and efficient. In addition, understanding the current state of second-semester students' online assessment literacy provides valuable insights for curriculum planning. Golden-Biddle et al. (2003) emphasizes the need to bridge knowledge gaps and develop best practices for knowledge transfer. By identifying areas where students are lacking, educators can design strategies to address these gaps when students take formal assessment courses in subsequent semesters. This targeted approach

optimizes the six months of learning in the third semester by focusing on the specific needs of preservice teachers, ensuring they are better prepared to meet the demands of modern education.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

The limitation of this study can be seen on the characteristic of the second-semester prospective teachers. These students have not yet completed the assessment course in their curriculum, which may limit their knowledge and understanding toward assessment practices. As a result, the study only reflects on the initial stages of their online assessment literacy and does not account for more advanced or practical assessment knowledge that may acquire in their studies. Additionally, this study is limited to analyzing online assessment literacy within the context of a specific educational setting and cohort. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to students in different semesters, program, or institutions. By focusing exclusively on this group, the research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of their early-stage online assessment literacy, acknowledging that broader insights may require comparative studies across different levels or contexts.

1.4 Research Question

1. What is the level of online assessment literacy among second-semester prospective teachers in English Language Education study program at Undiksha?

2. Does gender influence the level of online assessment literacy level among second-semesters prospective teachers in English Language Education study program at Undiksha?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of the study can be seen as follows:

1. To investigate the level of online assessment literacy among second-semester prospective teachers by exploring their knowledge toward online assessment practices.

2. To analyze gender influence on online assessment literacy level among second-semesters prospective teachers in English Language Education study program at Undiksha?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of the research was divided into theoretical and practical significance, in which emphasize the contribution of this study in the existing theories and real-world applications. Both theoretical and practical significances are explained as follows:

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to strengthen the knowledge on online assessment literacy, particularly within the context of prospective teacher education. By examining the challenges encountered by second-semester students, it addresses a gap in the literature regarding the preparedness in implementing effective assessment strategies in virtual and hybrid learning environments. The findings provide valuable insights into the adaptation of online assessment, enhancing the quality of prospective teachers' preparation and supporting more effective instructional practices. Additionally, this study serves as a foundation for future

research on the role of technological advancements in assessment, fostering a deeper understanding of their impact on modern education.

1.6.2 Practical Significances

1.6.2.1 Second-semester students

This research is expected to demonstrate the level of second-semesters students' online assessment literacy and provide insights regarding the improvement needed for students to enhance the understanding regarding the seventh dimension in online assessment literacy.

1.6.2.2 Assessment Lecturer

This research is expected to give insights regarding how literate second-semester students in online assessment. The result will demonstrate the strength and weaknesses of this students by dividing their mastery into seventh dimensions of online assessment literacy. Lectures can apply the insights from this research to refine their instructional approaches, ensuring that their students are well-prepared to utilize effective online assessment strategies in learning environments.

1.6.2.3 Ganesha University of Education

The findings of this study provide the gap of the assessment literacy of second-semester prospective teachers. By understanding the weaknesses of this students in implementing the seventh dimension of online assessment literacy, it will help the university to evaluate the current curriculum and prepare the strategic approach to maximize lecturers and students' online assessment practices.

1.6.2.5 Future Research

This research is expected to give insights toward online assessment literacy of prospective teachers on their early education stages. These findings can open broader opportunities for further investigations toward the factors influencing assessment literacy, in different universities and educational levels to solve the assessment challenges.