CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents research background, problem identification, limitation of problem, research question, research objective, the specification of the product, research significance, assumption and the limitation of the development, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Research Background

Recently, literacy as one of important foundations for success in school and life still becomes the most discussed topic around the world. The concept of literacy itself has been evolving in line with the development of era. Literacy in general is defined as learning to read and write (Horning, 2007). The Program for International Student Assessment or PISA (2000) further provided clearer definition of literacy, where it is defined as individual's capacity to understand, use, and reflect on written texts as a mean of developing potential knowledge. In addition, Keefe & Copeland (2011) stated that literacy covers reading, writing, as well as oral skills that enables students to access knowledge and information. Thus, it can be said that literacy, specifically in educational context refers to crucial skills needed by the students to seek knowledge for a better future. In line with

that statement, Faleti (2017) further stated that literacy is also able in helping a person to participate and gain success in social institutions. Besides, literacy is also a source of enjoyment that contributes to a person's understanding toward himself or herself, and also the world. Strickland, et al (2004) further believed that literacy as the ability of learning to read and write is actually an ongoing process, which means the process of becoming a literate person is passed gradually through certain stages. From early ages, a child has been literate in their native language from their surroundings. Such condition should be strengthened when children have entered their school years, so that their literacy development could be supported based on its stages. Strickland, et al (2004) also explainedthat embedding literacy for young learners at school will ease the teacher in monitoring their' literacy development for the following grades. In addition, Scott & Ytreberg (2010) reminded that embedding literacy to young learners is not easy. Certain strategies and extra efforts are needed to keep them enthusiast and willing to read and write.

In developing country like Indonesia, such effort of embedding literacy since early ages remains the biggest challenge in line with the literacy problems that still occur until now. Report presented by PISA (2000) related to Indonesian reading achievement reveals that in 2000 Indonesia is ranked 39th out of 41 participating countries.In 2003 Indonesia is ranked 39th out of 40 participating countries. In 2006, Indonesia is ranked 48th out of 56 participating countries. In 2009, Indonesia is ranked 57th out of 65 participating countries, and is ranked 61[st]out of 65 participating

countries in 2012. Last report which was conductedin 2015, Indonesia is ranked 66[th]out of 72 participating countries. Regarding to this data, it can be said that the Indonesian students' reading achievement is low and unstable. Research by Kharizmi (2015) related to difficulties faced by the elementary students in Indonesia in improving literacy skills. It is found out that the difficulties exist due to the development of elementary students' literacy has not been supported by maximum literacy practice and environment. (1)Students are often directed to talk about language than to practice using the language. (2) Teachers' lack of ability in doing learning tasks and evaluation. (3) Classroom management and students' individual learning are less intensive. (4) Number of textbooks which is not balanced with the number of students, and (5) Evaluation toward learning outcomes is focused on aspect of language skills has not run properly. Those findings are the cause of difficulties faced by the elementary students in improvingtheir literacy.

In addition with those findings, research by Laksono & Retnaningdyah (2018) related to literacy infrastructure in primary schools in Indonesia also found out that many primary schools in East Java still have inadequate literacy infrastructures. It is found out that access to books is poor due to lack of funding, poverty, as well as teacher's incompetence in enhancing students' literacy skills. Those three previous findings have surely answered report presented by PISA itself, and it should be seriously overcome since literacy is a crucial aspect for the students' future. Therefore, effort has been put into action by the Indonesian government by

introducing a program called National Literacy Movement *(Gerakan Literasi Nasional)*in 2016. This program is made and introduced as an intention of decreasing numbersof illiterate people, increasing the quality of Indonesian citizen, and also leading theIndonesia citizens to be able to compete in this 21ˢᵗ century. According to Kemdikbud (2016), this program is divided into three namely School Literacy Movement *(Gerakan Literasi Sekolah)*, Family Literacy Movement *(Gerakan Literasi Keluarga)*, and Society Literacy Movement *(Gerakan Literasi Masyarakat).* The program that is intended to introduce and embed literacy culture at school is The School Literacy Movement (Kemdikbud, 2016). The specific purpose of The School Literacy Movement program is to build the students' character, make the school as a comfortable place to possess knowledge, and enhance the students' awareness and willingness of being literate since early age, especially in Indonesian language.

Meanwhile, nowadays with the very rapid development of global era, students should be prepared to compete globally. Thus, they are highly suggested to be able to master more than one language, especially English. This is due to fact that English has been globally used and become the language that unite people around the world regardless their nationalities, cultural background, or races (Pandarangga, 2015). In line with this fact, Mahu (2012) further explained reasons of why learning English is considered very beneficial; (1) It widens the students' understanding toward other culture and bridge the gap between the other culture and their own culture, so they can see their own culture from different perspective. (2) It

opens the chance for students to have a better career in the future especially when they get the chance of working at firms where English is the medium of communication. (3) It develops the students' life skills. (4) It helps the students to expand their friendship network.

Considering many benefits that are offered by learning English, it is believed that teaching and embedding English language literacy to young learners will be more easily when compared to adult learners. This statement is further supported by Ghasemi & Hashemi (2011), children are categorized as learners who are able to rapidly progress through curriculum and in any situations. This means, introducing as well as teaching young learners about English will enlarge the chance for them to listen, speak, read, and write well the English language like the native speakers of English language itself.

In Indonesia, specifically Bali, English is still considered as a foreign language. Thus, the consideration of teaching English in most of primary schools is commonly started or taught to the students aged around 10 or 11. This is because English lesson is considered as local content curriculum since 1994 (Artini, 2017). Meaning that English is taught to students depending on the needs' of the community or environmental condition where the school is located. Meanwhile in other Southeast Asian countries where English may also not their first language, English is commonly introduced since kindergarten. This might be the reason of why the Indonesian learners' English literacy skill is left behind when compared to other learners among Southeast Asian countries. Considering findings

presented above,a preliminary observation toward the 5th grade students had been conducted inschool target which is located in Denpasar, namely SD Negeri 2 Penatih.

Based on the observation that wasconducted, it was found out that English is taught by the homeroom teacher or also known as *"Guru Kelas"*. This means the homeroom teacher is given the responsibility to teach one class for almost all subjects, and English language might be not the teacher's main expertise.This is proven from the result of observation which reveals that the students are less interested during the English lesson taught by the homeroom teacher. The students easily lose their concentration and easily look bored due to monotonous learning activities implemented by thehomeroom teacher.The teacher looks lack of knowledge about suitable strategies or teaching style to arouse the students' learning interest toward English lesson. The learning activities are mostly listen to explanation given by teacher based on the used book, then answering tasks provided in the book itself.

Such conditions further make the learning process tends to be book oriented. Since it is book oriented, it surely affects the students' literacy skills in English language. The observation result also reveals that some students still face difficulties in reading English words. Some of them cannot get the meaning of the text after reading it. When students face difficulty during reading, they tend to skip the words or lower their voice. In terms of writing, there are also several students who are mistakenly written words which have longer spelling. Besides, lack of learning sources for the

students also affects their English literacy. The 5th grade students at SD Negeri 2 Penatih only use one textbook as a learning source, and it mostly consists of monotonous activity such as answering questions. There is no activities provided in their text book that can encourage the students to enthusiastically participate during the learning process. Students do not get the real experience of using the language properly and cannot feel anenjoyable learning process.

In fact, when talking about the process of embedding English literacy skills to elementary students cannot be done in that way. There should be innovative and fun activities combined with four skills of learning language to help the elementary students enjoy in learning the language. It is further supported by Scott & Ytreberg (2010) who described that young learners are actually very active, enthusiastic, and very imaginative. They love learning from their closest surroundings, using their senses, and curiosity. Besides, young learners also have short attention span, and easy to get bored. Therefore, it would be great if the teacher can embed literacy through fun and innovative activities instead of asking the students to memorize, explain, translate, or simply answers questions from their book.

Findings from previous researchers have shown that there are many alternative ways to arouse young learners' interest toward English lesson. Dzanic & Pejic (2016) found out that the use of songs motivate and help the young learners to develop a love for language learning where they become more imaginative, creative, and eager to learn English language. Other research conducted by Gozcu & Caganaga (2016) found out that the

use of games are also effective in creating a fun classroom atmosphere where the students do not notice that they are learning target language. Moreoverthrough games,the learners become more motivated and show high learning performance.

Considering those previous findings, this present research is further aimed to develop English literacy-based activities for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students in the form of students' worksheet. The English literacy-based activities which are developed could further help the teacher in arousing students' interest toward English language, and developing more innovative and fun learning activities which are more relevant to real life purposes, as well as to be used in enhancing and embedding English literacy for the 5th grade elementary students.

1.2 Problem Identification

From the presented research background, it can be concluded that the identified problems are first, 5th grade students show low interest towards English lesson and it affects their English literacy skills due to teachers' lack of knowledge about proper teaching strategies implemented in the classroom and fun activities topromote the learning process. Second, lack of learning sources such as book and monotonous tasks provided in the book that could not help the 5th students to learn English in proper way.

1.1 Limitation of the Problem

The limitation of the problem was focused on developing English literacy-based activities for the First Semester of 5th Grade Elementary Students in the form of students' worksheet, as well as to examine how effective is the English literacy-based activities that had been developed.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research questions formulated as follow.

1. How to develop English literacy-based activities for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students?

2. What English literacy-based activities are developed for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students?

3. How effective is the English literacy-based activities for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students?

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research formulated as follow.

1.5.1   General Objective

The general objective of this research is to develop the English literacy-based activities for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students.

1.5.2   Specific Objective

1. To describe the process of developing English literacy-based activities for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students.

2. Todescribe the developed English literacy-based activities for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students.

3. To examinethe quality of the developed English literacy-based activities for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students.

1.6 The Specification of the Product

The specification of the product of this research formulated as follow.

1. English literacy-based activities in the form of worksheet were designed to be used by the first semester of 5th grade elementary school students only.

2. English literacy-based activities contained interesting pictures, innovative and fun activities. The result of the product based on this research would have different characteristics from the usual worksheet.

1.7 Research Significance

This research was expected to give theoretical and practical significance. Theoretical and practical significance of this research could be described as follow.

1.7.1   Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study is expected to be able to provide more information and knowledge of introducing English literacy through fun activities in the classroom.

1.7.2   Practical Significance

1.   For Teacher

This study is expected to be able to develop teacher's ability and innovation in improving students' English literacy through fun activities.

2.   For Students

This study is expected to be able to increase students' motivation in learning English through fun activities as well as improving their literacy skills.

3.   For Other Researcher

This study is expected to provide alternative sources when conducting related studies.

1.8 Assumption and Limitation of the Development

The reference about literacy, real world literacy, real-life activities, and young leaners' stages of literacy development as the

supportive literature would be used to identify the appropriate materials and level of the English literacy-based activities itself. Thus, the assumption and limitation of the development of English literacy-based activities as a learning source formulated as follows.

1. The product is developed based on the syllabus and characteristics of 5th grade students. Thus, the product is only for the 5th grade elementary school students.

2. The product is developed in the form of students' worksheet. Further research is needed to make the product become better and better.

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

Here are some key terms explained based on the conceptual definition and operational definition in order to avoid misunderstanding in defining the terms used in this research.

1.9.1 Conceptual Definition

1. Literacy

PISA (2000) defines literacy as an individual's capacity to understand, use, and reflect on written texts as a means of achieving the goals, developing potential knowledge in order to participate in the society. Keefe&Copeland (2011) states that literacy is considered as skills that covers reading, writing, as well as oral skills that enables

students to access knowledge and also information. In addition, Ariati, Padmadewi,&Agustini (2013)state that literacy refers to an oral skill requires the students to be able to speak fluently, independently, and effectively in the society.

2. Real World Literacy

According to Purcell-Gates, et al (2010) real world literacy refers literacy that is intended for real-life purposes.

3. Young Learners

Young learners are normally children between 2 to 14 years old (Harmer, 2007). In addition, Alkhamali (2013) explains students of primary school normally around 6 to 12 years old tend to considered as young learners.

1.9.2   Operational Definition

1. Literacy

In this study, literacy refers to the English literacy-based activities developed by the researcher for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students. In which, the English literacy-based activities which are developed are in accordance with the topic and the learning materials existed in the syllabus.

2. Real World Literacy

In this study, real world literacy refers to the English literacy-based activities which are developed for the first semester of 5th grade elementary students in line with the purpose of real-life situation.

3.   Young Learners

In this study, young learners refer to the first semester of 5th grade elementary students whose age is around eleven years old, particularly in North Bali that have been chosen as the subject of the study, and have been taught English language as a local content in their school.