CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the study which covers research background, problem identification, research limitation, research questions, research objectives, and research significances.

1.1 Research Background

In the current development of education system, students' role as the subject of learning is emphasized (Hanik, 2020). It means that students should have active position since the very beginning of the learning process. Salkhanova (2016) states that students as the subject of learning should be productive, creative, and competent. Students are no more listeners but also allocators who are ready in doing active observation and information collection. Students are given chance in expanding their creative potential and intellectual needs. Then as the result of learning, students should be able to practice and apply their communication competence. That is why nowadays educational curriculums promote the "learning by doing" activities so that students can implement their role as true subject of learning (Rosada, 2016).

K13 or *Kurikulum 2013* is the newest educational guidance used in Indonesian primary and secondary school. This curriculum is applied in stages since the academic year of 2013/2014 (Sutiyarti et al., 2016). *Kurikulum 2013* acquires the students to learn through five segments. They are observing, questioning, experimenting, associating, and communicating (Puspitasari, 2020). Through these segments, students

are expected to be more active in finding and evaluating information by themselves so that they can experience their own learning and apply it in real life situations. It is line with one of the purposes of *Kurikulum 2013* which is developing students' independence in learning (Abdul Rahman, 2019). As what mentioned in *Permendikbud No. 81A Tahun 2013*, students are also expected to develop a lifelong learning skill. That is why their independence in learning is really needed.

Independent learning is also known as self-directed learning (SDL). Specifically, Knowles (1975) as cited in Hill et al. (2020) defines self-directed learning as a process in which learners take initiative to diagnose their learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify learning sources, apply appropriate learning strategies and evaluate their learning outcomes, with or without the help from others. Meanwhile, Gharti (2019) describes self-directed learning (SDL) as self-initiated, personal and intentional learning. It establishes the involvement of personal relevant learning goals and emphasizes the use of various resources and the responsibility to learn. In other words, it can be said that in self- directed learning, the students are provided with an autonomy and a responsibility to control their own learning so that they can be more self-initiated in learning.

Several studies have found that self-directed learning can give positive impacts for students. Devi et al. (2016) state that self-directed learning can enhance students' cognitive skill by stimulating them to critically think and understand the learning topic. It is because in self -directed learning, the students are given a responsibility which can encourage them to do so. Similar opinion delivered by Zhou and Li (2020) who find that the autonomous learning promoted by self-directed learning stimulates active

inquiry, active thinking, and mutual cooperation. Through this process, students' performance in learning can be improved. Meanwhile, Van Woezik et al. (2019) note that self- directed learning can also increase students' motivation in learning. It happens because self-directed learning enables the students to get more freedom in exploring their curiosity. That is why the students feel motivated to learn.

Based on those studies, it is inferred that self-directed learning is an important component of learning. It even becomes more important in facing this 21st century era. According to Van der Walt (2016), self-directed learning lets the students to experience a sense of self-awareness to master a particular chunk of knowledge or necessary skill and then slowly begin to manage the learning process. This kind of experience is useful to build the habit of lifelong learning (Hill et al., 2020). As we know, lifelong learning skill is important in 21st century because nowadays people are required to learn throughout their lives so that they can survive in global society. Another reason is self-directed learning encourages the students to be responsible (Timpau, 2015). When the students practice self-directed learning, they take charge of their own learning by managing the time, finding sources, determining strategies, and so on. It helps the students to recognize their responsibility and develop them to be responsible people. As stated by Brandt (2020), to survive in 21st century workforce, an individual should be responsible and knows how to handle their accountability. Moreover, in 21st century learning the students are viewed as autonomous, self-determining, 21st century learners (Hirschman & Wood, 2018). Their independence in learning are required and their role as the center of learning is emphasized. Therefore, the implementation of self-directed learning is important for the students so that they can face the demands in 21st century.

In addition, self-directed learning can also influence the development of students' 21st century learning skills which consist of collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking (4C skills) (Yu & Wan Mohammad, 2019). As explained by Erdogan (2019), 4C skills are essential elements in 21st century learning and integrating it in the learning process are really expected. Hill et al. (2020) note that the group or teammate project in SDL can increase the collaboration between students. Even though self-directed learning promotes independent learning, it does not mean that students are isolated from each other. Group or teammate project are really possible to be conducted. Furthermore, the involvement of teacher-students and student-student interaction in SDL influences the development of students' communication skill (Van Woezik et al., 2019). Meanwhile, the need to acquire information, plan, and evaluate the learning activities in SDL (Geng et al., 2019) encourages the students to develop their creativity and critical thinking. Since school graduates are facing 21st century era in which there is tight competition in labor force, self-directedness, creativity, high order thinking skills, and ability to work as a team are needed to be developed and integrated to increase the quality as human resources.

Moreover, in its relation with learner autonomy, self-directed learning is often said as the humanistic approach which result-in learner autonomy in learning. Curry et al. (2017) state that SDL provides set of skills which contributes to students' autonomy. Through SDL, the students can be more autonomous in setting learning goals, making learning plans, determining learning sources, identifying learning strategies, assessing learning outcomes, and so on. Similarly, Gharti (2019) argues that SDL can be the best method to develop learner autonomy. A lot of literatures present strategies to increase

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learner autonomy which closely related to SDL strategy. It can be inferred that students who are self-directed in learning have bigger capacity in controlling their learning and managing their autonomy.

On March 2020, due to the global outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture published a new regulation through *Surat Edaran Mendikbud No 4 Tahun 2020*, in which the students are required to learn from home. It is mentioned that the teaching and learning process should be conducted online during this pandemic. This regulation may not be easy to be implemented. It is because not all teachers have good skill in developing online learning and not all students have good access to online learning (Sangsawang, 2020). In the other hand, this condition can be a good chance for the students to develop self-directed learning (Hanik, 2020). The reason is because in this condition the students need to raise their awareness to manage and monitor their own learning. They should take initiative in order to catch up with the learning without expecting direct assistance from the teachers.

This urgency also becomes the reason for teacher to conduct online learning activities that can promote self-directed learning and increase students' autonomy. Tjakradidjaja et al. (2016) note that teacher is responsible to facilitate the development of students' SDL ability. It implies that self-directed learning does not necessarily mean independent learning where the students study alone without the help from other. The help from teacher is really needed so that the students are able to implement self-directed learning effectively. Moreover, Tan and Koh (2014) argue that self-directed learning can take place in various contexts include online learning. The key of the

success is located in how teacher can design learning activities which engage the students in self-directed learning process. From the explanation above, it is concluded that self-directed learning is needed to be conducted especially in online learning during COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, teacher as the facilitator of the learning plays crucial role in the success of the implementation.

Looking at the importance of self-directed learning, this current study aimed to figure out teacher's perception toward self-directed learning and learning activities conducted by the teacher during online learning that could promote self-directed learning. Yet, because of the limited time, this study was conducted in a senior high school located in Badung regency. Senior high school was chosen because self-directed learning is not really influenced by gender and age of the students. It can be said that self-directed learning works on high school students, although it seems to be more challenging (Richards, 2001). Meanwhile, the participant of this study was an English teacher in the senior high school chosen. According to Vu & Shah (2016), in EFL teaching and learning, the students who are trained to be self-directed will acquire and master the language easier because they use to take initiative to learn the language autonomously and independently with or without teacher assistance. It can be said that self-directed learning is expected to be happened in English language learning and EFL teachers are suggested to adopt SDL practices. Therefore, English teacher was selected to see how the teacher had implemented self-directed learning in the teaching and learning process, especially in the context of online learning.

1.2 Problem Identification

From the research background above, the problems that can be identified are:

1. Student-centered learning becomes the focus of 21st century learning. This learning style places the students as the subject of learning who are actively observing and solving problem by themselves. Students-centered learning (SDL) is closely related with self-directed learning. The development of SDL is also expected in the learning process because it can help the students to build lifelong learning skill which is important in 21st century.

2. The need to develop self-directed learning requires teacher to teach and also motivate the students to be more autonomous in learning. Moreover, teacher has a role to facilitate the learning and help the students to acquire SDL ability. The way that can be done by teacher in supporting the development of students' SDL ability is by conducting learning activities that reflect self-directed learning principles.

3. In this COVID-19 pandemic, teaching and learning process still should be conducted even though not as normal as usual. According to *Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia* (2020), the learning process is done from home through online learning. Here, there is an urgency for the students to implement self-directed learning and an urgency for the teacher to conduct online learning activities that promote self-directed learning on the part of the students.

4. In conducting online learning, teacher should have good skills in teaching so that meaningful learning process can be achieved. Meaningful learning process

enables the students to experience their own learning and apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

1.3 Scope of Study

This study was limited to know English teacher's perception about self-directed learning in the context of online learning, the activities conducted by the English teacher in online learning class, and self-directed learning components that were found during online teaching and learning process. This study was conducted in grade 10 of SMA Negeri 1 Mengwi. One class and one English teacher were observed in this study.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions of this study can be formulated as follows:

1. How do English teacher of Grade 10 in SMA Negeri 1 Mengwi perceive self-directed learning?
2. What activities are assigned by the English teacher during online teaching and learning process?
3. What self-directed learning components that can be identified in the activities assigned by the English teacher in online learning?

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study can be stated as follows:

1. To describe the perception of English teacher of Grade 10 in SMA Negeri 1 Mengwi about Self – Directed Learning;

2. To describe the activities assigned by the English teacher in online teaching and learning process.

3. To describe self-directed learning components that can be identified in the activities assigned by the English teacher in online learning?

1.6 Research Significance

1. Theoretical Significance

   The theoretical significance of this study is to provide empirical evidence about SDL components in online learning during COVID-19 pandemic. This evidence is expected to contribute to the nature of online learning in EFL context in general, or in self-directed learning in particular

2. Practical Significance

   For teachers, this study can give awareness and consideration to include SDL components in the teaching and learning activities.

   For the education policy makers, this study can provide special training about the way to conduct online learning which encourage the students to be more autonomous in learning

For the future research, hopefully the result of this study can be used as beneficial reference in giving new insights about self-directed learning implementation in Indonesian context.