

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Literacy in this 21st century is considered an important thing. In line with that, Khairuddiniyah (2017) stated that today's global life requires the necessity to read well, or called literacy. According to Keefe and Copeland (2011), Lakstian (2016), and Rintaningrum (2009), literacy refers to the skills of being literate that are not only represented by reading and writing but also other skills such as listening, speaking, and arithmetic in the real context. In this case, literacy could be implemented in all subjects, including English. English in Indonesia starts to be taught in junior high school as a compulsory subject to help the students ready to face this 21st century (Ayu, Diem, & Vianty, 2017). Moreover, the students are required to be good at every language skill in this global era, including English literacy skills.

In the same way, the students have to be literate (Khairuddiniyah, 2017). It is supported by Rintaningrum (2009), who stated that literacy is needed in current community conditions and school since it is considered an important aspect in national development and the global market. In this study, the term literacy used refers to English literacy. Literacy refers to the skills of being literate that is not only represented by reading and writing but also other skills such as listening, speaking, and arithmetic in the real context (Keefe & Copeland, 2011; Lakstian, 2016; Rintaningrum, 2009). Therefore, English literacy is a set of English skills

that have to be mastered by the students to help them to apply the knowledge in the real context.

Furthermore, becoming literate will help the students apply their knowledge to the real world and strengthen English teaching and learning quality in Indonesia (Khairuddiniyah, 2017). Besides, having good literacy skills allows people to receive information and use it to participate actively in the larger society and international activities such as economic and education activities (Lakstian, 2016). It also leads to success in school and life (Rintaningrum, 2009).

However, several studies found that Indonesia is at the below-average level in terms of literacy level based on PISA data (Argina et al., 2017; Ayunin, Mirizon, & Rosmalina, 2019; Dewantara et al., 2019; Rosana et al., 2020). A preliminary informal interview and observation done by the researcher in the context of Bali indicated that the students also faced the same problems related to English literacy skills. It showed that the students were not equipped with the necessary skills to survive in life and it could be seen from how the students lack of basic English skills. It is the same within the context of Buleleng Regency, in which the students do not know how to read announcements or instructions in English properly. Besides, the students also lack tips on listening to English announcements in public places. In addition, the students also lack confidence to express their opinion both in written and spoken forms.

The phenomena explained above imply that literacy in Indonesia, especially in Buleleng Regency, is a problem that needs to be solved (Ayu, Diem, & Vianty, 2017; Padmadewi, Artini, & Suarnajaya, 2019). Argina et al. (2017)

and Ayunin et al. (2019) supported that based on the data from PISA from 2000 to 2012, Indonesia is in the below average in reading literacy level in case of international ranking. Further, based on the OECD report on PISA 2018, Indonesia obtained 396 as the score; meanwhile, the average score was 489 (Rosana et al., 2020). It indicated that the students only use the basic or daily content and procedural knowledge. Ayunin et al. (2019) also found that the students' PISA reading literacy was in level 3 (28.27), far below the school minimum mastery criteria (75). In addition, the result of PISA 2018 indicated that the average reading ability in 2018 is the lowest point from 2003-2018 (Safari, 2020). In conclusion, it could be said that Indonesia is almost at the lowest rank among countries that participated in PISA year to year.

In line with that condition, there is a policy proposed by the government that emphasizes the process of learning English should increase the students' competency to be able to communicate in English in terms of real context or called as literate in English (Department of Education and Culture Number 19, 2005). Khairuddiniyah (2017) added that English literacy is necessary in line with how English is identified as the global language. Moreover, the school literacy movement will help to increase literacy standards and face ASEAN Economic Community, AFTA, and MEA (Ayu, Diem, & Vianty, 2017; Khairuddiniyah, 2017). Therefore, improving English literacy skills is needed (Padmadewi, Artini, & Suarnajaya. 2019).

Related to the facts above, Argina et al. (2017) found that one of the reasons behind the stagnant position of Indonesia in PISA is the learning

evaluation or the assessment. In this case, the assessment process in Indonesia, which is the National Examination, only assesses the students' recognition knowledge that only requires memorization instead of analysis. Nurdiana (2020) also found that the teachers do not practice the knowledge of their assessment literacy in their classroom. Even some teachers are still lacking in assessment, especially about assessing the students' language performance.

According to Amua-Sekyi (2016), Marhaeni et al. (2020), Padmadewi and Artini (2019), Rahmawati, Utomo, and Ahmadi (2018), and Ratminingsih, Artini, and Padmadewi (2017), one of the crucial parts in teaching and learning activity is assessment. It is also said that assessment could be used to measure the students' improvement along the process and evaluate the students' strengths and weaknesses. Gultom (2016) and Nurdiana (2020) added that language teachers have to choose or select the most appropriate assessment for the students. In this case, it could be said that the problem of English literacy in Indonesia has a strong relationship with the teachers' assessment (Argina et al., 2017; Nurdiana, 2020). Therefore, an appropriate assessment program needs to be developed to cover this problem. Padmadewi and Artini (2017) added that one of the solutions to cover the problem of English literacy in Indonesia is by developing an English literacy development model for the students (Padmadewi & Artini, 2017). It is also needed to develop the assessment instrument as part of important things in the learning process (Padmadewi, Artini, & Suarnajaya, 2019). The assessment instrument could be used in the learning process to teach English literacy.

Besides, the teachers urgently need to be literate in language assessment, especially how to make a good test or the most appropriate method to assess their students. The minimum assessment literacy could not lead the teacher to help the students achieve the maximum performance results (Nurdiana, 2020). The same opinion comes from Nikmard and Zenouzagh (2020), in which one of the important factors in English teaching is the teachers' assessment literacy. Therefore, the teachers need to understand the concept of assessment and its important parts. However, the preliminary situational analysis in the forms of observation and interview done by the principal researcher found that the teachers in the context of Bali have not emphasized the use of assessment for learning and assessment as learning in the class. In the other hand, the teachers only focused on the use of assessment of learning in the form of multiple-choice test.

Further, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the educators are forced to adopt the other way of teaching that could cover the learning process (Setyowati, Sukmawan, & El-Sulukkiyah, 2021). In this case, one of the solutions to deal with this situation is digital technology. Maryuningsih, Hidayat, Riandi, and Rustaman (2020) and Setyowati, Sukmawan, and El-Sulukkiyah (2021) supported that during the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning is considered as the best learning solution. Moreover, online learning as part of technology also contributes to education in Indonesia (Zainuddin & Keumala, 2018). Because of that, it is needed to design the most appropriate teaching and learning process and its assessment in online learning, especially in the context of blended online learning.

In line with that, there are several previous studies from Damayanti et al. (2017), Kuniawati and Sukardiyono (2018), Maryuningsih et al. (2020), Puspitayani et al. (2020), Rahmawati et al. (2018), Ratminingsih, Artini, and Padmadewi (2017), Rosana et al. (2020), Samritin and Suryanto (2016), and Wahyuni et al. (2019). Those previous studies developed assessment instruments to measure the students' problem-solving skills, scientific literacy, 4C skills, language skills, attitudes abilities, performance, critical thinking skills, and higher-order thinking skills in the context of online and offline learning. However, little attention is given to issue on developing assessment instruments, especially assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning instruments to assess blended English literacy learning. This is related to the result of the preliminary observation. The preliminary observation and interview done by the researcher towards several English teachers in Buleleng Regency indicates that the teachers in Buleleng Regency only emphasize assessment of learning in today's learning situation. Assessment as learning and assessment for learning is often neglected despite its importance.

To conclude the above review, it indicated that the learners might improve their English literacy with the use of appropriate assessment. Since English in Indonesia started to be taught in junior high school as compulsory and considering today's situation that requires the learning process to be done in blended online learning, it seems appropriate to start developing assessment instruments for blended English literacy learning for junior high school students. In this case, this research was done in Buleleng Regency and the assessment instruments were

developed for seventh-grade students in semester two as part of a larger research. Therefore, this research developed assessment instruments for blended English literacy learning, especially for seventh-grade students in semester two.

1.2 PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

In this 21st century era, the students are required to become literate in all subjects, including English. In this case, English started to be taught in Indonesia since junior high school as a compulsory subject to help the students face this 21st century. However, the result of PISA as well as preliminary observation and interview done by the researcher indicated that literacy in Indonesia still becomes a problem. One of the reasons behind this condition is the learning evaluation or the assessment that only assesses the students' recognition knowledge instead of analysis.

It is also found that several teachers are still lacking in assessment. Moreover, the preliminary observation and interview done by the researcher indicated that the teachers in Bali did not emphasize the use of assessment for learning and assessment as learning in the class. Further, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the teachers to conduct the teaching and learning process in the form of blended online learning. In the context of Buleleng Regency, the teachers in Buleleng Regency only emphasized assessment of learning in today's learning situation and neglected the use of assessment as learning and assessment for learning despite its importance.

1.3 PROBLEM LIMITATION

Based on the problem identification of the study, the focus of this study is limited to developing assessment instruments, especially assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning to assess English literacy in the context of blended learning for seventh-grade students in semester two as part of a larger research. Further, the focus of this study is limited to developing the assessment instruments based on the needs analysis done in the Define stage to assess the students' English literacy especially English as foreign language at SMP Negeri 1 Singaraja and SMP Negeri 6 Singaraja.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the research background and problem identification, the research questions are formulated as follows.

- 1) What are the needs in developing assessment instruments to assess English literacy in blended learning for grade 7 semester 2 in Buleleng Regency?
- 2) How are the assessment instruments developed?
- 3) How is the quality of the developed assessment instruments?

1.5 RESEARCH PURPOSES

Based on the research questions proposed above, the research purposes are formulated as follows.

- 1) To analyze the needs in developing assessment instruments to assess English literacy in blended learning for grade 7 semester 2 in Buleleng Regency.
- 2) To analyze the process of developing the assessment instruments.
- 3) To analyze the quality of the developed assessment instruments.

1.6 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

This research is expected to give theoretical and practical significance to improve learning quality.

1) Theoretically

The theoretical significance of this research is to enrich study in assessment and TEFL courses, especially literacy-based English learning and authentic assessment in English learning.

2) Practically

The practical significance of this research is as follows.

- For Teacher

This research could enrich English teachers' knowledge of blended English literacy learning assessment techniques. The teachers could understand the strategy to maximize the authenticity of the assessment in the learning process, especially literacy-based assessment in the learning process.

- For Other Researcher

This research could be used as reference for other researcher to create similar product in the form of assessment instruments as well as to enrich study in assessment and TEFL courses.

- For Post Graduate Program of English Language Education

This research could benefit English Language Education post-graduate program as empirical study and learning material.

- For Students

This study could give the students more chances to use English in the real context to improve their English literacy.

1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

In order to avoid misunderstanding toward the developed product, which is in the form of assessment instruments, the operational definitions of variables used in this research could be seen as follows.

- 1) Assessment Instrument

Assessment instrument is a tool used to assess and improve the students' knowledge and performance through the obtained information.

- 2) Assessment of Learning

Assessment of learning is a kind of assessment that summarize and reports the students' learning outcomes at a certain time.

3) Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning is a kind of assessment that is used to monitor the students' performance and to improve the learning process.

4) Assessment as Learning

Assessment as learning is a kind of assessment that involves the students actively in the assessment process.

