CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is intended to investigate EFL students' Self-Directed Learning in completing *virtual service programs* throughout the Covid-19 outbreak. This chapter consists of five, the background of the study, the scope of the study, the research question, the purpose of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

Due to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) spreading over the world, including in Indonesia, the government was forced to create new legislation requiring students to study at home so they must be able to study independently. This study's goal is to look into a case study of EFL students who were identified during the Covid-19 outbreak through activities in a virtual service program. Students are viewed as independent 21st-century learners in this day and age. Self-directed learning (SDL) is a process in which people take the initiative to meet their learning needs, either with or without assistance from others.

As a result, the government enacted a new law during the pandemic that required all teaching and learning to take place online. Students may benefit from this circumstance to hone their SDL abilities. Students must raise their awareness in these situations in order to regulate and supervise their learning.

Without relying on the teacher for assistance directly, they must take the initiative to make up lost ground in their studies. This urgency is another justification for teachers to engage in online learning activities that can help students develop a feeling of self-awareness as they work to master a particular skill before gradually taking control of the learning process. Students can become more independent through SDL when it comes to establishing learning goals, creating lesson plans, choosing resources for learning, identifying learning tactics, evaluating learning outcomes, and other tasks. According to other studies, SDL may be the most effective strategy for fostering student independence (Gharti, 2019). We can draw the conclusion that pupils who are independent in their learning are better able to manage their autonomy and govern their learning.

Previous research has also shown that EFL students have a positive attitude toward SDL (Shaalan, 2019). However, many of them faced some problems in understanding the nature of self-study and practicing it effectively. Likewise, other research shows that EFL students have positive perceptions of SDL (Gharti, 2019). They see SDL as a necessary learning strategy that can help them become more independent in their learning. Other research findings show that SDL is moderately and positively correlated with (Durnalı, 2020). This implies that SDL has an important role in creating successful online learning, and online learning can be a positive medium for SDL development.

1.2   The Scope of This Study

`   This study only focuses on two participants who have carried out and completed virtual community service activities independently during the pandemic. These two participants are English students who really have conducted the virtual service program. They were recruited in this study for several reasons; they intend to contribute and be involved in this research, then these two participants are able to represent the data that researchers need, in this case, the virtual service program they carry out. This study only focuses on EFL students' self-directed learning while carrying out Virtual service program activities independently in the Covid-19 pandemic era. In terms of the virtual service indicates the service that was carried out during the pandemic in 2020, which was the first program of IAIN Kendari.

1.3 The Research Question

Based on the above background, the researcher formulated the research question as follows: *"What are the students' SDL in conducting Virtual service program during Covid-19 pandemic?"*

1.4   The Objective of This Study

This study aims to investigate students' SDL in conducting Virtual service program during Covid-19 pandemic.

1.5   Significance of the Study

The findings of this study can be used as a reference for those who intend to conduct research in investigating the Self-Directed Learning of EFL students in completing their virtual service program during the pandemic.

In the primary, this research will be very useful for the university in designing the program of virtual service program later to make a better education and to serve convenient learning for students who intend to learn in university, particularly at IAIN Kendari. Then this research also will be very useful for students who will do service virtually independently during the pandemic in the upcoming years. In addition, this research is a useful for lecturers to find out cases of student SDL in completing service virtual during the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.6   Definition of Key Terms

Self-Directed Learning is a learning method that is carried out by a person to improve his skills and achievement through his own initiative in planning, implementing, and evaluating an individual's ability to manage Learning in accordance with his autonomy, even though later he will need help or advice from others. *Self-Directed Learning* is also known by several terms, namely *self-planned Learning*, *Independent Learning, self-education, self-instruction, self-teaching, self-study,* and *autonomous Learning.* All these terms refer to the same meaning related to learning independence, namely the ability of students to carry out learning activities independently without depending on others to achieve learning goals.

Self-Directed Learning is *Self-Directed Learning* is a process of increasing knowledge, skills, achievements, and individuals' *self-development* that begins with their own initiative by *learning self-planned* and *self-conducted Learning, realizing, learning needs, learning goals,* making *learning strategies, assessing learning outcomes,* and having their own responsibility to be agents of change in Learning.

Self-Directed Learning (SDL) is a skill where a person is able to determine for himself and choose the goals he wants to achieve, plan strategies to be carried out, try to solve problems, manage himself, and evaluate thoughts and performance that have been done. These skills will increase the knowledge skills and achievements of individuals.

Self-Directed Learning in this study refers to the ability of students to conduct independent online community service activities during the pandemic. This research refers to the obstacles and cases that students get while conducting independent online community service activities.

EFL stands for *"English as a Foreign Language"* this program helps students over the age of 16 to improve their English language skills. *English Foreign Language* also means *English Foreign Language.* This EFL teaching applies in countries where the majority do not use English for daily communication but still study English as a preparation for career prospects such as continuing studies at foreign universities or who have good English language skills qualifications, job requirements, requirements for scholarship, requirements for joining the international community, etc.

Furthermore, Indonesia is one of the countries that learn English Foreign Language. So, students in Indonesia learn English based on the above needs. And English is very rarely found in the daily communication of Indonesian people.

In another sense, EFL stands for English as a Foreign Language and applies to the teaching of English in countries where the majority do not speak English as a means of communication. It is a country where students are eager to learn English because of their career prospects and also because of their desire to migrate and work in a foreign country where English is spoken. EFL can also be considered a hot spot to work as an EFL teacher. In such places, students study English as a subject for many years and often have a good understanding of vocabulary and grammar but need more exposure to conditions where people only speak English. If you want to work as an EFL teacher, there are many opportunities for you in these Asian countries.

The *Community Service Program* (KKN-DR) is a compulsory course for students related to the direct application of scholarships and community service. Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic is hitting the world, including Indonesia. Also, regarding the importance of her service to students, she should organize her program virtual service program from home or the virtual service program (KKN-DR).

A virtual service program is designed to prepare students to achieve three main goals. First, a virtual service program aims to be a learning tool for virtual service program students to apply the various theories they learn

in lectures to their fields of specialization. Second, virtual service programs can provide positive value to improve the quality of life of the community. Third, the virtual service program is a forum for building partnerships between universities that care about their communities and build an image and is also used as a promotional event for the universities in question.

However, with the current situation in the world, especially when the government declared a health emergency in Indonesia, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, which does not require physical contact or visits to other regions, is expanding. Indonesia needs a breakthrough for virtual service programs. A model that does not require physical contact with another person and does not touch the ground, hence the idea and idea of the virtual service program held by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Virtual service program stands for community service program- From Home. You can tell from the name virtual service program is running without a virtual service program going to the place together, but each Carry out a virtual service program at Home or around your residence attendees. Tighten the media on the Internet, but the result At least it's still usable in the community.

The surrounding community follows the general context. Coronavirus disease 2019, commonly abbreviated as COVID-19, is an infectious disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, a type of coronavirus. People with COVID-19 may experience fever, dry cough, and difficulty breathing. The virus can be spread from person to person through droplets that are often produced when

coughing or sneezing. The droplet range is typically up to 1 meter. Droplets can stick to objects, but they don't stay in the air for long. The time from exposure to the virus to the onset of clinical symptoms is 1 to 14 days, with an average of 5 days. Therefore, sick people should wear a mask to minimize the spread of droplets. So far, the cause of coronavirus is unknown, but it is known that the virus can be spread by animals and transmitted from species to species, including humans. The virus originated in Wuhan, China, and emerged in December 2019. Infected people show mild symptoms such as fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.