

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, LIMITATION, AND RECOMMENDATION**

This chapter contains three parts. The first part is a conclusion of the findings and discussion that is previously presented. Then, through this chapter also, this study highlights its implication and limitation. The last important thing that must be pointed out is the recommendation of this study. Concluding remark of this chapter is illustrated at the end.

#### **5.1. Conclusion**

This study was conducted to address three research objectives. The first aim is to investigate factors that EFL secondary school teachers consider in grade decision-making in online learning during the pandemic. Second, this study describes how EFL secondary school teachers provided measurable and observable evidence in their assessments and identifies grade decision-making that leads to grade inflation during the pandemic. The last, this study was conducted to study moral justifications of grade decision-making and grade inflation done by EFL secondary school teachers in online learning during the pandemic.

For the first research objective, this study yields that EFL Secondary school teachers took into account all grade factors: internal and external factors; academic, cognitive, or product, and non-academic, non-cognitive, and process factors. The internal factor includes beliefs, values, knowledge background, training and workshop, and expectations in assessment to explain how they performed. Meanwhile, in external factors, they regulated the emergency remote teaching curriculum for the assessment standards, high stakes test or the minimum mastery criteria (KKM), regional grading policies and particular school policies, and parents' involvement in assigning students' grades. Besides, they assessed students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

For knowledge mastery, teachers followed basic competencies mandated by the emergency remote teaching curriculum. In online learning during the pandemic, they always assessed knowledge mastery with its assessment rubrics on each topic

in every daily exercise, task, and unit test. They conducted middle and final exams and students' academic participation in online learning during the pandemic using a Learning Management System (LMS) and several online platform assessments such as Google Classroom, Kahoot, Quizizz, Google Form, Zoom Meeting, and WhatsApp. For the skill domain, during the pandemic, most secondary English teachers examined students' English skills and managed assessment rubrics by adapting them to the online platforms they used. Not only in learning, but teachers also valued English skills in related competitions students followed or won.

For the attitude domains, EFL Secondary school teachers considered students' engagement, attendance, and extracurricular. They recognized how students engaged and were responsive in the learning platforms teachers used in the forms of replying to chats in WhatsApp, putting comments in Google Classroom, participating in Zoom discussions, and, more importantly, being punctual in submitting given tasks. Students' attendance became the most contributing factor in assigning scores and grades in online learning during the pandemic. Besides, they considered students' extracurricular activities as a source of assessing attitude, but during the pandemic, the activities were inactive. To conclude, EFL Secondary school teachers employed a hodgepodge grading as the combination of two distinguishing factors: internal and external factors, academic, cognitive, product and non-academic, non-cognitive, or process factors.

The second research question of this study reveals that EFL secondary school teachers provided measurable and observable evidence in their assessment rubrics, particularly for the knowledge, cognitive, or academic domain. Regardless, one of the participants claimed that students' English skills could not be delivered during the pandemic and discovered that her assessment rubric, which supports her lesson plan, only assessed attitude and knowledge. Also, one participant initially concerned about students' products cannot confirm her statement since, in document analysis, skill aspects were absent from her assessment rubric. The absence of skill rubrics in some of the participants' documents questions the grade decision-making done by the teachers. The fact that online learning they had during the pandemic did not accommodate them to implement what they had obtained from

assessment training and workshop, practically to observe and evaluate students' attitude domains. Still lacking assessment evidence in taking into account hodgepodge grading. Moreover, the sympathy they had for students' situation during the pandemic became one of the reasons increasing students' grades indicates grade inflation.

The last, grade decision-making and grade inflation done by EFL secondary school teachers in online learning during the pandemic have moral justifications aligned with the morality of testing and assessment explained by (Johnston, 2008). Their grade decision-making contains the paradoxes of subjectivity and a necessary evil. Besides, moral justifications for the grade inflation they done are: they assigned scores and grades higher than the reality considered the teacher-student relation, which corresponds to the internal factors; students' assessment result and their actual knowledge of the language are an indirect relationship and also neither language nor competence in language is naturally measurable; they assessed beyond the language in which students' attitude such as engagement, attendance, and extracurricular; the idea of good or bad students that teachers had during the pandemic in the online learning affected the assessment they made. This moral consideration was based on teachers' beliefs; thus, whether it is right or wrong is still undeniable.

## **5.2. Implication**

The findings of this study give significant implications from theoretical, practical, and policy perspectives. First, theoretically, this study draws comprehensive grade decision-making factors from several experts. Hence, it can enrich English language testing and assessment literature and becomes a reference. Secondly, this study's findings give evaluations of the implementation of educational policies in national, school, or local regulations in the emergency remote teaching curriculum during the pandemic. Lastly, this study is practically helpful as pedagogical and moral considerations for EFL secondary school teachers to assign students grades in typical online learning or distance learning in the post-pandemic situation.

### 5.3. Limitation

This study has several limitations. First, the study context occurred during the pandemic; hence, the findings cannot be generalized to other situations. However, this study also concerns grade decision-making and assessment in online learning; thus, it can be a reference and evaluation for other typical online learning. Second, the categories and themes do not emerge from the interview data but are based on several frameworks of grade decision-making factors: internal or external (McMillan and Nash, 2000; see also Cheng & Sun, 2015); academic or non-academic records (Lawrence, Rober, Cross, and Frary, 1996; McMillan, Myran, and Workman, 2002), cognitive or non-cognitive performances (Brookhart, 2016; Arrafii, 2020), or another word is product or process factors (Guskey 1996; Guskey & Link, 2019), and hodgepodge grading, a combination of two classifications mentioned above (Mcmillan & Workman, 1998; McMillan & Nash, 2000).

### 5.4. Recommendation

This study recommends that Indonesian policymakers, language testing and evaluation experts, and educators create and evaluate assessment standards pedagogically and morally justified in face-to-face and online learning settings, such as distance learning, blended learning, or any typical online learning in the post-pandemic situation. Remarkably, respective stakeholders should consider having training and workshops about online assessment that is more practical than theoretical; hence, teachers can assess students thoroughly. For future research, having emerging themes in the interview data is highly suggested to discover holistic grade decision-making practices of EFL teachers at secondary schools. Lastly, specifically for English teachers, the findings of this study suggest they can evaluate students' attitudes in the online learning setting; hence, in the future, difficulties and challenges of using online assessment will not trouble them in assessing and grading students.

### **5.5. Concluding Remark**

This chapter concludes the findings and discussion of this study, followed by its implications, limitations, and recommendations. The findings of this study are expected to have implications even though this study still has some limitations. Then, hopefully, several parties can carry out the recommendations of this study.