

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Education has been changed by covid-19. Within a short period, the routines of millions of people have been changed by covid-19. Unexpectedly, people were required to cease all connections with society by staying at home to combat a virus that spreads quickly and in dramatic fashion in some countries, including Indonesia. Businesses, public places, places of worship, restaurants, gyms, and recreational areas such as parks, beaches, etc. were all closed and blocked with yellow tape in some cases to prevent people from leaving their homes. For the same reason, all formal and non-formal schools need to be closed. It made educators had the struggle to provide quality education to their students. Solutions to challenges brought about by having to provide education virtually, such as parents staying at home and taking on unexpected roles, lacking the necessary technology for various educational needs, challenges confronted by students, and the lack of structure for remote classrooms are all areas that needed special consideration that unfortunately remain a complicated process (Wood et al., 2021).

The situation of online teaching and the learning process is different from face-to-face learning. The teachers could not meet the students, as normal, so the teachers must adopt the new teaching method quickly (Yao et al., 2020). Each teacher must improve themselves especially in learning and teaching using technology. The educational system needs to incorporate the latest technology and

teachers should be aware of this need (Al-Takhyneh, 2018). The use of apps can be integrated into educational objectives, which will also prompt innovations in the teaching and learning process. However, simply using the applications is not sufficient for supporting educational goals. In order to optimize the quality of education, pedagogical strategies need to be formulated which can integrate the various elements involved in the teaching and learning process (Zaheer et al., 2018). It is incumbent on the teacher to create best way of accomplishing this.

Carrillo and Flores (2020: 2) emphasize that the use of technology to enhance online learning is dependent on three pedagogical factors: the learning process, learning design, and facilities. Suwartono stated in 2016 that in English language instruction, a teacher's creativity is a crucial and difficult concept. Creative teachers will continually learn new things from a variety of sources. Similarly, Holisoh & Fitriani (2020) found that using online tools like WhatsApp, Google Classroom, and Zoom to teach English during a pandemic revealed students' responses and experiences to be diverse and important in establishing new classroom strategies and methodologies. In addition, research entitled "Challenges and Strategies Using Application in Teaching Online Classroom during the Pandemic covid-19" by Tukan (2020) stated that teaching English using an online application is the best method for the time being.

English is a widely spoken international language in many countries. According to Crystal (2003), English can be viewed as a sign of globalization, diversity, and progress. Likewise, Lie (2017) believed that using English represents political power, privilege, and social prestige since many other countries included

English in their school curriculum. English has been included as a subject in the Indonesian curriculum. It is, however, only taught and presented in secondary school. Furthermore, according to Wahyudi (2018), the formal curriculum allows English to be a formal subject in grades seven through twelve, as well as at the university level. We can conclude from this that English should be a formal subject for secondary students. However, globalization makes parents and society demand improvement from time to time.

As a result, there is a policy discussion about English becoming a subject in primary school. The Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 22/2006 about The Structure of National Curriculum allowed that English could be included as a subject in primary schools, which are now free to choose whether English will be taught in their school or not. So globalization and pressure from parents have finally convinced the Ministry of Education that learning English will benefit everyone. Chang (2012) stated that introducing English to non-native countries at a young age had become a trend and a competition. According to Violetta-Irene (2013), age plays a significant effect in the language acquisition process. Many individuals believe that learning a language as soon as possible is best. As a result, ever younger children start learning English nowadays. The term “young learners” covers a large chronological age span: from 3 to 15 years (Nunan, 2011); 5 to 12 years (Cameron, 2001); or children at the age of 5 to 10 years (Scott & Ytreberg, 2010). So we may conclude that “young learners” are those of pre-school and primary school ages around 3 to 12 years old. As a result, many elementary schools or even pre-schools offer an English teaching program.

Many private kindergartens offer bilingual programs for their students. They have believed the existence of a bilingual school or education in education such as kindergarten, children will understand the use of English more quickly so that in the future they will be ready to face globalization. According to Anderson & Boyer in 1970 (as cited in Artini & Nitiasih, 2014:100), bilingual education is an instruction in two languages and the use of two languages as a medium of instruction for any part, or all, of the school curriculum. This educational program does not involve children who are already bilingual (they generally do not have a good second or foreign language mastery). The dominant language used is a foreign language or a second language regardless of their level of language background. In other words, the second or foreign language becomes the dominant language in the classroom until students reach a good level of proficiency in this new language.

Baker & Prys-Jones (1998) state that: “Bilingual education can be said to begin when more than one language is used to teach content (Science, Mathematics, Social Sciences or Humanities) in other words, language is not a separate subject”.

Therefore, there will be a question about teaching children categorized as young learners by using English as a medium of instruction because they are just experiencing the learning phase, then directly being taught a new language. Prihatin et al. (2021), in their research, stated that teaching young learners is totally different and more challenging compared to teaching adult learners who are more independent, mature, and knowledgeable. However, children are just kids who like to play, have fun, and need extra attention. Nunan (2011) said that young learners enjoy fantasy, and imagination. However, many educators, politicians, and

policymakers have emphasized that the best way for children to learn English is to educate in English exclusively (as cited in Artini & Nitiasih, 2014: 112).

In line with the researches that were conducted by Prihatin et al. (2012) and Nunan (2011) about teaching young learners, numerous obstacles and issues have arisen as a result of this fact in education for young learners. How can young learners acquire English as a medium of instruction for the teaching and learning processes in the midst of this pandemic? This will be quite challenging. Typically, children learn by doing, by observing a model, and by repetition in this environment. Meanwhile, students are unable to attend school and interact with their peers or learn directly with their teachers throughout the pandemic. The difficulties encountered at this time are threefold: not only establishing English as a medium of instruction, but also implementing EMI at a kindergarten level when children cannot read or write, and implementing EMI during a pandemic situation where face-to-face sessions cannot be done. This circumstance necessitates unique abilities and management in terms of how it should be handled. Thus, it is deemed necessary to do research into a model that utilized English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in the teaching and learning process for children during a pandemic.

Aura Sukma Insani Kindergarten is a bilingual school and applied curriculum national plus which combines curriculum 2013 with an additional curriculum which is modified by the school based on the need, vision, and mission of the school. This kindergarten also has been known by people for 15 years because of the success in teaching the students with many achievements and the student's

readiness to continue the study to a higher level of education. Therefore, how is English used as a medium of instruction for the teaching and learning process during the pandemic, and to find out what problems are faced by teachers in their teaching and learning process are needed to be discussed. If English as a medium of instruction is carried out successfully, in connection with this study, it can become a model school for schools that want their students to progress in English. So, the study conducted by researcher at Aura Sukma Insani Kindergarten aims to reveal how English was used as a medium of instruction in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic and the problems that the teachers faced during the teaching and learning process during the pandemic.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

English as a medium of instruction in the teaching and learning process during the pandemics especially, for young learners becomes a big challenge for all teachers, students, and parents in Indonesia. The strategies applied must be created effectively. The process of teaching and learning must be supported by some technologies and facilities like smartphones, gadgets, and internet connections. It is not only that, many educational applications or software are needed to support online learning. However, many problems faced by teachers and students, and schools during the pandemic. The problems appeared in implementing English as a medium of instruction (EMI) such as the teacher's proficiency confidence, students' ability, and unsupportive environment for acquiring English (Ibrahim, 2001; Artini 2013). In addition, some problems faced by teachers while teaching virtually,

included the process of online learning itself, such as the teacher's lack of technological knowledge for designing interesting online learning activities, lack of communication, lack of interaction, and lack of expertise in fostering effective online learning.

In Aura Sukma Insani Kindergarten that is bilingual, found some problems that were in line with the result of the researches in empirical reviews. The school and the teachers are difficult to conduct the teaching and learning process virtually. Two main problems were found by the researcher in Aura Sukma Insani is included: (1) English used as a medium of instruction in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic, included the implementation, strategies or procedures applied, the teachers and students' activities, the media or technology used and the protocols. (2) The problems faced by the teachers in teaching young learners using English during the pandemic, included students, teachers, parents, and facilities. These two main problems were found in Aura Sukma Insani Kindergarten as the focus of this study.

### **1.3 Scope of the Study**

The present study focuses on English used as a medium of instruction in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic at Aura Sukma Insani Kindergarten, and problems faced by the teachers in teaching young learners using English during the pandemic situation. The researcher illustrated English used as a medium of instruction in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic. Besides, the problems that teachers faced during teaching young learners were

described in this study. English is important for the students because in a bilingual school it is used for instruction. Besides, English is beneficial for the students in order to continue their study to higher levels of education and their life skill in the globalization future.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Based on the topic, the research questions are described as follows:

1. How is English used as a medium of instruction in Aura Sukma Insani Kindergarten during the pandemic?
2. What are the problems faced by the teachers during the process of teaching for Young Learners during the pandemic?

#### **1.5 Purpose of the Study**

Regarding the research problems which are presented above, the purpose of the study can be formulated as follows:

1. Describing how English was used as a medium of instruction in Aura Sukma Insani Kindergarten during the pandemic.
2. Explaining the problems faced by the teachers during the process of teaching for young learners using English during the pandemic.

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

##### **1.6.1 Theoretical Significance**

The result of the study is expected to provide information about English used as a medium of instruction in Aura Sukma Insani Kindergarten during the pandemic, and the problems faced by the teachers during the process of teaching for young learners using English during the pandemic. It might help teachers, the school, and all stakeholders in education to prepare, conduct, and evaluate English used as a medium of instruction during the pandemic. It can also use as a reference for post-pandemic planning that might be suitable for education in the future.

## **1.6.2 Practical Significance**

### **1.6.2.1 Students**

The students might be able to consider and reflect on what they have experienced during the teaching and learning process, so that they can maximize their process of learning to obtain a good learning experience for their success in their studies, even though they faced a pandemic situation.

### **1.6.2.2 Teachers**

This research is intended to highlight English used as a medium of instruction and the problems that teachers faced during the teaching and learning process during the pandemic situation. From the information learned from this research, the teachers are expected to gain new guidelines in teaching. These guidelines will also give an understanding for the teachers on how they can plan new teaching and learning activities, and find solutions to some of the problems that they faced. Afterwards, the teachers can deal with challenges that they might encounter during teaching both during the pandemic and post pandemic situations.

### **1.6.2.3 Schools**

This research might give information to other schools related to English used as a medium of instruction during the pandemic, and the problems faced by the teachers during teaching in a pandemic situation. With this information, schools can develop and improve as well as make an evaluation of the things mentioned before.

### **1.6.2.4 Other researchers**

This research is expected to stimulate other researchers in conducting similar studies on this issue, which is about English used as a medium of instruction during the pandemic. This pandemic is not finished yet, so this kind of study is needed very much even after the pandemic. The result of this study gives choices to teachers and schools to conduct teaching and learning processes, especially for the implementation of English as medium of instruction (EMI) in order to provide better and more creative and effective teaching and learning process.

