

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Learning English improves the chances of having a better career in the future. Learning English is crucial for socializing, leisure, and employment because it is one of the must-have skills in the twenty-first century. For that reason, English is taught since a student enters elementary school. North Bali Bilingual School (NBBS), a bilingual school in Singaraja, uses English as a compulsory course as well as the language of learning instructions for all students. All the students, including students with special needs, have been learning English since the first grade.

However, teaching English for students with special needs, especially autistic students, can be more challenging for both teachers and learners (Hartley, 2018). It is natural that the teachers may have anxiety that the existence of autistic students in the class may harm other students' progress in learning. The teachers may also worry that inclusive education will be difficult because it will require high-quality service, special training for teachers, and help with both the people and the things that need to be used (Lei et al., 2019).

From a neurological standpoint, autistic children are children who have difficulties developing their brains, particularly in the areas of language, social interaction, and fantasy (Clouder et al., 2020). Developmental hurdles cause children with autism to be treated differently than other youngsters (Lei et al., 2019). Autistic children show excessive inclinations in various areas of conduct. In terms of academics, it is frequently discovered that youngsters have unique tendencies and abilities that exceed those of their peers. Even

so, the average autistic youngster is not gifted in every field (Farokhzadeh et al., 2016; Lei et al., 2019)

Abnormalities in speech, social interaction, sensory disturbances, playing patterns, and emotional behavior are all symptoms of autism (Hodges et al., 2020). Symptoms of autism develop before children reach the age of three. This is a predicament that these youngsters will have to deal with for the rest of their lives (Clouder et al., 2020). Most kids with autism have mental problems too, though to a different extent (Lei et al., 2019).

Support from families is vital in teaching autistic students. It is critical to involve parents in educational planning (Azad & Mandell, 2016; Marashi & Dolatdoost, 2016). Meanwhile, parental learning support, particularly from early childhood to middle childhood, may have an impact on them (Chu, 2018; Lei et al., 2019). Communication between parents and teachers keeps both parties up-to-date with information related to students' needs and development both at home and school. The existence of a parent-teacher partnership helps the maintenance of strategies to solve any problems that arise at home or at school for teaching autistic students (Azad & Mandell, 2016).

Both parents and teachers must "stay informed" as the key to teaching these kinds of students who have a neurological condition that affects their language development as well as their ability to communicate, engage, and behave (Farokhzadeh et al., 2016; Lei et al., 2019). Moreover, parents' intervention is more crucial when students with special needs learn through the use of technology (Kurnava & Sellhorn, 2018). The technology then helps realize the communication of both parties as well as supports students in learning.

Learning media for bridging communication between parents and teachers is needed in dealing with students with special needs (Kurnava & Sellhorn, 2018). The limitations of time and space make this communication limited to face-to-face. Learning through digital applications can be a great choice and it has become a requirement in

education nowadays (Cheng & Lai, 2020; Kim et al., 2020). An application called Seesaw Application fulfills the requirements since it enables the parents' participation in online learning (Qotimah, 2018; Willis & Exley, 2018). Because this app has been found to be very good at teaching critical thinking, it has been used a lot. It has also been found to make students more interested in reading and improve their information literacy (Hasanah et al., 2020; Rou & Yunus, 2020), as well as making the learning flexibility of the English language better (Ratnaningsih, 2019) and making students more effective in speaking (Nur & Riadil, 2019).

The implementation of the Seesaw Application for students with special needs, especially autistic students, has been done in North Bali Bilingual School. The application was used to teach all subjects including English. This school had four autistic students, and they learned remotely due to pandemic situations through Zoom synchronously and the Seesaw Application asynchronously, as well as having a system for parents' involvement. Seesaw is a learning management system for autistic students at North Bali Bilingual School during the pandemic (Padmadewi et al., 2021; Padmadewi & Artini, 2017). It has both learning apps and communication tools in one mobile app.

NBBS implemented partial inclusive education. Partial inclusive education is a type of integration that takes place within the school and allows children with special needs to participate in a typical classroom setup. Partial inclusion allows children to remain in a "normal" environment with their peers while receiving support and help as needed (Padmadewi et al., 2021; Padmadewi & Artini, 2017). Additional therapy, services, or equipment may be required to support the child with special needs while in the regular classroom; this may require the students to leave the room for a short period of time or return to the special education room (Jensen, 2015).

The partial inclusion education in NBBS was done by implementing integrated and pull-out methods. In an integrated way, students with special needs were included in a regular classroom, such as in the subjects of art, PE, music, games, or projects. If necessary, a shadow teacher was frequently assigned to students with special needs. The second way, pull-out, students were identified and treated utilizing an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) depending on their abilities and needs. Students are taken to and taught in the classrooms where they belong (Padmadewi et al., 2021; Padmadewi & Artini, 2017).

The integrated and pull-out methods described above were done remotely by teachers and students of NBBS during pandemic. The English learning process was not integrated into the subjects in an integrated way, so students had their own special room for studying English with the teacher. The Seesaw Application was the learning management system for those students with special needs, or all four students who are identified as autistic students, learned and interacted with the teachers of NBBS. Students could have a worksheet, watch videos sent by teachers, a word wall, a virtual field trip, and also storytelling (Padmadewi et al., 2021; Padmadewi & Artini, 2017).

Considering the effectiveness of the Seesaw Application for teaching and learning, especially for teaching English, it could be said that the novelty of this research was the implementation of the application for students with special needs. In NBBS, the Seesaw Application had been implemented in teaching English for young learners with special needs. Through this research, the implementation, the constraints in implementation, and the response of the students to using the Seesaw Application were studied.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

According to Bouillet & Kudek-Mirošević (2015), students with special needs need additional supports in the educational process. As an integrated part of quality pedagogy,

the supports listed emphasized the importance of promoting the right of every student and family to be included, respected, and valued; to participate; to work toward common goals; and to reach their full potential, with a special focus on the most vulnerable (Bouillet & Kudek-Mirošević, 2015; ISSA, 2010). To maximize treatment of students with special needs, NBBS implemented partial inclusive education. Students with special needs had their own pull-out class in learning English, which meant that they had a class where a student and a teacher or more learn together in one learning circumstance. The Seesaw Application was used as their learning management system, in which this application offered some functions and benefits for students, teachers, and parents. So, parents and teachers shared the responsibility of supporting kids in different situations and encouraging them to study, which made it easier for both of them to do that.

Based on the research background, the problems identified in this recent study were related to the implementation of the Seesaw Application in North Bali Bilingual School in the context of students with special needs learning English, as well as the constraints in implementing the Seesaw Application for the students with special needs learning English, and also the responses that could be gained from the students with special needs learning English through the Seesaw Application.

### **1.3 Limitation of Problem**

The problems of the present study was limited to the analysis of the implementation of Seesaw Application for teaching students with special needs in NBBS learning English. It focused on describing the implementation of the Seesaw Application, constraints in implementing the application, and the response of the students in using the application in learning English. The researcher focused on finding out responses to facial expressions and participation.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

The research questions in this study could be formulated as follows.

- 1.4.1 How is the Seesaw Application implemented for the students with special needs in learning English at NBBS?
- 1.4.2 What constraints are faced by teachers in implementing the Seesaw Application for teaching the students with special needs in learning English at NBBS?
- 1.4.3 What responses could be gained from the students with special needs in learning English through the Seesaw Application at NBBS?

## **1.5 Purposes of the Study**

The purposes of this study were as follows.

1. To describe the implementation of Seesaw Application for students with special needs in learning English
2. To find out the constraints faced by teachers in implementing the Seesaw Application for teaching the students with special needs in learning English
3. To analyze the responses that could be gained from students with special needs in learning English through the Seesaw Application

## **1.6 Significances of the Study**

This study was expected to make contributions theoretically and practically in relation to the implementation of the Seesaw Application for students with special needs.

### **1.6.1 Theoretical Significance**

The result of this study was expected to be an input and give additional information about teaching English by implementing the Seesaw Application for teaching students with special needs.

### 1.6.2 Practical Significances

The practical significance of this study was for students with special needs, teachers, and future researchers.

#### 1.6.2.1 For Students with Special Needs

This study was beneficial for students with special needs as it gave additional information about an efficient and effective learning tool for students with special needs in learning English. Seesaw Application offered some features which could meet the special needs of students with special needs. The availability of responding visually for both parties, teachers and students, were observed in this study.

#### 1.6.2.2 For Teachers

This study was valuable for teachers who teach special needs students in implementing technology-inclusive learning models for special needs students in learning English. Learning English by students with special needs was done by using Seesaw Application. Seesaw Application offered features that enabled students with special needs in learning based on their special needs.

#### 1.6.2.3 For Future Researchers

The results of this study provided empirical data on learning English for students with special needs that can be developed and refined for future research.