CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer will present the background of the study, problem identification, limitation of the research, research questions, research aims, and the significance of the research.

1.1 Background of Study

Learning English language could be full of struggles for English as a foreign language (hereafter, EFL) students because of the natural differences between their mother tongue and the target language (Maheswari et al., 2020). It makes the students face some difficulties in comprehending the English language (Paneerselvam & Mohamad, 2019). Those difficulties tend to be more serious if teachers did not pay attention to each student's abilities in learning (Uzair-ul-Hassan et al., 2019). Another problem was raised when the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world as well as Indonesia in the early 2020. It changes Indonesian education system from offline learning become online learning that applied from the elementary, secondary, until university levels (Hermanto & Srimulyani, 2021). This policy was considered appropriate to prevent the Covid-19 disease, but in the reality there were many problems caused by online learning. Hermanto & Srimulyani (2021) stated one of the main problem of online learning is unprepared learning material. This is because online learning was an emergency, thus teachers and educators have no time to prepare the learning material. This problem truly affect the learning process; not all students are able to receive the knowledge because of lack learning material that can meet all the students' level (Hermanto & Srimulyani, 2021).

Sari et al. (2020) stated that a good education system should include all the learners to achieve the purpose of learning. Furthermore, Ediyanto (2017) defines the purpose of learning is to improving and increasing students' abilities without distinguishing their diversity. As stated in the 1945 Republic of Indonesia's constitution that everyone in Indonesia have the same right and equal opportunity to access education without any exception. The differences of learning media for each level of students' abilities in learning English is needed considering most EFL classrooms especially in Indonesia are filled with various students who has their unique characteristics (Tanjung & Ashadi, 2019). This might happen due to fact that each student has different background before they entering the school. In order to equalize that, teachers should be able to prepare learning materials as well as the activities to meet the needs of all students, including slow learners.

Slow learners are pupils who have intellectual potential slightly below average students in class. In some cases, slow learners face difficulties to deal with their ways of thinking or responding to social problems (Tran et al., 2020). In learning new concepts, slow learners need extra time to process the concepts given and need more detailed explanations in order to completing their academic or non-academic tasks, these reasons make them included as students with special needs (Fajriah et al., 2021; Nurhayati et al., 2020). According to Triani & Amir (2013), most of the slow learners face a lot of obstacles when dealing with language. They find it hard to express what they are thinking, and they have difficulties to understanding other people's words. Commonly, slow learners prefer to use simple, clear, and easy words.

Based on the previous explanations, slow learners will encounter many obstacles in learning English, especially when its conducted through blended learning. Even more, in previous problem identification, some teachers found it difficult to prepare the learning material for online classes (Hermanto & Srimulyani, 2021). Some respondents from the research that conducted by Sriwichai (2020), stated the students (slow learners) often not feel comfortable to learn through online learning because they must process the knowledge by themselves, online lessons also sometimes not engaging which cause complexity to communicate with teachers and pairs. On the other hand, English has different structures with Bahasa Indonesia which make it challenging for slow learners to learn. As we know, English is a foreign language that should be mastered by most of the people in the world. Otherwise, English has become an international language that used to talk and communicate with other people from different countries. Indirectly, slow learners also need to learn English language to be successful in building social relations in the international fields.

Not only English, there are still many kinds of skills that are needed in order to support the needs of today's and the future's era, the government has proposed a new learning policy that could address the needs of 21st century. It is known as 21st century learning skills. Those skills are known as 4C, they are collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication (Khoiri et al., 2021). 1) Collaboration is a practice to achieve the main goal by working together with other members in a group (Pardede, 2020). Collaboration become one of the most important educational outcome because most of the organization and business moved to a team-based work environment. 2) Critical

thinking is considered as essential skill in the 21ˢᵗ century education (Atkinson, 1997). Every student need to develop critical thinking skill to increase their understanding, evaluate their point of view, until improve problem-solving ability. 3) Creativity is an essential skill that is needed to generate ideas or product. 4) communication is the main objective in teaching language, especially English. Through communication students will be able to use the language that have been learned. All the 4C's skills that are needed in the 21ˢᵗ century skills are integrated into 2013 curriculum in Indonesia. Thus, teachers must be able to generate learning activities that supports 21ˢᵗ century skills as long as with the students' different learning abilities.

Since the students in EFL classrooms are very diverse, according to Pozas et al (2020), teacher need to conduct differentiated learning instruction to address each students' diversity, including slow learners. One way to conduct differentiated instruction is by preparing a learning material that suits the slow learners' characteristics, learning needs, and the learning goals, so it will be able to grow their potential maximally (Magableh & Abdullah, 2020). There is a large number of published studies described the positive impact of developing supplementary material for specific criteria of students. It has been proven able to improve students' participation in learning, able to support English writing activity become more interesting and varied than before (Lestari, 2020; Pravitasari, 2019). These statements supported by Sianturi et al. (2021) which developed a culture-based supplementary reading material. It showed that the students' vocabulary mastery was increasing after the researcher taught the students using the developed product. Nurhayati et al. (2020) on their research

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has proven that supplementary material is very effective to be used as a teaching and learning media for slow learners.

Despite many researchers proved that supplementary materials are beneficial in improving students' ability in English, including slow learners, but in from the research result conducted by Lavania & Nor (2020), the teachers in South African public secondary school, have lack of knowledge in identifying students' learning difficulties. On the other hand, the teachers also face difficulties in modifying and arranging the curriculum to meet all the students' needs. Other challenge addressed by Aldossari (2018), many teachers on his research stated the main challenge in implementing differentiated instruction for specific kinds of students occurs in the preparation process, where the teachers have to create and design learning material differently for specific kinds of students accordingly with the syllabus and curriculum that being used. Based on the preliminary observation, the same problems occurred in SMPN 6 Singaraja, the English teacher found it difficult to addressed slow learners in the English lesson. Moreover, the teacher often gives the same tasks and just ask the students to answers the questions in the textbook. Because the teacher believes if they use differentiated instruction for slow learners, it will take more time. The teacher also said it difficult to prepare specific learning materials and worksheets for slow learners. This make the slow learners hard to follow the lesson in class. Based on the slow learners' characteristics stated previously, it is known that slow learners need extra time to understanding new concept and completing the tasks (Fajriah et al., 2021; Nurhayati et al., 2020), thus, in this case there needs a special strategy to teach slow learners in the classroom.

To overcome these problems and to help teachers in addressing slow learners in regular classroom, it needed a supplementary material that contains of several choices of activities to be conducted in the classroom. It also requires collaboration to help teachers to design and create supplementary learning material. In this research, the researcher developed an English blended supplementary material for slow learners in the first semester of 9th grade junior high school. It developed in a form of project based learning, problem based learning, and discovery learning to support student-centered approach based on the learning competencies in the curriculum. This material is able to use in a blended learning model. This is important to conduct immediately to support the Indonesian ministry of Education's regulation to conduct equal learning environment in a form of online and offline learning. If there is no equal learning environment in the classroom that could assess all levels of students, including slow learners, they will face a lot of struggles and difficulties in improving their English language comprehension (Triani & Amir, 2013). Those are the reasons this research need to be conducted. It focuses on developing supplementary blended learning material for slow learners in the first semester of 9th grade junior high school. Although many researchers have conduct studies about supplementary material, no researcher has yet conducted a research and development study on developing English blended supplementary material for slow learners especially for north Bali's junior high school.

1.2 Problem Identification

According to the preliminary observation in SMP Negeri 6 Singaraja, there were three problems in English teaching and learning process in the

school. First, the teacher in 9th grade usually taught all the students using the same teaching style, that are by giving them some explanation and ask the students to answer the questions. The teachers realized that the students have various abilities in learning. But the teacher chose to use the same teaching style to treat all students in order to minimize the time consuming in learning. On the other hand, the same teaching style to treat all students considered as the safest method to avoid gap among the fast learners and slow learners in the classroom. Teacher also rarely use interesting teaching method like games, quiz, or any other to help students, especially for slow learners to be interested in English.

Second, because teacher applied the same teaching method to all students, consequently the slow learners were difficult to achieve meaningful learning in English. The slow learners found it hard to following the learning situation in the classroom. Especially, every time the teacher asked questions to the students, in most of the time, the fast learners answered it. The slow learners rarely have chance to participate in the classroom. Those learning situation could be led to another problem like slow learners become demotivated because they never being noticed by the teacher or their friends.

Third, teacher focused only to the result of learning not on the process. The previous problems, lead to this problem. When teacher taught the students using the same teaching style to treat all students and use textbook as the one only source in teaching, the teacher had difficulties on how to teach English in more fun and meaningful way to the students, especially the slow learners will have strong interest and can achieve their best potential in English. The selection of learning activities will give powerful impact in improving students'

confidence in using English. The teacher rarely invited the students to play games, she was focused to assess the students' cognitive level only, such as giving traditional assessment, test, and exam, where the students will have got the result in a form of score.

From those problems above, it is known that the point of English learning was to get final score as the result of learning in a whole semester. It was contradictive with the goals of 21st century learning which more emphasized on the way students use their language in daily lives. To solve the problems that already mentioned, it is important to create meaningful activities in the classroom to make teachers easier to handle the students with various abilities in learning, especially to treat slow learners so they will be able to maximize their potential.

Teachers need a guidance or supplementary book that could address slow learners in English to prepare them emerging 21st century learning era. There are three teaching methods that would be used in the classroom, they are project based learning, problem based learning and discovery learning. those teaching methods will help students not only in English, but also to improve the 4C's skills. Therefore, it is essential for the researcher to help teacher in developing English supplementary blended material for slow learners to meet the learning goals in English.

1.3 Limitation of the Research

This research focused on developing English blended supplementary material for slow learners in the first semester of 9th grade of junior high school. The topics are chosen from the first semester syllabus of 9th grade which use

2013 curriculum. The outcome product of this research developed in form of a book that could be a guidance for the teachers to improve the slow learners' English comprehension in the classroom. The supplementary material still need some improvement in the future to make sure that it is appropriate to be conducted for slow learners in the 9th grade of junior high school.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the background of study, the main questions of this research are:

1. How is the development of English blended supplementary material for slow learners in the first semester of 9th grade junior high school?

2. What are the qualities of English blended supplementary material which has been developed for slow learners in the first semester of 9th grade junior high school?

1.5 Research Objectives

The aims of this research are:

1. To find out the development process of English blended supplementary material for slow learners in the first semester of 9th grade junior high school?

2. To know the qualities of English material that have been developed.

1.6 The Expected Specification of the Product

The expected specification of the product in this research are as follows,

1. It is expected that the English blended supplementary material helps teachers to assess slow learners in the process of teaching and learning English in the classroom.

2. It is expected to avoid boredom in English teaching and learning, thus the slow learners will be able to improve their interest in English and achieve their best potential.

3. It is expected, be able to train students' 4C's skills, namely communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity in order to meet the needs of 21st century.

1.7 The Significance of the Research

This research is expected able to give beneficial contributions theoretically and practically to the readers. Its significance described as follows:

1. **Theoretical significance**

   This research hopefully could contribute to the development of English teaching and learning based on the students' ability in learning, especially for slow learners. Therefore, the teaching and learning are able to suit the students' characteristics and needs. On the other side, there has not been much research about developing English blended supplementary material to facilitate slow learners in the teaching and learning process.

2. **Practical significances**

   There are some practical significances of this research. For students, this research is expected beneficial to improve the quality of learning inside the classroom for slow learners. For teachers or educators, this research is expected to give the appropriate instruction by raising attention to slow learners' characteristics and their needs, without generalizing teaching and learning approach in the classroom. For future researchers, this research is

expected to give reference about English learning material, and activities for slow learners in 9th grade junior high school.

1.8 Assumption and the Limitation of the Development

There are some assumptions and limitations of developing the English blended supplementary material, which explained as follows;

1. The English blended supplementary material that have been developed in this research was based on the characteristics of slow learners in the 9th grade of junior high school in Buleleng Regency. This supplementary material has been designed and suitable for slow learners in that grade.

2. The English blended supplementary material in this research developed in a form of prototype which is need to be improved in the future.

1.10 Definition of Key-Terms

1.9.1 Conceptual Definition

1. **Supplementary Materials**

   Tomlinson (1998), point out that supplementary material is a kind of material that is used to support the main book in teaching and learning activity. Supplementary material focuses on developing specific skills or competencies that are not addressed in the main course book (Utami, 2016). The purpose of supplementary teaching materials is to enrich and bring deeper understanding for the specific criteria that is needed.

2. **Slow Learners**

   Slow learners are students who are defined as under-achiever in their class if it is compared to their peers (Aisah & Santosa AB, 2019; Tran

et al., 2020). Yekti et al (2019) also stated that slow learners often have difficulties in reasoning skill that make them hard to understand new concept. Furthermore, Korikana (2020) notes slow learners are sensitive and aware of their weakness but they often do not know how to deal with their weakness.

1.9.2 Operational Definition

1. **Supplementary Materials**

   Supplementary material in this research refers to the additional book that the researcher developed that could be used both in online and offline learning (blended learning). there are three main teaching methods in the supplementary materials, namely problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery learning.

2. **Slow Learners**

   Slow learners in this study refers to the students in the 9th grade junior high school who frequently got the test score below the standards.