

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

In this 21st century, children are raised in a digital media environment, where interaction with digital media is increasingly part of their daily lives both in the classroom and at home. According to Ofcom research (2023), one in five three and four-year-old children in the United Kingdom have their own mobile phone. Many young children in Turkey between the ages of 3 and 6 also typically have access to digital devices in their homes and spend over 3 hours on screens, while parents spend around four and a half hours on screens (Konca, 2022). This exposure to technology allows children to explore and play with digital devices. All their activities gradually use digital devices, including their early studying. For example, learning materials such as books started switching to digital devices. Books in digital format are increasingly popular among children through their electronic devices (Bus et al., 2020)

E-books, as discussed by Christ et al. (2019), offer various forms of interactive multimodal content, including written text, oral narration, music, illustrations, animations, and touch-activated hotspots that trigger sounds and animations when the screen is tapped or pressed. According to Rajendran & Md Yunus (2021), using digital storytelling (DS) could make learning more interesting for students. It also creates a positive learning environment and makes students feel more confident and motivated. Digital storytelling is especially helpful for interactive learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. They incorporate multimedia

components such as videos, audio, animations, and various interactive activities that enable students to actively interact with the book's content. The beginning of digitization has created fresh possibilities for mediating multimodal text. E-books provide several potential benefits, such as being accessible and interactive for young readers. Even children who haven't yet developed literacy skills can independently explore e-books without the need for adult assistance (Dore et al., 2018). This opens the door to reading practices that differ from traditional book reading, primarily due to the capabilities of digital touchscreens.

Previous studies have examined the development of e-story books for children as interactive learning materials to enhance early reading and writing. First, Paramita et al. (2022) conducted a study on the development of illustrated storybooks to enhance the reading skills of Indonesian language subjects for third grade elementary school students. The validity testing results obtained, based on the assessment of research subjects, were consistently excellent. Therefore, it can be concluded that the storybook media is suitable for use by third-grade elementary school students and has been proven effective in improving students' reading skills in the context of the Indonesian language subject.

Wulandari and Alamin (2020), conducted a study focusing on the importance of character education values in children's daily lives as a preventative measure. They proposed the use of digital media, which is widely integrated into children's lives, as a means to impart these values through everyday stories. The study utilized Punakawan characters—Semar, Gareng, Petruk, and Bagong—to symbolize these character education values. The research targeted children aged 7-11 due to their developing logical thinking abilities and employed a mixed

method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques, including expert interviews and experimental revisions. The research culminated in the creation of an interactive digital storybook with four chapters, and the result stated that it effectively conveys character education values through its characters.

Chuang & Jamiat (2023), also investigated the impact of interactive reading apps on students' reading abilities and future reading performance. The study focused on interactive reading apps designed for children aged 3-8 years from 2013 to 2022. The results showed that features like dictionaries, music, and animated illustrations positively affected literacy development. However, interactive elements such as games could be distracting and hinder reading progress. Further research is needed to establish guidelines for designing reading apps tailored to children's needs. Next, during the COVID-19 outbreak, Janawati et al. (2021) conducted research on the adoption of interactive e-books in Indonesia to enhance young children's reading and writing abilities. The study developed an interactive e-book for beginning readers and writers through research and development (R&D). The findings revealed that the interactive ebook had an appealing design, attractive typeface, animated text, interactive elements, interesting content, and learning videos, actively engaging students in learning.

In Indonesia, the adoption of 21st-century learning principles is evident in the recent curriculum known as Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar. Merdeka Belajar, or "Emancipated Learning Curriculum," is an Indonesian new curriculum introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Education in February 2022 to empower students to become independent and creative learners. Based on the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia

Number 262/M/2022 concerning Amendments to the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 56/M/2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Curriculum in the Framework of Learning Recovery, this initiative emphasizes student-centered learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, aiming to equip students with the necessary tools to navigate the challenges of the modern world. By observing this, the seamless combination of e-story books and the Merdeka Belajar curriculum or further on will be called as Emancipated Learning curriculum appears to be evident in accomplishing the essential 21st-century skills (Kemendikbudristek BSKAP, 2022).

However, preliminary observations were conducted on first-grade students at SDN 3 Bajar Jawa Singaraja, revealing that e-storybooks had never been implemented before, not even with the Emancipated Learning curriculum. The school still solely used and dependence on the conventional book provided by the government titled 'Student's Book My Next Words' and also some supplementary books provided by the teacher. The main reason for this was the teachers' lack of capability to operate the technology, making it challenging for them to create learning materials that could be integrated with the technology. Despite acknowledging that digitalization could greatly aid their work, the teachers found it difficult to create materials that seamlessly integrated with the technology on their own. Additionally, the teachers faced time constraints due to their responsibilities of teaching the students.

Unlike the previous curriculum, the Emancipated Learning curriculum also requires students to learn English from first until sixth grade. This will be a

challenge for the teacher to prepare interactive and engaging material for the students to learn English subject, especially for the early reading stage students in the first grade. Consequently, they expressed a need for assistance from instructional and design developers in creating English materials that could be effectively integrated with digital technology. The teachers firmly believed that digital materials are essential for today's digital learners in the 21st century and would also help in engaging students, encouraging them to study more diligently.

Moreover, early exposure to the English language has been proven to have numerous benefits for students. First-grade students are at a critical stage of language development, and introducing English within their curriculum provides them with a strong foundation for language acquisition. By integrating an English e-storybook into the Emancipated Learning curriculum, students can develop their language skills while simultaneously honing their cognitive abilities, crosscultural understanding, and communication skills. The e-storybooks' features create an immersive environment where students can practice and apply their English language skills, fostering confidence and proficiency from an early age.

Considering the demand for English e-storybooks in the 21st-century skills framework and the limited number of studies focusing on the development of English e-storybooks integrated with Emancipated Learning curriculum for first-grade elementary students, this research aims to address these gaps. The study adopts a development research approach, combining the Design and Development (D&D) model with the Analysis, Design, Development, and Evaluation (ADDE) framework, to develop an English e-storybooks that integrates with the Emancipated Learning curriculum for first-grade elementary students.

1.2 Problem Identification

In the 21st century, there is a demand for e-storybooks to cater to the needs of young students, aligning with the Indonesian official curriculum known as the Emancipated Learning curriculum. However, preliminary observations related to the use of English learning materials among first-grade students at SDN 3 Banjar Jawa Singaraja found that the current learning materials need improvement to align with the Emancipated Learning curriculums. Relying solely on textbooks as mandatory resources does not facilitate students' active engagement and independent learning due to the lack of interactivity in the content.

Since the textbook given by the government should be implemented in the classroom as mandatory, developing e-storybooks as supplementary materials can propel or support the main materials and help the learning process. However, the research that elaborates on the developments of e-storybooks as proponents for main materials to integrate e-storybooks remains unclear.

Therefore, in this matter, the researcher wants to conduct a D&D or Design and Development Research that adopts the ADDE model to develop estorybooks integrated with the Emancipated Learning curriculum for English subjects for first-grade elementary students. The elementary school level was chosen by the researcher because, in the current Emancipated Learning curriculum, English has been designated as an elective subject for students from grade one to grade six, which is suggested for them to learn.

1.3 Problem Limitation

This study was limited to developing e-storybooks based on the Emancipated Learning curriculum by using the Book Creator application for first-grade elementary students of SDN 3 Banjar Jawa in the academic year of 2023/2024. Therefore, this study aims to find out how the develop and elaborate the quality of integrated English e-storybooks.

1.4 Research Question

The following questions are the research questions of this study:

1. How to develop e-storybooks integrated Emancipated Learning curriculum for first-grade elementary students at SDN 3 Banjar Jawa Singaraja?
2. How is the quality of developed e-storybooks integrated Emancipated Learning curriculum as a proponent for the main material for first-grade elementary students at SDN 3 Banjar Jawa, Singaraja?

1.5 Research Objective

There are research objectives based on the research questions above, namely:

1. To develop e-storybooks integrated Emancipated Learning curriculum for the first-grade elementary students at SDN 3 Banjar Jawa Singaraja.
2. To investigate the quality of developed e-storybooks integrated Emancipated Learning curriculum as a supplementary for the main material for first-grade elementary students at SDN 3 Banjar Jawa Singaraja.

1.6 Research Significance

There are theoretical and practical significances in this research, including:

1. Theoretical significance

Since the present study elaborates on the procedure of development of English e-storybooks integrated Emancipated Learning curriculum, the result is expected to be a reference for future study or to enrich the information regarding the development of English e-storybooks integrated Emancipated Learning curriculum to wide audiences in the educational field and other related fields.

2. Practical significance

This study aims to provide valuable benefits for improving learning media in education:

1. For researchers, it serves as an initial step in developing educational technology and learning materials, which they can build upon as teachers.
2. For teachers, it offers an interactive and innovative alternative for enhancing students' learning experiences.
3. For students, it presents engaging and enjoyable self-learning materials for studying English.
4. For the education field, it serves as inspiration for creating technology based computer learning materials that align with the current era.
5. For future researchers, it offers a reference point for conducting similar studies on developing interactive e-storybooks integrated with the Emancipated Learning curriculum.