

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents research background, problem identification, limitation of the research, research objectives, purpose of the research, and significance of the research.

1.1. Research Background

English is an international language that is widely used by people in various activities and for some purposes (Raja et al., 2022). This language has spread quickly around the world. Even, it becomes one of the most frequent foreign languages that is learned (Yulfi & Syaprizal, 2020). In Indonesia, the same situation also happens. English as a foreign language is being taught in the formal and informal education. In the implementation of Merdeka Belajar curriculum in formal education, English becomes the compulsory subject lesson to be taught to students start from elementary schools.

Teaching English for young learners is something that is often discussed. It is because English is very important to be mastered as it is required in many activities. The characteristics of children who are very active and easily learn new languages become considerations for introducing English as early as possible. However, teaching English for young learners is not that easy. Children tend to get bored easily when studying. This can be overcome through some attractive activities. There are several learning activities that is suggested in TEYL context namely learning through stories, role plays, songs, and games (Pujiani et al., 2022). Besides, in this era, children also considered as digital native. It means that they

integrated digital technology in their daily life. Children will be more encouraged if they are doing activities through their phone, laptop, and etc.

Several requirements in Teaching English for Young Learners actually have been supported by the newest curriculum implemented in Indonesia named Merdeka Belajar. Merdeka Belajar curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intra-curricular learning where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to deepen concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers also have the freedom to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of students (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Some advantages are offered by this curriculum namely, the curriculum is simpler and more in-depth. It also designed more independent and also more relevant and interactive.

However, in its implementation, those requirements cannot be achieved yet due to several factors. It can be seen when researcher carry out preliminary observation in SD Negeri 1 Suwug where it is an initiator school that implement Merdeka Belajar curriculum. The researcher gained some information about the reality of learning materials and learning process in this school. In the reality, the learning process and materials has not been tailored to the students' needs and interests. It is because of teacher factor and also the learning source provided. The learning source used are still in the form of text books which are complex enough for students to understand and less attractive. It is also not integrated with digital technology proven by there are no digital book used in the learning process in this school. It makes the learning process in class only focused on the teacher who convey the materials or it called as teacher-centered learning and only focused on

one source in the form of a text book. On the other hand, teacher also experiences difficulties in developing supplementary materials that are attractive, integrated with technology, suit to the students' needs and also being in line with the curriculum. It is caused by limited time and also the lack ability of the teacher.

Based on that phenomenon, the current research will develop e-storybook as the supplementary materials to help teacher and students in English learning process. Storybook is a specific category of books that combine the use of text with pictures that is produced to convey aesthetic value (Ratminingsih & Budasi, 2018). A storybook includes characters, a plot, a conflict, and a resolution to the conflict, and illustrated using pictures (Hüseyin & Balcı, 2016). It helps the students to develop their imagination and able to see the visualization of situation in the story. The visualization makes the students can feel the same situation as what have been explained in the story (Ratminingsih et al., 2020). Storybooks can give the real example of the use of vocabulary through the story provided. It also supported with pictures that makes the students can visualize the meaning of the story easily by seeing the pictures. Besides, learning English through storybooks give a chance for students to learn interactively by reading the story or dialogue provided in the storybook. This e-storybook also integrated with technology as it is in the form of electronic book.

Various advantages are offered in the utilization of e-storybooks in the teaching and learning process. E-storybooks are portable; therefore, it is easier to be learned anywhere and anytime. Users also get lots of things compared with printed books. It is cheaper than printed books and can be hyper-linked for additional sources (Anderson & Dron, 2011). Access of e-books is also fast and

easy for the reader (Lieung et al., 2021). Besides, e-storybooks also offer several activities which involve interaction between students, the e-storybook itself, and the teacher. By utilizing e-storybook in the teaching and learning process, this book is expected to create an effective and interactive learning process which is in line with the curriculum and also students' need.

Several previous studies also discussed the development and the use of e-storybooks for learning. First, the study conducted by Hendratno (2022) that discussed the development of interactive story book for eco-literation learning to stimulate reading interest in early grade students elementary school. The finding shows that using interactive story books significantly improves early elementary school students' learning outcomes. This study developed e-storybook in non-English topics. The study also conducted by Pujiani (2022) to determine whether utilizing an e-storybook through storytelling technique can improve students' engagement in learning English. In the relation with previous research, Ratminingsih & Budasi (2018) argued about local culture-based picture storybooks for teaching English for young learners. It also shown the positive impact of using e-storybook in learning. The storybook used in the classroom consists of picture, story, and audio without followed by exercise to measure students' understanding about the topic.

Thus, the current research will focus on developing e-storybooks in English subject lesson for students in grade 4 of SD Negeri 1 Suwug. This e-storybook will be developed based on the Merdeka curriculum. It is expected that these e-storybooks can become supplementary materials by using stories that support interactive activities so that students are able to master language skills.

1.2. Problem Identification

The process of English learning at school that is following the Merdeka curriculum creates several phenomena because it is something new and needs adaptation. After the preliminary observation in SD Negeri 1 Suwug, it is found that English teacher only utilizes the main book provided to teach English. The teaching and learning process is less interactive as it mostly teacher-centered without involving students to interact. There are only limited number of learning sources that is in line with the curriculum and cannot suit to the students' needs. Besides that, the main book is difficult to understand by students. Based on this phenomenon, it is necessary to develop learning sources that can help teacher to create an interactive learning process based on students' need and also in line with the implemented curriculum. The most important thing is the developed book is easy to understand with interactive activities and able to help students in master the language skills. Therefore, the development of e-storybooks as a supplementary material in English subject for fourth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Suwug is expected to overcome these problems.

1.3. Limitation of the Research

The current study will focus on developing e-storybooks in English subject for students in fourth grade at SD Negeri 1 Suwug. It is developed using the Canva Application. The materials for e-storybooks consists of two topics in the first semester and two topics in the second semester. The e-storybooks will contain stories, picture, and interactive activities that help students in learning. E-storybook in this study involves various activities in the form of exercises that can encourage

students' productive skills. It is expected that after studying these e-storybooks students will not only stop at receptive skills.

1.4. Research Questions

1. How is the development of English e-storybooks based on Merdeka curriculum for fourth-grade students of SD Negeri 1 Suwug?
2. How is the quality of English e-storybooks based on Merdeka curriculum for fourth-grade students of SD Negeri 1 Suwug?

1.5. Purpose of The Research

1. To develop English e-storybooks based on Merdeka curriculum for fourth-grade students of SD Negeri 1 Suwug.
2. To investigate the quality of English e-storybooks based on Merdeka curriculum for fourth-grade students of SD Negeri 1 Suwug.

1.6. Significances of the Research

This part discussed about significances of the research. It consists of two main point includes theoretical significance and practical significance.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study is expected to be able to provide supplementary materials to learn English through e-storybooks for fourth-grade students in SD Negeri 1 Suwug. The result of this study is expected to provide theoretical evidence related to the topic. Thus, everyone who reads this study is able to obtain knowledge regarding the development of e-storybooks for fourth-grade students in SD Negeri 1 Suwug.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

a) For Teachers

The current research is expected to provide English teaching sources in the form of e-storybooks for teachers of fourth-grade students in SD Negeri 1 Suwug. These e-storybooks will help teachers in teaching English by providing teaching sources that are more interactive and also following the Merdeka curriculum. The product developed is a supplementary teaching source, therefore teachers can use it in teaching together with the main sources or only use the e-storybook itself.

b) For Students

The development of e-storybooks is expected to be able to provide English learning sources for fourth-grade students in SD Negeri 1 Suwug. It gives a chance for students to learn English with interactive media so that they not only stop in receptive skills. After using this e-storybook, they are expected to be able to learn more effectively through some activities provided in the e-storybook.

c) For Other Researchers

This research is expected to provide data for other researchers about the development of e-storybooks for fourth-grade students in SD Negeri 1 Suwug. Therefore, it will be beneficial for other researchers as a reference to conduct other related researches.