

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

English as a foreign language in an educational context has become the core competency for Indonesian students. English as a foreign language becomes the core competency in school based on the necessity of the language as an international language where it is being used worldwide. English as a foreign language in the educational context in Indonesia is also being upgraded by the curriculum that is being implemented in Indonesia. Previously, English only being taught for certain grades in elementary school and become a must learned subject in junior and senior high school. However, in the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum, English has become the core subject in school for students in all grades. Considering the implementation of *merdeka belajar* curriculum which impact and change the needs of the students, the school has to be ready in supplying and providing learning media that can be used for the students appropriately. Although the Ministry of Education has provided the schools with the main book as the main media in teaching, it is not enough to support the learning process for the students.

Due to the need for supplementary learning media for the students learning the English language because of the changes of the curriculum in education, teachers are expected to be able to creating supplementary learning media for the students. It becomes challenging for teachers, especially elementary school teachers in providing English learning media for students who are not learning the English language yet, specifically for those students in the first, second, and third

grade. Learning media in teaching English is more limited for young learners in elementary schools because English is not the core subject for elementary students. Therefore, it becomes the main challenge faced by teachers in elementary schools in teaching English without appropriate supplementary learning media.

Based on Teaching English for Young Learners which correlated with cognitive constructivism learning theory by Jean Piaget who mentioned about how the children in primary school age can learn and improve their cognitive skill effectively if they supported by appropriate learning media based on their abilities. Teaching English for young learners also consider cognitive constructivism learning theory because in this theory provides insight of the children's stages development so the teacher can consider the learning material and in creating appropriate learning media because learning media can be different based on the children's age, although most of the children are visual-learners. Piaget's stages of development are about the ability to learnt at different ages based on their logical development therefore, the teacher should be able to facilitate these needs by having appropriate learning media that can construct the children's cognitive skills independently (Powell & Kalina, 2009).

To create a sufficient and appropriate learning media for young learners in elementary school, some aspects need to be considered such as the students' characteristics, the teacher's teaching style, visualization, auditory resources, coherency and unity in using the language, also the comprehension of the media to make it easily perceived by the learners' sense (Gede et al., 2020). The teacher

also needs to consider providing the supplementary media in a comprehensible way to help children easier to learn the language (Sukarno, 2008).

The same challenge in providing supplementary learning media in teaching English was faced by the English teacher in SD N 1 Baktiseraga. The preliminary observation has been done in SD N 1 Baktiseraga because this school has implemented the curriculum *Merdeka Belajar* and the students in all grades have studied English since the curriculum has been implemented after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, after preliminary observation by doing interviews and observing the learning media provided in the school library, there are still minimal supplementary media in teaching English for young learners, especially for students in the third grade. During the pandemic, the students were not learning English appropriately due to the lack of learning media in teaching and the curriculum has just been implemented so the teacher and the students still adapting with a new condition and curriculum. In addition, there is no main printed English book for the teacher and the students as the main reference in studying English Language specifically for the third-grade students, the other supplementary learning media in English is very limited and does not specify the grade of the students. Furthermore, the contents in the supplementary media also do not comprehensive and are too difficult to learn for third-grade students. For instance, one of the learning media that being used which are provided by the school consist of too many vocabularies with complex sentences. It creates distractions and does not help the students in learning English language even though the book provides Indonesian translate below the English text it makes the

paragraph too tight and does not comfortable to read for the students in the third-grade.

The school also barely uses any digital book or electronic book in teaching English to the students. Although the English teacher used PowerPoint that he created according to the syllabus and the topic that is required for the third-grade students, the students do not have any learning media to learn at home because of the limited learning media at school both hard copy and in electronic or digital book. This condition caused boredom for the students due to the monotone teaching style during the learning process in the class and the lack of attractive learning media for the children to learn independently. Thus, it is important to consider an alternative learning media to assist new teaching style for the teacher along with utilizing technologies in the learning process. In preliminary observation also showed that the students actively used smartphone in their daily therefore, there is possibility for the teacher in creating electronic books for their students to learn at home.

The benefit and the positive effects of using electronic books for the students in learning English have been investigated from a lot of studies in various grade of the students. One of the studies conducted by Herlina Usman in 2019 about developing an English language electronic book for elementary students from based on whole language approach. This study shows that the learning material was very good and the learning activities in the learning material were effectively used in English classrooms in improving the students' language skills(Usman et al., 2020). Another study from Sulistianingsih AS and Annisa Carina in the same year conducted a research and development research that aims

to develop interactive E-storybooks as material technology coursebooks. After the electronic book being implemented, the result shows that interactive E-storybooks which consist of material and assessment are appropriate and effectively used by covering 5 aspects namely material content, operation, navigation menus, e-book display design, and language use in the e-book. These aspects also proved by the researchers helped the students in learning English Language(Sulistianingsih & Carina, 2019).

Based on the requirement from the *Merdeka belajar* curriculum, the students are not only required to be able in using, communicate, read and write in English, but also able to integrated the learning with technologies. By having this interactive E-storybooks, the students can integrate their learning process in using English language as their target language more effectively because it can enhance the students' attention and interest in learning English because it consists of interactive activities with attractive illustration and storyline which suitable for students in primary school.

According to this phenomenon faced by the English teacher and the students in the third grade and how the studies show positive effects by using electronic books as the supporting learning media, the researcher was interested to develop supplementary learning media in teaching English. The learning media is not only focused on the topics required for the students but also on how the learning media as in the form of electronic books to help the students learn anytime. The learning media also developed interactively because, after the observation, the researcher also found that the learning media has not provided interactive activities for the students after the learning process. Moreover, the

additional learning media integrated with the Merdeka Belajar curriculum are limited for students in third grade, the teacher said that it will help both the teacher and the students in the English learning process in the classroom. The interactive E-storybooks developed based on the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum to help the teacher in teaching and filling the students' needs, and also increase the students' competencies in the English language.

1.2 Problem Identification

In the implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum, the teacher at elementary school must provide appropriate and comprehend supplementary learning media in teaching English. Due to the limited supplementary learning media in teaching English both in hard and electronic form, it is difficult for both teachers in teaching English and students in learning the English language. Creating supplementary media in learning is a must for the teacher, but it is difficult for the teacher to provide supplementary media in the form of hard copy because of its price. Therefore, creating interactive electronic books for the students can be alternative media for the teacher and students in the learning process. Several studies have mentioned how interactive E-storybookss have positively affected the students' language skills competencies, especially in learning English. Students' perspectives were also actively involved and studied along with the implementation of the interactive E-storybooks. Moreover, other studies mentioned that teachers also perceived the positive effect of implementing interactive E-storybooks in the learning process because it is easier to use and help them to teach students with limited learning media. Furthermore, this research focused on developing an English interactive E-storybooks for students in

elementary school because this supplementary media will help the teacher and students during the learning process due to the limited learning media for the students at the school. This interactive E-storybooks customized to be relevant to the topic in the third-grade students with interactive exercises to help the students improve their understanding.

1.3 Limitations of the Research

This research focused on the development of an English interactive electronic book for elementary school students at SD N 1 Baktiseraga specifically for students in the third grade. In developing the interactive E-storybooks, the researcher used Book Creator Application and other supporting applications to support the book's detail. For topics, the interactive E-storybooks contained two topics for each semester in the third grade based on *Merdeka belajar* curriculum. The interactive E-storybooks not only focused on the supporting materials based on the topics but also on creating interactive exercises for the students to improve their language skills after they use the e-book during the learning process.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How to develop English Interactive E-storybooks integrated with Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for third-grade students at SD N 1 Baktiseraga?
2. How is the quality of English interactive E-storybooks as the supplementary material for third-grade students at SD N 1 Baktiseraga?

1.5 Research Objectives

1. To develop appropriate and comprehend English Interactive E-storybooks for third-grade students at SD N 1 Baktiseraga
2. To investigate the quality of the interactive E-storybooks integrated with Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for third-grade students at SD N 1 Baktiseraga.

1.6 Research Significances

This research was expected to have benefits for the researcher, readers, institution, and society. The significance of the research can be formulated as follows:

1. Theoretical Significances
 - a. For the researcher, this research can answer the research questions and help the researcher to understand and give suggestions for further research.
 - b. For the readers, this research can be a source if they try to study and examine the development and implementation of English interactive E-storybookss especially for young learners.
 - c. For the institution, this research attached the suggestion for further research that might motivate other researchers to do further research in the future and know how to overcome the challenges that occur during the development process and the implementation process of interactive E-storybookss.

- d. For society or general people, this research helped them understand about how the curriculum affects the way the teacher teaches and the needs of the students.

2. Empirical Significance

- a. For the researcher, this research helped the researcher to develop a product that is supplementary learning media in the form of interactive E-storybookss in helping the teacher in teaching the English language and the students in learning the English language as the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum required. Also, investigate the effect of the implementation of interactive E-storybookss for the students in improving their language skills.
- b. For the readers, this research can help them understand the development of interactive E-storybookss, the effects after it is being implemented, and the challenges faced during the process.
- c. For the institution, this research can be considered to conduct further research about supplementary learning media by using technologies.
- d. For society, this research will examine the challenges and the solution to the limited supplementary learning media provided by the school.