

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Al-Seghayer (2014) stated, that in the implementation of English learning activities, teachers can use a wide variety of available teaching materials that cover various aspects of learning. Teaching materials can range from those supported by audio-visual materials to books that only focus on one particular aspect or skill. There are types of English books that only focus on certain aspects of English and books that only offer practice activities at certain stages in the learning process. Therefore, many English teachers use teaching materials other than the general books provided because they feel unable to meet the learning targets that have been set. However, some teachers may choose to use only the general books provided, not additional teaching materials. This allows for learning activities that are monotonous and only rely on the activities in the book.

Teachers certainly hope that textbooks provided by the government can be trusted as a provider of adequate teaching materials. Therefore, the development of teaching materials is one of the main interests of education. Teachers need to know the best teaching materials for their learning in the classroom and they also need to have expertise in making additional teaching materials and know how to adjust them to suit existing educational demands (Qamariah, 2015). This is a reflection of teachers' efforts to create higher-quality learning in the classroom.

Cunningsworth (1984) stated that most textbooks are vague or do not have good details. This is because the textbook provided by the government covers all topics and tends to all aspects of English. In addition, it is also targeted to a wide audience so that

it has not identified the aspects of needs, learning styles, and local culture. As for providing students with more meaningful experiences and understanding, the textbooks used should provide specific specifications and be familiar with the child's life and culture.

Tomlinson (2011) stated that learning materials are all appropriate and can help facilitate language learning in classroom activities. Therefore, teachers have a great obligation to have the ability to develop teaching materials because if teachers can provide teaching materials that can stimulate students' intellectual abilities by providing content that is close to real life, it can help teachers to provide good learning experiences to students. Teachers must be able to customize materials to suit the needs of students in the classroom so that they can be used by all students to support group and individual activities. This is because the demands of learning in this era require students to learn independently, both in groups and individually. Teachers need to have the skills to select suitable materials to be developed and then applied.

Teacher skills also need to be considered in developing teaching materials aimed at young learners. Teaching English to elementary school students in Indonesia is not an easy thing to do. It is very different from teaching adult learners (Hertiki, 2018). Elementary school students are young learners who are still at an age where they do not have much experience and do not have good skills in foreign languages. However, it is at this young age that children need to receive meaningful and interesting learning because they tend to still have high learning motivation than adult learners. Young learners are more likely to learn indirectly or unintentionally, (Arda & Doyran, 2017). Children will learn faster if they learn about the world around them to be taught by subjects. In addition, students will find learning more meaningful than just listening to explanations if they are allowed to play, see, touch, hear, and so on. In addition, young learners have a strong instinct to enjoy. They will happily accept their part in the game. As a result, motivation and constructive activities will impact on the way they learn in class, making it more valuable and applicable in the long run. Therefore, teachers must maintain students' focus by not allowing students to feel bored and turn

away from the lesson. Therefore, teachers must not only be good at developing interesting teaching strategies, methods, and techniques, but teachers must also have the ability to develop interesting teaching materials.

Hertiki (2018) stated that developing teaching materials to teach English to young learners certainly provides a challenge for teachers. Teaching materials themselves are anything that can be used to assist the learning implementation process. In the context of language learning, teaching materials can contain linguistic, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic, which are presented in various forms such as print, direct electronic, or digital-based. The teaching material used is a very important determinant for the successful implementation of learning (Hanifa, 2018). These are the various teaching tools that teachers use to achieve targeted results (Mustafiyanti, Putri, Musyassaroh, 2023). With the purpose of teachers are required to have a sense of creativity in developing materials that will be very effective if applied in their English classes. There are several reasons why teachers need to develop their teaching materials. This is because, most elementary schools in Indonesia in English learning activities in the classroom still only rely on textbooks offered by the government (Simonne, 2017). Hence, teachers must take the initiative to provide more meaningful learning to students by providing learning experiences with teaching materials that are varied, interesting and of course effective.

Providing more meaningful learning experiences with good learning materials also needs to be adjusted to the curriculum implemented by the school. In the process of learning English in elementary schools that have implemented the emancipated curriculum. English materials delivered by English teachers in elementary schools in Indonesia tend to rely only on the main textbooks provided. It can be said that the learning activities provided have not been able to meet the learning criteria in learning activities with the emancipated curriculum. This can also be influenced because this curriculum transition occurred not long ago so teachers may not yet understand well how this curriculum works. Therefore, there are often problems with student learning outcomes because the learning itself has not met the suitability of the curriculum. The

main policy of the Emancipated Curriculum is self-learning and giving students the freedom to learn. Teachers will build comfortable learning conditions according to students' interests, provide opportunities for students to learn independently, build thoughts independently, and provide opportunities for students to discuss more with the teacher. Providing students more freedom while maintaining control over the process is seen to help develop the qualities of self-reliant, critical thinking, brave, courteous, competitive, and civilized individuals (Pertwi, Nurfatimah, Hasna, 2022).

The criteria that are expected in the application of emancipated curriculum in English language learning are differentiated learning, student learning styles, and cultural sensitivity. First, differentiated learning supports learning that is tailored to the needs, interests and learning styles of diverse students. In this instance, teachers have the autonomy to alter the course material, instructional methodology, learning materials, and learning environment. This learning activity is characterized by the absence of demands for students to be the same in all respects as others and are welcome to learn according to their requests. Tomlinson (1999) states in his book that differentiated learning is divided into four types, namely: 1). Differentiating content, this includes what students learn, namely the teacher controls, the content of the material with adjustments to student needs. 2). The differentiation process includes different activities used to activate learning in the classroom. 3). Product differentiation, which includes product tasks or tests that help students expand their understanding of the learning that has been done. 4). Differentiating learning environment, which includes how the teacher organizes the classroom atmosphere and expectations of the learning. Of the four, teachers can use one or more for differentiated learning in their classes.

Then, Jumrah (2022) stated that one of the influences on successful language learning is learning styles. All individuals learn in their unique way. He also stated that learning style is a strategy of collecting, processing, interpreting, organizing, and thinking about knowledge. Students have different learning styles which are reflected in how they acquire material in class. Young learners' learning styles are also different

and have their own characteristics. Young learners tend to prefer fun learning. Fleming et al. (2001) proposed VARK as (*Visual, Auditory, Read-write, and Kinesthetic*) is described as a learning style related to sensory modalities where children prefer to receive new information. This is a suitable learning style for young learners.

In addition, teaching materials need to contain the cultural sensitivity emphasized by the emancipated curriculum. Conversely, in learning a language, culture needs to be learned because the two of them always go hand in hand. Moreover, children need to be equipped with the ability to communicate with people of different cultural backgrounds. In addition to the importance of children knowing the diversity of cultures that exist, they also need to know how we can appreciate and understand each different culture. Therefore, the learning materials used by students to learn languages need to be accompanied by cultural sensitivity so that children are equipped with knowledge that can certainly be useful to shape their character and prevent misunderstandings and conflicts in the future. Zhu (2011) stated that cultural sensitivity can also be used as a basis for communication. Cultural sensitivity should not only be one tendency but children should also be taught to understand their own culture and the culture of others. Thus, children who have good abilities will be sensitive to other cultures and not forget their own culture. In other words, children do not lose their identity.

Then, learning with an emancipated curriculum is expected to be able to answer the demands of the learning era in the 21st century. Which with the demands of digitalization that utilizes technology makes teachers need to provide activities that are integrated with technology. With the integration of digitized learning, it will provide opportunities for teachers and students to bring new content and information into the classroom, (Fairman, 2004). This will be highly favored by students. Reflecting on the researcher's experience when conducting teaching practice activities in one of the schools based in Singaraja, there was a very good anticipation of learning activities that were integrated with technology. Students tended to be more engaged and active in learning. They looked happier and certainly encouraged student motivation to

understood the material more easily. This proves that it is very necessary to develop digital materials to be applied in English learning activities in the classroom.

Previous research conducted on textbook development in the context of elementary schools includes: Abidasari, Sabgini, Inayati (2021), with the title Development of Bright English Textbooks for Grade 6 Elementary School in Batu City, thus requiring additional textbooks to support learning activities. The developed book is very relevant to be applied and makes it easier for teachers to understand the information. In addition, Zuhdi (2019) also conducted a similar study with the title The Development of Young Learner Materials for Teaching English in 2019 which showed that elementary school students' English proficiency and teachers' ability to teach English were improved by using Teaching English Textbooks for Young Learners. However, none of the previous studies has concentrated on developing materials based on the emancipated curriculum, thus this is new research that has never been done before.

With regard to these issues, the researcher made preliminary observations at two elementary schools, both located in Denpasar. These schools are mover schools where all levels of students have used the emancipated curriculum. The results of the observation showed that the teachers in both schools still had difficulty implementing differentiated English learning. This is because the source of teaching materials used by both teachers, namely the "My Next Words Grade 6" textbook from the government, has not been able to facilitate differentiated learning. The textbook provided has not been able to fully facilitate teachers to create meaningful learning. Teachers also admitted that the book has not provided optimal learning with visual, aural, read/write, and kinesthetic learning styles. However, despite these problems, there is no maximum effort from teachers to develop additional materials to support differentiated learning. In addition, the results of preliminary interviews show that elementary school students prefer teachers to provide more interesting additional materials as teaching materials in addition to the main textbook provided. They will be more eager to learn if the teacher can provide more real things such as in the form of visuals that can spur

students' learning understanding to be better. Therefore, the need for evaluation and development of the "My Next Words Grade 6" book used must be ensured whether it can help students achieve learning targets or not.

These problems reflect the development of learning styles that follow globalization in the 21st century and are in line with the emancipated curriculum which carries the principle that students can learn freely and independently. Therefore, the researcher chose to develop textbooks that are integrated with technological advances. Hence, textbooks are not only used in printed form but what the researcher develop can be used in both printed and digital forms. This is adjusted to the needs of the class. Therefore, the developed textbook is an integrated textbook with digital features that can be utilized by teachers both for direct learning and learning with technology integration. To comply with the policy of emancipated curriculum, the researcher also consider differentiated learning, student's learning styles and cultural sensitivity to produce a more meaningful product. The researcher hopes that this research can help English teachers in both schools create higher-quality learning in line with the emancipated curriculum.

As a result, in this study, the researcher aims to help both English teachers develop differentiated English learning materials based on the Emancipated curriculum for grade 6 students in the first semester of the two elementary schools based in Denpasar. The researcher assisted the teachers in developing learning materials in the form of digital textbooks that are expected to have a meaningful function to support the teaching and learning activities of English in the classroom using an emancipated curriculum.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

The results of the preliminary observations at two mover elementary schools in Denpasar resulted in the discovery of several problems, namely:

1. The learning process carried out by teachers in English classes still seems to lack the use of varied teaching materials.

2. The English learning process carried out by teachers in the classroom still lack of using different learning styles so that students still have difficulty in understanding learning.
3. The English learning process carried out by English teachers in their classes still only relies on individual learning and do not support the learning process in groups.
4. The implementation of English in the two schools studied did not have effective learning for the emancipated curriculum.

### **1.3 Research Limitation**

Based on the background and the problem identification, it is necessary to limit the problem in this research. This study mainly focused on developing an Emancipated curriculum-based English digital textbook for sixth-grade students in the first/odd semester of elementary school based on student's interests, needs, and learning styles that refer to differentiated learning.

### **1.4 Research Question**

Based on the research limitations focused on this study, the research questions are as follows:

1. What are the needs of the teacher and students in learning English based on the emancipated curriculum for sixth grade of elementary school?
2. How to develop English learning materials based on the emancipated curriculum for sixth-grade students of elementary school in the first semester?
3. What is the quality of the development of English learning materials based on the emancipated curriculum for sixth-grade students of elementary school?

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

Based on the research questions, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the needs of the teachers and students in learning English based on the emancipated curriculum for sixth-grade students in the first semester.
2. To develop differentiated English learning materials based on the emancipated curriculum for sixth-grade elementary school students in the first semester.
3. To recognize the quality of the English material development for sixth-grade grade students of elementary school in the first semester.

### **1.6 Research Significance**

This study aims to develop teaching materials other than the primary textbook and student workbooks for the first-semester sixth-grade students at two State Elementary Schools based in Denpasar. Therefore, the significance of this research is divided into two, namely theoretical significance including the importance of this research to have an impact on the educational process. Then its practical significance is expected to provide benefits for English teachers, students and other researchers.

#### **1. Theoretical Significance**

The researcher expects that this research can contribute to the development of learning materials based on the interests of the needs, interests of students, and in accordance with the objectives of the implementation of the emancipated curriculum.

#### **2. Practical Significance**

This research can be useful in several aspects:

##### **a) For students**

This research aims to provide better quality learning by providing more varied teaching materials and materials other than just using the main textbook and student exercise books as the main teaching materials.

##### **b) For Teacher**

In addition, this research can help English teachers to develop learning materials that are varied and in accordance with the emancipated curriculum by realizing students' interests.

c) For Other Researchers

Apart from that, this research can be used as a reference for further research regarding the development of emancipated curriculum-based learning materials.

