

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Research Background**

Education can develop a good personality and enhance the abilities or talents that exist in human individuals to achieve specific goals or targets (Trahati, 2015, p. 11). Education in schools remains a crucial foundation for building progress, performance, potential, and knowledge in all children. Because education enables a person to have a more socialized learning experience, thereby increasing individual efficiency (Dewey, 1894). Therefore, to foster a learning process that can build a person's character, school education must have a structured learning curriculum to achieve specific educational goals. Because the curriculum is defined as a plan of learning specifically designed for activities in the learning process for students at school, an education curriculum will facilitate student learning development in school (Taba, 1962). The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has decided that the Merdeka Curriculum will officially be implemented in Indonesian educational institutions to help teachers understand the importance of basic concepts in the learning process for students throughout Indonesia (Makarim, 2022). Based on Kemendikbudristek No. 56 of 2022, students with disabilities are eligible to attend special or inclusive schools. Likewise, the Merdeka Curriculum is designed for general students and students with disabilities, especially D/HH children. Therefore, teachers in both settings must be prepared to implement the Merdeka Curriculum. The curriculum for D/HH and non-disabled students should share the same goal of shaping positive behavior.

The Merdeka Curriculum in educational units has been decided to be suitable for all students in various schools, especially at SLB (Sekolah Luar Biasa). The Merdeka Curriculum has advantages such as being simpler and more in-depth (Fitriyah & Wardani, 2022); teachers and students have more freedom in learning (Priantini et al., 2022); and learning is more fun, relevant, and meaningful (Priantini et al., 2022). Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 32 contains the meaning that: "Education for children with disabilities (special education) is education

for students who have a level of difficulty in following the learning process due to physical, emotional, mental and social reasons, abnormalities, or have the potential for special intelligence and talents” (Budi et al., 2022). With the Merdeka Curriculum, children with disabilities (DHH) can undergo normal education according to learning in certain fields, including learning English. Since the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in schools based on Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 56 of 2022, children with disabilities (DHH) have also been taught English (Lestari, 2023; Kemendikbud, 2022; Nugraha, 2022).

Regarding by Merdeka Curriculum of 2022, English language learning is taught to children with disabilities. Learning languages as a communication tool for deaf students is very necessary to assist them in communicating. Several schools must fulfil the learning needs of children, especially children with disabilities (D/HH), who must be taught how to learn languages in English for effective communication as well as possible. Learning English as a foreign language, especially as a lingua franca, is crucial to making communication easier. According to Sanjaya, Dewi, and Paramartha (2022), stated that one of the easiest ways to learn English is to learn the language at a young age. Based on the research proposed by Lestari, Padmadewi, and Swastini (2022), learning English as a foreign language must receive more attention from every school for all young children. Thus, English must be taught to deaf students when they are still children, around three or four years old. Because D/HH students find it hard to understand what normal people mean or say, thus, one of the activities they can do is communicate using English vocabulary. In learning English for D/HH students, seen from their limitations, learning English vocabulary is one subject that allows them to focus on.

The National Language Policy for multilingualism, with an emphasis on the use of Indonesian, preservation of regional languages, and mastery of foreign languages called "Tri Gatra Wangun Bahasa", which is promoted by the Law of the Ministry of Education (UU) of the Republic of Indonesia no. 24 of 2009 (Bedir, 2019; Fauyan, 2019). The context of understanding the teachings of "Tri Gatra Wangun Bahasa" is a form of implementing a more effective, creative, and innovative learning

process, especially in learning English, which can be implemented by Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) children. This aims to determine the development of his abilities and potential during the learning process (Maryanto, 2023). Several special schools in Bali have taught English as a foreign language, especially to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children (DHH), as complementary teaching material for DHH in the teaching and learning process to introduce language signs as early as possible (Adnyani et al., 2021).

In teaching English to deaf students, the teacher must select the appropriate strategy and assisted by fun media needs to be considered to improve D/HH students' skills in learning English vocabulary. Strategies in general are plans or actions used by teachers in various ways to carry out the learning process for students, aiming to achieve the desired learning targets. Teachers must determine special strategies to teach students with special needs, for example, teaching emotions and feelings material by using role play strategies in describing a picture using sign language and combined with body language while using expression. By implementing effective and efficient strategies, students can learn English vocabulary well, especially in improving communication. Annette (2011) and Domagala-Zysk (2015) revealed that teachers employ a variety of strategies to educate Deaf Learners in Special Schools on Reading and Writing, such as demonstrations, illustrations, explanations, and the combination of sign language between SIBI and ASL. Besides using strategies in teaching English to deaf students, learning media should also be implemented to support visual learning, increase student engagement, and help clarify vocabulary and concepts through concrete representations. The study by Muna (2014) covered, that visual media greatly enhances the comprehension of D/HH children during the English teaching and learning process. Additionally, based on Xu's (2018) research, it is highlighted that learning media can simplify the teaching and learning process. Therefore, effective strategies and learning media are essential in teaching English to deaf students. Although they have limited of hearing system, they still need equal opportunities to develop their language skills and communicate effectively in various contexts.

Deaf children are not different from other children in general. Deaf children are only distinguished by the limitations they have. The limitation is in the hearing

system, which makes it difficult to communicate well. According to Law No. 31, 1945 stated that every society has the same opportunity to obtain education. Thus, students with disabilities should also get the same opportunity in terms of education. However, the condition of a non-functioning hearing system normally becomes a differentiator between deaf students and students in general schools. With their limitations, students with hearing disabilities cannot be placed in regular classes in public schools in the learning process, so they need special treatment to help them communicate, especially in learning new languages in education.

Communication is a big challenge for disabilities children who often find it difficult to express their opinion with others (Dewi et al., 2025). According to Adi, Unsiah, and Fadhilah (2017), deaf students have several limitations, such as difficulty in capturing or conveying verbal communication and directions; they also cannot hear, which is the main cause of difficulty in understanding things in verbal communication. Also according to Furthermore, studies on the challenges teachers face when instructing D/HH students, conducted by Adi et al. (2017) and Christian (2018), revealed that some challenges include students' difficulty in understanding English words due to limited vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, teachers find it challenging to capture the attention of students with special needs during the learning process. Another study by Pradnyani et al. (2022) revealed that deaf students in SLB have problems with language skills; this is because their limitations result in students having difficulty remembering the vocabulary they have learned, difficulty pronouncing words, a lack of understanding in simple sentences, difficulty writing words that are to be conveyed. Students in special schools generally never have the opportunity for Early Childhood Education (PAUD), and their language skills are completely invisible. They certainly cannot recognize letters, pronounce, listen, or learn to read and write. Because of their limitations, they often face difficulties in understanding some words and understanding their meanings that have the same lip movements, for example, the lip movements on the words "meet & meat, see & sea, too & two, etc. Although when viewed from the lip movements, the two words look the same, but have different meanings, which is a major factor that will cause them to misunderstand. Their



difficulty in following things communicated verbally also greatly impacts the mistakes in improving the learning of English Vocabulary skills, which can cause misconceptions. These challenges are not only felt by educators or other teachers but also by D/HH students during the learning process at SLB. The level of hearing loss they experience can also affect their ability to capture information, digest or understand quickly, and even have difficulty reading and learning English. Hence, spoken oral language must be provided solely during teaching and learning (Mpofu & Chimenga, 2013; Oyewuni, 2008). These challenges are not only felt by educators or other teachers but also by Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students.

Besides all the limitations above, several facts cover all needs that must be met in SLB, one of which is for deaf and Hard Of students. Facts that are needed in SLB, especially for D/HH children, are: (1) improving the performance of the teaching process in the use of sign language, so that this will have a big impact on D/HH children. (2) The learning system not only focuses on textbook-based learning but can also teach through various learning media, which is more effective in improving the learning performance of D/HH children at SLB (Adnyani et al., 2021). The limitations of D/HH students became the teacher's challenge in teaching English vocabulary. However, despite its limitations/lack, SLB continues to expedite the learning process for D/HH children, especially in teaching English, which starts in the 7th grade of junior high school. Due to their enthusiasm, of course, this needs to be appreciated. Therefore, appropriate teaching strategies are needed to support their needs in learning English Vocabulary. The unique characteristics of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Children need to be respected, starting from their special needs, especially in terms of limited facilities and infrastructure that do not support them, especially during the learning process. This is very important, because it will have a big impact on the development of DHH children while learning English, especially in teaching English Vocabulary.

Despite these limitations and weaknesses, D/HH children in SLB have significant advantages, which can be seen from their special characteristics. Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) children have unique characteristics which can be seen from

several aspects, that is (1) Intellectual, (2) Language and Speech, and (3) Social and Emotional (Blackhurst & William, 1981; Hallahan, 1998; Somad & Hermawati, 1996). The intellectual abilities of DHH children are the same as children in general; some have high average intelligence, and some have low intelligence. Social and emotional factors also greatly influence their mental formation, character, and hearing in forming new vocabulary. This condition, caused by DHH children, causes them to experience delays in intelligence development due to obstacles and the inability to understand language properly. If DHH children are taught well how to use listening, grammar formation, or communication techniques, they can obtain full information based on their experiences. They have their way of communicating or conveying a message they think to other people easily without any psychological obstacles (Van Riper, 1972; Suparno, 2007). On the other hand, DHH children can learn and achieve at school if learning activities are not fully verbalized but through adequate visualization (Bunawan & Yuwati, 2000; Suparno, 2007). Language and speech are the main things for DHH children in forming their vocabulary because this will greatly influence the process of language and speaking development.

The Researcher conducted the study at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng because this special school was the only school with limited English educators, needed more English teachers, lacked learning facilities, and had inexperienced English teachers in special education, especially in teaching English to D/HH students. English teachers at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng must have good teaching experience in implementing the appropriate strategy in the field of English for D/HH students. Thus, D/HH students will very easily follow the learning flow carried out by the teacher in teaching English, especially in learning English Vocabulary. Based on research from Adnyani et al. (2021), learning English for D/HH students focuses on developing English Vocabulary learning abilities. This research is important to analyze teachers' abilities in implementing English learning strategies for D/HH Students, especially in teaching English vocabulary in SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng. In teaching deaf students, the learning process of selecting the appropriate strategy and assisted by fun media needs to be considered to improve D/HH students' skills in learning English vocabulary. Teachers

must determine special strategies to teach students with special needs, for example, teaching emotions and feelings material by using role play strategies in describing a picture using sign language and combined with body language while using expression. By implementing effective and efficient strategies, students can learn English vocabulary well, especially in improving communication. Therefore, the main attention here is the strategies the teacher uses in teaching English vocabulary to D/HH students by role-playing and incorporating sign language, body language, and expressions, which is a fantastic strategy for teaching students with disabilities. It is engaging, multi-sensory, and helps bridge communication gaps. By applying this strategy, students with disabilities can recognize their emotions and feelings from the learning materials that mention vocabulary from the pictures shown by the teacher. Then, by another strategy, the teacher shows some sentences from the use of vocabulary in the previous picture while practicing the sentence using sign and body language. Then the teacher tells students to practice the sentence in front of the class in pairs while showing expressions. With this strategy, teachers can help students with disabilities to reach their full potential in improving their English Vocabulary.

This study focuses on the strategies used by the English teacher for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Children, especially in teaching English vocabulary. Moreover, the study about the effective and efficient strategy used in teaching English vocabulary to D/HH students still needs to be implemented for all of the SLB in Bali. Much research on segregation has been conducted in Bali. However, some research on the teacher's strategies and challenges faced in teaching English vocabulary with special needs is rarely found, especially for D/HH students. Based on research conducted by Adnyani et al. (2021), learning English for DHH students focuses on developing English Vocabulary learning abilities. This aims to identify and analyze the development of D/HH children in their English language learning abilities, especially in teaching English vocabulary at SLB. Based (Kemendikbud & Muzdalifa (2022), this is driven by a policy based on the Merdeka Curriculum, based on the policy of the Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 56 of 2022 to support English language

learning for children with disabilities, including Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Children at SLB.

On the other hand, SLB teachers want to shape their understanding of English vocabulary mastery so that they can use it in daily communication. Likewise, children in SLB are very enthusiastic when carrying out learning activities, especially when learning English vocabulary. However, teachers at SLB have several challenges in implementing the strategies to teach English vocabulary, especially how to make deaf students easily remember a new vocabulary that the teacher teaches in the learning process. This is a challenge for teachers at SLB in implementing the strategies in teaching English vocabulary to Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Children (Ardianingsih et al., 2017). Therefore, the Researcher was inspired to conduct research that focused on the teachers' strategies and how to overcome the challenges when teaching English vocabulary to D/HH students.

This study is really important to conduct and the Researcher will support Indonesian deaf students in segregation in the National Education System should take an English subject in their school, as students in regular schools do. Also, dealing with deaf students' limitations because sign language is not familiar yet to people in general, thus, the only way to assist D/HH students in communicating with the people around them is by verbal communication to focus on improving their English Vocabulary. Therefore, the English teacher at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng must apply English language teaching to them and can determine effective and efficient strategies to be applied in teaching English vocabulary to D/HH children and also how to overcome the challenges that the teacher usually faces during teaching deaf students.

Based on the conditions and findings mentioned above, the Researcher was motivated to explore more deeply the strategies commonly used by English teachers in teaching English vocabulary to D/HH students, as well as the challenges that the teacher typically faces in the classroom at the junior high school level of SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng. Therefore, this research is considered important to conduct, and the Researcher is highly interested in further investigating and observing this study entitled ***"Teacher's Strategies and Challenges In Teaching English Vocabulary To Deaf and***



*Hard-of-hearing Students*". The results of this study may be valuable for English teachers, schools, and the government in developing better policies in English as a foreign language and improving the learning of English vocabulary for D/HH students at SLB Negeri in Bali.

## 1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the background of the study, several problems can be identified as follows:

1. Teacher strategies are needed because teaching D/HH students in 7th grade at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng presents enormous challenges. Therefore, it is important to choose the appropriate strategies that are effective for the development of deaf students while learning English.
2. Teaching English Vocabulary is needed to (a) develop D/HH Students' abilities in learning English vocabulary. (b) to support D/HH students' proficiency in English Vocabulary as effective and efficient learning according to teacher strategies in teaching.

## 1.3 Limitations Of Study

Based on the problems identified above, this research is limited to the learning strategy used by the teacher in teaching Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) students. This research tried to analyze the teacher's Strategies in teaching English vocabulary to D/HH students and the challenges/difficulties faced by the teacher while teaching D/HH students at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng.

## 1.4 Research Question

Based on the problem identifications above, researchers were inspired to research teacher strategies for teaching English vocabulary development to D/HH students. So, the research questions in this study can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the teachers' strategies for teaching English vocabulary to D/HH students at SLB Negeri in Bali?
2. What challenges are experienced by The English teachers in teaching English as a Foreign language to the D/HH students?

### 1.5 Objectives of Study

The objectives of the study were to find the answers to the problems that have been mentioned before, and these objectives can be listed as follows:

1. To describe the teaching strategies used by the teacher in teaching English vocabulary to D/HH students of 7th grade at SLB Negeri in Bali.
2. To describe the challenges faced by the English teacher in teaching English vocabulary to D/HH students of 7th grade at SLB Negeri in Buleleng Regency

### 1.6 Significant of Study

The result of the research was intended to have some significance, theoretically and practically.

#### 1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of this research is expected to give information about the theory of teaching strategies that can be used to teach English Language skills to D/HH students, especially in improving their learning of English Vocabulary.

#### 1.6.2 Practical Significance

The practical significance of carrying out this research in detail is useful for the following:

##### 1. For Students

The research is expected to be useful and can support the learning process for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students at SLB at the junior high school level, especially 7th-grade students, to improve their English Language Skills, especially in Learning English vocabulary through learning strategies that the teacher integrates.

##### 2. For Teacher

The research is expected to support teachers, especially English teachers at SLB, in developing and implementing an effective and efficient learning strategy for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Students

to improve their English language skills, especially in teaching English vocabulary.

### 3. For Other Researchers

The research is expected to be a reference for other researchers who will conduct research in the same field using more effective and efficient learning methods or strategies to support the learning process for D/HH Students in improving their English soft skills, especially in learning English vocabulary.

### 4. For Readers

The research results are expected to inform readers of the importance of teachers' learning methods or strategies in supporting the learning process for D/HH Students at SLB to improve their basic skills in English, especially in learning English vocabulary. It also teaches readers how to integrate effective strategies in teaching English vocabulary for D/HH Students in the 7th grade for Junior High School at SLB.

