CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Due to their differences from other students, individuals with disabilities require specific attention when they are studying. According to a research by Gkora and Karabatzaki (2023), students with impairments are less motivated and exhibit a lack of endurance in class tasks. Their performance will be impacted since students' motivation will have an impact on their learning process and learning outcomes. According to Stahopoulou and Siskou (2023), impaired students make an effort to study well, but if they experience repeated difficulties, they may get demotivated, stop finishing their assignments, and become unable to establish their learning goals.

Learning media for Visual Impairment Students (VIS) must consider their special needs in accessing information. Some examples include Braille books, audiobooks, sound-enabled display software, 3D models, touchpads for geometric concepts, interactive games, audio-annotated videos, tactile maps, and training in the use of assistive technology. Electronic books that can be used to support learning are fiction and non- fiction-based books. Students and teachers can access e-books via personal computers and smartphones (Fadlilah, 2022). Apart from electronic books, there are examples of other media such as audio media. Audio media has a big impact on VIS. They can easily access information without relying on visual abilities. This increases their learning independence and provides freedom to study while doing other activities (Fadlilah, 2022). This audio book media certainly makes it easier for students to study English material without having to use many devices and can be used anywhere and anytime. Audiobooks are also a very helpful medium for VIS but their role does not replace braille (Guha, 2020a).

Apart from the learning media created, blind people also use gadgets as a tool to receive information. Blind people use media called talkback for Android and also voiceover for iOS as their way of using gadgets. Gadgets are very commonly used by people with severe visual impairment and blindness (Abraham et al., 2022). To ensure accessibility, modern smartphones are equipped with built-in screen

readers, such as Talk Back on Android devices developed by Google and Voice Over on iPhone developed by Apple. This screen reader software reads smartphone screen content by voice and supports a variety of touch-based gesture interactions, allowing users to navigate and operate their smartphone without needing to look at the screen, hands-free. This era is also an era related to Gen Z, where they grew up in an era of rapidly developing technology, where smartphones have become an inseparable part of their daily lives. Khan & Khusro (2021) found that blind people use services with the help of technology to make their daily activities easier and can do them independently, thereby helping to improve their quality of life.

In providing new learning media, audiobooks are the right choice that can be used as English teaching materials for the blind. Audiobooks are very useful for the blind because they provide easy access to various information and entertainment without requiring visual abilities. Audio books produced for blind learners can create an environment to provide, enrich, inform, guide and teach subjects fully by creating an environment to learn and also develop independent learning skill to solve problems and answer questions as well as discuss different course related topics (Fansury et al., 2019). With audio format, blind people can listen to books, stories or learning materials easily through their ears. This allows them to access the same materials that others have, thereby increasing equality of access to knowledge. According to (Fansury et al., 2019), the benefits of audio books in distance education provide an easy access, low cost and swift alteration of the content when it is necessary. In addition, audiobooks also facilitate independence in learning, because blind people can listen to them wherever and whenever they want, without needing to rely on braille readers or browsers. Thus, audiobooks not only allow blind people to explore various topics and stories, but also increase their independence and accessibility in obtaining information and entertainment.

According to Nabiyev (2022) listening has an important place in learning as it is one of the four major skills in language acquisition. Even though the other skills such as reading, speaking and writing are essential to develop language proficiency, listening contributes primarily for language expertise. Listening plays an important role in language learning because it serves as a foundation for developing other language skills. When students listen effectively, they can better understand the

nuances of pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm, which in turn improves their ability to speak, read, and write accurately.

According to (Sanjay & Narayana, 2020), The most important part of communication is speaking, as it serves as the primary medium for individuals to share their thoughts and ideas effectively. Speaking is considered the most important component of learning a second or foreign language (Rao, 2019). Speaking is a way for students to talk, give explanations, convey information, make polite requests, exchange ideas with others, and express their opinions (Lui, 2014), which are essential skills for building interpersonal relationships and achieving academic success. (Lui, 2014), also states that the ability to speak in the language being learned is a measure of success in language learning, highlighting its critical role in demonstrating proficiency and confidence in communication.

Motivation is very important in encouraging students to participate in academic activities (Filgona et al., 2020). There are two factors, namely intrinsic and extrinsic in learning motivation. Intrinsic motivation in learning English is about the enjoyment of learning the language itself, while extrinsic motivation is driven by external factors such as academic requirements or rewards and punishments (Thohir, 2017). Apart from that, learning motivation also helps in building a sustainable interest in learning English. One of the most frustrating obstacles in student learning for a teacher is the lack of student motivation, especially language students (Filgona et al., 2020; Seven, 2020). Students enjoy learning English because of their own pleasure and desires (Silaban, 2023). However, when discussing the learning motivation of students with disabilities, special challenges emerge that need to be understood and overcome. Motivation plays an important role in students' academic success, however, students with disabilities have a lower level of motivation so they are vulnerable to a lack of motivation in education (Gkora Vana & Karabatzaki, 2023). Because classroom conditions and English language learners can vary from one place to another, the way to motivate students may also be different (Fadlilah, 2022).

Based on observations the researcher made at SLB N 1 Tabanan, we obtained some information. They have 3 elementary school students with visual impairments. The media they use in learning is usually in the form of quizzes,

YouTube, sending material via WhatsApp, and also utilizing built-in features such as talkback from each student's gadget. Their English learning materials focus on the use of sentences that are used every day. Examples of material include activities at school, getting to know the characteristics, greetings and objects at school. Students are also interested in several learning media related to music and fantasy stories. Therefore, they feel they need other, more specific learning media in learning English. Using this specific media will definitely increase their interest in learning English. Therefore, audiobook is one of the mediums used to support the learning of blind people.

1.2 Problem Identification

Inclusive education presents numerous challenges, particularly in meeting the diverse needs of students with disabilities, including those with visual impairments (VIS). These students require specialized approaches such as braille materials, orientation skills, and accessible technology to support their learning effectively. Motivating students with disabilities, often hindered by low engagement, remains a significant hurdle. Audio media emerges as a crucial tool in this context, offering VIS the ability to access educational content independently through smartphones equipped with features like screen readers and voice browsing. At SLB 1 Tabanan in Bali, creative integration of platforms like Quiziz, YouTube educational videos, and WhatsApp Groups enhances inclusive learning, with a focus on developing tailored audio resources to improve English language proficiency.

The use of audiobooks emerges as particularly beneficial for VIS at SLB 1 Tabanan, providing enhanced access to course materials and fostering independent learning. Audiobooks enable students to grasp context and language nuances effectively through auditory means, supporting flexibility in learning pace and reinforcing study independence. To substantiate these benefits, rigorous data collection is essential, focusing on outcomes such as improved material comprehension, heightened learning autonomy, and enhanced motivation. Such empirical insights are crucial for understanding the efficacy of audiobooks in

enhancing educational outcomes for VIS, guiding future strategies in inclusive education.

Students with visual impairments are the primary focus of this study because of the well-known difficulties that special education teachers and VIS face, including the lack of accessible learning resources (Gunadi & Binawan, 2023), the lack of educational training for special education teachers who handled VIS (Sohaib et al., 2021), and the requirement that teachers convert the learning materials into audio format for the VIS (Zahra et al., 2022). VIS needs special methods for learning. For instance, having access to assistive technology and using Braille educational resources. Teaching impaired kids has several challenges, particularly when it comes to supporting VIS in their educational journey. To meet their requirements, appropriate learning resources must be chosen and identified. Teaching impaired students has several challenges, particularly when it comes to supporting VIS in their educational journey. To meet their requirements, appropriate learning resources must be chosen and identified. Due to their condition, audio-based learning materials are more effective for them. One advantage of audio-based content is that it just uses auditory senses to explain concepts, which makes it simpler for VIS to understand.

SLB N 1 Tabanan has a lot of local issues. These include a lack of VIS-compliant and audio-based English learning materials, the inability of teachers to use instructional design techniques to produce materials, and the absence of student involvement in innovative, interesting, and easily available learning resources. Previous research using the ADDIE methodology to create audiobooks, such as that done by Saputra et al., (2022), demonstrates how a methodical instructional strategy may improve accessibility and student comprehension. The development of an audiobook for seventh-grade students with intellectual impairments by Sholeha et al., (2024) demonstrates that it can improve students' comprehension and memory of the subject matter. But evaluation didn't happen until much later.

Through the development of audiobooks that employ the iterative and user-focused Successive Approximation model (SAM) Two-Phase model, this study seeks to solve this issue. To guarantee content quality, relevance, and consideration for children with special needs, the guidelines in (Buitrago et al., 2023; Tomlinson,

2011a) materials were also used during development. It is anticipated that this research would result in a workable and inclusive alternative for teaching English for VIS, particularly in SLB N 1 Tabanan, by directly involving teachers and students in the design process.

1.3 Limitation of The Study

This research aims to developed audiobooks as an English learning medium for VIS at SLB N 1 Tabanan, focusing on elementary school level students. The study encompasses several key aspects. Firstly, it targets blind elementary school students at SLB N 1 Tabanan to investigate their learning needs and challenges in English education. Secondly, it evaluates the impact on students' learning motivation, measuring changes in interest, satisfaction, and self-confidence in English learning before and after using audiobooks. Thirdly, the research includes the development of tailored audiobook content and narration techniques to meet the needs of VISs, enhancing comprehension through voice intonation and emphasis on key vocabulary. Lastly, it explores how audiobooks can foster a more inclusive English learning environment, considering students' auditory learning capabilities and adapting materials accordingly.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What challenges do English teachers and VIS at SLB N 1 Tabanan perceive regarding the potential use of audiobooks for learning English before they are introduced?
2. How are the audiobooks that meet the needs of Visual Impairment Students in English language education developed?
3. How is the quality of the audiobooks for visually impaired students at SLB 1 Tabanan?

1.5 Research Objectives

1. To explore the challenges perceived by English teachers and VIS at SLB N 1 Tabanan regarding the potential use of audiobooks for learning English before their introduction.
2. To design and develop audiobooks that suit the needs of visually impaired

students (VIS) in learning English.

3. To evaluate the quality of audiobooks for VIS to facilitate their learning English.

1.6 **Significance of The Study**

1.6.1 Theoritical Significance

The significance of the theory resulting from this research lies in its contribution to enriching the theory of learning media development, especially for children with special needs in the context of English learning. By focusing on the creation and use of audiobooks as a learning medium, this research not only provides new insights into how to effectively deliver English language material to students with visual impairments, but also expands understanding of how audio media can be adapted to meet their unique needs. 7aket hoped that the results of this research can be a valuable reference for educators, researchers and educational media developers in designing more inclusive and effective methods and tools, so as to increase the accessibility and quality of English language learning for students with visual impairments. Apart from that, these findings also have the potential to enrich academic literature related to the development of inclusive learning media and can become a basis for further research in this field.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

a. For Student

Audiobooks provide better accessibility for visually impaired students in English learning materials, allowing them to listen and understand the material according to their needs. Additionally, well-designed audiobooks can 7aket he material more engaging and easier to digest, potentially increasing learning motivation and reducing boredom. Interactive and varied audio formats can increase student involvement in the learning process. The use of audiobooks also allows students to study independently outside of school hours, giving them flexibility and the opportunity to practice English more freely.

b. For Teacher

Audiobooks offer teachers an innovative teaching method by presenting material in a format more suitable for visually impaired students, making it easier to access and understand teaching materials. The use of audiobooks also increases teaching

efficiency, as the materials can be accessed by students at any time, saving teachers time and allowing them to focus on deeper interactions. Additionally, audio technology provides opportunities for teachers to improve their skills, which in turn enriches students' learning experiences.

    c.   For Future Researcher

This research offers an important reference for future research wishing to develop audio-based teaching materials for students with special needs, providing models and approaches that can be expanded. Additionally, this research contributes to the educational literature by highlighting the use of audio technology in English language teaching, opening opportunities for further studies on the application of technology in inclusive education. The findings from this research can also help other researchers evaluate and develop educational technology that is more appropriate for students with disabilities, as well as improve existing teaching methods.