CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research will present a brief introduction by explain the background of the reason why the research, the significance of the research, the scope and limitations and definition of the key terms.

1.1   Background of The Research

Children with Special Needs are individuals who require special education and services to develop their potential optimally. According to Putra (2021), they need help in various aspects of life, such as education, social services, and guidance and counselling. Ilahi (2013) added that can experience temporary or permanent obstacles in physical, mental, intellectual, social, or emotional development, thus requiring more intensive educational services. The Ministry of National Education (2007) also stated that includes all individuals who require a special educational approach that is different from children in general.

According to Emmorey (2002), people with hearing and speech disorders often have higher emotions than others. This happens because they have difficulty understanding the person they are talking to, and vice versa. This misunderstanding is compounded by the fact that they rely on non-verbal language to communicate. Unfortunately, there are still many people who do not understand how to communicate properly with them, especially in the family environment. As a result, children with hearing and speech disorders often feel neglected or treated in a less educational way (Lederberg, et al. 2013).

Mayberry (1993) stated that people with speech and hearing impairments face major obstacles in learning verbal communication. These obstacles are mainly caused by hearing limitations that make it difficult for them to develop vocabulary and speak fluently. In addition, they are more likely to use sign language that is not always understood by the general public. As a result, social interaction becomes a challenge for them. Moeller (2000) also added that children with mild hearing impairments must have a higher level of concentration when communicating with people who can hear, which makes the communication process even more difficult.

The development of appropriate verbal communication skills is frequently hampered for those with speech and hearing problems. These obstacles may make it more difficult for them to communicate effectively, expand their vocabulary, and interact socially with others in the community. In addition to requiring more mental work, this communication gap frequently result in social isolation, particularly when communicating with non-sign language users. The condition is back by Mayberry (1993), who claimed that hearing restrictions that impede vocabulary development and fluency provide significant challenges for people with speech and hearing impairments when verbal communication. Additionally, Moeller (2000) highlighted that children with mild hearing impairments had to pay more attention when speaking with hearing people, which makes communication more difficult.

In the world of education, English plays an important role as an international language. Krashen (1982) stated that the role of English as a means of communication, but also as a means to access information, technology, and

academic opportunities. However, for students with speech impairments, learning English is a challenge due to limitations in verbal communication. Therefore, the use of appropriate learning media is a key factor so that they can still understand English well. Tomlinson (2011) emphasized that well-designed learning media can improve student understanding and engagement, especially for those who have difficulty communicating.

In addition, research conducted by Adnyani et al. (2021) revealed that in special schools (SLB) in Bali, students still face obstacles in achieving optimal multilingual skills. This is due to the dominance of the use of Indonesian sign language in their learning environment, so that mastery of foreign languages, including English, is still limited. In addition, the learning system implemented is still based on textbooks, which does not support the needs of students with communication limitations. Therefore, it is necessary to develop more innovative and inclusive learning media so that students with speech impairments can gain better access to learning English.

Several studies have shown that technology-based learning media can help students with special needs in learning English. Rahayu et al. (2024) found that the use of Sustainable English Audio Vocabulary (SEA-V) improved the learning outcomes of blind students, proving that audio-based media can help foreign language comprehension. In addition, research by Adnyani et al. (2021) revealed that limited access to English learning resources for deaf and mute students is a major obstacle in learning. Therefore, the development of more inclusive and multimedia-based learning media is urgently needed.

On the other hand, Samsudin & Sulaiman (2022) examined the effectiveness of mobile applications in learning for deaf and mute students. The results of the study showed that the use of application-based technology can improve student understanding, especially in materials that rely on visual communication. Similar findings were found by Rahim & Rahim (2022), who developed Virtual Reality (VR) for sign language learning. This study proves that an interactive VR-based approach is more effective than conventional methods.

In addition to technological innovation, the design of learning materials also plays an important role in supporting the learning process of students with communication disabilities. Oviedo & Charpentier (2022) emphasized that the preparation of materials that are appropriate to the needs of students with special needs can increase the effectiveness of learning. They developed various activities that can be implemented by teachers to create a more inclusive learning environment. Based on previous studies, it can be concluded that the use of technology and the development of innovative learning media are essential to increase the accessibility and effectiveness of English learning for students with speech impairments.

Special schools (SLB) are educational institutions specifically designed for children with special needs so that they can learn and develop according to their abilities (Natadireja et al., 2023). Education in SLB is different from public schools because it is tailored to the individual needs of students, supported by teaching staff who are trained in dealing with various learning barriers. Nurida (2014) emphasized that special education aims to develop students' potential with learning methods that are tailored to their characteristics. SLB is divided into

several categories based on the type of barriers experienced by students, such as SLB A for the blind, SLB B for the deaf and mute, SLB C for the mentally retarded, SLB D for the physically disabled, SLB E for the emotionally disabled, and SLB F for students with multiple needs. With a more inclusive education system and the right methods, SLB plays an important role in helping children with special needs achieve their best potential.

SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng is one of the oldest special schools in Bali, founded in 1958 and serves students with special needs from elementary school to high school. Based on the preliminary interview, this school has supporting facilities such as Braille, BKPBI dictionary, and Indonesian Sign Language System (SIBI) which help the learning process. In addition, all school residents, including teachers and parents, play an active role in supporting student education. However, some buildings still need renovation to improve comfort and accessibility. This school accommodates students with various special needs, such as hearing and speech impairment, visual impairment, intellectual disability, and physical disability, so that learning methods are adjusted to the conditions of each student. Teachers at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng generally have qualifications in special education or special education, which allows them to adapt teaching strategies according to the needs of students.

This school was chosen as research setting because it provides English learning for students with special needs, including speech impairments, although the methods used are still conventional. The bilingual approach is applied in teaching, focusing on the introduction of basic vocabulary and simple communication using visual media such as pictures and animations. However,

limited facilities such as projectors and LCDs are a challenge in creating more interactive learning. With this background, this study aims to analyse the types, functions, and implementation of English learning media for mute students at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng.

Although the issue of foreign language learning for students with special needs has been increasingly discussed in various studies, the main focus still tends to be on students with general hearing impairments or other special needs. Several studies have explored the use of learning media in improving foreign language comprehension for students with hearing impairments or blindness, but there are still few that specifically examine English as a foreign language learning for mute students. The lack of attention to the specific needs of this group, especially in the selection and implementation of effective learning media, creates a research gap that needs to be filled. Therefore, this study was conducted to analyse the types, functions, and implementation of English learning media used in the learning of mute students, so as to provide deeper insights into more inclusive and effective learning strategies for them.

1.2   Problems Identification

Based on the background that has been described, there are several main problems in learning English for mute students. First, the English learning methods used in special schools are still conventional and have not fully accommodated the communication needs of mute students. Second, the limited appropriate learning media causes students to have difficulty in understanding English material optimally. Third, not all teachers have special training in teaching English for students with limited verbal communication, so the approach

used is not fully effective. In addition, the absence of a platform or learning media specifically designed for mute students in learning English is a challenge in itself. Therefore, this study aims to identify the types, functions, and applications of English learning media used.

According to earlier research, silent kids learn better through interactive and visual media than through traditional voice instruction. By decreasing dependency on verbal contact and enhancing visual stimuli, mobile application-based learning, for instance, greatly enhanced motivation among mute-deaf students, according to Samsudin et al. (2020). According to Prasetya et al. (2022), children with speech impairments were able to acquire more English vocabulary with the use of nonverbal media like photos, flashcards, and sign-supported instruction. Although these result demonstrate the potential of nonverbal media, they also how underutilized these resources remain in many schools.

There are still a number of holes, though, that have not been filled by earlier studies. Despite having different needs, deaf or hard-of-hearing pupils are frequently included in studies that do not clearly address silent students as a separate group. Furthermore, less is known about the creation and assessment of English learning materials that don't require speech output, like applications for writing-based responses, interfaces based on gestures, or augmentative and alternative communication technologies. Furthermore, nothing is known about the long-term effects of these media on mute students' communicative competence and English proficiency. There is also a dearth of research on how mute students' communicative competence and English proficiency. There is also a dearth of research on how mute students use alternative communication to engage with

peers while learning English.

This study attempts to close these gaps by examining and classifying the English learning resources that are accessible to mute students according to their kind, purpose, and use in educational environments.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the problem identified above, the formulations of research questions are as follow.

1. What are the types of English media used for mute students at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng?

2. What are the functions of English learning media in supporting mute students' language acquisition SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng?

3. What are the challenges encountered by English teachers in teaching mute students at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng?

1.4 Research Objectives

Based on the problems above, the research objectives are formulated as follows.

1. To identify the types of English learning media used for mute students at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng

2. To analyse the functions of English learning media in supporting mute students' language acquisition at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng

3. To identify the challenges encountered by English teachers in teaching mute students at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng

1.5   Research Significance

It is anticipated that this research will make significant theoretical and practical advances, especially in the area of teaching English to students with special needs.

1.5.1   Theoretical Significances

Theoretically, this study adds insight into the field of language education, especially in English language learning for students with speech impairments. This study can enrich theories related to the use of learning media in the context of special needs, as well as provide further understanding of second language acquisition strategies for students with verbal communication limitations. In addition, the results of this study can be the basis for further research on the effectiveness of learning media in inclusive educational environments.

1.5.2   Practical Significances

a. Teacher

This research can help teachers in choosing and implementing appropriate learning media for students with speech impairments, so that English learning becomes more effective and inclusive. By knowing the various types and functions of learning media, teachers can develop more innovative teaching strategies that are in accordance with students' needs.

b. Student

Students with speech impairments can get a better and more interactive learning experience through the right learning media. With specially designed media, they will find it easier to understand English

materials and improve their ability to communicate in alternative forms such as writing or signs.

c. Other Researcher

This study can be a reference for other researchers who want to explore further about learning media for students with special needs. The results of this study can also be used as a basis for developing research related to educational technology, applied linguistics, and language learning strategies for people with communication disabilities.

1.6   Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on the types, functions, and implementation of English language learning media for students with speech impairments at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng. The scope of the study includes the teaching methods used by teachers, the effectiveness of learning media in supporting student understanding, and the obstacles faced in its implementation. The subjects of the study involved English teachers and students with speech impairments at SLB Negeri 1 Buleleng, specifically those in grade 7 and 8 of the junior high school level.

Limitations in this study include the scope of the location which is only limited to one school, so the results cannot necessarily be generalized to other SLBs with different conditions. In addition, the limitations of the tools and facilities available at the school can also affect the results of the study. Other factors such as limited time and access to learning documentation are also challenges in collecting data in more depth.