

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Digital storytelling is one of the 21st-century learning innovations that combines the power of narrative with digital technology to create the engaging, interactive, and meaningful learning experiences. In the context of English language learning in primary schools, this method not only presents stories visually and audibly but also provides students with opportunities to gain exposure to language in a natural and contextual manner (Sumardi et al., 2020).

Through the integration of images, animations, audio, and bilingual narration, this method is able to create a fun and communicative learning atmosphere that is in line with the characteristics of primary school students who enjoy thematic and concrete experience-based learning. This is in line with the research of Bumela (2020) which states that the 21st-century learning requires a multisensory approach that combines in-class and out-of-class activities and supports listening and speaking skills.

Today's learning activities emphasize the importance of students' skills in 4C: Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, Collaboration for students (Stanikzai, 2023). In the context of English language learning in primary schools, this approach requires schools to have a more interactive learning method than what has existed before by emphasizing experiential learning and relevance to students' life. In developing learning materials, a holistic approach is essential to support language skills and shape students' characters. This seems to be in line with John Dewey's view through the theory of Experiential Learning, which states that

learning occurs effectively when students are directly involved in activities that are relevant to real life, thereby creating a connection between theory and practice. Thus, English learning itself should not only be oriented towards mastering vocabulary or language structure, but also the development of social-emotional competencies to the values in the Graduate Profile Value. In this case, a bilingual approach is also indispensable as students will slowly develop their language skills over time.

Achieving this goal requires the involvement of technology in the learning process. According to Haleem et al., (2022) technology has an important role to help students gain wider exposure, especially for students with low abilities. The inclusion of technology in English language learning can also help students' literacy to be more familiar with all digital devices such as computers, cell phones, and others (Haleem et al., 2022). According to Jannah et al., (2020) digital technology gives an improvement in the learning process and student outcomes because it triggers a sense of pleasure and enthusiasm in using digital technology throughout the learning process. Therefore, the utilization of digital media is one of the innovative solutions for learning English (Zarifsanaiey, 2022). Not only support language learning in primary schools, the insertion of technology also leads students to the modern era of digital literacy which is more essential to support the 21st century skills by creating powerful learning experiences, especially in language learning. Thus, the utilization of technology in English language learning in primary schools becomes an urgent need to realize quality learning.

The Indonesian government has implemented various policies to improve the quality of Indonesia's education, especially for English learning. Part of these

efforts both on a general and specific scale through the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology issued a policy on December 10, 2019 in the form of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, which was designed as an improvement from the previous curriculum to overcome various challenges in the education system in Indonesia (Rahmadayani et al., 2022). Kemendikbudristek (2022) explains that Merdeka Curriculum designs the concept of “Merdeka Belajar” which is certainly different from the previous curriculum and provide more freedom to schools, teachers, and students in innovating, learning independently, and developing creativity. This concept is reflected in various main characteristics that are the basis for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, such as: 1) Simplicity and Flexibility, where schools can customize learning based on the needs of students and their respective conditions. In short, this curriculum allows teachers to focus on developing students' competencies and character without being burdened by the complex administration. Then, 2) Using a Project Based Learning approach and based on competency and character strengthening, where learning is not only targeted at cognitive aspects, but also the development of students' social, emotional and character skills through the Pancasila Student Profile (Kemendikbudristek, 2022; Mulyasa 2023; Pratyca et al., 2023). Through this approach, students can gain academic understanding and build essential social and emotional skills. Furthermore, 3) The Merdeka Curriculum focuses on learning with essential material so that students have sufficient time to understand concepts in depth, especially in literacy and numeracy. Finally, 4) Merdeka Curriculum encourages the involvement of technology for learning to improve students' digital literacy and prepare them for face the challenges of the digital era.

Through Merdeka Curriculum, the government has made character education as a major focus in current education policy because character problems among the younger generation trigger impacts on various aspects of social life. Wongkar & Pangkey (2024) in their research, explained that children's failure to learn character causes a moral crisis, such as a decrease in ethical values and behavior in accordance with social norms. This makes various social problems such as bullying, alcohol abuse, and other negative actions increase and have a negative effect on individuals and the environment surround them.

To work on this problem, Merdeka Curriculum is not only emphasizing on academic aspects, but also integrated with character education through a more contextual approach. This is deliberately designed to be in line with the objectives of national education stated in Law No. 23/2003 Article 3, developing the potential of students to become individuals who are faithful, pious, noble, knowledgeable, independent, and responsible in the life of society, nation and state. One of the main strategies in realizing this is through the Pancasila Student Profile, which is the main foundation in the implementation of character education in the Merdeka Curriculum.

Kemendikbudristek (2022) states that the Pancasila Student Profile can be used as the main guideline in designing and implementing education policies, including guiding educators to build the character and competence of students who are aligned with Pancasila's values. In other words, the Pancasila Student Profile is used as a reference to form students who are not only knowledgeable and competent, but also characterized by national values. There are two main aspects that are the focus in the formation of the Pancasila Student Profile, namely making

students as democratic citizens and equipping them to become superior and productive individuals in the 21st century (Uma et al., 2024). The Pancasila Student Profile is formulated in six key dimensions that are interrelated and reinforce each other to help achieve this goal. According to Kemendikbudristek (2022) the six dimensions are: 1) having faith, devoted to God Almighty, and having noble character, 2) independence, 3) collaborative 4) having global diversity awareness, 5) developing critical reasoning, and 6) creativity. These dimensions are proof that the Pancasila Student Profile is not only oriented towards academic intelligence, but also oriented towards the formation of strong and adaptive characters to make students have the skills to face various challenges in the life of society, nation and state.

Furthermore, Permendikdasmen in 2025 expands this framework into an 8-Dimensional Graduate Profile as a strategy to strengthen national education. This profile was developed to respond to the demands of globalization and digital transformation by emphasizing the importance of holistic character education combined with a deep learning approach. The eight dimensions include: (1) faith and piety toward God Almighty; (2) citizenship; (3) critical thinking; (4) creativity; (5) collaboration; (6) independence; (7) health; and (8) communication. The addition of these dimensions is intended to equip students with adaptive, collaborative, and innovative skills in utilizing technology ethically and productively, so that they are ready to face the challenges of the 21st century (Permendikdasmen, 2025).

The Merdeka Curriculum since the 2021/2022 school year has been implemented in almost 2500 schools registered as participants in the Mover School

Program and 901 SMK Centers of Excellence as part of learning with in Indonesia's new paradigm. The thing that is emphasized in this case is English language learning. In English language learning, the Merdeka curriculum emphasizes strengthening English language competence from an early age to improve curriculum alignment, equalize learning quality, and prepare students to communicate across cultures and play a role in a global society. This makes English in primary schools an elective subject, which used to only consider English as a local content that was not mandatory to teach in the previous curriculum (Oktavia et al., 2023).

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in English language learning provides teachers with the opportunity to create relevant, contextual, and creative learning experiences. Creativity is one of the key aspects of the Graduate Profile Value, which emphasizes students' ability to generate new ideas and communicate them creatively to solve problems (Permendikdasmen, 2025). In such situations, English language learning can be planned using a story-based or narrative approach that integrates character education. This will enable the simultaneous improvement of language skills and the exploration of imaginative ideas. These stories do not merely unfold passively but also involve activities that encourage deeper thinking, such as open discussions and explicit and implicit questions. This approach instills pride as Indonesian citizens and confidence in using English while supporting students' language mastery and creative character amid global challenges. Therefore, innovative bilingual story-based digital media can be a strategic tool to help teachers develop students' creativity.

The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in English language learning

provides space for teachers to develop learning to make it contextual, creative, and has a connection to students' life. One of the important dimensions in the Graduate Profile Value such as creativity, emphasizes students to be able to produce original ideas and be able to express freely in problem solving through more innovative ways. In this context, English language learning can be designed by using a story or narrative-based approach that incorporates students' character education so that language skills and exploration of imaginative ideas happen at the same time. The story is not only presented passively, but is equipped with reflective activities such as explicit and implicit questions, as well as open discussions to provide opportunities for students to think creatively. The selected material will be combined with meaningful, joyful, and mindful learning in accordance with the principles of deep learning for differentiated learning. This approach not only supports language acquisition and students' creative and adaptive character in the midst of global challenges, but also provide students with an understanding of learn how to be a good citizen who are proud to be Indonesian and confident to use English. Furthermore, the opportunity to provide facilities from teachers to students in an effort to develop their creativity in language learning through media, especially innovative bilingual story-based digital media can be a supportive approach.

Primary school students show a greater tendency to use interactive and experience-based learning approaches, which encourage active participation (Ratminingsih et al., 2022). Therefore, to achieve student engagement, approaches and methods must be changed. The use of contextually and adaptively designed bilingual story media is one effective learning method. Storytelling not only teaches

listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills but also incorporates character values into the Graduate Profile Value. According to Huda et al., (2022) storytelling helps to improve language skills, such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking in an effective and natural way. In line with Nair & Yunus (2021) storytelling is able to help students to be more confident in speaking, develop better communication skills and be able to create new things during the learning process. This is in accordance with one of the dimensions of the Graduate Profile Value, namely creativity, which encouraging students to be able to give and contribute creative ideas without any limits. Every student's language ability is different, so speaking two languages helps students understand the story as a whole. This bilingual method not only serves as a tool, but also as a different teaching method that takes into account each student's learning style and pace. In order for students to develop digital literacy while learning languages in real-life contexts, the materials used will provide audio, visual, and narrative support. Therefore, storytelling can be an innovative learning approach that combines language, technology, and character building in accordance with the Graduate Profile Value.

The use of a bilingual approach in English language learning is considered relevant for young learners who are still developing their English proficiency. Preliminary observations and teacher interviews indicated that Grade 4 students often relied on Indonesian explanations, repetition, and visual support to understand English input. Therefore, the integration of both English and Indonesian can provide linguistic scaffolding that helps learners connect new language forms with meanings they already understand. From a pedagogical perspective, bilingual support enables students to access the content more easily while maintaining

exposure to English as the target language. Based on the theory of bilingualism and the whole language approach proposed by Freeman et al. (1986), children learn language more effectively when they are exposed to meaningful language in contexts that connect listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For Grade 4 students who learn English as foreign language, Indonesian serves as a form of scaffolding that helps them understand the story, connect new vocabulary with prior knowledge, and gradually build confidence in using English. In other words, the use of two languages helps make English input more accessible without removing the natural exposure to the target language.

The use of bilingual digital storytelling also shows that the media does not stand alone as merely a visual aid. Rather, it functions as an instructional medium that supports language learning in a structured way. The visual scenes, narration, and subtitles work together to provide comprehensible input, while the story context helps students understand language meaningfully instead of memorizing isolated words or expressions. Through this combination, the media becomes closely related to both the learning objectives and the characteristics of young learners. In addition, this strategy is in line with the Indonesian Ministry of Education's 2025 policy, which places technology-based deep learning as a key pillar. Deep learning must be applied throughout the entire educational planning process and not merely viewed as an additional strategy (Permendikdasmen, 2025). This includes creating learning objectives that are relevant to the real world, selecting contextual and challenging materials, and using methods and media that enable students to experiment, think, and create. The core principles of this framework are meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. These principles ensure that students not

only memorize information but also gain a broad understanding, strong critical thinking skills, high self-awareness, and social empathy.

Therefore, the use of bilingual digital media based on stories not only serves as a teaching aid in language instruction but also as a strategic tool for integrating academic skills, digital literacy, and character development in accordance with the Graduate Profile Value (Permendikdasmen, 2025). This method allows students to learn English in a natural environment while instilling values such as courage, cooperation, and independence. More importantly, this media provides a learning experience that is in line with the principles of deep learning. It encourages students to actively participate in the learning process, solve real-world problems, and acquire the 21st-century skills necessary to face global challenges and digital transformation.

However, based on preliminary observations, teacher interviews, and document analysis conducted at the selected school, English language learning at the primary school level still faced several challenges. Classroom observations showed that the activities of learning were still largely dominated by textbooks and teacher explanations, while students tended to rely on repetition, visual cues, and contextual support to understand the expressions of English. The interviews with two English teachers also revealed that although some interactive media had been used, their implementation was not consistent and they had not been specifically designed to support English learning, character education, and Creativity development simultaneously. Furthermore, the document analysis indicated that most existing learning materials focused primarily on vocabulary and language exercises, with limited opportunities for students to generate ideas, solve problems,

or express their creativity.

The findings also revealed that many Grade 4 students were still beginner learners who had varying levels of English proficiency. As a result, teachers frequently used Indonesian explanations to help students understand English input and classroom instructions. This condition suggests the need for bilingual learning support that can provide linguistic scaffolding while maintaining students' exposure to English. Therefore, a bilingual approach was considered relevant to accommodate students' learning needs and the development of language.

In addition, both teachers emphasized the importance of integrating Creativity into English language learning. This need is also aligned with the Graduate Profile Value, which identifies creativity as one of the essential competencies that students should develop. However, the existing materials provided limited opportunities for students to imagine, generate ideas, or create solutions to everyday problems. Consequently, the Creativity dimension was selected as the character value to be integrated into the product.

Additionally, learning activities tend to be mechanical and lack active student participation, thereby reducing their motivation to learn. Most existing technology-based medias still focus solely on linguistic aspects, without integrating the character values of the Graduate Profile Value. The teachers still rely heavily on conventional methods and textbooks, with very few media capable of encouraging students to use English naturally through narratives and storytelling while providing balanced exposure to bilingual. In fact, research shows that bilingualism can support cognitive development, problem-solving skills, academic achievement, and cultural awareness (Ariantini et al., 2024).

Although digital storytelling can provide meaningful language input, the use of media alone is not sufficient to support language learning for young learners (Bumela, 2020). Grade 4 students still need guided learning activities after watching the story so that they can process language input, practice simple expressions, check their understanding, and express ideas creatively. In other words, storytelling needs to be followed by relevant instructional tasks that connect the story content with the learning objectives. Therefore, in this study, the bilingual storytelling clip is not designed as a stand-alone product, but as instructional media supported by follow-up tasks that help students engage more actively in language learning.

This gap has become an urgent issue for the development of learning media that not only strengthens language skills but also instills creative character as one of the main dimensions of the Graduate Profile Value. To address these needs and gap, a digital bilingual storytelling clip was developed as a novelty of this study, namely: Developing a Bilingual Storytelling Clip for Teaching English with the Insertion of the Graduate Profile Value of Creativity for Grade 4. The use of digital storytelling was chosen because it combines narrative, visual, audio, and contextual language input in a single instructional medium that is suitable for young learners. The product was designed with English narration, Indonesian subtitles, animated child characters, and creativity-oriented story events. Furthermore, follow-up instructional tasks such as retelling, drawing maps, and proposing alternative solutions were included since this clip cannot stand alone as a learning media. The clip was also made to provide students with opportunities to actively use language while expressing their ideas creatively. In this way, the needs identified during the preliminary study were systematically accommodated in the product development

process.

A digital bilingual storytelling clip in this study refers to a short digital story-based instructional video that combines English narration and Indonesian subtitle support followed by instructional tasks as pedagogical follow-up activities derived from the storytelling clip that has a function as instructional media in classroom use, designed for Grade 4 primary school students. The clip presents a simple narrative related to students' daily life, supported by visual animation, character actions, audio narration, and contextual language input. Its main function is to serve as an English learning medium that introduces simple language expressions while embedding the Graduate Profile value of Creativity. This product is expected to provide a joyful, meaningful, mindful, and relevant pedagogical solution while contributing to innovation in English language learning at the primary school level. In this way, the developed storytelling clip contributes not only as a digital learning medium but also as a pedagogical tool that supports English language learning, Creativity development, and the integration of Graduate Profile values in primary education.

1.2 PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

According to the results of preliminary observations and interviews conducted with Grade 4 English teachers at SDN 4 Kalibukbuk, English language learning was still dominated by textbook-based instruction with limited use of digital and interactive media. Although teachers occasionally used visual materials, these media mainly focused on vocabulary practice and did not provide sufficient opportunities for students to engage actively, express ideas, or develop character values. The observations also revealed that many students were beginner learners

in English and relied heavily on teacher explanations, repetition, gestures, also contextual support to understand the language target. As a result, young learners often received language exposure but had limited opportunities to use English meaningfully in classroom activities.

Furthermore, teachers reported that Creativity, as one of the Graduate Profile values, was considered important but was difficult to integrate through existing learning materials, which mostly emphasized linguistic knowledge and textbook exercises. At the same time, the activities in classroom rarely provided opportunities for students to generate ideas, imagine alternative solutions, or express themselves Creatively. This condition indicates a gap between the expectations of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes meaningful learning and character development, and the actual learning practices in the classroom.

Based on these findings, the development of a digital bilingual storytelling clip was considered necessary because digital storytelling combines narrative, visual, audio, and contextual language input in a way that is suitable for young learners. Previous studies have shown that digital storytelling can support students' vocabulary learning, engagement, and motivation in language learning (Maya et al., 2022). In addition, the Creativity dimension was selected because it was identified as a character value that had not been explicitly facilitated through existing English learning materials by teacher interviews, despite being emphasized in the Graduate Profile framework. To ensure that students not only watch the story but also actively use language and creativity, relevant instructional tasks were also developed as follow-up activities. These tasks provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the comprehension skill in story content, express ideas, solve problems, and

practice English meaningfully after viewing the storytelling clip.

Therefore, this study aimed to develop a digital bilingual storytelling clip and its related instructional tasks as an integrated instructional package that supports English learning while fostering the Graduate Profile value of Creativity among Grade 4 students.

1.3 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study has several limitations. First, the main focus of this research was the design and development of a digital bilingual storytelling clip as a learning media and related instructional tasks for Grade 4 English learning as pedagogical follow-up activities. Therefore, the study did not examine the classroom implementation of the product or measure how students responded to it during actual teaching and learning activities. As a result, the study cannot make claims about the effectiveness of the storytelling clip in improving students' English ability or creativity.

Second, the development process was conducted based on the needs analysis being identified in one selected primary school, SDN 4 Kalibukbuk. The needs analysis reflected the specific classroom context, teacher practices, and students' characteristics found in that school. This study is limited to the development of a bilingual digital storytelling clip and a set of instructional tasks as follow-up learning activities. The tasks are developed to support language comprehension, guided speaking practice, and creativity-oriented learning for Grade 4 students at the selected school. For this reason, the findings should be understood within that particular context and cannot be directly generalized to other schools with different learning conditions.

Third, the evaluation of the developed product focused on content validity through expert judgment. Although this process provided important evidence regarding the relevance of the content, language, media design, and creativity integration, it did not include field testing with students. Therefore, the study does not yet provide information about how the product functions in real classroom interaction, how easily students follow the tasks, or what kinds of difficulties may appear during classroom use.

In addition, this study was limited to the development of a single bilingual storytelling clip designed for Grade 4 English learning, particularly related to daily routines and the topic *Be on Time*. The study did not cover the development of a broader bilingual storytelling program, the use of storytelling media for other subjects or grade levels, or the long-term use of the product over an extended period of learning.

Therefore, the storytelling clip developed in this study should be viewed as an instructional product prototype that was designed to match the learning needs and English proficiency level of Grade 4 students at SDN 4 Kalibukbuk, rather than as a product whose classroom effectiveness has already been empirically tested.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From those explanations, the research questions can be concluded as follows:

1. How to design storytelling clip that insert the value of Creativity for teaching English language for Grade 4 in SDN 4 Kalibukbuk?

2. What relevant tasks are needed to be developed that relevant for teaching English language and the character of Creativity through bilingual storytelling clip that inserted Creativity for Grade 4 in SDN 4 Kalibukbuk?
3. How is the quality of the developed bilingual storytelling clip and task for teaching English to students with the insertion of Graduate Profile value of Creativity for Grade 4 in SDN 4 Kalibukbuk?

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this research are:

1. To describe the design storytelling clip that insert the value of Creativity for teaching English language for Grade 4 in SDN 4 Kalibukbuk.
2. To develop the relevant task are needed to be develop that relevant for teaching English language and the character of Creativity through bilingual storytelling clip that inserted Creativity for Grade 4 in SDN 4 Kalibukbuk.
3. To evaluate the quality of the developed bilingual storytelling clip and task for teaching English to students with the insertion of Graduate Profile value of Creativity for Grade 4 in SDN 4 Kalibukbuk.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study has two main contributions in theoretically and practically such as:

1. Theoretical Significance

This study is expected to contribute to the theoretical development of English language learning for young learners, especially in the use of

bilingual digital storytelling. It is expected to strengthen the understanding that digital storytelling, supported by bilingual scaffolding, can facilitate language learning while also integrating Creativity as part of character education in primary school contexts.

2. Practical Significance

a. For teacher

This research provides teachers to learn how to develop instructional materials systematically, especially stories that integrate Graduate Profile values using digital technology. More specifically, this research provides teachers with ready-to-use materials for teaching through stories that ensure learning is meaningful, mindful, and joyful. After the story, follow-up tasks are provided, either embedded in the video or available as supporting handouts.

b. For students

The development of this bilingual storytelling clip is expected to be a natural and enjoyable media to help students in order to learn English through stories and instill Pancasila character values such as creativity.

c. For other researchers

The results are expected to support future researchers in writing literature reviews, conducting related studies, and developing bilingual digital learning media with character-based education, especially creativity, as a basis for further innovation.