

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

An outbreak called corona virus has appeared and infected many people in Wuhan, China in 2019. In 2020, this virus has infected many people in all around the world and it is then called Covid-19 (Corona Virus Diseases 2019). The world situation is getting worse in the beginning of 2020 because it rapidly spreads, therefore WHO (World Health Organization) took a step to announce Covid-19 as a pandemic (Frenette et al., 2020). As cited in Tadesse and Muluye (2020), the latest data shows that Covid-19 cases in the world have reached 18,705,540 cases per August, 5th 2020. Meanwhile, the numbers of daily deaths due to Covid-19 pandemic keep increases.

As it has been labeled as a pandemic, many countries have to implement social distancing or physical distancing in which the people have to keep a safe space with the others to stop the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. The rapid spread of this pandemic instantly changes the fabric of human life. It affected the global economy, business, world trade and movements. Besides, the thing that is also affected the most by this pandemic is the change of education system. Many countries are locking their citizens and enforcing strict quarantine to take control the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. It causes many schools, universities and education institution have to be closed. The data obtained from UNESCO (2020) as cited in Duraku and Hoxha (2020) showed that from approximately 188 countries around the world, there are about 1 billion and also 575 million students have been affected by school

and university closures due to precautionary measures being taken by countries against the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The closure of school and university was also implemented in Indonesia. The first case of Covid-19 in Indonesia was announced in the beginning of March. Shortly after that, the government slowly decided that the citizens have to implement social distancing to control the rapid spread of Covid-19, then schools and universities were closed temporarily in mid-March (Mulyanti et al., 2020). Since that, the normal activities like face-to-face meeting were no longer allowed and the students are required to stay at home and learn from home as well. Although the students have to learn from home, the role of the teachers as an educator is still needed to monitor the students. Therefore, the Minister of National Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim, issued a policy as explained in the Circular Letter of Indonesian minister of national education and culture Number 4 Year 2020 regarding studying and learning processes during the spread of the COVID-19. It is mentioned that the process of learning from home has to follow four conditions.

The first one is learning from home is carried out in online setting to give a meaningful learning experience for the students without thinking about the requirements of completing all curricular objectives for grade promotions and graduation. The second, learning from home can be focused on giving life skills education including the knowledge of Covid-19. The third, the learning activities and assignments for learning from home can vary between students, based on their learning interests and the conditions, it is important to consider the problem of accessing learning materials and learning facilities at their home. The fourth, the products of learning activities from home are given in qualitative and using useful

feedback from the teacher without giving quantitative scores (*Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2020*). Due to this issue, technology is the most important thing to be used in order to support learning from home. Therefore, distance learning or it can be called remote learning is the appropriate term to describe current educational system during this unpredictable situation.

Remote learning is a teaching and learning process in which the students and teachers conducted the learning process in distance. Yaumi (2007) defined remote learning as an acquisition of knowledge and skills through mediated information or technology. According to Ali (2020), remote learning is a learning process which carried out in virtual class without face-to-face meeting. Remote learning can be done synchronously and asynchronously. Synchronous Remote Learning is done when the teacher and the students are online at the same time and they hold the online class activity as the face to face meeting. Meanwhile Asynchronous Remote Learning is the condition in which the teachers already designed the instruction in the form of lessons, assignments, readings, etc. to be sent to the students, then they are required to work on the assignment given and submitted to the teacher via online as well. There are two things that should be highlighted when understanding the term remote learning, namely the teacher and students are separated by time and/or geographic distance and the use of media to bridge the gap like electronic media, print resources, voice communication, etc (Owens et al., 2009).

The existence of remote learning since this pandemic is undeniable very important. Therefore, technology is required in conducting remote learning during learning from home. In this global era, technology is not something new for most of people in Indonesia. In the context of education, students nowadays are very

familiar with the use of technology. Students nowadays are known as millennial generation, digital natives, and net generation (Ali, 2020). It means students are able to adapt and use technology easily. High school and college students are not the only students who are exposed to technology. It is because today's children are also exposed to technology from the very tender ages. This is a common thing that primary school students are very familiar with technology such as smartphones and tablets (Shava et al., 2016). Therefore, some primary schools in Indonesia also implement remote learning to facilitate learning from home during this pandemic.

Even though technology is considered the appropriate tool during learning from home (Duraku & Hoxha, 2020) and young learners are very familiar with the use of technology, however teaching young learners such primary school students during Covid-19 pandemic is not a simple thing (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). Primary school students who are facilitated with smartphone by their parents usually cannot fully use their smartphone for learning. It is because smartphone is usually used for playing games only. Therefore, the role of the teachers and the parents are needed. However, guiding primary school students in using smartphones for meaningful teaching and learning activities is a challenge for the teachers and also the parents of students (Noonoo, 2020).

The other challenge for the teachers to teach primary school students during this pandemic is to keep inserting 4Cs of 21st century skills in remote learning. In the 21st century competencies, the schools and other educational institutions have to develop the 4Cs that have been adopted by the Curriculum 2013 (Harjanti, 2018). Therefore, it is important to insert 4Cs in the learning activity. The 4Cs consists of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration skill, and communication skill. Teaching

critical thinking to young learners leads them in developing many skills, such as high level of concentration, good analytical abilities, and thought processing (Roekel, 2018). Teaching creativity allows the students in expressing everything they have learned in another way (Erdogan, 2019). He also stated that teaching collaboration skill helps students in understanding how to solve a problem in group work, give solutions, and decide the best action in group work. Meanwhile, communication skill helps students in articulating thoughts and ideas effectively by using oral, written and nonverbal communication (Yu, 2019)

It is mentioned that communication skill has a significant role in this 21st century learning. The term communication cannot be separated from language its self. People communicate by using language and language is used to communicate, it is the general role of language in communication. Then, communication can be characterized by transmitting and receiving verbal and nonverbal signals or signs affected by several contexts as the method of creating meanings (Mahajan, 2015). The process of communication uses written messages, spoken words and gestures.

In the context of ELT (English Language Teaching), communication skill is the main goal in learning English as a foreign language (Yu, 2019). Since English is being taught as formal ELT education for primary school in Indonesia as a compulsory subject (Widiati & Cahyono, 2006), therefore it is important for primary school students to have communication skill. Communication skill in this context emphasizes oral and written communication. Speaking is not the only term to describe what communication is. However, written communication is also important to be learned because expressing idea, opinion, and thought is not only through spoken language. According to Ahmad (2016), teaching communication

skill for young learners will help them in improving their speaking and listening skill because they have to interact with their peers to achieve communication goals.

However, since face to face classroom activity is not allowed for a while, it is difficult for teachers to teach communication skills to students in remote learning situation. It happens because teaching communication skill usually takes place in real classroom where the students and teacher can directly and freely communicate or interact to each other. Besides, the lack of appropriate English material for the primary school students in remote learning also becomes the issue in teaching communication skill in this unprepared situation (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020)..

There are many android-based platforms that can be used for students in learning from home; these platforms are also supported by the Indonesian Ministry of National Education and Culture (Abidah et al., 2020). These platforms are *Smart Class, Google Indonesia, Sekolahmu, Zeniuz, Quipper, and Microsoft*. However, from these platforms, none of them looks to be suitable for teaching communication skill to young learners. To teach communication skill, the teachers can use the material that can practice their oral skills (listening and speaking) and stories seem appropriate for this. As cited in Okumuş (2020), the EFL students believed that learning English through story can motivate themselves and it can be integrated into speaking and listening.

As stated previously, in this remote learning era, technology is the best way to support this new educational system. Even young learners such primary schools' students are very familiar with technology because they are exposed to technological gadget such as smart phones and tablets. However, because of remote learning is something new for primary school teachers, the teachers should consider

how to teach communication skill and develop the android-based English material such stories for EFL young learners, so that they can take the advantage of their mobile phone to learn English at home.

These problems were in line with the study conducted by Elenein (2019). This study aimed at developing EFL primary students' oral communication skills, listening and speaking, using digital stories. The results indicated that the use of digital stories develops oral communication skills and performance of EFL students. Besides, it was also found that fifth grade students are motivated to learn actively and communicate creatively when using digital story as the teaching strategy to learn English (Elenein, 2019). The story mentioned above can be in the form of folktales because it is suitable for young learners. In addition, folktales can enrich students' local cultural insights (Ellisafny et al., 2019). Mantra (2017) believes that folktales is one of literary works which is suitable for learning activity in the EFL classroom because folktales can increase language skills, provide motivation for students, and develop their cultural awareness and tolerance (Mantra, 2017).

Due to the importance of communication skill mentioned previously, it is needed to develop a material which can assist the students in developing and improving their communication skill. Folktales is one of an English material which is suitable to help developing communication skill. However, since the situation of remote learning, this material should be developed in a media which can be accessed in a smartphone in the form of Digital Folktales. To support the use of this apps in developing communication skill, it is also needed to provide the follow-up activities which is suitable for developing communication skill.

Based on the explanation, the development of android-based English folktales learning material that can develop primary school students' communication skills was needed, moreover in this remote learning situation. Besides, it is also needed to provide the information or the follow-up learning activity in using the application to help the students and teachers in applying the application and its learning activities in learning from home and face to face learning. This android-based application was developed by using Design and Development research promoted by Richey and Klein (2007) which applied four stages, such as analysis, design, development, and evaluation. This android-based learning application and the follow-up learning activities was developed for the sixth-grade of primary school students and also the English teachers.

1.2 Problem Identification

In this remote learning situation, there is limited learning materials to be accessed by the students and the teachers, so the teacher cannot provide a learning material which is suitable to develop students' communication skills in the remote learning. Therefore, it is needed to develop story as android-based English learning materials that can develop young learners' communications skill in the remote learning situation.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions of this current study were formulated as follows.

1. What are the problems and needs of primary school students and the English teachers in accessing English learning materials in remote learning situations?
2. How to develop Android-based English folktales learning materials for

developing communication skill of primary school students?

3. What is the quality of the Android-based English folktales learning materials for developing communication skills of primary school students?

1.4 Research Objectives

The objective of this current student was divided into two, they are:

1.4.1 General Objective

This study has general objective which is to design and develop an appropriate English learning material which is designed in the form of digital stories called Digital Folktales and the follow-up learning activities to develop communication skills which can be used by all primary school students especially for the sixth-grade of primary school students.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To explain the problems and needs of primary school students and the teachers regarding to access English learning material during remote learning situation;
2. To develop Android-based English folktales learning materials for developing communication skill for primary school students.
3. To describe the quality of Android-based English folktales learning materials for developing communication skills for primary school students.

1.5 The Specification of the Product

The specifications of the developed product are:

1. The product is android-based English folktales learning materials which was developed for promoting the sixth-grade primary school students' communication skills.
2. The product provides Indonesian folktales and its follow-up learning activity which assist the students to practice their communication skill.
3. The product was also developed to give better learning experience for students and also teacher during remote learning situation.

1.6 Research Significance

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, it is expected that the results of this study will contribute to the development of android-based English learning material in the form of android application through the development of folktales as an innovative learning material to teach English and develop communication skills for primary school students.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

Students: the results of this study are expected would be used to improve students' communication skill, achievement, and performance in English class.

Teachers: the results of this study are expected would be useful for teachers to teach English using ICT media to be more creative in the remote learning.

1.7 Scope of the Research

The scope of the study focused on developing Digital Folktales as an android-based English folktale learning material to develop communication skills and the follow-up learning activities which can be used in the learning process for primary school students especially the sixth-grade students.

