

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

In recent years, there has been much interest in the studies of teaching materials. The role of teaching materials has profound the learning outcome where students can gain the learning objective such as language competence and language acquisition. The previous studies have showed that teaching materials play pivotal role in enhancing students' language proficiency. The piece of evidence argued that teaching materials enable teachers and learners to learning a language more efficient because teaching materials provide a content and language integration.

The curriculum framework change necessitates the education system's elements to adjust from the previous curriculum. This requires careful management, which in turn affects the achievement of the designed goals by improving the quality of learning and education in Indonesia (Basri, 2021). Independent learning offers a range of benefits, including simplicity and intensity, a focus on essential content, gradual skill development, autonomy for students to manage their learning progression, and increased relevance and interactivity (Alwi, 2023). The government's policies represent a leap in educational quality, designed to prepare students for future complexities. Learning freedom enables the development of

independent mental personalities, with teachers and students exploring knowledge, attitudes, and skills freely. The primary objective in implementing these educational policies is to concentrate on improving literacy and numeracy.

In English, instructional media are physical aids used to facilitate the delivery of educational content. They function as tools of communication, transmitting information from the information source to the learner to enhance the learning process. According to Asmara (2015), these instructional media are harnessed to improve the efficiency of learning and address learning challenges. Hartono, as cited by Hapsari (2020) highlights that instructional media make the teaching process more captivating for students. This clarity in learning materials renders them more comprehensible to students. Instructional media also diversify teaching methods, moving away from exclusive reliance on verbal communication by teachers, which helps keep students engaged and prevents teachers from becoming fatigued. To summarize, instructional media act as supportive tools for educators to effectively convey educational content.

The Merdeka Curriculum, as an alternative educational framework, aims to tackle the issue of learning stagnation by granting educators and school leaders the autonomy to create, execute, and evolve the curriculum at the school level, all while taking into account the unique needs and potential of each student (Alimuddin, 2023). This curriculum transformation drives a shift in the curriculum and teaching paradigm. The

desired shift in paradigm seeks to enhance the autonomy of teachers as the leaders in the learning process. In this current curriculum, students involved in giving them freedom to learn. The role of educators as mentors offers a guidance and a direction to ensure students stay on the right path and avoid any harm, allowing them to find their own independence in learning.

Teachers must also grasp the concept of assessment, teaching materials, and other elements within the Merdeka Curriculum, which are notably distinct from the 2013 curriculum. One strategy for achieving Merdeka curriculum is by applying differentiated instruction. Differentiated learning entails tailoring services to cater to the unique characteristics of individual students (Bayumi, 2021). When students attend school, they bring with them a multitude of differences in abilities, experiences, talents, interests, language, culture, learning styles, and numerous other factors. This poses a challenge for teachers in establishing an effective learning environment that accommodates each student's unique learning style and needs. Differentiated learning allows teachers to approach education from multiple angles, which includes recognizing the learning profiles, requiring teachers to pay attention and respond to students' needs, gauging their readiness to learn based on variations, and identifying the students' learning interests (Bayumi, 2021).

Differentiated learning is in line with the educational philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara, who believed that education should guide children in unlocking their natural abilities, enabling them to achieve the utmost levels

of well-being and happiness, both as individuals and as contributing members of society (Herwina, 2021). Differentiated learning is an attempt to tailor the classroom learning experience to cater to the specific learning requirements of every student. This adjustment involves taking into account students' interests, learning profiles, and readiness, with the goal of enhancing their learning outcomes. Based on the explanation above, differentiated learning stands as one of the strategies educators can employ to address the unique needs of each student. This involves considering their readiness, interests, and learning preferences. The application of differentiated learning also entails conducting an initial assessment of students to design appropriate lesson plans and engaging in self-reflection after teaching sessions to evaluate the degree of success in executing differentiated instruction (Aprima, 2022). Schools can implement the process of differentiated learning to offer students the freedom to learn, as it doesn't require them to be the same in all respects. Instead, it enables them to express themselves according to their individual uniqueness.

Based on the observations made in November 2023 at SDN Ujungberung II, it was found that the “Merdeka Curriculum” had been implemented at the beginning of the 2022/2023 academic year. Differentiated learning had been established, including in subjects like English. However, there were some challenges. Firstly, students had not been grouped according to their learning characteristics. Since the implementation of this new curriculum was still in its early stages, teachers

had not fully adapted to it yet. The mixed learning styles made students less enthusiastic about learning process.

The second issue was that the school lacked additional teaching materials apart from worksheets (LKS). Teachers primarily relied on teaching from textbooks, which resulted in a lack of student interest in learning. The available LKS were not very engaging, and they could only be borrowed from the school, not taken home, which limited students' access. As a result, students could only learn English with the new curriculum at school for a short duration.

The third problem was that the teaching methods used by teachers were too monotonous and focused solely on the content of textbooks (LKS). This made students quickly become bored, during the learning process.

The fourth problem was that one major difficulty facing the school system is the lack of teachers qualified to provide materials for Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL), especially when considering differentiated learning. Differentiated learning takes into account the various requirements, learning preferences, and skill levels of pupils—an especially important factor to take into account when working with younger students. The lack of teachers who can customize TEYL materials to meet each student's unique learning style makes it difficult to maximize the learning process for all students. Closing this gap is crucial to creating a welcoming and productive learning environment that meets the special

needs of early learners and guarantees their all-around language development.

The last problem was that technology-enhanced language learning integration is still a mostly uncharted territory. Even while technology is developing quickly, its full potential to improve language instruction has not yet been reached. Students may benefit from creative and interesting learning opportunities when digital tools and resources are integrated into language learning contexts. Still, more work needs to be done in the areas of developing appropriate materials, investigating efficient methods, and evaluating the influence of technology on language learning. To fully realize the myriad opportunities that technology presents for enhancing language learning outcomes, extensive research and experimentation are required as educators continue to navigate this dynamic environment.

However, upon further examination of the aforementioned issues, the researcher observed that one specific problem stands out—the school's inadequate facilitation of teaching materials other than worksheets (LKS). In her opinion, instructional materials are a crucial key to the success of learning. Differentiated learning involves four aspects under the control of the teacher, providing opportunities and capabilities to modify these aspects, namely content, product, and environment.

In addressing this issue, teachers face several challenges, such as a lack of awareness of advancements in technology, which hinders their ability to keep up with the times. Additionally, teachers may feel confused

when differentiating instructional materials, as it requires consideration of the readiness, interests, and learning styles of the students, which can vary widely. To create teaching materials that support the learning process, teachers must consult various references related to differentiated learning, ensuring that students' learning aligns with their individual characteristics. This involves overcoming the hurdle of limited technological proficiency and navigating the diverse needs of students in terms of readiness, interests, and learning styles.

#### **B. Identification of the Problem**

1. Teachers have not fully implemented differentiated learning as they are still in the process adapting to it.
2. There is a limitation in the availability of instructional materials for differentiated learning, aside from worksheets (LKS).
3. The teaching methods employed by teachers or the ways in which differentiated learning implemented not yet aligned or suitable.
4. The lack of teachers to design TEYL materials based on the differentiated learning perspective.
5. The integration of technology enhanced language learning is still under-explored.

### **C. Delimitation of the Problem**

Based on the identified issues, this research is focused on the second point, which is that the school's inadequate facilitation of teaching materials other than worksheets (LKS).

### **D. Formulation of the Problem**

The problem in this study can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the students' needs in learning English at SDN Ujungberung II?
2. How to develop English language materials for SDN Ujungberung II?

### **E. Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study in this research is:

1. To identify the needs of the students at SDN Ujungberung II in learning English.
2. To develop English teaching materials for students at SDN Ujungberung II.

### **F. Product Specification**

Advancements in technology have transformed the conventional learning process gradually into computer-based learning. Developed modules can be connected electronically, known as electronic modules (E-modules), accessed and utilized through electronic E-module is a form of



independent learning material systematically organized into specific learning units, presented in an electronic format. Each learning activity within it is connected with links for navigation, making students more interactive with the program. It includes video tutorials, animations, and texts, audio presentations to enrich the learning experience. Moreover, it can be accessed anywhere, making it more practical and portable devices such as computers, laptops, tablets, and even smartphones.

As a tool and medium used by students in the learning process, an E-module must possess certain characteristics. According to the Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education (2017), the characteristics of an E-module include:

1. Self-instructional (Students can learn independently).
2. Self-contained (The learning material for a specific competence unit is entirely contained within one E-module).
3. Stand-alone (The E-module is not associated with other media).
4. Adaptive (Students can accommodate the growth of knowledge and technology and is flexible in usage).
5. User-friendly (Student can employ the E-module easily).
6. Consistent in the use of space, layout, and font (Students can use the materials from the appearance of format).
7. Technology enhanced (Students can utilize various electronic media functions, hence called multimedia).

8. Technology use (Students can incorporate various features available in software applications).
9. The ease of materials (Students can require careful and meticulous design).

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that the characteristics of an E-module are similar to those of a conventional module, but an E-module utilizes electronic media, making it a multimedia tool.

#### **G. Significance of the Study**

This research is anticipated to have both direct and indirect advantages for the education sector. The benefits of this study encompass:

1. Theoretical benefits:
  - a. This study has the potential to expand the pool of references and provide valuable insights contributing to the academic understanding of differentiated learning design within the framework of the independent learning curriculum.
  - b. Future researchers can draw inspiration from this and gain a comprehensive understanding of how to design differentiated learning within the independent learning curriculum.
2. Practical Benefits
  - a. For Teachers

This can present teachers with alternative and innovative teaching models for use and development in the English language learning process. Utilizing models that are customized to students' readiness, interests, and learning styles, teachers can deliver captivating and comprehensive English language instruction.

b. For Students

Helping students comprehend the English language content they are being taught will lead to improved learning outcomes and increased participation in English language learning, making the learning atmosphere more enjoyable.

c. For Researchers

This can serve as a point of reference for upcoming research focusing on the design of differentiated learning.

## **H. Operational Definition**

1. Materials

Tomlinson (2010) defines that 'anything which is used to help language learners to learn. English for young learners. Materials can be in the form, for example, of a textbook, a workbook, a cassette, a CD-ROM, a video, a photocopied handout, a newspaper, a paragraph written on a whiteboard: anything which presents or informs about the language being learned.

## 2. Developing Materials

Developing Materials refers to the process of creating, preparing, and designing educational materials or content. Material development aims to create engaging, relevant, and effective learning tools to support educational objectives, allowing for a better learning experience for students. Tomlinson (2010) explains that material development encompasses the improvement and generation of diverse resources utilized to facilitate teaching, including textbooks, workbooks, tapes, CD-ROMs, videos, handouts, and internet resources.

## 3. Differentiated Learning

Essentially, differentiated instruction (DI) denotes modifying instruction to suit each student's needs. This approach to instruction is successful because it uses flexible grouping and ongoing assessment, regardless of whether teachers differentiate material, process, products, or the learning environment (Tomlinson, 2014). Teachers are required by other frameworks, including Universal Design for Learning, to provide students with a lot of agency and choice so they can fulfill their varied needs and interests.

#### 4. Students

Students are operationally defined as individuals who are actively enrolled in an educational institution, pursuing formal learning, and engaging in academic activities, including attending classes, participating in coursework, and undertaking assessments (Dewey, 1974). In this research, students refer to elementary school students who have a variety of different background such as culture, language, learning motivation, learning style, and learning with different circumstance.