

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the background of the study, the identification of the problems, research questions, the purposes of the study, the scope of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of The Study

In this 21st century, the availability and accessibility of learning materials online is one of the significant benefits of ICT advancement in education (e.g. Rank et al., 2011; Jayanthi & Kumar, 2016; Arigusman et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2016; Zhang, 2018). However, this benefit comes along with the challenges to urge teachers and other parties responsible for choosing and making judgments about the materials (Richards, 2001). Teachers need to contemplate some important points before choosing the materials including the objective in the syllabus that should meet the needs including functions, topic, vocabulary, and four skills (Altay, 2013) so do the students' ages, students' interests, and students' social and cultural background.

Tomlinson (2014) in his book mentioned that even though what materials should drive the students' needs and wants, the teachers and administrators have needs and wants to be satisfied too with the concern of standardization and conformity for example syllabus and government policies (Masuhara, 2011 as cited in Tomlinson (2014). In this case, teachers in Indonesia are also required to refer to the government policies and standards regarding teaching and learning materials selection.

Focusing on teaching and learning materials selection, teachers in Indonesia also need to consider the competencies which are stated in the Ministerial Regulation No 24/2016 about the Core and Basic Competency (KI-KD) of Subject in 2013 Curriculum for Elementary and Middle School. This regulation covers the scopes, skills, and competencies students should learn and acquire. This also can be used to measure whether the learning materials cover all the competencies needed for facing the 21st-century era.

Many researchers conducted studies in evaluating learning materials for teaching and learning English in Indonesia. Anshar et al. (2014) reported the results of a study evaluating English Electronic Books for junior high school in Indonesia using the Textbook Evaluation Checklist (Skierso 1991; Cunningsworth 1984) which focuses on physical appearance, content, and supporting aids of the textbook. The study revealed that both textbooks fit the criteria in terms of physical appearance and content of the textbook. However, they also recommend some improvements in how to design the activities and add some supporting aids for the teacher such as audio recording for listening activities and teachers' books.

A study focusing on materials relevancy conducted by Laili & Wahyanti (2017) which is aimed to analyze an English textbook published by Airlangga titled "Pathway to English for SMA/MA Grade X" passed the BSNP (*Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan* or National Education Standards Agency) assessment and the content was consistent with the 2013 Curriculum. This study used the assessment based on 2 instruments which are the KI-KD of the 2013 Curriculum and the BSNP textbook

evaluation rubric and found that the consistency of the materials of the textbook reached 94% using the KI-KD assessment and 82.5% using the BSNP assessment which means that the materials in the whole chapters of the textbook are consistent with the criteria of the 2013 Curriculum. The researchers suggested to the publisher before publishing the textbook make sure that the materials correspond with the newest curriculum and develop them based on the students' needs as well as the KI (Kompetensi Inti) (Core Competence) and KD (Basic Competence) in the syllabus of the 2013 Curriculum.

1.2 Problems Identification

In response to the education for the 21st century in Indonesia, a research and development (R&D) study conducted by Mayuni et al. (2021), developed digital-based learning materials to support English teaching and learning during the pandemic as well as to assist students in improving their 21st-century skills. This digital learning material (DLM) in the form of a website called *MyEnglishStep.com* (MES) was created by integrating materials from different sources and learning activities using hypertexts. This MES is for junior high school level in Indonesia and was built as a collaboration of senior English teachers in Indonesia together with the researchers from Universitas Negeri Jakarta as a follow-up of their previous study.

MES has been developed by adopting the genre-based approach which was expected to achieve the English teaching and learning objectives of the 2013 Curriculum as stated in the English syllabus for primary and middle school levels. English teaching and learning in Indonesia tend to focus on improving students' skills

which can be utilizing the language they learn to make effective communication in many different contexts either spoken or written (MoEC (Ministry of Education and Culture), 2017) which means this MES covers all competencies of the 2013 Curriculum including the Core Competence (*Kompetensi Inti* or KI) and Basic Competence (*Kompetensi Dasar* or KD) as well as the contents of English learning materials including its social function, text structure, language features, and topics. Regarding this claim, it is important to know whether the contents of these digital learning materials and the basic competencies are relevant because it indicates whether the materials are appropriately usable or not.

Additionally, in the MoEC Regulation Number 22/2016 about the Process Standards or *Standar Proses*, it is stated that the incorporation of ICT to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning process is one of the learning principles. As mentioned in the background of the study section, numerous studies evaluated learning materials for teaching and learning English in Indonesia but most of them evaluate printed materials which is showing that still many teachers in Indonesia rely on certain textbooks either it is provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) or other textbooks which is not characterizing the utilization of ICT; such as no audio-visual aids or multimedia and authentic materials or real-life language examples.

Therefore, the researcher is interested to conduct a study evaluating MES as the digital learning material to investigate whether the claim of the use of the 2013 Curriculum as their foundation in developing the content of the materials is relevant

by analyzing its content feasibility based on the basic competence (KD) of the 2013 Curriculum. Focusing on the eighth grade which has the most materials compared to the other grades, the researcher will find out whether the contents of digital learning materials provided by the *MyEnglishStep.com* website for eighth-grade students at junior high school are feasible and cover all KDs (Kompetensi Dasar) of the 2013 Curriculum.

1.3 Research Question

Considering the issues, the following research questions will guide this study:

1. How is the content of the *MyEnglishStep.com* website presented in terms of the social function of the text, text structure, language features/grammar, and topic of each unit?
2. How does the *MyEnglishStep.com* website fulfill the requirements of content feasibility based on the 2013 Curriculum?

1.4 Purpose of The Study

The purposes of the study are:

1. to describe the content of the *MyEnglishStep.com* website presented in terms of the social function of the text, text structure, language features/grammar, and topic of each unit.
2. to examine whether the content of the digital learning materials website for eighth-grade students at junior high school provided on the

MyEnglishStep.com website fulfilled the requirements of content feasibility based on the 2013 Curriculum.

1.5 Scope of The Study

The scope of this study is to focus on the content feasibility of the eighth-grade students learning materials on the *MyEnglishStep.com* website based on the Basic Competence (KD) of the 2013 Curriculum by analyzing the content of each unit for eighth-grade students which consists of thirteen units/chapters using checklist table. The criteria of the checklist table were adapted from the English Syllabus of the 2013 Curriculum and BSNP textbook evaluation rubric. Furthermore, even though the newest curriculum in Indonesia is the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, the researcher in this study focused on the use of the KD and BSNP since MES was developed by using the 2013 Curriculum as its foundation.

Additionally, due to the limitations of the researcher's knowledge, the study in evaluating digital learning materials for eighth-grade students on MES was centered on evaluating the content feasibility of the DLM on the MES website by using instruments constructed that referring to the English syllabus of the 2013 Curriculum and adapted textbook evaluation rubric by BSNP.

1.6 Significance of The Study

The results of this study are expected to be beneficial for many parties such as material developers, teachers, and future researchers. For teachers, it is expected to give hints to them in choosing or selecting effective and appropriate learning materials

in supporting students achieve their learning objectives. For future researchers, it can be used as a reference or source in conducting further studies regarding this or related topics. For material developers, it can be used as a reference in revising the materials to be more effective, attractive, and suitable.

