CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of the research provides an introduction. In this particular research, the introduction covers the background of the research, research questions, purpose of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, and state of art. The explanationsare presented as follows:

1.1 Background of the Study

In the 21st century, adequate skills are required by students, who must overcome their requirements by practicing the three categories of skills: learning skills, literacy skills, and life skills. For example, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication are the parts of learning skills that students have to master. Students must apply these skills to their learning materials because they will have a positive influence on their ability to develop. Ahonen & Kinnunen (2014) mentioned more generally that incorporating 21st-century skills into instructional procedures and evaluation may increase student motivation and enjoyment of education. Larson & Miller (2012) viewed it as essential to teach students 21st century skills that cannot be disregarded or taken carelessly because the world is changing quickly, so educators need to prepare their students for the world they will live in and work in. Furthermore, Kay & Greenhill (2010) reported that 21st-century skills are connected with five standards: content knowledge, core subjects, interdisciplinary themes, deep understanding knowledge, real-world data, and multiple measures of mastery. 21st-century skills have underpinned the education system, and their necessity can be applied to the learning process. Along with the Pancasila Profile of *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar*, collaborative skills emphasize two elements: sharing and caring. Learning

from one another and sharing knowledge ensures that no student is left alone during learning activities, which is the underlying idea of collaborative skills. Collaborative skills can also include a range of abilities crucial for the development of a student's character, including the capacity for interpersonal communication, problem-solving abilities, organizational and group-building abilities, and the capacity for self-evaluation. According to this justification, it can be inferred that the current educational model urgently requires the development of collaborative skills because they can help students meet the demands of the 21st century educational system by emphasizing cooperation with mutual understanding, respect, responsibility, and full tolerance. Therefore, the importance of 21st-century skills can be integrated into the learning materials, especially for the development of the reading material.

Seventh-graders have been studying the English language for over three years. Although English is a required subject for them, they are still having difficulty understanding and practicing the language. Seventh-graders are considered adolescent learners, and they have the opportunity to gain the benefits of studying the English language and prepare their language skills for the next higher level. Oktaviani & Fauzan (2017) assume that Indonesian students place great importance on studying English, especially adolescent learners who will benefit most from learning the language early on. According to Rizqon et al. (2021), teachers can aid students in improving their reading comprehension skills by giving them interesting reading material and inspiring them to read more. According to their assumption, teenage

learners should review the foreign language from an earlier time when they were at a lower level because they will gain advantages soon. Thus, seventh-graders will master English language skills by practicing the English materials that come from the English textbook that will let students use technology, which is currently advancing swiftly, to explore knowledge.

One of the English skills that seventh-graders have to improve is reading. Perfetti (2001) states that reading skill is an individual's position, which reflects their reading proficiency. Bojovic (2010) conveys that reading is a cognitive skill that a person can employ to connect with written text. She cited Grabe (1991) as saying that reading skills involve knowledge of formal discourse structure, content and world background, automatic recognition abilities, vocabulary and structural knowledge, synthesis and evaluation techniques, metacognitive awareness, and skill monitoring. Reading is difficult for them to develop because they need a large vocabulary to understand the reading materials in the English textbook. Indeed, there are two types of English language skills: passive and active skills. Passive skills include listening and reading, while active skills include speaking and writing. These four skills requirethe learner to comprehend the learning context before they can utilize English properly. Furthermore, Nunan (2003) mentions that listening and reading skills help a person gain and grasp incoming information. His idea, listening, and reading skills are the foundational skills in learning that assist a person in establishing creativity or productivity. Nunan (2003) expresses that speaking and writing skills allow a person to express ideas or feelings in

the form of voice or text. To summarize, English language skills must be mastered by first understanding passive skills, for example reading skills. In addition, the English reading materials in the *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* are various; they expose materials about family, school environment, juvenile life, and global issues. Students learned reading materials about cultural and social life. As a result, reading materials for seventh-graders are still general, and English teachers must develop those materials by infusing them with concise and specific themes in the form of microlearning.

The importance of developing reading materials for seventh graders is crucial. They have to enhance their reading knowledge and skills based on the reading materials given in the textbook that has been established in the curriculum. They must use their reasoning while they practice reading because reading is a timeless skill that requires fidelity. Besides, Ardhian et al (2019) criticized that students must acquire a variety of information, including content, and comprehend the purpose of reading. The reading materials are supposed to involve their daily life, their culture, and their community. Simanjuntak & Barus (2020) quoted UNESCO (2005) that the reading materials must have four characteristics to be inserted; 1) reading skills, 2) application, training, and reading rules, 3) reading process, and 4) reading text that used. As a result, only several characteristics of reading materials are found in the textbook that has been composed based on the curriculum. Furthermore, Trika, Adi. & Ana (2012) cited Urdan and Wegen (2000) students who use e-learning materials gain a number of advantages, including: (1) e-learning materials make learning a continuous process; (2) it allows

students to learn whenever and wherever they want as long as they have access to computers and the internet; (3) it makes it simple for teachers to update the material; and (4) it enhances the students' self-assisted learning. While Widiantari & Putri (2017) mentioned Pollard and Hillage (2001) there are numerous advantages to employing e-learning, including the ability to: 1) make learning a continuous process; 2) allow learning to be done whenever and wherever; 3) allow the teacher to easily update the content; Improve student connection, increase self-assisted learning, reduce teacher intimidation, and provide tools to build educational assessment. 8) financial and academic advantages; and 9) risk-free. Unfortunately, seventh-graders who study English do not equally receive sufficient skills in reading materials with the same competencies due to the transitioning curriculum from *Kurikulum* 13 Revised Edition to *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar*. Then, they practice reading materials based on the monotone form constructed with long texts, unattractive posters, and labels. To emphasize, they have not used the learning activities and learning targets that are supposed to represent 21st-century skills in the reading materials, for example, as examples of collaborative skills. Regarding this phenomenon, developing reading materials that integrate 21st-century skills for seventh-graders is crucial. They can cope with advanced reading materials that include higher comprehension and sustainability of the context based on the reading objectives implied in *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar*. Briefly, developing reading materials that are integrated into collaborative skills by utilizing microlearning is highly suggested. Besides, microlearning also maintains high

levels of engagement since it engages people through a variety of media. Additionally, with the help of individual mobile devices and applications, learners can learn at their own pace, wherever they are.

Moreover, the English language subject is studied by seventh-graders, who experience a tentative situation due to the protocol of *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar*. Madhakomala, Aisyah, et al. (2022) confirm that *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* is used in the learning curriculum based on the approaches of talent and interest, and it was designed by Nadim Makarim (Minister of Education and Culture) to assess the progress of the previous curriculum, *Kurikulum* 13. It can be seen that this curriculum provides the chance for Indonesian students to study based on their concerns, particularly in learning the English language. Besides, Damayanti et al. (2022) tells us that *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* was developed into a more flexible framework, and its development focuses on the essential materials that support the development of the student's character and competencies in line with the Pancasila Student Profile. On the other hand, *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* provides the reading goals by supporting the multimodal and interactive texts (printed or digital form) to facilitate the students in finding and evaluating the main idea from the specific information given. As a result, *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* supports students' character and competencies, which can be built based on their talent and interest to facilitate their learning needs, such as practicing English language skills and integrating with 21st-century skills.

Collaborative skills are one of the 21st-century skills that must be trained specially by young students in Indonesia at the moment. Collaborative skills can help them facilitate their obligations as learners, and collaboration skills can involve them in achieving learning goals. Septikasari & Frasandy (2018) reported that collaborative skills are a skill that helps students work together in a group to accomplish shared learning through social interaction while being guided by teachers both inside and outside of the classroom. Collaborative skills are critical for seventh-graders to improve their English reading skills because collaborative skills have the potential to create mutual success. Redhana (2019) claimed that collaboration with others means being able to work effectively and fairly with different members of the team, showing flexibility and a willingness to compromise to achieve the goal, and being open to input from all members of the team while engaging in collaborative work. As a result, meaningful learning takes place, and students will value each other's contributions as group members. Besides, collaborative skills in the teaching materials are required because they will help the teachers and students to feel the collaborative environment to engage in the teaching and learning process. Dewi et al (2020) excerpted Bosworth (1994) interpersonal, group, conflict resolution, investigation, and presenting skills are all examples of collaborative skills that are mostly shown in teaching materials. However, those collaborative skills are trained less when they appear in the teaching materials. Briefly, collaborative skills are recommended for seventh-graders studying

the English language, and they can train their collaborative skills by practicing English reading materials even better for preparing for the next level utilizing microlearning.

Nowadays, technology roles are significant in learning English. Teachers can upgrade their English skills while students can learn and practice theirs independently through technology. Gilakjani (2017) revealed that technology provides a wealth of resources and communication opportunities for teachers and students to enhance their language teaching and learning. According to Abraham et al. (2022), ICT tools for teaching English, in line with English language skills, are critical processes for improving professional competency. Next to technology, microlearning is an education strategy whose concept is to provide short-term learning. Alella (2021) mentioned that microlearning is the practice of learning using manageable, carefully thought-out modules and momentary learning exercises. Mohammed et al. (2018) discussed microlearning as small, digestible chunks of knowledge taught in the form of e-learning. Thus, microlearning is a teaching method that uses technology to deliver short, bite-sized content.

According to the background above, there were three problems stated. First, the curriculum that underpins the English language subject for seventh-graders hasn't been set equally because of the transitioning curriculum. Next, the reading materials are generally tedious topics and texts, posters, labels, and ineffective texts. Then, 21st-century skills are not fully grounded in the learning objectives and activities. As a result, to achieve well collaborative skills that are integrated into reading materials,

English teachers have to develop them based on the student's needs, and the reading materials are supposed to be integrated into microlearning-based. Refer to *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar,* which focuses on one of Pancasila's profiles, which is *bergotong-royong* (collaboration). Therefore, the reading skills objectives in *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* are seeking and evaluating the main idea from the specific information given by different texts, which can be carried out with collaborative skills to help the learners work together for gaining success in reading.

Some studies had been conducted related to collaborative skills. First, Yusof et al (2022) revealed that many interpersonal, peer learning, and collaborative activities that are related to knowledge production constitute a big part of online learning. As markers of educational values, the three talents of peer learning, collaborative abilities, and knowledge construction are positively associated. The findings imply that a professionally crafted online learning session that encourages group participation can provide valuable educational benefits. Second, Cuesta et al. (2022) proved that the utilization of virtual workspaces helped students improve their ability to work together and encouraged open-mindedness. Besides, virtual workspaces give teachers the ability to create encouraging e-learning settings where students can explore subjects from various angles and respect one another's viewpoints. Another study conducted by Lestari and Anugerahwati (2022) claimed that collaborative strategic reading (CSR) enhances students' reading comprehension in small, dynamic groups. Although it is typically used with an expository paragraph, it can also be used in various texts, short

functional printed works, and rehearsals. Besides, collaborative strategic reading was useful for students to develop their knowledge base to comprehend the reading texts. They used the notes to create text-related questions, brainstorm what students already knew about the subject, predict what they needed to learn from the passage, and review to write something significant they learned from the text. On the other hand, CSR can be used as an alternative strategy to teach reading comprehension. Previous research only focused on incorporating technology into the collaborative perspective in general and the collaborative strategy in scaffolding reading in particular.

Besides, Erlina, Mayuni, and Akhadiah (2016) revealed an English coursebook that exposed reading strategies, a variety of topics, texts, activities, and evaluations based on whole language principles. But this study still suggested creating a rich learning environment with a choice of print and digital reading sources to give students the opportunity to select and decide on reading materials that meet their requirements. Second, Sunny, Sumarni, and Darmahusni (2023) examined the adaptive English learning materials during COVID-19. Their study intended to explore teachers' creativity using technology in the classroom teaching English, but it was impossible to apply it during the pandemic situation, and the adaptive learning materials in reading did not specifically conclude the reading objectives. Kiili et al. (2012) informed the understanding during collaborative online reading; their result showed five collaborative reading profiles were known: co-constructors, collaborators, blenders, individually oriented readers, and silent readers. While some students preferred

working alone, others were more adept at working in pairs. Next, Jin et al. (2019) reported a three-stage effective teaching method for collaborative academic reading. The outcomes demonstrated that the students successfully generated meaning jointly in the second stage, modified their comprehension at the third level, and then prepared themselves for cooperation in the first stage. Mazon et al. (2012) discussed developing reading comprehension through collaborative learning, and they described employing these methods effectively not just in collaborative contexts but also independently, that is, in a self-regulated and autonomous manner, so that the Learning Together participants appropriated and transferred the text comprehension skills suggested. From the studies above, it can be concluded that collaborative skills that are integrated into reading materials do not appear as often as collaborative reading activities.

There are some previous studies that discussed learning object media, for example Canva, Kahoot!, Quizizz, WordWall, and infographics that can be used to supplement the reading materials for this study. Canva, according to Christiana and Anwar (2021), produces concrete ideas, increases students' interest and attention, retains information and past knowledge, and promotes an effective learning process. Next, Melinia and Nugroho (2022) revealed the same points: Canva is beneficial and allows teachers to create reading materials in less than 10 minutes using various templates. Another study, conducted by Rahayu et al. (2020), proved that Canva is a viable medium for improving students' digital competencies by allowing them to develop creative goods and activities. Furthermore, Licorish et al. (2018) proposed Kahoot! as a teaching and

learning medium that discovers knowledge and information, gives fun and enjoyment for both instructor and student, and allows for more knowledge on certain relevant content. Cetin (2018) agreed that Kahoot! is beneficial and informative as a digital assessment tool because it provides a pleasant environment for learners and develops careful reading skills for teachers, which is consistent with Ismail and Mohammad (2017)'s claim that Kahoot! is a feasible and practical assessment tool. The potential of Kahoot! as a pedagogical tool for alternative teaching media and evaluation methods that give practical and innovative materials or information was then underlined by Guardia et al. (2019). Furthermore, Amalia (2020) advised us that Quizizz creates a competitive environment, particularly for English teaching, learning, and assessment. According to Zuhriyah and Pratolo (2020), Quizizz improves students' confidence, motivation, and reading skills because it is an interesting tool that allows them to practice the skimming strategy in the reading activity. Junior (2020) then emphasized that Quizizz allows students to complete collaborative work by accessing and sharing the quiz together, and Quizizz also provides features such as music, rankings, a scoreboard, and avatar time that can activate students' motivation. Then, Handoko et al. (2020) claimed that Quizizz can be used as a learning assessment resource for future enhancement by providing an analytical representation of student test responses. Next, Cil (2021) showed that using Wordwall.net alone was effective in enhancing students' vocabulary knowledge, whereas Rosyidah et al. (2022) reported that WordWall online games have a significant impact on students' grammatical quality. Furthermore,

Sornkeaw (2021) reported on the influence of using the KWL-Plus technique through infographics on the reading comprehension skills of Thai EFL students. This indicated that after getting teaching using the KWL-Plus via infographics on reading assignments, students' reading comprehension skills improved. Students also created infographics to demonstrate the success of the KWL-Plus reading technique, which fosters a teaching and learning environment that is convenient, exciting, motivating, and engaging. Moreover, it is obvious that implementing the KWL-plus technique through infographics can benefit classroom teaching and learning, particularly in the reading class. Finally, Putra (2021) stated that the usage of infographics is reasonable and appropriate for all levels of students, but the teacher must know how to separate the hurdles for each level. Infographics portray text or content in a straightforward and effective manner since they only focus on the important features of displaying the data. There are numerous benefits of employing infographics to boost the reading interest of EFL students. The infographic delivers the contents in a straightforward and effective manner; it will increase students' willingness to read owing to its appealing visual style; and it will also assist students in developing their critical thinking and organizational skills while reading. As a result, the learning object media utilized in the design of English reading materials are supposed to be suitable with strengthening seventh graders' collaboration skills. Thus, this study attempts to design reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skills for junior high school.

This study was conducted to fill the gap left by the previous studies, which were

limited to the design of reading materials based on microlearning and integrated into collaborative skills. The novelty of the current study was to advance the field of designing reading materials based on microlearning that promote collaborative skill according to Pancasila profiles in *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar*. Moreover, the design of English reading materials for seventh graders refer to *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar*, the collaborative skills framework by The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework, and CEFR indicators, which are at the A2 level including overall reading, reading for instruction, and reading as a leisure for seventh graders. Additionally, the design of English reading materials integrated collaborative skills employing Canva, infographics, Kahoot! Quizizz, and Wordwall.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the statements of the problem, four research questions aim to meet the objectives of this study. The research questions were formulated as follows:

1. To what extent do the existing English reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skills?

2. How are the processes of designing reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skills?

3. How is the design of reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skills?

4. How is the readability and employability of reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skills?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the existing English reading materials used by seventh graders.

2. To describe the procedure of designing reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skill for junior high school.

3. To design reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skill for junior high school.

4. To find the readability and employability of reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skill for junior high school.

1.4 Scope of the Research

The scope of this study was the design of reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skills for junior high school that already exist for seventh graders. English reading materials development, in particular, is focused on collaborative skills via microlearning. Then, the materials will be referred to *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* and CEFR to optimize the result. The developed reading materials will be presented in three activities: pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading in descriptive text, authentic text, and procedure text. Moreover, designing reading materials will expose seventh-graders to more vocabulary and comprehension skills that encourage them to work together. By the end of the study, the prototypes of English reading materials reading materials based on microlearning to promote student collaborative skills for seventh graders will be produced.

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research has both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research promoted student collaborative skills in reading materials based on microlearning. Besides, this study provides information about microlearning, collaborative skills, and reading materials for English teachers and English learners. Practically, the design of collaborative skills-integrated and microlearning-based English reading materials can promote learners reading skills and reading competency by utilizing microlearning with peers.

1. 6 State of the Art

The purpose of this study was to fill a gap created by prior studies, which were limited to the design of reading materials based on microlearning and incorporated into collaborative skills. The current study was new in that it advanced the field of producing reading materials based on microlearning that increase collaborative skill *in Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* using Pancasila profiles. Besides, the design of English reading materials for seventh graders refers to *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar,* The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework's collaborative skills framework, and CEFR indicators at the A2 level, which include overall reading, reading for instruction, and reading as a leisure for seventh graders. Furthermore, the design of English reading materials incorporated collaborative abilities through the use of Canva, infographics, Kahoot! Quizizz, and Wordwall. Indeed, the uniqueness of designing English reading materials based on microlearning to increase collaborative competencies in seventh

graders was introduced in this study. It helps students with learning disabilities benefit from microlearning and collaboration, allowing them to continue their studies, especially with accessible and flexible reading materials.