

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the reesearch questions, the purpose of the study, the scope of the study and the signifiante of the study.

1.1 Background of The Study

In the 21st century, where the world is changing very rapidly and the emergence of new sciences accompanied by rapid technological advances, the abilities needed to survive in life can also be said to have changed. To be a valuable citizen in the twenty-first century, one must be able to quickly master the core material of a subject of knowledge while simultaneously mastering a broad portfolio of ideal learning environments, innovation, technology, and professional skills (Fadel & Trilling, 2009). This situation then becomes a challenge for schools as educational institutions to implement 21st Century Skills because education has an important role in developing students' knowledge, abilities, and attitudes (OECD, 2021).

Creativity skills are one of the essential life skills in the 21st century. Creativity is a term that discusses the human ability to use one's imagination and creativity to solve complex problems (Welch & McPherson, 2012). In the 21st century, students are not only required to be able to understand the knowledge provided by the teacher but students are also required to be creative. Creativity skills will help students understand the material, improve critical thinking skills, and solve problems as creativity is closely correlated with critical thinking (Lamb et al., 2017). Therefore, with the existence of creativity skills, they are expected to be able to implement the knowledge they have and generate new ways to solve problems in everyday life.

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia has determined that 21st-century skills should be integrated into our education system. In teaching practice, the textbook can be a source of material or teaching aids used by teachers in teaching English. By using a textbook, the process of delivering material will be

assisted because in this case, the textbook acts as a teacher's guide in providing material and assignments that can meet student learning needs. The use of textbooks can be said to be very helpful because it serves as a teaching or learning tool, providing students with learning tasks (Gak, 2011). A textbook consists of several chapters with different themes, and in each chapter, a set of activities is provided to assess students' abilities and to measure the extent to which students understand the material taught in that topic. Textbooks should support the learning objectives and improve the efficiency of the teaching and learning processes (I.M.A.A. Gunawan et al., 2022). Therefore, to be considered a good textbook, the content of the textbook itself should be studied.

In 2021, a study related to the representation of 21st-century skills in an EFL textbook was conducted by Rinekso. This study aimed at analyzing the representation of 21st-century skills in an Indonesian EFL textbook entitled "*When English Rings a Bell*". According to the results, the English textbook entitled "When English Rings a Bell" included some 21st-century skills in which communication and collaboration were the most dominant skills presented in the textbook. However only 7 activities that are incorporated with creativity skills (Rinekso, 2021).

Similarly, Nuraeni et al., (2024) examined the portrayal of 21st-century skills in an Indonesian government-funded EFL textbook for first-grade junior high school students and found that although all four Cs (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity) were present, creativity skills were the least emphasized. These findings indicate that creativity remains underrepresented compared to the other three skills.

Based on the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka as the new curriculum, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology provides a new textbook for Junior High School entitled "English for Nusantara". This official textbook, written by Ika Lestari Damayanti, Iyen Nurlaelawati, Yusnita Febrianti, Pipit Prihartanti, Aji Jehan Fellani, and Raymon Rahmadhani, was published by Pusat Perbukuan in 2022. It consists of five chapters (About Me, Culinary and Me, Home Sweet Home, My School Activities, and This is My School) and is designed

to support communicative, contextual, and student-centered English learning under Kurikulum Merdeka for Grade VII of SMP/MTs.

However, the majority of previous research investigated the representation of overall 21st-century skills (the 4Cs) in English textbooks. Limited studies specifically investigated creativity skill in writing activities of the English for Nusantara textbook. Focusing solely on creativity skills is justified because creativity is a foundational skill that enables students to generate ideas, view problems from multiple perspectives, elaborate details, and produce original texts abilities that are essential in EFL writing development (Coşgun Ögeyik, 2026). Moreover, previous content analyses consistently showed that creativity is the least represented among the 4Cs, creating a research gap that needs to be filled (Nuraeni et al., 2024).

Thus, the researcher intends to fill in the gap by conducting research focusing exclusively on the integration of creativity skills in the writing activities of the English textbook for grade VII of Junior High School “English for Nusantara”.

To analyze the integration of creativity skills, this study adopts the four aspects of creativity proposed by Torrance, namely fluency, flexibility, elaboration, and originality. Fluency refers to the ability to generate a large number of ideas; flexibility is the ability to produce ideas from different perspectives or categories, elaboration involves adding details and expanding ideas and originality is the production of unique or unusual ideas. These four indicators serve as the analytical framework for examining the writing activities in the textbook.

1.2 Research Questions

1. To what extent are creativity skills integrated in the writing activities of English textbook for grade VII of Junior High School?
2. Which aspects of creativity skills are integrated into the writing activities?

1.3 Purpose of The Study

1. To analyze the extent to which creativity skills are integrated in the English textbook for grade VII of Junior High School.
2. To identify the creativity skills aspects integrated into the writing activities provided by the English textbook.

1.4 Scope of The Study

This study focuses on analyzing the integration of creativity skills in the English textbook for grade VII of high school *Kurikulum Merdeka* provided by the Ministry of Education Culture, Research, and Technology. However, the focus of the study is primarily limited to cover writing activity provided by the textbook. Other learning activities such as reading, listening and speaking will be the limitation of this study.

1.5 Significance of The Study

The findings of this research are expected to have a contribution in English language education theoretically and practically.

1) Theoretically

This study would give information about creativity skills in English textbooks. This study also could contribute to the enrichment of literature on the integration of creativity skills in English textbooks.

2) Practically

The result of this study is expected to help teachers in selecting and implementing English textbooks into the curriculum to promote students creativity skills, specifically in writing activity.