

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

The advancement of educational paradigms has brought forth various curriculum reforms to enhance the quality of learning and teaching processes. English language acquisition, particularly grammar, plays a crucial role in this educational landscape. Learning English at the junior high school level is an important stage in building language skills for students. In Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject taught starting from grade seven, which is the initial stage for students to learn a foreign language formally. One of the important aspects of learning English is the mastery of grammar.

Grammar is foundational for effective communication and comprehension, yet it often poses challenges for students, especially in the context of the seventh grade, where foundational language skills are being solidified. Grammar is the central component of language. It mediates between the system of sounds or written symbols, on the one hand, and the system of meaning, on

the other¹. Grammar is a set of rules that control the construction of sentences, phrases, and words in a language². Grammar is a crucial communication component; mastery of grammar is the main foundation of language skills, especially in writing and speaking.

One of the most recognized principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is that language is best learned by completing tasks rather than studying grammar rules. This method emerged as a reaction to earlier teaching approaches that emphasized grammar but failed to help students communicate effectively in spoken English³. However, many seventh-grade students have difficulty Understanding and applying English grammar concepts. This is due to various factors, such as uninteresting teaching approaches, overly theoretical materials, inappropriate learning methods, unattractive learning materials, the student's motivation, the learning environment, frequent government curriculum changes, and limited teaching materials that

¹ Sidney Greenbaum and Gerald Nelson, *An Introduction to English Grammar, Longman Grammar, Syntax and Phonology*, 2nd ed. (London: Pearson Longman, 2002), 1.

² Maryam Sorohiti et al., "Teacher Awareness, Identification of Learning Difficulties, and Effective Teaching Strategies for English Grammar Mastery," *Indonesian EFL Journal (IEFLJ)* 10, no. 1 (2024): 46.

³ Arifin, M. N. *Evolving Perspectives: A Comprehensive Guide to TEFL Methodology* (Serang: Laksita Indonesia, 2024), 33.

are contextual and relevant to students' daily lives⁴. Most existing grammar materials tend to be abstract, inappropriate for students' level of understanding and lack interactive activities. As a result, students often feel bored and find it challenging to practice grammar in real situations.

The Indonesian government has established the Merdeka Curriculum to offer pupils a more complete, student-centered learning experience. In Indonesia, the Merdeka Curriculum represents a substantial change toward more flexible and student-centered educational systems. This curriculum focuses on developing pupils' critical thinking, creativity, and autonomy, meeting the needs of a quickly changing world. This program focuses on developing 21st-century abilities like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and academic understanding. The Merdeka Curriculum promotes a more dynamic and engaging approach to English language learning. English materials designed for seventh-grade Merdeka Curriculum students should include practical instructional design elements such as clear explanations, relevant examples, and interactive tasks. The Merdeka Curriculum's

⁴ Sorohiti et al., 46

focus on personalized learning and competencies necessitates a reevaluation of instructional materials better to support student engagement and achievement in English grammar.

Designing an English grammar material book tailored for seventh-grade students following the Merdeka Curriculum is necessary to overcome the challenges in learning grammar. This research aims to develop learning resources aligned with the curriculum objectives, students' learning styles, and needs. This material is hoped to create a more effective and enjoyable learning experience by integrating modern pedagogical theories and best practices.

The grammar materials explicitly designed for seventh-grade students should have an interactive and contextual approach, making it easier for students to understand grammar. The materials should also be relevant to students' daily situations so that they see the application of grammar in authentic contexts. Developing interesting teaching materials that meet the needs of seventh-grade students is very important. A compact and easy-to-carry material book is the right choice to present the content briefly and interestingly to improve students' understanding of English tenses.

In addition, interactive materials can actively involve students in the learning process through discussions, educational games, conversation simulations, or collaborative tasks. This can increase students' motivation to learn and provide opportunities to apply grammar in meaningful communicative situations.

Designing material that focuses explicitly on basic English grammar is one promising approach to address these challenges. According to Abercrombie, Media can assist teachers in motivating students by bringing a piece of real life into the classroom and presenting language in a more communicative context⁵. A material offers portability and convenience, allowing students to access grammar lessons anytime, anywhere, thus facilitating continuous learning outside the classroom. The student's ability to understand English, particularly mastering sentence structure, is challenging. Debata and Elturki note that grammar is one of the most complex parts of learning a foreign language and cannot be disregarded while teaching language⁶. Effective grammar instruction is

⁵ Iin Baroroh Ma'arif, Yuyun Bahtiar, and Muthoharoh, "Designing LEEF (Learning English Easy and Fun) as Learning Media for the Seventh Grade of Junior High School," *FOSTER: Journal of English Language Teaching* 2, no. 3 (2021): 373.

⁶ Pradeep Kumar Debata, "The Importance of Grammar in Second Language Teaching," *Language in India* 13, no. 5 (2013): 483.

necessary for foreign, second, and first language learners, as understanding grammar is crucial for communicative competence.

Despite years of grammar instruction, the students often struggle with speaking and writing in English. Observations during PLP (Pengenalan Lingkungan Persekolahan) at MTs Negeri 3 Kota Cilegon revealed that students have difficulties with English grammar, particularly tenses. Issues include forgetting tense formulas, fear of making mistakes, and limited vocabulary.

This research is driven by the need to develop a comprehensive and adaptive English grammar resource that aligns with the Merdeka Curriculum and enhances students' grammatical proficiency. Focusing on seventh-grade students at MTs Negeri 3 Kota Cilegon, the study aims to create an interactive and contextual learning material book to address challenges in grammar learning. By designing engaging and relevant resources, this research seeks to improve students' language skills, boost their confidence, and foster enthusiasm for learning. Ultimately, the goal is to elevate the quality of English education at the junior high school level, supporting students' academic and communicative success.

B. Identification of Problem

Based on the background of the study, the researcher identified some of the problems as follows:

1. The lack of students' interest.
2. The lack of students' confidence.
3. The supporting media in the learning process.
4. The frequent curriculum changes by the government.

C. Research Questions

This research contributes to English education research and development. Based on the existing problems, the researcher formulated the problem by asking:

1. How is the process of designing an English grammar material book for a seventh-grade student?
2. How are the students implementing an English grammar material book affected?

D. The Objective of The Study

The primary objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To design and implement an English grammar material book based on the needs of seventh-grade students under the Merdeka Curriculum.

2. To implement the material book for students at seventh-grade junior high school.

E. The Specification of The Product.

The product produced in this research is an English Material book for grammar material. Then the result of the product specifications are as follows:

1. Seventh-year students use the English material book to learn English grammar.
2. The size of an English material book with an A5 paper size of approximately 70 pages.
3. The researcher will make a colorful book cover attractive because an attractive appearance attracts the students' attention, causing them to read and study the book.
4. This book uses the fonts Lazydog, Adlery Pro, League Spartan, Bobby Jones, Roboto, Dreaming Outloud Sans, and Belleza.
5. The material that will be presented consists of 3 units: simple present tense, simple past tense, simple future tense, personal pronoun, conjunction, adverb of time, an article, the auxiliary, preposition, etc.

6. The book will be dominated by bright colours, graphics, and pictures to attract students' attention.
7. The language used in the material book is simple, aiming to help students understand the material.

F. The Significance of The Study.

The results of this research are expected to be useful for students learning media and teachers teaching media in learning basic tenses of English grammar in seventh grade.

1. For Teachers

As a support media for teaching English material, the Pocket Book will be used as a supplementary tool. The teacher can help the students gain a deep understanding by practicing every exercise already provided. Moreover, seeing students practice activities using basic English tenses in materials is more accessible.

2. For Students

The researcher has provided the exercise in material for students to practice, making it easier for them to remember and understand the basic tenses of grammar.

3. For Researcher

The findings of this study should provide information regarding learning media that students can utilize to learn tenses in English grammar. They can also be used as a reference for further exploration and improved studies related to this research

G. Assumption and Delimitation of The Study

The researcher has assumptions about designing a material book for learning grammar that will be used by the students as a supporting media for learning English grammar and can help them understand it easily.

The researcher has several delimitations in designing a material book for learning English grammar, such as:

1. The material only provides the material about three basic tenses.
2. The material discussed is only grammar in grade seven.