

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

English is one of the most widely studied foreign languages globally. As a global communication medium, mastering English involves not only speaking and listening skills, but also an understanding of the grammatical structure that forms the basis for correct sentence formation. With a good knowledge of grammar, individuals can convey ideas in a structurally sound manner and accordance with language rules (Murti et al., 2024). In language learning, grammar plays a crucial role because it enhances the effectiveness of the English teaching process.

In English language learning, the need to master linguistic aspects develops in tandem with the level of language proficiency (Glover, 2011). One international standard that is widely used to measure these proficiency levels is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This standard provides clear guidelines for assessing language proficiency, ranging from basic (A1, A2) to intermediate (B1, B2) and advanced (C1, C2) levels. Each CEFR level describes the ability of language users to understand, speak, read, write, and use grammar and vocabulary when communicating (North, 2005).

However, even though standards such as the CEFR have been designed to guide the language learning process in matching the proficiency level of each learner, in reality, many learners, especially at the beginner level, still experience difficulties in learning English. One reason is the incompatibility of learning materials with their English proficiency level. Often, they feel burdened with vocabulary and grammar that are too difficult, while they have not mastered the necessary basics (Suhud & Puspita, 2024). As a result, this can overwhelm them, making it difficult for them to learn, and eventually, their motivation will decrease, rendering the learning process unpleasant. On the contrary, when learning materials are appropriately adjusted according to learners' proficiency levels, they can

achieve better progress in their developmental stage (Chew & Cerbin, 2021). Therefore, it is important for learners to adjust learning media to their level of proficiency so that the learning process can take place effectively, efficiently, and enjoyably.

In language learning, establishing a strong foundation is a crucial aspect that supports the development of language skills at higher levels in the future (Wang, 2010). This is especially important in the early stages of learning, such as the A1 and A2 levels in the CEFR, which are the basis for building language skills. At the A2 level, learners are expected to be able to understand simple sentences, respond to basic information, and express their daily needs and wants. Therefore, in achieving these abilities, basic grammar understanding needs to be strengthened because grammar not only helps learners construct structurally correct sentences, but also supports learners in conveying their intentions and ideas clearly, even when their vocabulary is still limited.

Then, as the learners' confidence and ability increase, they can express their opinions, tell stories about their experiences, and convey their plans. This is where the mastery of grammar becomes particularly important, as the sentence structure used begins to become more complex. Therefore, to support learners in learning according to their level of proficiency, we need learning media that not only focus on grammar structure but also attract learners' interest. One approach that can be used is the incorporation of interactive media, such as short story anthologies with audio and visual materials, for learners at proficiency level A2. With this media approach, it is hoped that learners will be able to understand grammar in a fun way through reading interactive short stories. Through easy-to-understand and straightforward narratives in everyday life, it is expected that learners will naturally acquire grammar (Akintunde & Iwuagwu, 2024).

Short stories often draw themes from real life, allowing learners to more easily understand vocabulary and grammar commonly used in everyday situations (Sulaeha et al., 2020). This aligns with the needs of learners at A2 level who are transitioning from understanding simple sentences to using more complex language in everyday life. Moreover, when presented interactively, short stories can encourage

learners' participation, especially with the support of media such as audio and visual elements that accompany the story (Hendratno et al., 2022). When learners listen to stories, they not only capture meaning but also learn to pronounce words, understand intonation, and recognize grammatical structures naturally through dialogue and narration.

On the other hand, the interactive short story anthology for A2 level also needs to be tailored to the learners' interests and needs. Topics that are close to everyday life, such as school, friendship, family, or hobbies, can make learning more personalized and enjoyable. When the material learned feels relevant, learners will be more confident and encouraged to use the language actively learned. In this case, short stories are not only a teaching medium but also a simple and effective way to help learners get closer to the English language. Through stories relevant to learners, they find it easier to understand the context, grasp the meaning, and apply it in their daily lives.

Based on previous research, this study presents differences and updates compared to Marhamah (2022) research, titled "Development of Picture Story Book Learning Media to Increase Elementary School Students' Learning." The study focused primarily on increasing interest in reading English through picture storybook media, without placing special emphasis on grammatical aspects or language structures used. In addition, the study targeted elementary school students without differentiating their language proficiency levels, as described in the CEFR. Meanwhile, this study emphasizes the development of interactive short story anthology media tailored to the needs of learners at A2 level. The media developed is also equipped with audio features to make learning more engaging and facilitate learners' understanding of the story directly.

The need for this media is also evident from the results of interviews with ten students with an English level of A2, who reported difficulty in learning grammar structures. They feel that the learning media used so far are too confusing and not suitable for their needs as beginners. Instead, they understand grammar better when it is presented through simple stories with sentence structures commonly used in daily conversations.

As an update to previous research, this study is significant because it helps A2-level learners better understand grammar. With a good understanding of grammar, learners will be able to speak, write, read, and listen to English more effectively. It also helps them understand texts and conversations in English more easily. With a good command of grammar, learners can communicate more effectively and confidently, both in formal and informal situations (Terrell, 1991). Therefore, the development of learning media, such as this interactive short story anthology, is significant in improving English language skills. Through this medium, learners not only strengthen their grammar but also provide a more enjoyable learning experience in daily life.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the background that has been described, the problem formulation in the preparation of this interactive short story anthology is as follows:

- a. How to develop an interactive short story anthology that aligns with the A2 grammar proficiency level?
- b. Why is creating a short story anthology book with a professional theme a medium for learning English at the A2 level?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The aim of this research is to:

- a. To develop an interactive short story anthology that aligns with the A2 grammar proficiency level.
- b. To identify and explain the reason for using a short story anthology book with a professional theme as an English learning medium for A2 level learners.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The development of an interactive short story anthology based on A2 level grammar is expected to contribute to the theory and practice of English language learning. The benefits that can be taken include:

1.4.1 Theoretical Contribution

Provide additional references in the development of interactive short story-based learning media to support the mastery of at the A2-level. In addition, the results of this development can enrich learning strategies based on a

communicative approach.

1.4.2 Practical Contribution

- a) For learners, it helps to improve their understanding and use of A2-level English grammar in a more fun and contextualized way.
- b) For teachers, it is an alternative creative teaching medium that can be used to support interaction-based grammar learning.
- c) For learning media developers, it is an inspiration in preparing learning media that combines interactive elements with a focus on mastering grammar.

1.5 Output of the Research

The output of this project is an interactive A2-level short story anthology entitled 'Kaleidoscope of Careers', complete with audio to support grammar comprehension. The final product consists of 89 pages and is expected to be an enjoyable and effective learning tool for beginner learners.