

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Research

Indonesia is rich in diversity that attracts foreigners to visit the country. According to data from Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia (BPS), the total number of foreign tourist visits during 2024 reached 13,902,420, representing a significant increase of 19,05% compared to 2023 (Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia, 2025). This high number of visits shows that Indonesia has become an international tourist destination. Apart from regular tourism, many of these international visitors also actively engage in community development through volunteer activities (Husna et al., 2021). The presence of these international volunteers serves as an effective medium for mutual cultural exchange that benefits local communities and strengthens the volunteers personal growth (Pemerintah Indonesia, 2015). Ultimately, this close cross cultural communication promotes global values and local traditions, which significantly contributes to a deeper cross cultural understanding.

According to the KBBI (Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language), a volunteer is someone who does something willingly, not because they are required or forced to do so (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 2025). This activity is considered more profound than tourism because foreigners are more directly involved in cross-cultural interactions with local communities for a longer duration and in a broader context (Makhmut et al., 2024). This interaction is an important means of international cultural exchange that allows international volunteers to understand each other's traditions. However, in reality, language barriers are a major problem in intercultural communication. As an organization that facilitates international volunteers, Dejavato Foundation also faces similar challenges in teaching Indonesian language for international volunteers.

Dejavato Foundation is a foundation in Semarang that focuses on volunteering or international volunteer programs. As part of its initial training, Dejavato Foundation provides one session on learning Indonesian. This session is

called the Indonesian language class and is very limited in duration, with only one to two hours before the program. The material taught covers basic survival language skills, including simple greetings, basic numbers, and short self-introduction phrases. However, the learning process stops there. During the program, volunteers often have difficulty remembering the vocabulary they have learned, resulting in a gap or long pause in communication with locals. Learning Indonesian requires functional and practical materials so that it can be immediately applied or practiced in daily interactions (Kusmiatun, 2016).

Therefore, practical media are needed to facilitate the needs of this communication problem so that it is more accessible and can be used by volunteers during the program. Consequently, practical media is urgently needed to bridge this communication barrier and accommodate the volunteers real time needs throughout the program. This was the basis for the development of a pocket book entitled “SOBAT: Socializing in Bahasa Indonesia with Tips” to facilitate daily social interactions. This pocket book was chosen as the appropriate media because of its practicality and the fact that it can be studied anytime, anywhere, and is easy to use (Hasan et al., 2021). By combining practical language materials and interactive writing columns for volunteers to practice writing Indonesian directly, this book is expected to overcome language barriers and boost volunteers confidence during their cultural exchange missions.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the background information, this research has several research questions, which are:

1. How is the development process of the pocket book “SOBAT: Socializing in Bahasa Indonesia with Tips” as a communication media for volunteers at Dejavato Foundation?
2. How do users respond to “SOBAT: Socializing in Bahasa Indonesia with Tips” pocket book in facilitating social communication between volunteers and locals?

### **1.3 Aim of the Research**

To answer the above research question, this research aims to:

1. To describe in detail the process of developing the pocket book “SOBAT: Socializing in Bahasa Indonesia with Tips” as a practical communication media for volunteers at Dejavato Foundation.
2. To explain the response to “SOBAT: Socializing in Bahasa Indonesia with Tips” pocket book as a practical communication media for international volunteers.

### **1.4 Benefit of the Research**

This research is valuable for:

1. For University

This research enriches the academic literature and resources within universities, particularly for undergraduate programs in Applied Foreign Languages.

2. For Researchers

This research allowed the author to apply the language skills acquired during the studies to a functional product relevant to the real world. This research also provided the author with valuable experience in the fields of educational research, instructional material design, and book layout.

3. For Communities

This research helps international volunteers and organizations such as Dejavato Foundation by providing an easily accessible tool to overcome communication barriers.

### **1.5 Research Output**

The main output of this final project is a practical communication media in the format of a pocket book entitled SOBAT: Socializing in Bahasa Indonesia with Tips. This book contains 36 pages of that chapter for introduction, alphabet pronunciation, daily conversation, introducing culture, emergency and many more. This book presents basic Indonesian language material specifically designed to meet the daily interaction needs of international volunteers with

locals. In addition to being informative, SOBAT is also designed to be interactive by providing Indonesian writing exercises in each chapter to help volunteers practice their skills. With compact design, this product serves as a systematic and practical field guide for volunteers at Dejavato Foundation. All stages of the design, development, and evaluation of this product were then comprehensively documented in a Final Project report as evidence of the research achievements.