CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

English has become a global language that plays an important role in various fields, including education, English is also the second or third language that is often used by the global community to communicate. Therefore, learning English from an early age is very important to prepare students to compete in the global world and the ever-increasing development that requires everyone to be able or proficient in English. In Indonesia, English is one of the most important languages to be learnt after Indonesian and local languages are taught in the classroom. English is introduced as a foreign language that required to be learnt in junior high school level to help students develop basic communication skills and build a strong foundation for future learning. However, the English teaching and learning process in junior high schools faces several challenges such as students' lack of interest in learning English and traditional teaching methods may not engage young learners effectively.

According to the results of observations, one of the causes of students' difficulties in learning English is the lack of student motivation in learning English, which usually occurs due to traditional teaching methods. Choosing a good learning method can also have an impact on students' motivation to learn English. Secondly, students have difficulty remembering new vocabulary and grammar. Apart from having difficulty remembering new vocabulary, students also often have difficulty in pronouncing words because there is no visualisation that describes how the word is. The modules that are mostly used do not have clear pictures and are not colourful. this gives the impression that learning is too serious and makes students less interested in understanding the material. the use of colour in pictures can also build enthusiasm and increase students' curiosity in learning. Relying only on one kind of material or instruction might seriously impede the mastery process given the constrained amount of time in the classroom (Rivera-lozada et al., 2022).

Nurdini (2018) mentioned that picture as a learning media including the type of visual media that does not move. To optimize children's exploration power, using picture media can present detailed images.

Comics are usually known as "comic books." The term "comics" is frequently used synonymously; it can also refer to comic strips, graphic novels, webcomics, and other sequential art forms. Comics look similar to novels, but the difference is that

comics are short versions of those, and the rest of the text will be presented as illustrations (Budiarti & Haryanto, 2016; Fatimah et al., 2019). The presence of this comic module can be a visual aid in improving students' memory and understanding more easily.

The role of comics can increase student literacy to enjoy reading books. Comics, as a form of visual storytelling, have a strong narrative structure that is able to build storylines, characters, and conflicts that are relevant and interesting to children. This structure makes it easier for students to understand the context of the language used, while stimulating their imagination and curiosity. When students are emotionally involved with the story, they will show higher interest and be able to remember the material easily. Therefore, by being interesting and creative, comics can stimulate students' interest in various disciplines (Mikamahuly et, al,. 2023).

Not only does this approach improve literacy and facilitate language comprehension, but the comic module will also create a new and more enjoyable learning atmosphere and experience. States that comics have taken their place in the field of education by adding educational and informative elements to their purpose and content in the development process and that these comics are accepted as a new genre and are named educational comics (Karagoz 2018).

Junior high school is a compulsory formal schooling level after primary school that will lead to senior high school. Junior High School (SMP) Open is one of the public schools established by the Government as one of the alternative education for the lower middle class. Indonesia makes it compulsory for all citizens to receive 12 years of education (Syahputri, 2020). Junior High School includes three levels, namely VII, VIII, and IX. Where students range in age from 13 to 15 years old, every grade in this school has 9 classes. Junior high school is the author's research because the language level of junior high school students has started from A2 level which is starting to be able to understand basic language concepts towards complex, besides that junior high school students already understand simple basic conversations without the need to translate to Indonesian. But it is undeniable that visual media is needed by students when learning English to facilitate students and not make students bored with conventional learning methods.

This research focuses on SMP Negeri 5 Bogor. SMP Negeri 5 Bogor is one of the public junior high schools located at Jl. Dadali No.10-A Bogor, Tanahsareal, Kec. Tanah Sareal, Bogor City, West Java. It is one of the favourite junior high schools in

Bogor City, which is ranked third out of the top 10 junior high schools in Bogor. The school has been accredited A with Accreditation Decree Number 02.00/330/BAP-SM/XI/2017 on 20 November 2017. Data collection in this study was carried out using several techniques, the main one being the adaptation of material from the students' English module book, which served as the main reference in the creation of the comics.

The second technique was observation and interviews, which were conducted to determine the level of knowledge of the 7th grade students and the appropriateness of the students' language level. Through observation, the author was able to see what the students liked and what kind of stories they found interesting to read, as well as what material the teachers often repeated. Data collection was carried out through classroom observation and interviews with teachers and 7th grade students to determine their level of English proficiency. This was important because the comics developed would be entirely in English with a target level of A2, so that the language, vocabulary, and dialogue could be adjusted accordingly. In addition, data was also collected to understand students' interests so that the comics produced would not only be in line with the curriculum but also interesting and relevant to students.

Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that includes a variety of intra-curricular learning opportunities, where the subject matter will be maximized to provide students enough time to explore ideas and build competency (Maulana, et al., 2024). As the nation faced the challenges posed by the pandemic, the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka became even more crucial in revitalizing education and addressing learning losses. This study identifies several key issues related to the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka at Junior High School. The Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented by the government since 2022. This curriculum uses diverse intracurricular activities, where students will have sufficient time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies (Cahyani, et al., 2024).

In this research, the source material for the comics presented by the English for Nusantara book, where the conversation uses comics as its depiction. Thus, it can be concluded that comics can be a good learning media for junior high school students.

1.2 Problem Statement

a. What are the process of developing an effective comic-based English learning module for junior high school students?

b. What is the stakeholder's feedback regarding of comic?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

a. To describe whether the use of comics can help students better understand English language concepts, vocabulary, and grammar through contextualised storytelling.

b. To discover the stakeholder's feedback regarding of the comic.

1.4 The Advantages of Study

a. The interactive nature of comics can facilitate the development of various language skills, including reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and writing proficiency.

b. Comics often reflect cultural themes and social issues, providing students with relatable content that can enhance their understanding of language in context.

1.5 The Output

In this research, the product is a comic module. The comic module, designed for junior high school students, can cover a variety of topics relevant to the independent curriculum for English language subjects. The title of this comic is 'Goodbye, Genevive,' which has 40 pages. The comic is divided into five chapters, each chapter is accompanied by text boxes.This comic module has several learning units organized with interesting story lines and relevant illustrations. This comic module is not only beneficial and makes learning more fun for students, but also teachers will be more helpful as an effective additional teaching material.

In junior high school, comic is one of the books that are often read by students, which can be a medium for observing students' reactions to comic module. Hopefully, this comic module can increase students' understanding of English material and improving understanding.