

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of Study

The development of relevant, engaging, and effective instructional materials is a fundamental component of successful English language teaching at the senior high school level, particularly within the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. This curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning, independent learning, differentiated instruction, and digital literacy (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2022). These principles require teachers not only to deliver content but also to design learning resources that enable students to learn actively, independently, and according to their learning profiles.

One of the important forms of instructional material that supports independent learning is a module. Daryanto (2013) defines a module as a self-contained unit of learning material that is systematically arranged to allow students to learn independently at their own pace. Similarly, Prastowo (2015) states that a module is a complete learning package that contains learning objectives, materials, exercises, and evaluations that guide students step-by-step without continuous teacher assistance. Thus, a module is not merely a collection of materials but a structured learning system that supports student autonomy.

The function of a module in learning is to provide clear direction, structured content, practice activities, and evaluation that enable students to achieve specific

learning objectives independently. According to Prastowo (2015), a module functions as a learning guide, a source of content, a medium for independent practice, and an evaluation tool. Daryanto (2013) also emphasizes that modules help students control their own learning pace, improve responsibility, and reduce dependence on teacher explanation. Therefore, modules play a crucial role in supporting self-directed learning, which is one of the core principles of the Merdeka Curriculum.

In educational practice, a module is different from ordinary learning materials and lesson plans. Learning materials generally refer to content sources such as textbooks, worksheets, or handouts that mainly provide information. These materials do not always include structured guidance, independent activities, or evaluations (Prastowo, 2015). Meanwhile, a lesson plan (Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran/ATP) is a teacher's instructional guide that contains teaching objectives, learning steps, methods, and assessments used by teachers to conduct classroom instruction (Richards, 2001). In contrast, a module is designed for students, not teachers. It is a complete, stand-alone learning unit that allows students to learn independently with minimal teacher intervention (Daryanto, 2013). This distinction shows that modules serve a different and more autonomous learning function than regular materials and lesson plans.

The use of modules is necessary in modern education because students are required to become active and independent learners. The Merdeka Curriculum strongly emphasizes learner autonomy, differentiated learning, and flexible learning pathways (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2022).

Modules enable these principles to be implemented because students can learn based on their readiness, pace, and learning styles. In addition, modules support mastery learning, as students are required to complete each learning stage before moving to the next one (Prastowo, 2015). Therefore, modules are not only supplementary materials but essential learning tools in competency-based education.

Along with the rapid development of technology, traditional printed modules have evolved into electronic modules (e-modules). An e-module is a digital version of a learning module that integrates multimedia elements such as text, images, audio, video, and interactivity to support learning (Daryanto, 2013; Smaldino et al., 2014). Prastowo (2015) explains that e-modules are systematically arranged digital learning materials designed to facilitate independent learning through electronic devices. The transformation from printed modules to e-modules allows learning to become more flexible, accessible, and engaging, especially for students who are already familiar with digital technology.

The effectiveness of e-modules is strongly supported by Multimedia Learning Theory. Mayer (2009) states that learners understand information better when it is presented through both verbal and visual channels rather than through text alone. In narrative text learning, multimedia such as images, animations, audio narration, and videos can help students visualize characters, settings, and events, making abstract story elements easier to understand. Therefore, e-modules are highly suitable for teaching text-based materials such as narrative texts.

In order to maximize the potential of multimedia-based e-modules, an appropriate digital platform is needed to present learning materials in an interactive and user-friendly format. A well-designed platform can help integrate text, images, audio, and videos into a single learning resource that is easy to access and navigate. One digital platform that supports these features is Heyzine Flipbook, which allows learning materials to be presented in an attractive flipbook format. By using Heyzine Flipbook, e-modules can be transformed into interactive digital books that enhance students' learning experiences and support independent study.

In the context of English learning at the senior high school level, narrative text is one of the key competencies that must be mastered by Grade 10 students. According to Anderson and Anderson (1997), narrative text is a text that tells a story in order to entertain readers. Gerot and Wignell (1994) explain that narrative text presents problematic events that lead to a resolution, while Knapp and Watkins (2005) emphasize that narrative focuses on character development and chronological events. To master narrative text, students must understand its social function, generic structure (orientation, complication, resolution), and language features such as past tense, action verbs, time connectives, and descriptive language. Because these elements are abstract and complex, students require structured instructional support that is systematic and easy to follow.

Based on the preliminary classroom observation conducted at SMA Gajah Mada Medan, it was found that the teaching process still relies heavily on printed textbooks and conventional worksheets. The learning materials mainly present narrative texts followed by comprehension questions without sufficient explanation

of generic structure, language features, or guided analysis. In addition, the existing module used in the school is not actively utilized in the learning process because the school rarely updates its instructional materials, causing the module to become less relevant to students' current learning needs and characteristics. As a result, students tend to depend heavily on direct explanation during class and struggle when they are required to study independently.

Meanwhile, the interview with the English teacher revealed that there is no digital-based instructional material specifically designed to support students' independent learning. The teacher admitted that the availability of digital teaching materials is still very limited. In daily practice, digital technology is mainly used through WhatsApp by utilizing the voice recording feature to train students' speaking skills. Other digital learning platforms or interactive learning media, such as e-modules, have not yet been implemented systematically in the teaching process.

Interview Evidence – September 23th, 2025

R: How do you integrate digital technology into your teaching and learning process?

T: I mainly use WhatsApp to communicate with students and give assignments. Sometimes, I ask them to send voice recordings to practice their speaking skills. However, I have not used any specific digital learning platforms because the availability of digital teaching materials is still very limited.

These findings indicate a clear gap between the demands of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes digital literacy, differentiated instructions and independent learning with the actual learning resources used in the classroom, which are still conventional and teacher-centered.

The novelty of this research lies not only in transforming a printed module into a digital e-module, but also in redesigning and updating the learning materials based on students' actual learning needs and the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum. Unlike previous materials that mainly focus on conventional text presentation, the developed e-module is specifically designed and formatted by the researcher using interactive multimedia elements, structured learning activities, and student-centered approaches.

To ensure that the developed e-module is truly relevant and feasible for classroom use, a systematic needs analysis and product evaluation must be conducted. This study adopts the needs analysis theory proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), who classify need analysis into target needs (necessities, lacks, and wants) and learning needs. In line with the Merdeka Curriculum, needs analysis serves as a foundation for student-centered and differentiated instruction (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2022). Furthermore, the quality and feasibility of the developed e-module are evaluated based on the standards issued by Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan, which include content, language, presentation, and media feasibility (Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan [BSKAP], 2024). By integrating needs

analysis and BSKAP evaluation standards, the e-module can be designed and validated to meet students' real learning needs and national curriculum requirements.

Based on these theoretical and empirical considerations, the researcher intends to develop a digital learning e-module using Heyzine Flipbook that integrates narrative text theory, multimedia learning principles, and students' learning needs. Therefore, this research is entitled "Developing a Learning E-Module for Teaching Narrative Text for Tenth Grade Students of SMA Gajah Mada Medan."

1.2 The Problem of Study

Based on the background described above, the research problem is formulated as follows: How is the Learning E-Module for teaching narrative text developed according to students' learning needs and the competencies outlined in the Merdeka Curriculum?

1.3 The Objective of Study

The objective of this study is to develop a Learning E-Module for teaching narrative text based on students' learning needs and the competencies outlined in the Merdeka Curriculum.

1.4 The Scope of Study

This study focuses on the development of a Learning E-Module using Flipbook for teaching narrative text to Grade 10 (Phase E) students at SMA Gajah Mada

Medan in the even semester. The narrative texts used in this study are limited to folktales as a form of traditional stories that contain moral values and cultural elements. In teaching and learning activities, this study applies the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), which consists of four stages: Building Knowledge of the Field, Modeling of the Text, Joint Construction of the Text, and Independent Construction of the Text.

1.5 The Significances of the Study

The findings of the research expect to be advantageous and can give a contribution theoretically and practically:

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to the field of English language teaching by integrating narrative text theory, e-module development principles and curriculum-based material standards.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

- a) For Teachers: Offers an interactive and practical digital learning material that supports narrative text instruction in alignment with the curriculum.
- b) For Students: Provides engaging, multimedia-supported learning that promotes independent study and improves narrative text comprehension.
- c) For Future Researchers: Serves as a reference for developing digital learning resources using Flipbook technology or conducting R&D-based studies in English language education.