

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

English has established itself as the primary international language used for communication, education, science, and technology across the globe. As a global lingua franca, English enables individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to interact effectively in academic, professional, and social settings (Rose et al., 2021). Given this global significance, mastering English has become an essential competency that must be cultivated from an early stage of education, particularly at the primary school level, where the foundations of language learning begin to take shape.

In Indonesia, English is formally introduced as one of the compulsory or locally adopted subjects in primary education, aimed at equipping young learners with basic communicative competence and cross-cultural awareness (Oktavia et al., 2023). Despite this pedagogical intention, English language instruction at the elementary level continues to face substantial obstacles, most notably students' low interest in learning the subject. Preliminary observations conducted by the researcher at SDN Rancatungku 01 revealed that fifth-grade students exhibited limited enthusiasm during English lessons. This condition was evident through several behavioural indicators, including low participation in classroom activities, minimal verbal interaction with the teacher, and a general lack of active engagement throughout the instructional process. Such symptoms point toward a deeper issue relating to students' intrinsic motivation, which is widely regarded as a central determinant of successful language acquisition among young learners.

This condition is largely attributed to the continued reliance on monotonous, conventional teaching methods, such as teacher-centred lectures and static textbook-based instruction, which frequently fail to stimulate students' attention, curiosity, and willingness to participate (Fatqurhohman & Huda, 2025). When instructional delivery remains one-directional and repetitive, young learners tend to disengage quickly, particularly in a subject like English that is not their first

language and therefore demands sustained motivation to overcome the natural difficulty of acquiring a foreign linguistic system.

The implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka in Indonesian primary education introduced a substantial paradigm shift, placing strong emphasis on student-centred learning approaches and the strategic integration of digital technology into classroom practice. However, in the specific context of English language teaching, this transition has not been seamless. Many primary school teachers still encounter considerable challenges in developing adaptive, technology-based instructional materials appropriate for young learners (Zein, 2026). As a result, classroom practices frequently continue to rely on conventional and administratively driven methods rather than fostering genuinely creative and interactive engagement. This gap prevents the core philosophy of Kurikulum Merdeka, namely the establishment of an active, technology-enhanced learning environment, from being fully realized, which in turn constrains the growth of students' intrinsic motivation and interest in learning a foreign language (Haleem et al., 2022).

In the broader context of learning, student achievement is shaped not solely by the quality of instructional materials but also by internal psychological factors, one of which is learning interest. Learners who possess strong interest in a particular subject typically display deeper behavioural engagement, sustained attention, and prolonged focus during the learning process. The Four-Phase Model of Interest Development proposed by Renninger & Hidi (2022) offers a robust theoretical foundation for understanding this behavioural drive, positing that interest evolves progressively through phases of triggered situational interest, maintained situational interest, emerging individual interest, and well-developed individual interest. This framework underscores that interest is not a fixed trait but a dynamic construct that can be systematically cultivated through appropriately designed instructional interventions. At the primary school level specifically, student motivation and interest remain central determinants of learning effectiveness, particularly when learners are exposed to active and stimulating instructional approaches (Dewi et al., 2026). A similar pattern has been observed among fifth-grade students in other subject domains; reading interest, for instance, has been

found to significantly predict learning achievement among fifth-graders (Oktorina et al., 2023), reinforcing the notion that interest functions as a critical mediating variable in the learning process regardless of the subject matter involved.

Interactive multimedia-based learning media presents one workable solution to the challenge of low learning interest within today's increasingly digital educational landscape. Well-designed multimedia is capable of delivering engaging visual, audio, and interactive stimuli that naturally capture students' attention and encourage active participation throughout the learning process (Mayer, 2024). Among the various multimedia authoring tools available, Articulate Storyline 3 stands out as a powerful computer-based platform that enables educators to design professional, interactive learning content by integrating text, images, audio, video, and animation into a single accessible application. Distinct from conventional instructional media, Articulate Storyline 3 offers a wide range of interactive features, including scenario-based simulations, drag-and-drop activities, interactive quizzes, and immediate feedback mechanisms, all of which have been demonstrated to optimize dynamic, audio-visual-based digital learning experiences (Adawiyah et al., 2024; Ramadhani & Asrul, 2024). This pattern is not unique to Articulate Storyline; other interactive media formats, such as augmented reality, have likewise been shown to improve fifth-grade students' learning outcomes, suggesting that interactivity itself, regardless of the specific platform used, may be a key driver of instructional effectiveness (Khoiriah et al., 2026).

The pedagogical application of interactive multimedia is theoretically grounded in modern principles of instructional design, which state that well-structured interactive visual and auditory inputs help prevent cognitive overload and expand the effective working memory limits available during learning (Castro-Alonso & Sweller, 2021). Furthermore, because primary school students tend to process foreign language material most effectively through enjoyable, concrete, and visually stimulating environments, the utilization of interactive multimedia tools directly aligns with the developmental characteristics and communicative needs of fifth-grade young learners (Aulia et al., 2024; Sudiantara et al., 2024).

Several prior studies have examined the effectiveness of Articulate Storyline in fostering positive student outcomes. Articulate Storyline 3 has been found to increase junior high school students' interest in learning English by 77 percent (Saputra et al., 2025), to significantly influence fourth-grade students' interest and outcomes in a social studies context (Idris et al., 2025), and, according to a recent critical literature review, to improve learning motivation and support twenty-first-century skills across educational levels (Syam et al., 2025). A more detailed review of these and other related studies is presented in Chapter II. Despite these encouraging findings, empirical research that specifically investigates the effect of Articulate Storyline 3 on fifth-grade elementary school students' interest in learning English using a quantitative pre-test post-test design remains notably scarce, revealing a clear research gap that this study seeks to address.

From a developmental perspective, fifth-grade students, generally between ten and eleven years of age, are situated at a transitional stage in which concrete operational thinking still predominates, while their capacity for sustained abstract reasoning remains limited (Imanulhaq & Ichsan, 2022). This developmental profile means that instructional materials relying heavily on written text and abstract grammatical explanation are often poorly matched to young learners' cognitive readiness, whereas materials that combine visual imagery, sound, and interactivity tend to align more closely with how children at this age naturally process and retain new information. This mismatch between conventional instructional design and learners' developmental characteristics is one of the underlying reasons why monotonous, text-heavy English lessons frequently fail to sustain fifth-grade students' interest over time.

Moreover, the limited availability of context-specific digital teaching materials compounds this challenge in many Indonesian primary schools. Teachers are often left to adapt generic, non-interactive digital slides or to continue relying entirely on printed textbooks, neither of which fully leverages the pedagogical affordances of modern educational technology (Ratnasari et al., 2025). Where interactive multimedia has been introduced, the majority of empirical studies to date have concentrated on subjects other than English, such as natural sciences, social

studies, and Indonesian language, or on grade levels other than the fifth grade, leaving a comparatively underexplored niche at the intersection of English language instruction, interactive multimedia, and upper elementary learners (Susanti et al., 2021). It is precisely this niche that the present study seeks to occupy, by empirically testing the effect of Articulate Storyline 3 media on a construct, learning interest, that is theoretically and practically central to sustained language acquisition among young learners.

This gap is particularly salient given that fifth grade represents an important transitional point in Indonesian elementary education, positioned near the end of the upper-elementary band and immediately preceding the shift to junior high school, where English instruction typically intensifies in both frequency and complexity. Interest cultivated, or left unaddressed, at this stage may plausibly carry forward into how students subsequently approach English learning at the secondary level, lending additional practical urgency to identifying instructional approaches capable of sustaining fifth-grade students' interest before this transition occurs. Addressing this gap through rigorous, quantitatively grounded research is therefore not only of academic interest but also of direct relevance to the continuity of English language education across the elementary-to-secondary transition within the Indonesian school system.

Based on the problems and gaps outlined above, the researcher was motivated to conduct a study entitled "The Effect of Articulate Storyline 3 Media on Fifth-Grade Elementary School Students' Interest in Learning English." This research is expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of Articulate Storyline 3 as an innovative, interactive instructional medium, while also offering practical contributions aligned with the objectives of Kurikulum Merdeka within the context of Indonesian primary education.

B. Problem Statement

Based on the research background above, the problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. How is fifth-grade students' interest in learning English before the implementation of Articulate Storyline 3 media at SDN Rancatungku 01?
2. How is fifth-grade students' interest in learning English after the implementation of Articulate Storyline 3 media at SDN Rancatungku 01?
3. Is there a significant effect of Articulate Storyline 3 media on fifth-grade students' interest in learning English at SDN Rancatungku 01?

C. Research Objectives

Based on the problem statements above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To identify fifth-grade students' level of interest in learning English before the implementation of Articulate Storyline 3 media.
2. To identify fifth-grade students' level of interest in learning English after the implementation of Articulate Storyline 3 media.
3. To examine whether there is a significant effect of Articulate Storyline 3 media on fifth-grade students' interest in learning English.

D. Benefits of Research

Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of English language education, particularly regarding the application of interactive multimedia in fostering young learners' interest in learning English. The findings of this study are expected to enrich the empirical literature that supports the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2024) and the Four-Phase Model of Interest Development (Renninger & Hidi, 2022) as relevant theoretical frameworks for understanding how technology-based instructional media influences affective and cognitive engagement among elementary school students.

Furthermore, this research is expected to serve as a reference for future studies examining the integration of interactive multimedia tools, such as Articulate Storyline 3, within various subject areas and educational levels, thereby broadening

the scope of empirical evidence available on technology-enhanced instruction in the Indonesian primary education context.

In addition, the results of this study are expected to strengthen the theoretical understanding of how specific multimedia features, including audio narration, animated scenarios, and interactive quizzes, correspond to distinct psychological mechanisms of interest development, offering a more nuanced, mechanism-based contribution to the literature rather than a general claim of effectiveness alone.

Finally, by reporting a standardized effect size alongside inferential test results, a practice not consistently found in prior Articulate Storyline research reviewed in Chapter II, this study is also expected to contribute methodologically to this specific line of inquiry, offering future researchers a comparable benchmark for evaluating the practical, rather than merely statistical, significance of similar interactive multimedia interventions.

This research is also expected to contribute to the theoretical dialogue between general instructional design frameworks, such as CTML, and language-specific pedagogical frameworks, such as Communicative Language Teaching, by empirically demonstrating how principles drawn from both traditions can be jointly operationalized within a single instructional medium. Few existing studies explicitly integrate cognitive-load-oriented multimedia design principles with communicative, learner-centred language pedagogy in their theoretical framing; by doing so, this study offers a modest but concrete illustration of how these two bodies of theory, more often discussed separately in the literature, can be brought together to inform the design of interactive English learning media for young learners.

E. Practical Benefits

1. For Teachers

This study is expected to provide elementary school English teachers with a concrete and low-barrier alternative to conventional lecture-based instruction, namely Articulate Storyline 3. Because this medium requires only a single classroom projector rather than individual student devices, it offers a realistic entry point into technology-integrated teaching even for teachers working in schools with

limited digital infrastructure. Beyond simply introducing a new tool, this study also provides teachers with a concrete example of how specific interactive features, such as audio narration and immediate feedback, can be deliberately designed to target particular aspects of student interest, offering a practical template that teachers can adapt to other units and materials within the Kurikulum Merdeka framework.

2. For Students

The use of Articulate Storyline 3 media is expected to increase fifth-grade students' interest, motivation, and active participation in learning English, particularly for students who have previously experienced English lessons as passive, repetitive, or unengaging. By presenting vocabulary and grammar content through audio, animation, and interactive quizzes rather than through textbook explanation alone, this study offers students a learning experience that better accommodates their developmental preference for concrete, multisensory input, potentially reducing the anxiety or disengagement often associated with foreign language learning at this age.

3. For Schools

This study can be used as a consideration for schools, particularly SDN Rancatungku 01, in integrating technology-based learning media to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process. The findings may also inform school-level decisions regarding the allocation of existing digital resources, such as projectors and computers, toward classroom instruction, since the intervention examined in this study does not require additional investment in individual student devices or internet infrastructure.

4. For Future Researchers

The results of this study can be used as a reference or supporting source for further research related to interactive learning media and students' learning interest, particularly research employing quasi-experimental designs with control groups, larger and more diverse samples, or applications to other subjects, materials, and grade levels. Future researchers may also build on the indicator-based analysis

conducted in this study to further investigate why certain dimensions of interest, such as behavioural participation, appear more resistant to short-term intervention than others, an area this study was only able to address preliminarily.