CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the introduction of the research study which covers the background of the study, identification of the Study, limitations of the Study, statements of the Problem, the purpose of the Study, significance of the study, and definition of key term.

1.1 Research Background

Literacy generally refers to reading and writing effectively in a variety of contexts. In the 21st century, the definition of literacy is getting wider which reflects the ability to use technology to gather and communicate information (Pilgrim & Martinez, 2013). Rintaningrum, (2009) also stated that many have accepted that literacy can be defined as "the ability to read and write". In addition, the concept of literacy is changed; literacy can be said to be more than just literacy and therefore cannot be separated from language skills, which are a set of written and spoken languages that require a series of cognitive abilities, genres, and cultural knowledge (Sumarni & Sri Kuswardani, 2019). The importance of this literacy will play an important role in the growth of children's awareness of their language and language in language learning (Kartikarini, 2020).

English literacy will be increasingly important when viewed in today's education which has become one of the educational skills that must be mastered by students. Literacy is a communication skill that makes it possible for a speaker to convey information and understand what is being said. The ability to receive, interpret, and share knowledge is a component of literacy (Padmadewi et al., 2022).

Literacy skills is very necessary for students today and recently have become a major concern in education. For that reason, it must be introduced early. In addition, this is in line with Padmadewi et.al. (2018) it is stated that literacy can be defined as the basic abilities of students, so literacy learning becomes basic learning that must be taught in elementary schools (Padmadewi et al., 2018). Besides that, literacy is an important foundation skill for success in school and life. It is recommended that literacy development begin at a young age (Suniyasih et al., 2020). In learning English, students are required to be able to use English not only to fulfill their school achievements but this is needed to deal with information obtained and relate directly to people in other countries. The importance of literacy skills will greatly affect the way students communicate because processing information will need interpretations that can understand the interactions that occur, especially in English.

In learning English literacy, students will indeed face difficulties, but teachers will certainly not be separated from the problems that occur, especially in 21st-century education. In 21st-century education, more success indicators will be based on the ability to communicate, share, and use information to solve complex problems, be able to adapt and solve problems faced by changing circumstances and expand the power of technology (Zubaidah, 2016). In achieving these skills, teachers must be able to understand and also be able to learn how these skills can be mastered by students. In the 21st century, what is growing rapidly is the use of technology. The development of technology today has changed the way of doing activities in human life (Kumar Kc et al., 2018). The influence of technology in everyday life has a very large impact on all activities. The education sector is no

exception, which continuously follows technological developments to make education better and more practical. Recognizing the impact of the latest technologies on our daily lives, today's teachers are trying to restructure educational programs and classroom facilities to maximize teaching and reduce the learning technology gap of today and tomorrow (Ratheeswari, 2018).

The phenomenon of a lack of literacy among students in Indonesia has affected the cognitive skills of students in Indonesia, where some data have found that Indonesia still has a lack of interest in literacy among its students. According to data on reading ability, data from "World's Most Literate Nations," conducted by Central Connecticut State University in the US and released in 2017, stated that Indonesia was ranked 60th out of 61 participating countries in terms of reading ability (Central Connecticut State University, 2017). In addition, data taken from the International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) reported that in reading comprehension, Indonesia was ranked 41 out of 45 Participants (PIRLS, 2012). In 2017, there were only 17.66% of Indonesian people had a high literacy level (Badan Pusat Statistic, 2017). This phenomenon shows that innovative strategies of teaching literacy need to be taken into consideration for how they can stimulate students to improve their literacy skills.

In providing learning English literacy in the 21st century, it is necessary to develop how to use technology in schools as an innovative method that will make learning better and more effective. The discovery of new technologies will help students understand the learning content and will get better learning outcomes in class (ROY, 2019). The suggested method that is suitable for literacy learning in

this era is the Blended Learning method. Blended Learning is seen as a combination of advanced teaching with technology-mediated teaching or online learning which is the most popular among 21st-century skills in higher education today (Bolandifar, 2017). In Blended Learning, Students will work independently with online activities and receive instruction tailored to their skill level. The main reason why elementary schools should adopt this method is due to the flexibility of blended learning in its implementation, where educators can choose the mode that best suits their pedagogical approach as well as classroom and technological constraints (Wilkes et al., 2020).

Seeing the importance of English literacy in today's learning in developing students' critical thinking, educational institutions must further improve students' English literacy. Referring to the importance of student literacy, the problem occurs in SDN 3 Banjar Jawa Singaraja which still has literacy skills that are not maximized. With this problem, namely the problem of English literacy in students, it must be emphasized immediately to build students who have better English literacy and concern for the importance of English literacy starting from elementary school education.

The solution that can overcome this is the use of the Blended Learning method, which can improve literacy skills in learning English. Blended learning is said to be of high quality, meaningful, and culturally responsive that must be used by teachers and students (Ratheeswari, 2018). Using this method can give teachers more choices in using learning media. The use of comics is one of the media that is said to be influential in literacy learning and can be combined with blended learning. Some experts state that improving literacy skills with comics has several

benefits, such as; Cartoons can summarize thoughts or events with some words and visual representations to make it easier for students. Cartoons make learning fun. They were especially useful for children with reading problems or lack of literacy skills. Comics, through the use of visual literacy, can open up the door to reading for students who are challenged and offer stimulating activities for gifted students (Mcvicker, 2018).

Considering the benefits of teaching comic, and the importance of using technology in the form blended system, this study is interested at investigating these variables. Therefore, the study aims at analysing the use of Comic integrated with Blended Learning method to teach students' literacy skills at primary school.

1.2 Problem Identification of the study

The implementation of this research is based on the background that is currently happening in the world of education, namely technological developments which encourage students to use technology in the future. Teachers are also encouraged to use technology in learning to produce more satisfying learning outcomes for students. However, the teaching of English in school nowadays especially in primary schools still needs to be assisted by accommodating technology and using innovative strategies using comic as a media. This research was carried out to apply learning media in the form of comics combined with Blended Learning for young learners. The comic can be used flexibly using mixed learning methods which is a great solution to the problems encountered.

1.3 Limitations of The Study

Due to the limited time and resources in this study, this research focuses on experimenting the use of Comic integrated with Blended learning in improving English literacy skills for young learners especially 6th grade students in SD N 3 Banjar Jawa, Singaraja. In this study, students' responses regarding the application of literacy learning with the blended learning method using comics also were taken as a result of this study.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the background that has been described, the author proposes several formulas for the research problem below:

1. Is there any significant effect of teaching using comics integrated with a blended-based learning method towards 6th grades student's scores in English literacy skills at SD N 3 Banjar Jawa?

2. How are students' responses to the implementation of learning using Comic integrated with Blended learning method and in the process of literacy learning?

1.5 The objective of the Study

Based on the research question formulated by the researcher, the objectives of this study are as follows.

a) This study aims to analyze the effect of using the method of using comic media integrated with the Blended Learning method in teaching English literacy in 6th grade students at SD N 3 Banjar Jawa.

b) This study also aims to analyze student responses regarding the use of comics as a learning medium that is integrated with the blended learning method to improve students' literacy skills.

1.6 Significance of The Study

The results obtained in this study aim to provide theoretical and practical importance for the teaching of English and the learning process, especially for young learners of English. By doing this research, the writer hopes that this research will get a good contribution from both its theoretical and practical significances.

1. **Theoretical significance**

Theoretically, this research is expected to be able to support theories related to the use of learning media, especially the application of Comic integrated with Blended Learning in improving literacy skills. In addition, this research aims to provide scientific knowledge that may be used in the future.

2. **Practical significance**

Practically speaking, it is hoped that the research carried out was make a valuable contribution to young students, English teachers, and future researchers:

a. For Young Learners

This research is expected to help young students to support their learning process and improve their literacy skills by using reading materials in the form of comics using the blended learning method in the classroom.

b. For English Teacher

It is hoped that this research can help English teachers in using a more organized blended learning method using comics to improve students' literacy skills. This research is also expected to help teachers

in enriching their knowledge about the use of technology media that can help the learning process.

c. For Other Researcher

This research is expected to be a reference for future researchers in the same research field and it is hoped that this research can be empirical evidence that can be used to strengthen the research to be carried out.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1. Literacy

a) Conceptual Definition

Literacy can be known as a competency possessed by individuals in processing and understanding information in reading or writing. In concept, literacy is more than just literacy which cannot be separated from language skills, namely written and spoken (Sumarni & Sri Kuswardani, 2019).

Literacy is said to be more than just the ability to read and write, and therefore it cannot be separated from language skills, which are a set of written and spoken languages that require a series of cognitive abilities, genres, and cultural knowledge (Sumarni & Sri Kuswardani, 2019)

b) Operational Definition

In this study, literacy is defined as competency possessed by the students of SD 3 Banjar Jawa in using English as indicated by the scores as a result of English test administered to them after they learned English using comic integrated with technology in the form of blended learning system.

2. Blended Learning

a) Conceptual Definition

   Blended Learning is seen as a combination of advance teaching with technology-mediated teaching or online learning which is the most popular among 21st-century skills in higher education today (Bolandifar, 2017).

b) Operational Definition

   Blended learning is a method created through the use of technology and the needs of students to learn anywhere and anytime that allows students and teachers to adapt learning remotely, as well as face-to-face which can be arranged according to the needs of the learning process. In this study Google Classroom platform is used to support student's online learning. Therefore, this method can be done anywhere and anytime that can adapt to required learning process.

3. Comic

a) Conceptual Definition

   Comic is a literary work in the form of a word-and-picture hybrid which has two narrative tracks, namely a verbal track and a visual track taking into account spatial temporality (Chute, 2008).

b) Operational Definition

   Comics are a medium that can support literacy learning, especially for young learners. This is because comics have a mix of verbal and visual tracks that make young learners increase their interest in learning, especially learning literacy.