

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Overview

The first chapter of this thesis describes the research context, problem identification, limitations, research questions, research objectives, and significance. The purpose of this chapter is to explain why the researcher did this research.

### 1.1 Research Background

The English language has long been considered a worldwide language in the current era of globalization. Learning English has been considered a second language to improve their language. Students can improve their academic and personal lives by learning a new language so that children can understand it. Indonesia's Minister of National Education. No. 23 of 2006 allows elementary schools to teach English as a foreign language as part of their Curriculum. Most elementary, secondary, and tertiary education for children who learn English at school is conducted in English (Fitriyani and Nulanda, 2017). Thus, English plays a vital role in Indonesian education.

According to Marthiningsih (2019:224), in modern times, in the era of the development of technology and information, students' reading interest has decreased. The level of intelligence possessed by students cannot be separated from the knowledge gained. This knowledge may be obtained via listening to and reading various materials. Reading provides an opportunity to have access to spoken knowledge. Reading activities may help children build their capacity for critical thinking. However, in Indonesia, reading

interest is still relatively low. The results of the 2018 PISA study ranked Indonesia down when compared to the 2015 PISA results. In reading literacy, Indonesia ranks 74<sup>th</sup> out of 79 countries or 6<sup>th</sup> from the bottom. The average score obtained by the Indonesian state is 371, which is below the country of Panama, which has an average score of 377 (Wulandari et al., 2021). According to UNESCO's World Literacy Rankings, reading interest in Indonesia is low. Only 0.001 percent of Indonesians, according to UNESCO data, are interested in reading. Only one Indonesian out of every thousand is a voracious reader (Devega & Evita, 2017).

The Ministry of Education, given the low literacy skills and culture, is promoting the School Literacy Movement to improve students' literacy skills. The Minister of Education and Culture's Regulation No. 23 of 2015 declares Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS) (Kemendikbud: 2017), which aims for the students to have good practices for implementing literacy in schools based on their function or role. The school activity is like reading any book for 15 minutes before class routine activities.

Students' interest in reading activities decreases due to a lack of variety in reading activities 15 minutes before learning. According to Nurhadi (2016:67), several factors contribute to students' lack of reading motivation and interest, including oral habits and television viewing, inadequate classroom and reading materials availability, and the incompatibility of reading materials with students' interests.

Imparting knowledge will be easier and faster to understand at the elementary school level. Students will begin to ask questions, think, and

imitate what is exemplified in their learning. Practical English language learning will give many opportunities to help students in seeking and building concepts. With this integrated English learning, students are expected to be able to identify, collect, assess and use the information around them in a meaningful way. According to Ratminingsih (2019), learning English for children will be better if it helps them understand what they are doing.

Literacy is a skill that should be valued from a young age, and an awareness of its significance should be inculcated at that age. Literacy is the ability to comprehend, create, and educate oneself about information in written, oral, or digital form (Wulandari et al., 2021). Literacy is not only important for improving academic achievement but also plays an important role in the process of improving the quality of human resources (Ratminingsih et al., 2021). Reading and vocabulary are two of the most fundamental aspects of literacy that a person must be able to understand. A person's literacy skills will be below average if they do not have strong reading competence (Ratminingsih et al., 2021). Also, vocabulary is an important part of learning a language because it can be seen as a base that helps students understand material, communicate meaning or ideas, and help them learn other language skills (Alamri & Hakami, 2022). As young students have good long-term and short-term memory, they are able to retain linguistic information in their minds if taught consistently, starting at a young age.

So that students can strengthen their literacy skills, they need to use appropriate teaching media. Namely, using printed and digital dictionaries as learning tools has been shown in previous studies to improve students' reading comprehension and vocabulary in English. According to Yanti's (2016), quasi-experimental study showed that students learned new words and phrases very well when they used an electronic dictionary. In line with the study conducted by Yanti (2016), (Hakim et al., 2018) also conducted a quasi-experimental study that aimed to investigate students' achievement in vocabulary learning using electronic dictionaries compared to printed dictionaries. The difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group showed that the electronic dictionary had a positive effect on students' ability to learn new words. In other words, the electronic dictionary was superior to the printed dictionary. The survey that was investigated by Ratminingsih et al. in 2021 revealed that students who practice their literacy skills with the assistance of multilingual, printed, and digital dictionaries find the experience highly beneficial. The investigator made use of a lexicon that was a multilingual thematic dictionary (English, Indonesian, and Balinese). This dictionary is designed to capture the interest of younger learners by including colourful illustrations throughout its pages. Dictionary resources, including printed and digital, are made available to educators and students by researchers. These resources may be utilized in a manner that best suits their needs.

As mentioned in previous research, dictionaries are helpful as a guide to improve students' vocabulary and reading comprehension, affecting

their reading skills. In addition, any dictionary can help translate complex and unfamiliar words that can be problematic for students' reading activities. Thus, this study will investigate the effect of digital dictionaries on students' literacy skills. Despite this, how effectively the dictionary works in developing the literacy skills of young learners still needs further investigation. Some of the tools that help people learn foreign languages are print and digital dictionaries, as well as multilingual dictionaries. This new study is a continuation of previous research that looked at how digital multilingual thematic dictionaries were designed and built. Through this research, it is hoped that the findings can show a significant effect of applying digital multilingual thematic dictionaries on students' literacy abilities as fifth-grade elementary school students. So, this experimental study will provide readers, teachers, and others working in education with the clarity and knowledge they need to understand how digital multilingual thematic dictionaries affect young people's literacy skills. As a result, this experimental study will provide readers, teachers, and other education practitioners with the clarity and knowledge to verify the effect of digital multilingual thematic dictionaries on young learners' literacy skills.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

Based on this background, the problems that will be discussed in this research are:

- 1.2.1 Lack of interest in Indonesian children's literacy.
- 1.2.2 Literacy is one of the skills in the digital era because this skill affects many aspects of the learners.

1.2.3 The need for the use of digital-based learning media to facilitate learning in the classroom, especially for young learners.

Based on the identification problem, it can be concluded that digital multilingual thematic dictionary-based media is needed to develop students' literacy skills.

### **1.3 Research Limitation**

This research is limited to finding the effect of digital multilingual dictionaries on fifth-grade students' literacy skill

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Based on the research background and problem identification above, one research question needs to be answered: "Is there a significant effect of digital multilingual thematic dictionaries toward 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students' literacy skills?"

### **1.5 Research Objective**

This research is conducted to verify whether there is a significant effect on the literacy skills of 5<sup>th</sup> graders when they use digital multilingual thematic dictionaries.

### **1.6 Research Significance**

Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the theories related to teaching media utilization, mainly digital thematic picture dictionary and literacy skill development in TEYL in the EFL context.

Practically, this research will provide contributions to the following.

#### **1.6.1 Students**

The result of the research is expected to help students improve literacy skills by utilizing learning media, namely digital thematic dictionaries. Through this learning media, it is hoped that it can make it easier for students to find words to achieve practical learning goals.

### **1.6.2 Teacher**

This research is expected to help teachers where the teacher is a stakeholder in the field of education in providing learning that is interesting, fun, and easy to understand for students in improving vocabulary mastery as the foundation of literacy skills.

### **1.6.3 For other researchers**

This research is expected to be a source of information about the effect of multilingual digital dictionaries, becoming the reference for future research with similar topics observed.

