

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

The use of English language has a very rapid development and has a great influence in the world. English has been claimed as an international language used by six hundred to six hundred fifty million citizens of other countries in the world (Amandjonovna, 2022). In Indonesia, English has been taught to students from elementary schools, up to senior high schools. For the elementary school level, English is included in local content subjects, while for the junior and also senior high school levels, English is a part of compulsory subject. According to Policy No. 0487/1992, Chapter VIII of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, primary schools are allowed to include new courses in their curricula as long as they don't interfere with the nations educational goals. Later, this policy was reaffirmed by the 25 February 1993 Minister of Education and Culture's Decree No. 060/U/1993, which included the potential of an English language program as a local content topic in primary schools, with the possibility of beginning in the fourth grade, until the emergence of the English Basic Language Competencies for elementary school and Competency Standards Regulation Number 22 of 2006 issued by the Minister of National Education.

The National Education Standards are governed by Government Regulation Number 4 of 2022 regulates content standards developed to determine the scope of material that is in accordance with graduation competencies. The preparation of content standards is carried out by formulating the appropriate scope of learning materials to develop the competence of students according to graduation competency standards. Based on this, English is one of the learning materials that must be taught in elementary schools because it is contained in the Scope of Materials for Elementary Schools. Learning English is very important to be taught from elementary school, this is because in the current era of globalization all systems are always related to English, so that the introduction of English from an early age will make it easier for students, where with the basic knowledge students have can help students in accessing technology.

In learning English in elementary schools, there are four basic skills taught to students, namely, reading, writing, listening and speaking. In line with these basic skills, literacy is an important foundation that must be mastered. Literacy is known as the abilities to read and write (Suniyasih et al., 2020). Literacy in the field of education is an ability beyond reading and writing which includes intellectual, cultural and electronic literacy skills (Paneton, 2015; Wulandari et al., 2021). More in-depth literacy is defined as skills in understanding, interpreting and conveying the meaning of information in spoken, written form, as well as the information contained in a media (Kharizmi, 2015; Wardana & Zamzam, 2014; Wulandari et al., 2021). Having high literacy skills can increase

learning motivation, academic success, future career, and also self-esteem (Carroll et al., 2019; Salim et al., 2018; Suniyasih et al., 2020). For language learners, literacy is essential since literate indicates that a person can create, absorb, interpret, and communicate whether the information is spoken, written, or even digital (Wulandari et al., 2021). Reading and vocabulary are the most important literacy skills to master. Without good reading skills, a person's literacy ability will be poor (Ratminingsih et al, 2021b). Vocabulary serves as a basis foundation for understanding information, communicating ideas and meaning, and mastering other language abilities, therefore vocabulary is very important for language learning (Alamri & Hakami, 2022). Therefore, literacy is very important to teach as early as possible.

Unfortunately, Unfortunately, according to Sumaryanti (2018), there is a low perception of literacy among Indonesians, particularly among younger students. Moreover, Indonesia is rated 71st out of 79 nations according to the results of the 2018 PISA (The Program for International Students Assessment) test (Yani et al., 2021). It is evident that Indonesian students have relatively low literacy levels, and a movement is needed to solve this problem. The Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 23 in 2015 regulates a solution in the form of The School Literacy Movement (GLS), where students are expected to begin reading non textbooks fifteen minutes before the start of the learning process, and they are invited to share what they have read after the learning process has begun (Parmawati et al., 2022a). By holding this movement, it is hope that it can improve the literacy skills of Indonesian students.

In teaching literacy skills in elementary schools, a learning media that can help students is needed. One of the media that stand as an important role in improving students' literacy skills is the dictionary. The use of dictionaries can help students in learning because dictionaries provide sources of words, meanings, and pronunciations, besides that, dictionaries can also help students improve vocabulary mastery (Barham, 2017; Suniyasih et al., 2020; Taj Abbasi et al., 2019). Dictionaries are also very useful because it can help students find meaning, find translations, synonyms, and paraphrase (Nematollahi et al., 2017; Suniyasih et al., 2020; Tsai, 2019). In the 21st century which is considered the era of globalization, the use of technology continues to increase so that the use of digital media in various aspects continues to expand. One of the areas affected is education. Thus, technology must be utilized properly so that it can produce great benefits in the field of education. Multilingual dictionary provides words and their meanings in more than two languages (Baskin & Mumcu, 2018; Suniyasih et al., 2020; Yurtbaşı, 2017). According to Biesaga (2017), a thematic dictionary consisting of simple words adapted to a particular theme and usually followed by graphics or illustrations. According to Parmawati et al. (2022), digital multilingual thematic dictionary is a digital dictionary that contains three languages, namely English, Indonesian, and Balinese which of course makes it very easy and helps students in learning. Elementary school children sometimes experience problems understanding language, and the dictionaries that are often used in Bali are usually bilingual dictionaries (English-Indonesian and Indonesian-English). So, the use of multilingual media

which contains three languages is very important because it can facilitate and assist students in learning.

The use of a proper learning media is very needed in order to improve student language literacy skills. Previously, there were several studies related to the use of digital dictionaries. Ratminingsih and Budasi (2020), found that the when teaching the dialogic reading technique, digital media outperformed printed media in terms of effectiveness. Further research conducted by Ratminingsih et al. (2021b), showed that multilingual, printed and digital dictionary were very helpful for students in practicing literacy skills. The dictionary used by researcher is a multilingual thematic dictionary (English, Indonesia, and Balinese). The dictionary is equipped with colorful pictures so that it attracts the attention of young learners. Suniyasih et al. (2020), found that students needed an English dictionary to help them learn and multilingual thematic picture dictionaries were dictionaries categorized as 'excellent'. Parmawati et al. (2022), found that multilingual thematic digital dictionaries are categorized as interesting media to help improve students' literacy skills. Amirian & Heshmatifar (2013), found that students who were taught using electronic dictionaries were superior to students who were taught using paper dictionaries. Santoso & Andriyadi (2019), found that teaching vocabulary using the *My Dictionary Application* significantly increased the students' vocabulary.

As mentioned above, the use of dictionaries is very useful as the guidance to improve students' vocabulary and literacy skills. Apart from those things, the used of digital dictionaries in improving student's language literacy skills still

needs further research. Digital multilingual thematic dictionary is a learning tool that can help students understand vocabulary in foreign languages. This recent study is a part of the previous research continuation to examine the improvement of students' language literacy skills by implementing the used of digital multilingual thematic dictionary. By this current research, the findings are expected to show the improvement of students' language literacy skills after the implementation of digital multilingual thematic dictionaries. The literacy meant in this study is students' ability to read and write which built from vocabulary. Therefore, this classroom action research will give clarity and knowledge about the use of digital multilingual thematic dictionary in improving young learner's literacy skills.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the research background above, the problem identification is, that the literacy skills of Indonesian students are very low and still require attention. Besides that, the use of digital-based learning media is also needed to make it easier for students to learn foreign languages and improve their literacy skills. Therefore, students' literacy skills must be improved from an early age by being facilitated with appropriate digital learning media. The digital learning media used here is digital multilingual thematic dictionary that will be used by sixth grade students of SDN 3 Banjar Jawa during the learning process to improve students' literacy skills.

1.3 Research Scope

This research is limited to the use of the Digital Multilingual Thematic Dictionary to improve the language literacy skills of sixth grade students at SDN 3 Banjar Jawa.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the research background and problem identification stated before, the research question that needs to be answered: “Can Digital Multilingual Thematic Dictionary improve the language literacy skills of sixth grade students at SDN 3 Banjar Jawa?”

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the research question, the objective of this research is to examine the use of the Digital Multilingual Thematic Dictionary whether or not it can improve the language literacy skills of sixth grade students at SDN 3 Banjar Jawa.

1.6 Research Significances

1.6.1 Theoretical significance

This research is expected to add to existing theories about the use of the Digital Multilingual Thematic Dictionary in improving students' literacy skills. In addition, the final results of this study are expected to be one of the references in using the Digital Multilingual Thematic Dictionary in improving the literacy skills of elementary school students.

1.6.2 Practical significance

The results of this study are expected to be useful for teachers in providing learning media that suit the needs of students. Therefore, teacher can provide a learning media to improve students' language literacy skills. Then, by utilizing the use of the Digital Multilingual Thematic Dictionary, this research is expected to help students improve their literacy skills. In addition, the results of this study can also be used as an example or guide in using the Digital Multilingual Thematic Dictionary in improving students' literacy skills.