

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I discusses the study's background, problem identification, limitations, research question, objective, and significance. The study introduction is explained as follows.

1.1 Background of the study

Indonesia makes English the most widely studied foreign language since elementary school (Idrus, 2023). In learning English, four basic components must be mastered, one of which is reading. Currently, reading plays a very important role and is the main focus for students in Indonesia (Ermawati et al., 2023). With good reading skills, people can get information or verify existing knowledge (Kusumawardhani et al., 2018). According to McNett (2016), reading is the ability to understand reading to support the learning process that supports the development of student skills. Meanwhile, Oktariani et al. (2020) state that reading is part of a broad literacy process, not only reading a text but also understanding the contents of the reading and being able to process the text into information. Through this, having reading skills is very important to master to receive and provide information from the text being read.

Reading is a part of literacy. Literacy is an important part of people's lives because literacy covers all aspects of social life (Ikhsanza et al., 2019). Currently, having good literacy skills is very helpful in the professional world. Literacy is not only reading and writing but also understanding the information obtained. Literacy is the ability to manage reading or writing that is received to become information that can be understood (Oktariani et al, 2020). Good literacy can increase intelligence based on the knowledge discovered. Thus, teaching literacy at the elementary school level is beneficial in building a strong foundation for student literacy (Sumarni et al., 2024).

Literacy is the most important skill that should be developed from a young age, including English literacy. The Indonesian government has recommended introducing English in elementary schools in the 1994 curriculum (Alwasilah, 2013). However, the fact that the literacy level in Indonesia is very low. Based on the PISA (Program of International Students' Assessment) reading test, a survey conducted by the OECD in 2018 stated that Indonesian children have low-quality reading because Indonesia's ranking is 74th out of 80 countries that take part in PISA. Apart from that, data from UNESCO states that the reading interest of the Indonesian people is only around 0.001%, which means that only one in a thousand Indonesians is an avid reader. Based on this data, it can be stated that Indonesia is at the bottom level in terms of its literacy abilities. Low literacy is currently a major problem that must be addressed immediately in Indonesia.

Various factors influence low literacy in Indonesia. Miller (2016) stated that several factors influence low interest in literacy, namely a lack of accessible material and a lack of supporting resources such as materials, books, or libraries. Because of that, society does not make literacy a culture so that it can become a daily habit. Oktaria ni et al. (2020) also state that some of the factors that cause low literacy abilities are less than optimal educational factors in developing reading habits, a curriculum that does not emphasize literacy, and limitations of learning resources such as books for literacy activities. Besides that, other factors that influence students' low literacy are self-motivation, which is less aware that literacy is a useful activity, and also environmental factors, where literacy does not become a habit and culture that must be implemented from an early age (Pitri et al., 2022).

Readiness can be defined as the cognitive precursor to the behaviors of either resistance to or support for a change effort (Repal, 2022). Teachers' readiness also has a big influence on improving literacy skills. The current low literacy level can also be influenced by human resources, where the teachers are less prepared to teach. A factor in the teachers' lack of

preparation in teaching literacy is that the current curriculum is quite difficult, where teachers have to prepare dense material for lessons, but the learning hours provided are less flexible (Tricahyati et al., 2023). Additionally, most English teachers in elementary schools do not have an English education background (Supriyanti, 2012). Background education is a guideline to determine how the skill of the teacher has when teaching students. With the provision of English education, teachers understand what to do to build students' enthusiasm and interest during the learning process in the classroom. When the teacher does not have a teaching background in English, the teacher may not understand how to transfer knowledge to students and may not have a sufficient understanding of English literacy. This can make students less satisfied because it can impact the learning process, which students may not like. Apart from students feeling dissatisfied, teachers can also experience difficulties due to a lack of ability to master the material.

The delivery of material is very important because it determines students' understanding in the future. If the teacher chooses the wrong material, students are not interested in learning, which can cause their abilities to decline. Therefore, teachers are expected to be able to design English learning that is fun, has a real context, and can emphasize various aspects to improve language skills (Kurniawan, 2021). So that students can understand well and improve their literacy skills. In addition, choosing the right material also improves students' critical thinking skills, allowing them to analyze the information when they are interested in the material presented by the teacher (Kordaki, 2014).

Mistakes in choosing teaching strategies can also affect students' low literacy levels. According to Girmus (2011), effective teaching strategies help to activate students' curiosity about a class topic, engage students in learning, develop critical thinking skills, keep students on task, and maintain classroom interaction. So, during the learning process, teachers are expected to be able to choose strategies that are appropriate to the material and character of the

students in the class. One learning strategy that can be used in learning English is using stories. Teachers who use stories in their learning is able to control teaching aims, concepts, or ideas, and by using stories, students can develop their thinking (Karabacak et al., 2015). According to (Hadi, 2019), when teachers use stories, it helps increase student involvement, train students to solve problems from the results of analysis carried out during the learning process, build discussion activities, and train language skills through stories. Other research also shows that using stories can increase students' learning motivation (Saripah et al., 2017). Using stories is also a way to improve oral language, reading comprehension, and writing (Miller et al., 2008). The benefits obtained from using stories can be used as a reference to start applying them during the teaching and learning process.

Apart from the teacher's readiness to teach, the teacher's perception of learning English with stories must also be understood. Current stories have many advantages that help build students' interest in learning. According to Hussein et al. (2020), teachers' perceptions by using stories can create many new points of view in the learning process, where students are also more independent, which helps them think more logically. Usually, students seem uninterested in learning but can be more enthusiastic when giving short stories. In addition, the teacher's positive perception of the story can help teachers effectively utilize stories to become a fun learning media (Escribano et al., 2021).

This researcher is part of the umbrella research from (Ratminingsih et al., 2024). Based on the findings presented, most of the research discusses reading in Indonesia and the importance of literacy in the 21st century. The research proved that teacher Readiness and Perception affect students' literacy. The population used was made up of EFL students from the elementary to high school levels. Previous studies have found that teacher readiness and perception greatly influence students' literacy, and using stories can be an appropriate technique to help improve students' literacy skills.

Based on the literature review conducted by the researcher, the gap obtained is from the aspect of readiness, namely in measuring readiness, which only focuses on teacher readiness in learning English without using stories. In addition, several articles only focus on teacher readiness in teaching young learners. In terms of perception, previous studies only measured teacher perceptions of teaching English using literature, short stories, or picture stories. In addition, previous studies mostly combined teacher and student perceptions of learning English. Thus, the novelty of the current study is that it focuses on how teacher readiness and their perceptions of using stories to improve student literacy at the elementary school level. This study also uses a mixed method method, where the data was more comprehensive.

1.2 Problem identification of the study

Based on the background of the research as described above, the problem identification that can be obtained includes:

In Indonesia, learners are very ignorant about having good literacy skills. Learners still need much attention in the learning process to improve their literacy skills. Improving students' literacy is very much related to teacher readiness; when teachers are ready to teach, it greatly affects students' understanding during the learning process. Using stories in the learning process can also be a good intermediary between teachers and students. When teachers have a good perception of using stories to help improve student literacy, it greatly helps students during the learning process.

Based on the problem identified above, it can be concluded that students in Indonesia need to pay more attention to their low interest in reading and that teachers need to be more ready to help students with their language literacy.

1.3 Limitations of the study

The research limitations of this study focus only on how using stories in the learning process can improve literacy skills. This study examines teachers' readiness to teach using stories and their perception of the effectiveness of using stories in the teaching process.

1.4 Research questions

Based on the background of the research and problem identification that has been explained previously, the research questions that are being answered:

- 1) How is the teachers' readiness to use stories in English language learning on Literacy skills?
- 2) What is the teachers' perception of using stories in English language learning on students' English literacy skills?

1.5 The objective of the study

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) To determine teachers' readiness to use stories in English language learning.
- 2) To investigate teachers' perception of using stories in English language learning on students' English literacy skills.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is intended to provide a significant theoretical and practical contribution.

1.6.1 The theoretical significance

This study theoretically contributes to the concept of teacher readiness and perception in learning English using stories. This research also provides a theoretical understanding of the importance of reading as an essential skill for daily life.

1.6.2 The practical significance

1. For students, this research is useful for increasing interest in reading so that it can improve students' language literacy skills.

2. For teachers, this research can enrich their knowledge about teacher readiness and perception which can influence their English literacy skills.
3. For other researchers, this research can be continued by using other research objects to determine the readiness of the world of education in Indonesia.

