

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I presents the research background, research problem identification, research problem limitation, research questions, research objectives, product specification expected, research significance, research limitation and assumption, conceptual and operational definitions. The rationale of the study is explained in research background and led into research problem identification and limitation. The research questions formulated leads to the objectives of the study, product specification expected, assumption, and significance of the study. Conceptual and operational definitions are provided to give clear definitions of key terms used in the study.

1.1 Research Background

Literature-based instruction has been studied and practiced in learning and teaching among different learning subjects. Its practices are not merely carried out in literature class, but it has also been implemented in different subjects like Language (Armstrong, 2015; Tasneen, 2010; Violetta-Irene, 2015; Yimwilai, 2015), Science (Morrow et al., 1997), and Maths (David, 2001; Wilburne & Napoli, 2008). The integration of literary works in classes is applicable as it provides students with real-life experience and context through the texts with learning content-related materials. The literary works are used as the learning materials presented to students to be observed, analyzed, and practiced to understand the content which is believed to support contextual and autonomous learning.

The positive impacts of the implementation have been noticeably found in other areas such as literacy, personal growth, and culture. Literature-based

instruction (hence, LBI) which focuses on understanding literary works is strongly believed to have its close connection to literacy development (Ellis, 2015; Lehman et al., 1994; Morrow et al., 1997). Instruction with literature used requires students to read and understand the texts in order to practice and develop their literacy skill. Literary works used in LBI present real-life contexts in the form of text. The real-life experiences presented in the texts give models to students and contribute to students' personal growth (Stan, 2015), and life skills (Abdelhalim, 2015). The experiences conveyed in the literary works are inspired and influenced by the culture which makes it an effective tool to introduce and preserve culture on students (Dai, 2011; Stan, 2015). The use of literary texts in LBI, despite the learning content, contributes to students' literacy, life skills, personal, and cultural knowledge development.

The supporting instructional activity for the use of literary texts in class is further designed to develop students' language skills, higher-order thinking skills, and 4Cs consisting of communicative, collaborative, creative, and critical thinking skills to catch up with the recent skills required to be delivered to students. Learning activities are designed to support the use of literary works to develop four language skills; reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, on students (Morrow et al., 1997; Violetta-Irene, 2015; Sultan et al., 2018). It was not done segmentally for each skill, but it was integrated to support all the language skills. Yet, activities also encourage students to understand the short stories as literary texts by relating their prior knowledge to get the implicit meaning to develop their critical and analytical thinking skills that involve C1 to C6 (Febrina et al., 2019; Thamrin & Widodo, 2019). Through LBI, students are also engaged in learning activities, in which they

practice to communicate, collaborate, and be creative and critical (Kirsch, 2016; Masie et al., 2018; Amran et al., 2019). These skills become crucial in the educational field and become a consideration to implement LBI in the classroom.

Stories are very well liked and enjoyed by both adult and young learners. They are used in English language class as learning materials that provide students with a whole language model that provides the example of language use in the literary works that present content, context, and culture. Both authentic and non-native literature have been used by teachers in English teaching and learning in first language, second language, and foreign language teaching contexts. The related learning materials are crucial to support English language learning. A preliminary observation was done by the researcher to know how English was taught and teaching materials used at elementary levels.

Twenty-five elementary teachers in Bali participated as respondents by filling in a questionnaire made by Google form. To make it confidential, the form did not require the names of participants and the name of schools and thus to encourage respondents' honest responses and answers. It revealed that twenty-four schools taught English and one school did not teach English which meant the schools were fully given autonomy to choose whether English is taught to students or not. The decision on keeping English subject for elementary school is also encouraged by the importance of English for students. A study conducted in a primary school in Indonesia showed that there were three main advantages of having good knowledge English, including: (a) to make to make students' English proficiency much better when learning English in earlier stages; (b) to help students get better job, and (c) to have students in getting benefits in their social and

economic life in the future, not only in terms of personal economy but also in national prosperity (Oktaviani & Fauzan, 2017; Tomlinson, 2007). Helping students compete in the globalization era, English should be taught in early stages (active age to acquire verbal-linguistic ability) as it is believed that students at certain ages acquire language better than at a higher level (Hali, 2017; Silalahi, 2016). Starting learning English as young learners does contribute to their language skills in the sense that it helps the learners have more skillful English than those older beginners (Broughton et al., 1980). It has become a consideration to keep the English subject in elementary schools.

Based on the preliminary observation conducted by the researcher, it was found that some schools teach English for all grades, some other schools include English in grade five and six only. The elementary schools have been given authority on the implementation of English subject which resulted in diversities on learning topics, taught levels, learning duration, learning sources, syllabus, and lesson plan. Based on the preliminary observation conducted by the researcher, it was found that learning sources used by the teachers were found to vary among elementary schools. Twenty schools provide students' textbooks and only fifteen schools use the teacher's guidance book. Moreover, the decisions on the book to be used in the schools came from different regulations; nine schools decided the book to be used, four schools let the subject teacher choose the book, seven schools used the book determined by the district government, three schools from government advice, and one school decided the book based on the sub-district government decision. All respondents agreed that they used additional resources to support learning. The most chosen source was the internet (42%) as it was an easy and fast

way to get learning materials for teaching. Different sources were used by teachers among schools to put extra effort in finding other related sources for their learning.

Moreover, the result of the preliminary observation conducted by the researcher obtained the data of challenges in teaching English at elementary levels. The challenges faced by twenty-four respondents in teaching English were limited books, sources, media to support the learning, students' poor comprehension and vocabulary mastery, students' lack of motivation, and lack of attractive and interesting learning sources. It was supported by other previous studies that revealed the challenges such as students' poor vocabulary mastery, teachers' limited teaching strategies, unavailability of books, realia, or real learning materials (Cahyati & Madya, 2019; Mumary Songbatumis, 2017). Moreover, textbooks or commercial materials widely sold do not always guarantee engaging or relevant sources for learners (Tomlinson, 2012). Indeed, not all commercially available books, even for EFL, aim at a specific group of learners for specific cultural and educational contexts (Howard & Major, 2004). On the other hand, locally-developed materials do give comprehensible connections because of their cultural-related and learners' daily life content (Tomlinson, 2007). Providing content- and culture-related materials was one of the challenges that needed to be overcome by teachers in delivering English lesson in elementary level.

Finding good sources can be a difficult task when there is no standardized curriculum from the government and schools are given all decisions to make their own curriculum and learning objectives. Moreover, teachers' competence and perception who do not have English expertise will affect the chosen book and

sources. Students completely rely on the chosen book and sources by teachers and it contributes in their understanding, acquisition, and perception toward English.

Short stories as literary works which present a language as a whole and supporting learning activities for literature-based instructional materials are promising and compatible sources for elementary students' English lesson. Not only they are thematically integrated, but also they have positive advantages on students' literacy, knowledge, culture, behaviors, HOTS, and 4Cs development. Using literary works in the form of short stories has been studied in the Indonesia context. Through literature, students could be engaged and observed experience through texts which can be done in interactive reading to involve students' creative, critical, and analytical skills (Syofyan, 2005). Literature for children was also found to be a motivating and good stimulus for children in Indonesia (Novasyari, 2019) where culture was also inserted (Shaleha & Purbani, 2019). Nevertheless, it does serve its first objective to provide language input for students. Literature in the form of storytelling was once studied in relation to verbal-linguistic intelligence by Howard Gardner's theory in Indonesian children's context and was found to be implementable (Hali, 2017). Stories as literary works are found as a fun and meaningful way by elementary students (Gonzalez, 2010). Short stories are interesting learning materials for students as they are drawn into the plot and into their imagination. Especially for young learners who learn English as a foreign language, interesting learning is necessarily provided by teachers (Santosa et al., 2020). Specifically in Bali context, an experimental study found that a Balinese value presented in learning materials improved students' reading comprehension and gained positive feedback from students and teachers (Sukarma et al., 2018). It

suggests that culture or local values of students do contribute in their learning. It is also supported that students' cultural background that need to be considered in providing learning materials (Novianti, 2016). Thus, literary works in the form of short stories that relate to students' culture are needed as supplementary materials for students.

Studies and developments on English materials for young learners have contributed some considerations for teachers and national education authorities. Authentic materials and international materials have been given so much credit in English learning with the argument that native use of the language gives students real examples of language use. 'Glocal' materials are introduced along the way. It is a term to describe materials that are developed based on the correct native language use and local context integrated (Tomlinson, 2007). It does not only allow teachers to develop their materials and cultural reservation but also it helps young learners who learn English as a foreign language context. Thus, literature-based instructional materials with thematically and culturally integrated needs to be developed in Indonesia.

Based on the preliminary observation done by the researcher, one of the challenges faced by the teachers in teaching English in elementary level was limited sources and difficulty finding content-related materials. In fact, the status of English subject as a non-compulsory subject in curriculum 2013 does not provide any guidance, topics, and materials for the English lesson. This study attempts to design literary works based on the determined learning themes in thematic lesson (as known as 'Mata Pelajaran Tematik') which is the main subject based on the national curriculum by the government for fifth-grade elementary students. The determined

learning themes are important to be used as the foundation for the developed materials as thematic lesson (*Mata Pelajaran Tematik*) is the compulsory subject proposed by the government to be implemented in elementary schools in Indonesia. The purpose of the curriculum is to provide students with thematic learning where all subjects are integrated based on certain topic.

This study aims at designing literature-based instructional materials that cover nine determined learning themes for one academic year. The learning materials designed consists of short stories and in-class activities to support the use of the short stories. The short stories as literary works are based on the determined learning themes and Balinese local culture to be able to be used as supplementary materials in an integrated way for the fifth-grade elementary students in Bali. In-class learning activities in the form of simple lesson plans are also designed for teachers as the supplementary materials in helping conducting the learning process with the short stories. The short stories and in-class learning activities are be combined into student's storybook and teacher's guide book as supplementary materials. Student's storybook consists of nine short stories designed in this study. The nine short stories are put in the same order of the determined learning themes of thematic (*tematik*) subject to help students relate the content of the story with thematic subject for integrated learning. The teacher's guide book includes unit title with a brief introduction, background information, in-class learning activities, short story, and handouts to be used in implementing the short story as supplementary learning materials. The two books for students and teachers to have a meaningful supplementary material in English class for grade five elementary students.

1.2 Research Problem Identification

Literature-based instructional materials in the form of short stories and learning activities are learning materials that can integrate determined thematic learning themes and local culture benefit on English language class for elementary level. Yet, the learning materials in the form of theme-related short stories to support the English subject in elementary schools in Bali learning was still scarcely found based on the preliminary observation conducted by the researcher in this study. The development of the short stories as supplementary materials is needed to support teachers and students with content- and culture-related materials in the form of short stories and in-class learning activities for the fifth-grade elementary students.

1.3 Research Problem Limitation

In the present study, the problem is limited to literature-based instructional materials in the form short stories and learning activities. The short stories and activities are designed and developed for the fifth-grade elementary school level in Bali. The stories designed are based on the fifth-grade determined thematic learning themes (*mata pelajaran tematik*). In-class learning activities designed are based on the learning activities for fifth-grade level and theories from previous studies which are administered to the teachers to see their preferences. As the determined learning themes in thematic learning subject (*mata pelajaran tematik*) given in the national curriculum by the government are used as the foundation in designing the materials, this study uses design and development procedure that the evaluation stage uses content-validity test to examine the quality of designed product.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the rationale of the study, there were two research statements formulated,

1. How is the design of literature-based instructional materials integrating learning themes in thematic lesson (*mata pelajaran Tematik*) and English for the fifth-grade students of elementary school level?

- 1.1 How is the design of short stories integrating learning themes in thematic lesson (*mata pelajaran Tematik*) and English for the fifth-grade students of elementary school level?

- 1.2 How is the design of learning activities to support the short stories for fifth-grade of elementary school level?

2. What is the quality of literature-based instructional materials integrating thematic lesson (*mata pelajaran Tematik*) learning themes and English for the fifth-grade of elementary school level?

1.5 Research Objectives

There were two research objectives formulated from the research problems.

1. To design literature-based instructional materials in the form of short stories and learning activities that integrates thematic lesson themes and English for fifth-grade of elementary school level.
2. To know the quality of literature-based instructional materials in the form of short stories and learning activities designed that integrates thematic lesson themes and English for fifth-grade of elementary school level.

1.6 Product Specification Expected

This developmental research aimed at designing and developing literature-based instructional materials that were specified into short stories and simple

activities for fifth-grade elementary school level. The learning materials designed were based on the determined learning themes in the fifth-grade thematic subjects (*mata pelajaran tematik*) and Balinese local values to design content- and culture-related materials. Nine short stories were developed for nine learning themes in one academic year. Simple in-class activities were made for each story that include learning activities for pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading phases. The stories are presented into a student's storybook. The stories with in-class activity were presented into the teacher's guide book. The two books were supplementary materials in conducting English learning for fifth-grade elementary students in Bali.

1.7 Research Significance

This research was expected to contribute theoretically and practically in relation to literature-based instruction and designing literature-based instructional materials in the form of short story and in-class learning activities for teaching English for fifth-grade elementary students.

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

The result of the research is expected to contribute to theory in designing literature-based instructional materials in the form of short stories and in-class activities for the fifth-grade elementary level in English as a foreign language context in Bali. It also uncovers how cognitive, affective, local culture, 4Cs, and HOTS inserted into literature-based language teaching.

1.7.2 Practical Significance

The practical significance of the study which is in the form of student's storybook and teacher's guide book to be used as learning materials in learning English and Thematic in Bali. The result of the research is supplementary learning

materials for teachers or parents to use since it has been designed based on thematic determined learning topics of grade five elementary level and is written in English. The result of the product can be practically used as a reference not only at the primary level but also in junior high schools to develop learning sources at high school levels.

1.8 Research Limitation and Assumption

The present research is developmental research that uses design and development research design. The research phases included analysis, design, develop, and evaluate. The evaluation phase used content-validity test by expert judges due to social distancing regulation and closed learning activities at school due to pandemic. The literature-based instructional materials designed were in the form of short stories which include local values in Bali and learning activities that support the short stories implementation that encourages students' HOTS, 4Cs, and language skills. Nine short stories covered nine thematic learning themes in one academic year for fifth-grade elementary level. Each short story designed was supported with learning activities that can be implemented in using the story in the class. The short stories designed in the study were categorized as non-native literature that can be used for fifth grade English and thematic class.

1.9 Conceptual and Operational Definitions

Conceptual and operational definitions of 'literature', 'literacy', literary work', 'literature-based instruction', and 'short story' are presented as guidance to give a clear theoretical foundation in conducting the study.

1.9.1 Conceptual Definitions

- 1) Literature is a language product that presents humans' concerns, needs, and experience (Sage, 1988) which includes moral and aesthetic aspects (Syofyan, 2005). Literature is an artifact of language that is artistically composed and culturally developed to convey meaning.
- 2) Literacy is the ability to understand and produce meaningful and communicative text (Cronin, 2014). The skill in using language, both delivering and understanding information, is referred to as a literacy skill.
- 3) Literary works are texts consisting of the language model, expression, vocabulary, grammar, culture, and context (Puspitasari, 2016). Literary work refers to text made focused on linguistic aspects to be used as literature.
- 4) Literature-based Instruction is a whole language instruction where literature is used as reading materials in which meaning is focused more than skill (Freppon, 1991). Literature-based instruction is learning instruction where literary work is used as a learning material with a series of compatible learning activities to support the use of literary work.
- 5) A short story is a short narrative that contains few characters, one plot, and a limited setting description which includes beginning, middle, and ending (Ceylan, 2016; Sultan et al., 2018a). A short story is a short narrative text which composed limited descriptions of elements to deliver a part of a whole complex story.

1.9.2 Operational Definitions

- 1) Literature is written text which is produced as a means of communication with its aesthetic aspect that can be used for language teaching resources. The

literature referred in the present study is written text in the form of short story composed in English for fifth-grade primary students.

- 2) Literacy is the ability to understand and produce meaningful and communicative text. It is a skill developed by students in understanding and communicating the text.
- 3) Literary works are texts consisting of the language aspects which includes language model, expression, vocabulary, grammar, culture, and context. The literary work type in the present study is a short story in the form of narrative text.
- 4) Literature-based Instruction is a learning process that uses literature as a source of learning as a whole language learning. Short story and reading activities will be the center of literature-based instruction developed in the present study as supplementary materials to support literature-based instruction.
- 5) Short Story is a short narrative used as a learning source and materials. It is composed of the completed elements, fifth-grade thematic theme-related, and local culture or wisdom.

