

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

English language learning is similar to language learning in general, where learners must master four skills as language users. To gain competence in English, it is necessary to master four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among the four skills, reading is an important basic ability to acquire knowledge and information. In other words, reading is the gateway to acquiring and developing one's understanding. In addition, reading is a dynamic and collaborative activity in which the reader and the reading material work together to create meaning (Anderson, 2003). Extensive research shows that reading is important in improving students' overall English proficiency (Babayan, 2019). This argument is supported by Mickulecky and Jeffries (2004), who underline the importance of reading in improving overall language ability, developing English thinking, expanding vocabulary, honing writing skills, and aiding the absorption of new ideas, facts, and experiences.

The learning process at school always involves students in reading activities, one of which is for students in elementary school. Primary education has an important role in shaping students' literacy skills. However, various studies reveal that there are still problems with the literacy skills of primary school students in Indonesia. The results of the 2016 PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) study showed that the reading ability of

Indonesian 4th-grade students ranked 45th out of 50 countries surveyed. In addition, the 2021 Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM) data also shows that only 37.4% of grade 6 students reached the minimum literacy level. Meanwhile, based on the PISA results, the literacy, numeracy, and science achievements of Indonesian students internationally have decreased significantly. Kemendikbudristek stated that in 2022, Indonesia's reading literacy score in PISA reached 359 points. This value is 12 points lower than in 2018 when Indonesia scored 371. Indonesia's reading literacy score in 2022 was also lower than in 2000, which was 371.

One of the factors affecting students' low literacy skills is the limited availability of reading materials that are suitable for students' characteristics and needs. The reading materials available tend to be less interesting, and less contextualized and do not encourage students to be actively involved in the reading process (Ahmadi et al. 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to develop additional reading materials that can increase the motivation and literacy skills of primary school students. In addition, students need a variety of reading resources that not only teach basic knowledge but also develop their literacy skills. Literacy, in this context, does not only mean the ability to read and write but also the ability to understand, interpret, and analyze texts (Suyono et al. 2017). Currently, the education curriculum in Indonesia has given significant attention to students' literacy development. However, many schools still face limitations in providing quality supplementary reading materials. Most reading materials available in schools are still limited to main textbooks, which are often

uninteresting and de-contextualized for students. This results in low student interest in reading and less than optimal development of their literacy skills (Pratiwi & Eka, 2022).

Therefore, interesting reading materials play an important role in English language learning because interesting reading materials can motivate students to read and understand texts better (Li et al., 2023). Reading materials that are interesting for students should be tailored to their language proficiency level. Nurgiantoro (2013, p. 356) emphasizes that when choosing reading materials, it is important to consider not only the students' level of proficiency in the second language but also the complexity of the content. This means using vocabulary and sentence structures that are appropriate for the student's level of understanding. The selection of vocabulary should take into account the language proficiency level of the students so that it is neither too easy nor too difficult for them. In addition, the sentence structure used in the reading materials should be appropriate for the student's grammatical level.

Appropriate reading materials are an important tool for teachers in planning and implementing effective teaching. The teacher's role is to deliver the material in a way that is appropriate to the students' prior knowledge. The curriculum should be organized in a spiral fashion, allowing students to gradually build their knowledge based on what they have already acquired (Kearsly, 2005).

One approach that supports reading comprehension is to use literature-based instruction. Literature-based instruction has emerged as an effective approach to supporting reading comprehension by utilizing literary works as the main source in the learning process. Recent research by Widodo and Cirocki (2023) shows that the integration of literary works in language teaching not only improves students' linguistic abilities but also deepens their understanding of cultural and social contexts. Short stories, as a form of literature, are a very suitable choice for grade 6 students. As stated by Zhao & Widodo (2023), the use of literary works in language learning can enrich students' linguistic experience, stimulate their imagination, and develop their interpretation ability. Lee et al. (2024) asserted that short stories have their advantages in language and literacy learning because of their concise yet meaning-dense format, allowing in-depth exploration in a relatively short time. Short stories also often address themes that are relevant to students' daily lives, making it easier for them to relate the reading to personal experiences.

Based on preliminary observations made by researchers at MI An-Nizham on November 18, 2023, through interviews with WAKA Curriculum and Homeroom Teachers from sixth grade and focus group discussions (FGDs) with 10 students from sixth grade, they found that they have used the latest curriculum, namely the Merdeka Curriculum, but in English language learning has only been implemented in grades 1 and 4, and only one of the influencing factors is the insufficient time allocation for sixth grade so that the many learning outcomes in the Merdeka curriculum cannot be done fully because

sixth grade must focus on preparing for the national exam. But in the new school year, sixth grade is already required to learn English, and the school chooses the textbook "My Next Word," published by the Center for Curriculum and Bookkeeping under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, to be the main media in the learning process. This book is also used by grades 1 and 4.

This book consists of 106 pages and is divided into 10 chapters of discussion topics; each topic consists of two basic competencies that students must master. This book is part of a series of textbooks developed by educational experts to help students develop their reading, writing, and speaking skills in English. This book is equipped with interesting pictures and interesting stories, but each chapter is only given one simple text, even though the learning outcomes of grade 6 are in phase C, where they must understand and respond to simple oral, written, and visual texts in English. Since sixth grade will only be learning English in the new school year, textbooks are the main source of the learning process. From the results of FGDs with sixth-grade students, it was found that some sixth-grade students have learned English outside of school hours through tutoring, which shows the interest and importance of learning English at an early age.

In terms of book preferences, they show interest in books that have interesting pictures, language and practice questions that are easy to understand, and interactive games that can stimulate their thinking creativity. Based on the

above discussion, the researcher is interested in developing a prototype of complementary reading material based on literary instruction that is believed to be able to help teachers as a medium for complementary reading material in the English comprehension process so that it can help students achieve English learning objectives. This material was developed using the Successive Approximation Model (SAM), a development model developed by Michael Allen (2012). Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "Developing Prototype of Complementary Reading Material Based on Literature Instruction."

1.2 Limitation of The Research

The teaching and learning process has various objectives. Objectives serve as initial criteria for future evaluation and planning. Based on the evaluation of learning outcomes listed in the government-mandated Merdeka curriculum for primary school students, they are expected to be able to read and respond to various types of texts, both print and digital. This includes the ability to understand visual, multimodal, or interactive texts and find basic information in sentences, as well as explain topics in the texts they read or view. In addition, researchers must maintain focus and specificity in their approach.

This research is specifically directed at developing a prototype of complementary reading materials based on literature instruction for sixth-grade elementary school students. In addition, due to the limited time and knowledge of the researcher, the researcher did not design all the materials needed by the students. This research focused on the design of learning materials for sixth-

grade elementary school students in the first semester of the 2023/2024 school year. The resulting product is a prototype of additional reading material for English language learning in the form of textbooks and PDFs.

1.3 Question of The Research

Considering the research background and problem identification, the researcher intended to solve the following questions: “How is the prototype of complementary reading material based on literature instruction at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah An-Nizham Jambi developed?

1.4 Objective of The Research

Based on the problem explained, the objective of the research is to develop a Prototype of Complementary Reading Materials Based on Literature Instruction for Sixth Grade Students of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah An-Nizam Jambi.

1.5 Specification of the Product

The product specifications developed in this study are:

1. This product is a prototype of complementary reading material developed specifically for grade 6 elementary school students. It combines modern learning methods with interesting content to improve students' English language skills.
2. The learning materials are organized using a systematic approach that guides students through six stages of learning: reading, observing, listening, exploring, reasoning, and communicating. These stages are designed to ensure students thoroughly understand English learning.

3. This teaching material consists of 76 pages divided into 6 lessons (lesson plans), adjusted to the basic competencies of semester 1. Each lesson is arranged sequentially to build students' understanding from basic concepts to practical applications.
4. This product's advantage lies in its use of picture stories complemented by interactive exercises. This combination not only helps improve students' reading skills but also makes the learning process more interesting and easy to understand. Picture stories serve as a visual context that helps students understand new vocabulary and concepts.
5. The product design uses a full-color approach with an attractive appearance, adapted to the characteristics of elementary school students as young learners. The use of appropriate colors and illustrations aims to create a pleasant learning atmosphere and maintain students' interest during the learning process.
6. Overall, this product offers an effective and fun English learning solution, combining pedagogical aspects with an attractive design to create an optimal learning experience for grade 6 students.

1.6 Significances of The Research

The results of the research can be of practical significance. The practical significance has three parts:

1. For students hopefully this research can improve their understanding of the subject matter at school. The researcher hopes that this product

can trigger students' interest and motivation to learn to read English texts

2. For teachers hopefully this product of the research can support teachers in presenting interesting and diverse reading materials, with the hope of increasing students' interest in reading. This will create a more enjoyable and motivating learning experience.
3. For academia hopefully this product of the research will be used in future research studies by academic research staff.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1. Literature-Based Instruction: A teaching approach utilizing literary works such as novels, short stories, poems, and dramas as the primary materials for learning.
2. Complementary Reading Material: Reading materials intended to supplement or reinforce the main reading materials.
3. Prototype: An initial physical and functional representation of a product under development, created for evaluation and testing.
4. Reading: is a dynamic and collaborative activity in which the reader and the material work together to create meaning