

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the research, research objectives, research questions, limitations, and the significance of the research.

1.1 Background of The Research

Imaginative storytelling is an engaging way to support language learning. Imaginative storytelling can play a meaningful role in language learning, as it helps learners connect emotionally and cognitively with the content. Folktales, as a form of imaginative narrative, have been found effective in addressing students' lack of interest in reading (Monica & Soplantila, 2024). Furthermore, folktales align with curriculum goals aiming to improve students' English reading and comprehension skills (Safitri, 2023; Monica & Soplantila, 2024). Strong reading skills not only help students understand various types of texts but also enhance critical thinking abilities as they involve analyzing texts from diverse perspectives (Angandari, 2019; Marlina, 2012).

Students may be strongly motivated in a foreign language setting, either because they consider themselves experts in English, anticipate needing it for university work, or see a clear role for English in the community outside of school (Broughton et al., 1980). However, research by Belinda and Syafei (2023) at SMA Pembangunan Padang indicates that students' reading abilities are still relatively low. Approximately 89% of students have limited vocabulary, and other weaknesses include difficulties in making conclusions, identifying detailed information, finding the main idea, and distinguishing between facts and opinions.

Students' reading habits are also considered suboptimal, leading to fundamental issues in text comprehension. This issue is highly relevant given the limited research that specifically addresses the causes and solutions related to low reading comprehension among high school students, especially in the context of the implementation of effective teaching methods.

The implementation of English language teaching in the classroom is determined by the teacher's depth of understanding of the curriculum, their experience, and teaching background (Rachman, 2023). As English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, Indonesian students require teaching methods that cater to their needs. Since English is not a second language in Indonesia, curriculum developers must thoroughly plan and consider the components of English language teaching in schools before applying them nationwide. Each curriculum has its own distinct objectives. The initial curriculum introduced in 1945 focused on the grammar-translation method for teaching English. The following curriculum in 1957 shifted to the audiolingual method. In 1984, the emphasis moved to a structure-based communicative approach, and in 1994, a meaning-based communicative curriculum was introduced. The 2004 curriculum centered on a competency-based approach, and in 2013, the K-13 curriculum was adopted (Sulistyaningrum & Sumarni, 2023).

The current curriculum, known as the Merdeka Curriculum, was implemented in 2022. This curriculum is centered around the Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) framework and is divided into several phases: Phase C, D, E, and F (Rachman, 2023; Sulistyaningrum & Sumarni, 2023). In senior high school (SMA), the curriculum is influenced by the CEFR, with English instruction tailored

to B1-level students. Students are expected to master various text types in both written and spoken forms (such as narratives, descriptions, expositions, procedures, arguments, discussions, short messages, advertisements, and authentic texts) and to incorporate technology in their learning process. The curriculum follows a student-centered approach, aiming to develop students' skills in listening, reading, and expressing opinions both orally and in writing. Teachers are expected to present material that suits the students' existing knowledge, gradually introducing new topics, ensuring that students remain interested and engaged in the learning process (Sulistyaningrum & Sumarni, 2023). The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum provides opportunities for teachers to be more flexible in adjusting their teaching methods according to the needs of students in the classroom (Hasibuan et al., 2023). One of the challenges EFL teachers face is encouraging students to actively use English (Marlina, 2013). Some strategies for practicing English in the classroom include ice-breaking activities, memory recall, brainstorming, class discussions, games, listening and reading exercises, paragraph writing, fill-in-the-blank tasks, English camps, and assemblies (Saragih et al., 2023).

This research was inspired by the researcher's experience during an internship in 2022, which provided valuable insights into classroom practices. One method that was used was the discussion method. Research on discussion method, in improving the comprehension of narrative texts in EFL classrooms is still relatively limited, and this research aims to fill this gap.

Based on this background, the study aims to analyze the implementation of the discussion method in teaching reading of narrative texts in grade X at a senior high school in Jambi. The research will also explore teachers' perspectives on the

effectiveness of this method in enhancing students' reading abilities and its contribution to improve their understanding of narrative texts.

1.2 Research Questions

How does an EFL teacher structure group discussion to enhance reading comprehension of narrative text?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to explore how an EFL teacher structures group discussion to enhance students' reading comprehension of narrative texts in a senior high school context.

1.4 Limitations

This study aims to investigate the teaching practices of an EFL teacher in delivering English reading skills, particularly narrative texts, at a public senior high school located in Jambi City. The participant of this research is a female EFL teacher who has been teaching English at a senior high school in Jambi City since 2009, with a total of 16 years of teaching experience

1.5 Significance of The Research

This research presents an invaluable opportunity for educators to deepen their understanding of effective pedagogical strategies, particularly in the realm of enhancing students' reading skills through the discussion method. By gaining insights into the efficacy of this approach, teachers can refine their instructional practices, thereby fostering a more enriching and engaging learning experience for their students.

Moreover, Through the implementation of the discussion method, students stand to benefit from a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. This approach not only facilitates deeper engagement with narrative texts but also cultivates critical thinking, communication skills, and collaborative learning. By actively participating in discussions, students can broaden their perspectives, refine their analytical abilities, and ultimately, bolster their reading proficiency.

This research contributes to the ongoing evolution of language teaching methodologies by illuminating the effectiveness of the discussion method in fostering reading skills development. By elucidating the nuanced interplay between instructional approaches and language acquisition outcomes, it informs the refinement of teaching practices and curriculum design, ultimately advancing the collective endeavor of language education.