

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of background of the research, research question, objective of the research, scope and limitation of the research, significance of the research, and definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

ELT (English Language Teaching) is an important area in language education that focuses on how English is taught and learned effectively in various educational settings. It is not only about transferring knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, but also about helping students develop communication skills, critical thinking, and confidence in using English in everyday and academic contexts. Richards and Rodgers (2001) explain that ELT involves a combination of teaching methods, learning strategies, classroom management, and learning materials aimed at supporting students' language development. A strong ELT process also considers student-centered learning, where the focus is on students' needs and learning goals. Teachers play a key role in creating meaningful learning experiences that connect the language to real-life situations. In this way, ELT becomes more than just delivering lessons it becomes a process of guiding learners toward becoming independent and capable English users.

In ELT, the development of four main skills listening,

speaking, reading, and writing must be balanced and interconnected. These skills support one another and should not be taught in isolation. For instance, students often gain vocabulary and grammar knowledge from reading and then use it in speaking or writing. Brown (2007) emphasizes that English teaching should be flexible and responsive to students' individual needs, background knowledge, and classroom realities. Nation and Macalister (2010) highlight the importance of providing enough input through reading and listening, which serves as the foundation before students can produce output through speaking and writing. Among these skills, reading stands out because it provides continuous and structured input. Through reading, students are exposed to language that is more organized, varied, and formal than everyday conversations, which helps them strengthen their language system. A good ELT program therefore needs to treat reading not only as a passive skill, but as a central part of learning that influences other skills as well.

In addition to that, the researcher chose to focus on reading because it plays a central role in academic learning and language acquisition. According to Anderson (2003), reading is the most important skill in language learning, especially in academic settings, because it supports independent learning and gives students access to a wide range of knowledge. Moreover, reading allows learners to progress at their own pace and develop strategies for understanding and analyzing texts. Unlike speaking or listening, which rely heavily on real-time interaction, reading can be practiced individually and revisited for deeper comprehension.

Students who are strong in reading tend to perform better in other language areas and other school subjects as well. Therefore, this research focuses on reading not only because it is challenging for students, but also because it is a foundation skill that supports the entire process of language learning, especially for junior high school learners.

Reading also brings important academic and emotional benefits for students. Academically, students who read frequently tend to perform better in many subjects, not only English, because they are more used to processing written instructions, understanding main ideas, and identifying important details in texts. Nation (2001) notes that reading can help students improve their reading fluency and expand their vocabulary naturally, especially through extensive reading. In addition, reading helps students develop independence in learning. When students enjoy reading, they are more likely to explore texts on their own, which builds their confidence and motivation. Emotionally, reading can reduce anxiety in language learning, especially for students who are shy to speak. By reading silently, they can still interact with the language in a comfortable and personal way. However, in practice, many junior high school students still struggle with reading English. They often feel unmotivated, confused by difficult vocabulary, or unsure how to approach a text. These problems show the need for teachers to use reading strategies that not only help students understand the content, but also make them feel successful and motivated to keep learning.

In teacher education programs, teaching practicum or field

teaching experience is one of the most essential components. It allows pre-service teachers to apply the knowledge and theories they have learned in real classroom situations. During practicum, pre-service teachers are expected to develop their teaching skills, manage classrooms, and implement appropriate strategies that match students' needs. Zeichner and Conklin (2008) state that teaching practicum plays a key role in shaping the professional identity of future teachers and helps them learn how to make practical decisions in real time. However, for many pre-service teachers, teaching reading presents a particular challenge. While they may have studied reading theories and methods in university, applying them to actual students especially those with low motivation or limited vocabulary can be difficult. They often need to learn by doing, adapting, and reflecting on which strategies work best. Therefore, teaching practicum becomes not only a space for practice but also for learning, problem-solving, and personal growth in teaching.

Based on the researcher's experience during teaching practice at a junior high school, it was found that many students showed low interest in reading English texts. They often had difficulty understanding the meaning of the text, mainly due to limited vocabulary mastery. Students also easily became discouraged when given reading assignments and tended to rely on teacher explanations rather than trying to understand the text independently. This condition indicates that the reading difficulties experienced by students are not only caused by weak language skills, but also due to a lack of application of appropriate

reading strategies and low learning motivation. To address this problem, teachers can use various strategies to overcome problems encountered during second language learning. Teaching strategies are methods or techniques used by educators to design learning experiences that support the achievement of educational goals and overcome learning challenges (Slavin, 2021). Teaching strategies can make the learning process more effective and enjoyable for students. There are many types of strategies that can be used in teaching reading that will help teachers in the learning process so that learning activities can run smoothly and of course will help students in participating in learning activities, for example, QAR strategy, Think Aloud, Jigsaw strategy, or Contextual Guessing strategy. Amelia (2022) in her study of Indonesian junior high school students reported that QAR improved students' ability to identify main ideas and supporting details in descriptive and narrative texts. Using appropriate strategies that are tailored to students' needs will increase student motivation and engagement. Finding appropriate strategies is also a challenge for teachers, as they must also recognize the needs of their students in learning a second language, especially in learning reading skills.

The issue related to English teacher Strategies' in teaching reading have been the focus of several previous studies. Asikcan (2018) investigated with Investigation of Reflecting Reading Comprehension Strategies on Teaching Environment among Pre-service Classroom Teachers. The result of this study is pre-service teachers have used almost

half of strategies defined as pre-reading strategies in the literature. Among the used strategies, the most repeated ones are guesses by visuals and stimulating prior knowledge and pre-service teachers used only a few of the during-reading strategies defined in the literature, and Finally, pre-service teachers designed post-reading strategies the most, and the strategy variation was accordingly the most for post-reading. Diannisa (2021) conducted with Teaching Reading Practice Amid Covid-19 Pandemic Era: Indonesia Pre-service English Teacher' Experiences. The result of this reasearch is the pre-service English teachers conducted critical preparation on the material and media before teaching, used the genre-based as the favorable approach, and gave evaluation and feedback after the teaching process.

Several studies have explained the strategies used by teachers in teaching reading in junior high schools, but the researcher here focus on pre-service English teacher who had their first teaching experience when taking the teaching practicum course, where of course they did not have much teaching experience, like teachers who have taught at school for a long time. Therefore, researcher want to investigate what strategies they use in teaching reading when teaching English in class to overcome various problems that exist in the teaching and learning process so that it can help them achieve learning goals. Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled Pre-service English Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading at Junior High Schools in Jambi City.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher formulated a research question namely “What are Pre-service English Teachers’ Strategies in Teaching Reading at Junior High Schools in Jambi City?”.

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the research questions above, the researcher formulated a research objective namely “To explore Pre-service English Teachers’ Strategies in Teaching Reading at Junior High Schools in Jambi City”.

1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Research

This research focused on the strategies used by Pre-service English Teachers’ in teaching reading especially on descriptive text material, based on their experience in teaching practicum while taking the teaching practicum course at a junior high school.

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to provide benefits for various parties as follows:

1. For Pre-service English Teachers

This research can serve as a reference for pre-service teachers who will undertake their teaching practicum. By understanding the strategies used by other pre-service teachers and the challenges they faced, they can better prepare their own lesson plans and teaching methods for reading activities.

2. For English Teachers in School

The results of this research can give insights into effective reading strategies that can be applied in junior high school classrooms. Teachers can adopt or adapt the strategies identified in this study to improve students' motivation and comprehension in reading English texts.

3. For the English Education Study Program

This research can contribute to the study program's efforts to improve the quality of its graduates. By providing evidence of which reading strategies are effective in real-life teaching situations, the program can better prepare students for future teaching practice.

4. For Lecturers in the English education Department

The findings can help lecturers enrich their teaching materials, especially in courses related to the teaching of reading. They can use the results as case examples when guiding students on how to select and implement appropriate strategies for different classroom contexts.

5. For Junior High School Students

The application of effective reading strategies, as suggested in this research, can help students improve their comprehension, increase their vocabulary, and develop a more positive attitude towards reading in English.

6. For Other Researchers

This research can serve as a reference for further studies on

reading strategies or English teaching in general, particularly in the context of pre-service teacher education.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Teaching Strategy

Teaching strategies are activities or teaching plans that teachers use in the teaching and learning process in implementing lesson plans that have been created using various methods to achieve a planned goal and to help students understand what they are learning. In other words, teaching strategies are approaches to teaching students. And the teaching strategy focused on in this research is the reading teaching strategy, namely the QAR strategy.

2. Reading

Reading is the construction of meaning from printed or written messages. This means that discovering meaning from reading involves readers in connecting information from written messages with previous knowledge to arrive at understanding (Day & Bamford, 1998). The purpose of reading is to understand the content of the text and find some information in the text. The text reading used in this study focuses on descriptive text.

3. Teaching Practicum

Teaching practicum is a part of a teacher education program where students gain hands-on experience in teaching in the classroom, allowing them to apply pedagogical theories and gain feedback on their practice (Zeichner & Conklin, 2008). Teaching Practicum is a field

practice carried out by students to get to know the world of schooling. Teaching Practicum can describe teaching experiences, interact, and formulate direct learning materials with teachers directly at school. Usually held in semester 7. This study focuses on students from the 2021 intake who have participated in the Teaching Practicum in semester 7.

4. Pre-service English Teachers

Pre-service teachers are students who are in a training program to become teachers and are still in the early stages of their education. They are not yet fully involved in teaching work but are involved in educational theory courses and teaching practice (Berkvens & Wubbels, 2014). In this study, pre-service English teachers are students who carry out teaching practicum and the researcher focused on students class of 2021 who had participated in the Teaching Practicum program in semester 7.