

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The first chapter discusses about introduction of the research. Which consists of some parts, namely the background of study, problem of study, research objective, hypothesis, scope and limitation, research significant, and definition of key terms.

#### **A. Background of Study**

Reading ability in English is an essential skill that students must master in order to develop their communication and language comprehension abilities. Reading involves the thinking skills needed to understand the meaning of the text, as well as the ability to build understanding from the text (Herlina, 2018). The problem of reading is not a new problem. However, this problem cannot be ignored. Students' entire learning system will be paralyzed if they have difficulty in reading (Abdullah, 2018). Problems in the field of reading are very broad, especially in terms of students and reading materials. The selection of reading materials is one of the factors that can affect students' reading skills. Choosing relevant and interesting reading materials can increase students' interest in reading English. When students are provided with reading materials that are more interesting and appropriate to their needs, they will be more motivated to read and more engaged in the reading process.

The level of difficulty of the reading material also needs to be considered. Reading materials that are too easy or too difficult can hinder the development of

students' reading skills. By choosing reading materials that are appropriate for students' ability levels, they can build better comprehension, increase their vocabulary, and develop better reading skills (Amelia, 2020). In addition, the relevance of the students' context is also important in the selection of reading materials. Reading materials that are relevant to students' contexts can improve cross-cultural understanding. Reading materials that reflect students' cultural diversity will help them understand and appreciate cultural differences (Rahma, Ampa, & Nappu, 2021). It can also broaden students' horizons about the world.

Vocabulary expansion is also an important factor in selecting reading materials. Reading materials that introduce and have new vocabulary are helpful in improving students' skills to understand and use English. Reading materials rich in new vocabulary greatly help students expand their vocabulary and improve reading fluency (Wulan, Nugrahani, & Suwanto, 2023). Various genres and topics in reading materials can also broaden students' horizons. By introducing students to different types of texts, such as fiction, nonfiction, poetry and articles, they will be able to develop a more thorough understanding of the English language and improve their overall reading skills. Brown (2003) stated that English reading materials are strongly related to reading genres and reading skills. Sesmiyanti et al. (2021) stated that the use of English reading materials should be aligned with the educational objectives and suitable for improving students' reading skills. By considering these factors in the selection of reading materials, a supportive learning environment can be created by teachers in order to improve students' English reading skills. Using

reading materials that are interesting, appropriate to students' level of difficulty, relevant to their context, expand their vocabulary, and cover a variety of genres and topics, can improve students' reading skills and create meaningful reading experiences.

In a previous study, conducted by Hidayat & Setiawan (2020), researchers analyzed the situation and conditions to identify the needs of English students and teachers. In this study, four aspects of student and teacher needs were identified, namely media, materials, games, and dictionaries.

In the next previous study, conducted by Rokhmansyah et al. (2021) aimed comparing the content of reading materials for students in Indonesia with those in other countries, such as the United States, particularly those covering lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) topics, it is based on differences in the selection of reading materials for teaching in educational institutions.

In the last previous study, conducted by Amelia (2020) the purpose of this study was to identify differences in student achievement and to assess whether or not students' interest in reading and comprehension of the reading material improved.

This research has differences and similarities with previous research that has been mentioned. The similarities between the previous studies above and this study are both examining reading materials that can improve students' reading skills. While the difference between the previous study and this study lies in the focus of the research, namely the effect of selecting interesting reading materials and in accordance with the criteria of good reading materials on improving students'

English reading skills. In addition, the place and curriculum of this research are also different from the previous research. There are differences between the curriculum discussed in previous studies and the curriculum studied in this study. Previous research still uses K13, while this research uses Merdeka curriculum. K13 is a national curriculum that has been developed over many years and includes two main aspects of the curriculum, namely planning and organization related to the content, materials, and objectives of the lessons, as well as the methods used in the learning process. Merdeka Curriculum is an educational approach that provides a variety of learning in its curriculum, where subject matter is customized to allow students enough time to explore concepts and strengthen their competencies. Teachers have the flexibility to choose various learning aids, allowing the teaching and learning process to be adjusted to the needs and interests of students. The Merdeka Curriculum gives educators the freedom to design quality learning, according to the needs and learning environment of students.

There are differences in materials in K13 and Merdeka Curriculum, namely in Curriculum 2013 teaching tools, namely textbooks and non-textbooks and teaching materials developed by the directorate of vocational schools. The Merdeka Curriculum uses textbooks and non-textbooks, teaching modules, project examples to strengthen the Pancasila student profile, as well as examples of the education unit operational curriculum. In essence, the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes essential material and student character building according to the Pancasila profile. This approach gives teachers the freedom to choose learning tools that suit students'

needs and interests. This approach gives teachers the freedom to choose learning tools that suit the needs and interest.

### **B. Problem of Study**

Based on the background study that has been presented, the researcher formulates questions to answer the problem:

1. How can the selection of reading materials affect the improvement of students' English reading skills?
2. Is there a significant effect in the improvement of English reading skills among students exposed to different types of reading materials?

### **C. Research Objective**

This study aims to determine the effect of selecting reading materials on improving students' English reading skills and to understand the extent to which interesting reading materials can improve reading skills. Therefore, this research is expected to provide a deeper insight into the importance of selecting the right reading materials in developing students' English reading skills.

### **D. Scope and Limitation**

The study will focus on the impact of reading material selection on improving the English reading skills of intermediate level students at SMKN 2 Kota Kediri. Factors to be considered in the selection of reading materials include learning objectives, level of difficulty, readability, relevance to students' context, and genre

variety. This study is limited to narrative text reading materials. Data collection will be conducted through pretest and posttest. However, the study will not include the influence of other factors such as teaching methods, students' background, or study time.

### **E. Research Significance**

This research was conducted with the aim of obtaining useful results as follows :

#### **1. Researcher**

The results of this study are expected to be a valuable contribution to researchers as one of the alternative methods to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of selecting appropriate reading materials and their impact on students' English reading skills.

#### **2. For students**

It is hoped that the results of this study can provide support to students in improving their English reading skills.

#### **3. For readers who teach English**

It is hoped that the results of this study can serve as practical guidelines for educators in choosing wisely reading materials that can improve students' English reading skills.

## **F. Definition of Key Terms**

In an effort to clarify important terms used in this study, some definitions are presented:

### **1. Reading skill and Reading Comprehension**

Reading skill and reading comprehension are two interrelated concepts in the reading process. Reading skills refer to the basic abilities needed to understand written text. It includes skills such as recognizing letters and words, understanding sentence structure, recognizing vocabulary, and recognizing punctuation. Reading comprehension refers to the ability to understand and interpret written text efficiently. It involves understanding the meaning of the text, relating given information, identifying main ideas, drawing conclusions, making inferences, and analyzing information presented in the text.

### **2. Reading Material**

Reading material submits to any texts or passage that brings certain messages or ideas to be shared to the reader through the process of reading activity.

### **3. Reading Material Selection**

Reading material selection is a strategic process in education and personal development that focuses on choosing the right text or reading material according to the reader's goals and needs. This process is very important because the reading materials selected will affect the way readers acquire knowledge, build understanding and develop skills. The selection of reading materials must consider five criteria for good reading materials

that are, learning objectives, difficulty level, readability, relevance to context, and diversity.

#### 4. Narrative Text

In this study, reading materials in the form of narrative texts were chosen because this type of text is rich in vocabulary and can improve language comprehension, which can help students' vocabulary development and language comprehension. Narrative texts engage students in critical thinking skills, such as analyzing characters, conflicts, and moral values in the story. Narrative texts often include cultural aspects and values, which can provide insight into cultures, both in Indonesia and other countries. This can enhance students' understanding of the world. Thus, the selection of narrative texts in this study can provide an interesting and relevant context for students, and can influence the overall improvement of their English reading skills.

#### **G. Hypothesis**

1. Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant influence of reading material selection on improving students' English reading skills.
2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha): There is a significant influence of reading material selection on improving students' English reading skills.