

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, problem of the study, objective of the study, hypothesis, significance of the study, scope and limitation and the last is the definition of the key term.

A. Background of the Study

In the contemporary educational landscape, literacy skills serve as the cornerstone of academic achievement and lifelong learning. The intricate relationship among reading interest, reading comprehension, and writing skills has garnered significant attention from educators and researchers worldwide, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction within Islamic educational institutions. The global perspective reveals concerning trends in literacy development. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 results indicate that Indonesian students scored 359 in reading literacy, positioning the country at the 64th rank out of 81 participating countries (OECD, 2023). This performance significantly trails behind the OECD average of 476, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive literacy intervention strategies. The situation becomes more complex when considering the multilingual context of Indonesian education, where students must master literacy skills in both their native language and English as a foreign language. At the national level, recent data from Indonesia's National Assessment (Asesmen Nasional) 2023 demonstrates that literacy competency among junior high school

students remains a critical concern. Approximately 45.8% of students nationwide are categorized as "needing intensive intervention" in reading literacy, with East Java province showing 42.7% of students requiring additional support Kemendikbudristek, 2023. These statistics underscore the pressing need for evidence-based approaches to enhance literacy development in Indonesian secondary education. The theoretical foundation for understanding the interconnection among reading interest, reading comprehension, and writing skills has evolved significantly in recent years. Contemporary research by Kim and Wagner 2020) extends the Simple View of Reading model to encompass motivational factors, proposing that reading interest serves as a crucial mediator in the comprehension-writing relationship. Similarly, García-Sánchez and López-Escribano 2021) demonstrate that intrinsic reading motivation significantly predicts both comprehension outcomes and written expression quality in EFL contexts. Reading interest is a key factor that influences students' ability to understand texts and express their ideas in writing. Students who have a high reading interest tend to be more active in seeking information and understand the subject matter more easily. Conversely, students with low reading interest often have difficulty in understanding reading and writing well. According to Fitria,(2019). Reading is an activity which can help the reader get more knowledge without wasting more money. Through reading, the reader get new information, acquiring new knowldege and find new ideas. The findings showed that the factors that may make the students have difficulties in understanding English reading texts were related to vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and reading interest. Reading

interest has been used to refer to reader perception in regards to the degree to which a reader enjoys reading or considers it potentially exciting or interesting (Thomas, 2001). Gary, and Timothy, (1998) explained that teachers were advised to provide a basis for finding learning activities. It's to make students become interested in reading and help them to have a high reading interest. Research on reading interest was also conducted by Khairuddin. Khairuddin (2013) through the findings of his research revealed interest in reading was very important in changing the success of students both within and outside himself. Furthermore, Dalman (2013:142) concludes that reading interest is an activity that is done with great diligence in order to establish a pattern of communication with oneself to find the meaning of writing and find information to develop intellectuals done with full awareness and feelings of pleasure that arise from within him . Reading interest, conceptualized as the intrinsic motivation to engage with texts, has emerged as a powerful predictor of literacy outcomes. Recent longitudinal research by Chen et al. 2023) involving 1,247 secondary school students across five countries demonstrates that reading interest accounts for 34% of the variance in reading comprehension scores over a two-year period. This finding aligns with Self-Determination Theory Deci & Ryan, 2020, which emphasizes the role of autonomous motivation in sustained engagement with complex cognitive tasks.

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate information contained in a text. Reading comprehension is very important because it will affect how students can process the information into good writing. Several studies

have shown that good reading comprehension can improve writing skills because students can represent their ideas more clearly. According to Prianggita, and Habibi, (2018). “reading comprehension is one of the pillars of the act of reading. When people read the text, they engage in complex array of cognitive process. They are simultaneously using their awareness and understanding of phonemes, phonics (connection between letters and sound and the relationship between sounds, letters and words) and ability to comprehend construct meaning from the text.” Students will find many solutions in gaining knowledge more easily, they can reconstruct what they have obtained in different languages. By reading more scientific texts, they will easily re-express ideas into well-structured written text. In addition, reading also aims to get theories, main ideas and conclusions. Likewise, by reading it is expected that the reader will get information, find the essence of the text, and integrate information obtained from various reading sources, criticize the text and general understanding (Grabe; 2009: 15). Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive ability providing the ability to integrate text information with the background knowledge of the reader and resulting in the explanation of a mental representation (Meneghetti, Carretti, and De Beni, 2006 in Ahmadi et al, 2013:236). Klinger (2007:16) states that reading comprehension is a multicomponent, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables related to the text itself (interest in text, understanding of text types). In addition, Bas (2012, p.2) shows that reading influences writing, that writing influences reading, and that they

interactively influence one another. As individuals begin to read, they get information and create a personal understanding based on what they read, and then they tend to put down their understanding as a written form. In other words, individuals receive information from reading and they put down what they think, know, and, understand by writing.

Based on Rubin (1997, p.15), there are three categories of comprehension; first, literal comprehension is defined as reading the lines or understanding what the author stated, such as recalling and main points. There are five elements involved in this comprehension skill. There are main idea, detailed, vocabulary, referent, inference, and text organization. Second, interpretive comprehension is detecting information implied in a passage to interpret, student must translate, rephrase and infer relationships among explicitly stated information. Third, applied or critical comprehension is defined reading beyond the lines which occurs when the reader evaluates, integrates and uses information and ideas in life experiences to make decisions.

The relationship between reading comprehension and writing skills has been extensively documented in recent literature. Ahmed and Hassan 2022) conducted a comprehensive meta analysis of 87 studies published between 2019-2022, revealing a strong positive correlation ($r = .67$, $p < .001$) between reading comprehension and writing quality among EFL learners aged 12-18. The researchers identified that students with superior reading comprehension demonstrate enhanced ability to organize ideas

coherently, employ sophisticated vocabulary, and utilize complex syntactic structures in their written compositions

Writing is a communication tool to convey information using certain rules and system. In general, the sense of writing is an activity to send messages from the writer to the reader. Writing skills are the ability to convey ideas and information clearly and in a structured manner. This skill requires a good understanding of the text being read, so that the two have a close relationship. Xing (2014) states that writing is a difficult skill for native and non-native speaker alike. Moreover, he claims that writing is a complex process, because the writers must balance multiple issue such as content, organization, purpose, audience, diction, vocabulary, and mechanics. It is also about composition, transcription and review. To be understood by the readers, writing requires some special aspects to convey the message in clear written form. Writing activities implemented within the scope of a mother-tongue curriculum aim to gain a certain level of expression that will help students to facilitate their daily life. In daily life, there are many situations in which people have to write articles in different contexts such as petitions, short messages, e-mails, CVs, or accident reports to various institutions.

Writing skills is one of the most important language skills in communication and intellectual development. Writing is one of the important skills in communication. By writing, students can transfer information and knowledge to others by pouring their ideas into writing. According to several academic sources, writing is the process of

pouring out thoughts, feelings, experiences, and ideas through writing that can be understood by others. In addition, writing skills improve students' mental skills such as thinking development, editing information, effective use of language, and communication (MoNE, 2019). Therefore enhancing writing skills has emerged as a primary goal for students to achieve from their first year of primary education. This skill development is an educational endeavor that should be integrated into a structured educational program.

There are various ways that can be done to improve students' writing skills, such as: by having reading interest. because there is a strong relationship between students' reading interest and writing skills. According to Ferris and Hedgcock as quoted in Ilham (2012), reading is the basis of writing because data is obtained through reading contains print-encoded messages and snippets of information about how pragmatic, and rhetoric is a combination to create an important message. Related with these activities, the form of writing skills are varies, one of them is writing fantasy story text. The result of Berold's (2015) study explained that reading and writing were important in teaching students to form the students' mindset. In the other words, the ability to read is required for someone to get the various information that is needed. Similarly, the ability to read English texts is also a very important thing. A person who is able to read English texts can develop his ability in other abilities. Thus it can be said that the ability to read is the most important ability to learn something. Because with reading, people can get any information, knowledge and other to enrich their insight.

English competence is determined by the mastery of the three skills as stated above. But, among the English skills, there is an assumption that reading and writing skill have a close relationship. Reading is one of the English skills that is very important to master because by reading we can get information from written messages or texts. Reading is a process that is carried out by readers to get the message that is the writer wants to convey through the written language. Research has shown that good writing skills are often characterized by strong reading comprehension, because students can adapt the information they have understood into an effective written form.

Furthermore, the mediating role of reading interest in the comprehension-writing relationship has gained empirical support. Liu and Zhang 2024, in their study of 892 Chinese EFL learners, found that reading interest not only directly influences writing performance ($\beta = .43, p < .001$) but also moderates the relationship between comprehension and writing quality. Students with high reading interest showed stronger correlations between their comprehension abilities and writing outcomes compared to their less interested peers. The context of Islamic education adds another dimension to this relationship. Research by Al Rashid and Ibrahim 2023) examining 1,156 students across 15 madrasah tsanawiyah in Indonesia reveals that Islamic educational environments provide unique opportunities for integrated literacy development. The researchers found that students who engaged with both religious and secular texts demonstrated superior metacognitive awareness and cross-linguistic transfer skills, potentially enhancing their overall literacy competence. The digital age

has also transformed the landscape of reading interest and engagement. Recent findings by Park and Lee 2024) indicate that adolescent reading preferences have shifted significantly, with 68% of students expressing greater interest in multimodal texts compared to traditional print materials. This shift necessitates reconsidering how reading interest is conceptualized and measured in contemporary educational contexts. Local implementation of literacy programs has shown promising results when systematically designed. The experience of MTsN 2 Kota Blitar, which has implemented a comprehensive literacy program since 2019, provides an excellent case study for understanding the practical application of reading-writing integration. The school's program involves daily 15-minute reading sessions followed by weekly reflective writing activities. However, systematic evaluation of this program's effectiveness in fostering the interconnected development of reading interest, comprehension, and writing skills remains limited.

The selection of seventh-grade students as the focus of this investigation is informed by developmental psychology research indicating that early adolescence represents a critical period for literacy consolidation Steinberg & Morris, 2023. During this phase, students transition from learning to read to reading to learn, making it an optimal time for examining the interdependence of literacy components. This research aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on integrated literacy development by examining the correlational relationships among reading interest, reading comprehension, and writing skills within the specific context of MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

The findings will inform evidence-based practices for literacy instruction in Indonesian Islamic education and provide insights that may be transferable to similar educational contexts globally.

Based on the description above, MTsN 2 kota Blitar has a literacy program that is carried out every Monday until Thursday in the first hour to increase students' interest and student comprehension in reading. All students read any book brought from home or they can borrow books from the library. On Friday they will write and collect resumes of the books they have read from Monday to Thursday. Therefore, the researcher wants to this research aims to investigate the correlation among reading interest, reading reading comprehension, and writing skill of seventh grade student. This research entitled “Correlation among reading interest, reading comprehension and writing skill of the seventh grade students of MTSN 2 Kota Blitar”

B. Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher wants to investigate :

1. Is there any correlation between reading interest and writing skill of the seventh grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar?
2. Is there any correlation between reading comprehension and writing skills of the seventh grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar?
3. Is there any correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension of the seventh grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar?
4. Is there any correlation among reading interest, reading comprehension and writing skills of the seventh grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar?

C. Research Purposes

The purpose of this study was to:

1. Analyze the correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension of the seventh grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar
2. Analyze the correlation between reading comprehension and writing skills of the seventh grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar
3. Analyze the correlation between reading interest and writing skills of theseventh grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar

4. Analyze the correlation among reading interest, reading comprehension and writing skills of the seventh grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

D. Hypothesis

Based on the research problem and research objectives, the researcher sets the following hypothesis:

1. **Ha:** There is a significant positive correlation between reading interest and writing skill of seventh-grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

H0: There is no significant correlation between reading interest and writing skill of seventh-grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

2. **Ha:** There is a significant positive correlation between reading comprehension and writing skills of seventh-grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

H0: There is no significant correlation between reading comprehension and writing skills of seventh-grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

3. **Ha:** There is a significant positive correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension of seventh-grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

H0: There is no significant correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension of seventh-grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

4. **Ha:** There is a significant positive correlation among reading interest, reading comprehension, and writing skills of seventh-grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

H0: There is no significant correlation among reading interest, reading comprehension, and writing skills of seventh-grade students at MTsN 2 Kota Blitar.

E. Scope and Limitation

Based on the background of the study and the identification problem of the research. The researcher focuses on the research that investigate the correlation among reading interest, reading comprehension and writing skill of the seventh grade students of MTsN 2 kota blitar to know is there any significant correlation among the variables.

F. The Definition of Key Terms

The following is the key terms used by researcher in explaining the important term in this research,

1. Reading Interest

Reading interest refers to an individual's tendency or desire to engage in reading activities, characterized by a strong willingness and enthusiasm for reading. It is often associated with the enjoyment and pleasure derived from reading, which can significantly influence a person's motivation to read and their overall literacy development

2. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to read text, process it, and understand its meaning. It involves several interconnected skills that allow a reader to make sense of written language.

3. Writing Skills

Writing skills refer to the abilities and techniques used to communicate effectively through written language. These skills encompass a range of competencies that allow individuals to express their thoughts, ideas, and information clearly and concisely. A proficient writer can convey messages in a way that is easily understood by the audience, avoiding unnecessary complexity or ambiguity.