CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research problem, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of critical terms.

A. Background of the Study

From the end of 2019, the world was shaken by a virus called corona or Covid-19. Almost all sectors of life are affected by the lockdown, including the educational sector. The government requires all citizens to do all activities at home, making all schools closed. All students study from home or online learning. So, students and teachers do not need to meet directly. The instructing learning process was directed by the pronouncement of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, number 4 of 2020, to be specific, the execution of schooling guidelines in the primary time of the spread of the coronavirus infection, which is addressed to all officials at the provincial and regional levels in Indonesia.[1] In this case, the teaching and learning process is conducted through online and offline distance learning in their residences. It becomes the anxiety here. Even though distance learning is not a new thing faced by education in Indonesia still in its implementation does not work well and is still challenging to implement. Because not all schools can implement distance learning,

Distance learning uses gadgets like PCs, telephones, or workstations associated with the web. These gadgets need different applications accessible like WhatsApp (WA), Instagram, Zoom, Google Meet, Edmodo, and more as a learning medium. A few teachers likewise utilize online media as a learning medium like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. With this media, it is expected that students can follow the advancement appropriately, although they are in a better place. However, it is incredibly challenging for far-off regions with different impediments to

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[1] SE Kemendikbud, Implementation of Education Policy in the Emergency Period of Covid-19 Spread, March 24, 2020, No. 4.

conform to a distance learning framework. Connected with this, detailed from the kompas.com, the students whined about issues in the learning system during the pandemic time frame addressed to the Minister of Education Nadiem Makarim,[2] to be specific; the execution of distance learning is as yet not kid-friendly and comprehensive, then, at that point, learning offices and web access are additionally not equally appropriated. Furthermore, there are as yet numerous educators who seek after the consummation of the educational program by troubling students in giving errands consistently during conveying surpass learning, consequently making students focused, which then, at that point, affects student psychology.

KPAI (Child Protection Commission) said that many students are currently experiencing mental stress and even dropping out of school due to obstacles faced in distance learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Child Protection Commission also encourages improvements in the second phase of distance learning to undergo distance learning in a happy condition. Data shows 79.9% of students feel unhappy learning from home because 76.8% of teachers do not interact during distance learning except to give assignments only.[3] Child Protection Commission concluded that the implementation of distance learning in this phase had not run effectively. Looking at some of the above problems, the performance of distance learning has not gone well under the expected objectives. Based on the above exposure, there are still many challenges and obstacles in the distance learning process in this pandemic period. So, it takes a more effective and efficient learning concept to support learning in this pandemic period. Blended learning can be alternative learning to reduce problems in online learning. Blended learning is learning that combines face-to-face and online learning.

The uplifting news is that in January 2022, the local Face-to-Face School will happen depending on the issuance of the most recent 4 Ministers' Joint Decree on Guidance on The Implementation of Learning in the Coronavirus Disease Pandemic

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[2] Wahyu Adityo Prodjo, "50 Students Convey Distance Learning Problems to Minister of Education Nadiem, from Heavy Duty to funding Has Not Been Effective" Kompas, the year 2020 (June 12, 2020),

[3] Karitna, " Child Protection Commission: Many students are stressed until they drop out of school during Distance Learning" Antaranews, 2020 (July 23, 2020),

Period 2019 (Covid-19).[4] By utilizing an assortment of learning strategies that consolidate up close and personal gatherings with internet education to develop mastering abilities further. Blended learning can be laid as an ideal during this pandemic. Learning exercises should be possible by working together with offline learning up close and personal in clarifying and conveying material, shortening the length of learning in school, and keeping separation by not cooperating straightforwardly with the teacher through internet-based / virtual classes. Task frameworks can likewise be executed internet utilizing different learning innovations.

Blended learning can be applied basically to challenging regions to execute web-based learning. For example, in distant areas that incorporate safe zones to spread Covid-19, schools explicitly utilize the blended learning technique in the yellow, green zones. For these areas, blended learning is viewed as essential to reinforce comprehension of the material instructed on the web. Thus, the hindrances and impediments of face-to-face learning can be coordinated with the upsides of online learning and the other way around to accomplish ideal learning adequacy in this pandemic period.

Although considered one of the new breezes in the schooling system during the pandemic carrying out blended learning still carries difficulties for both teacher and students. One of it that students are not upheld with sufficient offices and foundations. Furthermore, web access in specific spots is additionally still an issue for the students who follow. While for teachers, the technique's weakness is the trouble of planning the approach to learning or the material. Must by making an appealing method of guides and offices equally circulated to all members. Notwithstanding, it is as yet hard to get the best arrangement.

Researchers are looking for previous studies that were not conducted before 2018. Moreover, researchers get some previous research that leads researchers to find a gap between the research that has been done and the research researchers are doing. Some of the studies done are only a small part and will be wholly discussed

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[4] Fakhrizal Fakhri, "National Children's Day 2020, Child Protection Commission assesses Distance Learning Makes Children fail a class" Okenews, the Year 2020 (July 23, 2020).

in chapter 2. There has been considerable research before discussing the utilization of blended learning. For example, in "The Effectiveness of Reading English Learning Process Based on Blended Learning through "Absyak" Website Media in Higher Education" by A Syakur et al., This research used Brawijaya students as research objects to focus more on research on the use of Absyak applications.[5] And "**Blended Learning** in **English** Teaching and Learning: A Review of the Current Literature" by WS Albiladi et al. This paper reviews the examination connected with the utilization of blended learning in English as a second language. This research is done in the USA.[6] And the last is "Blended Learning: Improving Student's Motivation in English Teaching Learning Process" by Ima Frafika Sari et al. This research explores blended learning, the benefits, and the utilization of blended learning in the 21st century.[7]

Nevertheless, there are still many shortcomings in the previous study that have not been answered yet. The researcher noticed that they had not found research that used junior high school students as a research subject, and most of the study was done with university students and high school students. Moreover, there are still quite a few researches conducted in Indonesia discussing blended learning, and most of the research on blended learning is still research abroad. Although domestic research has discussed blended learning, there is nothing specific about the narrative text in grade 9. The study only examines the positive side of the use of blended learning. No one has addressed what challenges students and teachers face in implementing blended learning. Of course, the school environment, school circumstances, and family economy become critical influences in applying blended

[5] Syakur, Abd, Zainal Fanani, and Rulam Ahmadi. "The Effectiveness of Reading English Learning Process Based on Blended Learning through "Absyak" Website Media in Higher Education". *Budapest International Research and Critics in Linguistics and Education (BirLE) Journal*, Vol. 3 No. 2 (2020): 763-772.
[6] Albiladi, Waheeb S., and Khlood K. Alshareef. "Blended Learning in English Teaching and Learning: A Review of The Current Literature". *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, Vol. 10 No. 2 (2019): 232-238.
[7] Sari, Ima Frafika, Ardiana Rahayu, Dwi Indra Apriliandari, and D. Sulisworo. "Blended Learning: Improving Students' Motivation in English Teaching Learning Process". *International Journal of Languages' Education and Teaching*, Vol. 6 No. 1 (2018): 163-170.

learning. This leads researchers that this research is necessary and very feasible to do.

Based on these studies, many previous studies have discussed the implementation of blended learning. The application of blended learning tends to be popular among college academics in high school / vocational schools, and only a few are applied to the first school level. What distinguishes this research from previous studies is the location and context of the situation and condition of the study. This research focuses on implementing blended learning in distance learning at MTs Darul Hikmah Jabon as a practical learning effort in the Covid-19 pandemic. It becomes a reference for understanding by looking at previous research on the implementation of distance learning (online), which is considered impractical, especially in this pandemic.

Therefore, researchers want to get more information, more detail, and more in-depth about the implementation of blended learning by exploring the implementation of blended Learning implementation at MTs Darul Hikmah Jabon. Hopefully, the results of this study can be used as a reference to develop a more effective learning model, especially in learning in pandemic times, so that it can be applied in schools that are geographically difficult to implement online learning. Furthermore, it can be a reference for developing future learning models after the pandemic. MTs Darul Hikmah Jabon was chosen because no research had previously been established at the school. MTs Darul Hikmah Jabon itself is located in the Jabon Drenges Kertosono district of Nganjuk regency. The school stands under the Babussalam foundation, which inside of the foundation consists of the elementary school, kindergarten, Islamic boarding school Tahfidzul Quran and work training hall. MTs Darul Hikmah Jabon was established in 2012. This school can be categorized as not located in the city center or on a large highway but is quite famous because most students also study and live in boarding schools.

One of the lessons that are difficult for students to understand and many complain about is English subjects; there are various reasons why students have difficulty learning English. Such as the students' minimal vocabulary, the problem understanding the text, and hard pronouncing the word. Reading becomes an

obstacle among the four skills students must learn when learning English. A fascinating reality is that the student's advantage in reading is viewed as low even before the pandemic. The interest of students in Indonesia in reading and understanding text is delegated concerning. UNESCO information said the reading interest of Indonesian young people has not been above half, which implies that not a portion of the Indonesian youngsters has a propensity for reading, so students' reading levels are lacking. Reading exercises that look easy work become liked to be kept away from by some students.

In learning English, four abilities should be instructed to students: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is one of the four parts of the language that students should master among those four abilities. It is another challenge for Indonesian students as EFL to master reading English since numerous things are to be learned. Reading, as a general rule, is reading enactment to get data. Reading likewise gives an extensive understanding of information. Without reading, students cannot expand their insight, open the world's windows, and access data innovation.

Wallace explains there are three main goals of reading, and the first is to read to survive, such as reading the rules of using something, reading directions, et cetera. The next step is to read to learn, such as reading new vocabulary, understanding the meaning of both literal and metaphorical meanings, understanding the arrangement of sentences, understanding how to pronounce a word, et cetera. Furthermore, the last is to read for pleasure. Reading like this aims to enjoy reading like reading a story in a text narrative.[8] The narrative text is one type of text taught to grade 9 junior high school students. The narrative text is a fictional text that tells the story of a fairy tale, and the author of the narrative fiction usually implies a moral message to the reader.[9] There are many types of narrative text ranging from fables about animal stories, adventure, legend, myth, et cetera. This story usually starts with an opening once and uses a past tense.

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[8] Wallace, Catherine. Critical Reading in Language Education. Springer, 2003.
[9] Graesser, Arthur C., Murray Singer, and Tom Trabasso. "Constructing Inferences during Narrative Text Comprehension". *Psychological Review, Vol.* 101 No. 3 (1994): 371.

The reason behind the narrative text being chosen is that students complain a lot that rather than other types of text, narrative text is considered the hardest for various reasons, such as the length of the text, the amount of vocabulary that students do not know, and requires students to understand the entire text to answer questions correctly. Moreover, one of the primary skills in learning a language is reading. In pre-research, researchers ask about reading, and students answer that reading narrative text is quite tricky, considering students must understand how to pronounce as well. This research aims to explore blended learning applied in MTs Darul Hikmah Jabon. Both teachers and students face challenges, and how teachers use strategies to overcome these challenges.

B. The Research Problem

Related to the description in the background of the study above, the researcher formulated the problems as follows:

1. How is the implementation of blended learning at MTs Darul Hikmah Jabon?
2. What challenges are faced by the students of MTs Darul Hikmah in learning narrative reading through blended learning?
3. What challenges are faced by the teachers of MTs Darul Hikmah in teaching narrative reading through blended learning?
4. What strategies were used by the teacher of MTs Darul Hikmah to overcome the challenges in teaching narrative reading through blended learning?
5. What did blended learning give to benefit the teacher and students?

C. The Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the research problem above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To know the implementation of blended learning activities at MTs Darul Hikmah Jabon.
2. To know the challenges faced by the students of MTs Darul Hikmah in teaching reading through blended learning.

3. To know the challenges faced by the teachers of MTs Darul Hikmah in teaching reading through blended learning.

4. To know the strategies used by the teachers of MTs Darul Hikmah to overcome the challenges in teaching narrative reading through blended learning.

5. To know the benefits of blended learning to the teacher and students.

D. Scope and Limitation

This research focuses on the challenges faced by MTs Darul Hikmah teachers in conducting blended learning for reading narrative text and then find out what strategies teachers use at MTs Darul Hikmah face challenges and find out how much benefit is felt by students with the methods that have been implemented. Researchers only focused on teaching to read narrative texts and only examined English teachers at MTs Darul Hikmah.

E. Significance of the Study

1. Theoretical Benefit

This research is giving enrichment to many theories that have been conducted. Also, this research is expected to enrich scientific studies in education and can be used as a reference for further analysis. Then it can provide input in the form of empirical data for academics about blended learning by giving an overview of the struggle and strategy used as a consideration and foothold in developing a more practical understanding during the pandemic and becoming a reference for future learning methods after the pandemic. Especially many theories about reading narrative text using blended learning.

2. Practical Benefit

a. Teacher

This research gives new knowledge about teaching English during the pandemic using blended learning. Hopefully, this research can increase learning effectiveness during the pandemic and become a suggestion for teaching methods in the future after the pandemic. Also, this research is expected to help provide new

insights into blended learning-based learning models. It gives new ideas to teachers about teaching especially reading narrative text using blended learning.

b.   Student

This research also gives students benefits; reading is not something easy, especially for EFL students and during the pandemic. This research could enlighten that pandemic isn't a reason for failing to learn English.

F. Definition of Key Term

1.   Blended Learning

Blended learning is formal education programs that allow students to learn through online content and instructions with self-control over time, place, sequence, and learning speed.[10] Blended learning is the ease of learning that combines various ways of delivery, teaching models, and learning styles, introducing a wide selection of dialogue media between facilitators and people who are taught. Blended learning is also a combination of face-to-face and online teaching, but more so as an element of social interaction. Blended learning is learning supported by an adequate variety of different ways of delivery, teaching methods, and learning styles. It is found in open communication among all parts involved with training.

2.   Teaching Reading Strategy

Learning strategy is a general pattern of teaching and learning activities to realize an effective learning process to achieve the learning goal.[11] The word "strategic" comes from the language (Greek), which means empowering all elements, such as planning, ways, and techniques to achieve goals. Strategy learning is interpreted as "teacher activity in thinking about and trying to occur consistently between aspects components forming instructional systems, for which teachers need using a particular tactic. Teaching strategy is the whole method and procedures that focus on student activities in the learning process, teaching to achieve a specific goal. In the context of teaching, strategies are composed of

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[10] Bersin, Josh. The Blended Learning Book: Best Practices, Proven Methodologies, and Lessons Learned. (John Wiley & Sons, 2004).

[11] Ruddell, Martha Rapp. *Teaching Content Reading and Writing*. Allyn and Bacon, Order Processing, PO Box 11071, Des Moines, IA 50336-1071, 1997.

obstacles faced, plans to be completed, material learned, learning experiences, and evaluation procedures. The role of teachers is more of a facilitator and supervisor. The teaching strategy Student-centered is designed to provide a flexible learning system according to the student's life and learning style. Strategy can be concluded that is away or model applied by teachers in providing tutoring and achieving a goal in the learning process. The success of learning depends on the strategy used so that the purposes are aspired to be completed.

3.   Teaching Reading Challenges

The primary purpose of learning to read is so that we can understand, process, convey and give opinions on a discourse. In other words, be a literate human being. But in practice, when teaching reading, the teacher finds obstacles faced during teaching reading which arouse determination to overcome.

4.   Narrative Text

The narrative text contains imaginary stories, fairy tales, or true stories that have been exaggerated. There is usually a moral value to learn at the story's end.[12] Narrative Text Structure Narrative text structure focuses on a series of stages proposed to build a text independently. There are four stages in narrative text: Orientation, commonly called introduction, contains who, when, and where a story is set. Then, complications tell the beginning of the problem that causes the peak of the crisis, commonly called the climax. This section usually involves the main character of the story. Next, Resolution This part is the end of the story, in the form of a solution to the problem. Solving problems can be better or even worse, making the story end happily or vice versa. Sometimes, some resolutions are other problems to solve. The author deliberately creates it to add and maintain interest and tension for his readers. Usually, this type of resolution is found in the mysteries and horror genres. Last, Re-orientation is the cover of an optional story, and Re-orientation can contain moral lessons, advice, or teaching from the author.

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[12] Graesser, Arthur C., Murray Singer, and Tom Trabasso. "Constructing Inferences during Narrative Text Comprehension". *Psychological Review*, Vol. 101 No. 3 (1994): 371.