

BAB I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

English is one of the most commonly spoken languages worldwide. Brumfit and Christopher J. (1997) assert that it serves as a global language and acts as a dominant medium for international communication. Crystal (2000:1) emphasizes that various countries rely on English to engage in communication across international borders. So, English is an international language as well as a global language. English is also often used as a formal language in meeting forums of world leaders such as the United Nation (UN), G20, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations), etc. Nababan (1993) formal variety is the variety of language used in official speeches, official meetings, or service meetings at the head of an agency. English is also an essential requirement for participating in international events or competitions like Miss Universe and Miss World. Moreover, it is important to note that English is one of the compulsory subjects taught in schools across numerous countries.

In the era of globalization, the significance of English continues to grow alongside advancements in information and communication technology. According to Kardimin (2011), learning English is akin to opening a window to a broader world, often referred to as the global village. Ratna (2014) highlights that while technology can overcome long-distance communication barriers through non-local networks, language remains essential. Without language, technology cannot function independently or automatically. This is because language, especially English, is the language of technology. The internet, social media, and digital platforms have significantly broadened the global presence of English, enabling people to access information, content, and educational resources in this language from virtually anywhere. English is the language most widely used on the internet (Nihalani, 2008). Therefore, English is no longer just a communication tool, but also a gateway that opens access to global knowledge.

On the academic side, English language skills play a key role in higher education and scientific research. Many scientific journals, international conferences, and primary research literature use English as the primary medium. Language intervention in the realm of science aims to accelerate the development of that science (Richards, 2002). (Novelina, 2021) There are various reasons why English holds significant importance in Indonesia's education sector. One key reason is its role as a medium for accessing global knowledge. Many schools and universities require English proficiency as a standard prerequisite for students pursuing further education (Novelina, 2021). It encourages the growth of research in various fields of science and promotes the exchange of knowledge between cultures. Therefore, the study of English is not just about learning or teaching the language itself. It also deals with a deep understanding of how English influences global interactions, cross-cultural communication, economics, and education. Understanding the role and impact of English in a global context is important in facing the challenges and opportunities offered by an increasingly connected world. Thus, research and development in the field of English has a far-reaching impact on individual and societal development.

Learning English in Indonesia is a unique challenge and opportunity in the national education context. The Indonesian school curriculum emphasizes the development of students' English communication skills. This is essential as students may encounter learning materials presented in English and it also serves as an added value to their competencies (Novelina, 2021). An in-depth understanding of English language learning in Indonesia will help in detailing existing problems, improvement efforts, and long-term benefits. In Indonesia, English is taught at various educational levels, from elementary schools to universities. According to Hidayatullah (2022), four fundamental skills are essential for mastering the language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, vocabulary acquisition is a prerequisite, as language, including English, is fundamentally composed of words. Schultz (2018) highlights that limited vocabulary hinders comprehension and learning. Therefore, to become proficient English learners, students must thoroughly understand and master these components. Once these skills are well-developed, they can effectively apply English in their daily lives.

One essential skill in learning English is reading. It involves a process where the reader interprets and comprehends the message conveyed by the writer through written words (Tarigan 2008). One way to increase students' creativity is through English. Students' strong creativity can be used as a source of inspiration in the writing process, so that mastery of English, especially reading ability, becomes important in this development. The process of learning to read often creates challenges for teachers and students. For educators, teaching reading in English is not a simple task. This is a significant responsibility to ensure students' understanding of English texts.

In the context of teaching English, teachers need to choose the right teaching method so that students can learn effectively. Unfortunately, conventional teaching methods such as reading books and doing exercises are often considered monotonous and can make students lose interest in learning English. In traditional classroom settings, teachers typically have students read texts and complete assignments after reading. This approach is not always successful in improving students' understanding of the text. From a student's perspective, problems often arise in terms of vocabulary. One of the main obstacles is difficulty memorizing new vocabulary. In the context of learning to read, vocabulary plays an important role. Having a rich vocabulary allows students to understand texts more easily.

Conventional learning is still widely applied by various schools in Indonesia, as is the case in SMP Negeri 1 Plered. Learning with this conventional method does not make a difference to students' understanding of narrative text. This conventional learning focuses on the teacher's explanation, and then students only listen or understand the text themselves. This kind of learning can make students less interested in the material to be delivered. Students also become less active in class. Therefore, the role of the teacher is needed in this case, so that learning becomes more interesting and effective for students.

Selecting an appropriate method for teaching English can significantly enhance the learning process. One effective approach is communicative language teaching, which emphasizes language games to help students better understand and retain vocabulary (Hodgson, 2021). Sometimes boring teaching will make students uninterested and it will be difficult to understand the material presented. Students

will be easily interested in more interactive learning. This interactive learning can be done by adding games in the learning. said that doing language games has benefits for students. The benefits of games are to encourage students and help teachers create a good language context (Aribowo et al. 2008).

One way to overcome these challenges in teaching reading is by incorporating games as an effective strategy. The Spelling Bee is one such game that can enhance students' vocabulary comprehension. As explained by Wedhanti et al. (2021) and McMillan (2012:3), the Spelling Bee involves a competition where students are tasked with spelling words accurately rather than quickly. This activity encourages learners to spell words aloud, which not only expands their vocabulary but also deepens their understanding of word meanings. The interactive nature of the game also boosts students' interest and engagement in the English learning process. As Desfika (2018) suggests, Spelling Bee is a highly recommended method for teaching English vocabulary, particularly for young EFL learners.

Based on the background provided, the researcher selected Spelling Bee as a method for teaching reading comprehension in narrative texts because traditional learning approaches have become less engaging for students. Students' interest in monotonous learning methods has waned. Therefore, the researcher aimed to combine games with learning to make the process more interactive. Given that reading comprehension of narrative texts requires a strong understanding of vocabulary, the Spelling Bee game was chosen as an ideal tool to help students improve their vocabulary while enhancing their comprehension skills.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Based on this background, the researcher formulates the research problem as the lack of student interest in learning English due to unengaging teaching methods. To address this issue, the researcher aims to implement the Spelling Bee learning method, which is expected to significantly enhance student engagement and improve their learning outcomes.

1.3 Limitations of the problem

The scope of this study is focused specifically on examining reading comprehension in narrative text learning through the use of the Spelling Bee game

technique. To avoid any potential misinterpretation, the researcher emphasizes the need to narrow the focus to this particular method and its impact on vocabulary understanding and reading comprehension within narrative texts. Specifically, the emphasis is on assessing students' comprehension levels when reading narrative texts.

1.4 Research questions

This research is entitled “ The Effectiveness of the Spelling Bee in Teaching Reading Narrative Text at SMP Negeri 1 Plered” the research question that can be used is:

- 1) How are the results of the reading narrative text before and after treated through the Spelling Bee?
- 2) Is there any significant effect to the Spelling Bee in improving student reading skill?

1.5 Aims of the research

The objectives of the research are:

- 1) To assess students' reading comprehension of narrative texts both before and after the implementation of the Spelling Bee game technique.
- 2) To investigate the significance of the Spelling Bee game's impact on students' reading comprehension in narrative texts.

1.6 Significance of the research

The researcher hopes that the researcher's findings provide benefits for all parties. Researchers hope that this research can make a significant contribution both theoretically and practically.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significant

The related theory in this research is behaviorism theory. In this theory, spelling bee can be seen as a form of reinforcement-based learning. Competitions can provide stimulus and response in the form of improved reading comprehension and spelling.

1.6.2 Practical Significant

The researcher hopes that the results of this study can serve as a reference for teaching vocabulary through the Spelling Bee Game. The findings are intended to provide valuable insights for English teachers, particularly at State Junior High School 1 Plered, to help improve students' reading comprehension in narrative texts.

