

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 English Learning in EFL Context**

English language learning in an EFL context refers to the process of acquiring English language skills in a non-English-speaking country where English is not widely used in daily life. In this context, English is typically taught as a subject in schools, and learners have limited exposure to English outside of the classroom.

In Indonesia as an EFL country, English language learning focuses on developing the four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Learners are introduced to vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and communication strategies to help them understand and use English effectively.

English language learning in this context requires dedicated teachers, appropriate instructional materials, and supportive learning environments. While learners in an EFL context may face challenges due to limited exposure to English, effective teaching strategies and engaging classroom activities can help them develop their English language skills (Khan, 2011; Sakkir et al., 2021).

#### **2.2 English Learning in MTs an Overview**

Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), an Islamic junior high school in Indonesia, differs from public junior high schools in its integrated curriculum, emphasizing Islamic education alongside general subjects. MTs place a strong emphasis on Islamic values and incorporate religious activities daily, distinguishing it from public junior high schools. Teachers in MTs are required to have a robust background in Islamic education, unlike their counterparts in public schools. The school environment in MTs tends to be more religious and conservative, with adherence to Islamic dress codes and, in some cases, the separation of male and female students during certain activities (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2016).

These differences highlight the unique nature and focus of MTs as Islamic educational institutions in the junior stage.

English learning in Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) serves multiple crucial roles in preparing students for their future. It aims to develop their proficiency in the four language skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing, while also fostering cultural understanding and cognitive growth (Songbatumis, 2017). It follows the Competency Standards of Graduates (CSG), which outlines the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies that students should achieve (Pido & Dewi, 2019). The curriculum emphasizes the development of reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills, with a particular emphasis on mastering speaking skills (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017).

Pido & Dewi (2019) stated that English learning in MTs exposes students to diverse cultures and perspectives through English literature and media. This exposure promotes intercultural communication, fosters tolerance, and encourages respect for diversity. It helps students develop a global perspective, which is essential in today's interconnected world.

English learning in MTs aligns with the national education goals of Indonesia. It aims to prepare students to be globally competitive and active participants in the global community. Providing students with the language skills needed for international communication, collaboration, and exchange programs, contributes to Indonesia's aspirations on the global stage (Dewi & Pratami, 2022).

Beyond language proficiency and cultural awareness, English learning in MTs contributes to students' overall cognitive development. Engaging with English texts, participating in discussions, and debating enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills (Utomo, Kusakabe, Sultoni & Setyowati, 2020). These cognitive abilities are essential for students to excel academically and professionally.

In summary, English learning in Madrasah Tsanawiyah serves a pivotal role in preparing students for the challenges of an increasingly interconnected and globalized world. It equips them with vital language skills, fosters cultural understanding, aligns with national education objectives, and enhances cognitive

abilities, ensuring they are well-prepared for higher education and future career opportunities.

### **2.3 Challenges in Teaching English at MTs**

English teachers at MTs in Indonesia, encounter several challenges that impact their ability to provide effective English language instruction. Songbatumis (2017) categorizes the challenges into three main areas:

#### **1) Student-related Issues**

Student-related issues in teaching refer to challenges that arise from factors directly associated with students. These challenges may include students' varying levels of proficiency, learning styles, and engagement in the educational process.

#### **2) Teacher-related Issues**

Teacher-related issues pertain to challenges teachers face in the teaching process. These challenges may involve pedagogical approaches, classroom management, and the ability to effectively convey information to students, impacting the overall quality of education.

#### **3) Facility-related Issues.**

Facility-related issues involve challenges associated with the physical and logistical aspects of the educational environment. These include inadequate resources, a lack of appropriate teaching materials, and insufficient infrastructure, all of which can hinder the teaching and learning process.

Another researcher categorized it as follows: The first challenges were from the teachers. These challenges are less teaching material, teaching design, classroom management, ICT skills, teaching administration, job load, and memory decrease. The second was from the students. Those are lack of vocabulary, loss of motivation, and juvenile delinquencies. The third was from schools. Schools had limited facilities, which could be utilized by teachers and

students in teaching activities such as; limited dictionaries, projectors, and language laboratories. The fourth was from the parents. Many parents from the village have low education and future vision so it influences their children's education. (Utomo et al., 2020)

#### **2.4 Study of the Relevant Research**

Indeed, there has been a significant amount of research conducted on the challenges of teaching English in junior high school (MTS) environments. These challenges can vary depending on the specific context and location. Research conducted by Dewi & Pratami (2022) at MTs Nurul Qolbi discusses the challenges faced by English teachers in teaching English as a foreign language at a private Islamic junior high school in Indonesia. The challenges identified include lack of vocabulary mastery, low concentration, lack of discipline, student boredom, speaking problems, confidence issues, facilities issues, and time constraints.

Further research was conducted by Prabowo & Akmal (2019). The research discusses the challenges faced by teachers in teaching English in both rural and urban schools. It addresses issues such as vocabulary mastery, students' motivation, parents' support, and students' activeness.

Research on this has also been conducted at MTsN Taliwang. Songbatumis (2017) discusses the challenges faced by English teachers and the solutions they implement. The challenges include students' lack of vocabulary mastery, low concentration, lack of discipline, boredom, and speaking problems, as well as teachers' shortage of training, language proficiency issues, limited mastery of teaching methods, unfamiliarity with IT, and lack of professional development. Inadequate resources and facilities, as well as time constraints, also pose challenges.

Besides that, research in Banjarnegara by Utomo, Kusakabe, Sultoni & Setyowati (2020) About challenges faced by English teachers in teaching at a junior high school in Banjarnegara Regency. The study identifies various challenges including lack of teaching material, teaching design, classroom

management, ICT skills, teaching administration, job load, memory decrease, lack of vocabulary and motivation among students, limited facilities in schools, and low education and future vision among parents.