

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive study overview. It includes the study background, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significances of the study.

A. Background of the Study

In Indonesia, English has been taught as a subject starting from primary school. This practice was implemented as a part of educational curriculum from 1994 until the current curriculum known as "*Kurikulum Merdeka*" with consider that English is an international language and mastering English is an invaluable skill; then, introducing English since primary schools is an opportunity that can be utilized because primary school students are in the golden age to learn a second or foreign language (Rahman & Amin, 2020; Wahyuningsih & Mua'dib, 2023). In implementing this curriculum, as foreign language learners, Indonesian students require considerable adaptation, as learning English remains challenging for them. To succeed in learning English, students must be cognitively engaged in the learning process to make learning this language easier. Therefore, to effectively implement this educational curriculum, students must have cognitive engagement in English learning to support their success in the subject.

Cognitive engagement is a crucial factor that significantly influences students' success in their learning process. It refers to the students' deep mental engagement in the learning process, encompassing the ability to understand, analyze, comprehend, remember, and apply the knowledge gained from learning results to everyday life (Fredricks et al., 2004). As EFL learners, students must have cognitive engagement to engage and succeed in the English learning process. This statement aligns with Fredricks et al. (2004), who state that to succeed in learning, students must have three dimensions of engagement, namely: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. In this study, cognitive engagement plays a role as the main focus of research because as Oga-Baldwin (2019) states, cognitive engagement is considered the most important dimension of student engagement that determines

the students' success in learning, as it directly affects the depth and quality of students' learning process, and also, cognitive engagement can significantly influence other dimensions of engagement. In addition, Zhang (2020) also claims that cognitive engagement is the foundation for students to achieve maximum learning outcomes, especially in learning English, which demands complex understanding. Thus, to succeed in English learning, it is essential to encourage students' cognitive engagement in English learning first.

Contextually, students' cognitive engagement cannot appear by itself, the role of parents is necessary in this regard. The role of parents is an important factor in students' education. It can influence students' achievement and improve their academic performance (Gregorovi, 2021). In this context, the role of parents is one of the external factors that can contribute to encouraging students' cognitive engagement. The low and high levels of students' cognitive engagement in their learning process can be influenced by the role of parents. As Radian et al. (2021) stated that parents are students' first and most important educators, they have the most significant opportunity to influence students' intelligence. Therefore, based on all these things, it can be concluded that to be successful in the English learning process, students require the role of parents to encourage their cognitive engagement in English learning.

Many previous studies have examined the role of parents in supporting students to learn English. One of them was conducted by Purwanto et al. (2023), which aimed to investigate the role of parents in motivating students to learn English. Their study employed a qualitative approach with a case study method, involving five students and their parents at the Ganesha Course as participants. The data of their study were collected using motivation scales, interviews, and observations. The results of their study showed that parents play a crucial role in students' motivation to learn English with their active monitoring of students' academic progress and providing encouragement. However, there are some differences between their study and this study. Their study examined the role of parents in motivating students to learn English; meanwhile, this study focused on exploring the role of parents in encouraging students' cognitive engagement in English

learning, which is a crucial factor that determines students' success in the English learning process. Additionally, unlike Purwanto et al. (2023)'s study, their study was conducted at the primary school student level at a course named the Ganesha course by viewing the students and their parents' perspectives through motivation scales, interviews, and observations. In contrast, this study was conducted at the primary school student level at one of the primary schools in Tasikmalaya by viewing only the students' parents' perspective through interviews. Thus, based on these gaps, the researcher was motivated to investigate a similar topic with a different research scope.

In conclusion, based on the previous explanation, the researcher believed this was a unique topic that deserved research, considering there are few studies that have explored the role of parents in supporting students' English learning by encouraging students' cognitive engagement. Therefore, based on all these things, the researcher was compelled to conduct a study titled "Exploring the Role of Parents in Encouraging Students' Cognitive Engagement in English Learning: A Case Study of Primary School Students." Ultimately, the results of this study were expected to contribute insights into the existing literature on parents' roles in supporting students' education, particularly in English learning, which also served as a guide and references for parents to support students in learning English successfully, as well as a suggestion for teachers to maintain communication with students' parents by sharing information related to the examples of activities that parents can engage in with students at home.

B. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the study background above, the researcher addressed the following question: "What are the roles of parents in encouraging students' cognitive engagement in English learning?"

C. Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding the reader about the terms used in this study, the researcher provides three definitions of the critical terms related, as follows:

1. **The Role of Parents** : The role or contribution performed by parents to their children. In the context of this study, the role of parents refers to the role or contribution performed by students' parents in elementary school at Tasikmalaya to encourage students' cognitive engagement in English learning.
2. **Students' Cognitive Engagement** : Students' cognitive engagement here refers to the students' deep mental involvement in the English learning process, encompassing the ability to understand, analyze, comprehend, remember, and apply the knowledge gained from learning to everyday life.
3. **English Learning** : The English learning process that undertaken in primary school at Tasikmalaya to learn English as a foreign or second language.

D. Aim of the Study

Based on the study question, this study aims to explore the role of parents in encouraging students' cognitive engagement in English learning.

E. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

This study is useful for providing valuable insights into the existing literature on the role of parents in supporting students' education, particularly in English learning.

2. Practical Significance

This study is useful for providing valuable guidelines and references for parents to support students in learning English successfully. Additionally, this study can serve as a suggestion for teachers to maintain communication with students' parents by sharing information related to the examples of activities that parents can engage in with students at home.

3. Empirical Significance

This study is useful for providing experience for the researcher in conducting scientific research. In addition, this study provides valuable insights for the researcher on how parents can play a role in encouraging students' cognitive engagement, thereby helping them engage with and succeed in the process of learning English.