

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Creativity is an important aspect of education. It can help students generate new ideas or alternatives that solve problems. It stated that creativity enables students to be ready to make decisions, see things from various perspectives, think critically, and develop innovative solutions to complex problems (Demiriz & Okur, 2015). Students can achieve creativity with the help of teachers through literature media in literature courses, one of which is short stories. Writing short stories can help students develop their creativity. Satri Efendi and Yakub (2022) showed that short stories can encourage students' creativity, and participating in writing short stories involves analysing the plot structure and creating narratives. This practice resulted in the publication of an anthology, which shows their creative work.

Creativity can be formed by teachers creating an interactive, innovative, creative, and motivating learning environment. All of these elements can significantly improve students' critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and creativity. Teachers can help students develop original creative ideas into more developed concepts by integrating them into the knowledge-creation process (R. K. Sawyer, 2004; Scardamalia, 2006). The knowledge creation process can use literature as its media. Integrating literature into ELT learning can increase students' cultural awareness and understanding of the target language. Involving students in activities that explore and interpret literature works in innovative ways can expand their knowledge and also foster their ability to think critically and creatively (Jayapalan et al., 2024).

Various types of literature, including poetry, novels, and short stories, are frequently used in ELT learning. Poetry is a literary work often used in language learning because its content is limited, and poetry has many themes relevant to language learning. Tevdovska (2016) stated that poetry explores a wide range of issues relevant to students' interests and concerns and encourages

children to communicate their emotions, opinions, reactions, and thoughts. Novels are also often used for ELT classes because, according to Suoth et al. (2023), novels can improve critical thinking and language skills. One of the literatures that is often used in foreign language learning in ELT is short stories. According to Abdalrahman (2022), short stories can help students enhance their vocabulary while also integrating all four language skills. Barzani (2020) and Ceylan (2016) revealed that most EFL teachers and students have positive perceptions of using short stories. They stated that short stories can enhance reading comprehension, which aligns with the contemporary view of EFL teaching and learning, and increases their appreciation of literature, prompting them to read more short stories.

This study examines how short story writing activities in children's literature courses can serve as an effective tool for developing students' creativity. According to Munir and Hendaryan (2023) the short story writing program can help students develop their imagination and creativity in writing, increase their self-confidence, and allow them to express themselves freely. By analyzing the impact of the writing process carried out by students, this study seeks to understand the benefits of integrating creative writing exercises using literary media, namely short stories. Ultimately, this study aims to investigate the benefits of short story writing to develop students' creativity.

A previous study investigated the effectiveness of short stories in developing creative reading skills among university students. The study found that short stories improved creative reading skills for the experimental group of students. This improvement is attributed to the use of short stories rather than the typical approach utilized to teach the control group students. The current study also demonstrated that the short story program had a practical and pedagogical impact on the experimental group students' creative reading skills and overall creative reading abilities. The research methodology is the gap between the previous study and my study. My research uses qualitative research methodology and focuses on the benefits that students gain from writing short stories to develop their creativity.

B. Formulation of the Problem

A research question for this study is “What benefits do the students obtain from writing short stories to develop their creativity?”

C. Operational Definitions

1. English Short Story

An English short story refers to a creative written work produced by students in English, typically with a word count of 1,000–7,500 words, that focuses on a single incident or idea. It features a small cast of characters, a concise storyline, and a clear climax or turning point. The short story serves as both a linguistic and creative output, reflecting the students’ understanding of literary conventions and their capacity for imaginative expression.

2. Creativity

Creativity is a person's ability to generate ideas, solutions, or new approaches to a problem. Creativity is also a form of intelligence that can be measured by a person's ability to generate fluent, flexible, original, and diverse ideas. Operationally, creativity in this study is identified through four main indicators: fluency, or the ability to produce a large number of ideas within a limited time; flexibility, or the ability to generate varied ideas from different perspectives; originality, referring to the uniqueness or novelty of the ideas produced; and elaboration, which involves the ability to expand, develop, and refine initial ideas into more detailed and meaningful outcomes.

3. ELT

ELT refers to the teaching of English to non-native speakers. This field encompasses a variety of methodologies, approaches, and contexts in which English is taught, including formal educational settings and informal settings. ELT includes instruction in the four core language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—as well as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. It is influenced by learners' needs, language proficiency levels, cultural backgrounds, and educational goals.

D. Aim of the Study

This study aims to investigate the benefits of writing short stories to develop students' creativity in a children's literature class.

E. Significance of the Study**1. Practical Significance**

The use of short stories can be implemented by English teachers to enhance creativity not only in the context of higher education but also in different educational settings.

2. Empirical Significance

This study will provide empirical data on the benefits of writing short stories to develop students' creativity. The evidence can provide insight and knowledge regarding these benefits.