

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the study. The background of the study and formulation of the problem will be explored to provide insight into the context and urgency of the issue under study. Following this, operational definitions, the aim of the research, and its significance will be discussed, thus clarifying the research objectives and the benefits derived from this study.

A. Background of the Study

As students of English as a foreign language, reading is one of the English language skills many students encounter at various school levels, including junior high school. Developing this reading skill is crucial to developing other skills, such as writing. According to Wati (2021), one of the factors that encourages students to be good at writing is that it is accompanied by reading. The more students read, the more they expand their insights and knowledge, ensuring they have enough references and ideas to write about. Similarly, Attiyat (2019) stated, the more students are involved in reading, the more likely they are to catch words involuntarily, which can increase their vocabulary and make the writing process better than not reading. In other words, reading and writing are interrelated. Students who have read many books will find it easier to develop ideas when they want to write something (Ningsih, 2019). However, not all students have good reading habits, and this becomes one of the obstacles to their writing ability.

One effective way to improve students' writing abilities is through reading for pleasure. According to Abimbola et al. (2021) and Biswas (2023), reading for pleasure is one of the enjoyable activities carried out during leisure time. This activity involves reading texts without obligation or external pressure, with the opportunity to choose reading material and reading time (Ulivia et al., 2023). Furthermore, choosing enjoyable reading materials can help readers develop positive feelings such as entertainment, relaxation, and comfort, impacting their creativity and writing abilities (Attiyat, 2019). Furthermore, the National Library Research Trust-UK (2012), as cited in Okwako (2023), states that by enjoying

reading, students will unconsciously acquire various language skills, such as becoming good readers, expanding their vocabulary, and improving their ability to understand and use complex grammar. In other words, this skill not only contributes to the development of good writing style but also helps students compose texts that require imagination and fluency in expressing ideas in writing.

Despite its importance, writing is considered the most challenging skill (Rahmawati, 2021). These difficulties exist because it is inseparable from the language used in writing, whether the language used is native or foreign (Fadhilla et al., 2023). Similarly, Ferisia et al. (2020) highlight that the complexity of writing, such as vocabulary, grammar, critical thinking skills, and background knowledge, also makes writing difficult. Moreover, the writing process, which includes prewriting, drafting, and editing, can be exhausting for students. Therefore, these stages must be carefully considered to produce good writing products (Rahmawati, 2021). To achieve this, in-depth knowledge is needed to make a good writing which can the message and content are clear and understandable for readers (Noor et al., 2022).

In the Indonesian curriculum, students at junior high school are taught to write in several types of text. One of the genres they learn to write is a narrative text. A narrative is a story based on the sequence of an event or incident that can contain fictional or non-fictional stories (Cahyani et al., 2024). This text, including anecdotes, legends, and fantasy stories, are commonly used in Indonesian primary and junior secondary education (Aniati et al., 2025). In writing activities, narrative text involves a creative process of developing and developing ideas for writing. In this activity, students need imagination and creativity to process ideas and create good stories (Cahyani et al., 2024). In addition, students must also have a mastery of vocabulary that can affect their success in writing narrative texts so that they can engage readers (Maryamah, 2021). Therefore, writing narrative text requires students to have reading experience because limited knowledge about something will lead to limited ideas in writing (Cahyani et al., 2024).

Based on the researcher observations during teaching practice at one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya, the researcher found that students often struggle with organizing ideas, using varied vocabulary, and lack confidence when writing narrative texts. Additionally, some students demonstrated low motivation and interest in writing activities, which may hinder their ability to produce coherent and engaging texts. Interestingly, although writing difficulties are still common among students, the school has provided access to a well-stocked library, which includes textbooks, storybooks, novels, newspapers, magazines, and comics. According to the information provided by the teacher, many students voluntarily visit the library during break time, and the type of reading they often choose is storybooks or novels for pleasure. In other words, this behavior suggests a possible link between students' engagement in reading for pleasure and the development of their writing ability.

Some previous studies have also similarly discussed the correlation between reading and students' writing ability. The research undertaken by Attiyat (2019) investigated the impact of pleasure reading on enhancing writing achievement and reading comprehension. This study stated that reading for pleasure significantly impacts students' writing achievement. Other research by Ihsan (2021) discussed the correlation between students' reading habits and writing ability in the narrative text at State Islamic Senior High School 1 Pekanbaru, and the researcher found that reading habits affect students' writing ability. Ovilia and Asfina (2022) also conducted a study investigating reading for pleasure, which has a positive contribution to the development of English language skills indirectly. This study found that reading for pleasure positively contributes to acquiring English language skills such as vocabulary, grammar, and reading skills, which are important elements in writing. In addition, Maryamah (2021) also found that vocabulary mastery and reading skills significantly influence narrative text ability. These findings reinforce the notion that reading for pleasure has the potential to support writing ability, especially in narrative text writing.

Based on field observations and support from various previous studies, reading for pleasure has the potential to improve students' writing abilities.

However, few studies have specifically examined the correlation between reading for pleasure and writing ability in composing narrative texts, especially at the junior high school level in Indonesia (Attiyat, 2021; Boyask & Milne, 2021; Ovilia & Asfina, 2022; Yangdon et al., 2024). This study aims to fill the gap regarding whether reading for pleasure correlates with the writing ability of Indonesian students in one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya. Based on this, this research was designed as a study entitled “The Correlation Between Reading for Pleasure and Students' Writing Ability in Composing Narrative Text at Junior High School in Tasikmalaya.”

B. Formulation of the Study

This research focuses on answering the question, “Is there any correlation between reading for pleasure and students' writing ability in composing narrative texts?”

C. Operational Definitions

These are the operational terms of this research to avoid misunderstanding:

1. Reading for Pleasure

Reading for pleasure in this study is defined as the habit of junior high school students in reading materials of their choice voluntarily in their spare time for entertainment or personal pleasure, such as storybooks, novels, and comics that they can access on the internet or in the library. This variable is used to measure the extent to which interest and frequency of voluntary reading contribute to the ability to write narrative text based on reading as a form of play, motivational analysis of leisure reading, frustration index, reading span, and vehicle of reading habit.

2. Writing Ability

Writing ability in this study is defined as the ability of junior high school students in writing English narrative text with attention to aspects of format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentence structure. This variable is used to measure the extent to which students are able to develop ideas and organize them into a narrative text that is coherent and easy to understand.

D. Aim of the Study

Based on the research question, this research aim to determine whether there is a correlation between reading for pleasure and students' writing ability in composing narrative text. The research results are expected to provide knowledge and information on this correlation.

E. Significance of the Study

The significance of the research is:

1. Theoretical Significance

This research provides basic information that can contribute to literacy theory by exploring the effects of reading for pleasure on students' writing ability. It will focus specifically on their ability to compose narrative texts.

2. Practical Significance

This research informs teachers to find teaching strategies that integrate reading for pleasure activities in order to improve students' writing abilities.

3. Empirical Significance

This research expands knowledge about the correlation between reading for pleasure and writing ability in composing narrative texts, which can be used as a basis for further research.