

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a wide-ranging description of the study. It comprises the background, formulation of the problem, operational definition, aims of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Authentic materials are one of teaching materials types that offers a lot of benefits so it can be used in English language teaching because it can optimize the English teaching and learning process. According to Prošić-Santovac and Halas Popović (2021), authentic resources connect the gap between classroom learning with real-life language applications, fostering learners' communicative competence, engagement, and motivation. Furthermore, Jaelani (2020) stated that the use of authentic materials help language learners exposing to natural language use such as idioms, culture, and contextual vocabularies. Therefore, incorporating authentic materials in English language teaching can be beneficial not only enhances learners' linguistic skills but it can also fosters their cultural awareness, making language learning more meaningful and relevant to real-world communication.

Eventhough, there are the advantages of using authentic materials in the classroom, yet the teachers still face several challenges in their implementation. Several resecearchers found out for many teachers, the complexity of the language and the appropriateness of content for varying levels of learners are significant barriers (Setyowati, 2019; Srinivas Rao, 2019; Wondimtegegn, 2020). Furthermore, the process of selecting and adapting authentic materials can be a time-consuming process (Huda, 2017). Therefore, it is essential to explore the strategies teachers employ to effectively utilize authentic materials in optimizing the language learning process and overcome potential obstacles of implementing authentic materials in the classroom.

In line with this study, an English teacher in Tasikmalaya employs authentic material into their teaching learning process to optimize students' English language learning for ten years. Various authentic materials such as digital newspapers,

movies, podcasts, and so on are able to make the learning process more interesting and effective. During the implementation of authentic materials, the teacher faces challenges such as the language being too complex for their students and spending too much time selecting and organizing the materials. However, overcoming the challenges in implementing authentic materials is essential to have an optimal English language learning. Therefore, strategies are needed to overcome those challenges. Thus, the teacher employs strategies in implementing authentic material, including selecting and applying authentic materials in the classroom.

In recent years, there have been several studies about the use of authentic materials in English language teaching. The current study conducted by Fitrawati & Safitri (2021) examined the perceptions of secondary school teachers about the use of authentic material in Pakistani English language classrooms and the result showed that most of the teachers liked using authentic material in their classes. Moreover, Joraboyev (2021), found that the teachers believed that authentic materials could help the students practice English in real life. However, the previous research mostly focused on teachers' perception of the use of authentic material, there is limited of in-depth insights into how these materials are implemented in classroom settings or the specific strategies teachers use to integrate them effectively. Hence, to address this gap, this study focuses on teachers' strategies for using authentic materials to optimize English language learning.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background above, in this study the researcher addresses the following question, “How does a teacher optimize the use of authentic materials in her English language teaching?”

1.3 Operational Definition

To avoid misunderstanding the terms set out in this study, the researcher provides the definitions related to this study, such as:

- 1.3.1 English Language Learning : English language learning is a teaching learning process for the primary purpose of teaching the English language to Indonesian EFL students.

- 1.3.2 Authentic Material : Authentic material is any English material that is not originally constructed for teaching purposes for example short movies, songs, newspapers and used by an English teacher at one of junior high schools in Tasikmalaya, Indonesia to optimize English language learning.
- 1.3.3 Strategy : Strategy is a series of arrangements carried out by English teachers to implement authentic material in their learning teaching process in order to optimize the English language learning.

1.4 Aim of the Research

According to a research question, this research aims to explain teacher's strategies in optimizing the use of authentic materials in her English Language Teaching.

1.5 Significances of the Study

- 1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution : This research enriches the literature on the use of authentic materials for optimizing English language learning especially on the teachers' strategies.
- 1.5.2 Practical Uses : The research contributes to the English teachers to utilize authentic materials into their English teaching learning.
- 1.5.3 Empirical Uses : This research provides empirical insights into what teachers' strategies for optimizing the English language learning.