

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

English is the most widely spoken language in the world. In Indonesia, English has become a compulsory subject taught at the elementary school to university level.¹ To communicate well, it is important to understand language skills. One of the language skills is reading.²

There are still many students who have difficulty learning English reading comprehension. Among them, students do not understand questions, have difficulties in understanding vocabulary, identifying references, drawing conclusions, and determining the main idea of the text.³ Another difficulty students face is activating background knowledge or schemata while reading and their inability to connect what they read with context. In addition, students' difficulty in understanding the text is their inability to determine the purpose of reading. They have low motivation and interest in reading. Lack of practice and limited genre knowledge are also the causes of their weakness in reading. These difficulties become obstacles for students in reading and understanding English texts better.⁴

Based on these difficulties, teachers should facilitate students with media that are easy to understand and interesting. It seems that the use of narrative text can help students to improve their ability to understand reading texts. However, many things need to be considered in understanding a narrative text. Students must be able to find story ideas, character development, and others. Another cause that affects students' reading achievement is the prior knowledge related to English such as understanding vocabulary, good grammar, students skills, and so on.⁵

¹ Dwi Larasati, 'An Analysis of Difficulties in Comprehending English Reading Text at The Eleventh Grade Students of MA LAB UIN-SU Medan', *Thesis*, 8.5 (2019), 55.

² S. Sreena and M. Ilankumaran, 'Developing Productive Skills Through Receptive Skills – A Cognitive Approach', *International Journal of Engineering & Technology*, 7.4.36 (2018), 669 <<https://doi.org/10.14419/ijet.v7i4.36.24220>>.

³ Rini Safitri, 'Students' Difficulties in Comprehending English Reading Text in Madrasah Aliyah Batanghari', *Thesis*, 4.1 (2023), 88–100.

⁴ Eka Sustris Harida, 'Students' Ability and Difficulties in Understanding English Text (A Study at English Program IAIN Padangsidempuan)', 21.3 (2014), 183–88 <<https://doi.org/10.15548/jt.v21i3.102>>.

⁵ Rika Susanti, 'Case Study on Students' Difficulties in Comprehending Narrative Text at SMPN 1 Siman Ponorogo', *Thesis*, 1.1 (2018), 1–8

To reinforce the previously mentioned features, it seems important for teachers to prepare materials by using the most interesting media of interest to students. By considering this issue, the teachers determined that English short stories can be used by teachers. Besides not being boring, short stories can also make students more active in participating in learning. Following the current religious moderation policy, every learning technique and approach must include the importance of religious understanding. So the teacher uses the media of Islamic-based English short stories. Reading Islamic short stories in English will make students acquire new vocabulary in understanding Islamic values and train students to be more confident. The reading technique used by teachers and students in understanding Islamic short stories is reading aloud.⁶

Reading aloud has a positive effect on the development of reading comprehension and vocabulary fluency. Reading comprehension has been shown to improve in a meaningful way when reading aloud is used regularly during the English language learning process in the classroom. Reading aloud can be used proactively to prevent student difficulties in reading, such as lack of vocabulary, lack of comprehension, and general motivation, and ensure reading success.⁷ Reading enhances English vocabulary and knowledge by providing students with diverse information from various sources.⁸

Reading aloud can be applied to any text. One of them is Islamic short stories in English. Islamic stories are written about religious values and contain religious figures related to the Qur'an and Hadith. Islamic short stories are also presented in a language that is easy for readers to understand. Islamic stories are usually taught in Islamic schools. English Islamic short stories are very important to teach in the classroom. Because it is useful and suitable for improving

<<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cirp.2016.06.001>%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.powtec.2016.12.055%0Ahttps://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijfatigue.2019.02.006%0Ahttps://doi.org/10.1016/j.matlet.2019.04.024%0Ahttps://doi.org/10.1016/j.matlet.2019.127252%0Ahttp://dx.doi.o>

⁶ Shafa Muhammad Azwar Paramma, 'Increasing Novice EFL Learners' Vocabulary Based on Short Islamic Stories in an Islamic Higher Education', 4.1 (2022), 62–76.

⁷ Nasser Saleh Al-Mansour and Ra'ed Abdulgader Al-Shorman, 'The Effect of Teacher's Storytelling Aloud on the Reading Comprehension of Saudi Elementary Stage Students', *Journal of King Saud University - Languages and Translation*, 23.2 (2011), 69–76 <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jksult.2011.04.001>>.

⁸ Hanifah Aulia Kusuma, 'An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Reading Comprehension at The Tenth Grade of SMK Al-Islam Surakarta in The Academic Year 2021/2022', 2022.

the morals and attitudes of students.⁹ The use of short stories is one of the best methods in ELT that can be used by teachers. Short stories help develop students' language skills more effectively.¹⁰

So, this research is related to Q.S. Al-Alaq 1-5 about reading's importance in our life.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 أَقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ (١) خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (٢)
 أَقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ (٣) الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (٤)
 عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (٥)

It means:

In the name of Allah, the entirely merciful, the especially merciful, 1) recite in the name of your Lord Who created; 2) a clot of blood was used to make man; 3) read and the Most Gracious Lord be with you; 4) who teaches (mankind) with the aid of the pen (that means: Allah teaches man with the aid of the writing of studying); 5) he teaches you what he does not recognize.¹¹

The surah above discusses education. It refers to science by commanding reading as the basis of knowledge. The command "reading" in the verse is mentioned twice, namely as a command to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, then as a command to all his people. Reading is a means to learn and is a key to knowledge. So it takes a generation that raises characters who understand the importance of reading.¹²

In this research paper, researchers took two previous studies. The first research was conducted by Hanura Febriani. This research focuses more on the use of Islamic stories as a medium to develop the skills of Islamic school students and can learn Islamic messages contained in the story. Her research shows that facilitating students with materials that suit their needs can increase students' interest in reading.¹³ The second study was conducted by Djamilia Lasaiba. This research shows techniques that can be applied in the classroom to

⁹ Khairunnisa, 'The Student's Challenges in Comprehending Islamic English Short Stories', 2.8.5.2017 (2022), 2003–5.

¹⁰ Mustafa Mubarak Pathan, 'Advantages of Using Short-Stories in ELT Classroom and the Libyan EFL Learners' Perceptions towards Them for Developing Reading Comprehension Skill', *Arab World English Journal*, 2, 2013, 4–13 <www.awej.org>.

¹¹ 'Q.S. Al Alaq 1-5. Translation of the Verse of the Surah'.

¹² Rahayu Subakat and others, 'From Structural Analysis of Semiotics QS. Al-'Alaq 1-5 to Basic Structure of Science in Islamic Education', *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 22.1 (2022), 119–40 <<https://doi.org/10.21154/altahrir.v22i1.3598>>.

¹³ Hanura Febriani, 'Developing Supplementary Reading Materials for Islamic', *Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 2.1 (2015).

meet students' learning objectives, one of which is by using short stories as a type of literary work. Students can listen to short stories on the radio, or Youtube, read short stories in books or watch them on TV. Short stories can help students in learning and will be more fun. By using stories, students can develop their language skills. This research was conducted to find out the effect of using or not using short story media in the learning process. (Hanura Febriani, 2015, Djamila Lasaiba, 2015) ¹⁴

Overall, the results show that Islamic short stories in English have a positive impact and can be an appropriate way to introduce Islamic teachings to students so that students can learn Islamic messages and practice them in their daily lives. As reviewed above, most studies have different criteria and characteristics. Research on the use of Islamic short story media in English has not been done much for high school students. Therefore, further research is needed on the difficulties faced by students in understanding Islamic short stories in English. ¹⁵

Based on the researcher's interview with Mr. R.F, S.Pd. as one of the English subject teachers at MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati. Many students still have difficulties in understanding English Islamic short stories. Among them are difficulties in understanding the meaning of the story, identifying the story, understanding vocabulary, making inferences, and understanding the context of words in the story. ¹⁶

Based on the explanation above, researchers are interested in conducting research related to students' difficulties in understanding the reading of Islamic short stories in English. The object of this research focuses on high school students who have difficulty understanding Islamic short stories. Therefore, the author is interested in writing a research paper with the title "Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Islamic English Short Stories Comprehension (A Case Study of Eleventh-Grade Students' of MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati)".

¹⁴ Lasaiba Djamila, 'The Effectiveness of Using Short Stories in English Teaching for Pai Learners of Iain Ambon on Learners' Perception', *Jurnal Fikratuna*, 7.2 (2015), 257-76 <<https://jurnal.iainambon.ac.id/index.php/FT/article/viewFile/345/277>>.

¹⁵ 'Hanura Febriani (2015), Lasaiba Djamila (2015)'.

¹⁶ *Interviewed with R.F, as the English Teacher in Class XI IPS 1 and XI IPS 2 at MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati, July 27, 2023. Interview 1, Transcript., 2023.*

B. Research Focus and Scope

In this study, the researcher focused on students' difficulties in understanding Islamic short stories in English and solutions to improve English learning through learning media for Islamic short stories in English. The subjects of this study were students of class XI IPS 1 and XI IPS 2 MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati, especially in English lessons.

C. Research Questions

1. How is the implementation of Islamic English learning materials in the comprehension of Islamic short stories in class XI MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati?
2. What are the obstacles in the implementation of Islamic English learning materials in overcoming students' difficulties in comprehension of Islamic short stories in class XI MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati?
3. What are the solutions to the Implementation of Islamic English learning materials in dealing with students' difficulties in comprehension of Islamic short stories at MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati?

D. Research Objectives

1. To describe the implementation of Islamic English learning materials in comprehension of Islamic short stories in class XI MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati.
2. To determine the obstacles in the implementation of Islamic English learning materials in overcoming students' difficulties in comprehension of Islamic short stories in class XI MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati.
3. To find solutions to make it easier for students to comprehend Islamic English short stories at MA Matholi'ul Huda Pucakwangi Pati.

E. Research Significances

1. Theoretical Significance

The purpose of this study is to find a solution to overcome the difficulty of reading English for high school students by using Islamic short stories in English. The results of this study can be used as a reference and motivation to develop English from scratch by using different methods balanced with effective English reading.

2. Practical Significance

Practically the results of this study are expected to be useful for students, teachers, and schools, the details are as follows:

a. Benefits for students

Students will have a better understanding of how to overcome difficulties in reading English and can develop their understanding of English so that learning in class is easier to understand and can be followed properly.

b. Benefits for teachers

Teachers who understand the difficulties students face in class can adjust the method to the students they teach. The importance of learning and teaching English, even if it is a foreign language, can be expressed.

c. Benefits for schools

Able to improve the standard of English teaching and learning by following the educational objectives set by the school.

3. Pedagogical Significance

In the world of education, A teacher's pedagogical competence concerns his or her ability to guide student learning, handling principles from learning theory to subject mastery in the world of education. Educational competencies that must be mastered by teachers include understanding students, planning and implementing learning, assessing learning outcomes, and developing students to be able to realize their various potentials. At the planning stage, teachers should plan lessons based on the reading text, strategies, students' interests, and tasks. Teachers should think about the most suitable reading strategies for students, analyze students' needs, reflect on classroom activities, and evaluate students' learning processes.

In developing pedagogical competence skills, teachers can participate in various activities. Among them are seminars, workshops, and training on a small and large scale. Training on a small scale is the Teacher Working Group (KKG) and Subject Teacher Conference (MGMP). Meanwhile, large-scale training includes training organized by the Education Quality Assurance Agency (LPMP), the Center for the Development and Empowerment of Educators and Education Personnel (P4TK), and other agencies.

F. Definition and Key Terms

To avoid misunderstandings among readers, the key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. Students' Difficulties

Students' difficulties are students with lower levels of achievement who are considered to be struggling. Students' difficulties in reading comprehension are caused by three factors. Inadequate teaching, students' lack of interest in reading, and lack of vocabulary hinder their understanding of the content.¹⁷

2. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of creating and extracting meaning from written language. Without reading comprehension, reading will not be effective. Reading comprehension is the process of comprehending text to understand its meaning.

3. Islamic Short Stories

Islamic short stories are a way for Muslims to get to know Islam better, which is packaged in short stories to help us understand Islam itself.

G. Organization of Thesis

This paper is divided into three chapters:

1. Chapter I (Introduction)

It contains the research background, the research focus and scope, research questions, research objectives, research significance, the definition of key terms, and the organization of the thesis.

2. Chapter II (Review of Related Literature)

It contains the:

A. Theoretical Description

1. Reading Compehension

a) The definition of reading comprehension; b) the models of reading comprehension; c) the levels of reading comprehension; d) the strategies of reading comprehension; e) the difficulties in reading comprehension.

2. Reading Alous a a Learning Method

a) The definition of reading aloud; b) the benefits of reading aloud; c) the purpose of reading aloud; d) the function of reading aloud.

¹⁷ Sulih Okta Prihatini, 'An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Reading Comprehension at SMA NEGERI 1 Sukodadi Lamongan', *E-Link Journal*, 7 No.1.2 (2020), p-ISSN: 2085-1383; e-ISSN: 2621-4156.

3. Islamic English Short Stories
 - a) The definition of islamic short stories; b) the use of islamic short stories; c) the advantages of islamic short stories.
- B. Conceptual Framework, and
- C. Review of the Previous Research.
3. **Chapter III (Research Methodology)**

It contains the research design, research setting, research subjects, data and souch data, data collection techniques, data validity test, and data analysis techniques.
4. **Chapter IV (Research Findings and Discussion)**

It contains the research results and discussion.
5. **Chapter V (Conclusions and Suggestions)**

It contains conclusions and suggestions.

