

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This part presents some theoretical frameworks and previous study. The theoretical framework consists of the theories that exist in this study. Meanwhile, the previous study discusses the implications of related theories in previous studies.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Problems experienced by students in learning a language need to be considered in the teaching and learning process. As second or foreign language learners, students certainly have problems when learning English. The problems experienced by students can be complex and involve many aspects. However, the competence of the learners plays an important role. It is determined by the learners' intelligence and the effort they put forth in overcoming the obstacles (Mohammed, 2018). The new language students learn in class will be difficult when they do not understand what the teacher explains (Larasaty, Wati, & Roudlah, 2021). Therefore, the researcher described more themes related to the problems experienced by students while learning English below.

2.1.1 Students' Problems in Receptive Skills

Receptive skills involve students' understanding of both writing skills and listening skills. Learners acquire receptive skills by receiving the language from oral or written material. Knowing the meaning is necessary for students to

understand receptive material (Jarrah & Ismail, 2018). Broadly, student problems that can arise from listening skill areas can be influenced by unfamiliar words, speed of speech, and lack of vocabulary. As for the area of reading skills, the problem can be related to the difficulty in understanding the text due to inadequate vocabulary.

2.1.1.1 Students' Problems in Listening Skill

Listening skill is a part of receptive skills. Listening is an important part where listeners need to be careful in understanding the message conveyed by the speaker. It is also supported by Nushi and Orouji (2020) that listening comprehension is a complex process in which the listener's active role is required to understand the message conveyed. Therefore, knowledge such as English prosody, culture, vocabulary, and structure need to be mastered by the listener.

Concerning English as a foreign language, listening has been recognized as a psychological process involving humans. The involvement of perception, cognition, attention, and memory makes listening skills as a complex activity. The benefit of listening is believed can improve students' speaking skills (Hardiyanto, Tanjung, & Suharjono, 2021). According to Wang, Lin, Hwang, and Liu (2018), naturally, listening skills significantly impact students' ability to master a foreign language. Through listening skills, learners can internalize and produce language data through communicative discourse.

Nunan (2015) argues that listening has characteristics compared to other language skills. Reading and listening are part of receptive skills as opposed to productive skills like writing and speaking. Both receptive skills and productive

skills have essential differences. For instance, while reading, learners can read the written text as often as they want, but it is different from listening using spoken text because listening occurs in real-time.

Listening is a complex activity where students need both bottom-up and top-down processing skills in listening. Students must hear some sounds (bottom-up processing), hold them in their working memory long enough (a few seconds) to connect them, and then interpret what they have just heard before something new comes along. At the same time, listeners use their background knowledge (top-down processing) to determine meaning concerning prior knowledge and schemata (Brown, 2006).

Academically, listening skills play an essential role in the teaching-learning process (Yusnida et al., 2017). To be able to learn better, a student needs to listen better. Students and teachers must also have good listening skills (Sadiku, 2015). As for listening challenges, Syadiah (2016) explained that the problems often faced by EFL students in the listening category come from accent, pronunciation, speaking speed, short vocabulary, different speaker accents, lack of concentration, anxiety, and impaired recording quality.

In addition, in several cases in language classes, listening becomes the most challenging language skill for most students (Rintaningrum, 2018). It is based on deep concentration and attention to understanding the content or listening material in dialogue and monologue texts (Indahsari, 2020). Besides, a study by Hardiyanto et al. (2021) found several pieces of information related to the students' difficulties in listening, such as 1) message content including unfamiliar words, words of incoming, speech and long spoken text, 2) speaker

such as visual needed, speed of speech, and variety of accents, 3) listener that is less focus, lack in vocabulary, inability to understand the meaning and inability to recognize familiar words, and 4) physical settings related to noises.

2.1.1.2 Students' Problems in Reading Skill

Considering the facts in the context of EFL education, reading comprehension is one of the many essential skills students must have (Jafarigohar & Khanjani, 2014). It is about how a person can understand a text and what information is contained in the reading. Learners who do not understand reading material cannot enjoy reading. Additionally, inadequate vocabulary knowledge can cause a lack of understanding when reading (Wegener et al., 2022). It shows a strong correlation between reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, EFL students must have adequate vocabulary knowledge (Jarrah & Ismail, 2018).

Knowledge of vocabulary and reading ability will be interrelated. A person's large vocabulary will help him master and understand what he reads, and vice versa. The better their reading ability and the more frequency of text they read, their vocabulary knowledge will increase. It is supported by Namaziandost, Esfahani, and Ahmadi (2019) that extensive reading can help improve vocabulary, grammar, and reading speed regardless of the level of material a learner is using. In addition, students can benefit from addressing the material above their stations as long as they learn in a positive motivating context.

However, reading skills are also a problematic area and a challenge for EFL learners (Alharbi, 2022). Often, students have difficulty understanding what

they read. It may not be able to digest the information in the text properly. The reason could be a lack of motivation to read, a lack of vocabulary, or it could be that the reading they choose has a high level of language that makes it difficult for them to be at that level of writing.

Furthermore, several cases in reading include difficulties in reading English texts (Chawwang, 2008), which is closely related to vocabulary material. There are EFL learners who can understand complex sentences in reading comprehension, whether derived from coordinating conjunctions, prepositional phrases, participial phrases, and nominalization or in terms of reading habits and strategies. Lastly, problems related to poor working memory. Working memory allows readers to absorb and store information obtained in short-term memory while engaging in cognitive tasks. A learner can remember and activate previous knowledge about a subject or determine the meaning of a word according to the context while retaining what has been read.

2.1.2 Students' Problems in Productive Skills

Productive skills consist of speaking skills and writing skills. It is related to a person's ability to produce language, both oral and written. It can be said that productive skills are the output of receptive skills. In general, the problem that arises from the area of speaking is speaking fluency, which is influenced by many things, one of them is anxiety. As for writing skills, organized and correct manner become the problems that are faced when students want to write.

2.1.2.1 Students' Problems in Speaking Skill

Speaking skill is one aspect that is often in the spotlight when discussing abilities in English. It is because speaking is part of a communicative skill that others can directly see. It can be defined as the fundamental skill in constructing a language. Although it is a complex skill but on the other hand, it is also unique to humans. In addition, speaking can be defined as verbal utterances used to convey messages (Alsalihi, 2020).

When learning English as a second or foreign language, learning to speak is the most crucial component that students must fulfill. It is because good speaking skills can be measured by looking at good communication skills when using that language (Anam & Tantri, 2020). In schools, it is often found that in learning English, students find it difficult to speak.

Unfortunately, in actual conditions, it is still difficult for Indonesian students to practice their English skills, especially in daily conversations. Having a relatively long experience of learning English for ten years in formal junior high school, senior high school, and university, they may even get a good grade in English on their report card., but they can not speak English fluently (Musthafa, 2015 as cited in Riadil, 2020).

In a study by Jimenez (2015), EFL students face difficulties developing speaking fluency. This difficulty can be caused by motivation, low self-esteem, anxiety, first language disorders, and their learning environment. In addition, students do not know what to say, have inadequate vocabulary, and shyness. Also, the most common reason is fear of being mistaken.

Gkonou (2011) stated that EFL students have speech anxiety caused by the efforts and ambitions of the learner to pronounce words as accurately as possible in a class by paying attention to pronunciation and choice and use of language. On the other hand, EFL language self-awareness and anxiety can be defined as the constant social comparisons among learners, the fear of negative evaluation from teachers and classmates, and losing face if something goes wrong.

Moreover, research by Hosni (2014) revealed three significant speaking difficulties faced by students, such as linguistics. Students struggle to find the appropriate vocabulary item when speaking in English. It reflects their insufficient vocabulary repertoire. The next is mother tongue use and inhibition, and the third is the student explained that their fear of making mistakes in front of their classmates was the reason for not speaking in class. They are afraid of being laughed at by friends.

On the other hand, the problems that students usually face in speaking also come from large numbers of students in class, typically consisting of 30-35 students or more, who are unwilling to speak English, and also teachers prefer teaching grammar to speak and to write as productive skills that also needed for students (Riadil, 2020).

Although many things are the root of problems related to students' speaking, there are several things that students can try to overcome. Anam and Tantri (2020) stated that motivation could be obtained by increasing self-confidence, mastering a lot of vocabulary, and practicing speaking English more. Students and teachers need to practice speaking English to become accustomed to it. This activity can help students overcome their speaking problems.

2.1.2.2 Students' Problems in Writing Skill

Writing is a fairly complex activity (Jouhar & Rupley, 2021). There is a lot to do before producing a piece of writing. The crucial thing is we must think about what we will write. It is usually the most challenging thing, and we sometimes find it difficult to think about what ideas or information we will pour into our writing. Unsurprisingly, students given the assignment to write related to a topic will find it difficult. Karademir and Gorgoz (2019) also supported that one thing that becomes difficult for students is when they have to write about a topic and express feelings, but at the same time, they have to thoughts in an organized and correct manner. This phenomenon even happens in their mother tongue. This is why students feel stressed when their teachers give them writing assignments in other subjects.

On the other hand, writing skill is also a challenge for EFL students, as explained by Xin (2007 as cited as Muamaroh et al., 2020), that writing is the most challenging skill in language learning. Since one's writing ability can be demonstrated by writing articles, many steps must be considered, and certainly not as simple as people think. Mastery of both language and attitudes, such as the willingness to practice several times in writing is vital for students. For some students, this process may be tiring (Muamaroh et al., 2020).

In addition, to produce good writing, apart from having a lot of vocabulary knowledge. Knowing how to compose writing according to a good writing structure for each genre of text that students will write, one part that is not less important is building creative thinking. Through innovative thinking, it is possible to produce an exciting idea. Thinking creatively will help students to think

logically in developing their writing. From here, quality and exciting writing will be created. It is in line with a study by Mohamed and Zouaoui (2014) that writing becomes a complex process that allows students to develop and explore thoughts so that they become visible and concrete. It encourages students' thinking and learning because it motivates communication and makes ideas available for reflection.

2.1.3 Students' Problems in Vocabulary Mastery

Apart from receptive and productive skills, which are challenges for students, vocabulary is one of the most frequently used reasons for students' difficulties in speaking English (Krisnayanti & Winarta, 2021). Vocabulary plays a vital role in mastering a language. It is believed that developing the four language skills, i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing can be done and will be easy if students master a lot of vocabulary (Abteu, 2021; Lutfiyah, Nuraeningsih, & Rusiana, 2022; Patahuddin, Syawal, & Bin-Tahir, 2017).

Inadequate lexical knowledge will make students unable to communicate fluently and negotiate conversational meanings effectively. To understand meaning well in interactions, students must first understand sentence structure and vocabulary (Patahuddin, Syawal & Tahir, 2017). However, vocabulary problems apply to people who wish to express themselves orally and in writing. They also experience demotivation when reading and listening because of their limited vocabulary (Ghalebi, Sadighi, & Bagheri, 2020).

After all, Krisnayanti and Winarta (2021) revealed that there are linguistic and non-linguistic factors in learning vocabulary. The linguistics factor is related

to language difficulties such as grammar or language rules. As for nonlinguistic factors are divided into internal factors (related to peoples' motivation, interest, and memories of the words) and external factors (related to teaching method, environment, or situation).

Furthermore, vocabulary problems can be caused by many factors, including motivation, talent, interest, and experience of students in mastering vocabulary. The way that students can do this is to be involved in meaningful active communication in English with a good vocabulary. Literature is the best way to expand students' vocabulary. Some difficulties for teachers and students can be overcome by using literature. The effective ways are usually through novels, short stories, and reading sections in class and providing sample materials designed to address students' vocabulary problems (Abdelrady et al., 2022).

2.1.4 Students' Problems in Students' Attention

In most English classes, students pay little attention to the process of learning to master a foreign language. As for the indicators of students who are inattention to the lesson seen from their lack of seriousness in learning, neglect, and not caring about the language being studied (Akbari, 2015; Alasilihi, 2020; Tabatabaei & Hoseini, 2014). Many students tend not to know, ignore, or pay not enough attention to learn a foreign language well, even after many years of study. It can be assumed that students are not serious about learning the language. (Alsalihi, 2020).

One of the things that cause students to be less focused and not attentive in learning English, such as crowded classes. The dense atmosphere will distract

students. This leaves most students with insufficient time to practice English because many other students also need attention, do not solve language learning problems, and are not proficient enough to communicate in a foreign language. Due to limited teaching hours, they are usually unable to learn English effectively, especially in in-demand skills such as listening and speaking (Akbari, 2015). Several things will affect students' attention in learning English, including using mobile phones outside of learning activities, instructions, and teaching strategies from teachers that are not clear and effective (Thi & Minh, 2021).

2.1.5 Students' Problems in Students' Motivation

Student motivation becomes necessary for students in language lessons. Motivation can be a determinant of L2 achievement and one of the individual variables that have received more attention in the second language acquisition literature. As students' progress in their learning, changes in motivation are expected of them. This leads to individual variations over time. It makes the concept of motivation challenging to grasp (Lasagabster, 2013).

In addition, the indicators of motivated students are seen from their interests, ambitions, self-efficacy, and desire to participate in the language process. Hence, students have the propulsion to achieve specific goals (Erniyati & Putra, 2022; Riadil, 2020; Tuan, 2012). Therefore, it can be indicated that students with low motivation will feel lazy, bored, and have difficulty in learning even though the material being taught is easy.

However, student motivation can be influenced by several things. When viewed from the internal side, students see that their English is learned through a

provision at school. They think this subject is only a thing that must be passed without understanding its importance as the means of communication they can use to adjust to new advances in technology and other sciences. For most learners, English learning is an obligation. Similar to something they should do but do not want to do it. They feel the compulsion to learn. They see no fun in learning English. These students have low motivation to participate in class. They are just trying to get a passing grade to get off the course (Akbari, 2015).

The external side can come from the teacher's performance in social relations with students. Giving assignments too much or teachers who are too strict, including how the teacher treats students who are not good even though the teacher's role in second/foreign language classes is significant regarding student motivation. In addition, second/foreign language teachers must set an excellent example for students to improve their speaking skills in the target language (Liando, 2010). In addition, the influence of the limited environment will have an impact on student motivation. It causes students not to be able to practice the language outside the classroom because there is no obligation for it. However, students only care and pay attention to using the language appropriately in the classroom to get grades and satisfy their teachers (Alsalihi, 2020).

2.1.6 Students' Problems in Students' Confidence

In English learning, the motivational orientation of EFL learners to learn English has implications for confidence in using English (Hoang, 2021). Direction refers to a reason or motive for learning a language. They can color the experience of someone involved in the activity (Lou & Noels, 2021). Confidence is a factor

that hinders students from learning English. Students' negative responses at the beginning of learning English can cause a lack of motivation, self-confidence, stress, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes. These feelings can make students fail their lessons (Mohammed, 2018).

Research on EFL learning also showed that learners with a high level of confidence in their English ability were also more willing to use English. This willingness enabled them to achieve success in English (Lou & Noels, 2021; Öz, Demirezen, & Pourfeiz, 2015; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2002). Previous research also shows that positive experiences and achievements influence a person's confidence in using English in a foreign language (Bahous, Bacha, & Nabhani, 2011).

2.2 Previous Study

This research on the student problem is not new, but previous studies have examined the same focus. They are teaching and learning challenges (Abdullah, 2015; Mohamed, 2018; Putra, 2021). These researches explore teacher challenges in teaching English and any problems that occur to EFL learners in the classroom from the teachers' perspective. Each of these studies generally describes the obstacles in EFL learners, such as problems with macro and micro skills related to student motivation, environment, and confidence.

More specifically, some studies include four English skills. The studies discussed students' problems in the reading skills area such as Chawwang (2008) found that students had difficulties in sentence structure, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. In listening skills, Syadiah (2016) found there are ten students'

problems in listening comprehension, i.e., students' general self-rating to listening, proficiency, students' perception of the importance of listening skills, using different means to enhance listening skills, listening problems related to the content of the listening text, listening problems related to linguistic features, problems caused by the failure to concentrate, learners' perceptions of listening problems related to psychological characteristics, listening problems related to listener, listening problems related to the speaker, listening problems associated with the physical setting.

However, in speaking skills, Anam and Tantri (2020), who conducted research in the context of senior high school, found that the barriers to students speaking greetings were anxiety, shyness, fear of making mistakes, and the students also got lack of confidence when they were speaking in front of the class. The previous study by Gkonou (2011) related to anxiety over EFL speaking and writing views from language classrooms also found that EFL speaking anxiety is caused by learners' efforts to produce as accurate an utterance as possible in the classroom. They pay attention to both pronunciation and language choice and use. On the other hand, self-consciousness and anxiety about EFL speaking could be defined as constant social comparisons among learners and a fear of negative evaluation and loss of face in case of a mistake. The sociolinguistic dimension of speaking anxiety could thus reduce learners' levels of conscious effort when speaking in class and ultimately result in poor achievement.

Besides, in writing skills, Mohamed and Zouaoui (2014) studied the difficulties faced by EFL students in language learning, including seven parts. They are language proficiency, vocabulary and grammar, sentence structure and

paragraph development, connections between ideas, problems of transition, missing ideas, and style in writing. Apart from the three skills above, there is also research on student problems in terms of vocabulary, which is the biggest obstacle for EFL learners.

The previous study related to vocabulary building by Abdelrady et al., (2022) showed the findings of their research is to ascertain the four fundamental aspects affecting the Sudanese EFL secondary school student's vocabulary acquisition. The first and the most affecting element is the student's interest. The analysis affirmed that it takes a lot of effort and imagination on the teachers' part to get secondary school EFL students interested in learning. Secondly, the teacher factor is also a significant aspect. The analysis also showed that most teachers felt that teacher qualification, experience, classroom techniques, background knowledge of literature, cultural factors, and lack of trained teachers were the most critical factors affecting the teaching of literature. Third, the curriculum aspect has a practical impact on developing students' vocabulary. The other research also discussed students' problems in the vocabulary mastery area, such as problems when learning English vocabulary (Krisnayanti & Winarta, 2020), the obstacles in learning vocabulary (Lutfiyah, Nuraeningsih, & Rusiana, 2022), learning and acquiring English vocabulary (Patahuddin, et al., 2017) and vocabulary learning strategies (Abteu, 2021).

Meanwhile, the study relevant to students' motivation, also explored by Akbari (2015), mentioned that one problem students face is the lack of motivation to learn, where English is a necessity they do not want. On the other hand, students' motivation is still related to students' attention and students' confidence.

Broadly they influence each other. Some previous studies explore students' attention, such as the lack of seriousness of students in learning English (Alsalihi, 2020) and the influence of the classroom environment, such as a noisy class, that will affect students' attention (Akbari, 2015). Last but not least, students' motivational orientations for learning have impacted students' confidence (Lou & Noels, 2021).

The study is similar to the previous studies by some researchers who had previously wanted to know the problems of students who learn English. The novelty and the difference between this study and the earlier studies present the issues students often face when learning English in the classroom. The cases are specific to one aspect of the problem and happen in several problematic areas, such as receptive skills, productive skills, vocabulary mastery, students' attention, motivation, and confidence. This research is also linked to a different context from the previous study that was done on average at the university level. In contrast, this research has a junior and senior high school context. Finally, this study also sees the student problem of learning about English education based on the pre-service teacher's observational experiences.