CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, followed by the research questions, purposes and significance of the study. Each of which will be described in detail to provide a comprehensive understanding of the context and relevance of this research.

A. Background of The Research

Reading comprehension has become one of the most important issues in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, especially in Indonesian secondary schools. In EFL contexts, students rely heavily on reading activities to obtain information, develop language skills, and support academic learning. However, many students still have difficulty in understanding texts effectively, particularly narrative texts. This condition is also found at SMPN 3 Paseh, where many students still struggle to identify main ideas, sequence events, and understand the overall meaning of narrative texts. International assessments such as PISA continue to show that Indonesian students' reading literacy remains below the international average, indicating that reading comprehension is still a serious educational concern (Elpiza, 2024). This issue has attracted attention from educators and researchers because reading comprehension is related not only to language mastery but also to students' critical thinking and academic achievement.

At the junior high school level, students are still developing literacy skills and learning how to construct meaning from texts. However, many students face difficulties identifying main ideas, understanding vocabulary in context, recognizing text structure, and logically connecting events in narrative texts. Marleni (2024) found that many students still struggle to comprehend what they read, especially in texts that require structural understanding, such as narratives. Similarly, Mulyadin (2023) reported that several students were unable to explain the meaning, examples, and generic structure of narrative texts. Students also have

difficulty identifying themes, characterizations, and moral values in stories (Purnomo, 2024). These findings indicate that students' difficulties are not limited to vocabulary knowledge, but also involve cognitive skills in organizing and interpreting textual information.

Narrative texts themselves require students to understand chronological relationships, causal connections, and the organization of orientation, complication, and resolution. Dymock (2007) explains that narrative comprehension depends on students' awareness of text structure, as understanding a story's organization helps readers construct meaning more effectively. However, many EFL students fail to recognize these relationships, leading to fragmented comprehension and difficulty understanding the story's overall message. Based on preliminary observations at SMPN 3 Paseh on 26 February, they frequently relied on dictionary translations and teacher explanations during reading activities. Classroom interaction was still dominated by teacher-centered instruction, resulting in passive learning. As a consequence, students showed low engagement and often considered reading narrative texts difficult and uninteresting.

This topic is important to study because reading comprehension plays a central role in students' academic success and language development. In EFL classrooms, reading becomes one of the main sources of language input and knowledge acquisition. Khusmiati (2023) states that "reading comprehension is primarily a matter of developing efficient comprehension strategies." Therefore, improving students' comprehension skills requires instructional strategies that not only focus on linguistic aspects but also actively engage students in meaning construction. Effective reading instruction is needed to help students become active readers who can interpret, analyze, and connect ideas within a text.

One classroom activity that has the potential to address these problems is Story Sequencing Activity. Story Sequencing Activity requires students to arrange story events in logical and chronological order, enabling them to construct meaning from the text while identifying the relationships between events. This strategy helps students understand the flow of a narrative and identify relationships between events. Gouldthrop (2018) explain that sequencing plays an important role in

reading comprehension because readers construct meaning by connecting events chronologically. Through sequencing activities, students are encouraged to predict events, analyze cause and effect relationships, and actively reconstruct the story. This process supports deeper comprehension and reduces students' dependence on translation. Sequencing activities are also closely related to story mapping techniques. Elpiza (2024) emphasizes that story mapping helps students visualize and organize the plot of a story, while Purnomo (2024) explains that it guides students to focus on important narrative elements such as characters, setting, and events. Other related strategies, such as story pyramid (Djakkir, 2023), story face (Marleni, 2024) and story retelling (Khusmiati, 2023) have also shown positive effects on students' reading comprehension and engagement.

In addition to the Story Sequencing Activity, this study employs the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) as the instructional framework. GBA is considered appropriate because it explicitly teaches students how texts are organized and how language is used to achieve communicative purposes. According to Cheng (2015), genre pedagogy provides systematic instruction that helps learners understand the structure and social purpose of texts. Similarly, Martin and Rose (2008) argue that genres are staged and goal-oriented social processes that enable learners to understand how meaning is organized within texts. Emilia (2011) further states that GBA supports students' literacy development through explicit teaching, scaffolding, and guided practice. Through the stages of Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT), students gradually develop their comprehension skills. Liang (2006) also emphasizes that reading instruction should support meaningful learning by connecting language use with authentic contexts. Therefore, integrating Story Sequencing Activity with GBA is expected to create a more structured, interactive, and student-centered learning process.

Several previous studies have investigated strategies for improving reading comprehension. Elpiza (2024) found that story mapping significantly improved students' narrative reading comprehension achievement. Purnomo (2024) also

reported positive effects of story mapping on students' understanding of narrative texts. Djakkir (2023) showed that the story pyramid strategy improved students' ability to organize story information, while Marleni (2024) found that the story face strategy enhanced students' comprehension through visual representation. In addition, Khusmiati (2023) revealed that story retelling encourages students to read for meaning and supports language development. On the other hand, studies on the Genre-Based Approach also demonstrate positive contributions to language learning, as GBA provides explicit instruction and structured scaffolding for understanding texts (Cheng, 2015).

Although many studies have explored reading comprehension strategies, a gap remains that warrants further investigation. Most previous studies focus on single instructional strategies rather than integrating cognitive sequencing activities with genre-based pedagogy. In addition, many studies mainly emphasize quantitative outcomes without exploring the classroom learning process in depth. Creswell (2018) argue that qualitative inquiry is important for understanding how learners experience and interpret learning activities in real-world contexts.

Furthermore, research integrating Story Sequencing Activity with the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) in Indonesian junior high school EFL classrooms remains limited. Several previous studies have demonstrated that GBA effectively improves students' understanding of narrative texts, generic structure, and classroom engagement (Nabella, 2023). Likewise, Puspitasari et al. (2025) reported that GBA provides meaningful scaffolding through collaborative learning, while Herawati et al. (2025) emphasized that genre-based pedagogy supports literacy development through explicit instruction. However, these studies focused primarily on implementing GBA as an independent pedagogical approach and did not investigate the integration of Story Sequencing Activity within the GBA teaching-learning cycle.

Consequently, both pedagogical and methodological gaps remain. Pedagogically, limited attention has been given to how Story Sequencing Activity can be systematically integrated into the stages of the Genre-Based Approach to facilitate students' narrative reading comprehension. Methodologically, most

previous studies adopted quantitative or classroom action research designs, whereas few employed qualitative case studies to explore classroom interaction, students' responses, and instructional implementation in authentic EFL classrooms ((Deaton, 2018). Therefore, this study attempts to address these gaps by investigating the integration of Story Sequencing Activity and the Genre-Based Approach in teaching narrative reading comprehension at SMPN 3 Paseh.

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in Schema Theory by Anderson (1977), Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and Genre Theory from Hyland (2007). Schema Theory explains that comprehension occurs when readers connect new information with their prior knowledge and existing mental structures (Al Salmi, 2011). Similarly Wallace (1992), states that reading is an interactive process between the reader and the text, and Kurland (2000), emphasizes the importance of integrating textual information with prior knowledge to construct meaning. Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the importance of interaction, scaffolding, and guided learning in cognitive development (Gajdamaschko, 2011). Meanwhile, Genre Theory highlights that texts are socially organized and have specific communicative purposes (Cheng, 2015). Martin and Rose (2008) further explain that genres are staged and goal-oriented social processes, while Emilia (2011) emphasizes that genre awareness helps students understand the social function, structure, and language features of texts. These perspectives support the integration of Story Sequencing Activities and GBA to improve students' narrative reading comprehension.

Based on the issues discussed above, this study aims to investigate the implementation of integrating story sequencing activity and Genre-Based Approach in teaching narrative reading comprehension to EFL students at SMPN 3 Paseh. Specifically, this study seeks to explore how the integrated approach is implemented in the classroom, how it influences students' reading comprehension skills, and how students respond to the learning process. By employing a qualitative case study design, this research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of instructional practices and contribute to the development of more effective reading pedagogy in EFL classrooms.

B. Research Problems

This study addresses several problems related to teaching narrative reading in EFL classrooms:

1. Narrative reading activities need to provide students with more structured opportunities to understand story events and narrative structure.
2. Students' participation and engagement in narrative reading activities need to be strengthened.
3. The integration of Story Sequencing Activity with the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) has received limited attention in junior high school EFL contexts.
4. Students' responses to the implementation of Story Sequencing Activity integrated with GBA need to be further explored.
5. The potential of Story Sequencing Activity integrated with GBA to promote students' understanding of narrative texts needs to be examined.

C. Research Questions

In particular, this research seeks to address the following three main research questions:

1. How is Story Sequencing Activity Integrated with the Genre-Based Approach in teaching narrative reading comprehension in an EFL classroom at SMPN 3 Paseh?
2. How do students respond to the implementation of Story Sequencing Activity integrated with the Genre-Based Approach during narrative reading activities?
3. How does the integration of Story Sequencing Activity and Genre-Based Approach promote students' narrative reading comprehension throughout the instructional process?

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D. The Purposes of the Study

This study aims to investigate the integration of Story Sequencing Activity and Genre-Based Approach in teaching narrative reading comprehension to EFL students at SMPN 3 Paseh. Specifically, this study seeks:

1. To investigate the implementation of Story Sequencing Activity integrated with the Genre-Based Approach in teaching narrative reading comprehension.
2. To explore students' responses to the implementation of Story Sequencing Activity integrated with the Genre-Based Approach during narrative reading activities.
3. To examine how Story Sequencing Activity integrated with the Genre-Based Approach promotes students' understanding of narrative texts.

E. Significances of the Research

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the teaching of reading comprehension in EFL contexts, particularly in teaching narrative texts through the integration of Story Sequencing Activity and Genre-Based Approach (GBA).

1. Theoretical Significance

This study is expected to contribute to the development of reading instruction theory, particularly in narrative reading comprehension in EFL classrooms. The findings of this study may enrich the discussion on integrating the Story Sequencing Activity and the Genre-Based Approach as a more interactive and structured instructional approach. In addition, this research may provide a deeper understanding of how sequencing activities and genre-based pedagogy support students' comprehension development, classroom engagement, and meaning construction during reading.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Students

This research is expected to help students improve their narrative reading comprehension, particularly in understanding story structure,

sequencing events, and constructing meaning from texts. The implementation of the Story Sequencing Activity integrated with GBA may also increase students' participation, motivation, and engagement during reading activities.

b. For Teachers

This study is expected to provide English teachers with an alternative instructional strategy for teaching narrative reading comprehension. The integration of Story Sequencing Activity and Genre-Based Approach may help teachers create more interactive, student-centered, and meaningful reading instruction in EFL classrooms.

c. For Schools

This research may help improve reading instruction practices in schools, particularly by supporting the implementation of active and effective learning strategies in English reading classes.

d. For Future Researchers

This study is expected to serve as a reference for future researchers interested in reading comprehension, narrative texts, Story Sequencing Activity, or the Genre-Based Approach. It may also provide insights for further studies related to integrated instructional strategies in EFL contexts.

3. Social and Educational Significance

This research is important because improving students' reading comprehension skills can support their academic achievement and literacy development. Better reading comprehension may help students become more active, critical, and independent learners, which is essential for their future educational development and participation in broader social contexts.

F. Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in several interrelated concepts and theoretical perspectives, namely reading comprehension, narrative text, the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), and Story Sequencing Activity. These concepts provide the theoretical foundation for examining how Story Sequencing Activity integrated with the Genre-Based Approach supports EFL students' narrative reading comprehension at SMPN 3 Paseh. The discussion begins with the concept of reading comprehension as the primary skill investigated in this study, followed by narrative text as the learning material, the Genre-Based Approach as the instructional framework, and Story Sequencing Activity as the learning strategy implemented during the research.

Reading comprehension is one of the most important language skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it enables students to construct meaning from written texts. Reading comprehension is not merely the ability to recognize words but also the process of understanding, interpreting, and connecting ideas presented in a text (Gilakjani, 2016). According to Snow (2002) reading comprehension is "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language," indicating that comprehension requires active interaction between readers and texts. Likewise, Frederika (2011) explains that successful reading comprehension involves the integration of linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, and cognitive strategies. In EFL contexts, however, students often encounter difficulties due to limited vocabulary, insufficient exposure to English, and limited understanding of text organization. Therefore, in this study, reading comprehension refers to students' ability to understand narrative texts by identifying their generic structure, sequencing story events, recognizing the main ideas, and constructing meaning from the text.

Since this study focuses on narrative reading comprehension, narrative text becomes the primary type of text used throughout the instructional process. Narrative text is a text type that tells a sequence of events for the purpose of entertaining readers while often conveying moral values. According to Anderson (2003) narrative texts present a series of events involving characters, conflicts, and

resolutions that engage readers throughout the story. Similarly, (Derewianka, 2009) states that narrative texts are organized through a sequence of stages that lead readers from the introduction of the story to the resolution of the problem. From a genre perspective, narrative texts are socially constructed texts designed to achieve particular communicative purposes (Hyland K. , 2007) Understanding the generic structure of orientation, complication, and resolution helps students recognize how ideas are organized, thereby facilitating better reading comprehension (Dymock, 2007). Nevertheless, many EFL students still experience difficulty identifying relationships between story events, understanding the sequence of the plot, and recognizing how the conflict is resolved (Emilia, 2011). Consequently, appropriate instructional support is required to help students comprehend narrative texts more effectively.

One instructional approach that explicitly supports students in understanding narrative texts is the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). GBA is employed in this study because it systematically teaches students how texts are organized and how language functions to achieve communicative purposes. Hyland (2004) explains that genre pedagogy enables learners to understand how language is organized within different social contexts, while Cheng (2015) emphasizes that GBA provides explicit instruction on text organization and language features. Rooted in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), GBA views language as a resource for making meaning in social contexts. (Martin, 2008) further describe genres as staged and goal-oriented social processes that guide learners in understanding how texts are constructed. Through its four instructional stages Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT) students gradually develop both their understanding of text structure and their reading comprehension (Emilia, 2011). Therefore, GBA provides a systematic framework for improving students' comprehension of narrative texts through explicit instruction and continuous scaffolding.

Within this instructional framework, the present study employs Story Sequencing Activity as the primary classroom strategy to support students' narrative

reading comprehension. Story Sequencing Activity requires students to arrange story events into a logical and chronological order, enabling them to understand how individual events contribute to the overall meaning of a narrative. (Gouldthorp, 2018) argues that sequencing activities enhance reading comprehension because readers construct meaning by understanding chronological relationships and cause-and effect connections among events. Furthermore, sequencing activities share similarities with story mapping strategies that help students visualize and organize story elements effectively. Elpiza (2024) found that story mapping improves students' understanding of narrative plots, while Purnomo (2024) reported that it assists learners in identifying important narrative elements such as characters, setting, and events. Accordingly, Story Sequencing Activity is expected to encourage students to reconstruct narrative events actively, improve their understanding of narrative organization, and increase their engagement during reading lessons. When implemented within the stages of the Genre-Based Approach, this activity is expected to provide meaningful learning experiences that facilitate students' narrative reading comprehension.

G. Contributions of the Study

This study is expected to make several contributions to the field of EFL reading instruction, particularly in teaching narrative reading comprehension by integrating the Story Sequencing Activity and the Genre-Based Approach (GBA).

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of reading comprehension theory by integrating cognitive and genre-based instructional perspectives in narrative reading activities. Conceptually, this research offers a clearer understanding of how Story Sequencing Activity and GBA can work together to support students' comprehension and engagement during reading.

Empirically, this study provides evidence on the implementation of the integrated approach in a junior high school EFL classroom and its influence on students' learning experiences and the development of reading comprehension. Methodologically, this research contributes by employing a qualitative case study

design to explore the instructional process, classroom interaction, and students' responses in depth, areas that have been limited in previous studies.

Analytically, this study contributes to understanding the relationship between sequencing activities, genre-based scaffolding, and students' comprehension development during narrative reading instruction. In practical terms, the findings of this study are expected to provide English teachers with an alternative instructional strategy for teaching narrative texts that is more interactive, structured, and student-centered.

Contextually, this research contributes to EFL learning practices in Indonesian junior high school settings, particularly at SMPN 3 Paseh, where students continue to struggle with reading comprehension. Finally, this study may also make a policy contribution by supporting the implementation of active learning and literacy-oriented instruction in English language teaching, particularly by improving students' reading comprehension through innovative, meaningful classroom practices.

H. Relevant Previous Research

Several previous studies have investigated strategies and approaches to improve students' reading comprehension, particularly in narrative texts. Elpiza (2024) examined the use of the Story Mapping Strategy to improve students' narrative reading comprehension. The study found that story mapping significantly helped students understand plot organization, identify important story elements, and improve comprehension achievement. The findings indicate that visual and structural organization can support students' understanding of narrative texts more effectively

Further, Purnomo (2024) investigated the implementation of story mapping in reading classes. The findings showed that students improved their ability to identify themes, characters, settings, and event sequences after using story-mapping activities. The study also highlighted that structured reading activities encourage students to be more active in their learning.

Another investigation by Djakkir (2023) explored the use of the Story Pyramid Strategy in teaching reading comprehension. The study revealed that the strategy helped students summarize narrative information, organize ideas, and improve their understanding of story content. The researchers emphasized that sequencing and organizing information play important roles in the development of comprehension.

Also, Marleni (2024) investigated the effectiveness of the Story Face Strategy in teaching narrative reading comprehension. The findings indicated that visual representation of story structure improved students' comprehension and engagement during reading activities. Students became more interested and actively participated in classroom discussions after the strategy was implemented.

In addition, Khusmiati (2023) studied the implementation of the Story Retelling Strategy in reading instruction. The study found that story retelling encouraged students to read for meaning, improved their comprehension, and supported language development. The researchers also reported that interactive reading activities increased students' confidence and participation in learning.

Related to reading instruction, several empirical studies have reported the effectiveness of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) in improving students' reading comprehension. For example, Nabella and Rini (2023) found that the implementation of GBA significantly enhanced young learners' comprehension of narrative texts by helping them identify text structure, social function, and language features more systematically. Similarly, Puspitasari (2024) reported that genre-based instruction provides meaningful scaffolding that supports students' engagement and understanding of texts through collaborative learning processes. In addition, (Gintings, 2020) highlighted that genre-based pedagogy enables learners to develop literacy skills by explicitly connecting language forms, text organization, and communicative purposes. These findings suggest that GBA offers a structured framework that facilitates students' comprehension and supports literacy development in EFL classrooms.

Although the previous studies have demonstrated that various visual and interactive strategies, such as Story Mapping, Story Pyramid, Story Face, and Story Retelling, are effective in improving students' narrative reading comprehension,

most of these studies investigated each strategy as a standalone instructional technique. Similarly, studies on the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) have primarily focused on its effectiveness in developing students' understanding of text structure and literacy skills through explicit instruction and scaffolding. However, limited studies have specifically explored the integration of Story Sequencing Activity within the stages of the Genre-Based Approach in teaching narrative reading comprehension, particularly in Indonesian junior high school EFL classrooms. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill this gap by investigating not only how Story Sequencing Activity is implemented through the four stages of GBA, but also how students respond to its implementation and what difficulties they encounter during the learning process. By examining these aspects through a qualitative case study, this research is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the integration of Story Sequencing Activity and GBA supports students' narrative reading comprehension.

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