

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

English is an international language and it is useful as a tool of communication among nations in the world. It has a very important role in our society. In Indonesia, English is considered as a foreign language. English is also one of the subject matters in education system of Indonesian which must be learnt from elementary school up to university level because of the importance of English, it is hoped that all students, especially in Indonesia are able to communicate their ideas to other in English.

In this era, the use of technology by human is going rapidly with starting the conversion of natural resources into simple tools. Information is a result of technology used. It is about a greeting of message or expression and group of message, consisting of order sequences of symbols or meanings that can be construed from the message or group of messages. Information about education is very easy to get through the media. Such media convey a lot of important information that

we do not know. It may be a form video, text, audio and pictures. To understand what the convey of information we have to the ability of read and write.

Reading and writing is one of the important activities in life. Most of educational process depends on our ability and awareness of literacy. Literacy is the ability to recognize letters. Getting to know the letter is the first step to be able read and write. The term of literacy is rarely used as seen from the absence of major theme of literacy within Indonesia dictionary. Schooling in Indonesia seems to prefer to use the term language teaching or learning the language. In this era, the study of language or literacy is less desirable among the student especially English class. It is seen from the reduced number of children who are adept at reading and writing in English rather than Indonesian.

Literacy nowadays frequently discussed especially in the education system. Basically, literacy is defined as the ability of reading and writing, which sets the students up to the further learning process. Meanwhile, Ontario Education asserts that literacy is a learning gateway. It is because "*literacy is integral*

*to effective learning across all curriculum areas and across all learning phases”* Literacy has been defined in many different ways, each of which reflects a different theoretical orientation.

A broader definition of literacy is usually adopted by those who see literacy development as a social process, which develops through exposure to literacy practices within a particular environment and which cannot be separated from its social and cultural context. This view rejects the notion that literacy can be defined in terms of a set of narrow psychological skills, and places emphasis on literacy as a process of deriving meaning from text. This definition of literacy usually covers other language skills such as listening and speaking, as well as a range of other skills including the interpretation of visual material, the use and understanding of mathematical concepts and notation, computer literacy', and critical thinking<sup>1</sup>.

A second view, usually referred to as the conventional, commonsense or cognitive/psychological approach, defines literacy as the ability to read and write; that is, to be able to

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<sup>1</sup>De Lemos, Marion. *Closing The Gap Between Research and Practice: Foundations for the Acquisition of Literacy*. (Aust Council for Ed Research: Acer Press, 2002), 3.

convert the written text to the spoken word, and the spoken word to the appropriate written text.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, Sahetapy argues that literacy as the heart of learning process also needs to be taught as early as possible which aims to make the education better, especially in Indonesia. Regarding the importance of literacy, especially to young learners, teachers as the educators should be concerned with their students literacy skills and provide the way to develop their literacy skills well.

Literacy ability is a right everyone and the foundation for lifelong learning. Literacy skills can empower and improve the quality of individuals, families and communities. In education, the culture of writing is rarely to enthused by learners, especially in the schools. The students were more likely to choose a shortcut by copying tasks from the internet. Culture of writing should be more emphasized by the teachers to solve a problem of interest in writing for students. To

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<sup>2</sup>Farris, Pamela J., Carol J. Fuhler, and Maria P. Walther. *Teaching Reading: A Balanced Approach for Today's Classrooms*. (McGraw-Hill Humanities Social, 2004),63.

increase interest the students in writing, the teachers using a variety ways.

Writing is a skills is needed by everyone whether in elementary, secondary, senior high school, university or other school. Our government has stated English as one subject in national examination as final exam for school student.

The teaching literacy to be applied in school using the new method "picture book" to attract the attention of students in terms of writing. If the reading is less attractive because the only inscription is seen, then when adding the images are interesting, it is expected that students are more interested in using the images that interest to be seen. And learners are trained to make a written result of what they see from the picture, and indirectly foster interest in reading to understand the pictures in the book.

One possible way is through the use of picture books in teaching process, as Paquette supports that "teacher who shares quality picture books with young children is promoting literacy in the fullest sense of the word". In addition, through picture books children can learn many skills of literacy include reading,

learning vocabulary, comprehension and concepts about prints, as De Malendez & Sanchez state, and also phonemic awareness, fluency, and comprehension, as Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson report.

Moreover, studies of picture book have been conducted by many researchers. One of them was done by Seplocha & Strasser who revealed that picture books can support children's literacy by engaging children in activities that encourage the use of expressive language, phonological awareness and high-level thinking which is critical for their development in reading and writing.

In addition, another study by Bland discovered that picture books are the best training for literacy. His finding suggests that children are able to interpret the response of the stories in picture books, form the ideas and construct the meaning of the stories through pictures.

Although picture books have been reported to help literacy to young learners, research on the use of picture books in Indonesian context is still rare. Thus, this study attempts to fill the gap in the research area of teaching literacy. Moreover,

considering those previous studies and the importance of literacy in our life, this study is aim and investigating picture books as one of the supporting ways to develop children's ability in reading and writing skills and identify students' responses toward picture books. This study focuses on literacy aspects, such as reading engagement, comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, concepts about prints, phonemic awareness, fluency and aspects of writing.

Cultural literacy is embedded in the self-learners is affect the level of success both in school and in social life. The concept of teaching literacy is defined as the ability to write. But reading method using the display media is unknown outcome. For the application of the method of teaching literacy using picture books to increase interest in learning needs to do research, according to the title that will be examined "*Teaching Literacy To Young Learners Through Picture Books*".

#### **B. Limitation of the Problem**

Literacy is a term used for someone who is capable in a particular field. Literacy here, used for someone who has the ability to read and write. The ability to read and write is

addressed in the English lesson. I focus this literacy into reading ability. Literacy skills in English lessons are still less desirable by students, especially the first grade of junior high school students. The students are more dominant in religious studies. For that I will use the method of teaching literacy by using picture books, in order to attract students to more spirit in learning English.

Why use picture books? Because picture books are an interesting medium used in teaching. The pictures shown will interest students to learn and the images can also be easily remembered by the students because of their varied and diverse images. So I will use picture book media to teach literacy to the students.

As the identification stated above, the researcher needs to limit the problem to focus on some aspects. The researcher limits in teaching literacy to young learners through picture books which the researcher chooses is writing skill. This research will be conducted at first grade of Islamic junior high school (MTS) Nasyrul Ulum Cilegon.



### **C. The Statement of the Problem**

From the description above, the researchers were able to identify some of the questions related to literacy teaching, they are:

1. How is the picture books applied in teaching literacy?
2. How is the effectiveness of using picture books in teaching literacy?

### **D. The Aim of the Research**

Based on the research questions above, this study aims to investigate:

- 1) To know applied picture books in teaching literacy.
- 2) To know the effectiveness of using picture books in teaching literacy.

### **E. The Importance of the Research**

This research is expected to be useful theoretically, can help children in learning English literacy and at least can be useful as a contribution of thought to the world of education.

The result of this research gives a significant contribution to :

1. For the Teacher

Teachers can take advantage of the existence of this study and can be applied and be input to develop a conducive learning programs for learners to further develop the quality and quantity of students.

2. For the Student

Learners are able to read and write in the form of English and more than that, students are able to develop his abilities in the English language.

3. For The Researcher

Personally, the author is very pleased to be involved directly to educate the nation's children and are involved in the development process resource human. And in general, I can finish the final stage in the completion of a thesis for a bachelor of education.