CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part is a review of the storybook, vocabulary, the role of picture books for elementary school children, narrative text, and Jean Piaget theory.

2.1 Storybook

Several studies have concluded that storybooks are effective learning media for improving children's literacy skills (Ulfha et al., 2025). A storybook is a learning medium that presents stories accompanied by attractive illustrations, allowing readers to enjoy the narrative while gaining moral values from the story (Pasaka et al., 2022). The illustrations presented in a storybook make the narrative more vivid and meaningful, enabling children to better understand and process the information conveyed in the story (Ramadanu et al., 2023). Furthermore, illustrations function as an important source of information within the story, as they help readers understand the meaning and message that the author intends to convey (Matulka, 2008).

Storybooks that are easy to understand and enjoyable to read tend to be memorable for children, encouraging them to reread the stories, listen to them repeatedly, or retell them to others (Wardaya et al., 2020). Developing stories that reflect children's developmental characteristics also helps establish emotional connections through imagination and comprehension of the storyline (Ulfha et al., 2025). In addition, careful consideration should be given to the selection of characters, genre, and theme, as children often imagine themselves as the main characters in the story (Yusup et al., 2020). Storybooks also contribute to fostering positive character values from an early age (Solihah, 2022). Another significant benefit of storybooks is their ability to increase children's interest in reading, making them an effective medium for promoting reading habits (Ulfha et al., 2025).

The illustrations contained in a storybook serve not only as decorative elements but also as essential storytelling tools (Pasaka et al., 2022). Well-designed illustrations enhance children's comprehension, capture their attention, and increase their enjoyment of storybooks (Al-Hinaai, 2021). Consequently, they support the development of reading

skills and promote cognitive growth in young learners (Al-Hinaai, 2021). Moreover, the combination of engaging illustrations and an interesting narrative helps children understand the story more effectively (Ramadhani et al., 2025). Both elements are interdependent and complementary; the illustrations do not merely supplement the text, nor does the text simply explain the illustrations. Instead, they work together to construct meaningful information that is easier for readers to understand.

Therefore, the storybook entitled *The Basket of Kindness* was developed as a fable featuring a rabbit as its main character. The selection of the fable genre and the rabbit character was intended to attract young readers' interest, encourage them to identify with the main character, and provide an enjoyable and meaningful English learning experience through an engaging narrative and supportive illustrations.

2.2 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a fundamental component of communication therefore, every individual must possess sufficient vocabulary knowledge to communicate effectively and engage in social interactions that foster sustainable relationships (Saripah, 2022). Vocabulary acquisition is a crucial aspect of language learning (Permana, 2020). This indicates that the greater the vocabulary repertoire a child possesses, the better their opportunities for successful learning and language development (Alqahtani, 2015). Therefore, it can be concluded that individuals need an adequate level of vocabulary knowledge to support effective communication and interaction.

Vocabulary mastery is particularly important in English language learning because it enables individuals to express their ideas and thoughts more effectively (Syamsidar et al., 2023). Conversely, limited vocabulary knowledge can make it difficult for learners to communicate their ideas and opinions clearly (Syamsidar et al., 2023). A broad vocabulary repertoire is considered one of the key factors for success in second-language learning. Learning and applying a wide range of vocabulary are essential for achieving proficiency in English language acquisition (Harahap & Kembaren, 2023). Vocabulary is one of the fundamental aspects that must be developed in English language learning,

alongside other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Harahap & Kembaren, 2023). Therefore, vocabulary serves as a foundational element that enables children to achieve success in learning and effectively using a second language.

2.3 The Role of Storybook for Elementary School Children

According to Jean Piaget's theory, elementary school children are in a stage of cognitive development characterized by significant growth and advancement. At this stage, children begin to develop their ability to think logically and understand concepts based on concrete experiences. They tend to be attracted to concrete objects that can be directly observed and touched (Rohmah et al., 2022). This characteristic indicates that children may find it easier to understand information when it is presented through objects, situations, or experiences that are familiar to them. Therefore, learning materials for elementary school students should consider their cognitive characteristics and provide concrete and meaningful learning experiences. The use of appropriate learning media can help students connect the information presented in the learning process with their existing knowledge and experiences.

In relation to English language learning, storybooks can provide accessible and meaningful support for children's cognitive and language development. Storybooks present information through a combination of written language, illustrations, and simple narratives, allowing children to understand concepts through both textual and visual information. The use of storybooks in learning activities can also encourage children to observe illustrations, follow the sequence of events, and relate the content of the story to familiar objects and situations. In this way, storybooks can support children's thinking skills while providing an engaging context for learning. Munthe and Halim (2019) state that storybooks can support children's development by providing meaningful learning experiences through stories that are appropriate for their level of understanding.

Storybooks can also facilitate the introduction and learning of new English vocabulary by combining words with visual illustrations (Munthe & Halim, 2019). The presence of illustrations helps children connect unfamiliar words with concrete visual representations, making vocabulary learning more understandable and meaningful. For example,

when a new word is presented together with an illustration of the object, animal, or action referred to by the word, children can use the visual information to support their understanding of its meaning. Furthermore, repeated exposure to words and illustrations through storybook reading can help reinforce children's understanding and retention of new vocabulary. As children encounter the same vocabulary in meaningful contexts, they have opportunities to recognize, recall, and understand the words more effectively. Consequently, the use of storybooks may support children's vocabulary acquisition and contribute to their overall language development.

2.4 Narrative Text

Narrative text is an imaginative form of writing that presents a sequence of interconnected events (Ahmad, 2015). It is also defined as a type of text that retells events that occurred in the past (Mulyanah, 2021). A narrative text presents a story through a clear and coherent sequence of events, allowing readers to follow the development of the story with ease (Perdiana & Suryadi, 2022). Furthermore, narrative text is one of the most commonly used forms of writing for expressing perspectives on events or topics that are interconnected, as it is closely related to events that have happened, are happening, or may happen in the future (Qatrinada & Apoko, 2024). Narrative texts may present stories based on real-life experiences or situations that are familiar to readers, although they can also contain imaginative elements. Through the sequence of events presented in the story, readers can understand the relationship between one event and another and follow the development of the characters and situations. Therefore, narrative texts can provide an organized context that allows readers to understand information and messages through a series of meaningful events.

A story developed from real-life events may lead readers to interpret the narrative from different perspectives. Despite these differences in interpretation, readers are expected to understand the author's intended message (Bulut & Turkozu, 2019). The events experienced by an individual character or a group of characters are presented in such a way that readers can empathize with and experience the emotions of the characters throughout the story (Rosyadi et al., 2023).

The presentation of characters, events, and emotions allows readers to become more engaged with the story and relate its content to their own experiences. Moreover, a story that is organized with a clear, logical, and detailed sequence of events has a positive influence on the cognitive and emotional development of children aged 6–10 years (Rahmadani et al., 2017). A well-organized narrative can encourage children to follow the development of events, understand relationships between characters, and recognize the consequences of actions within the story. Thus, narrative texts can provide not only language-related benefits but also opportunities for children to develop their cognitive and emotional abilities.

Narrative text is considered an appropriate learning medium for young learners because it is engaging and supported by a simple and well-organized structure that is easy for children to understand (Muchmaina et al., 2025). The use of narrative stories as instructional media has also been found to increase students' learning motivation (Susanto & Wahyuni, 2023). The effectiveness of narrative text as a learning medium is supported by several essential elements, including characters, plot, and conflict. These elements encourage students to develop their imagination, understand the development of events, and improve their ability to analyze texts, which may contribute to increased learning motivation (Susanto & Wahyuni, 2023). A well-structured storyline also enables students to understand the content of the story more easily and identify the moral message conveyed by the author (Nugroho, 2021).

In addition, narrative texts can help children develop empathy by encouraging them to understand and relate to the experiences and emotions of the characters within the story (Muchmaina et al., 2025). Therefore, the use of narrative texts in English learning can support vocabulary acquisition while simultaneously improving students' reading skills. Based on these explanations, narrative texts with a systematic and chronological sequence of events can attract students' interest and provide meaningful learning experiences. Narrative texts can also function as instructional media for developing vocabulary, expressing emotions, understanding moral values, and encouraging students to engage with the content of a story. Furthermore, the logical relationships between events presented in a narrative provide readers with a coherent understanding of

the story and make narrative text a useful and enduring form of communication.

2.5 Jean Piaget Theory

According to Jean Piaget, an individual's ability to learn develops according to their age and stage of cognitive development (Babullah, 2022). Piaget argued that intellectual development occurs through the interaction between individuals and their environment, enabling knowledge structures to be gradually constructed as a process of adaptation to the surrounding environment (Babullah, 2022). In this process, children actively construct knowledge based on their experiences and interactions with the world around them.

Therefore, children's learning abilities are closely related to their cognitive development and the experiences they obtain from their environment. This perspective suggests that learning activities and instructional materials should be designed by considering the developmental characteristics of learners so that the information provided can be understood according to their level of cognitive development.

Furthermore, Piaget proposed that cognitive development progresses through four stages: the sensorimotor stage (0–2 years), the preoperational stage (2–6 years), the concrete operational stage (7–12 years), and the formal operational stage (13–17 years) (Nainggolan & Daeli, 2021). Each stage reflects increasingly advanced thinking abilities, beginning with understanding the environment through sensory experiences and motor activities and progressing toward logical and abstract reasoning. For elementary school students, the concrete operational stage is particularly relevant because children at this stage begin to develop logical thinking abilities and can understand concepts through concrete objects and events.

Children in this stage are generally better able to reason about information that can be observed, experienced, or related to real situations than information that is entirely abstract. This characteristic has important implications for classroom learning because learning materials that provide concrete and visual representations may help students understand new information more easily. Research and educational literature on Piaget's theory similarly explain that children in the concrete operational

stage can apply logical thinking to concrete objects and events, although their ability to reason about abstract or hypothetical situations is still developing.

The characteristics of the concrete operational stage are relevant to the use of picture books as instructional media for elementary school students. As discussed previously, narrative texts provide a structured sequence of events, characters, and situations that can help young learners understand information through meaningful contexts. When narrative texts are combined with illustrations, students can receive both textual and visual information, allowing them to relate unfamiliar vocabulary and story events to concrete representations. The use of pictures in storybooks has also been examined in research showing that congruent illustrations can support children's understanding of narrated stories. In addition, research on picture books based on Piaget's theory has indicated that visual learning media can assist elementary school students in understanding learning content.

Therefore, the characteristics of children's cognitive development provide a theoretical basis for using illustrated narrative texts, such as *The Basket of Kindness*, as an English learning medium. The combination of simple narrative text and illustrations is expected to provide concrete visual support that can help fourth-grade students understand new English vocabulary within meaningful contexts while following the development of the story.