

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

English is the second language used as an international language almost all over the world. In this era, English plays an important role as a means of communication used in various fields of life, such as technology, science, trade, and many more. English has become a language used by many people around the world to connect and share. Therefore, people must understand and master English to obtain broader knowledge, information, and technology, namely by reading more, either in the form of story books or other readings.

According to Dalman (2013), reading is an activity of looking at and understanding the content of a text, involving the processes of thinking, comprehension, and interpreting the meaning of words or sentences. In addition, according to Tarigan et al in Harianto (2020), reading is a process carried out and used by readers to obtain the message that the writer wants to convey through words/written material or to extract and understand the meaning contained in the written material. Then according to Sudarsono in Harianto (2020) stated that reading is “a complex activity that involves a large number of separate actions, including: people must use understanding, imagination, and observe and remember.”

Reading is one of the essential skills in learning English that contributes greatly to overall language acquisition. In an academic context, reading skills are very important because many teaching materials and references in various fields of science are presented in English. Therefore, effective mastery of reading skills is one aspect that needs to be considered in the English learning process. In today's digital era, technology in reading learning is also one of the solutions that can increase the effectiveness of learning. The use of digital-based learning applications, interactive e-books, and various online learning platforms can provide a more interesting reading experience for students. In addition, technology also allows for personalization of learning, where students can learn according to their own pace and learning style.

Along with the development of technology, the use of digital media in English learning has begun to be widely developed, one of which is through the Webtoon application. Webtoon is a digital platform that provides various types of Webtoon in various languages, including English. Visual content in Webtoon can help students understand texts more easily, because the text in the speech bubble is supported by illustrations that describe the situation or emotions of the character. This can increase student engagement in reading and make learning more interesting compared to reading academic texts that they usually research at school.

According to Will Eisner (2008): Webtoon is a digital Webtoon format that provides convenience such as being a cheap alternative to printed Webtoon, providing a direct reading experience, and a place for creators to explore with an “infinite canvas” and the use of computer devices. According to Siwi et al in Rini (2024) et al, webtoon is an interesting learning medium and is in accordance with developments in information technology. In addition, according to Nam et al in Hanum (2023) et al, Webtoon is a combination of the words web and cartoon, interpreted as online Webtoon. Then according to Cho in Hanum (2023) et al, the birth of webtoon is the result of the adaptation of printed analog Webtoon into digital Webtoon, presented in a vertical layout that has been optimized for computer screens and mobile phones.

Based on observations and interviews with researchers from SMA Islam Margolembo, it was found that there are problems in reading comprehension learning, namely a lack of interest among students in learning to read. This problem is caused by the lack of technology use in learning, which makes students feel bored when studying in class. If this continues, the learning atmosphere in the classroom will become uninteresting and students will lose interest in reading.

Based on previous opinions, the researcher argues that the Webtoon application is one of the learning media that can help students in improving reading skills, where this application is equipped with visuals so that it can make students enthusiastic about learning and not feel bored in class, especially English learning. Not only that, the Webtoon application is also one of the learning media that provides various interesting features and can be used to increase students' enthusiasm for learning. Based on the facts that have been experienced by students

and which have been explained above, reading competence has a very important role in language, and reading competence is the basis of English.

Through this research, it is expected to find an effective strategy in utilizing Webtoon as a learning medium that supports improving students' reading skills. The results of this research are also expected to contribute to educators in designing more interesting teaching methods that are in accordance with the needs of students in today's digital era. So, the researcher is interested in conducting research with the title "The use of Webtoon to Improve Students Reading Comprehension in SMA Islam Margolembo".

1.2 Problem Statement

Based on the background above, the researcher formulated the research problem as follows: "Can the use of the Webtoon application improve the reading comprehension of tenth grade students at SMA Islam Margolembo?"

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the research problems, this research aims to find out the improvement of reading comprehension skills through the Webtoon application of tenth grade students of SMA Islam Margolembo.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The benefits of the results of this research can be explained as follows:

1. In the use of Webtoon applications can help students in increasing their interest and motivating students in reading.
2. This research is also expected to contribute positively to schools to use Webtoon application technology for the learning process in the classroom.

1.5 Scope of the Research

In this research, the researcher limited her research to improving reading ability, specifically focusing on reading comprehension ability.

1.6 Operational Definition

The researcher used some terms in this research to clarify and prevent misunderstanding, the definition of terms as follows:

1. Reading comprehension is the ability to understand text, process and understand the meaning of reading text. In reading comprehension, especially literal comprehension, the process of understanding the content of reading directly in accordance with what is written in the text. Readers simply focus on the information available, such as answering questions about what happened when the event took place and where it happened. The answers to these questions can be found directly in the text, without having to make their own guesses or judgments.
2. Webtoon is a type of digital Webtoon that can be read through smartphones or other digital devices. This Webtoon is specially designed to be read by scrolling. Webtoon has various types of interesting storylines ranging from romantic, action, horror and slice of life with colorful images.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Some Pertinent Ideas

1. Reading Comprehension

a. Definition of Reading Comprehension

According to Dalman (2019), reading comprehension is an activity of looking at and understanding the content of a text, involving the processes of thinking, comprehension, and interpreting the meaning of words or sentences. In addition, according to Tarigan et al in Harianto (2020), reading is a process carried out and used by readers to obtain the message that the writer wants to convey through words/written material or to extract and understand the meaning contained in the written material. Then, according to Wulan in Widiyanto (2023) et al, reading is one of the important factors in the life of modern society. The ability to read is a necessity because the dissemination of information and messages in the modern world is presented in written form, and can only be obtained through reading. Then, according to Grabe in Stoller (2021) explain that reading is a complex process, not merely the act of pronouncing words from a text. It involves visual encoding, linguistic processing, and constructing meaning from the information presented. Readers must integrate new information from the text with their prior knowledge in order to form a comprehensive understanding of the material.

Based on the explanation above, the writer can conclude that reading is an activity carried out to understand information from written texts. This process is not limited to merely looking at words, but also involves thinking to comprehend the meaning contained in the reading. Reading is usually done for various purposes such as seeking information, gaining knowledge, or simply for entertainment, whether through books, articles, newspapers, or other media. Reading is an activity to understand the content of a text. When we read, we do not just look at letters or words, but also try to grasp the meaning the author wants to convey. In this process, we use the knowledge we already have to help us comprehend the text. Reading also involves the ability to recognize words, understand sentences, and connect the information in the text with our previous knowledge or experiences, so we can fully

understand what we are reading. This activity is very important because through reading, we can broaden our horizons, learn new things, and enrich our knowledge.

b. Types of Reading Comprehension

Types of reading comprehension in the world of English must be understood as something we need to know. The following are the types of reading comprehension expressed Patel and Jain (2008):

1. Literal comprehension

Literal comprehension is the ability to understand information written directly in the text. This means that readers only need to look for and capture the facts that are written clearly, such as answering questions about what happened, who was involved, when the event took place and where it happened. The answers to these questions can be found directly in the text, without having to make their own conjectures or judgments.

2. Inferential comprehension

Inferential comprehension is the ability to capture the hidden meaning in a text, in the form of information that is not directly written, but can be understood by looking at the clues and relating them to the reader's own knowledge or experience. This means that the reader must infer or guess what actually happened or felt by the character based on the signs in the reading.

3. Evaluative comprehension.

Evaluative comprehension is the ability to judge and give opinions about the content of reading. In this process, readers not only understand what is written, but also consider whether the information is correct, logical, or in accordance with their values. Readers can also agree or disagree with the content of the text, as long as they provide supporting reasons.

4. Applied comprehension

Applied comprehension is the ability to relate the information read to everyday life. Readers not only understand the content of the text, but can also apply the ideas or lessons from the text in real situations they experience. This ability is very important because it helps readers to utilize what they read to deal with situations and problems that exist in their lives.

5. Critical comprehension

Critical comprehension is the ability to analyze and evaluate reading content in depth by considering various points of view. Readers not only comprehend the text normally, but also criticize the arguments, ideas, or information conveyed in the text. This involves assessing the quality, accuracy, and purpose of the text, as well as the ability to identify bias, logical fallacies, or flaws in the arguments presented.

Based on this explanation, the researcher will use the literal comprehension type, because by using literal comprehension students are expected to be able to understand directly what is conveyed in the text. Then students can understand the written information properly, such as who, when, and where, according to what is in the text.

c. Aspect of Reading Comprehension

Haeruddin et al (2020) said that the reading process requires involvement in mental and physical activities. The reading process has five aspects, namely:

1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation refers to how a person articulates words correctly according to the rules of the language. In reading, correct pronunciation is crucial to ensure that the words are understood properly by the listener. Mispronouncing words can change the meaning or make it difficult for the listener to comprehend what is being said.

2. Intonation

Intonation refers to the variation in pitch or tone of the voice when reading aloud. Proper intonation helps convey emotion, emphasis, or intent in a sentence. For instance, a question typically has a rising intonation at the end, while a statement tends to have a more neutral or falling tone. Correct intonation helps clarify the speaker's intentions and makes the reading more dynamic.

3. Fluency

Fluency in reading is the ability to read smoothly and effortlessly, without frequent pauses or stumbling. Fluent reading reflects mastery of the text, the ability to quickly recognize words, and an understanding of sentence structure. Fluency is important to ensure that the message in the text is delivered effectively and isn't confusing to the listener.

4. Clarity of voice

Clarity of voice refers to the ability to pronounce words in a clear and understandable manner. This includes aspects like volume, articulation, and avoiding speaking too quickly or too slowly. A clear voice helps the listener easily follow what is being read and ensures that the message is communicated without misunderstanding.

5. Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to understand and absorb the information being read. This aspect focuses on the reader's capacity to grasp the meaning of the text, both in its entirety and in its details. Good comprehension allows the reader to convey the content of the text accurately and in context.

Based on this explanation, the researcher will use the comprehension aspect, because comprehension is important in reading. Reading comprehension is the key to assessing the extent to which a reader, especially students, can know the information correctly and use that information effectively. Therefore the researcher took comprehension where the researcher will examine students' reading comprehension skills.

d. Teaching Reading Comprehension

According to Douglas Fisher (2020), it is important to combine word recognition and language comprehension in teaching reading. They argue that effective reading skills require not only the ability to recognize words quickly, but also to understand the meaning contained in the text. This approach ensures that students can read fluently and understand what they read. Teaching reading can be done with various approaches, depending on the needs of the students, learning objectives, and materials used. Teaching reading is a process designed to help students acquire skills in recognizing, understanding, and interpreting the texts they read. The main goal of teaching reading is for students to be able to read fluently, understand texts and also gain knowledge and skills that can be useful from what they read.

Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that reading comprehension teaching is teaching that can assist students in developing effective and in-depth reading skills. This process includes not only the ability to recognize words and

sentences, but also the ability to understand, analyze and infer the meaning of the text read. In addition, effective reading comprehension instruction can increase students' learning motivation, as they feel more confident in understanding texts and subject matter.

2. Webtoon

a. Definition of Webtoon

According to Will Eisner (2008): Webtoon is a digital comic format that provides convenience such as being a cheap alternative to printed Webtoon, providing a direct reading experience, and a place for creators to explore with an “infinite canvas” and the use of computer devices. According to Siwi et al in Rini (2024) et al, webtoon is an interesting learning medium and is in accordance with developments in information technology. In addition, according to Nam et al in Hanum (2023) et al, Webtoon is a combination of the words web and cartoon, interpreted as online Webtoon. Then according to Cho in Hanum (2023) et al, the birth of webtoon is the result of the adaptation of printed analog Webtoon into digital Webtoon, presented in a vertical layout that has been optimized for computer screens and mobile phones.

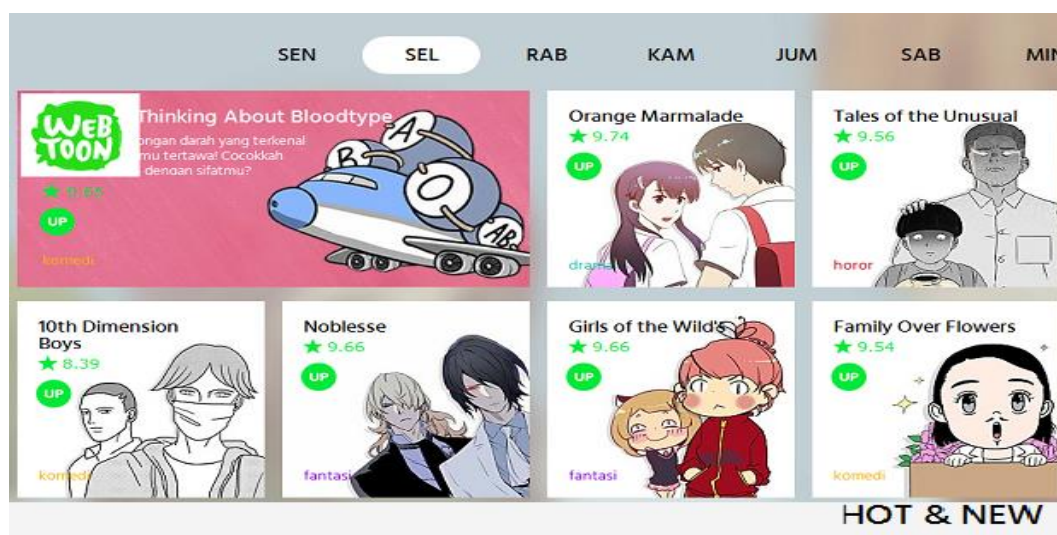


Figure 1. Home Page Webtoon Application

The Webtoon app offers a variety of genres, but slice of life and drama are often chosen for 10th graders because the content is relevant to teenage life. These genres depict everyday experiences, such as friendships and family relationships, encouraging students to reflect on themselves and their social environment.

Muliany et al (2024) investigated the effectiveness of using the Line Webtoon application to improve students' reading comprehension at SMKN 6 Makassar through a pre-experimental design (one-group pre-test–post-test). The effectiveness of this media is attributed to its key characteristics: attractive visuals, well-structured story panels, and short, contextual dialogues. These features help students understand the plot, characters, and vocabulary meaning while also enhancing motivation and engagement in the reading process. The study concludes that Webtoon is an effective digital medium for teaching reading comprehension.

Based on previous opinion, the researcher concludes that Webtoon is a digital Webtoon format that is published online and then accessed through applications or websites. The popularity of Webtoon itself initially began in South Korea which then spread throughout the world, becoming one of the entertainments that is popular with most people. Webtoon is also presented with colored illustrations to provide an interesting visual experience for readers.

b. Procedure of Using Webtoon

The application of webtoon as learning media can be an interesting and effective way to deliver learning materials, especially in increasing student engagement. According to Heinich et al. (2024), the initial stage of media use includes the introduction of the tool or platform. In the context of Webtoon:

1. Researcher and students download the apps Webtoon on their respective play store.



Figure 2. Download Apps on Playstore

2. Researchers and students select the account to be used.

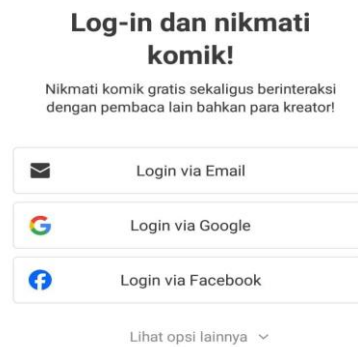


Figure 3. App Log in Page

3. Researchers and students enter date of birth.



Figure 4. Entering Age on the App

4. Researcher can choose genres/titles that suit their abilities and students development.



Figure 5. Choosing a Story Genre

5. If the students chooses at will, researchers should guide, direct and control students work and students behavior.



Figure 6. App Main Page

6. Example of a webtoon story cover.



Figure 7. Cover story “After School”



Figure 8. Cover story “Candy”

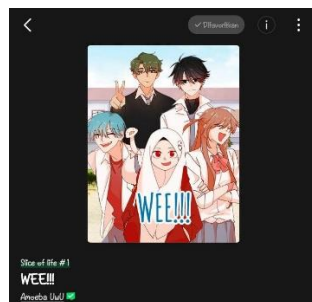


Figure 9. cover story “wee!!!”

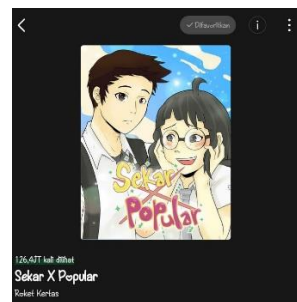


Figure 10. Cover story “Sekar X Popular”

c. Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Webtoon in Teaching Reading Comprehension

Darmawanti (2022) states that the advantages and disadvantages of applying webtoon in learning activities, one of the main advantages of Webtoon apps lies in the ease of access it offers. The popularity of these apps has increased significantly along with the development of digital technology, such as the use of smartphones, laptops, and personal computers, which allows users to enjoy content anytime and

anywhere. In addition, this ease of access is enhanced by the availability of a number of stories that can be read for free. The availability of this free content is generally determined by the quality or popularity of the story.

While the Disadvantages of the Webtoon application are inseparable from a number of limitations. Access to the platform is highly dependent on the availability of a stable internet network. In addition, not all content can be accessed for free, given that some stories are categorized as paid content, which is generally determined based on ratings or reviews from users. As a form of digital Webtoon, the majority of content available on Webtoon focuses more on the fiction genre, which may be a consideration in the context of its utilization as an educational medium.

The solution to overcome the problem of unstable internet connection when using Webtoon in learning is to download the episodes first when a good network is available, such as at home or at school with Wi-Fi access. After logging in to the Webtoon app, researchers or students can select comics that are suitable for the material, then save them through the download feature. The downloaded episodes will be available without the need for an internet connection, so they can still be used while studying. This step is very helpful so that the learning process remains effective even if the internet is problematic. However, the researcher has ensured that the internet connection in the area where the researcher conducted the study has a good connection so that the learning process can run well and smoothly.

2.2 Previous Studies

After reviewing several journals relevant to this research, it was found that some had similarities with the researcher's research. Some of these literature reviews include:

1. In Pattisina and Tomasouw (2023) with research entitled “The Influence of LINE Webtoon Media on the Reading Ability of German Language Education Research Program Students at Pattimura University”, This research aims to find out whether there is an effect of the use of LINE Webtoon media as a German language learning medium on German reading ability. This research was conducted on 18 students in the second and fourth semesters who were researching German at the elementary and secondary level (A2). The data

obtained were analyzed using a t-test with a significance level. The results of the research showed that the results of students' Post-Test scores experienced a significant increase compared to the Pre-Test scores before treatment.

2. In Meyliana and Sumantri (2024), with research entitled “The effectiveness of the webtoon "Gula-Gula" on improving reading skills and understanding of punctuation in grade IV elementary school students“, The purpose of this research is to find out the effectiveness of the "Gula-Gula" webtoon to improve students' reading skills and punctuation comprehension. This proposed research was carried out through a quasi experiment with the design of the non-equivalent control group. The subjects in this research are grade IV students of SD Negeri 7 Jatiwaringin, Pondok Gede District, Bekasi City. The webtoon media used is titled "Gula-Gula" which tells the daily life of grade IV students at school. The results of this research show that the use of the webtoon "Gula-Gula" can improve reading skills as well as punctuation comprehension.
3. The research from Dewi et al (2021) entitled “The Effectiveness of Direct Reading Thinking Activities Strategy on Improving Reading Comprehension Skills in Elementary School” this research aims to determine the effectiveness of the direct reading thinking activities strategy for improving reading comprehension skills of fifth grade students of elementary school in Indonesian language subjects, Anggadita III Elementary School, Klari Karawang Subdistrict. This research is a type of quantitative research. The population used in this research were all students of class V of Anggadita III Elementary School, Klari Karawang District, amounting to 46 students. The results of the instrument validity test about the ability to read students' understanding of Indonesian subjects obtained 20 items that were declared valid and 30 items were tested in other school samples, namely in class VA and VB Anggadita III Elementary School, Klari Karawang District.
4. In Ali and Emirati (2021) with research entitled “Webtoon Application and Students' Reading Activity” The purpose of this research is to investigate and describe students' attraction to the use of webtoon applications in reading activities. This research is a descriptive model consisting of 35 students. It was conducted at the University of Muhammadiyah Bulukumba, South Sulawesi.

The results of the research show that webtoon applications are an interesting medium used in reading activities because they contain and cover electronic Webtoon, online Webtoon, digital Webtoon, etc.

Based on explanation above, this research and previous studies have differences and similarities. The first research aims to determine whether there is an effect of using line Webtoon on reading skills. with the subject of 18 fourth semester students using quantitative methods. in the second research with the aim of improving reading skills and understanding of punctuation, with the subject of fourth grade students, and using Webtoon media. The third research aimed to determine the effectiveness of the direct reading thinking strategy in improving reading comprehension, with the subject of 46 fifth grade students, and quantitative methods. and the fourth research which aims to determine students' interest in using the Webtoon application in reading activities, with 35 students as research subjects.

Therefore, there are similarities and differences in this research. the similarities are both using Webtoon media and using quantitative methods, and aiming to improve students' reading skills. while the differences lie in the subjects and research instruments.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this research is show in the diagram below as follow:

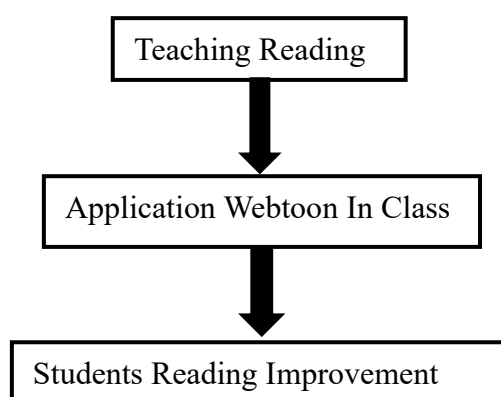


Figure 11. Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework in this research, for the pre-test the researcher will provide a story on the Webtoon application and then students are asked to read the story. the research will observe student performance then analyze their reading

ability, after that the researcher will carry out treatment for five meetings. then after carrying out the treatment the researcher will conduct a post-test by giving a reading test to students, to find out the increase in students' reading ability by comparing the average scores of the pre-test and post-test.

2.4 Hypothesis

Hypothesis are temporary statements or conjectures made on the formulation of problems or initial observations related to the problem to be studied and need to be tested through research. Related to the previous explanation, the researcher formulates the hypothesis as follow:

- a. Null hypothesis (H_0): The use of Webtoon is not effective in improving students reading skills
- b. Alternative hypothesis (H_a): The use of Webtoon is a effective in improving Students reading skills

General testing rules using the following formula:

1. If $\text{sig } a < 0,05$ then (H_0 is accepted and H_a is rejected)
2. If $\text{sig } a > 0,05$ then (H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted)

Based on the above criteria, it can be explained that if the significant value is smaller than (0,05), it shows that H_0 is accepted. Meaning that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results of students after being given reading comprehension treatment using Webtoon application media. Whereas if the significant value is greater than (0,05), it shows that H_a is accepted. Meaning that there is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results of students after being given reading comprehension treatment using Webtoon applications.