

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction of the research. This chapter includes some sub-chapters which cover the background of the study, identification of the problems, delimitation of the problems, research questions, objectives, significance of the study, and organization of the chapters. The background of this study explains the reasons why the researcher chose this topic. Then, the identification of the problems explains the relevant problems related to the topic while the delimitation of the problems leads to the focus and to make the study within the boundary. In the objectives, the researcher presents the purpose of the study. The significances of the study provide the benefits that can be obtained for several parties who read this study. In the last sub-chapter, the organization of the chapters presents the outline of presenting the report of the research.

Background of the Study

Reading is one of four major skills in English. Noor claims that reading is an essential academic language skill in the learning environment for all second and foreign language learners (as cited in Akarsu & Daryemez, 2014, p. 86). In reading itself, reading can make learners obtain more knowledge and information. Dalilan (2021) stated that people whose hobby is reading will read all forms of reading texts with various reading purposes in order to satisfy their desire to obtain as much information as possible.

Technology has become part of our life nowadays. It has become an essential need in our life helping us in many ways to make our life easier. Technology also affects how people in the 21st century rely on computer-based or digital resources rather than paper-based resources. People can see that there are many computer-based resources such as e-mail, online news portals, chatting applications or instant messages, and online videos. Internet and ICT are increasingly important as sources of information, and to use information resources effectively requires literacy (Coiro et al., 2008, as cited in Leu, et al., 2011).

Nowadays, digital literacy has changed people's habits of reading. There are many resources of digital literacy platforms that can help people read through computers, tablets, or smartphones. Online magazines and newspapers in digital format have easier access and the developers can update their data more easily (Akarsu & Dariyemez, 2014, p. 86). Some of the applications are for entertainment purposes. Many platforms published digital comics. Some popular applications that can be found in the Play Store or App Store are *LINE Webtoon*, *Kakao Page*, *Mangatoon*, *Tapas*, and other related applications..

One of the most popular digital comics platforms is LINE Webtoon application. LINE Webtoon application can be downloaded and accessed freely. However, the readers can access early the preview episode by buying the episode using *coin*. Then, the comic layout in LINE Webtoon application is easy on the eyes because of its vertical paneling (how the comic is arranged) and layout. As Astabrata (2019) said, by scrolling the panel, the readers can see each panel more

thoroughly because several panels are not displayed in just one page. Also, in LINE Webtoon, the users can also become a creator by publishing their own comic in the LINE Webtoon 'Kanvas' section. In LINE Webtoon Kanvas, people can access and read the comics made by creators for free (Bentri, Magh'firoh, & Tahitu, 2021).

With the various kinds of comic available in LINE Webtoon, students' reading habits can be improved by using it. LINE Webtoon is suitable for developing reading literacy and reading with LINE Webtoon is a fun activity (Indah & Wibowo, 2021). Meanwhile, Green stated that people who have good reading habits, their knowledge can be broaden (as cited in Florence et al., 2017). However, some people tend to be bored when they are reading, especially in language learning because the topic is not interesting. To acquire fun reading activity, extensive reading can be done. Extensive reading can be seen as a reading activity that still within the reader's peak acquisition zone, as for the goals is to gaining reading experience and general language knowledge (Mermelstein, 2015). By using LINE Webtoon, students can improve their reading habits because LINE Webtoon has many comics that have interesting stories and illustrations. Wulandari et al. (2019) claim that the use of pictures creates it more appealing when reading.

This research mainly focuses on the particular application, LINE Webtoon. Because of the high use of this application, the researcher believes that there are many opinions regarding this application. From the researcher's experience and observation, there are many of her friends from the English Education Department who like reading webtoon in their free time. Regarding the application, Muyassaroh

et al., (2019) stated that LINE Webtoon can become a media for learning because it has interesting stories and plots. Students can also understand easily because of the simple sentence they use. With this background, the researcher intended to find out the students' experience in using LINE Webtoon regarding their English reading habit. This research is also intended to find out how the students perceive the significance of using LINE Webtoon on their English reading skills.

Identification of the Problems

From the background above, the researcher believes that some people think that reading can be boring. This is due to the overwhelming of words that makes some people not interested in reading. When students read extensively, they are developing their reading skills through reading for information and reading for pleasure without being aware that they are learning something (Permatasari, Wijayanto, & Kristina, 2020). To improve the habits in reading, the use of technology can assist and enhance the reading habits more because of the attachment of technology in daily use. Some reading applications provide an interesting topic for reading; therefore, this reading is suitable for students because they may relate to the topic or theme from the story.

The existence of the LINE Webtoon application can be one way to overcome boredom while reading. The purpose of the application is not only for entertainment, but there is also a possibility to use this application to increase students' reading habits. With the illustration and interesting topic provided in

LINE Webtoon, the students can easily find their suitable reading material. Also, LINE Webtoon is available in many languages and the users can change what language they want. This mean people can also use LINE Webtoon to sharpen their reading skills in different language.

In applying LINE Webtoon related to reading habits, however, several problems might arise. For example, the paid stories in LINE Webtoon are considered a weakness of LINE Webtoon because the readers cannot freely access them and push the reader to read from illegal sites. Not only that, digital literacy in using LINE Webtoon is different for each person, whether they use it for entertainment purposes or for learning purposes. Furthermore, there are different experiences when using LINE Webtoon on English reading habits in the perspective of both the teachers and students, and also the different awareness of the significance of using LINE Webtoon for their reading skills.

Delimitation of the Study

The focus of this research is to explore the students' perceptions on the use of the LINE Webtoon Application regarding their reading habits. It covers their experiences when using LINE Webtoon. It also focuses on how the students perceive the significance of using LINE Webtoon Application on their reading skills. The subject of this study is only limited to only the students from an Islamic private university in Yogyakarta majoring in English Education. The research is based on the students' perception only, not from the teachers' points of view. The

method used when conducting this research is limited to apply only qualitative design using the interview as the data collection method.

Research Questions

1. How do the students of English Language Education Department experience in using LINE Webtoon application regarding their English reading habits?
2. How do the students perceive the significance use of LINE Webtoon application on their English reading skills?

Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, the objective of this research covers two goals:

1. To find out the students' experiences in using LINE Webtoon application on the students' reading habits.
2. To explore how the students perceive the significance of using LINE Webtoon on their English reading skills.

The students' experience that investigated is about their feeling when using the LINE Webtoon application to read English, how they read English comics in LINE Webtoon application, and whether they have different reading habits before and after reading through LINE Webtoon application.

Significance of the Study

The study is expected to give an explanation and information about the students' experience when using the LINE Webtoon Application to improve the students' reading habits. The researcher expects that this research will be beneficial for students, teachers, other researchers, and web 2.0 developers.

To students. The study can give information to the students about other students' perceptions towards the LINE Webtoon Application on their reading habits. When students learn others' experiences, there is likely an influence to improve and motivate them to use the LINE Webtoon Application to improve their reading habits. The researcher hopes this study can motivate and encourage students to increase their reading habits.

To teachers. The researcher hopes this study can provide information on the use of LINE Webtoon to improve the students' reading habit and reading skills based on the students' perception. Therefore, it is hoped that the findings will inspire teachers to consider digital comics into their learning material to make students more interested and increase their reading habits.

To other researchers. The other researcher may use this research as the guideline and references to use in their research. Other researchers may also use this study to compare with another existing study related to the topic. The researcher of this study hopes the findings of this study can be helpful as a comparison to other related studies.

To web 2.0 developers. The researcher hopes that this study provides an information about students' habits in reading using LINE Webtoon application. As a consideration in developing technology that can support the users' reading habits. The researcher hopes the findings of this study can inspire developers to make digital literacy contents.

Organization of the Chapters

The chapter one is explains the background of the research, the identification, the delimitation, the research question, the objectives, the significance of the study and the organization of the study. Moreover, the second chapter discusses the related study and review of the previous study related to this study. After that, for the third chapter, it provides the methodology that used for the research and how the researcher conducted the data collection and analysis. In this section, this study explains about the data collection using qualitative approach and describe the participants selection for this research. Furthermore, the findings and the discussion of the study are described in the chapter four. Lastly, the fifth chapter provides the conclusion and recommendations. In the last chapter, discusses the conclusion consists of the summary of the research, while the recommendations provide some suggestions for students, teachers, other researchers, and for web 2.0 developers.

