

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents several explanations of why this research was researched and how the research process occurred. Therefore, the researcher describes it in several sub-points, such as the background of the study, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the research, and significance of the study. The following explanation regarding this topic is outlined.

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's digital era, English learning has evolved with sophisticated technology. Additionally, one of the most crucial elements of the teaching and learning process is the utilization of digital technology which after years of drastic changes, has become dominant among traditional media (Hikmah, 2019). Since the rapid development of digital technology, new approaches and techniques for teaching and learning English to readers of other languages have gradually surfaced (Arigusman et al., 2018). The existence of this digital era has given many types of digital-based technology that apply to the process of teaching and learning to improve the quality of students learning, especially in English (Sagita & Khairunnisa, 2020). In addition, the educational importance of digital technologies in EFL learning stems from the idea that they provide a new environment in which learners can practice English individually or collaboratively (Alakrash et al., 2021). Hence, the presence of digital technology in EFL learning can expand the excellence of learning and can encourage students' development in using new methods and strategies in learning English.

One of the English language skills is reading which is developed to enrich students' reading comprehension. Moreover, reading is the central way of learning a foreign language so someone needs to pay attention to what is contained in the reading (Yang, 2017). Although an individual's cognitive development naturally determines reading and is largely dependent on their speedy word recognition (Yurko & Protsenko, 2022), students will not only read what is written in the text. Still, they will also think critically and attempt to understand the text between the

lines (Mohseni et al., 2020). As Capodieci et al. (2020) revealed the use of learning media online can increase the acquisition of literacy among students which improves students' reading comprehension. However, models of digital learning media for reading comprehension can be adapted to students' characteristics based on their background (Khusniyah, 2022). In addition, this is consistent with multimedia learning cognitive theory, which argues that the practice of technology in learning can advance students' comprehension skills in thoughtful and visualizing learning (Samat & Aziz, 2020). Therefore, reading activities to improve reading comprehension can be supported by a variety of digital learning media that support students' reading needs from a variety of text sources.

Based on an existing preliminary interview, a non-English major student has poor English reading skills, such as an inability to understand reading text. She found it difficult to understand the meaning and intent of a text, fortunately, because of her habit of reading English texts, her reading comprehension gradually improved. She discovered a reading platform, Z-library, that was interesting to read and made her enjoy it. After more than three years of being interested in reading English texts, it has become a habit for her to do it for 30-40 minutes every day. Additionally, from the Z-library reading platform, she found various types of reading texts, such as novels, poetries, encyclopedias, and non-fiction books. By using a strategy that she had mastered, namely understanding the entire context of the sentence, she goes back and forth to open Google Translate to translate words that are unfamiliar or difficult to guess. She realized that her habit had become a strong habit because many benefits could be gained from reading comprehension, such as enriching vocabulary, understanding reading structure, patterns, grammar, and so on (Preliminary interview, September 17th 2023). Such as research on reading English texts which provides recommendations to non-English major students in improving reading comprehension (Ibrahim et al., 2023; Ngoc Yen, 2020; Yang, 2017). Further, Z-library can impact students' ability or motivation to learn English texts because Z-library offers various types of texts, both fiction and non-fiction, so students are interested in reading. Therefore, this research contributes to providing recommendations to non-English major students in

learning to read through reading English texts. As a source of reading English text, an online library, Z-library can be accessed to ease to find resources and increase reading interest as well as free access for users.

In previously conducted research on the use of reading platforms in reading comprehension, researchers discovered that using digital technology for reading platforms can improve students' reading comprehension (Hartati et al., 2023; Mariam et al., 2022; Permatasari et al., 2020; Pido et al., 2022; Ramadhanti et al., 2021). Permatasari et al. (2020) conducted research focused on students' attitudes toward extensive reading on the Wattpad platform and its advantages for improving students' English skills. The research's findings show an improvement in students' writing skills, speaking skills, vocabulary mastery, reading comprehension, and listening abilities. Ramadhanti et al. (2021) conducted a research focus on the influence of utilizing the Wattpad application on students' reading comprehension in narrative texts. The findings of this study show that using the Wattpad application has a significant impact on students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. Mariam et al. (2022) researched the use of Quipper School to improve reading comprehension of recounted text. According to the findings of the study, using Quipper School has been quite effective, easy to implement, and easily accessible for students. Pido et al. (2022) conducted research focused on the ability to read English through comics as a medium for improving English reading abilities. The research findings that learning to read and understand English through comic media can improve adolescent comprehension. Hartati et al. (2023) conducted research focused on using webtoon comics for deaf students to improve their reading comprehension. The research results show that the use of webtoon comic media can improve reading comprehension skills, as evidenced by the increase in scores obtained by each student.

Although there have been massive studies concerning reading comprehension (e.g Smith et al., 2021), learning to read (e.g Share, 2021), and teaching to read (e.g Cicerchia & Freeman, 2018), little attention has been paid to studying the Z-library (Alver, 2019), it only describes the use of the Z-library.

Therefore, this research wants to fill in the gaps regarding the perception of using Z-library in learning reading comprehension by a non-English major student.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

In this research, the researcher focuses on the perception of using Z-library in learning English reading comprehension. More clearly, the question of this research is, “What are the student’s perceptions of the use of Z-Library in learning English reading comprehension?”

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstandings in this research, the researcher presents several keywords to clarify this research:

- 1.3.1 Learning to read : This is a practice of abilities to understanding the meaning when reading by choosing the desired reading or outside the academic context, especially for non-English major students who have a special effort to learn to read English.
- 1.3.2 Student’s perception : Perceptive process students use to understand the world through their senses, namely sight, hearing, smell, feelings, and appreciation. This research focuses on two components, there are cognitive and affective.
- 1.3.3 Non-English major student : In this research, the researcher involved a non-English major student namely a civil engineering major who had deficiencies in reading comprehension so she learned to read English texts.
- 1.3.4 Z-library : It is a library platform for reading that provides various types of texts. Apart

from that, this platform can be downloaded for free and unlimited.

1.4 Aim of the Research

This research aims to investigate the perception of a non-English major student of the use of Z-library in learning English reading comprehension.

1.5 Significances of the Study

In this research, the significance of the study consists of three, namely theoretical contributions, practical contributions, and empirical contributions.

- 1.5.1 Theoretical contributions : This research contributes to the existing theories on learning to read (Ehri, 2020; Gosmawi & Bryant, 2015), reading comprehension (Insuasty-Cárdenas, 2020; Locher & Pfof, 2020; McQuillan, 2019; Smith et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2021; Yén & Thảo, 2021) and also discussion the theory of perception (Drayson, 2020; Hickok, 2015; Walgito, 2004).
- 1.5.2 Practical contributions : This research showed that a non-English major used a reading media as a participant to present the perception of using Z-library in learning reading comprehension.
- 1.5.3 Empirical contributions : This research reviewed and complemented existing research regarding reading comprehension in non-English major students. However, this research is often researched by scientists. Therefore, this research aims to investigate significantly broader issues regarding using Z-library in learning to read English texts of reading

comprehension by a non-English major student.