

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents research background, research problem, research objective, research hypothesis, research significance, research scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Research Background

The use of English as a foreign language in Indonesia is prevalent across various sectors, including the economy, politics, tourism, science, education, and social interactions. Recognized as a global language, English is the most extensively studied foreign language worldwide (Rao, 2019), underscoring its critical role in facilitating international communication. In Indonesia, English is incorporated into school curricula and featured in national examinations, highlighting its educational importance.

English education in Indonesia emphasizes four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, reading is particularly crucial, serving as the foundation for success across all educational contexts (Zein et al., 2020). Through reading, students acquire extensive knowledge, directly influencing their academic achievements.

Effective reading comprehension is essential for academic success and requires strategic instructional approaches. Teachers must guide students through structured steps, including text selection, strategy explanation and demonstration,

guided support, independent practice, and reflection (Indrayani, 2014). Mastery of reading comprehension is therefore a systematic and deliberate process.

The Indonesian government's introduction of *Kurikulum Merdeka* has expanded English education from Grade 1 to Grade 12, focusing on skills such as listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting various text types. In reading, students are encouraged to comprehend, utilize, and reflect on texts to enhance their knowledge and skills, enabling them to contribute effectively to society by addressing relevant issues (Aditomo, 2021).

To meet contemporary educational demands, teachers must employ engaging and effective reading strategies. Li et al., (2024) suggests that students benefit more from interactive and emotionally engaging content rather than solely focusing on textual structures. However, traditional teaching methods often prevail, with limited emphasis on enjoyable and effective reading strategies, leading students to rely on conventional and less engaging practices (Indrayani, 2014).

Preliminary observations at SMAN 1 Kademangan revealed that eleventh-grade students face challenges in understanding narrative texts, particularly with vocabulary related to past participles. Students often depend exclusively on standard English reading materials without exploring innovative learning methods. Additionally, teachers predominantly use textbooks and worksheets, with minimal integration of technology like smartphones, despite the availability of WiFi facilities that could facilitate access to diverse learning resources. This preliminary findings supported by Mrs. Suratén, S.Pd. and Mrs. Mulki Banu Wati,

S.Pd. as the English Teacher in SMA Negeri 1 Kademangan Kabupaten Blitar said:

“Selama ini, kita lebih banyak menggunakan buku teks dan lembar kerja, padahal sebenarnya ada banyak sumber daya yang bisa dimanfaatkan, terutama dengan fasilitas WiFi yang sudah tersedia di sekolah”.

Also Mrs. Mulki Banu Wati, S.Pd. also stated:

“Banyak siswa yang masih terlalu bergantung pada materi bacaan bahasa Inggris standar tanpa mencoba metode pembelajaran yang lebih inovatif”.

The integration of smartphones in learning narrative texts presents a viable solution, supported by various digital applications designed to enhance reading skills. For instance, Several studies share similarities with the current research in terms of approach, methods, and media used, but differ in focus and methodology. Mudawamah's (2023) study on vocabulary enrichment in 8th-grade students through short story e-books focuses on vocabulary, unlike the current study's emphasis on reading skills. Stevani et al. (2023) similarly use the Let's Read application, but their focus is on visualization strategies to improve reading comprehension, while the current study uses the app more broadly. Khoiriyah et al. (2021) emphasize narrative text and reading comprehension through mind mapping in a literature review, contrasting the current study's experimental approach. Sulistyono (2021) uses Wattpad in classroom action research, differing from the pre-experimental design of this study. Finally, Amanda's (2022) research on the Let's Read Asia app involves quasi-experimental methods with purposive sampling, contrasting with the current study's sample and methodology.

Previous research has explored strategies to improve students' reading comprehension, such as digital applications like Wattpad and mind mapping

techniques. However, there is a research gap regarding the integration of more accessible, educationally targeted tools like the "Let's Read" application in Indonesian high schools. Most studies focus on general reading improvement, overlooking specific challenges like vocabulary difficulties with narrative texts. This study aims to address this gap by evaluating the impact of the "Let's Read" application on students' reading skills at SMAN 1 Kademangan, offering insights into its potential to enhance engagement and comprehension.

Considering these findings, this research proposes *“The Impact of Implementing “Let’s Read” to Refine The Students’ Reading Skill In SMAN 1 Kademangan”*. The school's policy permitting smartphone use, coupled with widespread student access to these devices, provides an optimal environment for implementing this digital tool effectively and enhancing the overall learning experience.

1.2 Research Problem

Based from the background above, the researcher wants to propose the research problem as follows. How is the effectiveness of Let's Read Application to enhance the Eleventh Grade students' achievement on the reading of narrative text in SMA Negeri 1 Kademangan Blitar?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the research problems above, the research objective is to analyze the effectiveness of Let's Read Application to enhance the Eleventh Grade students' achievement on the reading of narrative text in SMA Negeri 1 Kademangan Blitar.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

The researcher had two hypotheses in this research. There were an alternative hypothesis and null hypothesis. The researcher stated the hypothesis as follows:

- a. H_a (Alternative Hypothesis) there is an effectiveness of using Let's Read to enhance the eleventh grades reading skill of Narrative Text in SMA Negeri 1 Kademangan Blitar.
- b. H_o (Null Hypothesis) there is no effectiveness of using Let's Read Application to enhance the eleventh grades reading skill of Narrative Text in SMA Negeri 1 Kademangan Blitar.

1.5 Research Significances

This research holds several important significances for English teachers, students, and future researchers. For English teachers, the study provides insights into the effectiveness of using the Let's Read application to improve students' reading skills, particularly in narrative texts.

1.5.1 *English Teacher at SMA Negeri 1 Kademangan Blitar*

For English teachers, the result of the study provides insights into the effectiveness of using the Let's Read application to enhance students' reading skills, particularly in narrative texts. This understanding can help English teachers adopt the application as a supplementary resource to enhance students' reading comprehension and tailor their teaching strategies to better address the needs of students who may struggle with reading.

1.5.2 Students

For students, the Let's Read application offers an interactive and enjoyable way to engage with narrative texts, increasing their interest in reading. It also helps them improve their reading comprehension and critical thinking skills through a wide range of accessible materials. Moreover, the application encourages independent learning, allowing students to enhance their reading skills at their own pace.

1.5.3 Future researchers

For future researchers, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on technology-enhanced learning. The empirical data provided can serve as a valuable reference for further studies on the effectiveness of digital reading tools in improving reading comprehension or on the use of other digital platforms in language learning. Additionally, this research opens the door for more in-depth investigations into the impact of various digital tools on different aspects of English language skills across diverse student populations.

1.6 Research Scope and Limitation

This study focused on examining the effectiveness of the Let's Read application in enhancing the reading comprehension of narrative texts, specifically focusing on legend among grade XI students with a total of 33 students at SMAN 1 Kademangan, Blitar, in class XI J during their second semester. The research uses Sugiyono's (2019) One Group Pre-Test Post-Test Design to evaluate how well the students improve their reading skills through the use of the application. The limitations of this study include its restriction to only one class of grade XI students at SMAN 1 Kademangan, specifically class XI J. Additionally, the study is constrained by the timeframe of the second semester, limiting the duration of data collection and analysis

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

In order to ensure clarity and consistency in this study, it is essential to define the key terms that used in this study. This section provides definitions for Let's Read, Reading Comprehension, and Narrative Text, all of which are central to the research focus. The terms are explained based on expert definitions, followed by how they are applied in the context of this research.

1.7.1 Let's Read

Let's Read Application is an initiative developed by The Asia Foundation, aimed at fostering a love of reading among children across Asia, particularly in communities and languages that have limited access to educational resources (<https://www.letsreadasia.org/>). The application provides free access to a large

library of storybooks in multiple languages, making it an important tool for improving literacy, it can be accessed through smartphone, laptop, hand phone (Rahmadini & Kurniawan, 2022). In this research, Let's Read refers to the application being used as a digital reading tool to enhance the reading comprehension skills of grade XI students at SMAN 1 Kademangan Blitar. The focus is specifically on using this application to improve students' understanding of narrative texts, particularly stories about legends.

1.7.2 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language." It is the ability of the reader to decode the text, understand its meaning, and relate it to their prior knowledge or experiences with the purposes for pleasure and for gaining information Ardiansyah & Jaya, (2020).

In the context of this study, reading comprehension refers to the students' ability to read and understand narrative texts using the Let's Read application under the topic "Legend"

1.7.3 Narrative Text

Narrative text as a type of writing that tells a story or presents a sequence of events, often with characters, a setting, and a plot which has the purpose of a narrative text is to entertain, inform, or convey a message through storytelling (Khatimah, 2020). In this research, narrative text refers to the type of reading material used for assessing the effectiveness of the Let's Read application. The

narrative texts used in this study will focus on legendary stories, which serve as the main reading subject for the grade XI students at SMAN 1 Kademangan Blitar during the second semester.