

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research focus, research objectives, and explains the researcher's interest in the research topic, and discusses the research limitations. This chapter summarizes the research, research focus, research objectives, research significance, research limitations, and definitions of key terms.

1.1 Research Context

In today's era of globalization, English has become a global language that plays a crucial role in various aspects of life, including education, business, and international communication. As highlighted by Kusumaningrum et al. (2019), mastering English enables individuals to communicate across cultures and access a wide range of global information. English proficiency is no longer viewed as an additional skill but as a fundamental requirement, particularly for students who aim to compete at the international level. Moreover, learning English supports the development of critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy. According to Andayani (2022), English serves not only as a communication tool but also as a gateway to academic and digital resources, considering that much of the world's scientific literature and digital content is presented in English.

English language learning includes four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Graham and Santos (2018), these skills are interrelated and collectively form the foundation of language competence. Among them, reading is one of the most vital, especially in the academic context. Reading enables learners to understand written texts, expand vocabulary, enhance grammatical awareness, and develop critical thinking abilities. To make reading

instruction more effective, especially in today's digital environment, it is necessary to adopt interactive and learner-centered approaches that align with students' needs and technological familiarity.

In this regard, technology integration has become increasingly relevant in English language learning. Wahab and Lestari (2018) describe interactive learning as a process where students actively engage through interactions with teachers, peers, and digital content. Technology serves as a powerful tool to support engaging, flexible, and adaptive learning experiences. Rachmadtullah et al. (2020) argue that digital tools enrich the learning process by providing access to multimedia content, collaborative platforms, and interactive applications. Putra et al. (2021) further explain that adaptive digital tools can enhance motivation and engagement by catering to different learning styles and paces. In addition, Selwyn (2016) notes that technology encourages independent learning and helps students manage their own progress.

One of the most critical aspects of language learning is assessment, especially formative testing that aims to monitor students' progress and inform instruction. In the digital era, the integration of technology into educational assessment has become essential, particularly in testing reading comprehension. Traditional paper-based assessments often fail to capture the dynamic nature of students' understanding and may not accommodate diverse student needs. As emphasized by Rachmadtullah et al. (2020), digital assessment tools can enhance learning by providing real-time feedback, flexibility, and interactivity. Hence, using technology for formative reading assessment is not merely an option but a necessity to ensure

that reading instruction is more effective, engaging, and responsive to students' abilities.

Among the digital tools available, Socrative has gained popularity for its usefulness in classroom assessments. Socrative is a web-based application that allows teachers to design quizzes, monitor student responses in real time, and evaluate learning outcomes. Its simple interface and engaging features make it suitable for formative assessments. According to Vesselinov and Grego (2016), the use of interactive applications such as Socrative can enhance student motivation and engagement through educational games, quizzes, and digital activities. Socrative also supports formative testing by helping teachers adapt instruction based on student performance.

However, the implementation of educational technology, including Socrative, in high school settings still encounters several challenges. Based on a preliminary study conducted at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar on October 30, 2024, two primary issues were identified in the reading learning process using technology. First, there is a wide gap in students' English proficiency levels. Some students demonstrate high proficiency, while others struggle with basic English, making it challenging for teachers to design instructional materials that suit all learners. As stated by one English teacher, Mrs. Zanuba:

“Ada siswa yang sangat mahir, tetapi juga ada siswa yang bahkan kesulitan memahami dasar-dasar bahasa Inggris. Hal ini memerlukan strategi pembelajaran yang benar-benar fleksibel. Selain itu, terdapat siswa yang baru pindah dari lingkungan pesantren dan belum terbiasa menggunakan teknologi dalam pembelajaran.”

Second, student concentration is an issue when using mobile devices for learning. Although mobile phones can serve as learning tools, students are often distracted by non-academic applications such as social media. As Mrs. Zanuba stated:

“Siswa jarang menggunakan ponsel di sekolah, tetapi ketika mereka diberi kesempatan menggunakannya untuk aplikasi pembelajaran, banyak yang malah terdistraksi ke hal lain seperti media social.”

Despite these challenges, the same teacher had experience using Socrative for reading and grammar exercises. Although it was not implemented regularly, she found it helpful due to the instant feedback and ease of managing results:

“Saya pernah mencoba beberapa aplikasi untuk evaluasi, termasuk Socrative. Waktu itu saya gunakan untuk latihan soal reading dan grammar. Sebenarnya cukup membantu karena hasilnya langsung muncul, tapi waktu itu belum semua siswa terbiasa.”

These experiences highlight the potential of Socrative as a tool for formative reading assessment, particularly when tailored to students’ needs and school contexts. O’Keeffe et al. (2020) explain that Socrative allows teachers to manage tests and track student progress. Awedh et al. (2015) found that Socrative increases focus and active participation among students, while Dervan (2016) emphasizes that instant feedback through Socrative can improve classroom language learning.

Moreover, Socrative supports a student-centered environment that fosters collaboration and active engagement (Wright, 2020). According to Graham and Santos (2018), formative assessments using digital tools can help identify students’ difficulties and guide instructional adjustments. Johnson et al. (2017) highlight that Socrative promotes inclusive learning through interactive features that enhance

communication between teachers and students. Smith (2021) adds that the customizable nature of Socrative enables the creation of tailored materials aligned with students' interests and proficiency levels.

From the learners' perspective, El Shaban (2017) notes that the effectiveness of educational technology depends on students' attitudes and perceptions of its benefits and ease of use. However, while many studies support the use of Socrative in education, most have focused on general or tertiary-level learning contexts. For instance, Kaya and Balta (2016) explored its use in science instruction at the university level, while Awedh et al. (2015) emphasized feedback and collaboration but not specifically in reading instruction at the high school level. Dervan (2016) also investigated active learning through Socrative, but not within the context of Islamic secondary schools with diverse student backgrounds.

These gaps in the literature show the need for further exploration into how Socrative is implemented in testing students' reading skills and how students respond to its use in real classroom contexts, particularly in Indonesian high schools with faith-based backgrounds. Therefore, this study focuses on class X at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar and aims to investigate two aspects: (1) how Socrative is implemented in testing students' reading skills in English language learning, and (2) how students respond to the use of Socrative in reading assessments. This research is expected to contribute in two main ways. Academically, it seeks to enrich the literature on the integration of digital platforms in English language assessment, especially regarding reading skills in the context of faith-based senior high schools. It also provides insights into how formative assessment tools like Socrative can be adapted to suit students with varying English proficiency and

technological familiarity. Practically, the findings can offer meaningful input for English teachers in planning and managing reading assessments using Socrative, and can also assist schools in designing policies for appropriate and effective technology use in learning. Additionally, for education stakeholders and policymakers, this study offers relevant data to support the implementation of digital assessments that are contextual, equitable, and aligned with the current demands of language education. With this in mind, this research is considered timely and significant, particularly in enhancing the quality of English reading instruction and promoting effective use of educational technology in Indonesian classrooms.

1.2 Research Focus

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How is Socrative implemented in testing students' reading skills in English language learning in class X at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar?
2. How do students respond to the use of Socrative in testing reading skills in class X at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar?

1.3 Research Objective

The objectives of this study are :

1. To examine the implementation of Socrative in formative testing reading comprehension in class X English at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar.
2. To explore students' responses toward the use of Socrative in reading comprehension assessments in class X students at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar.

1.4 Research Significance

This research is expected to provide multiple primary advantages:

1) Theoretical Contributions

This research contributes to the academic field of language assessment by exploring the use of Socrative as a tool for testing reading comprehension in secondary English language classrooms. While previous studies have widely discussed interactive learning and general technology integration, few have specifically examined how platforms like Socrative function in reading assessment. By investigating the implementation of reading tests through Socrative and analyzing student responses, this study enriches theoretical discussions on formative assessment, digital testing environments, and student engagement in reading tasks within the context of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) instruction.

2) Practical Contributions

a.) For Teachers

The findings from this study will offer practical insights into how Socrative can be effectively used to design and administer reading comprehension tests. Teachers will benefit by learning how to apply digital assessment tools not only to evaluate student comprehension but also to accommodate diverse reading abilities, provide immediate feedback, and improve student focus during testing.

b.) For Students

This study can serve as a foundation for future research in digital reading assessment. Subsequent researchers may build on this work by comparing

various digital platforms, investigating other English language skills, or conducting similar studies in different educational settings to explore broader patterns and impacts.

c.) For Future Research

This study serves as a basis for further investigation into digital reading assessment. Future researchers can build on this research by comparing different digital platforms, testing other English language skills, or applying similar research across different educational settings to explore broader patterns and impacts.

1.5 Research Scope and Limitation

This study specifically focuses on the use of Socrative as a digital platform to assess students' reading comprehension skills in English. It does not examine the use of Socrative for other English skills such as listening, speaking, or writing. Furthermore, this research does not evaluate Socrative as a general learning medium or as a tool for delivering full subject matter.

The primary focus is on the role of Socrative in reading assessment, particularly in terms of its implementation by teachers and the responses from students. The study was conducted at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar, an Islamic-based senior high school located in Blitar, East Java. Therefore, the findings are not intended to be generalized to all schools, especially those with different educational systems, cultural contexts, or technological infrastructures. Factors such as institutional policies, curriculum design, and student backgrounds influence how digital-based assessments are applied in this context.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstandings and so that readers can more easily understand the contents of this study, the researcher feels the need to explain some important terms that are often used in this thesis. The explanation of these terms is adjusted to the context of the research title, namely "Formative Testing Reading Using Socrative: A Case Study at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar." By explaining these key terms, it is hoped that readers can better understand the scope and direction of the research discussion clearly and precisely :

1) Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension refers to students' ability to understand, interpret, and analyze written texts in English. This includes identifying main ideas, retrieving detailed information, making inferences, understanding vocabulary in context, and recognizing text structure and purpose. In this study, reading comprehension is assessed using test items delivered through Socrative.

2) Testing Reading

In this context, testing reading refers to the process of evaluating students' ability to comprehend written English texts. This includes identifying main ideas, summarizing content, understanding vocabulary in context, and drawing both explicit and implicit conclusions. The test focuses on comprehension rather than technical skills such as pronunciation or reading speed. Assessments were conducted using multiple-choice or other structured formats via Socrative.

3) Socrative

Socrative is a web-based platform and mobile application that allows teachers to create and deliver interactive quizzes or tests online. In this study, Socrative was

used to conduct English reading tests, enabling teachers to distribute questions, collect real-time responses, and provide instant feedback. It also stores data for analysis, supporting evaluation and instructional planning.

4) Students Respon

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