STUDY ON WEBTOON AS MEDIA TO PROGRESS STUDENT READING SKILL AT THE SECOND GRADES OF SMAN 3 BANGKALAN

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Abstract: *This study explores the effectiveness of Webtoon as a learning medium to improve reading skills and vocabulary development of students in grade XI at SMAN 3 Bangkalan. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through classroom observations, student interviews, and documentation analysis. Findings indicate that Webtoon significantly increased students' engagement, motivation, and comprehension compared to traditional textbooks. The combination of visual storytelling and contextual learning helped students better understand the text and acquire new vocabulary. Interview results showed that students often found and actively searched for the meaning of new words, which strengthened their language skills. Teachers acknowledged the advantages of Webtoon but highlighted challenges such as the use of slang and maintaining student focus. Despite these obstacles, Webtoon remains a valuable tool for improving literacy. This study concludes that Webtoon is an innovative and engaging medium for improving reading skills, and future research should explore strategies to optimize its use in education..*

Keywords : Webtoon, reading skills, digital media, vocabulary acquisition, student engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a core skill in the education system, from elementary school to college. The purpose of developing reading comprehension is to enable students to understand and analyze a variety of written and digital texts. Mastering reading comprehension not only improves their ability to understand information, but also enriches their critical thinking, vocabulary and communication skills. By reading, students can gain knowledge from multiple perspectives and are better equipped to succeed in academic and professional environments. English language learning includes reading, writing, listening and speaking. According to (As Sabiq & Rohmatulhaq, 2024), the focus of English language learning in schools is on grammar and vocabulary.

Reading skills are one of the fundamental language skills and play an important role in language acquisition, especially in developing students' vocabulary. Hence, people who enjoy reading may read books with plenty of goals and genres to satisfy their need to learn (Sorohiti & Kirsan, 2023). By reading various reading materials, students can learn new words and expressions and understand how they are used in different contexts. (Sari et al., 2022) argue that reading not only strengthens vocabulary but also improves general language skills, so that students can express themselves more clearly and confidently.

However, when it comes to helping students master English, improving reading skills, especially vocabulary skills, is a challenge for teachers. Teachers need effective strategies and media to improve students' reading comprehension and expand their vocabulary. In this context, Webtoon apps can be a useful tool. According to a study (misnayanti Wanti, 2024). Webtoon is an innovative web-based application designed to advance students' reading comprehension by focusing on vocabulary acquisition. Webtoon offers a variety of reading materials and exercises tailored to different levels of ability and learning needs. One of the main benefits of Webtoon is that students can practice reading online at their own pace, both at school and at home. Webtoon offers an interesting combination of text and images, helping students understand and remember new vocabulary in a more enjoyable context (Winarti et al., 2024). (Safitri, n.d.) Therefore, Webtoon not only progress students' reading skills but also helps them build vocabulary in an interesting and effective way.

With the rapid development of technology in the modern world, including in the field of education, this study aims to explore and understand the possibility of using Webtoon applications in improving students' vocabulary knowledge. Hopefully, the results of this study can contribute to the development of interactive learning media and provide direct benefits for students, teachers and educational institutions in improving the quality of English language teaching, especially in expanding students' vocabulary.

Based on this, this study aims to explore the impact of Webtoon on students' reading development. By understanding this context better, it is expected to make a positive contribution towards developing more effective and innovative reading skills. Therefore, the researcher would like to conduct further research with the title "A Study on Webtoon as a Media to Improve Reading

Skills of Grade XI Students of SMAN 3 Bangkalan." From the above background, the researcher formulated the problem as follows: How can the use of Webtoon application as a media improve students' English reading skills? How do students respond to Webtoon as a media in learning reading skills?

The purpose of this study is to describe the use of Webtoon application as a medium to improve students' English reading skills and to find out students' responses to Webtoon as a medium in learning reading skills. The expectation of the results of this study can provide benefits both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study develops insights in educational science related to improving student competence and participation in the learning process. Practically, for students, the application of learning media using the Webtoon application can improve English reading skills. For teachers, this technique can be seen as modern learning that follows technological developments to improve students' English reading skills. For researchers, they can also find out the effectiveness of learning using the Webtoon application.

This study focused on grade XI students at SMAN 3 Bangkalan. The purpose of this study was to examine how the Webtoon application can improve students' reading skills by analyzing the ratio of their reading skills before and after using Webtoon media as a learning medium. This study has certain limitations, namely it was only conducted on certain groups of students and only investigated the impact of Webtoon on their reading skills. In order for readers to understand the content well, it is important to provide a clear explanation of the terms used

in this study. Learning media is a tool that supports the teaching and learning process, so that the material presented becomes clearer and learning objectives can be achieved more effectively and efficiently.

Meanwhile, the Webtoon application is a digital platform that presents comics or illustrated stories in a vertical format, which is specifically designed for mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets. Reading skills themselves refer to a person's ability to read, understand, interpret, and analyze texts properly and correctly.

There are several studies support the use of Webtoon as a learning tool. Based on research conducted by (Suryani & Kiptiyah, 2023) entitled "Improving Students' Reading Ability Through Comic Strip Media on the Webtoon Application", this study focuses on the use of comic strips through the Webtoon application to improve students' reading ability. The results of the study show that the use of comic strips in learning activities makes the process of learning to read more interesting and effective. Comic strips that have attractive visuals and diverse narratives can help students understand English texts, while increasing their interest in reading. By analysing the content in comic strips, students not only learn academically but are also motivated to overcome difficulties in understanding English. This study concludes that multimedia-based learning media, especially Webtoon, is a valuable educational tool in making reading learning more enjoyable and providing a more meaningful experience for students. The second as reported by (As Sabiq & Rohmatulhaq, 2024) entitled "Students' Perceptions of Webtoon as Independent Learning Media for Reading Skills", this study focuses on the use of Webtoon as a learning medium to improve students' reading skills. The results of the study indicate that the use of Webtoon in learning activities makes the reading learning process more interesting and effective. Webtoon which has attractive visuals and diverse narratives can help students understand English texts, while increasing their interest in reading. By analysing the content in Webtoon, students not only learn academically but are also motivated to overcome their difficulties in understanding English. This study concludes that multimedia-based learning media, especially Webtoon, is a valuable educational tool in making reading learning more enjoyable and providing a more meaningful experience for students. The third, based on research conducted by (Rozaq & Choirul Huda, 2024) entitled "Effectiveness of Using the Webtoon Platform in Reading Comprehension Learning for Semester 2 Students of Bhinneka PGRI University in the 2023/2024 Academic Year", this study emphasizes the use of digital media, especially the Webtoon platform, to improve students' reading comprehension skills. The results of the study showed that by incorporating Webtoon into learning activities, students' reading comprehension skills increased significantly, so that the learning process became more interesting and interactive. By using this platform, students not only increase their vocabulary, but also develop better comprehension skills, which ultimately results in a more enjoyable and effective learning experience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Skill

Reading is a basic skill in language acquisition that plays an important role in students' academic success. According to (Tomasoa et al., 2024), reading is not just about recognizing words, but also understanding the implied meaning. Reading comprehension involves decoding symbols, obtaining meaning, and analyzing text

content. (Harianto, 2020) emphasized that reading is a process that allows individuals to obtain information and develop critical thinking. Effective reading skills help students in vocabulary mastery and text comprehension. Furthermore, research by (Rozaq & Choirul Huda, 2024) highlighted that reading comprehension is particularly enhanced through the use of digital media such as Webtoon, which provides an interactive platform for students to interact with the text. This approach not only improves students' reading skills but also integrates prior knowledge with new information, making the learning experience more meaningful and enjoyable. By utilizing such innovative tools, students can significantly improve their reading comprehension skills, which ultimately contributes to their overall academic success.

Media In Learning

The use of media in learning can increase student engagement and understanding. (Rahmasari, 2021) defines media as a tool that conveys messages effectively, so that learning becomes more interactive. Learning media, such as digital platforms, facilitate the acquisition and storage of knowledge. (Ibrahim MA et al., 2022) classify learning media into visual, audio, and audiovisual categories, with audiovisual media proven to be very effective in maintaining student interest and increasing understanding. Learning activities may be made more engaging, motivating, and stmulating by incorporating instructionalmedia into the teaching and learning process(Rozaq & Choirul Huda, 2024). In addition to the types of media mentioned above, comic learning media has emerged as a valuable tool in improving reading comprehension, especially for students with hearing impairments. Research shows that the use of comic media can significantly improve students' understanding of reading materials by translating abstract concepts into more concrete and relevant formats. By integrating webtoon comic media into the learning process, educators can create a more interactive and engaging environment that not only helps comprehension but also fosters critical and creative understanding among students.

Webtoon As Learning Medium

Webtoon is a digital comic platform designed for online reading, which provides an engaging way to improve literacy. According to (A Nurbaiti, 2023) Webtoon utilizes a vertical format optimized for digital consumption, making reading more accessible and engaging.

Webtoon offers a combination of text and visuals, which facilitates comprehension by providing contextual support(misnayanti Wanti, 2024) highlights that Webtoon can improve students' reading skills by increasing motivation and making the learning process more enjoyable. Webtoons have also been studied to improve students' writing skills (Khudlori et al., 2018). Furthermore, the integration of webtoon comics into educational settings has shown promising results in improving reading comprehension, especially for students with hearing impairments. As shown in a study by (Hartati et al., 2023), the visual storytelling format of webtoons helped students understand narrative sequences, thereby improving their overall comprehension skills. This is in line with the finding that webtoon media not only increases motivation and engagement but also serves as an effective tool for conveying complex ideas in a more digestible manner, ultimately promoting a more inclusive learning

environment for all students..

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, researchers used qualitative research. This research provides a precise description and explanation of the conditions or symptoms encountered. According to Sugiyono, (2020), qualitative research methods are research methods used to examine the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out by triangulation (merging), data analysis is inductive, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization. Data can be obtained through interviews, direct observations in the field, and observations that produce a lot of data or information.

Qualitative research design is intended to describe situations that actually occur. This research focuses on the application and responses of students regarding learning to read English using webtoon media. Researchers will analyze and collect data regarding students' implementation and responses to learning using webtoons as learning media. Interviews are also used by researchers to understand webtoon media as a medium for learning to read English. Qualitative research methods, observation and interviews will help researchers in the process of obtaining data..

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on observations, Webtoon has proven to be an effective learning medium to improve students' reading skills. Webtoon provides an interactive and engaging learning experience, so that students can develop comprehension skills in a fun way. Webtoon's visual elements make it easier for students to understand and remember information.

Interview Results

Interviews were conducted on February 11, 2025 with teachers and students to evaluate their perspectives on the use of Webtoon in reading learning.

a. Teacher Interviews.

Teachers emphasized that Webtoons help students engage more actively in reading. They observed that students preferred Webtoons over traditional textbooks because of their interactive visual stories. However, teachers also faced challenges such as finding age- appropriate Webtoon content and managing distractions in the classroom.

b. Student Interviews

Students reported that Webtoons made reading more enjoyable. They appreciated the colorful visuals and interactive stories, which helped them understand new vocabulary and sentence structures. Many students mentioned that they often encountered new words while reading Webtoons and used context clues or digital tools to understand their meaning.

Documentation Results

The study also included documentation in the form of recorded classroom activities and student assessments. The analysis showed that students' reading comprehension improved significantly after using

Webtoon as a learning medium. The increase in reading performance was consistent across most students, highlighting the potential of Webtoon as an effective educational tool. However, some students still faced challenges, particularly with new vocabulary that required additional explanations

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that the use of webtoon as a learning medium has a significant positive impact on students' reading skills and vocabulary use. The results of observations show that students are more engaged and motivated compared to traditional textbooks. The combination of visual elements and contextual findings helps students to better understand the content and makes the reading process more enjoyable. In addition, Webtoon encourages students to analyze historical moral lessons and topics.

Interview results reinforced the effectiveness of webtoons in improving students' vocabulary usage. Students often encountered new words while reading webtoons and actively searched for their meanings. They also believed that webtoon dialogues would help them understand how English is used in everyday conversation. Teachers acknowledged the advantages of webtoons but also highlighted challenges such as the use of slang, culturally specific terms, and managing students' focus while using mobile devices. Despite these challenges, webtoons remain a valuable tool for improving students' reading skills.

The documentation results further support the effectiveness of Webtoon-based learning. The data collected showed that students' reading comprehension increased significantly after participating in Webtoon for two lessons. The interactive and visually appealing nature of Webtoon made it easier for students to understand new vocabulary and comprehend sentence structures. However, some students still needed additional support in interpreting unfamiliar words without direct translation. These findings suggest that Webtoon can be a useful complement to traditional learning methods if used strategically.

Overall, this study contributes to the many studies on the integration of digital media in language learning. The use of Webtoon provides an innovative and engaging approach to the development of reading and vocabulary of students. Teachers can use this medium to create more dynamic and engaging learning experiences, while addressing the challenges associated with the application. Future research can explore how learning can be optimized and strategies can be developed in webtoon to overcome possible limitations to ensure long-term effectiveness in education.

Suggestion

Based on the results of the study, it is seen that teachers can improve students' reading comprehension and skills by using webtoon media when teaching in class. Webtoon offers attractive images and contextual storytelling, which is an effective way to motivate students and deepen their understanding. However, teachers must be careful in choosing webtoon stories that are appropriate for their age and educational goals and ensure that the content does not contain excessive slang or culturally specific terms that are difficult for students to understand. I addition to reading Webtoon, guided integration discussions and vocabulary exercises can further

enhance language learning.

In addition, to maximize the benefits of webtoon-based learning, schools are also advised to provide structured guidelines for use in the classroom. These guidelines include setting clear learning objectives, using strategies to engage students, and maintaining focus throughout the lesson.

Furthermore, further examination will allow us to examine the long-term impact of webtoons on students' language development and how they compare to other digital learning tools. By refining the application in the classroom, webtoons can act as an innovative and effective medium to improve reading skills and increase students' enthusiasm for language learning.

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