

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter delineates the foundational architecture of the present investigation. Specifically, it provides a comprehensive articulation of the research background, establishes the precise formulation of the research questions, clarifies the overarching purpose and significance of the study, defines the scope and limitations, presents the guiding conceptual framework, outlines the research hypotheses, and incorporates a critical review of relevant previous studies to situate this work within the existing academic discourse.

A. Background

Reading is one of the most essential aspects of studying English. Reading is a crucial skill that facilitates students' acquisition of knowledge, exploration of new perspectives, and improvement of their comprehension across various subjects. Reading provides individuals with the necessary expertise, including textbooks, research articles, and literary works. Erlidawati and Syarfun (2018) argue that reading is a method for enhancing the ability of students to develop knowledge, reading proficiency, and comprehension skills. Reading is a complex skill. Students must comprehend the material they read. Therefore, reading is crucial in language learning, especially in English.

Reading comprehension fundamentally represents the reader's capacity to internalize, interpret, and mentally construct the message conveyed within a written text. This multifaceted cognitive process necessitates the active engagement of the reader through strategies such as anticipating content, probing for deeper meaning, summarizing key information, contextualizing specialized vocabulary, evaluating one's own understanding, and reflecting on the material. Furthermore, successful comprehension mandates the integration of the reader's existing prior knowledge concerning both linguistic conventions and the broader external world. As asserted by Olson & Land (2007), proficiency in reading comprehension is indispensable for individuals to effectively understand

and apply information derived from written sources. Consequently, it remains one of the most critical and central skills within the educational development of students.

Based on the researcher's preliminary observation at a junior high school in Sumedang, it was found that some students had limited vocabulary, which caused them to lack an understanding of the text's content. As a result, students experience issues such as becoming lazy, disinterested, and losing interest in reading activities. Mansur (2019) indicates that their language skills are confined to comprehending and conveying information in the reading material they have encountered. Several factors contribute to specific students' difficulties with reading comprehension. For instance, students struggle to grasp the text's meaning due to their ongoing challenges with reading fluency and a lack of focus on the material.

In addition, the teacher was the source of the problem. Their methods of instruction are monotonous. It results in a passive classroom environment. According to Nurhayati et al. (2023), common difficulties in reading faced by EFL students include ineffective teaching strategies and problems with sentence comprehension. Traditional teaching methods, such as lecturing and textbook-based activities, often fail to meet students' needs for more engaging learning environments. Students struggle with reading comprehension due to monotonous teaching methods and a lack of engaging learning media. Low motivation, prior knowledge, and a lack of vocabulary in English may all contribute to poor reading comprehension, according to Nanda and Azmy (2020), Reading difficulties can negatively impact students' ability to complete schoolwork and higher education due to increased reading needs.

Digital technology in education has opened new opportunities to enhance students' learning experiences. Gamification has been proven to improve motivation and engagement among learners, making it a promising approach for enhancing students' reading comprehension skills. According to Fitria (2023), gamification aspects within a learning environment are

becoming increasingly popular in the gaming industry. Making the learning process more engaging, enjoyable, and productive can be achieved through the use of gamification. A fresh, creative option called Quizwhizzer has surfaced as technology has progressed. QuizWhizzer is an online gamification platform that combines learning with interactive quizzes and games. Fauzi and Rachman (2024) state that Quizwhizzer is a platform that offers interactive quizzes along with an adaptive strategy that adapts the difficulty level to individual students' skills.

Previous studies have shown that using QuizWhizzer in English language learning can improve reading comprehension. For Example, Cahyono et al. (2024) investigated using QuizWhizzer to enhance reading comprehension among tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Blitar. The study results show that Quizwhizzer effectively enhances pupils' reading comprehension skills. As a result of using QuizWhizzer as part of their learning activities, the experimental group's students showed higher reading comprehension levels than the control group. Oktika et al. (2023) investigate how seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Rembang can enhance their vocabulary mastery by using QuizWhizzer. According to this study, students' vocabulary skills are effectively improved when vocabulary is taught through the Quizwhizzer game.

Nevertheless, this study differs from previous studies, despite QuizWhizzer being an effective learning tool for various reading comprehension levels. In comparison, previous studies have explored the use of QuizWhizzer for narrative texts and vocabulary mastery. This study employs various methods and theories that differ from those in prior studies. The central objective of this research endeavor is to conduct an empirical examination of reading comprehension skills in recount texts among students enrolled in the eighth grade at a specific junior high school. Accordingly, this study is meticulously designed to address a defined gap in the existing pedagogical literature by investigating and determining the efficacy of the digital tool QuizWhizzer as a means of improving the

aforementioned reading comprehension skills in the target student demographic.

B. Research Question

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the students' score before using QuizWhizzer to improve students' reading comprehension?
2. What is the students' score after using QuizWhizzer to improve students' reading comprehension?
3. Is there a significant difference between the students' reading comprehension before and after learning by using the QuizWhizzer?

C. Research Purposes

The study is governed by a tripartite set of specific research objectives:

1. To identify the students' score before using QuizWhizzer to improve students' reading comprehension
2. To identify the students' score after using QuizWhizzer improve students' reading comprehension
3. To determine whether there is a significant difference in students' reading comprehension before and after using QuizWhizzer.

D. Research Significance

The researcher hopes this research will be significant both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretical Significances

This investigation is anticipated to yield valuable practical and theoretical insights regarding the systematic deployment of QuizWhizzer as an intervention tool for the explicit purpose of enhancing students' reading comprehension. The outcomes derived from this research will serve to enrich the existing body of knowledge concerning effective teaching methodologies and enrich the existing literature on digital-based learning and student engagement in EFL contexts.

2. Practical Significances

Practically, this study gives significance to:

a. For the teachers

This study can offer valuable insights into incorporating gamification into language teaching. Teachers have discovered several ways to make learning more engaging and fun. Additionally, it can serve as a resource for teachers to adapt their learning materials for students, maximizing the benefits of using QuizWhizzer and helping them become more proficient in English, particularly in reading.

b. For the students

Hopefully, this study will have a positive impact on students' language skills, particularly in reading. The study's results are expected to motivate students to practice reading comprehension skills using QuizWhizzer.

c. For the other researchers

This study demonstrates how QuizWhizzer is a valuable learning tool for enhancing students' reading comprehension levels. Future studies on QuizWhizzer can be informed by this evidence, which can also direct the tool's use in teaching English.

E. Research Scope

Reading comprehension is acknowledged as a paramount and indispensable skill within the pedagogical context of student education, particularly in the domain of English language teaching and learning. The ability of students to fully comprehend and internalize information is directly tied to their capacity to accurately visualize the message conveyed within a written text. The current research program is fundamentally driven by the objective of investigating the utility of QuizWhizzer as a technological tool designed to enhance reading comprehension proficiency. The investigation's primary focus is centered on the application of QuizWhizzer for this enhancement. The subjects participating in this study

were 32 eighth-grade students enrolled at SMPN 1 Jatinangor, an Indonesian junior high school located at the designated research site.

F. Conceptual Framework

The following diagram shows the conceptual framework that underpins this study.

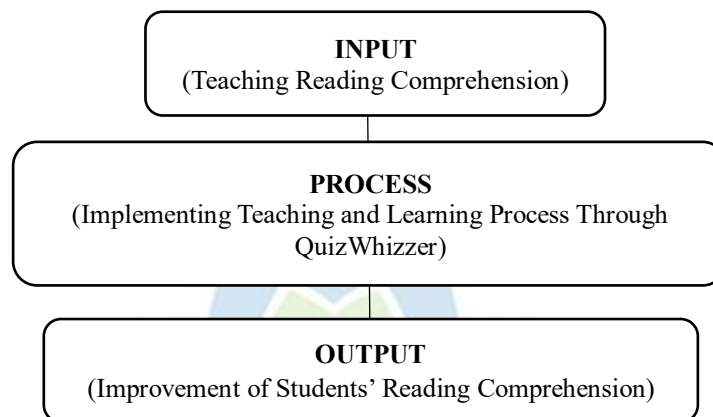


Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework

This study investigates the use of QuizWhizzer as a gamified learning platform to enhance students' reading comprehension by increasing their interest, motivation, and engagement in reading activities. Reading is one of the essential language skills that involves constructing meaning from written texts. According to Snow (2002), reading comprehension is an active process in which readers interact with textual information, integrate it with their background knowledge, and interpret meaning. In this process, students' interest and motivation play a significant role in determining their success in comprehension. Reading interest, as cited in Purnama et al. (2023), refers to the readers' willingness and enthusiasm to engage with reading materials both inside and outside the classroom. When students are genuinely interested in reading, they tend to read more frequently, sustain focus, and achieve deeper understanding.

To foster this engagement, the present study employs QuizWhizzer, an online gamified learning platform designed to make classroom learning more interactive and enjoyable. Iskandar et al. (2023) state that

QuizWhizzer can enhance students' interest in learning by integrating competition, rewards, and instant feedback into the instructional process. Similarly, Sitanggang et al. (2023) highlight that the use of QuizWhizzer promotes more creative and participatory learning experiences, enabling students to comprehend and retain the material more effectively. The platform's features, such as game-like quizzes, leaderboards, and visual progress tracking stimulate students' curiosity and engagement, thereby fostering a positive learning environment.

Based on these theoretical considerations, this study assumes that QuizWhizzer serves as an effective media to improve students' reading comprehension. The integration of gamification elements helps students participate actively, feel enjoyment during learning, and maintain consistent motivation throughout the lesson. As suggested by Susanti & Darmansyah (2024), game-based media not only make learning more engaging but also support students in self-understanding and applying content meaningfully. Therefore, this conceptual framework illustrates that the implementation of QuizWhizzer in teaching reading comprehension can foster students' interest and motivation, leading to improved reading comprehension achievement.

G. Hypothesis

The hypothesis functions as a tentative resolution to the formula and a provisional solution to the problem, articulated in the research formulation as a declarative statement. The core of this investigation is guided by two formal hypotheses regarding the intervention's impact:

1. H₀: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, indicating that the use of QuizWhizzer does not improve students' reading comprehension.
2. H_a: There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, indicating that the use of QuizWhizzer improves students' reading comprehension.

H. Previous Studies

Several previous studies have investigated the use of QuizWhizzer as a gamified learning platform in English language teaching. Maharani & Susanti (2024) conducted a quasi-experimental study entitled “Empowering EFL Students’ Reading Comprehension Abilities with Quizwhizzer.” The study involved 45 seventh-grade students divided into experimental and control groups. A standardized reading comprehension test consisting of 30 items was used to measure students’ abilities before and after treatment. The findings revealed a significant improvement in the experimental group, whose post-test mean (82.45) was notably higher than that of the control group (75.52), with a significance value of 0.023. These results indicate that QuizWhizzer effectively enhances students’ reading comprehension.

Similarly, Cahyono et al. (2024) investigated the use of QuizWhizzer to improve tenth graders’ reading comprehension of recount texts at SMAN 1 Blitar through a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design. The study involved thirty-seven tenth-grade students. Their study reported an increase in the students’ mean score from 74.74 in the pre-test to 83.84 in the post-test, suggesting that QuizWhizzer effectively improved students’ reading comprehension in recount texts.

In addition, Fauzi & Rachman (2024), entitled "The Effect of QuizzWhizzer Game as Gamification to Motivate and Improve Learning Outcomes of English Learners in Vocational School." examined the impact of QuizWhizzer on students’ motivation and learning outcomes. The participants were eleventh-grade students of SMKN 15 Samarinda, and the research employed a pre-experimental design using a one-group pretest–posttest. The findings demonstrated a substantial increase in students’ average score from 48.12 to 79.62, with an N-Gain of 0.61 (medium). Students also displayed a very high level of motivation (85.23%). The results revealed that both students’ motivation and learning outcomes improved significantly, indicating that gamified activities can enhance students’ enthusiasm and performance in English learning.

Likewise, Oktika et al. (2023) conducted research titled “Using QuizWhizzer Game to Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery of Seventh Grade of SMPN 2 Rembang in the Academic Year 2021-2022”. A previous study examined the effectiveness of using QuizWhizzer to improve the vocabulary abilities of seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Rembang. That research, which also employed a pre-experimental, one-group pre-test post-test design with 32 seventh-grade participants, found supportive evidence that teaching vocabulary through QuizWhizzer was effective. Specifically, the statistical analysis showed that the calculated test value was greater than the critical t-table value ($8.504 > 1.695$), leading to the conclusion that the method successfully improved students' vocabulary ability.

Finally, Dohny & Soekarno (2024) evaluated the impact of QuizWhizzer as a gamification tool on English vocabulary performance among 42 pre-university students in Malaysia. This research, employing a quasi-experimental with pre-test and post-test design, the study found a large effect size (1.223), indicating strong improvement in vocabulary achievement. The findings indicated that QuizWhizzer was an effective gamification tool for improving students' English vocabulary performance, comparable to other digital platforms such as Kahoot and Quizizz.

Despite a substantial body of research demonstrating the positive effects of QuizWhizzer on students' motivation, vocabulary mastery, and overall reading performance, studies that specifically examine its use to enhance reading comprehension of recount texts at the junior high school level remain limited. Most existing studies were conducted at the senior high school level or addressed different skills such as vocabulary or general motivation. Although one study explored the use of QuizWhizzer in teaching recount texts, it focused on senior high school students whose cognitive and linguistic characteristics differ from those of junior high learners. Consequently, there is no empirical evidence on how QuizWhizzer facilitates the teaching and learning of recount-text reading comprehension among eighth-grade students within the junior high school context.

Therefore, the present study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the effectiveness of QuizWhizzer in improving junior high school students' comprehension of recount texts through a pre-experimental design, thereby providing context-specific insights not addressed in previous research.

