CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of the research, including the research background, research question, research purposes, research significance, research scope, the conceptual framework, and a review of previous studies.

A. Research Background

This study aims to determine how junior high school teachers perceive the use of digital tools for reading assessment and understand their advantages, challenges, and implementation. Despite the increasing integration of digital technologies into education systems, there seems to be little research on school teachers' perspectives on digital assessment, particularly regarding reading comprehension. Teachers play a crucial role in implementing sustainable and successful assessment procedures, so understanding their background and readiness is crucial. This knowledge can facilitate more efficient use of digital assessments and minimize educational inequities caused by infrastructure constraints and differences in digital competencies.

To begin with, reading is a fundamental skill in learning a new language. This skill enables students not only to access more information but also to improve their vocabulary and critical thinking. Reading is a complex cognitive process that allows students to create meaning from what they read. This skill is essential for academic achievement (Grabe, 2009). Reading assessment in language learning is used to evaluate students' comprehension and their ability to identify what is important in what they read (Alderson, 2000). Moreover, reading assessment helps students evaluate their inferences and reading strategies. This study focuses specifically on technological developments and the need for reading assessment in this context.

Traditionally, teachers frequently utilize traditional evaluations, which typically consist of paper-based exams with multiple-choice questions and brief written responses, to gauge students' reading comprehension. Conventional tests tend to assess the product of reading rather than the process through which readers comprehend a text (Alderson, 2000)t, which suggests that traditional assessment may not fully capture

students' reading strategies. Furthermore, Assessment should provide meaningful feedback to support both teaching and learning processes (H. D. Brown, 2004), which indicates that assessment plays an important role in improving instructional practices and student learning.

However, the development of digital technology over the past decade has brought significant changes to language learning practices, including the assessment process. The usage of digital tools also affects how teachers evaluate their student's reading comprehension Teachers are increasingly using digital tools to assess students' reading skills because these tools provide interactive activities, immediate feedback, and real-time data that help teachers identify students' learning gaps (Spector et al., 2016; Maruanaya et al., 2024). In addition, platforms such as Quizizz and Google Forms enable automated grading, which makes the grading process more efficient and reduces teachers' workload (Maruanaya et al., 2024; Yakkop et al., 2021). In the context of reading, Quizizz-based reading quizzes have also been developed and found to be valid and practical for assessing students' reading competencies (Puspitayani et al., 2020). These studies indicate that digital assessment tools have become an important element in measuring students' reading abilities in the era of modern learning.

Furthermore, as technology is incorporated into schools, reading assessment, a crucial part of literacy development, continues to progress. In addition to changing how children access texts, these developments also influence the methods teachers use to better assess reading comprehension. Digital reading platforms such as ReadWorks have been shown to significantly improve students' reading comprehension outcomes, as evidenced by a statistically significant difference in post-test performance between students using digital platforms and those using conventional methods (Dinda et al., 2025). This demonstrates that digital tools are not merely supplementary but can serve as effective instruments for measuring and enhancing students' reading abilities. Additionally, digital assessment platforms automatically record students' results, allowing teachers to see students' scores immediately and identify the questions that most students found difficult (Herianto et al., 2025; Maruanaya et al., 2024). This highlights the importance of accurate and efficient assessment tools in supporting informed instructional decisions. Furthermore, digital extensive reading activities

through various platforms, such as Xreading, Wattpad, and Webtoon, have been reported to support EFL students' reading activities and English language learning in Indonesia (Janah et al., 2022). This suggests that the integration of digital tools in reading activities, including assessment, holds significant potential for improving literacy outcomes in EFL contexts.

Despite these benefits, the use of digital tools to assess reading proficiency is not always successful. Several studies have shown that teachers' use of digital assessment tools is limited by a lack of training, poor technological skills, and inadequate school infrastructure (Nurohmah & Ma'rifah, 2025). Similarly, English teachers who use Quizizz for formative assessment face unstable internet connections and limited student access to devices (Maruanaya et al., 2024), indicating that infrastructure plays a crucial role in supporting the implementation of digital assessment. Furthermore, teacher readiness for digital instruction remains a challenge, as many junior high school teachers in Indonesia report limited knowledge regarding appropriate models and media for teaching reading in a digital context (Rahma et al., 2024), indicating that teacher readiness is a key factor in the success of its implementation. Without adequate training and institutional support, digital assessment tools cannot be fully utilized, highlighting the importance of professional development that equips teachers with technical and pedagogical skills.

Furthermore, several studies have identified the underlying causes of these challenges. The use of digital tools in the classroom has a significant impact. When digital tools are used for repetitive exercises, such as vocabulary drills, this is negatively associated with students' reading comprehension. However, their use for reading projects is positively associated with reading comprehension (Salmerón et al., 2023). This suggests that digital tools do not always support deeper comprehension. Limited technological skills, insufficient training, and inadequate infrastructure also remain barriers to the widespread implementation of digital assessment tools (Nurohmah & Ma'rifah, 2025). Teachers' limited knowledge of appropriate models and media for teaching digital reading (Rahma et al., 2024) may also affect their ability to assess reading comprehension using digital tools. These factors may explain why digital reading assessment has not yet reached its full potential in junior high schools.

Given these challenges, exploring teachers' perspectives becomes an important focus of investigation. Teachers vary in experience, digital literacy, and computer or technology competence, which significantly affects how they perceive the utility differences and challenges, as well as the value of digital tools for reading assessment. Teachers are the key users of assessment tools, and their beliefs about digital tool adoption matter because they influence how effectively these tools become part of classroom practice. Exploring teachers' views helps schools identify teachers' needs, provide appropriate training, and select digital platforms that align with classroom realities.

To illustrate this issue in a real educational setting, initial observations at a junior high school in Bandung, Indonesia, indicate that English teachers use digital technology in their teaching and learning activities to deliver and assess reading comprehension in English lessons. Digital technologies, such as Kahoot, Quiziz, Google Forms, and eBooks, facilitate the delivery and assessment of reading comprehension in the classroom. This observation aligns with the focus of this research, which explores teachers' experiences in assessing reading comprehension. Nevertheless, previous research indicates that digital technology can help improve literacy and reading comprehension. There remains a gap in understanding teachers' perspectives, particularly regarding formative assessment of reading comprehension in junior high schools in Indonesia. Innovative digital assessment methods have been shown to improve ESL students' language proficiency and provide rapid, personalized feedback (Grab, 2025). Nevertheless, this research focuses more on general language proficiency rather than reading assessment specifically. Additionally, Dinda et al. (2025) found that the ReadWorks platform can improve students' reading comprehension, but the focus of their study was on student learning outcomes rather than on teachers' experiences. Previous research examining teachers' perspectives has typically focused on only one platform, such as Wordwall (Herianto et al., 2025) or Quizizz (Maruanaya et al., 2024), and has addressed various language skills rather than reading comprehension specifically. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring EFL teachers' views on the use of various digital tools for formative assessment of reading comprehension in junior high schools. Students' reading habits are closely linked to their academic achievement

in English (Abid et al., 2023), while teachers still face challenges in optimally implementing digital assessment (Nurohmah & Ma'rifah, 2025; Rahma et al., 2024). By gaining a deeper understanding of teachers' perspectives, it is hoped that digital-based reading assessment practices in junior high schools can develop more effectively and meaningfully for all stakeholders in the field of education.

B. Research Questions

This research aims to examine the following questions:

1. What are junior high school EFL teachers' perspectives on the use of digital tools for formative assessments in assessing students' reading comprehension?
2. What benefits and challenges do the EFL teachers experience when using digital tools for formative assessment of reading comprehension?

C. Research Purposes

This research aims to:

1. Describe junior high school EFL teachers' perspectives on the use of digital tools for formative assessment in assessing reading comprehension.
2. Identify the benefits and challenges experienced by the EFL teachers when implementing digital tools for formative assessment in reading classes.

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D. Research Significance

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the existing body of literature on technology-enhanced language assessment, particularly by providing insight into teachers' perspectives on the use of digital tools for reading assessment at the junior high school level.

Practically, this study gives the following significances:

1. For teachers, the findings can help teachers reflect on their assessment practices, identify effective digital tools, and improve their implementation of digital-based reading assessments.

2. For schools and stakeholders, the results can serve as input for designing training programs, enhancing digital infrastructure, and selecting suitable assessment platforms.
3. For future researchers, this study can serve as a reference for further research on digital assessment, teachers' digital literacy, or reading instruction.

E. Research Scope

The purpose of this study is to investigate junior high school English teacher perspectives of using digital tools to evaluate students' reading comprehension. The study focuses on teachers' difficulties and experiences. The scope of this study does not cover the assessment of other language skills such as listening, speaking, or writing. Instead, this study focuses solely on how digital platforms such as learning management systems, quiz or test applications, and artificial intelligence (AI) tools are used to evaluate students' reading comprehension. The research participants are two English teachers at the junior high school level, and the findings of this study reflect the instructional practices and contextual conditions in their teaching environments.

F. Conceptual Framework

Reading comprehension is an important part of English language learning because it helps students understand and grasp the meaning of a text. Language proficiency involves various cognitive strategies used in teaching reading comprehension, such as identifying main ideas, noting important details, drawing conclusions, and applying interpretation strategies. Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process that involves the reader's interpretation of a text's meaning (Grabe, 2009). Therefore, evaluating reading comprehension is crucial for determining the extent to which students understand the material, so that teachers can select appropriate teaching strategies (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). Effective reading comprehension assessment serves as the foundation for improving the quality of English language learning.

Assessment tools are used to measure students' reading comprehension. In education, assessment is typically divided into formative and summative assessment.

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Formative assessment is an evaluation conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the learning process to monitor student progress and provide feedback (Black & Wiliam, 2009). This type of assessment helps support continuous improvement in learning. In contrast, summative assessment is conducted at the end of a learning period to measure students' overall achievement and learning outcomes (H. D. Brown, 2004). This type of assessment is important for determining students' final results once the learning process is complete.

In the era of modern education, the use of digital assessment tools offers new and diverse ways to evaluate students' reading comprehension. Platforms such as Quizizz and ReadWorks are frequently used to collect data on students' comprehension of texts. For example, Quizizz-based reading quizzes developed as online formative assessment tools have proven to be valid and practical for assessing students' reading competencies (Puspitayani et al., 2020). This demonstrates that game-based quiz platforms can be specifically designed to assess particular reading skills. Furthermore, the use of Edmodo as a technology-based formative assessment has been shown to significantly improve junior high school students' reading comprehension compared to face-to-face question-and-answer sessions (Nuraini et al., 2025). These findings indicate that technology-based formative assessment helps teachers identify and address gaps in students' understanding before moving on to new material. The ReadWorks platform has also been shown to significantly improve high school students' reading comprehension compared to conventional methods (Fitriani & Sunarti, 2024). This success demonstrates that digital platforms not only replace traditional worksheets but can also enhance students' reading comprehension.

In conclusion, assessing reading comprehension requires a balance between effective teaching strategies and appropriate assessment methods. Digital tools make this process easier by providing a fun, fast, and accurate way to measure students' comprehension of texts. When teachers combine effective assessment methods with technology, they can more easily identify students' needs and help them read better. Therefore, a well-designed assessment framework is essential for improving reading comprehension skills and English language learning.

G. Previous Study

Abid et al. (2023) investigated the relationship between reading habits, learning skills, and students' academic achievement in English classes at high schools in Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. Their findings were published in the journal Frontiers in Psychology. This study employed a descriptive correlational design with a quantitative approach and involved 1,614 10th-grade students from 40 public high schools in Lahore, selected using a non-proportional stratified random sampling method. Data were collected using the Reading Habits Questionnaire (RHQ), which consisted of 35 items across four subscales: reading preferences, reading interest, attitudes toward reading, and reading difficulties. In addition, the Learning Skills Scale (SSS), consisting of 11 items, was used, while students' English achievement was derived from their annual exam scores. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics, including Pearson's correlation and regression analysis. The results show a strong positive correlation between reading habits and learning skills ($r = 0.848$), between learning skills and academic achievement in English ($r = 0.721$), and between reading habits and academic achievement in English ($r = 0.584$). Reading habits and learning skills also predict academic achievement. This study is relevant to current research because it highlights the importance of reading in students' academic success and provides a foundation for understanding why accurate assessment of reading comprehension, including through digital tools is crucial in English language education at the junior high school level.

Alqahtani (2024) investigated the use of technology to help EFL learners master vocabulary and improve reading comprehension. The findings of this study were published in the journal English Language Teaching. The study involved 31 ESP learners who were asked for their opinions on the use of multimedia tools and applications for learning English. The results showed that the learners had a positive attitude toward multimedia applications and preferred to use various technological tools to support vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. This study is relevant because it demonstrates the potential of digital technology in supporting reading comprehension and highlights students' perceptions of technology integration

in English language learning. However, while Alqahtani's study focused on students' perceptions, this study investigates teachers' perspectives on the use of digital tools for formative assessment of reading comprehension, with a specific focus on the benefits and challenges faced by EFL teachers at the junior high school level.

Rahma et al. (2024) examined Indonesian teachers' perspectives on reading instruction in the digital age and the challenges they face. The findings of this study were published in the journal Contemporary Educational Technology. The study employed an illustrative case study involving 30 Indonesian language teachers at junior high schools in West Java. Data were collected through guided written reflections, in-person structured interviews, and participatory classroom observations, and were then analyzed using the Constant Comparative Method (CCM). The results showed that 63% of teachers believed that 40%–50% of teaching time should be devoted to developing reading skills through online resources, and 40% of teachers considered improvements in students' reading comprehension to be the primary indicator of success in reading instruction. The three main challenges reported were teachers' lack of knowledge regarding appropriate models and media for teaching digital reading, students' difficulty in understanding information from various text sources, and students' low motivation and awareness regarding reading activities. This study is relevant because it provides teachers' perspectives on digital reading practices in junior high schools in Indonesia. However, a gap remains because this study focused on Indonesian language teachers and reading instruction, rather than on the assessment of English reading comprehension, which is the focus of this research.

Amini et al. (2025) investigated EFL students' perceptions of Quizizz as a formative assessment tool for reading comprehension. The findings of this study were published in IDEAS: Journal of Teaching and Learning English, Linguistics, and Literature. This study employed a quantitative survey involving 58 11th-grade students from SMA PGRI 2 Bandung, Indonesia, all of whom had previously used Quizizz for reading activities. Data were collected via a standardized questionnaire consisting of 27 items on a five-point Likert scale (Cronbach's alpha coefficient = 0.898) and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results indicate that students' perceptions were relatively high (M = 3.43), with positive evaluations of Quizizz's interactivity,

gamification, effectiveness of feedback, and ease of use. However, challenges such as time pressure and technical limitations also emerged. This study is relevant because it demonstrates the potential of digital tools in supporting formative assessment of reading comprehension in EFL classrooms. In contrast to this study, which examined the perspectives of junior high school English teachers on the use of various digital tools for formative assessment of reading comprehension, Amini et al. (2025) focused on students' perceptions of a single platform in high school. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring teachers' perspectives on the benefits and challenges of various digital tools for formative assessment of reading comprehension.

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