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The Effectiveness of Using Webtoon Platform in Teaching Reading Comprehension Among Second Semester Students at Universitas Bhinneka PGRI in Academic Year 2023/2024

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Abstract. English, a crucial global language, is essential in education and communication. In Indonesia, mastering English is vital, with the 2013 curriculum emphasizing the four skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Reading comprehension, which integrates written content with prior knowledge, is particularly important. Various internal and external factors, such as word recognition, parental support, and educational media, impact students' reading comprehension. Digital media like Webtoon offer advantages such as accessibility and interactivity, making them valuable educational tools. This study examined how well the Webtoon platform taught reading comprehension to second-semester students at Bhinneka PGRI University's English Education Department in the academic year 2023–2024. Twenty-two individuals were chosen at random from the student body to make up the sample. This study employed a quantitative research approach with a pre-experimental design that included a one-group pretest, treatment, and post-test to determine the impact of Webtoon on reading comprehension skills. Using this strategy, the effectiveness of the intervention may be evaluated by contrasting pre- and post-test results. Students' reading comprehension scores increased dramatically after using Webtoon; on average, their scores went from 69.00 to 81.81. The data distribution was validated by normality tests, and a significant difference was found using a paired t-test ($t(15) = -12.854, p < 0.001$). These results showed how Webtoon improves reading comprehension and makes a good contribution to education by demonstrating creative uses of digital media in the classroom. Using this strategy, the effectiveness of the intervention may be evaluated by comparing pre- and post-test results.

Keyword: Effectiveness, Reading Comprehension, Webtoon,

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important things students need to acquire in order to fully understand English is reading. Reading comprehension is a necessary skill that goes beyond simply seeing words written down. Analyzing, comprehending, and integrating textual content with previously acquired information are all parts of reading comprehension. (Djuma, Palengkahu, & Sanger, 2022). Reading comprehension is therefore a fundamental skill in mastering the English language, which includes not only the ability to see written words, but also to understand them.

There are several factors that might impact students reading comprehension learning process when it comes to learning the English language. These Factors can be divided into internal factors and external factors. Family, education, and society are the three of external factors and on the other hand, physical, psychological, and intellectual components are the three categories of internal factors (Christanti & Kartikawati, 2021).

In the context of an external factor, teachers can utilize learning media to facilitate the learning process in the classroom. Learning activities may be made more engaging, motivating, and stimulating by incorporating instructional media into the teaching and learning process (Alwi & Aulia, 2023). In conclusion, incorporating learning media into teaching can make learning more engaging and stimulating for students. These media can help students process concepts more easily and stimulate their right brain, enhancing the overall learning experience.

With the development of technology, digital media such as computers, tablets and smartphones are increasingly accessible to the public, including in the context of education. Digital media offers various advantages, such as wider accessibility, flexibility in use, and the ability to present information in an engaging and interactive way. In this context, in order to optimize the advantages of digital media for learning, educators must comprehend both its possibilities and disadvantages. From this background, the author utilizes technology by choosing Webtoon platform as a medium to examine the effectiveness.

There are several possible reasons for choosing the Webtoon platform for teaching reading comprehension and focusing on second semester students majoring in English Education. Firstly, Webtoon offers visually engaging and interactive content, enhancing student interest and motivation. Secondly, as digital natives, these students are familiar with digital platforms, potentially leading to more effective learning. Thirdly, based on the researcher's experience ¹⁸ during the second semester of the 2020/2021 academic year, Understanding and comprehending English materials during presentations continues to be a challenge for many students. This curiosity led the researcher to study the progress of ¹² students in the second semester of the 2023/2024 academic year. Lastly, focusing on second semester students allows for a targeted examination of Webtoon's effectiveness in teaching reading comprehension skills, as they have foundational English skills.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading is a form of communication that involves receiving messages or information in the written form to comprehend written information, students must possess excellent reading comprehension abilities (Manik, 2019). According to Rodríguez & Adolfo (2002), the term reading is more complex and relates to a person's ability to recognize the letters of a written word and the sequence of words that give meaning to a particular phrase. Dewi (2019) also states reading, which is considered a fundamental skill in communication, involves a complex process. The concept of reading comprehension emphasizes the interactivity between the

background knowledge of the reader and the information retrieved from the text (Wong, 2003 cited in Sitorus, 2013). Grabe and Stoller (2002) as cited in Anida (2019) define reading comprehension as understanding and interpreting textual information. According to Ahmad & Ma'rifatulloh (2023), reading is a useful tool for increasing learning and gaining information.

Definition of Webtoon

Based on the Webtoon official website, Webtoon is a worldwide storytelling platform where creators and consumers can explore, create, and share stories. According to Jang and Song (2017) as cited in Yu & Park (2023) the term "webtoon" which combines the terms "web" and "cartoon" implies that it is a digital comic book based on web services. Sumanjaya & Padmaningrum (2018) also explain, as practically all students own a smartphone or computer/laptop, Webtoon is a digital comic platform that can be easily accessible through these devices. The term "webtoon" refers to an acronym for "website cartoon" which, in the most general sense, refers to a variety of images that have been posted online (Kim & Yu, 2019).

Manhwa and webtoon are similar subgenres, but webtoon is distributed differently; webtoon is distributed online, typically through comic hosting websites, whereas manhwa is published physically in magazines or books (Harmoko & Sumbawati, 2017). Putri (2018) also explains one of LINE's social media offerings is LINE Webtoon, a digital comic reading app. The name "webtoon" (wept'un) originates in Korea and refers to webcomics, which are without a doubt the most popular and successful type of online repetitive creation in Korea today. (Cho, 2021). Webtoon is a type of graphic storytelling in which, similar to a printed comic, the panel layout seamlessly blends words and graphics (Fatha & Mansoor, 2021).

3. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the author tested the Webtoon platform's effectiveness in teaching second semester students reading comprehension using the quantitative research approach. More precisely, the author employed a one-group pre-test, treatment, and post-test quantitative research approach using pre-experimental design. This makes it possible to compare pre- and post-assessment results to assess the effectiveness of the treatment related to a pre-experiment design.

O1	X	O2
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In this study, the authors used SPSS 29.0 software to conduct the t-test. The t-test compares the mean values before and after the treatment to determine how effective the

treatment is. The researcher utilized a ⁹ paired sample t-test to compare the mean values before and after treatment.

The researcher's hypothesis is as follows:

Ha: Significant differences exist in the ¹ reading comprehension of second semester students at Bhinneka PGRI University in the 2023/2024 academic year before and after being exposed to the Webtoon platform.

Ho: No ¹⁷ significant difference in reading comprehension of second semester students at Bhinneka PGRI University in the 2023/2024 academic year before and after being exposed to the Webtoon platform.

In many fields, this level of significance is widely recognized as the cut-off point for deciding whether the findings are statistically significant. If the p- value of the t-test is less compared to 0.05, which indicates that the result is likely to be statistically significant, suggesting the outcome is statistically significant, the hypothesis null can be ignored. On a different note, if the p-value is greater on the scale of 0.05, null hypothesis may be ruled out and the result is not statistically significant.

4. FINDINGS

This study involved 22 students, but only 16 students could participate because there were several students who were absent without explanation and then some students had permission not to attend class. The aim was to examine the effectivity of utilizing Webtoon in teaching reading comprehension. A pretest and post test were conducted on 16 participating students to evaluate their reading ability before and after the learning intervention using Webtoon. Here are the results of the data obtained :

⁸ No	Name	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score
1	MBAR	57	73
2	RNH	67	83
3	JWM	70	80
4	ULR	67	77
5	RYA	73	83
6	TRM	73	87
7	NAZ	70	80
8	LHT	70	83
9	SAP	70	87
10	ARH	70	83
11	ENS	77	83

12	MDN	80	90
13	FRA	73	87
14	DSW	60	83
15	NLA	60	73
16	MRFA	67	77

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest Webtoon	16	57,00	80,00	69,0000	6,08824
Valid N (listwise)	16				

Analysis of pre-test data from SPSS 29 shows that, before learning through the Webtoon platform, students had a mean score of 69.00 with a normal deviation of 6.08824 for reading comprehension. 80.00 was the highest score attained, while 57.00 was the lowest. This demonstrates how different students' reading comprehension skills were prior to the Webtoon learning intervention.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Posttest Webtoon	16	73,00	90,00	81,8125	4,92908
Valid N (listwise)	16				

The table above shows the findings of the post-test data analysis, which reveals that, for the 2023/2024 academic year, second semester students at Bhinneka PGRI University had a mean score of 81.8125 with a normal deviation of 4.92908. The highest score was 90.00, while the lowest score was 73.00.

Normality Testing

To make sure the data used in the study have a distribution that is close to the normal distribution, a normality test is performed. The outcome of this normalcy test is crucial in deciding which statistical analysis techniques to employ parametric or non-parametric.

3 Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest Webtoon	,190	16	,125	,938	16	,321
Posttest Webtoon	,220	16	,037	,929	16	,232

The results of above indicated that pre- & post-test data on students' reading ability tended to be distributed normally. The significance value for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is 0.125 for pre-test data and 0.037 for post-test data. Furthermore, the Shapiro-Wilk test has a significance value of 0.232 for post-test data and 0.321 for pre-test data. Since both significance points are greater than 0.05, it is possible to draw a conclusion that all pre-test and post-test reading ability data have no significant difference from normal distribution. Therefore, it may be said that both sets of data fulfill the normal distribution assumption, allowing parametric statistical analysis techniques to be applied to determine if the two sets of data vary from one another.

Hypothesis Testing

The comparison of changes in pre-test and post-test scores was examined by the researcher using parametric statistical analysis techniques after the normality test results showed that the normal distribution assumption was met for both sets of data. The data analysis conducted with the SPSS 29 software is as follows.

4 Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences	t	df	Significance			
				Mean	Std. Error	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Pair 1	Pretest Webtoon - Posttest Webtoon	-12,854	15	<,001	<,001		
	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	Mean	Std. Error	Lower Upper				
	-12,81250	,99674	-14,93700 10,68800				

The results above shows that, after the Webtoon platform intervention, there appeared to be a significant change in students' overall reading comprehension skills between pre- and post-test scores ($t(15) = -12.854$, $p < 0.001$, 2-tailed), and this difference was less than 0.05. This demonstrates that following the Webtoon intervention, students' reading comprehension skills have significantly improved. This finding suggests that Hypothesis Ho is not accepted and Ha is valid.

5. DISCUSSION

Several factors can be highlighted based upon collected data from the reading comprehension pre-test and post-test of students' reading comprehension prior to and following the learning treatment using the Webtoon platform. First, the pre-test results revealed that students' reading comprehension skills had a mean score of 69.00 with a normal deviation of 6.08824 before the Webtoon learning intervention. This demonstrates how different students' reading comprehension skills were before to the Webtoon learning intervention. 80.00 was the highest score attained, while 57.00 was the minimum. Second, score of 81.8125 average and a normal deviation of 4.92908, the post-test findings demonstrated that students' reading comprehension skills increased following the Webtoon learning intervention. 90.00 was the highest score attained, while 73.00 was the lowest. This demonstrates how well the Webtoon platform-based learning intervention teaches students' reading comprehension abilities.

Furthermore, the findings of the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality tests indicate that the pre- and post-test data on students' reading proficiency likely to be regularly distributed. This demonstrates that both sets of data fulfill the normal distribution assumption, allowing parametric statistical analysis techniques to be applied to test for differences between the two sets of data. The findings of the paired t-samples test indicate a significant result ($t(15) = -12.854$, $p < 0.001$, 2-tailed) showing a significant difference after the Webtoon platform intervention. This difference is less than 0.05. This demonstrates how much the Webtoon learning intervention enhanced students' reading comprehension skills. There are also theories that may support the findings of this research. In Bamford (2003) stated that visual literacy is an important component in modern education. The webtoon platform, with its combination of text and images, supports the development of visual literacy, which helps students to understand narratives more deeply. Then also in Schwebel (1979) stated the importance of social interaction and visual aids in learning. The use of Webtoon platform can be seen as a form of visual aid that helps students build understanding through a rich and interactive context.

This study shows that the utilization of Webtoon platform is effective in teaching reading comprehension. Practical implications of the findings include the integration of Webtoon into the curriculum, teacher training, and the development of innovative teaching materials using Webtoon platform. Theoretically, this study supports various learning theories such as multimodalism, constructivism, and learning motivation, and emphasizes the

importance of visual literacy in education. Thus, the use of Webtoon platform as a learning tool can be considered as an effective strategy to improve students' language proficiency.

Using the Webtoon platform to teach reading comprehension to students is beneficial, according to the study's findings. Students' abilities to comprehend what they were reading varied before the intervention, but after it, their reading comprehension skills significantly improved. This demonstrates that Webtoon may be a useful tool for raising students' reading comprehension skills in addition to helping them acquire vocabulary. This study adds to the body of research demonstrating how using digital media like Webtoon can enhance students' language proficiency. It is clear from the aforementioned assertion that the H_a Hypothesis is accepted, which states "Significant differences exist in the reading comprehension of second semester students at Bhinneka PGRI University in the 2023/2024 academic year before and after being exposed to the Webtoon platform".

6. CONCLUSION

According to the research results regarding the teaching of reading comprehension to Bhinneka PGRI University second semester students in 2023/2024 may be accomplished successfully with the use of the Webtoon platform. Before to the intervention, there were differences in the students' reading comprehension abilities, with an average score of 69.00 suggesting a substantial ability gap. Students' reading comprehension skills significantly improved following the Webtoon platform learning intervention, as seen by the average score of 81.8125 that they achieved. Data on students' reading comprehension abilities, both before and after the test, tend to be distributed normally. This enables the testing of the difference between the two data using parametric statistical analysis techniques. Research results from the paired t-test demonstrated that, after the Webtoon platform intervention, a significant change in students' reading comprehension ability existed between pre- and post-test scores ($t(15) = -12.854, p < 0.001, 2$ -tailed), and this difference was less than 0.05. This demonstrates how well Webtoon teaches reading comprehension to students. This finding validates the study hypothesis h_a , which states that there is a discernible change in students' reading comprehension skills before and after using the Webtoon platform. The study's findings are beneficial to the area of education, particularly in regards to the creative and useful use of digital media like Webtoon as a teaching aid

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