

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

Reading comprehension is the capability to understand and interpret written content by recognizing main ideas, details, and subtle nuances within texts (Listyarini, 2022). It is fundamental across all education levels, serving as the basis of knowledge acquisition in diverse subjects (Rehfeld et al., 2022). The benefits of reading are evident in students' improved skills and academic success, especially for those who engage in regular reading practices (Ansar, 2019). Reading facilitates comprehension of complex concepts, deeper engagement, and better retention of information (Bradley & Bryant, 1983).

Phonemic awareness as a subset of phonological awareness is a highly reliable predictor of reading proficiency. It involves the ability to isolate, blend, segment, and manipulate phonemes, the smallest units of sound in language (National Reading Panel, 2000; Hogan et al., 2005). Strong phonemic awareness supports learners in word recognition and reading fluency (Listyarini, 2022; Rehfeld et al., 2022). Vocabulary acquisition is equally essential, involving both oral and reading vocabulary, and is a critical foundation for literacy development (Carmioli et al., 2024; McKeown, 2019).

Critical thinking enhances reading comprehension by promoting skillful analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of text information, enabling learners to engage beyond surface meaning (Lin & Chen, 2024; Mohammadi et al., 2024). It facilitates connections between ideas, incorporation of prior knowledge, and assessment of information credibility, including identifying biases (Heidari, 2020). Despite these cognitive skills, learners often face challenges such as low motivation, limited vocabulary, difficulty extracting relevant information, and struggle with lengthy or complex texts, reducing reading enthusiasm (Darihastiningsih et al., 2023).

The rise of technology offers solutions through digital tools that help manage learning and foster new literacies (Mokhtar & Othman, 2022). Gamification integrates game elements such as points, badges, and rewards into educational contexts, which increases engagement and motivation in learning environments (Khan et al., 2024; Alfadil, 2020). It transforms passive learning into interactive participation with goal setting and incentivization fostering sustained learner progress (Thompson & von Gillern, 2020).

This study centers on the use of gamified quizzes to enhance reading comprehension. Such quizzes accommodate diverse learning styles, benefiting visual and competitive learners alike, and promote collaboration through features like leaderboards and team challenges (Setyaningsih et al., 2023; Blanco et al., 2023). Additionally, personalization in gamified quizzes prevents boredom or overwhelm by adjusting content difficulty (Orhan & Gürsoy, 2019). While benefits are well documented, successful implementation requires teacher training for quiz design and integration (Attig et al., 2024)

Expanding on the cognitive aspect, motivation plays a critical role in reading comprehension. Research indicates that motivated learners invest more effort in understanding texts, employ better strategies, and persist longer with challenging materials (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Gamified quizzes enhance motivation by providing immediate feedback and rewards, fostering a sense of achievement and sustained interest. This motivational support can be particularly beneficial for struggling readers who might otherwise disengage from reading tasks.

Moreover, the social dimensions of gamified learning offer additional benefits. Collaborative features such as team competitions and peer comparison contribute to social learning dynamics where students learn from and encourage one another (Kapp, 2012). This social interaction can enhance understanding and provide emotional support, resulting in higher engagement and better comprehension outcomes. Facilitation of these interactions requires thoughtful design to ensure inclusivity and equal participation.

The integration of gamified quizzes also aligns with principles of personalized learning, which tailor educational experiences to individual learner needs and preferences (Walkington, 2013). Adaptive quizzes can adjust question difficulty based on real-time performance, allowing learners to work at optimal challenge levels that promote growth without frustration. This approach maximizes learning efficiency and supports differentiated instruction in diverse classrooms.

Despite the promising potential, challenges in gamification implementation must be acknowledged. Technical issues, varying levels of digital literacy among teachers and students, and resource constraints can hinder effective adoption (Barata et al., 2017). Additionally, excessive focus on extrinsic rewards might undermine intrinsic motivation over time if not balanced appropriately. Therefore, successful gamification requires ongoing evaluation, teacher training, and student feedback to optimize outcomes.

Finally, this research contributes to educational practice by providing empirical evidence on gamified quizzes' impact on junior high school students' reading comprehension. It responds to the growing need for innovative, evidence-based teaching methods that leverage technology to improve foundational literacy skills. By investigating motivational and social factors alongside cognitive outcomes, the study offers a holistic view of gamification's role in modern education. Based on the explanation above, the writer will conduct a research entitled **Gamified Quizzes as Media to Enhance Students' English Reading Comprehension Skills**

1.2.Problem of Study

In relation to the background of study above, below are the problems of this study:

1. What effects do quizzes have on students' outcomes in their reading comprehension learning process?
2. In what ways does the use of gamified quizzes influence students' engagement levels, and how does this compare with traditional teaching methods in enhancing reading comprehension skills?

1.3.The Objectives of Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the effects of quizzes on students' outcomes in their reading comprehension learning process.
2. To find out in what ways the use of gamified quizzes influences students' engagement levels, and how does this compare with traditional teaching methods in enhancing reading comprehension skills.

1.4.The Significance of Study

The significance of this study can be outlined both theoretically and practically as follows:

a. Theoretically

This study theoretically enhances the expanding corpus of knowledge regarding the effects of gamification in education, particularly in the area of reading comprehension. It explains how adding gamified quizzes affects cognitive processes like phonemic awareness, vocabulary acquisition, and critical thinking, which helps students understand and interact with texts better. The research expands on educational theories such as self-determination theory and constructivist learning, providing empirical evidence that game elements like points, badges, and immediate

feedback improve intrinsic motivation and engagement. This study also builds on previous frameworks by looking at how well gamified learning tools work compared to more traditional teaching methods. This gives us a better idea of how digital tools can change how we teach reading and writing.

- b. The findings provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers aiming to enhance student outcomes in reading comprehension through innovative strategies. The research shows that gamified quizzes can be used successfully in the classroom to boost students' motivation, participation, and understanding. The practical implications include advice on how to use gamification effectively, stressing the need for teacher training and careful quiz design to get the most out of it. The study also shows how gamified assessments let teachers keep track of students' progress in real time, which makes it easier to create personalised learning experiences that meet the needs of all students and encourage group work. These results ultimately support the use of technology-enhanced teaching methods that create active and interesting learning environments. These methods can help with common problems like low student motivation and short attention spans.