

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

According to Maduwu (2016:1-2), English is considered a universal language because it is used by many countries in the world as the main means of international communication. In addition, English is one of the international languages that is important to master or learn. Therefore, according to Mika et al. (2023), one of the goals of learning English is to help students be able to communicate orally and in writing. Thus, when using English, they can understand the content of conversations and texts such as letters, articles, and various other forms of media. In addition, this ability also allows them to interact with others smoothly without any significant obstacles. In other words, when students engage in communication situations, they can convey an understood message.

In fact, writing skills are often considered the most complicated and challenging aspect, especially in foreign language learning (EFL) such as in Indonesia (Djafar, 2022). This is also explained by Fareed (in Djafar, 2022) who revealed that EFL students in South Asia experience various difficulties in writing English, ranging from the use of grammar and sentence structure to organizing ideas and choosing understanding. In line with that, Aryanti (in Djafar, 2016) also found a similar finding, namely that the main obstacles in learning to write English for students lie in weak language mastery, limited comprehension, and difficulties in assembling and arranging ideas. According to Rahman, there are three main factors that are challenges for students in learning English, namely: (1) the influence of the mother tongue, where the structure of Indonesian or regional languages is often carried over to sneak in" into English writing, (2) lack of exposure to authentic texts, (3) teaching methods that still focus on grammar and translation (Djafar, 2022).

Sutarsyah (2017) shows that most English teachers today are still very dependent on traditional teaching methods. Many of them simply assign students a few topics to write about without providing a clear explanation. As a result, students are always confused when asked to write and they think that writing is boring and difficult to learn.

The main factor that leads to a lack of writing skills and interest is the less effective use of teaching media. Therefore, students need the use of media according to the time to stimulate and activate their ideas to produce writing more easily. Thus, effective use of media is expected to create a more interesting writing class. Media can also be used by English teachers to transfer learning materials to achieve learning objectives and improve students' writing skills. Learning to write depends heavily on the effectiveness of techniques and the use of English media teachers. It is very important for English teachers to make some kind of breakthrough in teaching, by trying to use media that is appropriate for the times to attract students and support writing learning (Wahyudian et al., 2020).

Comics are considered one of the learning media that has succeeded in attracting the interest of students at the high school level, especially at the age of 11–15 years, because it combines narrative with interesting illustrations (Wahyudian et al., 2020). In other words, comics are a popular medium that makes learning more interesting for young learners. Daryanto, as quoted in Riwanto and Wulandari (2019), further defines comics as a form of cartoon that features characters and tells a story through a series of sequences.

Along with technological advancements, comics are no longer limited to print books but are now widely available in digital formats that can be accessed through devices such as smartphones and computers, commonly known as "digital comics" (Pratiwi et al., 2023). Hakim, quoted in Pratiwi et al. (2023), explained that digital comics consist of visual symbols that are presented through electronic media and arranged in a certain order to convey information or create aesthetic pleasure for readers. This evolution from print comics to digital

comics demonstrates the adaptability of this medium, making it a promising tool to support English learning in the modern era.

As a learning medium, digital comics have a number of advantages. Trimo (in Riwanto & Wulandari, 2019) emphasized that comics provide four main benefits, namely: (1) enriching students' skills; (2) to facilitate the understanding of abstract things or formulas; (3) fostering interest in reading and interest in other fields of study; and (4) the comic storyline always leads to the values of goodness. In addition, as a visual medium, comics present stories with clear and concise illustrations so that the content of the story is easier for students to understand because it is conveyed in the form of an interesting story (Eva et al., 2020). Research results at various levels of education—from elementary school, junior high school, to high school—show that the use of comics can improve students' cognitive learning outcomes. The experiments conducted also showed that comic media was able to provide stimulus and arouse students' curiosity about the material learned (Aeni & Yusupa, 2018; Ambaryani and Airlanda, 2017; Saputro, 2015).

Furthermore, digital comics contribute significantly to the development of students' narrative writing skills. Its use in narrative teaching has been shown to be effective in improving students' writing skills, especially in structuring ideas and presenting well-organized examples. By providing a clear visual representation of the storyline, characters, and setting, digital comics help students understand the development of the narrative. This is especially beneficial for students who previously had difficulty organizing their ideas coherently and concisely. Suryani, as cited in the literature, emphasized that visual media such as comics can improve students' narrative writing skills by offering concrete and easy-to-understand examples to model. Learners who utilize digital comics generally produce a more organized narrative. They are not only able to follow a given storyline, but also develop it by including additional details, such as descriptions of the characters and their environment. Then,

Rahmawati's study revealed that the use of digital comic visualization supports students in developing more complex story elements, something that is often challenging when using traditional teaching methods. Analysis of students' work results before and after the application of digital comics showed an increase in creativity in the use of language as well as an increase in narrative coherence. Students who previously relied only on simple sentences began to use more varied and complex sentence structures. Research conducted by Haryanto and Saraswati shows that the use of digital media, especially comics, can increase students' creativity while strengthening their confidence in writing, because the visuals displayed are able to provide greater inspiration. In addition, Saputra and Parisu (2024) emphasized that the use of digital comics as a learning medium not only deepens students' understanding of narrative structures, but also develops their skills in composing stories more effectively.

Some of the challenges in learning to write English are also relevant to the experiences experienced by the researcher himself. When he was still in SMP Negeri 16 Borong, the researcher had problems in writing English due to the lack of vocabulary and lack of understanding in determining word structure. These challenges are generally caused by the influence of word structure in Indonesian applied to the writing structure in English as well as the teaching method of English teachers who still focus on translation techniques without practicing composing words in depth.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "THE INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL COMICS ON THE WRITING ABILITY OF ROSA MYSTICA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS". This research focuses on how digital comics can affect the ability to write narratives for Rosa Mystica Junior High School students.

1.2 Research Problems

The research problem can be formulated as follows:

1. Do digital comics have a positive influence on the narrative writing ability of Junior High School students?
2. How can digital comics be implemented in teaching writing of narrative text to Rosa Mystica Junior High School?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the background, the researcher would like to address a question that can be formulated as follows:

1. To find out whether digital comic have a positive influence on the narrative writing ability of Junior High School students.
2. To identify the steps in implementing digital comic in learning to write narrative text to Rosa Mystica Junior High School.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research offers 2 benefits the following:

1. This research is expected to be useful and help students in general to improve the quality of English learning, improve information and improve learning skills.
2. This research is also expected to encourage students to be more active, creative and innovative in writing spending in writing narrative text.
3. This research is expected to be a reference for finding the right approach or learning method in teaching writing skills. In addition, this research will provide insight and understanding to students as prospective teachers to develop learning models that can be used to make students interested and motivated in learning.