

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

Learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia has become a key pillar of the national education system, particularly due to globalization, which has made foreign language proficiency a critical necessity (Zein, Sukyadi, Hamied & Lengkanawati, 2020). English is regarded not only as a mandatory subject but also as a global communication tool that facilitates extensive access to critical domains such as science, technology, diplomacy, and foreign employment prospects (Kurniawan, 2023). The Indonesian education curriculum incorporates English instruction from elementary through high school, further enhancing it in higher education to cultivate a generation capable of global competition (Khasbani, 2019). Therefore, the role of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia has evolved into a fundamental component of national education, equipping youth for global competition through ongoing instruction from basic to tertiary education.

In relation to this issue, the primary emphasis of English instruction is the development of the four fundamental language skills, i.e., reading, listening, speaking and writing. The four skills are taught cohesively to develop comprehensive and practical communicative competence (Sharma & Puri, 2020). Nonetheless, writing is sometimes seen as the most intricate of the four abilities (Roxas, 2020). This is due to the necessity of a comprehensive knowledge base, proficient grammatical skills, and the ability to organize thoughts clearly and logically (Peter & Singaravelu, 2020). Moreover, writing necessitates critical and reflective thinking abilities not readily acquired by children still learning English.

One of the challenges of writing difficulties can be caused by students' reading habits. Difficulties in writing that stem from limited reading practices have been widely observed. Nguyen (2022) explains that limited reading can make it hard for students to develop clear and organized ideas, because it narrows their perspective and reduces creativity. In addition, Risman et al. (2019) state that inadequate reading practices affect vocabulary acquisition, leading to repetitive and

less interesting writing, as highlighted by research on the correlation between reading habits and writing ability. Furthermore, starting the writing process becomes very difficult due to a lack of familiarity with various writing styles and structures, which should be fostered through consistent reading habits (Linuwih & Winardi, 2020). These interconnected issues imply that students' usual engagement in reading activities plays an important role in promoting their writing ability.

Given the complexity of writing difficulties, which are closely related to students' reading habits, the fast-paced growth of digital technology over the past few years, especially since the onset of Covid-19, has brought about changes in schools. Many digital tools, like e-learning, mobile apps, and various reading resources, allow students to access instructional materials more quickly and flexibly. This technology facilitates learning without spatial and temporal constraints while necessitating students to possess digital literacy as a component of 21st-century competencies (Martínez-Bravo, Chalezquer, & Serrano-Puche, 2022). Consequently, the advancement of digital technology can motivate students to cultivate reading habits through online platforms. These changes inspire teachers to change their instructional strategies to fit modern needs (Alakrash & Razak, 2021).

Regarding online reading, the presence of digital technology has significantly changed traditional reading practices. This shift has made online reading a common activity among students. This shift has encouraged the development of online reading habits, which perform vital roles in determining students' total literacy abilities, e.g., comprehension and contribution. As highlighted in a study, the integration of online devices has not only expanded access to reading materials but also influenced the reading culture among adolescents, considering the opportunities and challenges in the digital era (Olszak & Curie-Sk, 2015). In practice, students today more often read articles, short stories, or news through digital devices such as smartphones and computers (Virgiyanti, Dipta, Fachriza, Nuraini, & Hafiz, 2024). Based on observations conducted twice and interviews with English teachers at SMA Global Mandiri on March 18, 2025, it was found that the school provides each student with a tablet to access learning

materials in class. It was also conveyed by the vice principal and the English teacher of SMA Global Mandiri that students' physical reading habits, such as reading printed books are still relatively low. This issue is not unique to SMA Global Mandiri, but also the results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) study (in Wahyuni, 2010) indicated that 25% to 34% of Indonesian learners were at literacy level -1, while fewer than 1% reached literacy level -5, signifying that only a small number of learners in Indonesia possess advanced reading skills, including extracting complicated insights from unfamiliar texts. In 2023, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbudristek) formally released the results of the 2022 PISA assessment, indicating that Indonesia's ranking had improved by six places in comparison to its performance in 2018 (Kemendikbudristek, 2023). This advancement represents Indonesia's most significant ranking achievement since it began participating in the PISA program.

The influence of this shift in reading habits on literacy abilities, particularly in writing, raises serious concerns. Online reading offers many current, diverse, and substantial reading materials. In fact, the fast-paced, multitasking nature of online reading frequently results in a loss of focus and deeper comprehension of the reading material because writing demands a depth of comprehension and a methodical thought process, so this condition may affect students' ability to write successfully. Ferris and Hedgcock (in Ihsan, 2019) state that reading provides the basis for writing because it alerts students to how the rhetorical and pragmatic forces interact to convey meaning and print-encoded information.

Regarding the relationship between reading habits and writing, a long history of study has demonstrated that students' ability to write and their online reading habits are positively correlated. For instance, Wati (2021) discovered a strong and positive correlation among the writing abilities and reading habits of 36 first graders of SMAN 2 Batusangkar. A quantitative research approach was adopted in this study, applying a correlational framework. The research of Karunaratne and Navaratne (2023) also found an impact between reading habits

and writing skills. Their sample was 30 grade three students at an English medium private school that had been selected in Kandy, Sri Lanka. Subsequently the quantitative method through correlation design was utilized to this research. The study showed that reading habits significantly influence writing skills.

Table 1. 1 Research Gap Identification from Previous Studies

Author(s) & Years	Setting	Instrument	Result	Limitation
Khalisa (2018)	SMAN 4 Banda Aceh City	Questionnaire & Writing Test	Significant correlation between reading habit & writing ability	Small sample; not focus on online reading habit
Wati (2021)	SMAN 2 Batusangkar, West Sumatra	Questionnaire & Writing Test	Significant correlation between reading habit & writing ability	Not focusing on online reading habit
Karunaratne & Navaratne (2023)	English medium private school that had been selected in Kandy, Sri Lanka	Questionnaire & Writing Test	Significant correlation between reading habit & writing ability	Small sample; not focus on online reading habit
Rijal & Efendi (2024)	STKIP Muhammadiyah Aceh Barat Daya	Questionnaire & Writing Test	Significant correlation between reading habit & writing ability	Small sample; not focus on online reading habit

Based on previous studies, although there are similarities in this research such as using quantitative methods with correlation design, also research samples with the same level, and the same theory used. However, several gaps have been identified, which in turn form the novelty of this present study, particularly research that explores the interaction between students observed online reading habits and their English writing ability. Then the focus of the subject and location with areas that have never been used as objects of previous research, in this study the focus is on tenth grade students at SMA Global Mandiri Cibubur Bogor where students apply the English environment and are facilitated with technology by the school. Then involve new instruments by modifying and developing questionnaire items that have never been used before. As digital developments have now become a

fundamental component of students' lives, it is important to determine whether this research provides additional insights to the existing scholarly literature or new insights into supporting students' English language skills through online experiences. Hence, this study will provide a general overview of how reading online activities relate to the writing ability of their tenth-grade students of SMA Global Mandiri Cibubur who read on-line and to their English writing ability.

1.2. Research Problem

Drawing from the contextual foundation that has been outlined, this research issue is centered on the investigation of "Is there a positive and significant correlation between students' online reading habits with their English writing ability in tenth-grade students at SMA Global Mandiri Cibubur?" This research explores the relationship between online reading habits and writing ability. Hence, the problem statement of this study is to see if there is a positive and significant relationship between the two variables.

1.3. Research Objectives

The primary goal of this study was to find out if there is a statistically significant and positive correlation between students' reading habit online with tenth-grade students' English writing ability at SMA Global Mandiri Cibubur.

1.4. Research Significances

This research offers significant theoretical and practical advantages. Theoretically, the results of this research are intended to inform the advancement of theories concerning the link between online reading and writing proficiency within the framework of foreign language acquisition. Practically, teachers may use this research as information of the development of learning practices that better suit the digital lifestyles of their students, such as incorporating online texts into lesson plans. Students may learn from this research how important it is to read critically

and actively on online platforms in order to get better at writing. Furthermore, future researchers might utilize these insights of this research investigation as a guide and starting point for further research that examines related topics with different approaches or variables

1.5. Research Scope and Limitation

This study was conducted in order to examine students' reading habit across the internet in relation to their English writing ability as a foundation skill in school for further English learning development. The limitation of this research is that the participants were only the tenth-grade students of SMA Global Mandiri Cibubur. Additionally, the data collection method used was limited to questionnaires and tests, which may not capture the full depth of students' online reading habits and writing abilities. Furthermore, the time allocated for data collection was relatively short, which may have affected the comprehensiveness of the data gathered.