

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background and theory behind the design of a website-based learning medium for English that focuses on reading comprehension. It begins with a discussion of the role and importance of English, particularly as a means of communication and a global challenge that is a requirement for students, especially in Indonesia. The relevance of the discussion in this chapter explains that the CEFR A2 level is used as a reference in the design of website content and includes the problem statement, research objectives, research significance, and outcomes, which are the results of the design of this project.

1.1. Background

English is one of the most commonly used languages, especially in the international arena. As the main international language, many students in Indonesia learn English as one of the foreign languages that must be mastered in order to improve their abilities and communicate with people from various countries and fulfill the campus graduation requirements, employment, and continuing study abroad. In the academic context, mentioning Diponegoro University's students, undergraduate students are required to have English language skills as evidenced by official English language certifications such as TOEFL, one of which is TOEFL ITP, as per academic regulations from Diponegoro University for the Applied Bachelor education program (Rector's Regulation No. 22 of 2024) and undergraduate education (Rector's Regulation No. 7 of 2024; Rector's Regulation No. 4 of 2020) regarding English language skills (Diponegoro University, 2020, 2024a, 2024b). For some people, it tends to be difficult, and some even consider it less important to learning English, especially with a fairly monotonous way of learning. It is said that in learning English, it has been found, based on real examples, that learning English is not very favorable and not only comes from monotonous learning factors but also boring ones (Cameron, 2001). Basically, to overcome the

disinterest in learning English, innovations such as new and fun learning methods are needed and can build motivation (Uzer, 2019). In regard to the issues, independent learning using the internet and websites as interactive learning media can increase students' interest in learning and avoid monotonous learning, supported by theories from Hanum (2013) and Kusmana (2017) which state that, acquiring knowledge that makes use of internet technology to improve the learning environment with extensive coverage and rich content is known as web-based learning. It has been demonstrated that using websites as learning resources can boost student enthusiasm and engagement, particularly when it comes to language acquisition. Web-based technology provides an adaptable and dynamic learning environment that enables students to access course materials at any time and from any location, suggests Warschauer (1996).

Based on the problems evident from the data, the TOEFL ITP exam served as the model for this educational resource. In addition to being a test of a person's capacity to speak English, the TOEFL ITP is one of the exams used to assess an individual's competency in the language. It is a prerequisite that must be prepared for and has been accepted by many universities and employment opportunities. According to Warfield, Laribee, and Geyer (2013), the results of the TOEFL ITP, an internationally acknowledged and reliable English proficiency test, demonstrate the English competency of Indonesian students. In recent times, TOEFL ITP scores are utilized not just as an assessment of an individual's capability but also as a prerequisite for graduating from college, getting admitted to international universities, and continuing education in English-speaking nations. According to Aliponga (2013), several institutions have the right to establish requirements based on the TOEFL ITP, an English proficiency test certificate, which can be used to assess and measure students' capability in speaking, reading, comprehending, listening, and assimilating material in English.

In regard to the TOEFL ITP itself, there are points about the types of tests tested, and the discussion that will be highlighted here is the test of ability in reading comprehension. There are many definitions of reading ability, one of which is corroborated by statements from Alderson (2000) and Klingner, Vaughn, and

Boardman (2007), that reading ability can be defined as the interaction between the reader and the text he/she reads. Reading ability is also important because it can improve the learner's ability to increase knowledge (Fjeldstad, 1994, p. 20). The ability to measure reading comprehension through story questions and also the expectation to draw conclusions from the stories read, then listening, which measures the ability to hear English conversations, where usually a conversation or a sentence will be played through a loudspeaker, participants are also expected to be able to listen properly and correctly, and writing or structure, which tests the ability to write and arrange words in English with grammar according to the book. Referring to the points tested in TOEFL, this English learning innovation is made into a website with a reference focus on reading comprehension with a focus on level A2.

The reason for choosing the A2 level as the focus of this research is based on several considerations. Firstly, the A2 level is the stage where English learners begin to develop their reading skills independently, so there is a need for learning media that can encourage their interest in reading and improve their understanding of English texts. Secondly, the A2 level is often considered a 'bridge' between the beginner (A1) and intermediate (B1) levels, so the mastery of reading skills at this level will greatly affect the overall progress of learning English (North, 2014). Thirdly, based on research conducted by Cameron (2001), learners at the A2 level tend to feel bored and unmotivated more easily if the learning methods used are monotonous and uninteresting. Furthermore, as part of the argument for the value of knowing English as a foreign language, particularly in order to boost students' academic talents and professionalism in the age of global interconnection. As a framework for English language learning, CEFR assessment can serve as a clear guide or direction on what students should learn, especially in providing structured development. CEFR is not merely an international standard for syllabi, curricula, and other teaching materials, but also plays a crucial role in the development of an integrated pedagogical system that naturally encompasses the processes of learning, teaching, and assessment (Little & Erickson, 2015). This approach can involve or provide continuous evaluation of students' competencies, rather than merely

serving as motivation for educators, educational institutions, and teachers in designing activities focused on delivering content. In terms of reading comprehension, the TOEFL ITP practice system has pedagogical value that is relevant to CEFR principles, as these exercises are part of action-oriented learning that encourages students to learn independently and actively through reflection and problem-solving strategies (Lowie, 2013). Therefore, it can be confirmed that the TOEFL ITP can serve as a bridge in implementing the CEFR pedagogical approach based on competencies and communication skill development orientation, while also helping to provide targeted, meaningful, and language proficiency-aligned learning incentives.

In designing a digital media website as a TOEFL ITP reading comprehension learning exercise, an R&D research method approach is used. Sugiyono (2012) suggests that the development research method is centered on making products and has conducted research on the effectiveness of the products made in accordance with the research objectives. Stated by Borg & Gall (in Suarno & Sukirno, 2025), R&D development research is a type of research that aims to design products with new innovations in accordance with research methods, application procedures, and field trials. Evaluation is also followed by revision in order to meet the standards of effectiveness and quality. The design and research of this reading comprehension website learning media were carried out by involving subjects in the research, validators as product validation tests, and Diponegoro University students as respondents and product trials.

The ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation) serves as a framework in developing learning product designs. According to Junaedi (2019), the ADDIE model was developed by educational practitioners in creating effective and dynamic tools and infrastructure for training or learning programs that support it. The use of this model was chosen because it is relevant to the design in learning design and has advantages in systematic and detailed stages, followed by evaluation stages needed for the need to revise, assess, and test the feasibility of the product as a learning website for English reading comprehension exercises. As supported by Tegeh and Kirna's (2013) statement that

the five stages of the ADDIE model are quite simple and offer a systematic, efficient balance and quality control compared to other models, it makes this model easy to understand and use, especially in designing learning products.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the theory and limitations of the background of the problem above, the author formulates the problem as follows:

1. How is the process of creating a reading section website for TOEFL preparation?
2. How is the stakeholder's feedback on utilizing the website for English learning and practice?

1.3 Objectives

The following is the purpose of creating a reading-based English learning website as the preparation of the final project, which produces and applies online English learning:

1. To explain the process of creating a reading section website for TOEFL preparation.
2. Analyzing the stakeholder feedback on the use of the website as a medium for English practice and learning.

1.4 Significance

The significance of the study consists of a few key points of both theoretical and practical contributions in creating the English learning medium. The implementation of the English learning medium in order to enrich the educational and literature practices through accessible learning tools, which consists of three main parts as follows:

1.4.1 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

The theoretical and practical contributions in this subchapter are the theoretical application of research in the development of CEFR-based English learning media, providing real insights and experiences to the author and future researchers in the design of learning products.

1. Expanding the author's knowledge and competence in designing website-based learning media.
2. Provide real experience in applying language learning theory to website products.
3. Sharpen analytical skills in identifying basic English learning needs.

1.4.2 For English Learners

As a student, this website's learning products can provide benefits and serve as a tool for interactive and easily accessible independent learning.

1. Provide alternative learning media that can be accessed anytime and anywhere.
2. Facilitate understanding of reading material through the presentation of questions tailored to the A2 ability level.
3. Increase learning motivation through an interactive and not monotonous display.

1.4.3 Academic purposes

The academic purpose of this research aims to contribute to and inspire the further research and development of an English learning website.

1. Provide new references in the development of digital-based English learning media.
2. To be taken into consideration for CEFR-based curriculum development.
3. Open opportunities for further research on the effectiveness of digital media in English language learning.

1.5 Output

The output of this final project writing is a website-based digital product that functions to learn and practice English reading comprehension, especially focusing on reading comprehension tests, with the function and purpose of learning and testing students' abilities with English level A2 according to CEFR. The website contains English learning and practice for reading comprehension, which consists of 5 sets of practice tests with a total of 20 questions in practices 1-3 and 10 questions in practices 4 and 5. And 3 sets of test preparation containing 50 questions in each set. The output of this final project writing can be accessed as a website at the link <http://esphrasso.com> via the internet.