



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Problem

In the digital era, online gaming has transcended its role as mere entertainment, evolving into a dynamic platform for informal language learning across reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills. *Honkai Star Rail*, a narrative-driven role-playing game (RPG), exemplifies this shift, as its immersive storyline and quest systems necessitate frequent interaction with English-language dialogues (reading), in-game audio cues (listening), and collaborative discussions in platforms like the Perserikatan Firefly WhatsApp group (speaking/writing). This multifaceted engagement raises a critical question: how does online game, combined with digital social interaction, shape English reading interest while simultaneously engaging other language skills ?

Reading interest remains a cornerstone of academic and professional success, yet many learners struggle due to limited exposure to authentic materials beyond formal education (Grabe & Stoller, 2020:22). *Honkai Star Rail* addresses this gap by embedding rich textual input such as quest descriptions and character dialogues into gameplay, requiring players to decode, infer, and analyze written content to progress. Simultaneously, the game's voice-acted narratives and environmental audio provide incidental listening practice, exposing players to native pronunciation and intonation. These interactions align with Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which posits that



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language acquisition thrives on meaningful, context-rich exposure (Krashen, 2012:15) cited in (Nation, 2020:30).

The Perserikatan Firefly WhatsApp group further amplifies this learning ecosystem. Members engage in hybrid English-Bahasa discussions, debating strategies, deciphering lore, and sharing gameplay experiences. These interactions foster speaking and writing skills as participants articulate complex ideas, negotiate meanings, and co-construct knowledge practices mirroring Vygotsky's social learning theory, where peer dialogue scaffolds (Vygotsky, 1978) cited in (Duke & Cartwright, 2021:S30). For instance, explaining a quest's objectives in writing or clarifying plot twists via voice messages reinforces both productive (speaking/writing) and receptive (reading/listening) skills.

However, existing research disproportionately focuses on isolated skills, neglecting their synergistic potential. While studies confirm that RPGs like *Genshin Impact* improve inferential reading (Liang, 2022:1045) and vocabulary retention (Xu et al., 2021:80), they rarely account for how listening to in-game audio or discussing strategies in social groups enhances these outcomes. Similarly, research on digital communities (Thorne et al., 2021:810)

By investigating the Perserikatan Firefly group, this study seeks to unravel how *Honkai Star Rail*'s integration of reading within gameplay and social interaction collectively shapes English reading interest. The findings aim to advance holistic understanding of digital media's pedagogical potential,



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B. Identification of the Problem

1. Many people are exposed to English text in *Honkai Star Rail* but it is impact on reading skills is unclear.
2. Limited research on the effect of non-educational games on language acquisition.
3. Social interaction in WhatsApp groups may influence English reading abilities.
4. Lack of studies exploring the combination of gaming and digital communication in improving reading skills.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This study examines the relationship between the frequency of playing *Honkai Star Rail* and the interest to read in English. Although various factors that could affect reading skills, such as formal education and exposure to additional English materials, hold significance, the study highlights the influence of gaming and digital communication. The research is conducted among the members of the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group, and the results are tailored to this particular group, although they may possess wider implications. The study investigates the function of gaming and social interaction in English reading interest; however, it does not engage in an exploration of alternative gaming platforms or communication tools. While digital communication may exert a considerable influence, other social and



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psychological elements that might impact reading interest are not thoroughly examined.

D. Research Question

Is there any correlation between frequency of playing online game: *Honkai Star Rail* and english reading interest on the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group ?

E. Objective of the Research

The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between the frequency of engaging in *Honkai Star Rail* and the English reading interest of individuals within the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group.

F. Significance of the Research

This study holds significance in examining the correlation between the frequency of playing *Honkai Star Rail* and the English reading interest of members in the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group. By analyzing the extent to which exposure to in-game English texts influences reading interest, this research aims to provide empirical evidence on the potential educational benefits of gaming.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the field of language learning by offering insights into the role of digital games as an informal learning medium. Furthermore, the results may serve as a reference for educators and researchers in exploring alternative approaches to enhancing reading skills through game-based learning strategies.



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G. Definition of the Key Terms

1. Frequency of Playing Game Honkai: Star Rail

Frequency of playing refers to the regularity and duration with which individuals engage in a specific activity over a defined period. In gaming contexts, this is typically quantified as hours per day or week spent interacting with a game (Griffiths et al., 2017:310).

2. English Reading Interest

English reading interest describes a learner's genuine enthusiasm and motivation to read English texts, which encourages voluntary engagement and ongoing participation in reading activities. This concept is strongly associated with positive emotional responses to reading and the tendency to seek out English materials for personal enjoyment or knowledge, beyond classroom obligations (Wang & Guthrie, 2023:45).