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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Review of the Related Theories

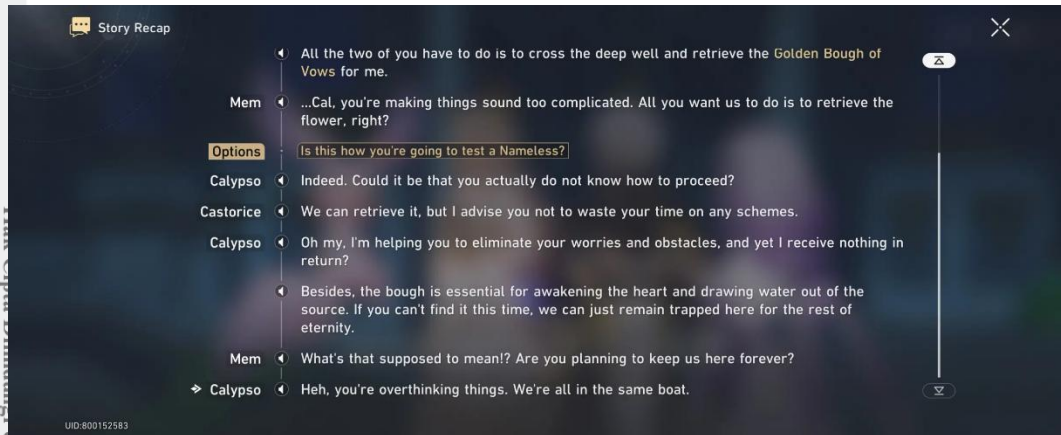
1. The Concept of Frequency Playing Honkai Star Rail

a. Definition of Frequency Playing Honkai Star Rail

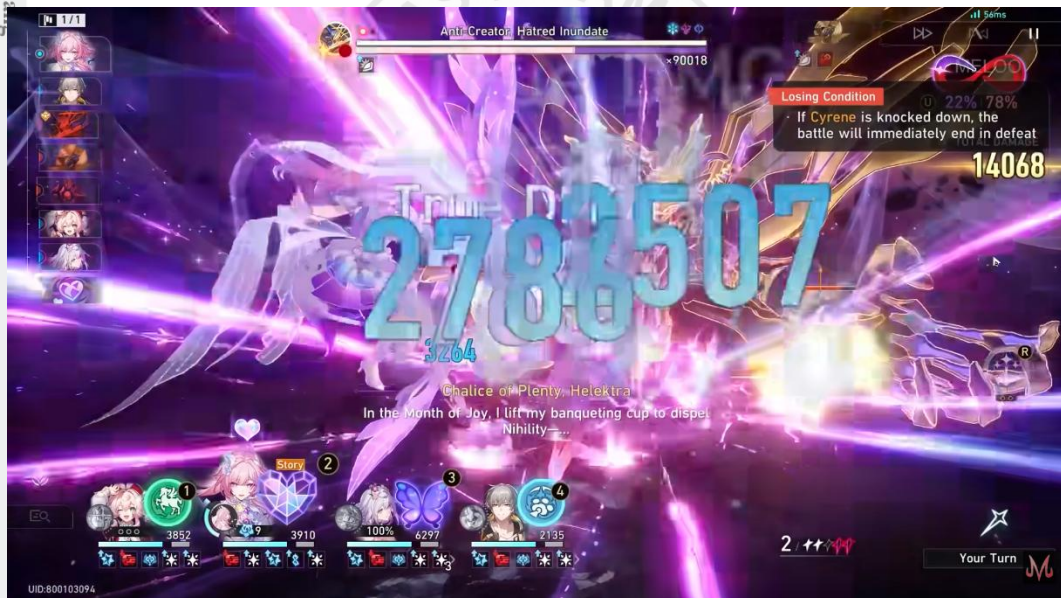
Online games, are digital entertainment platforms played via the internet, often featuring rich narratives, real-time interaction, and complex virtual worlds. These games extend beyond mere leisure, functioning as interactive environments where players engage with textual, auditory, and visual content often in a second language such as English. In educational and linguistic research, online games like role-playing games (RPGs) are increasingly recognized as informal but powerful contexts for language acquisition, as they immerse players in meaningful, repetitive, and goal-oriented communication.

Within this context, Frequency of playing refers to the regularity and duration of engagement with a specific activity over a defined period. In gaming research, this is operationalized as the number of hours per day, week, or month spent interacting with a game (Griffiths et al., 2017:310). Gentile et al. (2011:322) emphasize that gameplay frequency can significantly influence cognitive outcomes, such as problem-solving and language processing, particularly in narrative-driven games requiring sustained textual interaction.

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Story Dialogue between Trailblazer (Player) & Calypso (In-game Character)



In battle Dialogue Text, Climax of Amphoreus Arc.

Honkai Star Rail, a role-playing game (RPG) developed by HoYoverse, exemplifies this dynamic through its immersive, text-heavy design, featuring English-language dialogues, quest descriptions, and lore. Games of this nature, as Xu et al. (2023:80) note, provide "incidental linguistic input" through repetitive exposure to contextualized vocabulary and narrative structures, potentially fostering second language acquisition. In this study,



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frequency is measured via a self-reported questionnaire where participants detail their weekly gameplay hours, enabling an assessment of its correlation with reading interest. The game's reliance on textual interest for progression such as decoding character motivations or strategizing based on quest instructions positions frequent players in a unique environment for language exposure (Gee, 2020:92). Overall, The main reason for choosing this title is to emphasize the critical role of gameplay frequency as a measurable factor influencing language learning outcomes, specifically english reading interest within the context of playing *Honkai Star Rail*.

b. Advantages of Playing Honkai Star Rail Online Game in Relation to Enhancing Reading Interest

Regular interaction with Honkai Star Rail offers several benefits for English reading development, supported by contemporary research on gaming and language acquisition. The game immerses players in engaging English narratives and dialogues, providing meaningful context that enhances vocabulary acquisition and reading interest. According to Xu et al. (2023:80), frequent exposure to authentic, context-rich texts within games like Honkai Star Rail significantly improves incidental vocabulary learning and sustains reading motivation. This intrinsic motivation encourages players :

1) Enhanced Exposure to Contextualized Language Input

Frequent gameplay immerses players in authentic English-language content, including dialogues, quest descriptions, and narrative arcs. This



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exposure aligns with Krashen's (2012:15), as cited in (Nation, 2020:30) concept of comprehensible input, where repeated encounters with meaningful, context-rich texts reinforce vocabulary retention.

2) Context-Driven Lexical Development

The game's narrative framework embeds specialized terms (e.g., "Aeons," "Pathstrider") within situational contexts, enabling players to infer meanings without explicit instruction. Nation (2020:45) emphasizes that such incidental learning promotes deeper lexical retention compared to rote memorization, as semantic cues in gameplay scaffold understanding. For instance, encountering the term "Aeon" across multiple quests each time framed by distinct narrative scenarios allows players to gradually construct a nuanced understanding of its role as a cosmic entity governing abstract concepts.

3) Strengthened Cognitive and Analytical Skills

Honkai Star Rail requires players to analyze complex narratives, solve text-based puzzles, and strategize using quest instructions. These tasks cultivate critical reading skills, such as inferencing and synthesizing plot details, which Grabe and Stoller (2020:89) identify as essential for academic literacy.

4) Intrinsic Motivation for Sustained Engagement



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The game's immersive design combining compelling storylines and interactive mechanics fosters intrinsic motivation, driving players to engage persistently with English texts. Ryan and Deci's (2017:254) self-determination theory underscores how such motivation enhances long-term language retention, contrasting with extrinsically driven learning methods.

5) Collaborative Learning via Social Platforms

The *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group amplifies these benefits by enabling players to discuss lore, decode ambiguous texts, and share strategies in English. Thorne et al. (2021:810) argue that such peer-mediated dialogue reinforces interest, while Liang's (2022:1045) study of gaming WhatsApp groups highlights how collaborative tasks (e.g., interpreting cryptic quests) enhance critical literacy.

c. Indicators Frequency of Playing Honkai Star Rail

The frequency of playing *Honkai Star Rail* is operationalized through a multidimensional framework grounded in gaming engagement and second language acquisition (SLA) research. Drawing on Gentile et al.'s (2011:322) longitudinal studies on behavioral patterns in gaming, this framework identifies key indicators that measure gameplay habits and their implications for English reading development:

1. Regularity and Duration of Gameplay Sessions



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- a) Daily/Weekly Playtime: Total hours spent playing per day or week serves as a foundational metric. For example, players engaging ≥ 10 hours weekly encounter repetitive vocabulary (e.g., “Stellaron,” “Pathstrider”).
- b) Consistency Over Time: Sustained engagement over months reflects habitual gameplay, creating a structured language-learning environment.
2. Intensity of In-Game Interaction
 - a) Session Length: Extended sessions (>60 minutes) correlate with deeper cognitive immersion.
 - b) Textual Engagement: Frequency of reading in-game texts (e.g., item descriptions, quest logs) determines language exposure depth.
3. Contextual and Social Integration
 - a) Cross-Platform Engagement: Use of supplementary resources (e.g., wikis, forums) to decode game lore extends language exposure.
 - b) Social Discourse Frequency: Active participation in the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group reinforces retention, as explaining game mechanics in English mirrors academic summarization.
4. Cognitive and Behavioral Outcomes
 - a) Vocabulary Transferability: Adoption of game-specific terms (e.g., “Aeons”) into non-gaming contexts reflects lexical internalization.
 - b) Motivational Persistence: Goal-driven gameplay (e.g., unlocking lore) fuels intrinsic motivation.



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2. The Concept of Reading Interest

a. Definition of Reading Interest

Reading interest is a multifaceted construct that reflects an individual's intrinsic motivation, emotional engagement, and sustained willingness to interact with written texts. It goes beyond simply liking to read; rather, it involves a genuine curiosity, enjoyment, and value placed on reading, which in turn drives voluntary and frequent engagement with a variety of texts. According to Schiefele et al. (2016:30), reading interest is shaped by personal relevance, positive reading experiences, and the perceived usefulness of reading in everyday life. This interest not only encourages readers to select texts that align with their preferences but also sustains their attention and effort even when faced with challenging material.

Guthrie et al. (2019:18) highlight that students with high reading interest are more likely to employ deep comprehension strategies, such as making connections, asking questions, and reflecting on meaning, which contributes to greater reading achievement and academic success. Furthermore, reading interest is influenced by both individual and contextual factors, including self-efficacy, access to engaging materials, and supportive social environments. In educational settings, fostering reading interest is essential for cultivating lifelong literacy habits, as it motivates learners to explore diverse genres, develop critical thinking skills, and participate actively in knowledge-building communities. Ultimately, reading interest serves as a driving force



that not only enhances reading proficiency but also enriches personal growth and intellectual development.

b. The Principle of Reading Interest

The development of reading skills is guided by a set of interdisciplinary principles rooted in cognitive psychology, sociocultural theory, and pedagogical research. Drawing on contemporary scholarship, the following principles outline foundational approaches to fostering reading proficiency :

- 1) Effective reading instruction must balance *word recognition* (decoding) with *language interest* (Duke & Cartwright, 2021:S30). Known as the "Active View of Reading," this principle emphasizes that skilled readers simultaneously process phonological, syntactic, and semantic cues to construct meaning (Duke & Cartwright, 2021:S32).
- 2) Vocabulary development thrives when learners encounter words in meaningful contexts rather than through isolated memorization. As Nation (2020:45) argues, extensive reading in authentic texts such as narrative-driven games provides repeated exposure to lexical items, enabling incidental learning through semantic inference.
- 3) Reading fluency is cultivated through repeated practice to achieve automaticity in decoding, allowing cognitive resources to shift toward higher-order comprehension (Rasinski et al., 2020:112). Prosodic reading marked by appropriate pacing, intonation, and phrasing further enhances text engagement (Rasinski et al., 2020:115).



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- 4) Readers must be taught to interrogate texts for implicit biases, rhetorical strategies, and sociocultural assumptions. Luke and Freebody (2021:70) assert that critical literacy empowers learners to "read *against* the text," questioning dominant narratives and fostering analytical thinking.
- 5) Proficient readers employ metacognitive strategies such as self-questioning, summarizing, and predicting to monitor comprehension and resolve ambiguities (Afflerbach, 2022:41). For instance, pausing to paraphrase complex sentences improves retention and coherence (Grabe & Stoller, 2020:89).
- 6) Reading motivation is sustained when learners engage with texts that align with their interests or goals. As Grabe and Stoller (2020:22) note, "purpose-driven reading" in contexts like gaming narratives or digital forums enhances persistence and depth of engagement.
- 7) Explicit instruction in text structures (e.g., cause-effect, compare-contrast) and genre conventions equips learners to navigate diverse reading materials. Duke and Pearson (2020:34) highlight that modeling and guided practice are critical for transferring skills to independent reading.
- 8) Instruction must adapt to learners' linguistic backgrounds, cognitive profiles, and literacy levels. Snow (2022:18) underscores the need for "differentiated scaffolding," such as bilingual glossaries or adjusted text complexity, to address individual needs.



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9) In digital-age reading, proficiency extends beyond print texts to include visual, auditory, and hyperlinked elements. Leu et al. (2023:105) posit that multimodal literacy such as interpreting infographics or navigating hypertext is essential for modern information processing.

10) Reading is inherently social, shaped by discourse communities and collaborative interactions. Gee (2020:92) observes that participation in affinity spaces such as gaming forums or WhatsApp groups reinforces interest through peer dialogue and shared inquiry.

c. The Difficulties in Reading

Reading while critical for academic and societal participation, is often hindered by a constellation of cognitive, linguistic, and contextual barriers. As Duke and Cartwright (2021:S30) note, “reading difficulties rarely stem from a single deficit but emerge from the interplay of decoding inefficiencies, comprehension gaps, and motivational constraints, many factors make reading difficult and these areas are :

- 1) *Decoding and Phonological Processing Deficits*, Struggling readers frequently lack the phonological awareness necessary to map graphemes to phonemes, impeding word recognition. Ehri (2020:15) emphasizes that “without automatic decoding, cognitive resources are diverted from comprehension to laborious word-solving,” a phenomenon termed the *bottleneck effect*.
- 2) *Limited Vocabulary Depth*, Insufficient lexical knowledge restricts inferential comprehension and contextual analysis. Nation (2020:45) observes that



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learners with “superficial vocabulary breadth” struggle to deduce meanings from context, particularly in complex texts like *Honkai Star Rail*’s lore-rich narratives.

- 3) *Inadequate Background Knowledge*, Comprehension relies on the integration of prior knowledge with textual content. Grabe and Stoller (2020:22) argue that “readers from disadvantaged backgrounds often face a *knowledge gap*, limiting their ability to make schema-based inferences in unfamiliar domains.”
- 4) *Poor Metacognitive Strategy Use*, Struggling readers often fail to self-monitor comprehension or employ repair strategies. Afflerbach (2022:41) notes that “inexperienced readers rarely question inconsistencies or re-read ambiguous passages, leading to fragmented mental models.
- 5) *Critical Literacy Barriers*, Many learners lack the analytical tools to deconstruct texts for bias or rhetorical intent. As Luke and Freebody (2021:70) assert, “uncritical readers risk internalizing dominant ideologies without interrogating their sociohistorical roots.”
- 6) *Digital Literacy Demands*, Navigating hypertext, evaluating online sources, and synthesizing multimodal content pose unique challenges. Leu et al. (2023:105) warn that “digital-native students often overestimate their competence, mistaking skimming for deep comprehension.”
- 7) *Motivational and Socioeconomic Factors*, Socioeconomic disparities in access to literacy-rich environments exacerbate reading gaps. Duke and Cartwright



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(2021:S32) highlight that “students from low-resource households are 3x less likely to engage in leisure reading,” perpetuating cycles of underachievement.

In addition, Instructional practices often compound these challenges. For instance, Rasinski et al. (2020:112) critique “overreliance on standardized tests,” which prioritize speed over depth, sidelining critical and metacognitive skill development. Similarly, curricula that neglect genre diversity such as excluding multimodal or culturally relevant texts fail to prepare learners for real-world reading demands Grabe & Stoller, (2020:89).

d. Indicators of Reading Interest

Crow (2014:3) identifies four essential dimensions that shape a person’s reading interest: attention, time use, motivation, and emotion. Attention, in this context, refers to the focused mental engagement that a reader directs toward a specific text or set of reading materials. When an individual is truly attentive, their cognitive resources and mental energy are concentrated almost exclusively on the act of reading, allowing them to immerse themselves fully in the material.

This process involves an active filtering of external stimuli, where the reader selectively prioritizes the information from the text over other competing distractions. Such deep attention is not merely a passive state, but a deliberate and dynamic allocation of awareness, which is fundamental for meaningful reading experiences.

B. Review of Related Findings



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In formulating this study, the researcher examined prior scholarship exploring the intersection of digital gaming, language acquisition, and reading proficiency, with a focus on recent empirical findings :

The first research conducted by Xu et al. (2021) at the University of Hong Kong and published in *Language Learning & Technology*, titled “*Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition in Narrative-Driven RPGs: A Mixed-Methods Analysis*,” investigated how role-playing games (RPGs) facilitate second language (L2) vocabulary retention. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers tracked 120 intermediate English learners over 12 weeks as they engaged with *Genshin Impact*, a text-rich RPG. Data were collected through pre-test and post-tests measuring vocabulary gains, gameplay logs, and semi-structured interviews. Results revealed a 34% increase in target vocabulary retention among frequent players (≥ 8 hours/week), compared to 12% among low-frequency players (< 3 hours/week). Qualitative data highlighted that narrative immersion and repetitive contextual exposure were critical drivers of incidental learning. This study underscores the potential of narrative-driven games like *Honkai Star Rail* to enhance lexical acquisition through sustained engagement.

Second study by Reinhardt and Sykes (2020) from the University of Arizona, published in *ReCALL*, titled “*Digital Game-Enhanced Reading Comprehension: A Quasi-Experimental Study*,” explored how integrating game-based texts into curricula impacts L2 reading skills. The quasi-experimental design involved 200 university students divided into control



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(traditional instruction) and experimental (game-integrated) groups. The experimental group completed quests in *The Witcher 3*, analyzing in-game texts for comprehension tasks. Post-intervention assessments showed a 22% higher improvement in inferential comprehension scores among the experimental group, with significant gains in synthesizing multimodal texts (e.g., dialogue, journals, maps). The authors argue that game narratives provide scaffolded, context-rich input, aligning with Krashen's (1982) comprehensible input hypothesis. These findings suggest that RPGs like *Honkai Star Rail* could similarly enhance higher-order reading skills through immersive storytelling.

Third research conducted by Liang (2022) at National Taiwan Normal University, published in *Computers & Education*, titled "*Collaborative Learning in Gaming Affinity Spaces: A Case Study of WhatsApp Groups*," analyzed how social platforms mediate language development. Through action research involving 50 participants in a *Genshin Impact* WhatsApp group, Liang collected chat logs, reading comprehension tests, and reflective journals over six months. Findings indicated that members who actively discussed game lore in English demonstrated a 28% improvement in reading proficiency compared to passive participants. Notably, collaborative tasks such as decoding cryptic quest instructions correlated with enhanced critical literacy, as learners negotiated meanings and debated textual ambiguities. This highlights the synergistic potential of combining gameplay with social interaction, as seen in the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group, to reinforce reading skills.

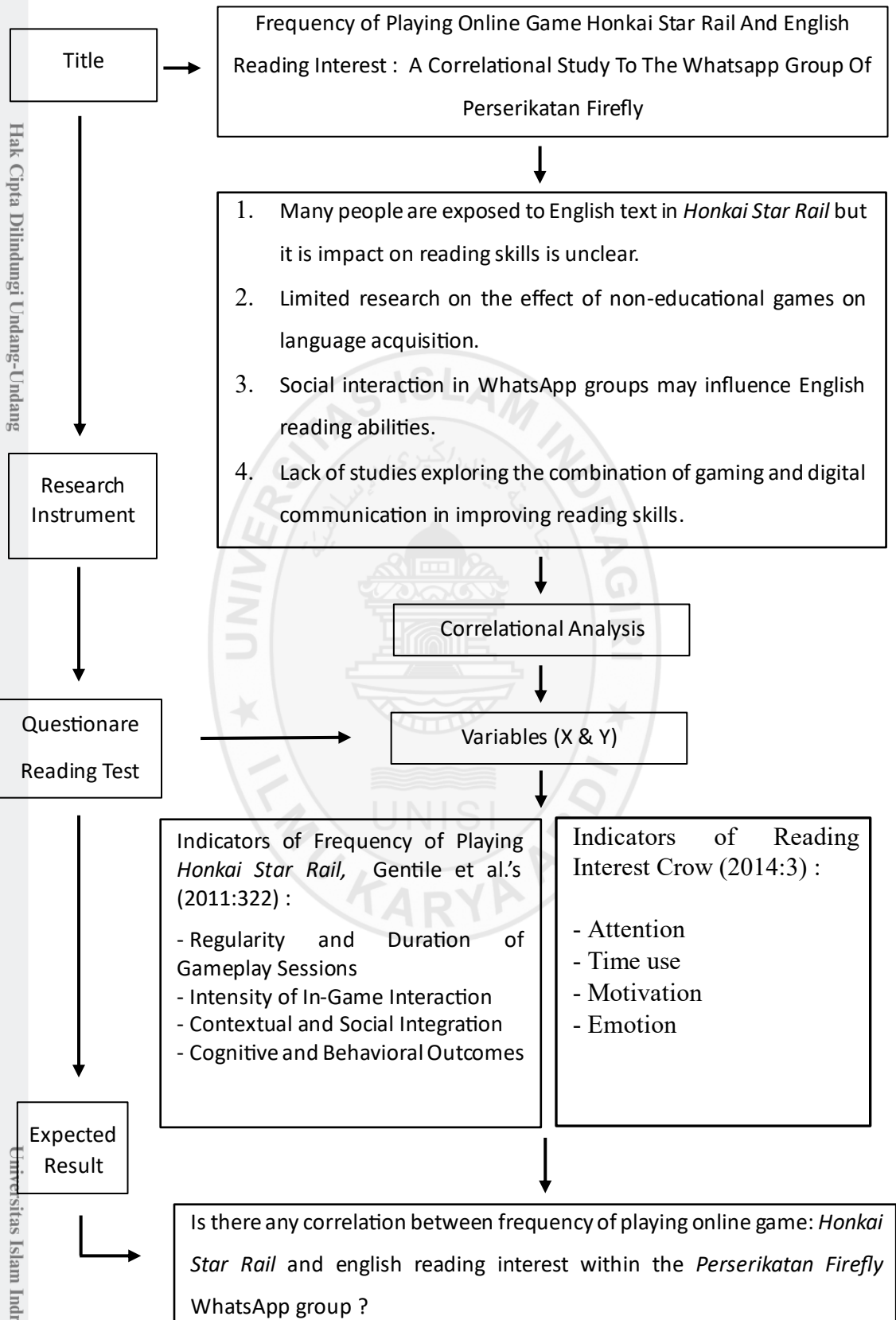


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Fourth research conducted by Rahmawati et al. (2021) at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, published in *TEFLIN Journal*, titled “WhatsApp Groups as Digital Affinity Spaces for Language Practice,” explored how social platforms mediate English skill development. Through action research involving 45 vocational students in Bandung, the authors analyzed chat logs, speaking tests, and reflective surveys over six months. Findings indicated that students who actively participated in English-dominated WhatsApp discussions improved their reading comprehension by 18%, as they decoded peer-generated texts and collaboratively resolved ambiguities. Notably, 52% of participants linked their vocabulary growth to game-related discussions, such as explaining *Mobile Legends* strategies in English. This aligns with Vygotsky’s social learning theory, emphasizing peer scaffolding as a driver of literacy (Vygotsky, 1978:86) cited in Rahmawati et al., (2021:45).



C. Conceptual Framework





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D. Assumption and Hypothesis of the Research

1. Assumption

This study assumes that frequent engagement with *Honkai Star Rail* correlates with improved English reading interest due to consistent exposure to in-game English narratives, dialogues, and quest descriptions.

Additionally, active participation in the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group is presumed to amplify this relationship by fostering collaborative discussions and peer-mediated learning, where members decode complex texts and share interpretations.

Finally, the study posits that players who regularly interact with both the game and the group will demonstrate enhanced critical literacy skills, such as analyzing implicit themes and synthesizing multimodal content (e.g., combining visual cues with written lore). These assumptions align with theories of incidental language acquisition and social learning, which emphasize contextual exposure and community interaction as catalysts for skill development.



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2. Hypotheses

The researcher formulated two hypotheses to address the research questions :

- a. H_0 : There is no significant correlation between the frequency of playing *Honkai Star Rail* and English reading interest among members of the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group.
- b. H_a : There is a significant correlation between the frequency of playing *Honkai Star Rail* and English reading interest among members of the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group.