

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

The appropriate use of ICT media will enhance the effectiveness of teaching English. According to Namaziandost & Nasri (2019), the readiness of EFL students to integrate social media will encourage global understanding and broaden their perspectives. In addition, Sabiri (2020) shows that integrating ICT with constructive learning significantly improves EFL learning outcomes. One of the results of learning the language is an increase in the ability to speak both formal and informal. However, speaking skills are considered one of the most difficult skills because various preparations must be prepared, including vocabulary, word structure, and content (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Therefore, choosing the appropriate ICT as learning media, such as Webtoons, is needed to improve speaking skills.

Webtoon is an acronym for cartoon website, where the broad meaning of Webtoon is a collection of images published online. According to Berlian et al. (2021), Naver released the LINE Webtoon in South Korea in 2004. Webtoon is also known as a sub-genre of manhwa but is published differently. Manhwa is published physically in magazines or books, while Webtoon is published through internet media, usually on comic hosting sites. The Webtoon was officially launched in Indonesia in April 2015. Since its debut, LINE Webtoon has received many great responses. The number of LINE Webtoon users actively using this application has reached 6 million in Indonesia, making it the country with the most active users compared to other countries.

The data shows the popularity of Webtoons in Indonesia as an entertainment application. However, recently many of them have begun to realize the potential of Webtoons in the world of education, including as a learning medium (Wulandari et al., 2019). Webtoon as a learning medium is only seen from its strength or potential. There are still some users

whose implementation methods need to be aligned. The use of Webtoons with a divergent focus and methodology negatively impacts the results afterward. Therefore, effective self-control and time management are needed as well as consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of using the Webtoon itself so that the use of the Webtoon is more effective.

Webtoon is an application that appeals to "fun reading" through several features. It is common for users to read continuously to fulfill their curiosity about stories. This addiction if done continuously with poor time management will have a negative impact (Winastiti, 2016). However, if this addiction is balanced with proper time control, it will certainly have a positive impact. One is increasing reading interest, critical thinking, and structured speaking skills. This has been explained by Yuliani & Purnama Sari (2022), who state that students consider Webtoons to help speak English in a fun, motivating, and interesting manner, as indicated by an increase in their test scores.

Webtoon provides a simpler and more useful English vocabulary. According to Novanti & Suprayogi (2021), students' vocabulary increases significantly through dialogue or pictures on Webtoon. They can read, write, and speak a wide range of words they have acquired. Students' perceptions of Webtoons for reading comprehension by Erya & Pustika (2021) showed that Webtoons motivate students to improve reading comprehension skills. Their reading comprehension helps them understand the story efficiently. Students can practice reading skills and create a picture of the conflict being told. In addition, Webtoon also influences students' writing abilities. Mazyatul Ulya & Hindun (2022) found that Webtoon comics improve writing skills. It indicates that Webtoon's efficiency in improving English language skills acceptable to students and teachers.

Speaking classes using Webtoon have been conducted and researched by several experts. Burhanuddin (2022) says that students learn new vocabulary easily and become

interested in English skills, especially speaking skills. The mixed method approach was used to find the effect of Webtoon on students' speaking skills. A total of 31 students showed improvement in speaking English. That means Webtoon exerts a considerable influence on training students to speak English. Students will be more enthusiastic about welcoming creative and innovative media that attract students' attention and interest in learning. This situation is obtained when integrating innovative media such as Webtoons into English classes.

Students need speaking preparation which can be obtained from Webtoon. Webtoon presents a variety of sentences, phrases, and vocabulary according to 21st-century development conditions. Students can use it as preparation for speaking. Yuliani & Sari (2022) examined the advantages of Webtoons in teaching English. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data at Pekanbaru. The results indicate that Webtoon improves students' speaking by creating interesting, fun, and motivating English classes. Mastery of vocabulary and grammar can increase self-confidence in shaping student readiness so that speaking skills increase optimally. The reason for this is the preparation of students who speak well.

Furthermore, student confidence is also an advantage of using Webtoons in speaking classes. Tifani & Regina (2020), discussed increasing students' confidence in speaking with storytelling techniques through Webtoons. 32 students from class X IPS 3 SMA Negeri 5 Pontianak Utara participated in this research. The results showed that students' speaking confidence increased by applying storytelling techniques through Webtoons. In addition, Pratiwi (2021) discusses the influence of Webtoons on the speaking skills of class IX students at Assafina Middle School Bandar Lampung for the 2020/2021 academic year. This research shows that $\text{Sig} = 0.037$ and $\alpha = 0.05$. This means that Webtoons are accepted as having a

significant influence on speaking ability.

Webtoon is a modern medium that focuses on reading and writing activities, as well as being used as an educational medium. Webtoons are animated digital comics published online. The vertical scrolling arrangement and the way the information is presented make it easier for the reader to understand the flow. Webtoons can create more interactions between users by commenting on stories through comments. Webtoon authors can use video and sound effects, flash animation, and music. Digital technologies, such as interactive speech and gestures, can engage webcomic viewers and arouse their interest. Readers can enjoy the storyline with sound effects and flash animations. Readers can also choose the genre of the story according to their needs and desires (Safrina, 2021).

Webtoon has become one of the most popular reading apps due to its popularity and accessibility. Readers tend to neglect their homework and spend most of their time reading different stories. However, some students use it to improve their language skills as part of their habit (Ramos & Prestoza, 2022). The younger generation enjoys Webtoons as a visual entertainment, while still benefiting from language indirectly. The use of Webtoons in education must be adapted to the content presented. Webtoon content is divided into two categories: picture or storyline and linguistics. Both must contain moral values and motivation. Meanwhile, instructional webcomics should not be vulgar but include graphics that convey information (Suryani & Kiptiyah, 2023).

To learn English speaking skills using Webtoon, it is worthwhile to consider some strengths and weaknesses. According to Lavy (2020), strength is the benefit, advantage, or positive impact that increases function and welfare. In contrast, weaknesses are limitations or deficiencies owned by the company. One example of Webtoons' strength is the improvement of student's English speaking skills (Pratiwi, 2021). However, one of the Webtoon

weaknesses is addiction which causes a decline in students' social values (Mahartika et al., 2023). Research on Webtoons in EFL is increasingly developed, especially for improving language skills using various approaches and methods. However, this research still discusses Webtoon's strengths rather than examining the weakness of Webtoons on students' speaking skills. Therefore, this research tries to find the strengths and weaknesses of webtoons as a medium for learning speaking.

1.2. Research Questions

1. What are the strengths of Webtoon as a medium for learning English speaking?
2. What are the weaknesses of integrating Webtoon into EFL-speaking skills at the English Language Education Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang, in the academic year 2020-2021?

1.3. Research Objectives

1. To know the strength of Webtoons as a medium for learning English-speaking
2. To know the weaknesses of integrating Webtoon-based pictorial literature into EFL-speaking skills at the English Language Education Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang, in the academic year 2020-2021.

1.4. Scope and Limitation

This research focuses on identifying Webtoons' strengths that support improving EFL students' speaking skills. Besides, this research focuses on the weaknesses of webtoons that hinder the improvement of EFL students' speaking and become students' vigilance in selecting the media to be used in learning. The limitation of this research is that the population and sample in this study only focused on fifth and seventh-semester students majoring in English, at Muhammadiyah University of Malang. The reason the researchers chose fifth and seventh-semester students was that the most extensive range of webtoon users

were aged 20 years or above. According to Lestari & Irwansyah (2020), LINE Webtoon is popular worldwide with 75% of its readers aged 20 years or above.

1.5. Research Significance

Every social media-based learning medium has potential to influence students towards their learning goals, especially speaking skills. Webtoon as social media has strengths and weaknesses in improving students' speaking skills. This strength can motivate students to integrate Webtoon as a learning medium. Meanwhile, the weaknesses of webtoons can be a signpost so that students are more careful in using webtoons as an educational medium. Weaknesses that are not balanced with caution will harm students. So it is necessary to know the root of the problem to improve students' speaking skills positively.

This research is expected to provide insight into the strengths and weaknesses of Webtoon on students' speaking abilities. This research is also expected to be useful for students interested in improving their speaking skills through Webtoon. Therefore, this research is expected to help students find appropriate learning strategies to overcome the weaknesses of webtoons. Besides, it is hoped that this research will be useful for teachers to find out the appropriate learning model to be implemented in students' speaking learning.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

- **Webtoon**

Webtoon is an acronym for a cartoon website, which, in its broadest sense, refers to an assortment of images posted online. According to Berlian et al. (2021), Naver released LINE Webtoon in South Korea as an entertainment medium in 2004. The formal debut of Webtoon took place in April 2015 in Indonesia. Webtoon is a popular online comic software that is widely used across the globe. Compared to other nations, Indonesia has the highest number of active LINE Webtoon users reaching 6 million people.

- **Strengths**

Based on Lavy (2020), strength provides individuals, groups, or institutions with a positive and beneficial perspective that can improve the functioning and well-being of individuals, groups, or institutions. Additionally, according to Prmatasari et al. (2022), the strength of media, especially literacy, increases flexibility in motivating students to implement a literacy culture.

- **Weaknesses**

Weakness is any form that hinders students' ability to fulfill their goals. It comes from limitations, challenges, or deficiencies related to resources and tools that create losses individually or in groups. According to Mahartika et al., (2023), electronic educational media (Non-Print Media) brings weaknesses in the form of a decline in social values in children.

