CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

English language competency has become crucial for people looking to succeed in a variety of social, academic, and professional contexts in today's globally connected world (Gomathi et al., 2023). Researchers and educators are looking at creative ways to address the growing need for English language proficiency.

In this modern era, humans have many interactive learning and playing facilities. One of effective way of learning for a person is by reading. Reading not only adds information from outside but is also able to hone a person's imagination abilities. Even in this era, many people play and can hone their academic skills, especially in the realm of foreign languages. With the existence of many social media platforms, we can interact with many people from various countries, who of course also speak many different foreign languages. In this case, English is one of the most commonly used languages in the international court and widely on social media.

Back to the academic field, reading is one the easiest learning activity and can be done at any time. Reading material can be found easily with today's technology, even though the material is so plentiful and very diverse. In this case, stories are one of the reading materials

that are a great interest to the wider community. Be it physical books, e-books, free short stories from the internet, or short stories written anonymously on internet platforms. This very diverse story of course also has many different genres, ranging from drama, romance, friendship, mystery, and many more.

The large affordability of access to reading materials does not rule out the possibility of the emergence of other methods of obtaining reading materials that suit one's interests. A strategy that has garnered significant interest is the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies into the teaching of English language (Gomathi et al., 2023). In this increasingly advanced era, people are starting to recognize the existence of multi-purpose Artificial Intelligence provider websites which are starting to become more commonly used by the public. This AI is mostly used as a fast search engine, which is able to answer almost various types of questions from various fields. This versatility of AI finally also reaches the user's most personal realm, namely their hobbies. With so many diverse AI providers on the web, they are also expanding to provide other services. One of them is AI to create stories, or carry out real-time roleplay with users. An example of web AI is Character AI, which provides a language model chatbot service that can produce human-like text responses and can participate in contextual conversations. Chatbots have been shown in numerous studies to be a useful tool for EFL students learning the language. Students can practice

conversing with a chatbot in a low-pressure, safe atmosphere, which is one of the key advantages (Young & Shishido, 2023).

So, what is the relationship between this AI progress and a person's reading? It all comes back to the main reason, namely a person's interest in reading and the influence of their imagination on language skills. Because learning a language is not only limited to academic domains and materials, reading stories created by AI websites can also influence their language capacity.

Reading and increasing knowledge is not limited to academics alone, because in reality humans are always learning throughout their lives, including by reading. In fact, the Qur'an also emphasizes that humans should read and learn new things that they did not previously know, as stated in surah Al-Alaq verses 1-5 which reads:

اِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ (١)
خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (٢)
اِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْاَكْرَمُ (٣)
الَّذِيْ عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (٤)
عَلَّمَ الْاِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (٥)

In the Al-Quran, Verses 1-5 of Surah Al-Alaq, Allah SWT gives the first commandment to humans, emphasizing the importance of reading. This commandment is not just about reading books; it also

includes reading anything that can increase human knowledge and understanding. To understand His greatness as reflected in the universe He created, Allah commanded humans to read. It also includes understanding the written word. People are asked to think about this amazing creation. So, the command to recite in the early verses of Surah Al-Alaq is to expand our knowledge, understand the greatness of Allah, investigate ourselves, and appreciate the wonders of the universe that He created.

The development of a person's English language skills and the relationship between the chatbot's ability to read and play characters is very important. One of the best ways to improve your language skills is to read regularly. This is especially true for improving context understanding, expanding vocabulary, and improving grammatical understanding. When someone reads different types of texts, they are exposed to different writing styles, word varieties, and sentence structures. All these things help improve one's language skills.

Active use of English when interacting with an AI chatbot includes asking questions, providing answers, or even talking about certain topics. Thus, one has the opportunity to use English in real-life situations, which is an important part of improving one's speaking and writing abilities. Additionally, playing with AI chatbot characters can help users understand the context and language used in everyday conversations. Thus, users can learn to use English correctly in various

communication contexts. Overall, participating in reading activities and playing with AI chatbot characters can complement each other in developing one's English language skills. Reading improves one's comprehension and understanding of the language, and playing with chatbots offers practice in the use of English in real communication situations.

B. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid confusion regarding the title and content of this research, the researcher will explain the meanings one by one:

1. **Exploring the Integration:** This relates to the methods used to build the character of an AI chatbot with the aim of improving English reading ability. This idea combines the narrative power of AI in human-machine interactions to improve engagement and learning outcomes (El Hefny et al., 2020). This method uses an AI chatbot character that can function as a virtual assistant and narrator. This AI character can tell stories to users, which can be fiction, fairy tales, or other narrative texts with interesting narrative techniques.
2. **Storytelling Techniques in AI Character Chatbots:** In AI character chatbots, storytelling techniques refer to the strategies and techniques used to insert AI characters into conversations with users. This involves applying traditional narrative elements such as plot, character, setting, and conflict to human-machine interactions. AI characters can be created with a variety of personalities to increase user engagement,

while good dialogue structure and appropriate use of language help maintain a consistent and engaging storyline. Characteristic AI chatbots can be an effective tool for telling stories in an engaging and interactive way, building a strong connection between the user and the technology.

3. **AI Character Chatbots:** There are four features that set chatbots apart: 1) They attempt to mimic human speech; 2) They used to communicate through written messages, which gave rise to the term "chat," but later developments made spoken interaction possible; 3) Unlike robots or similar devices, chatbots are disembodied agents; and 4) Unlike avatars, they do not represent a real person in a virtual environment (Nee et al., 2023). Artificial intelligence (AI) based chatbots function as virtual characters in human-machine interactions. They can understand and respond to user conversations in real-time using natural language processing and machine learning algorithms (Kuhail et al., 2023). The ability of AI character chatbots to change their personality and speaking style according to user preferences or conversation context is its main feature. To increase user engagement, these characters are often created to have interesting personalities, perhaps with specific traits or emotions. They can be used in a variety of situations, such as customer service and virtual assistants, as well as entertainment and language learning. Additionally, AI character chatbots continue to experience improvements in language understanding, contextual response, and technology integration such as facial and voice recognition. With ever-

expanding potential, AI chatbots are increasingly important in expanding the boundaries of human interaction with technology and offering more personalized and engaging user experiences.

4. **Reading Enrichment:** Reading enrichment involves various activities and resources designed to broaden and enhance a learner's reading experience beyond what is typically covered in a standard curriculum (Gunning, 2014). Its main goal is to encourage deeper comprehension, expand vocabulary, and foster critical thinking skills by exposing learners to diverse texts, genres, and themes. Reading enrichment can include interactive discussions, supplementary readings, creative projects, or multimedia content that make reading more engaging and meaningful. By providing these opportunities, reading enrichment helps learners develop a genuine love for reading and the confidence to interpret and analyze texts more thoughtfully.

C. Research Questions

The main questions to be addressed in this research are:

1. What story elements are found in the narratives of C.AI?
2. How do the C.AI chatbots operate within the story elements throughout the interaction?

D. Research Objectives

Examining how AI integrated stories works on a deeper level by examines these objectives:

1. To analyze story elements such as plot, characters, setting and conflict contained in C.AI.
2. To know how the chatbots work within the story elements in C.AI.

E. Research Significance

The researcher concludes the significance of this into 4 major point:

1. This study exhibits how interactive and captivating storytelling from C.AI chatbots might enhance students' educational experiences. Features like character interactions and decision-making help students hone their critical thinking and narrative comprehension skills. Furthermore, the chatbot's encouraging, nonjudgmental atmosphere promotes confidence in language and reading skills.
2. The researcher also wants to highlight how C.AI chatbots can provide educators with innovative materials that help them better teach language skills, narrative structure, and storytelling techniques. Because these resources can be customized to meet the requirements of specific learners, educators can more easily close the reading gap and provide interesting instruction to students with a range of skill levels.
3. This study shows how C.AI chatbots facilitate cross-cultural conversation without the need for formal language learning by overcoming conventional language obstacles. They are accessible to people with different linguistic and educational backgrounds since they may offer personalized and interactive learning experiences.

4. Beyond education, C.AI chatbots may find use in media and entertainment, where they can provide individualized, interactive narrative experiences. This research enhances both technology innovation and the human experience of narratives by advancing the creation of AI tools that closely resemble human storytelling.