

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's digital era, proficiency in English has become increasingly essential. As globalization continues to expand and digital platforms play a greater role in communication and information exchange, English proficiency provides access to a broader range of global knowledge while creating more opportunities in education, careers, and business (Ahmada et al., 2023). English is acknowledged as the predominant language in a number of domains, including education, commerce, trade, research, law, tourism, international relations, healthcare, and technology, in addition to being the primary language used on the internet (Kurka, 2022). Consequently, individuals who possess strong English Language Skills are more likely to thrive in today's digitally connected world (Karsim, Ikram Yakin, Pramana Saputra, 2023).

The widespread adoption of information and communication technology has brought major changes to English language learning practices. Digital transformation has reshaped the way people learn, communicate, and access information (Mahmudah & Paramita, 2023). Rather than relying solely on conventional classroom instruction, English learning has increasingly incorporated technology-based methods such as online learning platforms, mobile applications, interactive videos, and social media to support authentic language practice (Renita et al., 2022). This transformation has not only affected the technical aspects of delivering learning materials but has also shifted the learning paradigm from teacher-centered to learner-centered,

where students have greater control over the time, place, and pace of their learning (Auzi & Saragi, 2023). In addition, easy access to various English-language learning resources worldwide broadens students' learning horizons and enables more contextual and meaningful learning (Bong & Firmansyah, 2023).

One of the main groups affected by changes in the digital era is students, who exhibit unique characteristics in responding to rapid technological and informational developments. Students today are known for their fluency in using digital technology and their ability to adapt quickly to modern changes, especially because they have grown up surrounded by digital devices and online environments (Zaskia dkk., 2025). They have continuous access to gadgets, digital media, and various online learning environments that shape their learning preferences and behavior (Sari, 2021). These conditions influence how students process information, communicate, and participate in academic activities. Their characteristics, which are closely linked to technological advancements, have caused noticeable shifts in learning patterns and lifestyle trends compared to previous generations, such as a preference for fast information, interactive learning, and technology-assisted tasks (Husaeni & Haristiani, 2025).

English Language Skills are becoming increasingly important for students amidst the increasing use of digital media. As English continues to become a global language, it is important to equip students with effective English Language Skills to thrive in a highly interconnected and diverse society (Hilman dkk., 2023). In addition, since English is a global language

that all people need to acquire in order to compete in the educational and professional spheres, students in particular need to be proficient in the language (Putri dkk., 2022). With strong English Language Skills, students can access a wider range of information, communicate with people from different countries, and expand their educational and career opportunities (Warini dkk., 2021).

However, students still face numerous challenges in the digital era. Although digital technology provides many educational benefits, social media is often used to consume non-educational content, which may negatively affect students' learning habits (Semarang & Alfikri, 2023). Many students experience difficulty focusing due to the habit of consuming fast and short information, which affects their ability to analyze broader content. This condition is influenced by the brain's habit of receiving quick stimuli from social media, which can lead to challenges such as reduced concentration. Students also often face obstacles such as limited opportunities to practice English speaking and difficulty in understanding complex English materials (Rini dkk., 2021).

Students' Mindsets toward learning English are influenced by the perceived relevance, accessibility, and practical benefits of learning English in everyday life and future careers. They prefer learning that is flexible, contextual, and technology-based (Muhartini dkk., 2023). However, the motivation to learn English among students is not always high, especially if they feel there is no urgent need or immediate benefit (Dewi & Sulistyawati, 2024). Therefore, it is essential to gain a deeper understanding of students'

perspectives on learning English in today's digital era (Badara & Dinar, 2020).

The relationship between digital media and English language proficiency has been examined in a number of previous studies. According to their research, exposure to English via social media, instructional games, and online videos can improve speaking, listening, and vocabulary development. Nevertheless, most of these studies have primarily emphasized the role of digital media or learning tools rather than Students' Mindsets as factors influencing English language learning. In fact, mindset is considered a key factor that influences students' motivation, learning strategies, and overall success in acquiring language skills.

By investigating the relationship between Students' Mindsets and English Language Skills in the digital era, the present study aims to address this research gap. This study focuses on how students perceive the value of English Language Skills and how their mindset influences their approach to language learning, rather than merely the use of digital technology. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to investigate how students view learning English, including whether they think it is worthwhile, applicable, and helpful in their daily lives in the digital world.

It is anticipated that this study will help build more effective learning practices that align with the characteristics of today's digital generation by providing a better understanding of Students' Mindsets toward learning English. Additionally, it is believed that the results will be a helpful resource for curriculum authors, educators, and legislators when creating

English language learning strategies that better meet the demands and learning styles of modern students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background presented above, the research problem of this study is formulated as follows: Is there a significant relationship between Students' Mindsets and their English Language Skills in the digital era?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research problem presented above, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether there is a significant relationship between Students' Mindsets and their English Language Skills in the digital era.

1.4 Benefit of the Study

This study is expected to offer the following benefits:

1. For Students

To enhance students' understanding of the importance of developing a positive mindset toward learning English and encourage them to make effective use of digital media to improve their English Language Skills.

2. For Teachers and Educators

To provide teachers and educators with insights into students' learning characteristics and preferences, enabling them to develop English learning strategies that are more relevant, adaptable, and supported by digital technology.

3. For Curriculum Developers

To offer valuable considerations for developing an English curriculum that is aligned with students' needs and learning styles in the

digital era while promoting the effective integration of digital media into the teaching and learning process.

4. For Future Researchers

To serve as a reference and foundation for future research examining the relationship among psychological factors such as mindset, technological advancement, and English Language Skills in the digital era.

5. For Education Policy Makers:

To provide data and insights useful for formulating education policies that support the development of English language competence through approaches that align with the characteristics of students in the digital era.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study is limited to examining the relationship between Students' Mindsets and English Language Skills in the context of the digital era. The participants of this research consist of 88 active students from the English Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. A total sampling (saturated sampling) technique was employed because all members of the population who met the research criteria were included in the study. The variables examined are Students' Mindsets, which are classified into growth mindset and fixed mindset, as well as their English Language Skills, covering the four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

1.6 Hypothesis

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a statistically significant relationship between Students' Mindsets and their English Language Skills in the digital era.

H₀ (Null Hypothesis): There is no statistically significant relationship between Students' Mindsets and their English Language Skills in the digital era.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Students' Mindset According to Kraker-Pauw et al. (2022), Students' Mindset refers to how students perceive their own capacity for learning, specifically whether they believe intelligence is fixed or can be developed through continuous effort and effective learning strategies.

English Language Skills According to Raniadi & Firdaus Umar (2023), English Language Skills consist of four essential components: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills are regarded as the fundamental elements of English communication and are commonly used to assess an individual's level of language proficiency.

The Digital Era According to Zahro Rohmatin et al. (2024), the digital era is defined as a period in which technology is deeply integrated into learning processes, making digital tools an essential medium for accessing information, communication, and skill development.