DIGITALIZATION TOWARDS READING HABITS: HOW DO TODAY'S EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS READ?

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ABSTRACT

The simple availability and accessibility of online reading materials is perceived a benefit for reading culture, and at the same time, Internet services can be seen as a challenge to typical print reading. This study was designed to examine the pattern of todays' EFL university students on reading habits in the digital age and to examine the significant of internet on EFL reading habits. In order to have a broad overview of the current reading habits, a questionnaire was conducted among 36 fourth-year students of Universitas Islam Malang. Creswell's (2009) method was used to analyze the data. The findings showed that respondent enjoy online reading because internet and electronic devices create a perfect. Internet affects the respondent's reading, nowadays, many respondents are surfing the internet, doing more scrolling or non-linear reading, and and attempted to get the information they're needed. Beside, the students are still interesring in reading printed books.

Keywords: Digitalization, Reading Habits, University Students

INTRODUCTION

Reading is the best process to expand student's knowledge, writing patterns, linguistic competencies, and reading fluency that has been considered as a necessary skill to be mastered by numerous researchers (Allen, Cipielewski, & Stanovich, 1992; Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988; Huang, Capps, Blacklock, & Garza, 2014, p.

437). In addition, people who read will be belonging several good side effects such as skillful and experienced, have different point of views, and help them to encourage in case of mentality, behavior, academic environment, also in medical case, for example reducing stss and blood pressure (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2018, p. 149). According on Gallik (1999), Chen (2007), Mokhtari et al. (2009), and Huang et al. (2014) addressed that previous research mostly concerned on adolescents reading habits, but in the other hand still less exploration and inaccurate outcomes on university reading habits. Based on PISA 2015, OECD reading score of Indonesian students is 397, so it makes the ranking of Indonesian students' reading score on 62th of 72 countries. And, Indonesia's OECD score is still significantly stagnating from Thailand, 54th, this shows that Indonesia still has low reading interest. The total number of reading decreases immensely, and thus the ability to read is declining.

Currently, where things move, as is the issue in all fields, there seems to be a rapid technological evolution, digital assets and availability of information. It is now a fact that an individual who tries to keep his or her up to date with changes, and not a person who is just educated, can easily adjust to this transformation and be effective throughout any area. Loan (2011) revealed that "currently, Over 1.7 billion people of the world approximately 25.6 percent of global population have touched the internet, and all aspect of lifes have influenced, moreover people begin developing new tecnologies.

Reading becomes a compulsory for college students because many assignments make them read more. Ability to comprehend the literature text and interpret in a broader explaination are college students' reading level (Ely, 2001; Huang, Capps, Blacklock, & Garza, 2014:439). Furthermore, the important characteristic of the future candidates that differenciate between university youth and other youth groups are experienced, adminstator, and decision maker (Yazıcı, 2003; Erdem 2015:3984). A habit is an act that is done regularly, and sometimes it is done instinctively and automatical act that built from experince and life changes. The

reading habits are habits that have been done for a long time by humans in the context of needs or just for entertainment. College students in this information age have already been eased by availability of many kinds of reading resources. The fact that college students are able to obtain knowledge and experiences through numerous way is true, for example books, newspaper, magazine, e-book, online journal, social media, etc. Internet has broaden to the whole world rapidly in all sectors such as economics, politics, and education. In the area of education, the availability of knowledge and information resources take important role for students, teachers/instructors, and resarchers. To address the stated research void, this study is designed to examine what variables are correlated with the reading habits and preferences of university students in Malang and to analyse the effect of digitalization on how today's university students read.

METHOD

Research design refers to the technique of cohesively and coherently integrating the various elements of the research projects. Based on the most recent Creswell (2009) research design is guidelines and research procedures for comprehensive data collection and review methods. In this study, the researcher use qualitative approach and descriptive qualitative design. The data obtained from respondents in this study meaning that students are from fourth-year university students of Universitas Islam Malang in academic year of 2016/2017. The questionnaire for the use of smartphones for reading (Liu & Huang, 2016) was used to collect the data about respondents' online reading habits.

The data of this study will be in the form of conceptual analysis of the written content and also descriptive interpretation of information about students' believe, perception, motivation, benefit and difficulties in reading through digital online media. The data analysis will be using creswell's method of qualitative analysis that consist of data reduction to remove unnecessary data, interpretation and coding that convert raw data into comprehensible content that elevant with the problem and

purpose of the eseach, classification and grouping, also presentation of data and rinterpretation of the result.

The whole process of the construction of the study is formulation of research topic, background of the research and problem of the study, the background and problem will be decided by the background, related theory and previous study. The research framework is descriptive qualitative

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

In this research the researcher aims to examine the pattern of todays' EFL university students on reading habits in the digital age of university students in Malang and to analyse the significant of internet on EFL reading habits. The data were collected from 36 participants of fourth-year university students of English department from University of Islam Malang undergoing final project. The researcher describes the results of the preference of the respondents on the online reading, which shows that more than half of the sample enjoy online reading for some reason.

This finding is consistent with that of Akarsu and Dariyemez (2014:93) who found that "students attempted to switch to online reading". These results reflect those of Zasacka (2017:111) who also found that "respondents would prefer to use their gadgets to access information conveniently and efficiently". Furthermore, the impact of ICT has shown positive results on students' interest in online reading (Kumara and Kumar, 2018:78). The previous study claim that the influence of online reading might provide non-linear reading, instant access, and search to the sources, and the reading material not only text but also associated with pictures (Larhmaid, 2018:11).

This result may be explained by the fact that respondents tend to read online because it is conveniently available instantly. Besides, preferred it because it was affordable. Quick access and numerous reading materials are also widely available on the internet. Also, there is no need to bring books or other print media, only by bringing a smartphone or tablet, so, the respondents can read easily. This also accords with the

earlier observations, which showed that impact of the internet around university students has already been massive, the internet is simultaneously used by college students because of high-speed browsing, low cost, and enjoyable (Tanjung, Ridwan, & Gultom, 2017:149). Reading via electronic media provides reading content that is not available in print or written form. (Kuzmičová, Schilhab, & Burke, 2018).

It is evident from the findings that due to the small size of the text, some respondents are less comfortable reading online, and staring at a smartphone or laptop makes them dizzy. Besides, they cannot even put some notes or marks on the text. Also, the respondents claimed that various sources are not relevant or credible, and can consider hoaxes. The majority of the respondents read online for information and entertainment purposes, and still less in gaining knowledge respondents were more likely to read online for pleasure compared to reading to finding information for study purposes.

Internet also reduces university students' consistency reading, concentrations, and detailed information seeking (Loan, 2012:8). The Internet has changed students' literacy practices. Students' literacy attitudes have been changed since the popularity of the internet (Huang et al., 2014:454). Further with the development of communication and network technology, students have become inclined to read online only by sliding the cellphone screen and only by reading important points (Larhmaid, 2018:11). Consistent with the literature, this research found that participants who reported also found that greater number of students read online just to explore the point of reading materials, followed by reading until getting the information, and reading it in full.

Liu (2005:706) found that "the respondents did a lot of scanning while reading online because they just attempted to get the information they needed, and would read in more depth if they got what they were looking for". Larhmaid (2018:11) also found that "in the present age, the phenomenon of online reading is that many respondents are surfing the internet, doing more scrolling or non-linear reading, and less searching for keywords". The greater number of students tend to

read using scanning methods, as shown in Table 4. Whereas, there is an equivalent number of voters using intensive reading and previewing processes. Besides, a smaller amount of respondents enjoy reading with the skimming process. These results are in line with those of previous studies.

Respondents claimed that online reading motivates them to look for information related to their necessary and for pleasure. One unanticipated finding was that mood or self-motivation take a big role in reading online among respondents than other factors. In accordance with the present results, previous studies have demonstrated that the enthusiasm of EFL students would be an influential focus on developing sustainable English reading habits (Iftanti, 2012:161). This also accords with the earlier observations, which stated by Perrin (2016) that printed reading text is more highly regarded than digital reading text. Though online sources are popular among university students, the data showed that they frequently read textbooks and online sources (Tanjung, Ridwan, & Gultom, 2017:150).

The results of the study conducted by Larhmaid (2018:11) also showed that "undergraduate students (73.6 percent) use online sources instead of print sources to accommodate their educational and recreational reading needs". Loh & Sun (2018:2) claimed that "books remain a suitable alternative for respondents". However many people would prefer to invest their money in purchasing ICT services that would make available reading materials instead of print media stated by Mlay and Sabi (2019). Varga (2020:956) agreed that "people are not tending to purchase any books at all but the physical library is still needed". Also, universities must divert funds to develop ICT facilities and e-resources rather than buy books (Mlay & Sabi, 2019:47). Several researchers have different opinions about preferred media between digital format and print format. The findings show that the majority of students are more motivated and prefer printed reading text. For detailed information, see Table 5. This shows that the dimensions of time and place give different outcomes in this case.

In addition, entertainment is the first clicked on by the majority of the respondents, followed by art & humanities. Meanwhile, education is still in fourth

place. In line with Shen (2006:565), "the number of students accessing education as a first-click remains low among students". On the other hand, In accordance with the results of the study, see Table 5, the current study found that online news is content that EFL students frequently accessed. Meanwhile, journal articles are usually accessed lower than novels/stories. It can be inferred that the respondents have quite desire in extensive reading such us reading novel/ stories. This finding is consistent with that of Akarsu and Dariyemez (2014:91) who found that "the first content accessed by students when online is Facebook and online news". This means that they are reading online for a particular reason. This also accords with our earlier observations.

Discovering information about daily life trends became more necessary than exploring academic needs while participants were on the internet (Shen, 2006:565). Dilevko and Gottlieb (2002; Liu, 2006:584) found that "undergraduate students accustomed to reading online resources for accomplishing their assignments and papers". The Internet has been affecting the students' needs. Comparison of the findings with those of other studies confirms that most of the respondents use the internet to finish their school works compared to the respondent who surfing on the internet for seeking the latest knowledge related to their major, obtains reading sources, and for learning activities. And, they use the internet relatively diverse such as discuss their assignments via e-mail. In addition, the EFL university students read for different academic purposes, along with enjoyment, assignment, and development of their knowledge related to the course taken in the university.

Besides academic reasons, there are technical factors that make more convenient to read online, specifically search engine option. In this case, the search engine feature allows the respondents to quickly obtain the preferred reading material. In accordance with the present results, On the other hand, in reading online respondents use several applications and explore many websites. Numerous applications include Wattpad, Instagram, Webtoon, and Twitter were used by the majority of the respondents. Research on the first semester students of Koforidua

Polytechnic by Acheaw (2016:217) found that the existence of social media affected respondents reading habits. The similar result by Rafiq, Asim, Khan, and Arif (2019:62) demonstrated that the usage of social media tools on the majority of respondents affects their reading habits. Whereas, the websites accessed frequently by respondents while online or digital reading such as Elsvier, Google Book, Springer, ScienceDirect, and Researchgate. These results are in agreement with Ajayi, Shorunke, and Abodaye (2014) and Bala and Lal (2016) findings which showed that e-resouces like e-book and e-journal are oftenly accessed by the respondent. In conclusion, from the various apps and websites that have been mentioned above, it can be inferred that apps and websites for pleasure reading have a relationship with the content they normally read when they are on the internet. Meanwhile, websites and apps classified as open source library suggest that eighth semester students use them because of thesis requirements.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

As stated in the formulation of the problems in the previous chapter, this study aims at finding out the belief of todays' EFL university students on reading habits in the digital age. More than half of the participants enjoy online reading because internet and electronic devices create a perfect combination such as simplicity, portability, availability, and high-speed connection. The time spent on the internet has increased, based on previous study, the respondent often spent approximately 1-3 hours a day. However, the current study revealed that the respondents spent more than 4 hours a day. That most respondents read online every day and take less than 1 hour to 2 hours but they more likely read online for information and entertainment purposes, and still less in accessing education. For academic purposes, the respondents accustomed to reading online resources for accomplishing their assignments. Internet affects the respondent's reading. Further, many respondents are surfing the internet, doing more scrolling or non-linear reading (i.e. only by reading important points), and attempted to get the information they're needed. Mood or self-

motivation take a big role in reading online among respondents than other factors. Beside the popularity of online source, the majority of the students are more motivated and prefer printed reading text. From the conclusion, the researcher suggest that all lecturers should involve students with motivational encouragement to read not only in the educational context but also at a deeper level. The teachers need to offer suggestions for reading material outside the academic field, such as reading materials that can improve student's skill or personality and introduce authentic materials in the classroom. Students should make use of the internet development and electronic technologies to generate changes in students' reading habits as students are given the facility to access reading materials to enrich experience and knowledge. It is suggested for future researchers to develop this study into broader area involving participants from various majors and universities. And, conduct in depth study on students' perception about online reading.

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