

THE REALIZATION OF E-BOOKS FOR TEACHING AS REFLECTED BY EFL TEACHERS OF ISLAMIC JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL (MTs)

Nana Priajana and Luqman Baehaqi

IAIN Cirebon and STAIN Palangkaraya

yana_priajana@yahoo.com and luqman_baehaqi@yahoo.co.id

Abstract: This study was aimed at processing empirical data to know the realization e-book program in EFL teaching and learning process as reflected by English teachers of Islamic Junior High School (MTs) in Indonesia. It is a descriptive research of which the approach is a cross sectional survey. The result of this study was expected to be the basis for the government to re-evaluate the implementation of the national project of School Electronic Books (BSE). Based on the result of data analysis, the program of e-books should be revised as considering several factors affecting its insufficient use by the EFL teachers of MTs. The use of E-book in teaching and learning in Indonesia EFL classroom had been beyond the teachers' outlook. It revealed that e-book and its advantages were not well recognized by many teachers of MTs in Indonesia because of lack awareness of rapid growth of technology and information in this case the use of internet.

Keywords: e-book, teaching and learning, program, implementation.

Current Indonesian system of education has been developing to respond the rapid growth of technology and information. Through the advance progress of the technology, teaching and learning process recently run much easier inside and outside of school. Educators and students can benefit of the availability of technology-based media such as the use of internet that help them learn faster and dig knowledge deeper. A classic problem of the teaching and learning process in Indonesia is the shortage and availability of books used as key sources of knowledge. At the beginning of academic year, a student has to spend thousand to million rupiahs for new books of almost all subjects. In regard to recent economic standard of Indonesian people, the school needs seemingly are considered high costs.

Concerning to those problems, the Ministry of Education and Culture (KEMENDIK-

NAS) was triggered to launch a program called Buku Sekolah Elektronik (BSE) or e-books. This program has launched about 407 titles of printed text books which are officially standardized by Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan (BNSP) and have been eligible for teaching and learning under Decree of Minister of National Education of Indonesia (Permendiknas) No. 46 Year 2007, No. 12 Year 2008, No. 34 Year 2008, and No. 41 Year 2008 (Chandra, 2009).

This nationally-known program has provided teachers and students with free access to school-subject e-books for all levels of elementary to senior high school. The ministry managed purchasing copyright of several books from the writers and publishers (Supriyadi, Dedi. 2000). Thus, the government had the rights and authority to reproduce, store, and distribute the books in certain form. The rights also included uploading the books in

official government website in the form of electronic book or e-book and share them for the sake of teaching and learning. E-books provided in the official government website or other free e-book-provided websites can be accessed and freely downloaded.

An e-book (short for electronic book, also written e-book or e-book), also known as a digital book, is an e-text that forms the digital media equivalent of a conventional printed book, sometimes restricted with a digital rights management system (Erben, 2009). E-books are usually read on dedicated hardware devices known as *e-Readers* or *e-book devices*. Some personal computers and cell phones can also be used, especially to read documents in pdf format (Wikipedia, 2009). At present e-books become trends as newly information sources which might replace current printed forms in the future. In several developed countries reading the virtual books has been shifting the peoples' choice of reading habits, which is the consequence of the progressive development of the computer technology over the past few decades.

E-book contains cluster of text pages that are grouped together and stored in a different file format. The e-book can be stored in a computer as a word file .i.e. .doc file or pdf file which is the most commonly used format for e-books. To read e-book in a computer, certain softwares like Adobe Acrobat Reader, Foxit Reader, etc. are needed. By using those software the user can locate pages and find references more easily by only clicking to the desired spot in the text.

There are some reasons why e-book is more beneficial than using printed book according to James (2002). One main advantage is the digital content in e-book reduces the physical size of it, thus literally 1000 favorite books are easily brought in one hard copy either in pen drive or on a DVD. They can be easily carried out to anywhere. There won't be any wear and tear in e-books like normal paper books because of time factor. The following are some

of advantages using e-book, namely, a) once downloaded, e-book can be viewed whilst offline, b) e-book can be easily distributed to other users, c) unlike standalone documents, e-book can contain a variety of documents and files, all conveniently packaged in a single file, d) unlike paper-based books, e-book can be updated and can have a link to a website which contains the latest downloadable version of the book; f) the production cost of e-book is minimal and can be distributed in any quantity either gratis or priced; g) e-book can be compiled so as to disable printing, can be password protected; h) E-books are compact and are lot easier to share with others irrespective of distance .

However the use of e-book has limitations for the user as many e-book require reader to have a particular combination of software and hardware (Doctorow, 2004). Many e-book compiler programs produce books which can only be viewed on a PC / Windows platform, thus eliminating Apple Mac users. Some require a particular version of MS Internet Explorer to be installed (typically version 4 and upwards).

As a newer development, sometimes only the electronic version of a book is produced by the publisher. It is also possible to convert electronic book to a printed book by print on demand. However this is an exception as tradition dictates that a book be launched in the print format and later if the author wishes, an electronic version is also produced.

However, the government struggle against a lot of obstacles in implementing this program. After being officially launched in August 2008 e-books, insufficient teachers' knowledge of using the internet has become one potential threat (Tilaar, 2001). Teachers' perception on the use of e-books, the information are provided to answer the following questions; a) How is teacher's perspective of Islamic Junior High School (MTs) in Indonesia on the realization of e-book for EFL teaching and learning? What is e-book according

ables may influence the validity of questionnaires. The degree of importance of the topic of the questionnaire is main consideration. The response of those can be assumed to be more valid than the response of those who have known about the topic. The second issue is to ensure the anonymity of the respondents as their responses will be more truthful if their names are not exposed, especially if the items are sensitive or personal.

Reliability

It is impossible to repeat the questionnaire or the interview to the same respondents after while, or to give different questionnaire to the same respondent. Therefore, to respondent who have returned their questionnaires, the researcher come to them to have an interview and in that way the consistency of responses can also be checked. Each instrument consisted of 15 items. After being measured for their validity and reliability, some items were revised. Two researchers took parts in this research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysis of the questionnaire and interview responds, the definition of e-book should be sufficiently known by teachers. 22 respondents who are teachers (53,7 %), strongly agree with the opinion that urges them to know what e-book is while 14 respondents (34,1 %) agree that knowing the e-book is important. Here the importance of e-book that should be acknowledged by teachers are agreed by the majority of respondents.

The use of e-book to replace print book in EFL teaching and learning has been optimal. 22 respondents (26,8%) disagree with this statement and other 4 respondents (9,8%) even strongly disagree. The respond results indicates that number of teachers identify e-book as one of important supporting media but still can't change the position of printed book in class.

Searching for the website containing e-

books that is recommended by the government is easy. 16 Respondents (22,5%) agree with the opinion. Indeed, it is easy to find the website. The user simply clicks the search engines like Yahoo.com or Google.com or right away to type the website address. Yet, the respondents who are neutral are quite dominant (15 persons or % of all respondents). It can be concluded that there are still numbers of MTs teachers not accustomed to make use of the internet to search for intended information.

On the question about the effortless search of other websites that provide free e-books some facts are revealed. Majority of respondent (34.1%) disagree that searching of those websites is easy. 11 of them (26.8%) don't have idea or in neutral position toward the opinion while some respondents are in line with the opinion.

Downloading e-books in the internet is trouble-free. Number and variety of reply to this statement is almost similar to the previous one. They mostly disagree (35,9%) and only rest of them showed their agreement toward the statement. The position, after all, validates the previous statement that clearly reveals that many teachers are not yet acquainted with the internet so they think that downloading free e-book is a complicated task.

The program of E-book officially launched by the government is really helpful to afford low economic students to own books. 14 respondents (34,1%) are nonaligned to the estimation. Meanwhile two groups of respondents are split half between agreeing (11 respondents) and disagreeing (11 respondents) with the opinion. It shows that controversial issue still exists in this matter whether the program of e-book is really helpful for poor students or not in term of its economical benefit.

The program of e-book implemented in school has been splendid. However, most of respondents (35.9%) showed disagreement

about the opinion. Only less than a half respondents (20, 5%) agree that the program has been already well implemented. This fact illustrated how indifferent most MTs teachers are toward the program.

The above perception is validated by the following opinion on that the socialization of e-book by the government has been evident. Majority of the respondents (41%) disagree saying that the socialization of e-book program done by the government is unclear. Number of the neutral respondent about this matter reach 20,5% which is quite large compared to those who agree that the socialization has been well done already.

The program of e-book has been projected to lessen cost of print book. 11 respondents (26,8%) show strong agreement. The number of respondent were the same with those who were neutral. It means that e-book is considerably cheaper than print book

E-book is projected to replace the utilization of printed books to facilitate the process of teaching and learning of some subjects especially English. 15 respondents (36.6%) agree that it may help them if the facility supports.

Realization of e-book should take into account of supporting media and facilities such internet access, computer hardware and software, etc. Asked to respond about the problem, 20 respondents (48.8%) admit that the institution where they belong do not afford to provide the facility and infrastructure needed for the lack of budget allocated for this purpose. It clearly showed that, in general, the availability of facility to support the realization of e-book in school is still unfinished issue.

E-books on the EFL learning and teaching found many in the internet. It is agreed by 19 respondents (48,7%) of all participants in the research. 11 respondents (28,2%) even strongly agree with this fact. Some respondents, however, disagree with it. It means that actually many teachers have realized the huge availability of e-book in the internet. The fact

is true since hundreds of EFL websites provide free e-books for users.

The utilization of e-book among students in the respondent's classes has been adequate. 21 respondents (51,2%) disagree and 9 respondents (22 %) even strongly disagree the opinion. Those who disagree said that many of their students do not use e-book in the process of teaching and learning in classrooms. Those respond can be interpreted as that the e-book usage are still peculiar among students.

Concerning to teachers' enthusiasm on the use of e-book in their teaching, 20 respondent (48,8%) or the majority agree that the teacher's enthusiasm in their institution is still low. 13 respondent (31.7%) choose a neutral stance. Yet, small number of respondents agree that the enthusiasm is fairly fine. From this evidence, it can be interpreted as that the implementation of the program doesn't raise enthusiasm of MTs teachers that may be the user of e-book in the process of teaching and learning.

Although a few of teachers knows how to access the internet well, but still many of teachers do not get much information of the use of e-book particularly. The complete information of e-book socialized by the governments seems still insufficient for many teachers to have clear information of the use of e-book. the lacking information of e-book may become a serious problem in implementing e-book as teaching media in teaching and learning process. It is very possible if the teachers have a little information how they can use e-book as media for their instruction.

CONCLUSIONS

This study is a descriptive research of which the approach is a cross sectional survey. It aimed to process empirical data to know the realization e-book program in EFL teaching and learning process as reflected by English teachers of MTs in Indonesia. The result of this study can be used to be basis for

the government to re-evaluate the implementation of the national project of School Electronic Books (BSE).

Based on the result of data analysis, it is evident that the program of e-books should be revised as considering several factors affecting its insufficient use by the EFL teachers of MTs. The use of E-book in teaching and learning in Indonesia EFL classroom still has been beyond the teachers' prospect. It reveals that e-book and its advantages are not well recognized by many teachers of MTs in Indonesia because of lack awareness of rapid growth of technology and information in this case the use of internet. Teachers of MTs still consider the internet as a sophisticated thing hard to cope with. In other words, inadequate knowl-

edge of most EFL teachers of MTs in taking advantages of internet and the disparity of educational facilities and infrastructure over territory of Indonesia is the main factors.

From the result of the study, it is recommended that: the teacher's knowledge about the internet must be improved. The teacher, especially EFL teachers of MTs, should be given opportunity to develop their knowledge. In addition, the government should provide Islamic Educational Institution with adequate supporting facilities and well planned infrastructure so the teachers as well as students can easily browse through the internet to get benefits of e-books in teaching and learning process.

CONCLUSIONS

This study is a descriptive research of which the approach is a cross sectional survey. It aimed to process empirical data to know the realization e-book program in EFL teaching and learning process as reflected by English teachers of MTs in Indonesia. The result of this study can be used to be basis for

E-books on the EFL learning and teaching found many in the internet. It is agreed by 19 respondents (48.7%) of all participants in the research. 11 respondents (28.2%) even strongly agree with this fact. Some respondents, however, disagree with it. It means that actually many teachers have realized the huge availability of e-book in the internet. The fact

REFERENCES

- Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C., Razavieh, A., & Sorensen, C. (2006). *Introduction to Research in Education*, California: Tomson Wadsworth.
- Cahyono, B.Y & Widiati, U.(Eds.). (2004). *The Tapestry of English Language Teaching and Learning in Indonesia*. Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang Press.
- Chandra, E. (2009). *Masalah Perbukuan di Indonesia. Studi Kasus Kontroversi Buku Sekolah Elektronik (Online)*. (<http://edychandra.blogspot.com> accessed on November 20, 2009)
- Doctorow, C.(2004). *E-books: Neither E, Nor Books*, O'Reilly Emerging Technologies Conference
- Erben, T., Ban. T., & Castaneda, M. (2009). *Teaching Language Learners Through Technology*. New York: Roudtledge.
- James, Bradley. (2002). *The Electronic Book: Looking Beyond the Physical Codex*. Sci-Net
- Supriyadi, Dedi. (2000). *Anatomi Buku Sekolah di Indonesia: Problematik Penilaian, Penyebaran, dan Penggunaan Buku Pelajaran, Buku Bacaan dan Buku Sumber*. Bandung: Adicita
- Tilaar, HAR. (2001). *Membenahi Pendidikan Nasional*. Jakarta: Penerbit Rineka Cipta.