



STUDENT EFL PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS EFFECTIVENESS EBOOKS AND PRINTED BOOKS IN A PANDEMIC SITUATION FOR INCREASING READING COMPREHENSION AT UNIVERSITY SINGAPERBANGSA KARAWANG

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ABSTRACT

The present study reports students' responses on the usage of e-books as well as its effectiveness following their experience. This study also examines the students' preference and experience for printed books and e-books. The method of this research is qualitative method. The data was collected through observation, interview, and documentation. Qualitative findings show that: (1) All of the students had an interest in using e-book in pandemic situation; (2) the use of e-book in pandemic situation made students independent and active in reading comprehension; (3) e-book engaged them in reading comprehension rather than printed book; (4) e-book motivated students in reading comprehension. The findings of this study may be useful to other researchers who are interested in EFL teaching innovation or teachers who seek effective reading teaching method.

INTRODUCTION

In today's case where online classes are held mandatorily in response to the 2020 Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, electronic books are needed to replace the physical copies of books used in schools and universities. As of July 2020, several countries are still affected including Brazil, Germany, Iran, South Korea, and Indonesia. In Indonesia's case, while the country reopens itself for commerce, universities are still closed forcing to move the classes into online sessions (Kaplan, Frias, & McFall-Johnsen, 2020; Ika, 2020). The policy to move the classes online is taken as a response to avoid infections in universities considering the fatality of the disease that could cause heavy damage to the lungs or even death (Gallagher, 2020). Also, the global infection number

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currently stands at 12.7 million people in over 180 countries with a global death toll of 560,000 (The Visual and Data Journalism Team, 2020). Moreover, it is also reported that there are many infected without symptoms that act as carriers of the disease (Plater, 2020). With that in mind, electronic books hold an important role in providing teaching materials, particularly in a time where online classes are mandatory under a global pandemic. As a result, students need to change all of their activities online, which includes reading books. Then, e-books are needed to support the activities.

As the name suggests e-books or electronic books are digital files that contain texts or images that are displayed on the screen in contrast to paper as in printed books. The usage of e-books in education has been discussed many times since they have different characteristics than printed books. For example, e-books are easier to carry and access since they are stored in local storage in phones or online libraries. In short, e-books contain the benefits of printed books without their hassle since they have no physical forms (Landoni and Hanlon, 2007). While e-books provide many benefits, the students are seen to prefer their printed counterparts since they do not understand the full features of e-books (Johnston & Ferguson, 2020). Meanwhile, teachers seem to understand them more and prefer to use them (Buhamad, 2020). However, it seems the students' preference also comes from their free choice. In today's context, students are forced to use e-books since libraries and universities are closed due to the recent pandemic.

The higher education students of Indonesia, including from Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, have experienced online learning for the whole semester, starting from early March. Students from various years are forced to move the learning activities in different platforms, including Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Meet, as well as WhatsApp. This measure is taken following the government's policy to protect students and staff from the coronavirus (Pakpahan, 2020). However, not all students benefit from online class learning because of the disparity of internet access across Indonesia; the infrastructure for online learning is not yet established in all cities causing some students to fall behind since they have to find internet access in remote locations (Gunadha & Rahmayunita, 2020). Regardless of the issues, for the last semester, the students have been taking online classes.

With that in mind, this research aims to investigate the students' responses on the usage of electronic books as well as its effectiveness following their experience for the last semester. Also, the study intends to examine the student's preference and experience for printed and electronic books. As a result, this study will survey the students of Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang regarding their experience and responses of using e-books during the online-learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

E-book

As in a full electronic book, Ebook is a digital file containing a body of text and images suitable for electronic distribution and on-screen display like a printed book. EBooks can be created by converting printer source files to formats optimized for easy downloading and on-screen reading or scanning or extracting them from a database or a set of text files not created for printing alone. Although many electronic books exist for works that have passed into the public domain, appeal years were restricted by the need to read them on a computer. Bestseller books such as J.K. Rowling's famous Harry Potter series are available online (Britannica, 2020). Although sometimes defined as the "electronic version of the print book," some eBooks exist without a print match.

Students' Experience

The term "student experience" has become so commonly used that critical perspectives are essential to remember. Sometimes, the student experience is viewed as similar to the consumer experience – as a marketing concept. When students are perceived when "customers" or "customers," their "experience" is a consideration that needs to be handled and optimized, as with any other target group.

Students' Responses

Students' responses refer to attitudes comprised of three components: cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. This model is known as the tripartite proposed by Hovland (Azwar, 2012). The first component is about one's beliefs or thoughts towards certain things. The second component is the students' emotional feelings towards specific topics or something, e.g., their perception of online books can be favorable or not; the perception is often carried out by "...sympathetic nervous responses and verbal statements of affection." Lastly, the conative or behavior component refers to the tendency of acting in a certain way that is in line with their attitude.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

TAM is a useful theory to describe the attitudes of the use of Information Technology (IT) (Davis, 1989). The approach was adapted from the Theory of Reasoned Action introduced by Ajzen's and Fishbein (1975). A reasonable theory of action asserted that beliefs could affect attitudes, which led to the intention to use and actual user behavior in the end. The thesis contains a casual relationship that will help us understand IT (including the eBook system) (Ajzen's and Fishbein, 1975, in Hayashi Albert et al., 2004). Model Technology Acceptance (TAM) has become a fundamental model in understanding the individual's decision to use technology (Davis,1989; Davis et al. Legris et al.,2003; Michael Reid, Levy Yair, 2008). TAM only accounted for 40% of the intention to use the information system (Legris et al., 2003). TAM has been modified and replicated over the last two decades in information systems research and has proved to be a solid model in the understanding of users of information Systems Jackson et al. (1997), Legris et al., Vankatesh & Davis (2000) in Michael Reid, Levy Yair (2008). Davis (1989) TAM insists that the perception of benefits (PU) and the perception of ease-of-use (PEOU) are two of the main things that ultimately lead to the actual use of information technology. Here is a picture of the earliest construction of TAM introduced by Davis (1989).

METHOD

The method used in this research is descriptive research because the researcher focused on the student perspective towards effectiveness eBooks and printed books in a pandemic situation for increasing reading comprehension. Burhanuddin (2010, claimed in Fitriani 2017) stated that "Descriptive research is the research that aimed to describe with systemic, factual and accurate about facts and characteristics in a specific setting." It is supported by Creswell (2008) argued that a descriptive qualitative study is aimed to investigate the detail of people, places, or events in a setting of a qualitative approach. Based on the researcher's preliminary research, this research was conducted at an EFL Reading Course. The participants were the Department of English Education Students, Faculty of Teachers Training, and Education, Karawang Singaperbangsa University. In taking the sample, the researcher chose 20 students randomly.

To complete the data, researcher needed some instruments. In qualitative

research, collecting the data was done in the Close-ended questionnaire and Open-ended. According to Cresswell (2012), the Close-ended question is that the researcher poses a question and provides pre-set response options for 20 participants and Open-ended questions are questions for which researchers do not provide the response options; the participants provide their responses to questions. Sugiyono (2008: 225) stated that the fundamental method relied on by qualitative researchers for gathering information was participation in the setting, direct observation, in-depth interviewing, and documentation review. In this research, the researcher used online questionnaire supported by interview and documentation.

In descriptive research, all findings obtained in the research were processed to develop the research report. The data collected systematically. According to Miles and Huberman (1984), there are four steps in analyzing the data. These are the steps:

1) Collecting the Data

The researcher started gathering the data related to the students. The data is from the online questioner.

2) Reducing the Data

The researcher reduced the data by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming broad data into more specific and manageable categories.

3) Displaying the Data

Afterward, the data were displayed. Sugiyono (2011:249) stated that qualitative research data should be displayed in narrative form.

4) Data verification

The last step was data verification. The researcher examined how the questioner to answer the research question and interpret the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As explained in the data analysis technique, researchers used descriptive qualitative analysis to describe the findings of the data obtained through an open-ended questionnaire and documentation. This research was conducted to describe students' perception.

Findings

After the researcher analyzes the data that has been collected, the results are as follows:

E-Book Frequency

It can be concluded that students of Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang are not strangers to technology, and many of them think that eBooks are needed in classrooms. Therefore, this finding is similar to a study by Jeong (2020) that finds Korean students are exposed to technology. Moreover, a study by Buhamad (2020) also finds that teachers frequently use eBooks in their classes as well. As a result, it can be said that eBooks are commonly used by students of Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang.

E-Book Efficiency

Many average students think that eBook is easier in understanding the results of questioner say 8 participants with percentage 40% agree with eBook easier to understand this also shows the easier practical use is not the only advantage the electronic book has; it can also help students to understand a difficult subject such as physics because of its advancement that could add videos and animations inside the copy of the electronic book (Rahim, Suherman, &

Muttaqin, 2020). And 2 participants say that very agree, while 3 people say less agree because according to participant 2.

Perception using E-book in Offline Classes

The third section seeks to know whether the eBook is more effective in the management of the offline class, and according to the questioner that has been spread proves many of participant who agrees according to 19 participants where 10 participants with percentage 50% and 9 participants 45% prove that they are very agreed with the learning using eBook in class. So, can be seen from the Questioner results many students who agree when eBooks can be used in the classroom.

E-book Preference

Researchers found the result that the University of Singaperbangsa Karawang does not yet have a sufficient eBook shown by the result of the spread of Questioner 10 participants with percentage 50% less enough and 4 participants with a percentage 20% is not enough, this shows that the lack of the provision of the eBook University of Singaperbangsa Karawang needs to be added for students' learning. But from the results of the spread of questioner there are felt enough to prove the existence of 4 participants with a percentage of 20% said that the eBook is very sufficient and followed by 2

CONCLUSION

In today's case where online classes are compulsory in response to the 2020 Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, e-books are needed to replace physical copies of books used in schools and universities. The online class transfer policy was taken as a response to avoid transmission in universities given the fatalities of the disease which can cause severe damage to the lungs and even death.

This study aims to see how do the students of Singaperbangsa Karawang University use eBooks in their reading class and their efficiency. Therefore, this study is the students' view of the usability and effectiveness between printed books and ebooks. This study used a qualitative approach and used a descriptive study design. Participants in this study involved 20 students of the Singaperbangsa Karawang University. Online observations, online interviews, and virtual documentation are used to obtain data as information or answers related to research questions

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