

EFL students' perception of mobile-assisted extensive reading in a university setting: Toward self-directed online readers in higher education

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Abstract

Mobile-assisted language learning has now been evaluated as one of attractive methods in the Asian EFL instruction context. Yet, studies on students' perception toward its implementation on English extensive reading are rarely reported. Therefore, this research aimed at investigating the students' perception of mobile-assisted English extensive reading activities in a private English college in Indonesia. To get in-depth analysis, the data were collected through the questionnaire and interviews. Seventy-two respondents were voluntarily recruited to participate in the study. The findings show that (1) the students perceived that mobile-assisted English extensive reading activities give positive impacts, (2) the students' learning motivation are getting boosted as they feel pleasures during the reading activities, and (3) the students' self-directed learning is built. In addition, issues of critical thinking awareness and collaborative learning are also discussed.

Keywords: *extensive reading, mobile-assisted language learning, motivation, self-directed learning*

Sari

Pembelajaran bahasa berbantuan perangkat seluler (mobile-assisted language learning) kini telah dievaluasi sebagai salah satu metode yang menarik dalam konteks pengajaran EFL (English as a Foreign Language) di Asia. Namun, studi tentang persepsi mahasiswa terhadap penerapannya pada kegiatan membaca ekstensif bahasa Inggris masih jarang dilaporkan. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki persepsi mahasiswa terhadap kegiatan membaca ekstensif bahasa Inggris berbantuan perangkat seluler di sebuah perguruan tinggi bahasa Inggris swasta di Indonesia. Untuk mendapatkan analisis yang mendalam, data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan wawancara. Sebanyak tujuh puluh dua responden direkrut secara sukarela untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa (1) mahasiswa memandang bahwa kegiatan membaca ekstensif bahasa Inggris berbantuan perangkat seluler memberikan dampak positif, (2) motivasi belajar mahasiswa meningkat karena mereka merasa senang selama kegiatan membaca, dan (3) kemandirian belajar mahasiswa terbentuk. Selain itu, isu tentang kesadaran berpikir kritis dan pembelajaran kolaboratif juga dibahas.

Kata kunci: *membaca ekstensif, pembelajaran bahasa berbantuan perangkat seluler, motivasi, kemandirian belajar*

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Introduction

Mobile-assisted English learning has been widely accepted in higher education contexts. Employing mobile-assisted learning stimulates students to have fun and practical English learning. In the enjoyable learning atmosphere, the students are motivated to learn (Lamb & Arisandy, 2019). In the internet-supported mobile learning, the students are engaged in both synchronized and asynchronized interaction. Classroom discussion, e.g. questioning, commenting, arguing, answering, runs in different modes and channels, e.g. online learning platform and application. Thus, the interaction is beyond the classroom (Wrigglesworth, 2019). Students' intention to make direct classroom contribution is consecutively proceed. As the results, learning possibly happens in flexible times and places.

The use of mobile-assisted English learning potentially builds students' sense of motivation (Tavakoli, Lotfi, & Biria, 2019) and promotes self-directed learning (Botero, Questier, Zhu, & Garc, 2018; D. Zhang & Pérez-paredes, 2019). In the online discussion, e.g. extensive reading activities, discussion occurs rapidly. Sharing and exchange ideas go so fast beyond the lecturer's instruction. In this case, the extensive class can be a model of enthusiastic reading activities--beyond classroom (Wrigglesworth, 2019). Defined in extensive reading, students are directed to have information in the leisure time reading activities. To this, mobile-assisted extensive reading activities suit its context.

Research has witnessed that the power of mobile-assisted reading activities in varieties of classroom and out classroom contexts (Chih-cheng Lin & Lin, 2016; Tavakoli et al., 2019; Wang, 2016). Having participated in a university projects, students enjoyed mobile-electronic book assisted reading project. The findings show

reading electronic books (e-books) through mobile-devices with internet access has fascinating reading achievement. Mobile-assisted reading tasks also perceive positively from the students, e.g. boosting reading motivation of the university students, and thus improve their reading achievement (Tavakoli et al., 2019). Moreover, mobile-assisted instruction also demonstrates how the students of higher education felt satisfactory in mobile-assisted reading activities (Wang, 2016). albeit a number of previous research relating to mobile-assisted reading practices in the higher education, however, investigation on students of higher education toward the mobile-assisted extensive reading activities has ever been reported. Thus, this research aims at describing how EFL students' perception toward the use of mobile-assisted English extensive reading activities in the contexts of university settings.

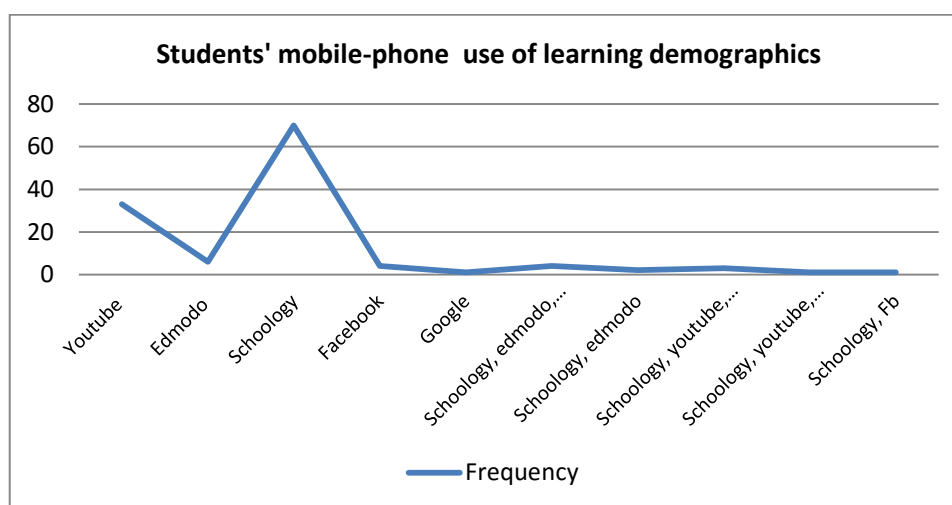
Methods

Design

This study employed a single case study. To gather rich data, this current study used questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was administered as the course ended through online google form tools. The participants were consecutively interviewed on how they perceived the use of mobile-devices, i.e. smart-phones and tablet-computers during the extensive reading activities.

Settings and participants

The research was conducted at a private university in Indonesia. Seventy one voluntarily students of English department were recruited to participate in this study. All students were familiar to Internet-based mobile-devices. They have experienced using youtube and edmodo learning platform as presented in figure 1. All students were requested to install and use schoology for the extensive reading activities.



Project procedure

The invited lecturer who was one of the researchers assigned the reading materials to the groups of schoology. The students were allowed to start enjoying reading with a couple of tasks at the end of the project. In this research, the students spent two weeks for reading one book provided by the lecturer. This project was then evaluated regarding the students' perception toward the use of mobile-devices for their English extensive reading project. The features of the schoology platform used during the study is presented in the following figure.

Data analysis

All data were collected from open-ended questionnaire and in-depth interview. Sixty seven out of total participants (71) filled the forms. These results of the questionnaire were tabulated using 2007 Microsoft excel while the results of the interview was coded and analyzed using content-based analysis.

Results and Discussion

This research investigated how university students perceived mobile-assisted English extensive reading. Overall, the findings revealed no negative perceived statements from the students. All students found it interesting to have mobile-assisted extensive reading activities during the extensive reading project. Moreover, 14 students (20.9 %) felt their learning motivation strongly enhanced. The adoption of mobile-assisted English learning, e.g. reading promotes learning motivation (Tavakoli et al., 2019). Surprisingly, accessing and managing mobile devices for reading was easy for the students. This is to show that mobile-assisted language learning is accepted as up-to-

date learning tools (Chih-chung Lin et al., 2019; J. Zhang, Sziegat, Perris, & Zhou, 2019; Zhonggen, Ying, Zhichun, & Wentao, 2018).

Mobile-assisted English extensive reading also demonstrate interesting evidences for four interesting interrelated issues: collaborative learning (CI1), vocabulary mastery (CI2), spoken enhancement (CI3), and critical thinking awareness (CI4). The students perceive using schoology inside of their mobile-assisted English extensive make them experiences for collaborative works (Mortensen, 2019). During the interaction, English chatting was also reported as medium of virtual interaction and thus, this leads not only to enhance speaking skills among the students but also develop their vocabulary mastery (Wrigglesworth, 2019). Being alive discussion, the students were also having sense of being critical (CI4). It also discovered that the students realized for their strong statements and arguments. They searched and checked for some items and vocabularies from valid sources.

Yes, using schoology in extensive reading gives me chance for collaborative reading [**collaborative learning (CI1)**] and for increasing vocabulary mastery [**vocabulary mastery (CI2)**]. English chatting [**spoken skill enhancement (CI3)**]and reading activities boost developing my vocabulary recitation [**Vocabulary mastery (CI2)**](Tina)

I found easy to complete the reading tasks provided in our schoology. We have no lecturer in the classroom, therefore, it forces us to make alive discussion [**collaborative learning (CI1)**] and thus, make us critical [**critical thinking awareness (CI4)**] (Misri).

As noted from questions and answers in conventional reading class, students tend to kept silent and shy. The overall findings have demonstrated how the students are self-directed readers. They shared and discussed ideas and arguments online through mobile-assisted extensive reading activities. Through this platform, the students felt free to share opinion and discuss for some interesting insights from their reading activities. Overall, the findings suggest that these mobile-assisted English extensive reading

activities enable to promote critical thinking awareness. At the end of continuum, students grow as self-directed learning and thus, promote collaborative learning.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The findings of the study successfully address the research objective. Generally, all findings are consistent with previous studies. Students perceive mobile-assisted extensive reading activities have positive impacts on their learning (Tavakoli et al., 2019). They are motivated (Lamb & Arisandy, 2019; Tavakoli et al., 2019) and they evaluate that mobile-assisted extensive reading practical in use. However, although this research was designed properly, some issues may be defects. Due to controlled participants, the results of the interview might be subjective and thus, unreliable.

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Conflict of Interest

Potential conflict of interest, if any, should be reported here during data collection.

About author

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