

Students' Perception Towards the Use of Internet as Learning Media to Promote Reading Comprehension Skill

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This study analyses student's perception toward the use of Internet to improve reading comprehension. This study aims: (1) to describe the students' perception of the use of Internet as teaching media in learning reading comprehension; (2) to depict the students' perception of the importance of Internet to access information; and (3) to explain the students' frequency to access Internet. This study uses the descriptive method to reveal the research problems. A questionnaire is used to collect the data. It consists of 20 questions with five options to reveal the students' perception of the use of Internet. The questionnaire is distributed to 120 students who took reading subject at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang. The study shows that (1) The students' perception toward the use of Internet to improve Reading Comprehension subject is positive; (2) According to the students, the use of Internet to access reading materials is very important; and (3) The students frequently access Internet to find the reading materials.

Keywords: perception, Internet, reading, skill

Introduction

Nowadays, the implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching and learning process is pivotal. It benefits the process of teaching in a classroom. The information and communication technology such as Internet facilitates students to improve their learning outcome. The use of Internet in the academic life is depending on the students' perception. Their perception of Internet also determines the importance of Internet and how often they access it to obtain information from which they are able to complete their academic tasks. Moreover, their perception of Internet is essential to expand their knowledge. The students who have positive perception towards the use of Internet tend to use it as the source of information. In other words, those who have skills to operate ICT are able to win the job competition because they are capable of gaining much information of vacancies (Kruk, 2014).

English plays a decisive role in the global activities such as business, communication, education, and many other aspects of life. English is used as a means of communication by many countries on the world including Indonesia. According to Silva (2014), in the context of Indonesian language, English has several functions, i.e., gaining prestige, raising one's social status, and getting future jobs. Hence, Indonesian language has borrowed many English words in various fields, e.g., in sport, culture, science, politics, technology, and medical. Similarly,

Basthomi (2007) argues that English has been a global language because the number of people who use it as media of communication has increased significantly. As a result, it is regarded as an international language that is used by many people on the world. Most professions such as scientists, businessmen, politicians, teachers, and many other careers use English as media of daily communication at their work places. They use English to share their ideas and even to disseminate their knowledge to other people.

Almelhi (2014) claims that developing reading and writing skills is a recent curricular reformatory practice in college academic writing settings worldwide. Given that both skills are process-oriented, it is assumed that there is a relationship between both skills by integration. In other words, reading comprehension is one of the basic language skills that enable learners to improve their achievement. Through reading comprehension, learners can gain new experiences that become the basis of knowledge acquisition. A student can appreciate other people's experiences through books or other printed sources. It is because all scientists and journalists write their ideas or information in the form of report which is published as a book, magazine, academic journal, and Internet. Generally, they disseminate their concepts or knowledge into printed and electronic mass media. Therefore, reading comprehension is a fundamental skill for everyone who wants to improve their insight. Reading is a skill that leads all people to achieve their goals of life.

In universities, reading is very essential for lecturers and students. However, only a few students have skills to understand the main ideas of the texts. Most of them are having ability below the average in the use of text to improve their knowledge. It is caused by several problems that make them unable to understand the author's message. According to James (2014), adults who struggle with reading may have faced literacy obstacles in the primary grades. Students below grade level in reading by the time they enter the fourth grade are likely to experience academic difficulties and literacy problems in high school. There is a need to close the achievement gap between students who are and are not proficient in reading. In other words, it is important for teachers to improve the students' proficiency in reading. Likewise, Setiasih (2014) claimed that English literacy skills became important because they were learning tools to understand the three subject matters. As a result, without having English literacy skills, the students would have difficulty in understanding the contents of the subject matters. In this case, university students were assumed to have the English literacy skills, especially, reading and writing skills, which were needed to do academic English literacy practices.

English is the important medium in the development of science. In Indonesia, English is the first foreign language taught from elementary schools to universities. Therefore, reading is very important for all students either inside or outside of campus. Reading is also very essential for students to improve knowledge and skills. Consequently, it is suggested that students enhance their reading skills. They need to find a medium that can improve their reading skills through many media like Internet.

Sudiran and Prasetyowati (2014) state that media is essential to teaching learning process. It gives many advantages to the teacher and students. By using teaching media, the students are interested in learning English. Moreover, it is effective to provide them with message and information clearly, attracting their attention, and giving them experiences as a reality. As a result, students can comprehend the materials easily. Therefore, media is an instrument that can motivate and stimulate interest in learning. Both manual and electronic media are very important to help students gain the learning experience. Today, electronic media such as computer is already familiar to students. Computers are an effective way to acquire knowledge because it can show images or objects

including knowledge that enables students to increase their learning outcome. In line with that statement, a computer program can show students interesting objects from which they can learn well.

In relation to the computer, the image can generate student's interest and motivation. Interesting image will stimulate the students to learn with enthusiasm. Pictures can be regarded as media that are useful for a lecturer to teach writing, speaking, listening, and reading in an integrated way. There are many lecturers and students trying to find more efficient ways to search for an information or knowledge through Internet because it can provide a lot of useful information. They can access to a wide range of information they need through the Internet for hours a day. Their enthusiasm is very high when accessing information through the Internet. It makes the Internet familiar to many people because it can be considered as a part of their daily activities. When they use Internet to access information, they need reading skills to understand the text. Therefore, there is a close correlation between Internet and reading skills. Internet can also be used to increase student competence. Those reasons become a fact that arouses the curiosity of researcher to have a depth observation about the students' perceptions towards the use of Internet in reading comprehension course.

This study is developed based on three main questions: (1) How is the students' perception towards the use of Internet as learning media in reading course?; (2) How is the students' perception towards the importance of the Internet as a means of problem solving for reading assignment?; and (3) How is the frequency of students to access Internet to get useful information related to the reading comprehension course?

The Use of Internet as Learning Media

Media plays a significant role in the language learning process. Students are able to understand lessons easily through media. Media also creates an interesting atmosphere of learning. The use of media should be appropriate for the learning objectives. Media is used to assist students understand the learning materials. On the other hand, the explanation from the lecturer is difficult to be understood for most students without the presence of media. For some students, not all lecturers' explanations can be understood easily. To bridge the gap between lecturers' explanations and students' ability to understand, it needs appropriate media. For this reason, the media is very important in the learning process. Media helps students master the subject and makes learning run well.

In terms of media, the Internet can be used as a systematic supporting facility of learning media. In the teaching-learning process, a lecturer can use a computer with all its programs to improve students' learning achievement. Internet as part of the electronic media can be used to stimulate student interest in many subjects including reading comprehension course. Internet is a global communications network that uses computer as a tool to access information. According to Sutedjo (2002), Internet is a computer network that has the ability to access widely. The Internet also has wide connections between networks around the world. As a symbol of the information technology revolution, Internet has three characteristics: (1) It overcomes the obstacle between computer and other communication devices such as telephone, radio, satellite, and so on; (2) Communication data which are conveyed through the Internet generally in the form of text, sound, and images. All those data are processed directly and quickly; and (3) Accessing the Internet information uses the computer which is connected with an international network.

Electronic media can produce images and sound recordings that can be used as information sources. Today, the information may be obtained from books, tape recorders, films, micro films, Internet, and many other

teaching aids. Teaching media can be considered as a source of information because they transmit a lot of information to many people who are seeking important information. According to Jasmadi (2004), Internet users come from different places in the world by using many variety of programs and applications of computer. Certain term is used, and certain standard rule that is applied generally is made to use the Internet together. The Internet itself provides various types of services. Internet services are popular and commonly used today, including e-mail, chatting, transfer data file, and web.

Teaching and learning activities in the classroom can be enriched by the presence of Internet. The use of Internet in the classroom will make the learning atmosphere more attractive and alive. It is because the Internet can provide a variety of information related to the learning materials. Its process is short, and its display is attractive. The information display in the form of text, images, and sounds that are interesting can stimulate the students' curiosity. Learning driven by the high curiosity makes students enjoy. Enjoyable learning is the beginning of successful teaching and learning activities in the classroom. It is because feeling happy can motivate students to learn. Moreover, Feeling enthusiastic to learn makes the students not to get bored and tired to do their exercises.

According to Lovely (2008), reading should focus on teaching students strategies that help them read, understand, think about, and use materials and information within informative text. Similarly, Jones (2003) suggests that there are 13 strategies to improve students' reading skill. Five of them are: (1) establishing a consistent reading program; (2) establishing a clear standards and objectives; (3) understanding content of the curriculum; (4) adding assignment hours or discussion groups; and (5) increasing the collaboration between lecturer and students to solve the problems listed in text. Those five strategies are an effort to improve students' ability to read comprehension course in the college. Reading skills, especially reading the text on the Internet requires a different skill from that in reading the text in the form of hard copy (book, magazine, newspaper, or journal). Reading the text in the Internet requires speed and accuracy to understand the meaning either explicit or implicit. It is in line with the nature of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) that is able to transmit the message quickly and able to reach a large area.

According to Small (2014), social networking (Internet) ranked as the most popular content category in worldwide engagement. Some of these networks that are being utilized as educational tools inside and outside the classroom include Twitter, Facebook, LiveMocha, and Blogs. It means that, in the field of education, Internet or search engine is considered as a technology that can be applied in teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Internet offers a variety of objects such as images, text, and sound in the classroom. The use of the Internet in the classroom provides several benefits, those are: (1) motivating students; (2) improving the quality of teaching and learning processes; (3) reducing the misunderstanding among students; (4) increasing the students' curiosity; and (5) increasing the students' competitiveness to achieve their goals. Those benefits are very closely related to the purpose of all the educational institutions in every level. Today, almost all schools or colleges show their superiority in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to the society. Educational institutions which implement ICT in the teaching and learning process will be considered by many people as favorite schools. People have positive perception to the application of Internet in school or college. They believe that the success of graduates of each school is depending on their ability to apply Internet at their work place. Without mastery of ICT, graduates of high school or college will not have a superior competitiveness.

Students are considered to have positive perception of the use of information and communication technology or Internet in reading comprehension course when they think that the Internet is an important tool to improve their reading skills. They also assume that the Internet can provide them useful information, and it supports the completion of their final project. However, students have a negative perception of the use of Internet when they consider that it is not a useful tool, and it should be avoided. They also have a negative perception of the use of Internet when they argue that the Internet has more negative effects than positive.

A student who has a positive perception of the use of Internet as a search engine or ICT will attempt to use it to find useful information that enables him to enhance his learning achievement. He also uses the Internet to find some good articles that are needed to increase his knowledge. A student who has a positive perception of the Internet applies it as a facility to improve his proficiency in language skills especially in reading comprehension. In other words, students who have a positive perception of the Internet will assume that it is very important in academic life. Notwithstanding, students who have negative perceptions toward the Internet will assume that it is as an unimportant facility. They argue that the Internet is technology that wastes time, and it should be abandoned. In order to know the students' perceptions whether the Internet is important in reading or not, it needs to be proven scientifically. Thus, this study is designed to reveal the students' perception of the use of Internet as an information and communication technology product, whether they assume that the Internet is important or not.

Research Method

This research applied the descriptive method which attempted to describe the students' perception towards the use of Internet as teaching media in learning reading comprehension course. To get the data, this study applied questionnaire which consisted of 20 items and comprised of five options each, in the form of Likert Scale which started from strongly disagreeing to strongly agreeing. The questionnaire was adapted from Horvat's *Measuring Computer and Web Attitudes Using CAS and WAS Measurement Instruments* (Horvat, Petric, & Mikrut, 2004), and it was modified into three sections: (1) comprising of 10 items to collect the data about the students' perception towards the use of information and communication technology (Internet) as teaching media in learning Reading Comprehension course; (2) of seven items to collect the data of the students' perception towards the importance of the Internet as a means of problem solving for reading assignment; and (3) of three items to collect the data of the frequency of students to access the Internet to seek the useful information related to the reading comprehension subject.

This study was undertaken at English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, the University of Muhammadiyah Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The sample of this study was 120 students or four parallel classes. They were selected by using representative technique which supported the researcher to get data illustrating the population characteristics. The researcher had the students to answer the questionnaire while they were joining the lecture in the classroom.

The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 program. The scores of the questionnaire were the total number of options given by the respondents. The values obtained from the data analysis were used to formulate the findings.

This study examined validity of the research instrument used to collect the data. From the computation of the validity test of the questionnaire, it was found that 17 items were valid with the coefficient correlation = 0.000

-0.300 for $p < 0.05$. For this reason, it could be said that the questionnaire as the research instrument was valid. Moreover, reliability test applied Cronbach Alpha technique in the SPSS version 20. From the computation; it was found that significant level equaled to 0,913 with $p = 0,000$ ($p < 0,000$). According to Sekaran (1992; in Priyatno, 2012), reliability which exceeded 0.8 was good or reliable. Therefore, questionnaire as research instrument used in this study was valid.

Findings and Discussion

There are three points as the finding of this study namely, (1) the students' perception towards the use of information and communication technology (Internet); (2) the students' perception towards the importance of the Internet, and (3) the frequency of students to access Internet.

The Students' Perception Towards the Use of Internet

The data of the students' perception towards the use of Internet were obtained by questionnaire, and it was analyzed through SPSS program to find its percentage, mean, and standard deviation which described the students' perception towards the use of Internet as learning media to improve reading comprehension skills. The result of the computation of data analysis could be seen at the Table 1 below.

Table 1

Percentage, Mean, and Std. Deviation of the Students' Perception Towards the Use of Internet

No.	Items	Percentage (%)					Mean	Std.
		SA	A	UN	D	SD		
1	I feel confident using search engines (Yahoo and Google).	28.4	60.3	10.6	0.7	-	4.16	0.62
2	I like to use the Internet from home.	29.1	59.6	11.3	-	-	4.17	0.61
3	I believe using the Internet is worthwhile.	44.7	48.2	7.1	-	-	4.37	0.61
4	The Internet helps me to find information.	52.5	45.4	2.1	-	-	4.50	0.54
5	I believe the Internet makes communication easier.	40.4	51.1	8.5	-	-	4.31	0.62
6	Internet is helpful to understand online information.	36.2	59.6	3.5	-	0.7	4.30	0.60
7	I believe the Internet has potential as a learning tool.	37.6	54.6	7.8	-	-	4.29	0.60
8	Internet can offer online learning activities.	43.3	52.5	4.3	-	-	4.39	0.57
9	learning how to use the Internet is worthwhile	35.5	57.4	7.1	-	-	4.28	0.58
10	Learning Internet enhance academic performance.	36.2	51.1	12.8	-	-	4.23	0.66
11	Internet is important to access information.	54.6	44.0	1.4	-	-	4.53	0.52
12	Internet is essential to access reading materials.	47.5	48.9	3.5	-	-	4.43	0.56
13	Internet is important to improve reading skills.	53.9	45.4	0.7	-	-	4.53	0.51
14	Internet is very important to learn reading.	61.7	38.3	-	-	-	4.61	0.48
15	Internet is important to solve reading problems.	38.3	50.4	11.3	-	-	4.26	0.65
16	Internet is important to increase knowledge.	37.6	53.2	8.5	0.7	-	4.27	0.64
17	Internet is essential to promote creativity.	24.1	55.3	19.9	0.7	-	4.02	0.68
18	Students should often access Internet.	39.7	52.5	7.1	0.7	-	4.31	0.63
19	Students should access Internet two hours a day.	31.9	55.3	12.8	-	-	4.19	0.64
20	Students should access Internet once in a week.	32.6	60.3	7.1	-	-	4.25	0.57

From the above table, it could be explained that students responded to 20 statements of the questionnaire which revealed their perception of the use of Internet as teaching media of reading subject at the university. In the Table 1, it was obviously seen that the highest percentage of the students' response which showed their positive

perception towards the use of Internet was the statement number 14, which stated that, "Internet is very important to learn reading" (100% of the respondents answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.61$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.48$). Additionally, other statement showing the students' positive perception towards the use of Internet was number 13, "Internet is important to improve reading skills" (99.3% of the respondents answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.53$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.51$).

In contrast to the highest percentage of the students' response of the questionnaire, there was the lowest percentage of the students' response that indicated their positive perception towards the use of Internet. The statement was number 17 that stated, "Internet is essential to promote creativity" (79.4% of the respondents answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.02$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.68$). Having read the percentage of the students' response of the questionnaire in Table 1 which was more than 80%, it can be said that students who took reading course at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang had positive perception towards the use of information and communication technology or Internet as learning media to increase reading comprehension skills.

The Students' Perception Towards the Importance of the Internet

There were seven statements of the questionnaire that indicated the students' perception of the importance of the use of Internet as learning media to improve reading skills (see Table 1). They were as follows: (1) "Internet is important to access information" (statement number 11, in which 98.6% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.53$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.52$); (2) "Internet is essential to access reading materials" (statement number 12, from which 96.4% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.43$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.56$); (3) "Internet is important to improve reading skills" (statement number 13, which 99.3% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.53$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.51$); (4) "Internet is very important to learn reading" (statement number 14, which 100% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.61$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.48$); (5) "Internet is important to solve reading problems" (statement number 15, which 88.7% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.26$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.65$); (6) "Internet is important to increase knowledge" (statement number 16, which 90.8% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.27$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.64$); and (7) "Internet is essential to promote creativity" (statement number 17, which 79.4% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.02$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.68$).

The Frequency of Students to Access Internet

As illustrated in Table 1, students responded to three items related to their level of frequency to access Internet namely, (1) Item number 18, "Students should often access Internet" (92.2% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.31$) and Std. deviation ($SD = 0.63$); (2) Item number 19, "Students should access Internet two hours a day" (87.2% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.19$) and Std. deviation ($SD =$

0.64); (3) Item number 20, "Students should access Internet once in a week" (92.9% of the students answered that they "agree or strongly agree" with that statement), with Mean score ($M = 4.25$) and Std. deviation ($SD = 0.57$).

From the three items of the students' level of frequency to access Internet above, it could be said that students were often to access Internet to get the reading materials that were suitable for their reading assignment. It was supported by the fact that the total percentage of the students' response to the questionnaire related to their level of frequency to access Internet ranged between 87.2% and 92.9%. It meant that students had high level of frequency to access Internet as learning media to promote their reading achievement.

The students' perception towards the use of information and communication technology or Internet can be categorized into positive. This category is strengthened by the result of the data analysis which indicates the Mean score ($M = 4.61$), and is regarded as the highest score among the items of the questionnaire. The fact obviously portrays the phenomena of the students' perception of the use of Internet to access reading materials which is relevant to their reading assignment at the university. Considering the Mean score of the data analysis, it can be said that students tend to use Internet as media to find the reading materials to complete their reading assignment given by their lecturer. For this reason, students consider Internet for a means of problem solving when their lecturers have them do the reading assignment.

On the basis of the percentage, Mean score and the Standard Deviation of the students' response of the questionnaire above, it can be said that the students' perception towards the importance of the use of Internet in reading comprehension subject is positive. The fact was supported by the total percentage of the students' response which range from 79.4% to 100%. It means that students favor the importance of the use of Internet as learning media to improve reading comprehension ability. Students regard Internet as the important media in the learning process at university. They take advantage of the Internet to obtain meaningful information about reading materials from which they can enhance their learning outcome. For this purpose, it can be claimed that Internet is absolutely essential for the students to get the information needed that enables them to improve their reading achievement.

Conclusion and Suggestions

As described in the previous findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the students have positive perception towards the use of Internet as a part of information and communication technology. The perception is supported by the percentage of the items of the questionnaire answered by the students from which they answer agree or strongly agree for the statement saying, "Internet is very important to learn reading". The total percentage of this item is 100% with Mean score ($M = 4.61$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.48$). In addition, according to students, "Internet is important to access information". This item get 98.6 % of the data analysis with Mean score ($M = 4.53$) and Std. Deviation ($SD = 0.52$). In other words, students consider using Internet to gain useful information which enables them to enhance their language skills, especially reading comprehension. Internet benefits students to enrich their mind by accessing a lot of information which enable them to increase their knowledge.

The other meaning of the students' perception towards the Internet usage is that students have high level of frequency to access Internet. This fact is strengthened by the data analysis of the percentage of the students who answered the item of the questionnaire that says, "Students should access Internet once in a week". The total

percentage of this item equals to 92.9%. It reveals that students consider Internet an important medium to increase their reading performance. To do so, they have to spend a lot of time on Internet to access information. This fact is evidence that students have favorable perception toward the use of Internet in learning reading comprehension subject. As a means of increasing knowledge, Internet plays a key role in the learning reading comprehension because it helps students acquire much information from which their achievement is developed. On the basis of the findings and discussion, it can be suggested that Internet plays an important role in the learning reading. It can be applied as learning media from which students may use to expand their reading skills at university.

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