

EFL Students Perceptions on the Accessibility of E-book: A Case Study in English Language Education Programme Class a 2019 in Mulawarman University

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Abstract

EFL students often receive assignments via digital platforms, specifically pdfs or e-books, such as article analysis for reading comprehension and EFL students' experience accessing e-book. People' reading preferences and behavior have changed due to the advancement of electronic book (e-book) technology. .This study is intended for 2019 A English Department students at Mulawarman University who have finished the advanced reading course and from these criteria. The researcher selected 7 participants from the questionnaire results, and interview them. Almost all participants felt that there are numerous solutions to challenges associated with the use of electronic books. Some participants claimed they preferred to utilize the e-book's search box to find keywords they were interested in. Other individuals stated that simply looking for what we enjoy might be a motivator to engage in reading. The researcher found that efl students have several reasons for using e-books as their most convenient reading tool.

Keywords: Student's Perceptions, EFL Students, E-book Accessibility, Reading

1. Introduction

The researchers in this study are affiliated with an institution that employs English as the medium of instruction and education. Research concerning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students examines subjects like reading comprehension and the competencies required for academic research and writing. Multiple variables affect reading comprehension and pedagogical strategies in English academic reading and writing courses. The inability to comprehend English literature is attributed to several causes, including an aversion to reading. Prior research on integrated teaching for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) acquisition mostly highlights the implementation of this methodology across many dimensions. Certain research investigated EFL students' attitudes and promoted active engagement. Certain scholars advocated for overall English ability, including vocabulary and reading comprehension of texts. In Malaysia, Bozarth and Zhong (2016) used a mixed methodology to investigate consumers' preferences and behaviors about e-books. Users appreciated the advantages of features like effortless downloads, in-book search functionality, highlighting, notes, quotations, and bookmarks.

Alongside English language acquisition, integrated education that incorporates synchronous online learning may enhance EFL students' global literacy development via online cross-cultural communication, provided that individualized learning is implemented in large on-site courses. EFL students often get assignments via digital channels, especially PDFs or e-books, including article analyses for reading comprehension. The final outcome or comprehension of each learner must be fluid, and their interpretation of the text will vary. The use of e-books by university students is increasing, and several academic libraries have challenges in identifying the optimal e-book purchase strategy that effectively meets the needs of their patrons while being budget-conscious. Electronic books (e-books) are digital publications that may be accessed on computer displays or portable devices, such as personal digital assistants and tablet computers. The advent of e-books in the literary market led information technology (IT) specialists to anticipate that e-books will replace printed books, posing a danger to conventional publishing. Nonetheless, this anticipation stays unfulfilled as people persist in reading printed books.

Because of developments in e-book technology, people's reading habits and tastes have shifted. The iPad, Kindle, and Nook are displacing traditional printed books as the preferred method of reading. In accordance with the formal definition, an electronic book is a book produced in a digital format that comprises text, images, video, animation, and/or sound and is intended for viewing on a computer screen or portable device. Many users are unfamiliar with reading from a screen since they are used to reading from paper. Paper books still have a particular place in their hearts, even if they know there are many benefits to reading e-books. The researcher is interested in studying students' viewpoints on e-book reading comprehension because of the problems outlined before. With the research topic, how do students interpret e-books?

Research Questions:

- a) What are EFL students' perceptions on ebook reading comprehension?
- b) What are the challenges and their strategy during their process to understanding the text on ebook?

2. Literature Review

a. Perceptions

Perception, according to Kotler (2009), is the process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets information supplied to generate a meaningful picture of the world. Walgito (1989) posits that the formation of perception is the result of a process flow in which an object creates stimulation, which in turn hits the sense organs or receptors. We call this a physical or natural process. The sensory nerves carry the impulses from the organs that receive stimulation all the way to the brain. Physiological processes describe this.

b. E-book Reading

Even if a lot of people bought e-books because of all the cool features, this innovation can't take their place entirely. With a vested interest in the development of the book business, both content producers (publishers) and e-book reader makers and suppliers see the practical use of these devices to be managerially important.

The researcher has an e-book reading approach for these assignments that involves underlining and bookmarking key sentences, which believe could be difficult in comparison with printed books. The researcher is interested in investigating this title and also wants to learn how these EFL students develop reading comprehension methods for electronic books. The e-book is one type of learning substance that can be applied in the classroom to improve student reading comprehension. To begin, this study examines the present habits of e-reader buyers, specifically how they really use the gadget to read rather than relying on traditional paper books. Therefore, e-book readers will remain popular among consumers so long as they can enjoy electronic books just as much as printed books.

After the first uptake of e-books or e-readers, several academics have studied customer loyalty and repurchase behavior (Chen, 2015).

3. Methods

The study's methodology was qualitative research, which is defined by Creswell (2014) as a way to investigate and comprehend the significance that people or groups attach to a social or human issue. With a qualitative method, we may look at students' views on E-book reading comprehension in detail. Based on these criteria, the researcher will deliver questionnaires to students in the English Department at Mulawarman University who have completed the advanced reading course in 2019. . There were some questions as a filter, the researcher chose the answers with the highest frequency as participants to be interviewed in odd numbers. Mulawarman University has 26 current class A English Department students, according to department administrative data. After selecting study subjects, the researcher conducted follow-up interviews with seven individuals selected at random from the questionnaire data. The research process in this study included the use of questionnaires and interviews. In order to collect information and data from the study's subject, this research used interviews. Taking into account prior research pertinent to this study, the researcher used a semi-structured interview guide to conduct interviews with study participants using interview sheets that were designed by the researcher. Thematic analysis was used to examine the gathered qualitative data. We used Creswell's (2012) six-step process for assessing qualitative data.

4. Result

The findings are presented according to the instruments for easy understanding and clarity.

1. Questionnaire

In this research the questionnaire used to select the participants. The questionnaire was using purposive sampling.

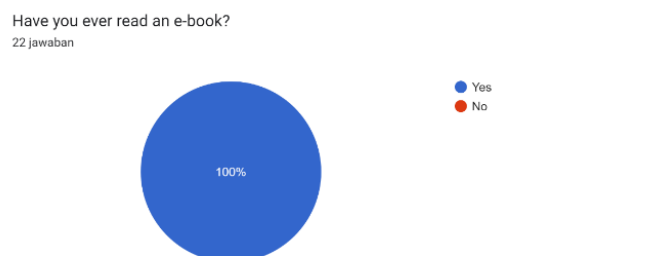


Chart 1. Questions related to students' perception of e-book

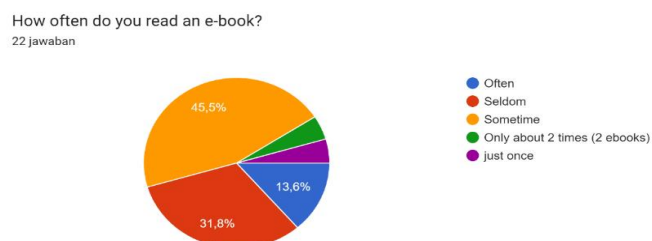


Chart 2. The students' habits about reading an e-book

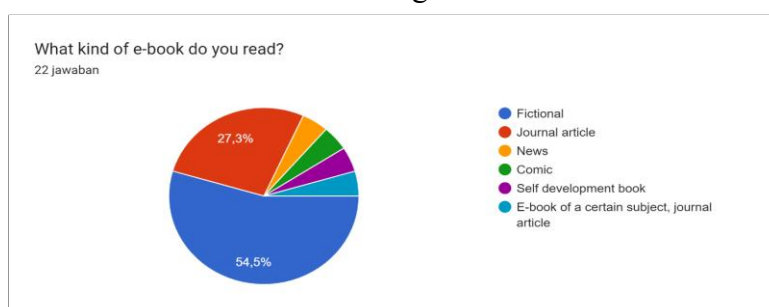


Chart 3. The findings shows that there are 22 students preferences about e-book genre.

2. Interview

The findings of the interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Here are the themes that found:

A. The easiness of e-book

This research found that there are many differences about the perceptions of reading an e-book. The findings are presented below:

The study found that, all of the participants agree that e-book is more easier in many ways. It can be seen from the statements below from two of the participants, for examples:

Reading an e-book helps to increase my reading comprehension. It is convenient since a device can carry thousands of e-book to read. (SP, P7, IQ 1, Line 7-8)

For me reading e-books is very comfortable. because it is easy to access e-books on the internet with a cellphone or laptop and there are many e-books that we can read for free on the internet (P6, IQ1, Line 7-9)

From the findings above, it can be concluded that students feelings about reading e-book is can make them more comfortable to read, increasing reading skills, and master the content of an e-book quickly. Participants also agree that e-books make things easier for them in a variety of ways, both academic and non-academic, such as for enjoyment. Participants believe that e-books are more efficient than physical books because physical books are heavy and difficult to transport in big quantities, but e-books can hold over 1000 books.

B. The preferences of e-book genre of increasing reading skills

The study found that students have different opinions about use of e-books and the act of increasing reading skills for them. 3 participants use e-book for entertainment and 1 participant use e-book for the major that he took. This can be seen from the statement below:

Actually I often read e-novel, specifically comedy or slice of life e-novels. I love reading those in my free time. But I also read academic e-book like journal articles as I do my thesis. (P2, IQ 3, Adv, Line 24-26)

Mostly I just read about my major I took English Teaching the example is "Linguistics for Everyone". (P3, IQ 3, Adv, Line 18-19)

It can be seen that P3 reading e-books as a tool to entertain himself after they have studied for a long time or done a thesis. Besides that some of them like to read biology and psychology. The statement can be seen below:

First of all, why I like to read scientific its because I mean these days people are feeling stressed and burned out. And I also feel the same with them. So I think it wont hurt me to understand myself more to read scientific and also psychology book especially with 16 personality I guess you have heard about that. And for scientific I often read biology, because hmm especially science book because it also comes with interactive pictures. (P7, IQ 9, Adv, Line 67-72)

It can be seen that P7 feels that reading psychology and science keeps her entertained because she finds something new by reading it.

From the findings above, P3 and P7 are prefer to use e-book for entertainment only, and use it for their thesis study.

C. Students preferences between e-book or printed book

In the results of this study, almost all participants chose e-books as their most convenient reading tool, but there were 2 participants who preferred physical books or printed books. This can be seen from the statement below:

To me I prefer e-book because its more affordable you can even get it for free from the internet. And It has more features, and doesn't need shelf to store it because it's in your devices. And bring it everywhere. (P1, IQ7, Line 48-50)

I would rather reading via e-book because I feel comfortable when reading e-books. Also it is much easier since I only need one device like laptop or smartphome to read a lot of e-books. The device is pretty light and easy to use everywhere and anytime. (P2, IQ 7, Line 52-55)

The other participant said that she prefer printed books because eye problem, the statement can be seen below:

"As much as I enjoy reading ebook, I prefer printed book more. The reason is simple. I can touch and keep the physical form of the book as my collection. I collect book since elementary school and it feels amazing to have your favorite book in printed version. I can stare at it as long as I want without hurting my vision." (P7, IQ7, Line 58-61)

The participant's thoughts above show that there are two diverse perspectives among four different persons. Two persons stated that they prefer e-books since they are easier to use and include various features such as highlighting, bookmarking, keyword searching, and so on. Another two participants claimed that physical books have a different essence. This indicates people enjoy a new book's "distinctive" aroma when they first open it. On the other hand, one participant stated that he like physical books due of his love of collecting books; this participant prefers to have a favorite book in fisik form for collection.

D. Challenges during reading an e-book

These findings has so many answers that the challenges is important to overcome. Most of them have mentioned that their eyes hurt. Some of them mentioned they can easily distracted. Those statement can be seen below:

1). Eye strain

Some participants had difficulty reading e-books, with one stating that using devices for too long while reading caused eye problems. Their opinions can be shown below.

Yes, I do. The only challenge I usually face is eye fatigue or eye strain. When I read e-book for long time, my eyes usually feel tired and itchy. (P2, IQ4, Adv, Line 31-32)

Sometimes, staring at mobile or computer screen for a long time strain my eyes and hurt my head. . (P4, IQ 4, Adv Line 22-23)

It can be seen that P2 had eyes problem or eye strain by using an e-book, but P2 said it is not a big thing. Besides that, another participant also mentioned that he got distracted by phone notification. This statement can be seen below:

2). Distraction from the gadget.

When reading e-books, readers will be using gadgets; 2 participants argue that they sometimes feel bothered by notifications on their cellphones, and it is extremely bothersome; more information may be found below:

Ah yes, like I mention before, . I sometimes got distracted because of my phone notification. For example when a youtube notification youtube popped out, I can easily open it. (P1, IQ 4, Adv, L27-29)

Some of them have mention that they tend to open another app while reading e-book, and ruin her focus on reading. Her statement can be seen below:

My challenges is reading an e-book for a long period of time, I would have this urge to open another app and stop reading. (P4, IQ 4, Adv Line 21-22)

It can be seen that the urge to open another app is a common problem during reading an ebook. Especially with smartphone that is commonly used for daily life. Besides that, another participant mentioned that she had a problem while highlighting an e-book journal. This statement can be seen below:

3). Lack of using the “tools” from E-book.

There will certainly be numerous "tools" in an e-book to make it easier to use, but in addition to these conveniences, 1 participant have challenges when using it; their opinions are shown below:

Difficulties that might occur might be that when we want to review an article or journal, we need to highlight important part right?. But sometimes, because we do it via e-book, the highlights that have been done can sometimes be lost or not saved. (P5, IQ4, Adv, Line 30-32)

It can be seen P4 have problem while highlighting some e-journals, because sometimes if the PDF not compatible with the device there will be

some problems while using it. Like the apps need to be upgrade first, so we can use it properly after that.

4). Inaccuracy of e-book links

It appears that 1 participant said that frequently face issues where the links they receive to download do not match what they expect, such as unlawful URLs, journal publishing periods that have recently been posted and cannot be downloaded, and so on. The statement can be seen below:

I don't face too many challenges. But sometimes when I want to download journals, sometimes there are some that I can't download for free. And I cant open it with my laptop, but I can open it with another laptop. (P6, IQ4, Adv, Line 27-29).

Based on the information provided above, it is possible to conclude that the participants experienced difficulties with device upgrades, and the inability to obtain free links to download the articles.

B. The strategies to overcome the challenges

1. Find something interest.

Besides that, one of them said they don't have specific techniques, her statement can be seen below:

When I read e-book for long time, my eyes usually feel tired and itchy. But this is a common things so it's not a big thing. (P2, IQ4, Adv, Line 32-33)
Hmm for me personally, I don't have any technique to read, so it could be find something that you are interested to read so you can enjoy it. (P4, IQ 6, Line 35-36)

Her reasoning is very basic but accurate. We must find our passion first if we want to get maximum results. Besides that one of the participant said use of google translate is important. Her statement can be seen below:

2) Use search bar.

This section will answer the research question about their effective techniques in overcoming problems in reading e-books. One participant said, she uses the search bar in the e-book that she read. Her statement can be seen below:

I think the most effective technique to make the e-book reading process more efficient is by navigating the text. As I mentioned that I read journal articles, I usually use the search function in apps to find key words or phrases. For example, I type "methodology" in the search bar so it will automatically open the page that contains methodology. Therefore, I don't have to read from the start also save my times and energy. (P2, IQ 6, Line 41-49)

It can be seen that she usually use search bar while reading e-journals and it make her easier to find the meaning as soon as possible. She has to do that because e-journals has a lot of pages and sub-page and the fonts are usually smaller that usual.

3) Buy original journal links

Beside that, one of the participant said he needs the link that can be open directly to the book, his statement can be seen below:

Maybe the e-book can Include links to the online resources that related to the topic that we search. (P3, IQ 6, Line 32-33)

From the opinion above, the researcher can conclude that what this participant means is that he needs a link that can directly take him to the e-book he wants to read. And with that he can read it easily. Another participant has different statement, her statement can be seen below:

I think it would be very proper to read if you read the book straight from the author account and it means you also support them. since it means that you truly appreciate the art of writing. So i think it is better to pay for it rather than searching for the free link (P7, IQ 6, Line 52-55)

It can be seen that, P7 often searching for your favorite book like subscription to the author. She has more of a way of supporting the author and supporting author by subscribing to the author's work. Since it means that you truly appreciate the art of writing. So she thought it was better to support by paying than to get a free link to get it for free.

From the findings above, it can be concluded that, the participants utilize the use of the internet such as using google translate to improve vocabulary skills, using tools in e-books for example e-journals in pdf form, and others. Therefore, the problem of reading their e-books is solved. Almost all of them prefer e-books because it is more efficient to use, but some of them prefer printed books because they can feel the essential of the books itself.

It can be concluded that reading via e-books has an impact on many things such as making it easier for them to do assignments because in e-books there are many tools that make it easier for them to bookmark or highlight, students also do not need to carry the heavy burden of carrying physical books. In addition, although there are also some obstacles when reading e-books such as sore eyes and so on, they can overcome it all by controlling the hours of e-book usage.

5. Discussion

In this section, the researcher reviewed the above-mentioned findings, which are based on data interviews, observations, and focus group discussions in order to answer the study questions. 1) What are EFL students' perceptions of e-book reading comprehension? 2) What are the challenges and strategies used to understand the ebook text.

4.2.1 The students perception on e-book reading comprehension

In response to the first research question about the students' perceptions of e-book reading comprehension, the researcher collected data from an interview and got information to carry out. This research discovered that EFL students have some attitudes about e-book reading. The discussion is below:

a. Easiness of e-book

Based on the results of the interviews, this study found that the first reason why EFL students choose e-books is because there are many uses in just one hand. The interview data shows that e-books have many uses such as when highlighting or when searching for keywords in e-journals. Because when they do this in printed books they will find it difficult because they have to do it manually. This is in line with the findings of Simonson (2013) who lists multiple features of e-books that are not available from printed versions, such as better portability and greater accessibility, and versions, such as better portability and instant downloading. Students can use e-books anytime and anywhere and are very useful at the beginner level. Some findings from researchers also found that EFL students felt that reading e-books made them improve their vocabulary skills faster. (Myrberg, 2017) When it comes to the usability of e-textbooks, the majority of the students' complaints seem to be related either to the highlighting and annotation functionality or to the overview of the content and the ability to navigate easily within the book.

A. Preferences of e-book genre

From the interview data, this study found that almost all participants read e-books as their entertainment. Because currently almost all of them are working on their thesis or academic genre, and there is 1 person who is already working. So they read novels to relax their minds after reading some heavy journal articles. However, some use e-books only as learning materials when in class. Another participant also said he liked reading Psychology and Science because the graphics and unique content in the reading made him engage while reading. This is also found in the research of Brueck and Lenhart (2014) offering a more extensive level of reader engagement, including more vibrant colors and images. Engagement, including more vibrant colors and images as well as capabilities for animations.

B. The impact of e-book reading for increasing the reading skills.

Based on interview data, the study discovered that teachers used e-books to improve their reading skills in the EFL environment. They also favor e-books over print books. On the other hand, other participants reported that e-books were quite useful in writing their thesis, particularly when reading e-journals, and that their thesis work was done faster than reading physical books. One participant also stated that e-book reading helped him learn new terminology; for example, he preferred reading e-books in novel style over extended reading. When reading novels, he frequently encounters unfamiliar words, therefore he must seek up the meaning using his smartphone's translation. This greatly improved his ability to learn new terminology. This is akin to research. Additionally, Brueck and Lenhart (2014) offer

a more extensive level of reader engagement, including more vibrant colors and images as well as capabilities for animations.

4.2.2 The EFL students challenges and techniques to overcome the challenges

During reading an e-book Based on interview discussions, this study discovered that all students used e-books in the EFL environment in a variety of ways. Almost all participants felt that there are numerous solutions to challenges associated with the use of electronic books. This is in line with the findings of Wu et al. (2019). By delivering content through digital media, e-books have the advantage of less paper use in addition to other aspects such as readability and reader preference at any time. Students can choose from a variety of highly convenient reading modes thanks to the different ways to add notes, dynamic multimedia presentations, and permanent portfolio records. The other technique to overcome it can be seen below:

A. Suffer from eye strain

In the interviews, this study found that some students experienced problems with their eyes or eye strain. It was found that the use of e-books makes their eyes tired quickly compared to printed books, fonts, or sizes in e-books make them have to shrink their eyes to be able to see clearly. This is in line with Myrberg's research (2017) which states that screen size and quality have improved in recent years, the kind of screen you use when you are reading matters. The statements of some participants are also similar to the statements of some previous participants, where they choose to use e-books to study or just read and eye strain is not a big problem. Some participants also said that e-books can be accessed easily on smartphones or laptops and are also convenient. They also said that it would be better to buy in the form of supporting the author's work, that way these participants also express their hobby of collecting books. This is also in line with Staiger's (2012) statement that Ebook platforms also permit readers to preview books before actual purchases of physical versions as well as e-books.

B. Distraction from Gadget

We can see in the previous discussion that if they feel disturbed when reading an e-book, what they feel is that they are disturbed by cellphone notifications, so they overcome it by buying or downloading on an official site

so as not to be disturbed by such notifications. This is in line with Ketron and Naletelich (2016). Specifically, e-books can be directly downloaded from Internet-based “stores” as opposed to printed books, which must be purchased from physical stores or ordered online with some wait involved.

C. Lack of using the tools from e-book

It can be seen that she usually uses the search bar while reading e-journals and it makes her easier to find the meaning as soon as possible. She has to do that because e-journals have a lot of pages and sub-pages and the fonts are usually smaller than usual. most students' problems are difficult when using tools in e-books. therefore the solution is to look for tutorials to use it, and most of them say to use the navigating text feature. so they will immediately be able to use the feature easily. This is also in line with Ketron and Naletelich (2016). E-books offer capabilities such as highlighting, notations, definitions, and font size adjustments, making it easier to reference and manipulate content

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis in chapter four, the researcher draws conclusions related to the reasons and perceptions of EFL students about the use of e-books in everyday life, especially in the scope of understanding and improving reading comprehension skills of English Department A 2019. In response to the first question regarding student perceptions, this study collected data from interviews. The researcher found that EFL students have several reasons for using e-books as their most convenient reading tool. The first reason is because of their proficiency level in using the tools in the e-book. This happens because students' ability to use and overcome problems in their reading is different, although there are also students who prefer to use printed books, so they also have to choose wisely which one can help them in the learning process so that the results are maximized.

The second reason is because of students' confidence. This study found that using e-books could "make it easier" for them to understand and improve their reading skills, many of them said that their vocabulary skills increased because of using e-books. Although the challenges in reading e-books and printed books are more or less the same. However, if they use e-books, students can immediately overcome the problems of using e-books in one hand with Gadgets. In addition to improving reading skills or arguably in the academic field. E-books are also useful as a tool to entertain themselves or just their hobbies.

The third reason is that e-books are easy to find, students can download them directly from the link. Another example is if you are highlighting, students can immediately solve the problem by finding out how to do it on the internet. It can also be bookmarked so that the file is not lost and not difficult to find. From the results of interviews with participants, it was also mentioned that one participant felt that by using e-books, he could use the features for example he can zoom in on the screen to make him read the text easily. so e-book was very helpful.

To answer the second question relating to challenges in reading e-books, the researcher collected data from interviews. The results showed that all students had some of the same problems, namely eye strains, with using e-books. This happens because, in the process of

reading e-books, they often feel like the light of gadgets is too bright, and radiation occurs. Some are distracted by smartphone notifications, they may stop reading and open other applications. On the other hand, a participant said that they also sometimes experience problems in using e-books, namely when they analyze a journal and highlight it, they are worried that the file will not be saved. Another said that their difficulty in using e-books was that the book could not be downloaded but they had to buy it.

They have solutions for the problems mentioned above. First, they advise, that seeking for something that piques students' attention will undoubtedly become quickly involved in the discussion. Second, if users are having problems identifying keywords, they use the search box, which is typically found in PDFs. They will then immediately find the text they are looking for. Third, when they are having problems finding the meaning of a new vocabulary word, they utilize an online dictionary to immediately seek the meaning by blocking the sentence and pushing the word search on Google, which allows them to get the meaning right away.

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