

IMPLEMENTING ER FOR VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH LITERACY CLOUD

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the implementation of an Extensive Reading (ER) program using Literacy Cloud for mobile English learning, and the perception of the student participants. For roughly four weeks, 45 EFL students enrolled in third grade from two major courses, namely a pharmacy and dental assistant course at a vocational high school in East Java, Indonesia, joined this program to experience extensive reading through Literacy Cloud for mobile English learning. They had no experience to use Literacy Cloud before, so literacy cloud is introduced to support ER program. Data was gathered with a questionnaire and interviews were given to ascertain student experience using Literacy Cloud in ER class. The results show that students had positive attitudes and perceptions about Literacy Cloud and felt that Literacy Cloud was very useful for supporting the development of their English skills, especially their reading skill. The results of this study have implications for English language teaching, for deploying ER with vocational school students. The integration of technology such as Literacy Cloud can provide many benefits for the students' reading skill development.

Keywords: *ER implementation, EFL learners' perception, online-library, Literacy Cloud*

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization which requires students to be able to adapt to the times, education in Indonesia tries to focus on children's academic development so that they can be formed to compete in knowledge and communicate fluently using foreign languages so that they continue to develop amidst changing times. To realize the hope that EFL students can continue to develop, the Indonesian government should implement English language learning in other learning in EFL classes. Therefore, the Indonesian government should establish relationships with experts so that students can achieve the target indicators that have been determined for their language competency (Husna, 2019).

One of the most important things to improve student competence is reading (Niazifar & Shakibaei, 2019; Puspa & Ragawanti, 2022; Renandya, 2007). Reading competency is considered very important so that students can access information more efficiently. However, this is in stark contrast to the situation of EFL students in Indonesia. In the results of The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018, the reading ability of students in Indonesia is very low, namely ranked 74th out of 79 countries (Hewi & Shaleh, 2020). Many EFL students have difficulty reading materials in the target language, namely books in English, so that they have been demotivated in reading English Language (Cahyono & Widiati, 2006; Sunggingwati & Nguyen, 2013).

On one hand, in the context of reading in the classroom, teachers often focus on intensive reading, namely on the achievement of EFL students where reading learning is focused on achievement and conformity to the syllabus that has been created (Taembo & Education, 2023). On the other hand, one strategy so that EFL students can enjoy reading activities is to use extensive reading. In implementing extensive reading, students will be given the freedom to choose the reading books they want to read. Students are asked to always read lots of books in a second language, namely books that use English without thinking about the meaning of difficult vocabulary. This is done because extensive reading is effective for improving students' foreign language skills and helps develop their motivation to read (Birketveit et al., 2018; Delfi & Yamat, 2017).

In practice, EFL students who take part in extensive reading program activities are given the freedom to read according to their interests, not only in the classroom during learning but also outside the classroom without the presence of their teacher. According to Fransisca et al. (2021) when students feel comfortable with reading activities, they do not feel heavy or bored with the activities they do. Thus, extensive reading can make students become active readers. In addition, students will gain comprehension competence even though they do not yet know the meaning of some of the vocabulary from the book they are reading (Mikulecky & Jeffries, 1998).

Several studies state that EFL students will gain high reading motivation and understanding when they can choose books they like freely and feel comfortable when reading books at a speed according to their respective abilities. These activities are more efficient when carried out outside class hours outside of school. It is in line with the thoughts of Aka (2015) who explains that EFL students who are teenagers should carry out extensive reading activities independently without waiting for their teacher. This is supported by Birketveit et al., (2018) that choosing reading material independently and easily to access gives a pleasant impression to each student. The more books' students read will increase their knowledge of vocabulary that they never knew before and this will affect each student's language skills (Iqbal, 2017; Tabata-Sandom, 2020). Apart from increasing students' competence, extensive reading activities can increase students' reading motivation. According to Day (2015) and Ruzin (2019), the freedom to choose reading books that students like provides a feeling of comfort in carrying out reading activities, this will automatically increase students' reading motivation because they feel that reading is a fun and easy activity.

Not only students who attend public schools, vocational school students' also experience increased understanding in extensive reading activities. However, in practice, vocational school students' reading motivation is still low when they carry out extensive reading activities. This may be because the reading materials read by vocational students need to be redesigned so that they can help them increase their reading motivation. Therefore, in this research we want to identify extensive reading activities in vocational school students using the online platform, namely Literacy Cloud.

Although the explanation above highlighted extensive reading gives positive contribution on students' learning development, it is important to know how students feel about the implementation through exploring their perception. Perception defines as 'the ability of person to have ideas about something that is obtained through the sensory and intellectual capability (Sartika, 2020). As a result, from students' perception, it gives a picture of they feel about the extensive reading implementation in language classroom.

Previous studies (e.g. de Morgado, 2009; Howarth & Bollen, 2019; Lien, 2010; Sartika, 2020) about students' perception of the implementation of extensive reading have been conducted by many researchers. For example, Howarth and Bollen (2019) examined the perception of 730 second-year students at Sojo University, the results revealed that extensive reading gave positive impact on students' English skill. It proves that students also support the implementation of extensive reading in English classroom environment. For this reason, this present study was inspired to conducted the same focus with different context which are formulated with the following research questions"

RQ1. Can ER be implemented effectively in a vocational school with Literacy Cloud?

RQ2. What are the students' perceptions of their experience in using Literacy Cloud?

METHOD

The participants of this study were one English teacher and Fourty five EFL leaners from vocational high school at Bojonegoro, East Java, Indonesia. They were in the grade and having no experience in the implementation of extensive reading before. They consisted of 42 females and 3 males. They had the basic learners of English language. In this study, the English teacher introduced the extensive reading program and they were first time introduced the Literacy Cloud.

To investigate the implementation ER in vocational high school students and their perception using Literacy Cloud during the implementation of ER, the researchers conducted questionnaires and written interview after the implementation of ER in English language teaching. The questionnaires were distributed through an online platform, that is using Google form. The researchers designed close-ended questionnaire which cover the questions of the implementation of extensive reading using Literacy cloud (See Appendix A). Then, the interview is also conducted through online mode, using Google Form. The interview questions were related to students' perception of the implementation of extensive reading using Literacy Cloud (See Appendix B).

The present study conducted in four weeks or one months. Before the first meeting in the classroom with the students, the English teacher was introduced to the implementation extensive reading and how to access and use Literacy Cloud as the tool for extensive reading. At the first meeting, the students were introduced Literacy Cloud Website and asked them to use the Literacy Cloud as the tool to apply extensive reading. Then, to follow up and monitor the students' reading in Literacy Cloud, the teachers asked them to fill general information about what they read in Literacy Cloud by of Reading Log sheet. In every week before the class begin, the students were asked to report their reading log, and the teacher continue the lesson that they had to discuss for that day. After three weeks, the researchers asked students to fill the questionnaire and online written interview to know the implementation of ER and their perception using Literacy Cloud in ER program

RESULTS

1. The Implementation of ER through Literacy Cloud (RQ1)

a. Media used in accessing Literacy Cloud

As shown in Figure 1, all students revealed that they used smartphone to access Literacy Cloud website. It was because mostly they hold their smartphone every time and they do not have any tool except smartphone.

45 responses



Figure 1. Media used in accessing Literacy Cloud

b. The challenges in accessing Literacy Cloud

As shown in Figure 2, 62 % students demonstrated that they had problem in internet connection. Then, 7 % students could not operate the Literacy Cloud and 31 % students stated that they had other problem except internet connection and could not operate the Literacy Cloud website.

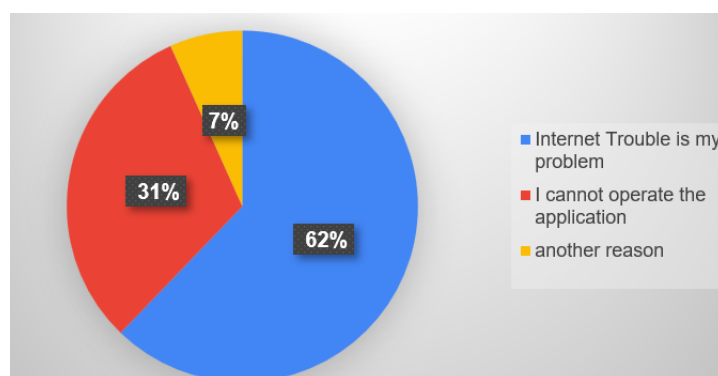


Figure 2. The challenges in accessing Literacy Cloud

c. Implementation time of Literacy Cloud

Figure 3 shows that 58 % of students demonstrated that they accessed Literacy Cloud for reading in their spare time at home. 20% of students stated on spare time at school, 11 % students said on no spesific time. Then 9% of students state before sleeping at night and 2 % of students stated after waking up in the morning.

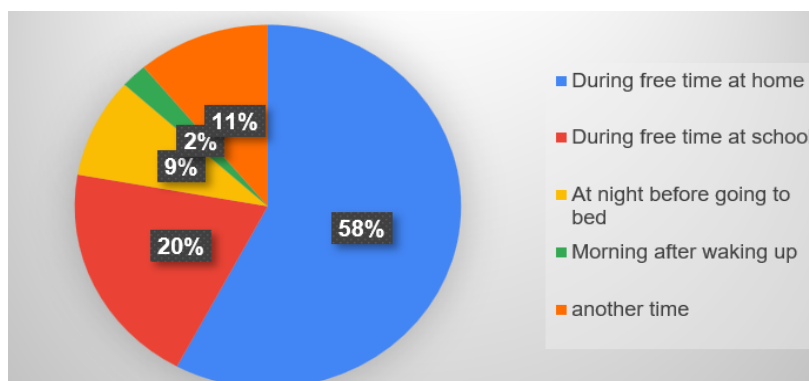


Figure 3. Time of Literacy Cloud's Implementation

d. The thing students do when access Literacy

Figure 4 shows 49 % students stated that when they accessed Literacy Cloud, they only read the book. 47 % students stated that they read the book and listen the audio or video provided in Literacy Cloud website. Then, 4 % students stated that they only listen the audio or watch the video at "read aloud" menu.

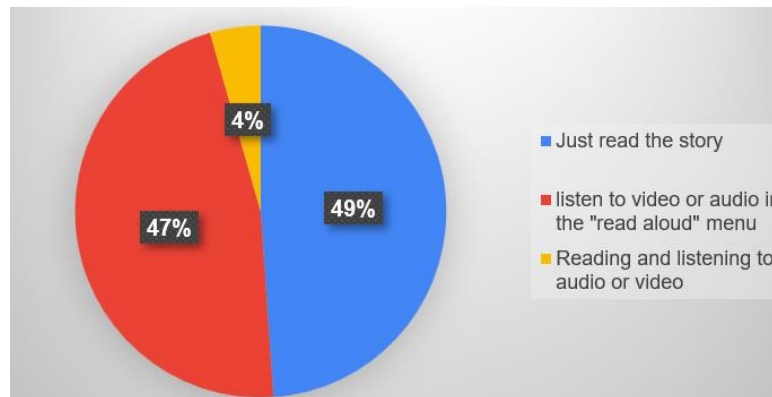


Figure 4. The thing students do when access Literacy

e. Students' tool when reading in Literacy Cloud

Figure 5 shows 78 % of students stated that they used online dictionaries to support their reading in Literacy Cloud and 22 % of students revealed that they did not use online dictionaries to support their reading.

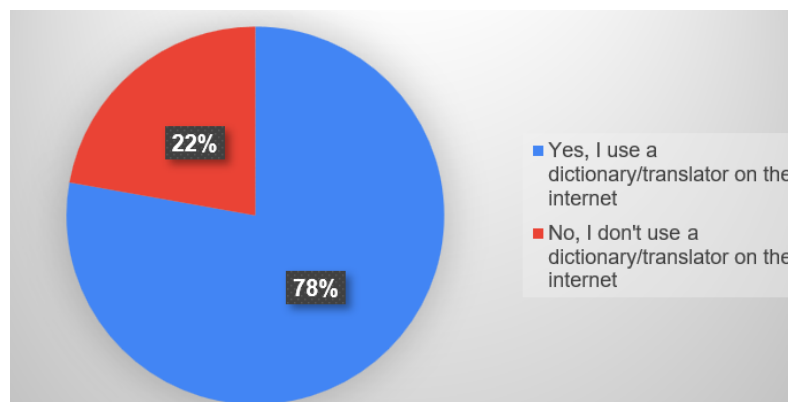


Figure 5. Students' tool when reading in Literacy Cloud

f. Students' preference in deciding the book provided in Literacy Cloud

Figure 6 displays 60% of students revealed that they chose the book by book's level. 27% students stated that they chose the book by looking book's cover and its template or design. 7 % of students stated that they chose the book by the book's author/s. 4 of students revealed they chose the book by book's rating and 2 % of students stated they chose the book by the length of the book.

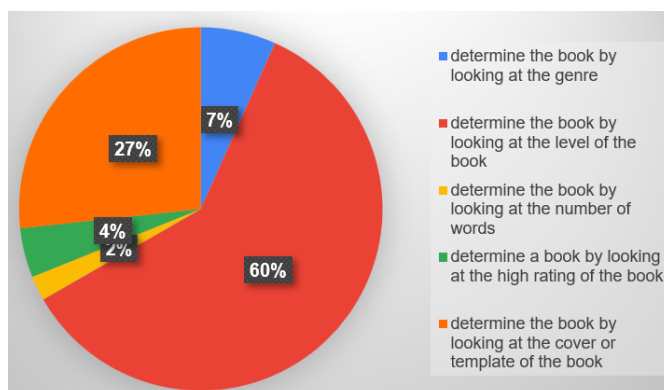


Figure 6. Students' preference in deciding the book provided in Literacy Cloud

g. Students' understanding about the content of the book they read in Literacy Cloud

Figure 6 displays 69% of students stated that they needed dictionary to understand the story they read in Literacy Cloud. 22 % of students stated that they understood but did not full the whole story and they revealed they didn't need a dictionary. Then, 9 % of students stated that they understood the story they read in Literacy Cloud.

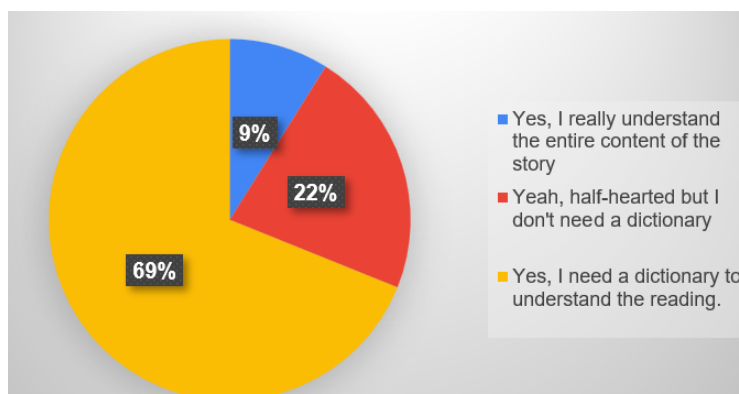


Figure 7. Students' understanding about the content of the book they read in Literacy Cloud

2. Students' Perception of Literacy Cloud (RQ2)

a. Positive attitude

Students revealed that they enjoyed using Literacy Cloud in implementing extensive reading. It means they gave positive attitude toward the implementation of ER through of Literacy Cloud. The following are students quotes.

S3: Literacy cloud is very fun and interesting for all students

S10: I'm very happy, learning to read and translate English with cloud literacy

S11: It was very interesting learning to use cloud literacy because there are pictures to make it easier to understand stories

S17: Very satisfying, easy to access and the language is easy to understand besides that we get a lot of new vocabulary

b. Increase students' reading motivation

Most of students demonstrated that Literacy Cloud increase their reading motivation since it provides interesting cover of book features. The following are students' excerpts.

S38: I want to read more.

S22: Reading books on Literacy Cloud is very interesting and can increase interest in reading with the features provided such as being able to listen to audio and video, as well as the pictures provided

c. Students feel grateful to be introduced Literacy cloud media for ER

Almost all the participants pointed out that they felt grateful to know the Literacy Cloud website. They were happy, they access and open the website wherever they go. The following are some of the students' excerpts.

S5: Literacy cloud is a website that provides English stories accompanied by interesting pictures so that beginners don't feel difficult, btw this is my first English story website

S14: Thank you, literacy cloud, I understand English, although not all of it

S18: I am happy to know about cloud literacy which can be used to start learning English, and thanks also to my teacher who has introduced this platform to me and other friends

S27: Thank you very much to My English teacher who has told me and my friends about literacy cloud, after using literacy cloud, I learned a lot of English words and how to read English properly and correctly by listening to Video on literacy cloud

S34: It's nice to get to know literacy could also introduce it to other people, it's very useful.

S40: very memorable because this is the first time, I have read a digital book which is very unique and funny, you can see from the cover that I am already interested in reading it.

d. Enhance students' English vocabulary mastery

Most of the students revealed that Literacy Cloud support their vocabulary development. As they stated below.

S2: It's very useful because it can add vocabulary that was not previously known

S39: I came to know that there is a new online media that can help me increase my vocabulary in English.

S10: I know various kinds of English vocabulary/that I don't know yet"

S12: I can learn and know more about English vocabulary

S16: Literacy cloud is indeed suitable for learning English, yes, even though there are words we don't know at least we know that with literacy cloud there are many new words and make it much easier to be made to learn through online media

S20: I know about vocabulary that I have never encountered

S22: Apart from getting new vocabulary, I can retell stories that I have read "story telling"

e. Improve students' reading comprehension

Since Literacy Cloud provides graded readers, the students said that it improves students' reading comprehension. The following are the examples of students' excerpts.

- S14: Through I understand English even though I do not fully understand it
S16: I can have more ability in speaking English than before even though a little but it can make me understand and it's a little easier to learn
S34: I Can understand a word by looking at a picture
S44: I can understand the meaning a bit

f. Literacy Cloud helps students to improve their English Skill

Most of the students felt that their English skill improves after they use Literacy Cloud in extensive reading program since the Literacy Cloud provides examples how to read the story in a certain book and the students could immitate how to pronounce the word at the story. The following are the examples of the students' excerpts.

- S25: After accessing literacy cloud, I feel good at speaking English
S29: From Literacy Cloud I know the correct pronunciation
S30: It's helpful tool, because we can improve our speaking English by listening to audio or video
S33: I feel better understand how to pronounce in English correctly and how to write it
S39: It' helpful because from the literacy cloud, I can try to retell what I read to my friends and of course hold back my speaking skills in English.
S41: Literacy cloud assists me learn to read

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the implementation of extensive reading through Literacy Cloud and students' perception of that implementation. After the researchers analyzed the results, the first result showed that Literacy Cloud facilitated students in extensive reading program, it provides easy reading material, a wide range of topics, freely to choose what they want to read, read as much as possible, the reading purpose is for pleasure and gaining general understanding. Those principles of implementation of extensive reading using Literacy Cloud were in line with the principles of implementing extensive reading which proposed by Bamford and Day (Bamford & Day, 2004). For this reason, Literacy Cloud can be a choice for English language teachers in implementing extensive reading program.

For the second results, students also were asked to express their perception after using Literacy Cloud in the implementation of extensive reading. The results revealed that students feel positive impact toward their English skill, especially in reading skill. The results of students perceptions were summarized and support the previous studies' results, such as: positive attitude, increase students' reading motivation (Day, 2015; Ng et al., 2019; Ruzin, 2019), feel grateful to be introduced Literacy cloud media for ER, enhance students English vocabulary mastery (Iqbal, 2017; Tabata-Sandom, 2020), Literacy Cloud improve students' reading comprehension, and help students to improve their English skill (Grabe & Stoller, 2020). It can be concluded that the results of the present study emphasized many benefits from implementing ER through Literacy Cloud.

CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that the implementation of ER through online-based (Literacy Cloud) by EFL learners is somewhat in line with the principles proposed by Day & Bamford. Moreover, the findings highlighted students' perceptions of the implementation of ER through Literacy

Cloud in six aspects: 1.) positive attitude toward, 2.) Increase students' reading motivation, 3.) feel grateful to be introduced Literacy cloud media for ER, 4.) enhance students English vocabulary mastery, 5.) Literacy Cloud improve students' reading comprehension, 6.) help students to improve their English Skill.

This research gives contribution to the researcher find the best media to implement ER in English classroom context. For the students, it gives students motivation and make they are interested to learn English, especially in reading comprehension in narrative text, Then, for the teacher, it helps and inspires the teacher to determine the media that appropriate to implement ER habits.

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