Students' Perception towards the Use of Insert Learning App in Blended Learning to Enhance Reading Comprehension

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ABSTRACT

One of the essential skills to expand students' knowledge and abilities is reading. Teachers have used various media and platforms to support the learning and teaching process during online classes. However, to help students easily understand what they read, teachers have to make and provide techniques, strategies, and media for the needs of their students, including reading mastery. Using appropriate media can be pivotal for teachers to make the students understand by considering its efficiency. This paper focuses on investigating the students' perception towards the use of the Insert Learning App in Blended Learning and Teaching to enhance students' comprehension in reading. This study uses a case study method. The participants were master degree students of the English Department. In total, 50 students consisted of 22 male students and 38 female students. The data were collected mainly through questionnaires and interviews to find out the students' perception towards the use of Insert Learning. The result of this study reveals that most students have positive perceptions regarding the usage of Insert Learning as a teaching media for reading comprehension in blended learning. It is a beneficial tool to make reading more interactive and engaging. Students also claim that Insert Learning is easy to use because it is connected as an extension in Google Chrome.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the rapid development of science and technology requires people to increase their knowledge and experience. One way to increase knowledge is to read the latest information. For students, reading is one of the skills that affect the improvement of their academic abilities. Because by increasing reading activities, students can explore their talents and potential, spur on the improvement of their reasoning power, train concentration, and improve school achievement. This is in line with Iftanti's (2015) statement that a better student's reading ability can provide a greater possibility for

success in the field. Given the many benefits obtained from reading activities, it is clear that reading is a very important activity for students. Reading is the primary means by which students learn a language. The students will only know something if they read. According to Stone, "reading is a central objective that children must learn to succeed in school and life." This is supported by Smith, who states that "reading is a thought-full activity." Nanda et al. (2018) stated that according to Pardon (2004), reading is a process carried out by the reader to get a message, which will be conveyed by the author through words or writing. Pardon's statement implies that reading is more than just looking at words on a book page or knowing vocabulary and grammar, it is an interactive process in which readers try to engage with texts by interpreting the meanings of the texts they read or relating them with their prior knowledge.

According to Klingner, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007), reading comprehension is a multi-component, extremely complicated process involving numerous interactions between readers and what they bring to the text, such as previous knowledge and technique used, as well as text-related factors. It also describes as knowing the meaning of words, understanding the meaning of a word in context, following the organization of a passage and identifying antecedents and references in it, drawing inferences from a passage about its contents, identifying the main thought of a passage, answering questions answered in a passage, and recognizing literary devices or propositional strife are all fundamental skills required for a writer. In another word, reading comprehension is a skill to understand the reading text. The readers should be able to understand what the author wrote and build their meaning from the text that has been read.

However, literacy data from UNESCO shows that Indonesian literacy is second from the bottom, which confirms that the Indonesian people's reading interest is still low (DPRWebsite, 2021). To overcome this problem, various efforts have been made to increase the reading demand of the Indonesian people, especially students. One way that is done is the use of several strategies, techniques, and even several applications that teachers implement to increase students' reading interest.

After two years of facing the Covid-19 pandemic, students can finally study at school. The teaching and learning process, which is fully online, can be conducted by using blended learning. In a study on the benefits and possibilities of blended education, the Online Learning Consortium treats hybrid learning and blended learning as the same thing. Hybrid learning is defined as those that "integrate online with conventional face-to-face class activities in a structured, pedagogically beneficial manner." Although teachers may disagree on what is "pedagogically worthwhile," the essence of hybrid education is clear: online technology is utilized to not only complement but also modify and improve the learning experience. In line with that, (Graham, 2006) proposed that blended learning systems combine face-to-face and computer-mediated instruction. This describes the blend as a combination of two types of course delivery. It also refers to a wide range of alternatives opened up by merging the Internet and digital media with traditional classroom settings requiring physical participation from the teacher and students. In a word, blended learning is an approach to learning that combines face-to-face and online learning experiences. Ideally, each (both online and off) will complement the other by using its particular strength. Besides, the use of blended learning during this era is quite common. Students are also used to operate smartphone and laptop to support their study during the lockdown.

Several existing studies have been discussing the struggle to enhance students' reading comprehension. Sriyati, et al. (2019) found that INSERT (Interactive Notation

System to effective Reading and Thinking) strategy and students' motivation do not correlate with students' reading comprehension of descriptive text. Similarly, Nanda (2018), in his study investigating the use of Quizziz in improving students' reading comprehension skills found that by using a quantitative study, the result showed that in improving reading comprehension, Quizizz could make the students' learning outcomes better than before. Meanwhile, Nadirah et al. (2020) analyzed the use of Interactive media to improve students' reading comprehension. The data analysis showed that the interactive multimedia application enhanced the students' ability in reading comprehension.

The findings from the prior research, however, have emphasized the investigation of using some strategies, techniques, and applications to improve students' reading comprehension. However, no study investigated the use of Insert Learning Application to enhance students reading comprehension. Insert learning is an extension application on Google Chrome that allows users to turn websites into interactive learning. Insert learning has a fantastic toolbar that allows us to highlight text, add sticky notes, ask students either essay or multiple choice questions on web pages, add topics to discuss together, etc. From the usefulness of the features in Insert learning, this application is very suitable as a tool to enhance students' enjoyment and to make reading learning more interesting and interactive.

Therefore, it is still wide open to investigate this application. Considering the above phenomenon, the present study aims to analyze more about the students' perception of using Insert learning to enhance reading comprehension.

METHOD

This study is a case study method to gain insights into students' perception towards the use of Insert Learning App to enhance reading comprehension. The participants were selected in such a way that master degree students of the English Department, in total 50 students consisted of 22 male students and 38 female students. The writers collected the data mainly through structured questionnaires and interviews in order to get relevant and valid data. The questionnaires are designed as the main instrument to answer the research problem and to describe the perception of using insert learning as media for reading comprehension.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research gave the participants some questionnaires to determine students' perception towards Insert Learning application. Of 50 students, 36 students responded to the questionnaires. The questions stated in the questionnaires consisted of 11 items. The first 10 items were closed-ended, and the last were open-ended. There are two main points as the study's finding: (1) the students' perception towards reading in English, and (2) Students' perception towards Insert Learning Application.

1. Students' perception towards reading in English
   The first and the second questions in the questionnaire asked about the students' hobbies in reading English texts. The result of the first question showed that 21 out

of 36 participants liked English and the others revealed they liked English. While on the second question, 27 out of 36 participants enjoy English reading materials but not the rest.

Table.1

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I like English	21	15	-	-
2	I like reading materials in English	24	3	9	-

2. Students' perception towards Insert Learning Application
The next six items in the questionnaire aimed to observe the students' perception towards Insert learning application.

Table.2

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
3	I like the use of Insert Learning for blended learning, especially in reading	3	33	-	-
4	Learning to read becomes more fun by using Insert Learning.	6	30	-	-
5	Insert Learning is very easy to operate to support blended learning	12	21	3	-
6	The features in Insert Learning can help the reading materials in blended learning be more interactive	9	21	3	3
7	I become more focused on reading when I use Insert Learning	3	27	6	-
8	I'm having difficulty, especially in using some features on Insert Learning.	18	18	-	-
9	I have limitations in using Insert Learning, such as laptops, internet networks and so on.	18	18	-	-

10	Teachers play an active role in learning English and provide feedback	21	15	-	-

The result of the third and the fourth items showed that all participants liked the use of insert learning in blended learning for reading materials. It also describes that using Insert learning becomes more fun due to its interactive learning in reading comprehension. The fifth and sixth questions relate to the ease and features of the insert learning application. 12 out of 36 participants strongly agree that insert learning is very easy to operate, while 21 others agree. On the other hand, 3 participants disagree with this statement. In other words, insert learning is difficult to operate. The sixth statement in the questionnaire discussed the features in Insert Learning that can make reading material in blended learning more interactive. From this statement, 9 participants stated strongly agree, and 21 participants agreed.

Meanwhile, 6 participants disagree with this statement, and three strongly disagree. Furthermore, related to the seventh item, *"I become more focused on reading when I use Insert Learning"* the majority of participants strongly agree with this statement, where 3 strongly agree, and 27 participants agree. Yet, the remaining six disagree with this. In other words, Insert Learning has no effect on making them more focused. The eighth and the ninth items have the same result. All participants stated that they have difficulties and limitations in using Insert learning. 18 out of 36 participants strongly agree that they have difficulties operating the features on Insert Learning, and so do the limitation related to the laptop and internet connection, as the remaining 18 participants agreed with them. The last closed-ended question in the questionnaire measured their response towards the statement *"teachers play an active role in learning English and provide feedback"*. The result revealed that no one disapproved of it. 21 Participants strongly agree, and the other 15 agree on it. The open-ended question in the questionnaire asked about the recommendation application which can be used in blended learning related to reading comprehension. There are some participants who recommend some useful applications in reading and also mention the reason for using it.

Reading is a crucial ability for locating information in written form. The objective of reading also determines the right technique to reading comprehension. From the present study's finding, almost all students have positive feedback towards the use of insert learning in blended learning, especially in enhancing students' reading comprehension. They stated that Insert learning could make the teaching-learning process more interactive and easier and help them focus more on reading the text. It implies that students and educators, of course, highly utilize the use of digital technology in English language learning. Digital technology can be used as a means to increase student interest in learning English and improve their reading skill. Besides, digital technology can improve the quality of learning and the quality of students and simultaneously improve the quality of educators in the technology sector.

It was not surprising that students strongly agree/agree that Insert learning could improve their reading comprehension. Several previous studies have also shown the benefits of using technology in learning. Those include increased engagement in the classroom (Chen, Lambert, & Guidry, 2010; Diemer, Fernandez, and Streepey, 2012; Wilson, Goodman, Bradbury, & Gross, 2013), beneficial to learning (Chen, Lambert, &

Guidry, 2010; Lam & Tong, 2012), increased academic achievement (Flumerfelt & Green, 2013), increased student attention and participation (Edmonds & Ruch, 2015), supporting collaborative learning (Falloon, 2014), and increased classroom motivation (Lam & Tong, 2012). These studies contradict Loan (2009), who said that the existence of new technologies such as television, cinema, cellular phones (Gadgets), computers, and the internet has become a threat to reading habits. Another study conducted by Hidayat (2017) revealed that the development of information and communication technology strongly influences students' reading interest, which can be interpreted as the more advanced technology is, the lower students' reading interest will be.

When viewed positively, the existence of technology and the latest applications, such as Insert learning can be used to improve students' reading comprehension. Currently, many internet media are considered capable of increasing students' reading interest. These media like this can be downloaded and installed for free.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

As highlighted in the previous finding and discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that more than half of English Department postgraduate students enjoy reading English literature. Furthermore, most students have a positive view regarding the usage of Insert Learning as a teaching media for reading comprehension in blended learning. The notion is reinforced by the number of questions answered by students who strongly agree or agree with the statement, "reading becomes more pleasurable by utilizing Insert Learning." Furthermore, students claim that Insert Learning is easy to use because it is connected as an extension of Google Chrome. On the other hand, students are interested in adopting Insert Learning because it makes reading exercises more engaging and interactive. Not only teachers but also all students may share their ideas and their understanding of the reading material. Furthermore, Insert Learning is highly effective in blended learning along with the spread of covid-19 pandemic because the activity of face-to-face learning remains limited.

On the contrary, there are still some technical issues in using Insert learning as an instructional tool, specifically in reading, such as the unavailability of a laptop and the lack of internet/Wi-Fi. Thus it makes it difficult for students to try the application. Secondly, when it comes to functionality, the tools offered in insert learning are still basic, which means that some students do not see any benefit. This study is only offered to a select number of postgraduate students. As a result, future researchers can study the usage of Insert Learning in a larger context.

Furthermore, in the last question, students submitted feedback on various applications that may be utilized in blended learning, especially to promote reading comprehension, such as edpuzzle, moodle, etc. As a consequence, the results of the students' suggestions may be considered as reinforcements for teachers and future researchers to investigate the usage of more effective platforms for reading comprehension.

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