Integrating ICT in English Language Learning: Students' Perceptions of a State University in Jambi Province

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Abstract

This research was done in order to know students' perception toward integrating ICT in English Language Learning and also to find out problem that may faced by students during the ICT integration. This research used quantitative method in order to describe students' perception toward the use of ICT in ELL. This research involved English students from a state university in Jambi province as the respondents. The data were collected by using questionnaires adapted from Chutopama (2004). The questionnaires consisted of items related to the use of ICT for their learning, their reason(s) of using ICT, as well as the problem(s) encountered through the use of ICT for the learning. After that, the data were analyzed by using SPSS 16 that pointed at a point in which the students agreed that ICT is beneficial for their learning process, especially in terms of accessing information for learning. Nevertheless, employing ICT in learning needs to be supported by sufficient equipment, and needs to educate the students to be an agile user for better, more effective, and more efficient process of learning.

Subject Areas

Language Teaching

Keywords

ICT in Language Learning, English Language Learning, Students' Perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Good quality of a university can bring positive effects to the quality of its students. A university is considered of having a better quality if it can pass some criteria such as having sufficient facilities for learning process, an efficient management, a democratic leadership, qualified learning process, sufficient library, and the utilization of ICT . One of those criteria investigated in this research was the utilization of ICT in learning process.

ICT is defined as a tool to distribute, process, store and exchange information in the set of application or service . ICT refers to the use of technological tools for storing, creating, and sharing information. In other words, ICT refers to a kind of devices that can help people in accessing information, storing it and sharing it with other people. The use of ICT is considered as a potential factor to help students in improving their academic achievement in language learning process. The use of ICT can help students in accessing information easier in many places which is a way to produce an active learning related to real life which also increases educational quality among universities . Therefore, the

use of ICT to support teaching and learning of English needs to be investigated. Most of the students are more interested in learning when the teachers make use of ICT as their media to create an interactive and innovative English learning. But there are still some colleges which do not fully used ICT in learning process, they are lack of access to ICT facilities, including using interactive software to support four skills of English. This condition provides boredom situation and make student becoming passive in learning process. Besides, the traditional method still remain dominating in teaching and learning process while computers are seen to have potential to make significant contribution to teaching and learning of English.

In English department of a state university in Jambi, the use of ICT in teaching and learning activity integrates the use of projector so far. Projector helps students getting visual material which might help them understood the lesson better. However, the use of ICT cannot go any further, there is no other ICT facilities supporting this circumstances. The use of projectors alone seems no longer enough to accommodate the learning process.

Based on the explanation above, it is important to know the quality of the ICT itself, since it is used in learning process and such information can be gauged from students' perception toward the use of ICT, therefore, the problems of ICT utilization can be investigated. Furthermore, this phenomenon makes the researcher interested in conducting a research to find out what are the students' perceptions related to the utilization of ICT in learning process in a state university in Jambi. The research entitled The Use of ICT in Language Learning: Students' Perceptions of a State University in Jambi Province.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of ICT (Information, Communication, and Technology)

ICT is defined as the use of technologies to store, to create, to accumulate, to edit and to share information in various forms (Tinuoye and Adogbeji, 2013). ICT is considered as the innovation in technology which involves the use of computers, internet, and other devices exist in people's daily life. In other word, it can be concluded that ICT refers to technology tools which are used to help people in accessing or storing information Bandele, (2006) in Tinuoye and Adogbeji (2013).

ICT and Education

ICT is considered potentially effective in accelerating, enriching, and make skills deepen, even motivating and engaging students in order to support learners for having experience that will be useful for learners' future job (Davis and Tearle, 1999; Lemke and Coughlin, 1998; Yusuf, 2005; as cited in Amin, 2013).

Using ICT and integrating it in learning process may bring positive result for both teachers and learners because it can produce effective learning (Abidin, et al., 2011). In order to make the integration of ICT is effective, it is important for teachers to know the nature of learning itself (Divaharan & Wong, 2003; as cited in Abidin et al., 2011). Technologies improve teaching and learning process through active engagement based on the real life situations faced by both of participants (Roschelle et al., 2000; as cited in Abidin et al., 2011).

Furthermore, it is important for teachers to introduce ICT to learners in order to make ICT work more effective. In introducing ICT in the classroom, there will be three kinds of conditions that should be considered by the teachers. First, teachers supposed to believe that technology is effective to be used in classroom, second, teachers supposed to believe that the technology implementation will not disturb the teaching and learning process, the last is teachers supposed to trust that teachers are the technology controller not the opposite, (Zhao & Cziko, 2001; as cited in Amin, 2013).

Moreover, ICT is able to expand access to education in following ways (Tinio, 2002; as cited in Tinuoye & Adogbeji, 2013, pp. 23-24):

- Anytime and anywhere: ICT is a possible solution for time and place problem for learning process.

ICT can face the time lag problem and distance learning since ICT makes students possible to access the material anytime and anywhere. The example of this point is online course which let learners to access the material 24 hours in a day. Moreover, distance will be no longer problem since both teachers and learners would be benefit through easily access the material such as the use of educational program in radio broadcasting. Additionally, certain types of ICT, such as teleconferencing technologies, enable instruction to be received simultaneously by multiple, geographically dispersed learners.

- Access to remote learning resources: By integrating ICT in teaching and learning process, both teachers and students will not be depended on the printed materials anymore. The help of the internet ease them to accessed the learning materials whenever and wherever they. Moreover, ICT devices help many schools in developing countries to overcome the limited sources of learning material that could not be obtained from their library. In addition, since ICT makes the global conversation be possible, so it may ease the learners to communicate with other people researchers, professionals, mentor, or even expert in education in order to gain intended information.

- Improving the quality of education and training is a critical issue, particularly at a time of educational expansion: ICT devices may improve the education quality, which is, ICT may increase the learners' motivation and engagement, ICT also facilitates the acquisition of basic skills, and also improve training for teacher (Haddad & Jurich, 2002). Additionally, ICT devices are also transformational tools which, when used appropriately, can promote the shift to a learner-centred environment.

- Motivating to learn: the challenging and authentic materials which are from the videos, television, or even computer software that combine text, sound, and even moving images may engage the student during the learning process. Moreover, the use of sound effect, song, dramatizations, and other features of interactive video may require learners to listening and involve in the given learning material. Furthermore, other type of ICT, net- worked computers with Internet connectivity can increase learner motivation as it combines the media richness and interactivity of other ICT devices with the opportunity to connect with real people and to participate in real world events.

- Enhancing teacher training: ICT devices are also used for improving the access of teacher training quality such as in China. The large scale radio and television based teacher education has been conducted for many years by the China Central Radio and TV University, the Shanghai Radio and TV University and many other RTVUs in the country (Carnoy, et al, 2002).

Weakness and Strength of ICT

In supporting education, ICT must have the strength and weaknesses that can be used as consideration for integrating it in learning process. Vyasulu (2012) already divided the strength and weaknesses of ICT into some points, they are:

- Individualization of learning
  It means that people can learn individually and not as homogenous group. ICT allows each person to access the knowledge individually.

- Interactivity
  Interactivity is the way in which someone can relate to the content, go forward, backward in the content, start at any point depending upon prior knowledge, instead of just stuck at the same point. ICT helps people to be more active in accessing the knowledge that can be taken from many sources.

- Low per unit cost

Individually, ICT can reduce the cost of education from very high to very low.

- Distance and climate insensitive

  It is easy for every people to access knowledge through ICT although she or he are not in a same place or it can be said that place will not be a problem for ICT or even the climate of the place.

- Can serve multiple teaching functions and diverse audience

  ICT especially the computer and Internet based can be useful in drill and practice, to help diagnose and solve problems, for accessing information and knowledge about various related themes.

- High speed delivery, wide range at low cost

  ICT let every people access the information quickly and the information or knowledge will be delivered quickly as well, for instance, in accessing information using internet, someone only need to type everything she or he tried to find and internet will work fast to get the information.

- Uniform quality

  If content is well produced and is of good quality, the same quality can be delivered to the rich and the poor, the urban and the rural equally and at the same low cost.

While the weaknesses of ICT will be mentioned in the following points:

- High infrastructure and start up costs

  It cost money to build ICT system and to maintain it.

- Tend toward centralized uniform content in economies of scale

  The larger the numbers, the lower the cost. It means that sometimes people try to reach large numbers so they make content common without considering individual differences.

- Are not ideally location and problem sensitive

  Address problems in a general way, without special effort it can not solve local and culturally

sensitive problems.

- Problems of reach, access, remain

  Not everyone has equal access and not everyone benefits equally from the use of ICT.

- End to create new class of knowledge rich or knowledge poor

  Those who have access and knowledge through the media become richer and those who do not become poorer, widening the "knowledge or digital gap" between rich and poor. It can occur because as the previous point said that ICT will cost the user, for those who have money they can buy supported tools for support the ICT itself.

- Essentially delivery systems

  A medium is different from the content and sometimes it is forgotten that ICT can deliver everything without any filter because ICT devices are essentially meant only to deliver content, not to change attitudes or bring about behavior change.

- Hard to assess impact

  Learning from ICT delivered content is difficult to assess since such learning is of a multidimensional and long term kind. So sometimes ICT still used in the wrong way.

Problems in ICT Utilization

There must be some problems that will occur when applying ICT in one institution and the problem that will occur generally divided into some points as stated below:

- Insufficient ICT facilities and unsophisticated accessories

  Problems of quality and lack of resources are compounded by the new realities faced by higher education institutions battle to cope with every increasing student's numbers (Nwosu and Ugbomo, 2012; as cited in Tinuoye and Adogbeji, 2013). ICT will not bring advantages if the supported facilities are not fully provided and it will not work properly if there is not balance between number of students and number of

facilities or ICT tools.

- Insufficient people who master ICT

  Although some institutions already provided ICT for learning process, but it is also important to consider about human resources who will use it. Instructor or teacher even lecturer must posses ICT skill so a training is needed in order to help them in mastering ICT as a result they can help their students. There are many teachers or lecturers who only have a little or no training in information and technology and its integration into the curriculum (U.S. Congres, 1988 ; Munday, Windham & Stamper, 1991; as cited Chutopama, 2004). They can not follow the development of ICT then they just teach as they teach before using white board or chalk board as a result most of their students have less motivation to enjoy the learning session or even just follow the class.

- Low quality machine

  Internet as one of ICT part must need a good connection in order to help students surfing in online networking easily. Fast internet connection will help learners in accessing information. It will not take a long time to find out what they need, but sometimes connection of the internet depends on the machine itself. Insufficient number, low quality, and readiness of the computer machine can disturb students in accessing information because of slow connection (Jaunchainat, 1998; as cited in Chutopama, 2004). Based on the result of the study, it was recommended for University to maximize the internet usage by improving the efficiencies of the system, training, teaching process, and providing students with printed internet book.

- Inappropriate usage

  Since ICT especially internet is very easy to be gained, teachers or lecturers will face difficulty in controlling students. Choosing material in teaching will be easy for teacher but students will find it difficult because they can not measure how far they get the information (Jetton, 2003; as cited in Chutopama, 2004). Some critics also come as respond toward the use of ICT, it is viewed as inappropriate for children to use internet that cause some people think that ICT does not being impact to language learning.

ICT and English Language Learning

Nowadays, as technology developed, ICT occurs as one potential learning aid. One of ICT devices is computer. Computers can make interactive human communication being possible. The computer based activity can connect people to others who come from different place that is local or global network by the help of internet (Kern and Warschaeur, 2001; as cited in Cahyono and Widiati, 2011).

By having access to internet, students can see the potentials of almost any website for learning English (Cahyono and Widiati, 2011). There must be many sites designed especially for students of English as a foreign language in which they can exchange email or information, do exercise and find out the answer, browse many learning materials. The real advantage of ICT in English language learning for both teachers and students is they can get access to the authentic English (Harmer, 2001:149; as cited in Cahyono and Widiati, 2011). They can browse and visit the site whenever they want and wherever they are. Besides, it is also possible for them to communicate with a native speaker or other language learners who come from all over the world thus exposing themselves to the target language and they can access it 24 hours a day.

Furthermore, there are others learning process which involve computer without access to internet. First, the use of interactive text during the listening class. The existence of a text can increase students' motivation during the listening class (Jakodobstirr and Hooper, 1995; as cited in Yusof, 2012). Text here is not a usual text, this text is provided in the computer which appear

while the audio is played. It can help students to improve their listening ability. Second, the use of three different media which are audio, video tape, and CD-ROM in listening activity that make students give better performance on task and get effective comprehension and recall while using it in listening test (Brett, 1997; as cited in Yusof, 2012). Third, the use of ICT in designing activities for teaching done by the teacher such as some result of expert study showed that ICT is used in designing and doing activities in teaching pronunciation (Lee, 2008; as cited in Yusof 2012), grammar (Al-Jarf, 2005; as cited in Yusof 2012), vocabulary (Tsou, Wang, & Li, 2002; as cited in Yusof 2012), listening and speaking (Hochart, 1998; as cited in Yusof 2012), communication skills (Lee, 2002; as cited in Yusof 2012), reading (Akyel & Ercetin, 2009; as cited in Yusof 2012), and writing (Chikamatsu, 2003; as cited in Yusof 2012).

METHOD

This research used the quantitative method which involved 76 students as respondents from English depart-

ment in a state university of Jambi province. As stated in the purpose of this research above, the use of ICT in teaching and learning in some classes of English Department was investigated. Through this research, problems encountered by the students were discovered by inventing the students' perceptions.

76 respondents were those who have experienced the use of ICT during the teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Then, the data were obtained through questionnaires given to the respondents in order to find out their perceptions towards the use of ICT and the problem that they encountered in the use of ICT during the learning process. Finally, the data were analyzed by using SPSS 16. The result was taken into consideration to draw conclusion regarding to the students' perceptions towards the use of ICT in a state university of Jambi province.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students' perception toward the use of ICT in English language learning
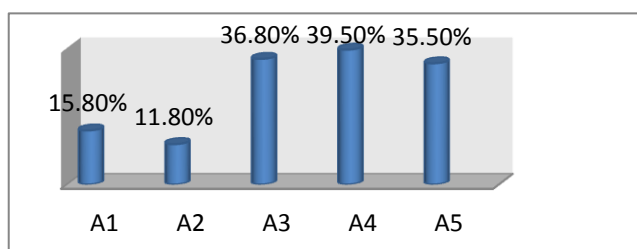
A1 : IT equipment and services are available at the University.
A2 : IT equipments are available in classroom.
A3 : Lecturers at the University use ICT equipment in teaching.
A4 : Lecturers at the University assigned students to use ICT equipment.
A5 : Students of UNJA use ICT for doing project.

Figure 1. Use of ICT Equipment in terms of "often" statement

Based on the chart, it could be seen that ICT devices were available at classrooms in the University. The chart also shows that lecturers and students are already familiar with ICT devices. Lecturers tended to use ICT in teaching

to deliver material or just assigned students to do assignment, while students tend to use ICT to do the assignment given by the lecturer. These findings indicate that the lecturers and the students consider that ICT is,

somehow, useful in teaching and learning activities. ICT makes the learning activities easier in some ways. Besides that, over past two decades, ICT already introduced and used during the learning process, than it

indicated that the educational stakeholders have realized the potential use of IT as a learning tool and have determined that students need to be able in using it (Jenes, 2000; Chutopama, 2004).
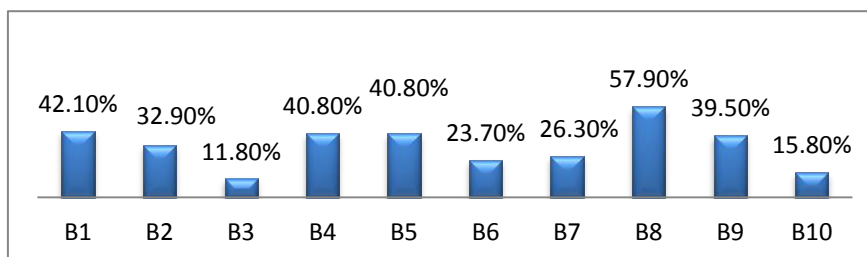
B1 = IT equipment like CD-ROM and internet are very useful to teaching – learning activities.
B2 = The information searched from IT is updated.
B3 = The information searched from IT is reliable.
B4 = IT makes learning and studying easy.
B5 = IT makes learning it easy and convenient to search information.
B6 = IT saves money.
B7 = IT saves time.
B8 = IT makes global communication easy.
B9 = IT helps make new discoveries and technology.
ion and solve problem.

Figure 2. Usefulness of ICT in term "always" statement

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the students agree that ICT is useful to be used in English language learning, because it benefits them in some ways. An easier global communication due to the existence of ICT ranked as the highest percentage of the ICT utilization done by the respondents, then followed by the tools of ICT such as CD-ROM and internet which are very useful to teaching-learning activities as well, and also IT makes learning and studying easy since when students would like to search information.

There are many communication services that can be accessed through one of ICT devices that is internet. By accessing the internet, students can check many potentials websites to communicate with others in

learning English (Bambang Cahyono and Utami Widiati, 2011). There are sites which are designed for English students in order to exchange emails, journals, or other learning materials. In addition, as cited in Cahyono and Widiati (2011), the real advantage of ICT in English language learning for both teachers and students is they can get access to the authentic English (Harmer, 2001:149). They can browse and visit the sites whenever they want and wherever they are. Besides, it is also possible for them to communicate with a native speaker or other English language learners who come from all over the world. Therefore, they experienced a lot more exposures to the target language and also accesses during 24 hours a day which are very supportive for

their English learning process. Furthermore, there is also another learning process which involves a set of computer without accessing the internet, such as the utilization of CD-ROM that could help the students during the learning process as what they have agreed through the questionnaires. CD-ROM was frequently used in "listening". According to Brett (1997) as cited in Yusof (2012), CD-ROM utilization in listening activity helped the students to perform better on task and learn effectively. ICT is not only useful for students but also for lecturers. Some experts have also provided evidences of ICT utilization in designing various activities for English teaching and learning done by the teachers such as pronunciation (Lee, 2008), grammar (Al-Jarf, 2005),

vocabulary (Tsou, Wang, and Li, 2002), listening and speaking (Hochart, 1998), communication skills (Lee, 2002), reading (Akyel and Ercetin, 2009), and writing (Chikamatsu, 2003) as cited in . ICT is considered potentially effective to accelerate, enrich, and deepen skills, as well as to motivate and engage students, to help relate school experience to work practices, create economic viability for tomorrow's workers, as well as strengthening teaching and helping schools change (Davis and Tearle, 1999; Lemke and Coughlin, 1998; cited by Yusuf, 2005) in Amin (2013). Utilization and integration of ICT in learning process may bring positive results for both teachers and learners, because it can produce effective learning .

Problems during the use of ICT in English language learning
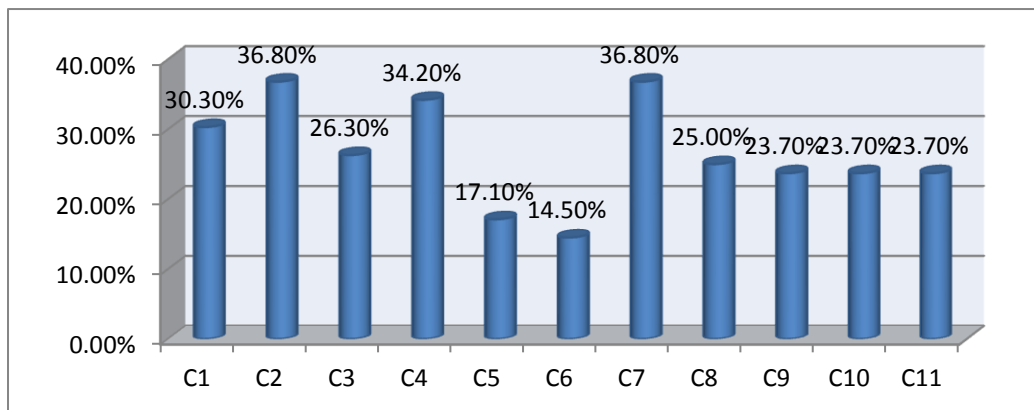
C1 = The computers serving IT are low in quality

C2 = There are very few staff using IT in their classes.

C3 = Most subject content is not suitable for IT use.

C4 = Limited time to use it.

C5 = The information search from IT do not meet the needs

C6 = Don't know how to operate the computer, CD-ROM, or internet.

C7 = The information search from IT always change.

C8 = Lack of knowledge in writing references from IT.

C9 = Lack of knowledge and skills in using English to search information from IT.

C10 = The university does not realize the importance of IT in classroom activities.

C11 = The lecturer do not realize the importance of IT in the classroom activities and assignment of the learner.

Figure 3. Percentage of Problems encountered by students

The chart shows percentage of problems encountered by students during the use of ICT that based on "agree" statement. The highest percentage gained by problem "there are very few lecturers using IT in their classes" and "the information search from IT always change" that is about 36.80 percent, then followed by "limited time to use it (C4) and the computer serving IT are low in quality (C1).

Based on this data, it shows that students agree the number one problem comes from the availability of ICT tools and the content of information they need. The highest percentage gained by C2 and C7. It indicates that although ICT tools have already been provided by University, some of the lecturers did not fully utilize ICT tools during the learning process or the other reasons were, first, only some lecturers who could master the ICT usage and second, it could be related to the limitation of time to use IT which made some lecturers felt reluctant in some ways integrating ICT in learning process. Although the institution has already provided ICT for learning process, it was also important to consider about human resources who would use it. Instructors or teachers even lecturers must have ICT skill, so a training is needed in order to help them in mastering ICT in order to be able to help their students. There are many teachers or lecturers who only have a little or no training in information and technology and its integration into the curriculum (U.S. Congress, 1988; Munday, Windham and Stamper, 1991; as cited in Chutopama (2004). They cannot catch up with the development of ICT, as the result, they just teach as they teach before using white board or chalk board which, circumstantially, affected the motivation of the student that some of the students might experience demotivation due to the monotonous activities in learning in the classroom. Moreover, the lesser the teachers or lecturers integrate ICT in learning process, the lesser exposures to English experienced by the students which means that the students might not

get optimal sources to practice their English in comparing to a condition where the lecturers integrated ICT in learning process. In a previous study done by Kulik (1994) cited by Mikre (2011) shows that students who used tutorial software in reading scored significantly higher on reading scores. Very young students could write their own stories by the help of computer then could gain higher scores in writing. Moreoever, students who use computer for writing scored higher on measures writing skills. The use of ICT facilities mostly show higher gains than those who don't use .

The next problem was low quality of ICT devices. It indicated that the machine that was used to support ICT utilization needed to be investigated to find out if the machine was still functional or not, then whether it was also needed to be updated or not, in order to make the machine go with the growing ICT devices and programs today. Besides, it was also about the connection to the internet itself. For instance, though the students owned supportive ICT devices, when the connection broke down or was bad, it became useless for them. And, when learners become frustrated in learning because of the lack of equipment, it can bring negative effect among the learners as this similar problem appeared in the previous study done by Chutopama (2004). Students can be less motivated and lose their spirit in learning, if these problems are not solved. Fast internet connection will help learners in accessing information easily. It will not take a long time to find out what they need, but sometimes connection of the internet depends on the machine itself. Insufficient number, low quality, and readiness of the computer machine can disturb students in accessing information because of slow connection (Jaunchainat, 1998; as cited in Chutopama, 2004). Based on the result of the study, it was recommended for University to maximize the internet usage by improving the efficiencies of the system, training, teaching process,

and providing students with printed internet book.

The lowest percentage was gained by C6 and followed by C5 that is "don't know how to operate computer, CD-ROM, or internet" and "the information search from IT do not meet the needs". Based on this result, it indicates that majority of the of the students of this University are able to use computer and the other ICT devices and the information that they search through ICT devices meet their needs so it helps them during the learning process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that students agreed that ICT is useful to be used in English language learning since it can bring advantages for them. Several advantages that gain high percentage are IT makes global communication easy, IT equipments like CD-ROM and internet are very useful to teaching-learning activities, and IT makes learning and studying easier, since students only need to type some words into the browsing engines to search information from the internet and thousands, even millions of source will come up.

Another perception of students was also taken from the use of ICT itself which more focused on the utilization. Majority of students stated that IT equipments were already provided in the university and they already used it in learning process. Students tended to use ICT services for searching information given by lecturer, while lecturer tended to use it for presenting material or as media in delivering task.

While the problems that faced by students during the utilization of ICT were, more or less, the same with the problem that faced by the respondents of Siranee Chutopama research in 2004, but the highest number gained by the statement was few lecturers using IT in their classes and the information always changed that make students being confused to determine which information reliable for their need (36.80%).

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