EFL STUDENTS' DIGITAL LITERACY: FACTORS INHIBITING ITS DEVELOPMENT AND EFFECTIVE ICT PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS' ICT SKILLS

A Thesis by

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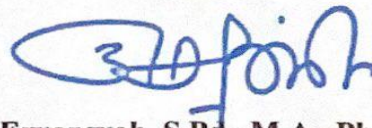
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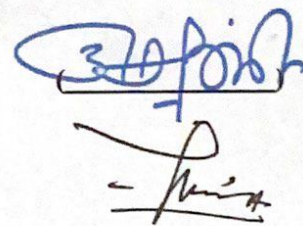
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DECLARATION

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THESIS DEDICATIONS AND MOTTO

I sincerely dedicated this thesis to:

- My beloved parents, H. Darmadi, S.Pd, M.Si and Hj. Yulainah,S.Ag, who have given me invaluable educational opportunities and never stop to support, pray, and love me.

Motto:

"Everyone works based on their time zone"

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EFL STUDENTS' DIGITAL LITERACY: FACTORS INHIBITING ITS DEVELOPMENT AND EFFECTIVE ICT PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS' ICT SKILLS

ABSTRACT

This study was intended to investigate EFL students' digital literacy skills, factors affecting them in developing their digital literacy skills, and effective ICT programs to develop EFL students' ICT skills. Respondents participating in this research were the English Education Study Program students of a university in South Sumatra Province. They were in the sixth-semester of study. Research data were collected through questionnaires and interview. To answer the formulation of this problem, the writer used qualitative descriptive research. The results of this study indicated that the most significant majority, or 69,4%, of the sixth semester students of English Education Study Program considered that the unavailability of digital devices on campus was the main factor inhibiting their digital literacy skills development. And in addition, the most significant majority, or 90,3% of the participants considered that YouTube was the most influential ICT program that can develop their ICT skills.

Keywords

Digital literacy, ICT programs, EFL students

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Writer will serve the introduction chapter into four parts, as following (1) the background of the study, (2) the problems of the study, (3) the objectives of the study, and (4) the significance of the study.

1.1 The Background of the Study

The 21st century, unlike any other period in human history, is characterized by technological developments, in which digital technology plays an essential role in the digital age, as well as access to information accessible to all people around the world (Black, 2009). This is the strongest reason for the need for efforts to close the gap in the accessibility of digital devices and expand opportunities for access to technology to create equity. Both educators and students are still unable to integrate their ability to access technology into the ongoing student learning process. They, especially students, are only able to use technology without knowing how to evaluate, choose, and use critical, as well as digital literacy skills. Accelerated technological advances have made digital literacy important for society in this information age Koltay (2011).

Digital literacy skills support effective technology interactions of students in a variety of academic situations. Therefore, students should master students 21stcentury skills to deal with such rapid technological advances. According to (Silva, 2009), twenty-first-century skills are not new, only essential. Specific skills have been the focus of all educational institutions worldwide for more than decades, such as language skills and critical thinking. On the other hand, several other skills recently emerged, namely, digital literacy. Twenty-first-century skills, as described by Fadel and Trilling (2010), are classified into three main knowledge domains: (1) innovative thinking; (2) information, media, and ICT (information, communication, and technology) skills (collectively referred to as digital literacy); and (3) life and career skills.

Digital Literacy skills divide into three points, i.e., information literacy, media literacy, information, communication, and technology literacy seem to have a vital role in the 21st century as this era is strongly related to digital technology (Zook, 2019). The first component, Information literacy, can effectively and ethically select,

evaluate, and use the information to acquire, apply and share their knowledge. ICT skills, refers to using digital technology, communication tools, and networks to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information bodies Panel (2002). The third component, Media Literacy, which is interdisciplinary, is associated with access, analyzing, evaluating, and communicating messages in various forms.

Beetham and Sharpe (2007) stated that away from the three acquisitions of required ICT skills through the technology utilization, digital literacy includes understanding, behaviors, and the capacity of individuals to recognize, obtain, handle, incorporate, interpret, examine, and synthesize digital tools and information, develop new expertise, construct media expressions, and engage with others in real-life contexts.

Being digitally literate is deemed necessary to survive in this era because it will help daily life and career achievement. Digital Literacy first defined by Gilster (1997) as **cited** by Pool (1997)that digital literacy is the ability of someone to understand the information and evaluate the information in various formats submitted by digital media.

Indonesians need to be well-prepared to cope with digital literacy, particularly in the field of Education. The development of science and information technology has brought students as the present generation into the world of digital literacy. The 21st century demands that the world of Education always continuously adopt technological developments to improve the quality of Education. Hence Digital literacy needs to be instilled in every individual, especially students. Digital literacy is expecting to spur students better to utilize digital literacy in the academic field. One of the advantages of developing technology and information is that students can access more up-to-date educative information Alismail and McGuire (2015).

Many countries are noticing an increase in the importance of digital literacy, and the widespread use of digital technologies for language learning is debating in various journals Riddle (2015). Digital technology becomes a necessity in meeting diverse academic information needs. The reality is that information systems and digital technology have not been satisfied with adequate literacy competencies. Students have not implemented information systems and digital technology capabilities, and

the urgency of digital competencies is not following by strategic management and policy Shopova (2014).

Technology grew and developed as time flies for teaching and learning practices during the COVID-19 pandemic, lecturing on methods and strategies for teaching and learning was done through virtual learning by utilizing computer technology and the internet network. Virtual learning implements government policy to prevent and spread the COVID-19 disease, becoming a global epidemic. During virtual lectures, students face many obstacles. Therefore, to successfully attend virtual classes in the COVID-19 pandemic, students must be familiar with and operate various digital applications used by lecturers, such as zoom applications, Google classrooms, and so on.

Along with this, language learners must acquire digital literacy skills and language learning techniques in technology-enhanced language learning (tell) contexts. Hubbard (2013)states that learner preparation is need for digital learning success.

To successfully implement learner training in digital language learning, it is essential to determine the digital literacy level of target language learners and then identify the factors inhibiting their development of digital literacy skills. In short, to successfully follow the lecture process virtually, every student must have digital literacy skills. This digital literacy skill can reduce the COVID-19 pandemic problem and virtual classes problem. Through digital literacy, they will obtain accurate digital information as material for decision-making.

A previous study conducted by Eryansyah et al. (2020) who got involved university students revealed that the significant barriers to improving digital literacy skills were the unavailability of facilities. In English Education Program of Studying Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Sriwijaya University, students learn ICT courses in the fifth semester. Through the purpose of this study, researcher wish the students gain the factors inhibiting students' digital literacy skills.

According to the explanation, the writer would like to research EFL Students' Digital Literacy: Factor Inhibiting its Development and Effective ICT Programs to Develop EFL Students' ICT Skills in English Education Study Program Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Sriwijaya University.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Researcher served the problems into:

1. What are the factors that are inhibiting Indonesian EFL students in developing their digital literacy?

2. What are the effective ICT programs for EFL students to improve their ICT skills?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

The study's objective is to determine factors inhibiting EFL students' digital literacy development and figure out the effective ICT programs to develop EFL students' ICT skills. The researcher will do this study by using a survey study involving English education study program students.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

1. For Students

   Students, in the future, can have this research as a reference of information in a way to understand the factors that inhibit EFL students' digital literacy development and find out the effective ICT programs to develop EFL students' ICT skills to prepare themselves for facing the digital era.

2. For Lecturers and Other Instructions

   The researcher expected that the lecturers can be helped to vary their teaching concept and strategies in the using of technology in language learning, specifically for English subjects.

3. For Future Researchers

   Through this research, the researcher expects to facilitate the future researchers with addition and newest information as a guideline for these variables and develop this study based on more studies and further research to come.

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