

Reading Habits and Integration of Technology in Understanding English Texts: A Case Study of EFL Students

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Abstract

This study aims at exploring how students' interest in reading books using technology and exploring how technology affects students' reading habit. Type of design used in this study is quantitative and using questionnaire as the main instrument. In general, it can be said that the level of student interest in reading is still relatively low. Most students think that they are not the kind of students who spend a lot of time reading about English. The technology that develops in the context of learning and reading comprehension shows that students' interest in integrating their reading interests using mobile phone and laptops.

Keywords: Interest in reading, reading habits, technology

Introduction

The development of technology from time to time brings a great impact on human life. Technology has a major influence on all aspects of life ranging from economic, cultural, communication, is health and is not left behind in the field of education. This is in line with the opinion of (Bullock & de Jong, 2013; Dreyer & Nel, 2003; Yang & Chen, 2007) states that the media technology used in the teaching and learning process provides very significant benefits for learning itself. In the world of education technological sophistication is very helpful to facilitate teachers in teaching and delivering information. For students, technology also provides convenience, for example, it is easier to find precise and accurate information.

One of the causes of low interest in reading among Indonesian people is that reading is not a habit, either done in spare time or done to increase knowledge. With this technology, it can increase students' interest in reading. The first way to attract students' interest in reading is to form habits, which in this way will attract students' habits in reading (Inderjit, 2014; McGeown et al., 2015). This is more inclined to the opinion of (Liu, 2005) which says that interest is a tendency that causes someone to try to find or try something activities in certain fields.

However not all of the reading and information contained in technology can be bought well in attracting students' interest in reading. For that reason, among students reading habits have been lost due to factors from the academic environment, as argued (Ratnawati Mohd Asra et al., 2003) states that there are factors that affect learning outcomes that have external factors and internal factors, this is one example there are still many students who are busy with activities while waiting for students who forget to read. Technological developments can also reduce students' interest in reading because they are influenced by social media, which is more interesting for students to compare with reading.

This research was conducted to find out the development of technology in the digital age that is very helpful for people in various fields, especially in the field of education that is helping teachers and students. Technology can foster student interest in reading because it is very easy to find various information. There are several studies on reading habits and the use of technology in helping students' reading comprehension process in English, including (Annamalai, S. & Muniandy, 2013; Behjat et al., 2012; Chen, 2015; Lee & Wu, 2012; Olanrewaju Issa et al., 2164). These studies provide an overview of reading habits and technology use. However, in this study the researchers focused on English students who were the main subjects so that these results could provide an overview of the extent to which students' interest or habit of reading English texts is related to the technology that is currently developing.

Based on the brief description above, this study aims to explore how much students' interest in reading books using technology. In addition, this study also traced or described how students' reading habits by utilizing technology.

Methodology

This type of research uses a qualitative approach using the survey instrument to collect the data. (Creswell, 2014) stated that the research design is the plan and structure of the framework in research that guides and determines the direction of the research process correctly and appropriately in accordance with the objectives that have been set. Without the correct design, researchers cannot conduct research properly because they do not have guidelines in conducting research. The interview method was conducted in this study by giving several questions regarding reading interest and reading habits. According to Sugiyono (2008) states that in general the research method is a scientific way to obtain data with specific purposes and uses.

The participants involved in this study were 47 people. Seven people consisted of men, and 40 other students were women. The selection of research respondents was carried out randomly in all semesters in the Department of English Education. After selecting the respondents, the researcher next sought the respondent's willingness to take a moment on the same day to fill out the researcher's questionnaire. The questionnaire contains a student reading interest questionnaire. The amount of questionnaire items is 15 items containing remarks concerning reading habits and the incorporation of technology in reading. The adoption was provided through Google forms and then analyzed descriptively to show student interest in reading linked to technology integration. In the statement item about using technology in reading, students were required to identify reasons. The students' arguments are explained in narrative and constitute supporting data in interpreting the quantitative data in this study.

Findings

The following sections provide an overview of the study's findings. The demographic information provided by participants serves as the basis for the research data. There are 47 participants, all of whom are students of English Education at IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo. A total of seven male individuals and forty female participants took part in the study. The research sample was selected at random from all of the batches or semesters in the study. There are 15 students enrolled in the seventh semester, 13 students in the fifth semester, 11 students in the third semester, and eight students in the first semester of the year.

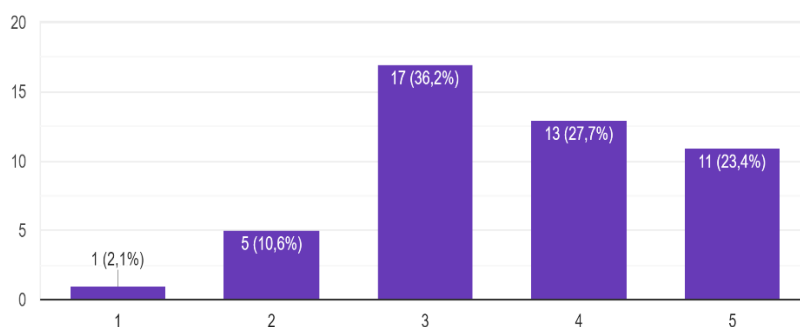


Chart 1. I meet the criteria for persons who enjoy reading.

Chart 1 reveals that many students are still hesitant to identify themselves as students who meet the criterion for enjoying reading, as evidenced by the questionnaire items in the chart. Even one of them is genuine in admitting that he does not enjoy reading in class. In this context, the only need for reading is that students spend at least 10 minutes a day reading something of any content.

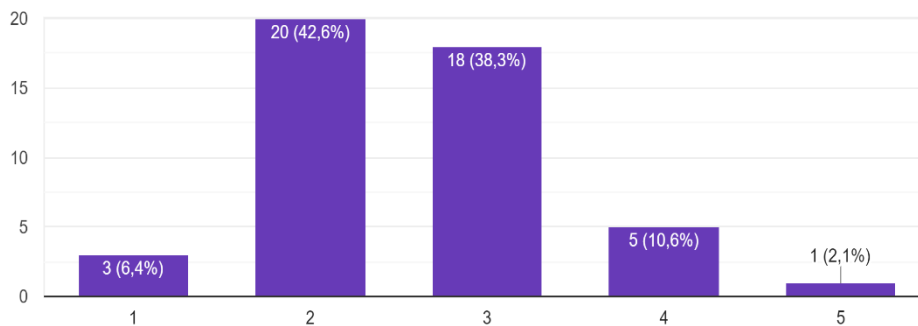


Chart 2. I enjoy reading books from the library.

The habit of borrowing books from the library by English Education students has started to fade. Most of them expressed doubt and even disagreed if they liked to borrow books from the library. If it is related to the facts on the ground that today's technology makes it easier for students to access information or reading materials from anywhere.

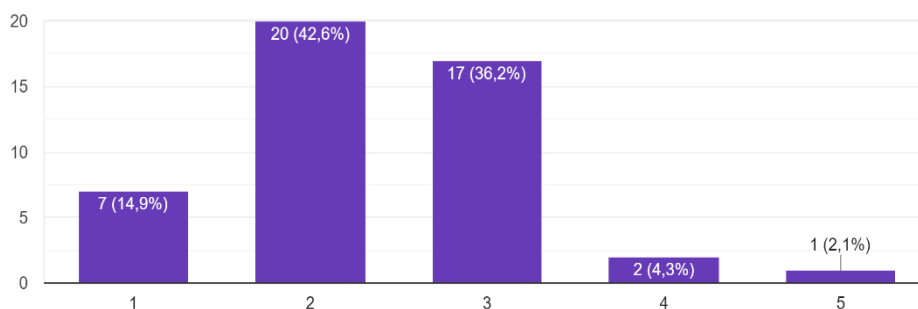


Chart 3. I always read books in the library in my spare time.

The information in chart 3 supports the information in chart 2 above. English education students did not express any interest in borrowing books or simply spending their time reading books at the library, according to this study. Only one percent of students responded that reading books in the library during their free time is enjoyable.

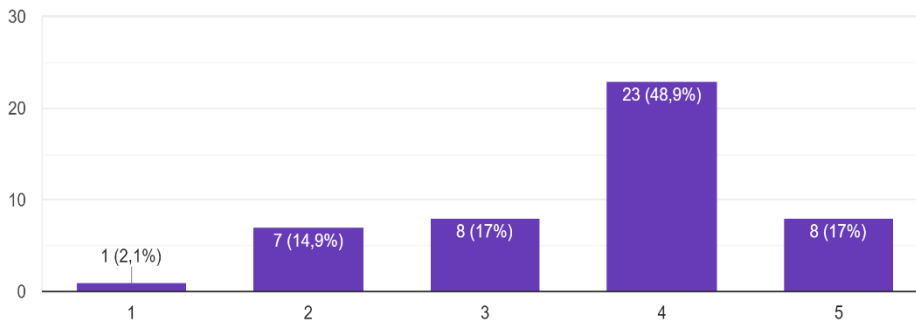


Chart 4. I only read/borrow books from the library when the Lecturer orders it.

It can be seen in the chart above that the urge to borrow books from the library is only motivated by the need to follow the lecturer's directions. That is something that the majority of students agree on. Only four students fulfilled their own desire to borrow books from the library, even though many more. The low level of interest in borrowing books is once again influenced by technological advancements, which are occurring rapidly nowadays and make it easier for students to obtain books at any time and from any location.

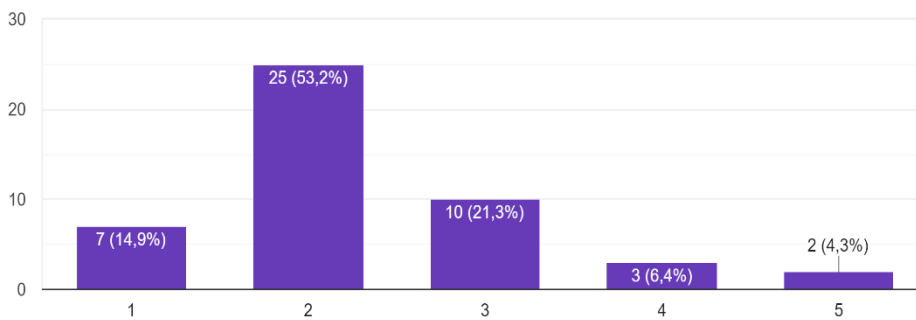


Chart 5. I believe that I have read more books than my friends.

The results of the questionnaire data on item 5 in the chart above demonstrate that the majority of students do not agree when they claim that they read more than their peers. This reflects a lack of self-assurance or perhaps the impression that they are not engaged in reading. It turned out that just two students believed they read more books than their peers.

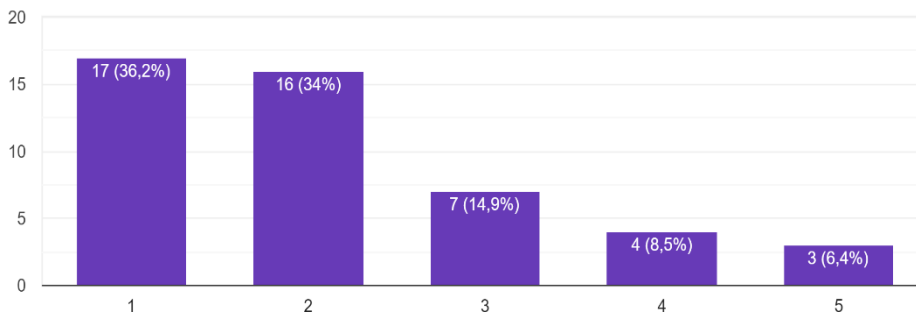


Chart 6. For me, reading books will only reduce my free time.

According to the data in Chart 6, the majority of students believe that reading actually takes away from their leisure time. This information is startling because as a member of the academic community who suffers from the knowledge and requires a great deal of information from reading sources, the facts are inversely proportionate. This is an important reminder for all college elements, particularly those in the English Education Department, to hone and familiarize students with reading skills.

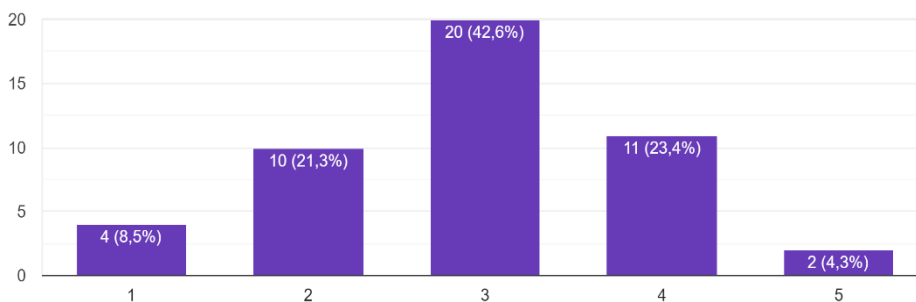


Chart 7. I prefer reading English books

The data in chart 7 shows that the majority of English Education students answered doubtful in terms of reading text sources in English. There are 13 people who stated that they tend to like reading English texts and 14 people who tend to enjoy and understand Indonesian texts.

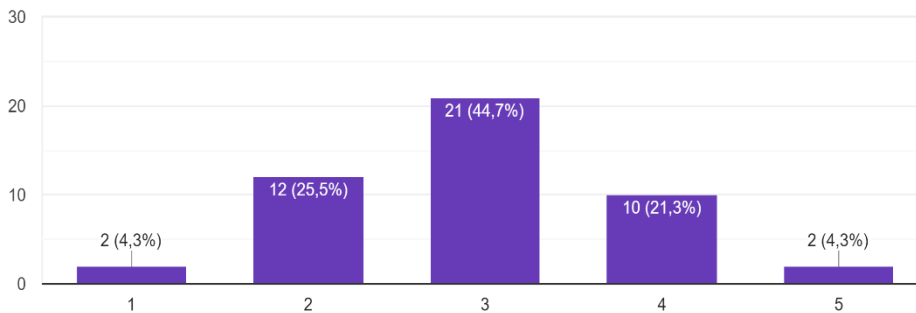


Chart 8. I have read many books related to English Education Materials.

The data in chart 8 above shows that out of 47 students, only 12 people stated that they read a lot of books related to their knowledge, namely books on English education. Meanwhile, there are 14 people who do not access and read books that have no relevance to their knowledge and as many as 21 people express their doubts whether more are related to English in general or not.

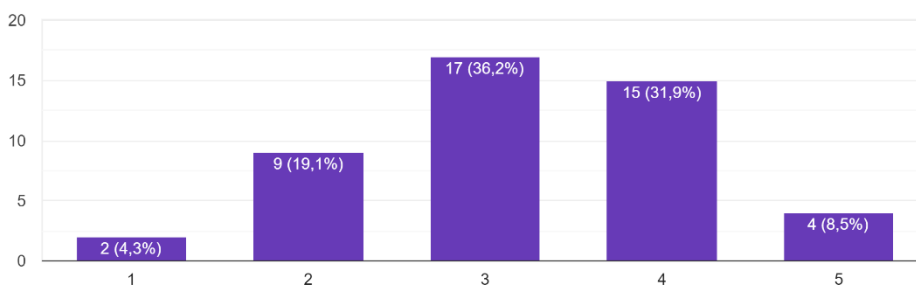


Chart 9. I prefer to read non-fiction books than fiction.

The statement items regarding interest in fiction and non-fiction texts or books in the table above show that most students choose to read their reading sources that are academic or scientific. There are 19 people who state that reading

non-fiction textbooks is more preferred than fiction genre. 11 students showed interest in fiction reading and 17 others showed interest in both genres of reading.

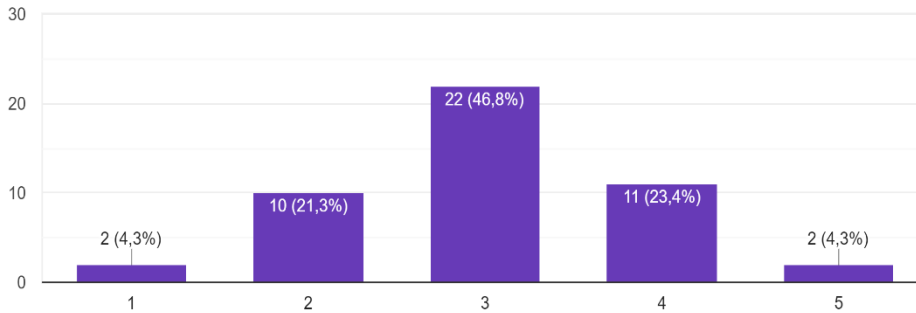


Chart 10. I am interested in reading Journal articles in English.

The data in the chart above shows that there are only 13 students who are interested in adding to their reading material through the research results contained in journal articles. There are 12 people who are less interested in accessing and reading journal articles, while 22 others choose to be hesitant, which means that there are likes or dislikes.

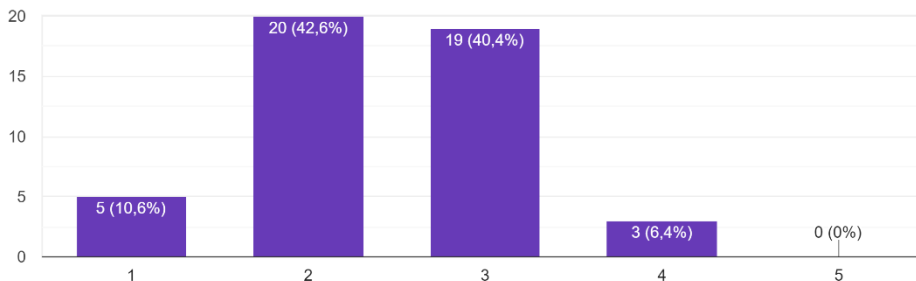


Chart 11. I know a lot about linguistic theories.

The data in Chart 11 provides information that none of the English students stated that they knew much about linguistic theories, in this case theories related to English linguistics and English education itself. However, this does not necessarily state that there is no single linguistic theory that is controlled, because the statement item emphasizes many theories. From the answers, most of the participants stated that they did not agree if they were considered to know a lot about linguistic theory. This means that students tend to be said to know a little about linguistic theory that has to do with their science.

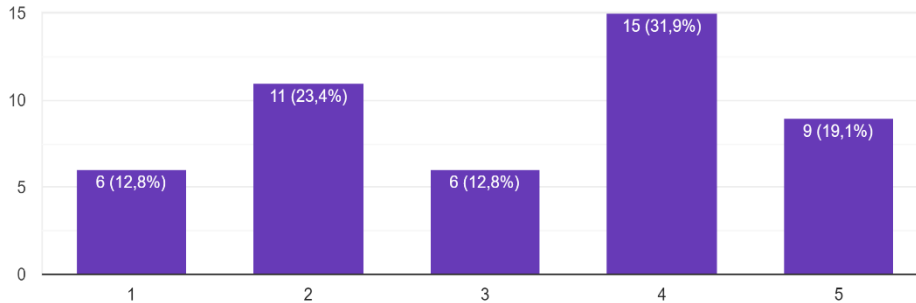


Chart 12. I prefer to read using a mobile phone or laptop rather than a printed book.

The data in chart 12 informs about the relationship between students' reading interest and the use of technology. The data illustrates that 24 students chose to read books using a mobile phone or laptop when compared to printed books. However, not a few also stated that they preferred to read text books, namely 17 students and 6 students who answered doubtfully.

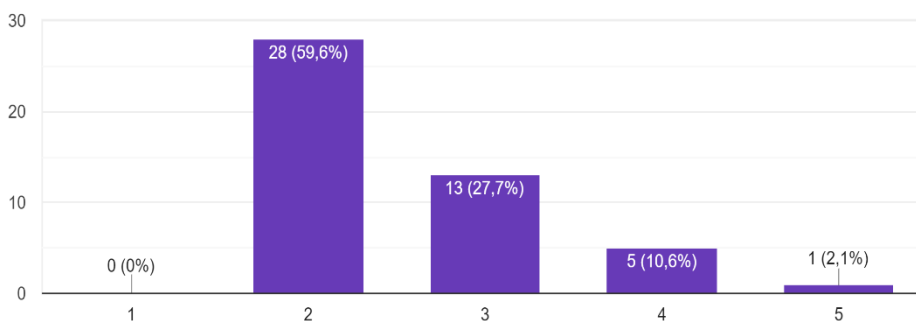


Chart 13. I collect a lot of electronic books in English.

The data on chart 13 provides further information on chart 12 which states that many students like to read using cellphones and laptops. However, this information is not in line with whether or not there are many sources of electronic books stored on electronic devices such as cellphones and laptops that they have. Most of the students stated that they did not agree if they were considered to store a lot of reading material in the form of electronics. This can be interpreted that most students do not save the electronic reading file.

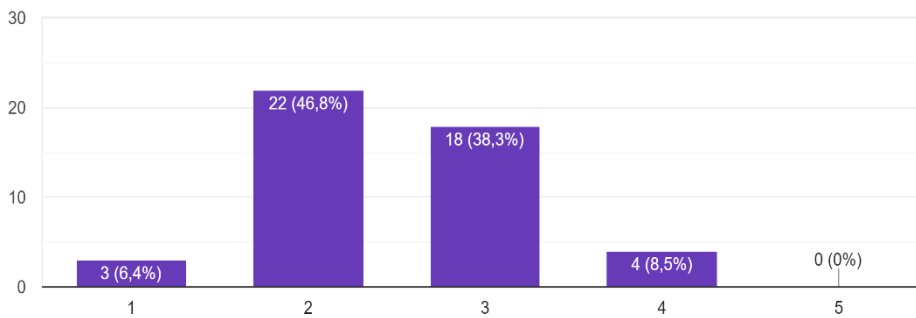


Chart 14. I understand English texts better than Indonesian texts

The data on this chart shows that even though they majored in English, most of the students did not understand English readings or texts well. This information was confirmed by the students' reading interest in the previous data which could be categorized as still needing to be honed and developed in a sustainable manner.

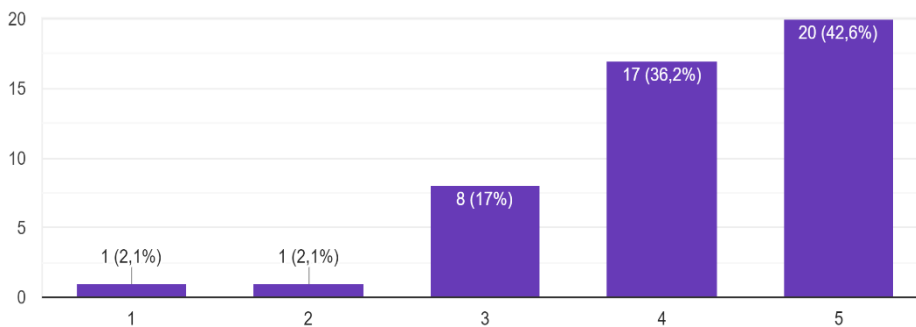


Chart 15. I use electronic Dictionary or Google Translate to understand English text.

The data on chart 15 provides confirmation of why students do not understand English texts well. It is clearly seen that most students have a dependence on technology in the form of electronic dictionaries and google translate to understand a text. Although there is no prohibition on this at all, it should be noted that the two tools referred to as tools are second only to their own abilities. So that students need to be given a lot of English reading resources and analyze and understand them as much as possible with their English competence.

Discussion

As described by Maynard (2010) interest is a distinctive disposition that develops through the experiences of individuals, encouraging people to look for things such as objects, activities, understandings, skills, and goals as a result of paying attention and mobilizing their abilities. Individuals who have an interest in reading have a disposition that motivates them to seek out opportunities and resources to participate in reading activities. Social media plays a significant role in influencing students' interest in learning and reading.

Following the research findings described above, it appears that the English Education students at IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo who responded to the questionnaire did not engage in reading in their leisure time. Reading is not a scheduled activity because it is merely a recreational activity that has not yet developed into a recreational activity. Even worse, reading is regarded as a time-wasting pastime by these individuals as well. However, this requires further investigation through the use of other instruments such as observations and interview guides for the entire set of data to be appropriately and precisely justified.

Another interesting thing from this finding is that most students no longer make the library the most comfortable place to read. Most of them consider going to the library only as a fulfillment of obligations if there are assignments or lecturers who ask them to seek information from reading sources available in the campus library. This is, of course, influenced by several factors, including the lack of books or it could be that there are many reading materials available on the internet. So that access to books is easier to obtain compared to libraries. In fact, today's libraries have done a lot of modernizing their systems. Digitization of books or information sources has been widely developed. Therefore, there needs to be more massive socialization about this in the future.

One important thing from this finding is that students prefer to read using technological devices such as cellphones or laptops. The reasons that are often put forward are the convenience, efficiency of time and place, and students' dependence on these electronic devices. Reading books directly in the printed version makes students feel bored and easily sleepy. But some other students think otherwise. Reading using electronic devices does not fully concentrate because there must be distractions (Micheal & Larson, 2014). The most felt negative effect is their vision

ability, which will decrease if they continue reading through a cellphone or laptop screen.

Today's learners indeed much love technology integration in reading today. It is undeniable that the rapid development of technology can change a person's learning style, even in reading interest itself. Therefore, the technological devices developed must also be intended following the goals or developments of science, which also continues to develop. Technology can no longer be considered something that tends to impact negatively. Still, technology should be a tandem for students to continue to hone their abilities, in this case, the ability to understand information from various reading sources, which is used wisely.

Conclusion

From the results of this study in general, it can be concluded that the level of student interest in reading is still relatively low. Most students think that they are not students who spend a lot of time reading English books. So from this data, it is also found that students are less proficient in understanding English texts. Their limited knowledge of linguistic theories also evidences this low reading ability. This study also revealed that most students like reading if presented in electronic form either through a cellphone or laptop. Unfortunately, this trend is not followed by collecting electronic books stored in these two technologies. It can be understood that the use of technology is only limited to looking for information directly on website sources on the internet and it has not become a concern for most students to collect it in one file which one day can be accessed without using internet quota.

This research certainly requires further research to comprehensively complete the data and justify student interest in reading. The study only used one instrument in the form of a questionnaire to describe reading interest and combined the results of observations by researchers while teaching at the Department of English Education. Therefore, further research can be done by adding instruments and also taking a larger number of respondents.

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