

Conference Paper

Students' Views on the Use of Book and Web-Based Materials for their ELT Classes: A Study on ICT-Based Education in Indonesian Context

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Abstract

This study examined students' views on the use of web-based materials in ELT classes. It was triggered by the findings of some previous studies done in the developed countries showing that, in this digital era, teachers and students still have not abandoned traditional materials despite the growing interest in digital/web-based materials [2, 10]. Therefore, this study tried to reveal students' attitude on their lecturers' use of technology for ELT in Indonesian context where, as one of developing countries, the technology is booming nowadays. The focuses of this study were the students' preference on the use of book-based and web-based materials, the motivational impacts of the use of book-based and web-based materials for the students, and the problems in using book-based and web-based materials. This study involved students of English Department at IAIN Tulungagung. They were given questionnaires on their lecturers' materials used in their ELT classes and some of them were then interviewed in details for their further responses. The findings of this study reported the students' real preference, advantages, and problems related to ELT materials which can be used as a reference for the lecturers or teachers in selecting the materials for their students in similar context.

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1. Introduction

In this digital era, the use of information and communication technology (ICT), especially computers and internet, in language classroom is very dominant. In [13] predict that computer-based instruction will occupy a more central role in language classroom in the future. Now, ICT is used in almost all aspects of teaching in language classroom, for example, as teaching strategy [9], teaching media, and teaching materials [4, 11]. In addition, technology integration in language classroom also deals with teaching most language skills and components [3, 5, 9, 12].

Before the booming of technology integration in the classroom, most teachers usually rely only on the existing published book-based materials or textbooks to structure their teaching learning process. However, such trend has changed since the advent of

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digital era of free resource sharing and collaboration where there are more interactive and free web-based tools and resources available. The place of course book package or book-based materials in the classroom is then questioned [2] although its important role cannot be ignored entirely.

Many teachers are interested in using web-based materials since they have some advantages over the traditional book-based materials. Some of the advantages are that the web-based materials are frequently available at no cost and they can be ready anywhere and anytime [10]. Moreover, web-based materials are said to provide more authentic materials for the students' language learning as indicated by [3] who states that the most compelling reason in using web-based materials is definitely the convenience in accessing and obtaining an endless supply of authentic materials in target language.

The advantages of having web-based materials involving technology definitely present a new challenge for the teachers and the students. This technology advancement certainly demands the teachers and the students to have new skills of making use of information, media and technology, also known as digital literacies [7]. Further, [7] explains that in order to have digital literacies, ones have to be capable in four areas of literacy which are language, information, connection, and (re)design.

For some groups of people who belong to what is called by [6] as 'digital native', the requirements for being digitally literate as mentioned above is not a big problem. This is because of the characteristics of digital native generation who enjoy using technology for their lives. In [6] defines digital native as those who have grown up using technology and the internet, and therefore, feel more at home in the online world. On the other hand, for those who belong to 'digital immigrant' people, the demand of being digitally literate is very high. Those digital immigrant people have come to technology later in their life [6] and that they are not very comfortable using technology and internet.

Considering these two different groups of people, the material selection should match with the characteristics of most of the students. Web-based materials would seem to ideally match the needs of the 'digital native students' who have known nothing but digitalized technologies throughout their lives. On the other hand, book-based materials are considered more appropriate with digital immigrant students.

In general, students who were born and grown up in digital era are considered as being digital natives and prefer having web-based materials. However, this notion is not certainly right since the findings of some research show that digital native generation prefer having more traditional materials or book-based materials. A research on the use of coursebook package and digital materials among the teachers conducted in Sweden show that among digital native pre-service teachers, coursebook package still has its place as source of materials in teaching [2]. Another research carried out by [10] also revealed that despite the notion of digital native generation, the students of British

University as the participants of that study preferred having book-based material for their independent grammar learning.

The previous studies reveal the facts happening in the developed countries which are considered as having technology or what is associated by [8] as having higher resource context. The facts show that in this digital era, teachers and students still have not abandoned book-based materials despite the growing interest in digital/web-based materials. Those findings raised a question whether the developing countries which are considered as having lower resource contexts in terms of technology also face similar situation.

Therefore, a study on the students' preferences in their lecturers' use of technology for ELT in Indonesian context needs to be carried out in order to reveal the perspective of students on the use of book-based and web-based materials in one of developing countries. The findings of this study are very important to give considerations for the teachers or lecturers in selecting appropriate materials for the students. More specifically, the students' preferences, the motivational impacts and the problems in using book-based and web-based materials were investigated in this study.

2. Method

In this study, two classes of university students in Indonesia consisting of 57 students were asked to fill in questionnaires about the use of book-based and web-based materials in their ELT classes. The two classes were one class of the second year students and one class of the third year students. Before distributing the questionnaires, the researcher had ensured that the lecturers in both classes used both book-based and web-based materials. Thus, the students had just to recall their uses in classes and indicate their views on the use of book-based and web-based materials.

The questionnaire consisted of 20 statements and classified into four sections. The first section comprised some statements about general information (4 statements). The second section was related to the students' preference of using book-based and web-based materials (8 statements). The third section deals with the students' motivational impacts on using book-based and web-based material (6 statements) and the last section asks the students' problem in using book-based and web-based materials (2 statements). In addition to the options, a blank space is provided following two statements about the students' problems in using book-based and web-based materials. The blanks were important to reveal the students' problems in using book-based and web-based materials.

The questionnaire used in the present study was in the form of a five-point Likert-scale in which the options for statements in section two, three, and four consisted of 'Strongly Agree' (5 points), 'Agree' (4 points), 'Neutral' (3 points), 'Disagree' (2 points), and 'Strongly Disagree' (1 point). After the students gave their responses for

each statement, their responses were counted for its percentage in order to see the students' response tendency easily. To analyze the students' preferences in the use of book-based and web-based materials, the students' responses were converted into numbers based on each option weight, summed up for each group of statements, compared, and finally interpreted and reported descriptively.

3. Findings and Discussion

The findings are presented and discussed by following the three research questions in this study; they are the students' preferences in using book-based and web-based materials, their motivational impacts in using book-based and web-based materials, and their problems in using book-based and web-based materials.

3.1. The Students' Preferences in Using Book-Based and Web-Based Materials

In order to identify the students' preferences in using book-based and web-based materials, eight statements were given to the students. The first four statements were related to web-based materials and the other four were related to book-based materials.

The students' responses to the preference in web-based materials were dominated by 'Agree' and 'Neutral' choices. Regarding the use of web-based material to make the students understand the materials easily, most students (27 students or 47%) agree and 26 students (46%) responded in a neutral way the statement. The second statement about the students' preference on web-based materials for their appropriateness to their age and their level of proficiency was also responded similarly. Concerning web-based materials offer access to a wider variety of English learning activities, most students (45 students or 79%) agreed with this statement. When given a statement that web-based materials used in English classes give them more practices in learning English, most of them (36 students or 63%) also agreed.

Similarly, on the next four statements about the preference in book-based materials, it was also found that the students' responses were also dominated by 'Agree' and 'Neutral' options. When given a statement that they prefer book-based materials because they are easier to handle than web-based materials, most students (23 students or 40% of them) chose 'Neutral' response. The statement that book-based materials are more organized and well-graded was agreed by most of the students (25 students or 44%). However, 24 students (42%) responded in a neutral way. The next statement was the opposition of statement number four and surprisingly most students responded almost in the same way as statement number four. The last statement that using book-based materials in English classes makes them understand the

		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	No response (0)
1.	Using web-based materials in my English classes makes me understand the materials easily.	3 (5%)	27 (47%)	26 (46%)	1 (2%)		
2.	I prefer web-based materials for my English classes because they are appropriate to my age and level of English proficiency.	3 (5%)	28 (49%)	18 (32%)	8 (14%)		
3.	Web-based materials offer access to a wider variety of English learning activities.	3 (5%)	45 (79%)	9 (16%)			
4.	Web-based materials used in my English classes give me more practices in learning English.	7 (12%)	36 (63%)	12 (21%)	2 (4%)		
5.	I prefer book-based materials because they are easier to handle than web-based materials.	8 (14%)	20 (35%)	23 (40%)	5 (9%)		1
6.	Book-based materials are more organized and well-graded.	6 (11%)	25 (44%)	24 (42%)	2 (4%)		
7.	Book-based materials used in my English classes give me more practices in learning English.	2 (4%)	30 (53%)	22 (39%)	2 (4%)		1
8.	To me, using book-based materials in my English classes makes me understand the materials easily.	3 (5%)	28 (49%)	25 (44%)	1 (2%)		

TABLE 1: Students’ Preferences in Using Book-based and Web-Based Materials.

materials easily was in contrast with statement number 1. The students also responded positively since most of them (28 students or 49%) agreed. See Table 1 for detailed findings on the students’ preferences in using book-based and web-based materials.

The findings on students’ preferences in using book-based and web-based materials in which a big number of students chose ‘Neutral’ option indicated that they could not decide which kind of learning materials they preferred more. This fact was also supported by most students’ responses of choosing ‘Agree’ option in all statements even though there were some opposing statements. However, when the frequency of students’ choices in the first four statements of preference in using web-based materials were summed up and compared to that of the second four statements of preference in using book-based materials, the total number for the first four statements (843 points) was greater than that of the second four (809). It can be concluded that more students preferred web-based materials to book-based materials.

Although students' preferences in the web-based materials cannot be clearly seen without deep analysis in this study, the fact that students enjoyed web-based materials and did not have serious problems in using them cannot be taken for granted. Such findings are not surprising since the students as participants in this study were all born after 1990, or between the period of 1980 and 1994 that [6] considered as the 'digital native' generation. Even, some of them were born after 1994. It means that the students in this study have grown up using technology and the internet, and therefore, enjoy using them. This long period of exposure to computer and internet also gives students different learning style from earlier generation.

3.2. The Motivational Impacts on Using Book-based and Web-Based Materials

The next finding was about the students' motivational impacts on the use of book-based and web-based materials. From the first three statements about positive motivational impacts on using web-based materials, it was found that option "Neutral" dominated the students' choice, except in the first statement. It can be seen from the students' responses on the second statement about their high motivation in using web-based materials where 22 students (39%) selected "Neutral", 21 of them (37%) selected 'Agree'. In the third statement about the effectiveness of web-based materials, option 'Neutral' got the highest points because 28 students (49%) chose it. However, in the first statement, 38 students (67%) agreed with the usefulness and enjoyment in using web-based materials.

In the second three statements about positive motivational impacts on using book-based materials, more students chose 'Neutral' option. The students' responses were mostly 'Neutral' in the statement about the disappointing aspect of web-based materials, in the next statement about the usefulness of book-based materials over the web-based ones and in the last statement of confidence effect on the use of book-based materials. For clearer description, see Table 2.

Although it seems that the students got difficulty in deciding their opinion about motivational impacts on learning materials, it is still possible to find the level of motivational impacts on book-based and web-based materials by converting the students' responses into numbers, calculating them and comparing between the first three statements with the second three statements. The results showed that there were more responses on the first three statements (619 points) while there were only 555 points for the second ones. It can be concluded then that web-based materials gave the students greater motivational impacts.

The finding in this second section is in accordance with the result of previous study that websites, as a new medium of instruction, can not only increase the learners' motivation and improve their performance [12], but also give them satisfaction in

		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	No response (0)
1.	To me, web-based materials are useful and enjoyable.	11 (19%)	38 (67%)	8 (14%)			
2.	I feel more motivated to learn English using web-based materials.	11 (19%)	21 (37%)	22 (39%)	3 (5%)		
3.	Studying using web-based materials is more effective for me.	2 (4%)	16 (28%)	28 (49%)	11 (19%)		
4.	To me, web-based materials are disappointing because of occasional technical computer and internet problems.	4 (7%)	16 (28%)	19 (33%)	18 (32%)		
5.	Book-based materials are more useful than web-based materials	5 (9%)	18 (32%)	31 (54%)	3 (5%)		
6.	I feel more confident in using book-based materials for my study.	8 (14%)	23 (40%)	24 (42%)	2 (4%)		

TABLE 2: Students’ motivational impacts on the use of book-based and web-based materials.

learning [1]. However, this positive impact is not always the case because in [10] study, students preferred to have paper-based materials in learning grammar.

3.3. The Students Problems in Using Book-Based and Web-Based Materials

Related to the students’ problems in using book-based and web-based materials, it was found that most students did not decide their opinions for they chose ‘Neutral’ option in the two opposing statements about their problems in studying using book-based and web-based materials. In the first statement about students’ problem in studying using book-based materials, 29 students (51%) chose ‘Neutral’, 20 of them (35%) disagree. Similar responses were also found in the second statement about the students’ problem in studying using web-based materials. See Table 3 for more detailed data.

When the number of the students’ responses in the first statement and the second one were calculated and compared, the first one (156) is slightly greater than the second one (153). It means that more students thought that they got difficulty in studying using book-based materials and fewer students thought that they got difficulty in studying using web-based materials.

Based on the answers from the questionnaire, it was found that the students got problems or difficulty in studying using book-based materials because the materials

		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	No Response (0)
1.	I think I get difficulty/problem in studying using book-based materials.	1 (2%)	6 (11%)	29 (51%)	20 (35%)		1 (2%)
2.	I think I get difficulties in studying using web-based materials	2 (4%)	8 (14%)	27 (47%)	19 (33%)		1 (2%)

TABLE 3: Students’ problems in the use of book-based and web-based materials.

are boring, not interesting, heavy to bring, more expensive, difficult to understand, difficult to look for and having limited pictures. On the other hand, the problems related to web-based materials are bad internet connection, difficulty in taking a note, untrusted sources of materials, difficulty in operating since they need more tools, eye problems, and inappropriate materials.

This finding suggests that although the problems in using web-based materials are relatively few, the students still face problems in using the web-based materials. Therefore, when teachers decide to use web-based materials, they should be more careful in using them by minimizing the existing problems.

Finally, the students’ tendency in using web-based materials in this study does not mean that they can leave book-based materials. This can be seen clearly from the result of questionnaires that most students chose neutral indicating that they could not decide the materials based on the sources. This is in line with [2] suggestion that teachers should not rely on ICT so much that they leave traditional materials completely.

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

Despite the fact that many students did not decide their preferences in the kinds of materials, this study indicates that the students had more positive views on the use of web-based materials. Web-based materials are more preferable than book-based materials. The students also got more positive motivational impacts when using web-based materials. The problems they faced in using web-based materials are fewer than those of printed materials. However, this conclusion does not suggest that book-based materials can be set aside in ELT classroom.

It is suggested that the teachers use web-based materials with careful selection in addition to book-based materials by considering the skills developed in their ELT classroom. Despite the limitation of this study in which the number of the participants was small, similar study with greater number of participants need to be replicated to validate the result of the present study.

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