The Digital Native Students' Preference in Accessing Online Stories

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Abstract

Time changes, so does the human's preference. Several decades ago many people tend to read the stories in offline books, but as time goes by, people especially the digital native students prefers for reading online stories to offline stories. A lot of reasons urge this generation to do this habit. This paper seeks to address the extent to how often digital native students mostly access the online stories and its impact. This paper includes a brief look at the concepts of online media merits in which supports the digital native students' preference in accessing online stories. Using qualitative method, the study's data is collected from the second semester until sixth semester students of English Department at Tidar University. The Conclusion, in this paper is, digital natives' students mostly prefer to read stories via online, yet some of them also still use printed book or even combine both media to access stories. Their habits in reading stories also affect their life as students and for literature itself in positive and negative sides.

Keywords: digital native, online stories, online media

Introduction

Language is an important aspect in human being. By learning language people can communicate each other, get information from one to another and to interact. Language has big role in human life to make a relation in their environment. One of the expert states that language is used widely in communication between people who do not share the same first (or even second) language (Harmer, 2007). It indicates that language is very important to be learn in human life.

Digital native generations is so close to the presence of technology. Gadgets are not considered as foreign objects to them anymore. They have a different view of technology. Their technology and life are highly connected. They should keep up to date. Their cognitive, intellectual needs must be met with the presentation of informative and relevant books. These conditions make them prefer to read online stories (Nur, 2018).

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Nur (2018) also stated that the digital learners are digital native generation which uses a digital learning tool where teacher and students alike can create their own interactive timelines. Many new social features introduce collaboration and engagement between students.

Online stories are the most popular way for digital native to read. It gives them instant, fast, many genre, and simple form. Online stories that are made available online for their readers. Since they are online and in a digital format, it is easy to change and update their data. Many platform developers compete to serve the best platform for the digital native, application can easily be downloaded to a smartphone or tablet computer in order to access them. The Digital Native activities also support them to access the online stories. Their activities in classroom make them more intense to access online stories.

Online media in this century has many form. The Digital Native generation will use their smartphone, tablet and personal computer to stay online in a whole day. Any kind of E-book application has their specific detail and unique in order to give many online stories for them. Thousands of electronic books can be saved to the reader and can be taken anywhere with ease. They allow us to look up words and translate pages. Some of them have a text to speech features which transforms text into audio, thus enabling their readers to listen as well as read.

Noor (2011) claims that in any higher learning environment, reading is valued as the most important academic language skill for all second and foreign language learners. Students learn new information and become more competent in their subject matters through reading. Loan (2009), moreover, stresses the importance of reading by claiming that individuals with good reading habits have the chance to widen their mental horizons and to multiply their opportunities. Noor (2011) supports Loan's idea and adds that reading is essential in teaching individuals how to cope with new knowledge in the technologically changing and developing world of today. Holte (1998) emphasizes the importance of reading in that it increases quality of life as well as creating culture and making cultural heritage available; moreover, he claims that it both strengthens and brings people together (as cited in Akanda, Hoq and Hasan, 2013). The importance of reading is obviously high, so the question becomes what is to be done to facilitate reading? Since

technology affects how we read by changing the medium from printed to electronic, methods to foster new reading habits should be studied.

Methodology

Qualitative research is used in this research. Patton and Cochran (2002) explain qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis.

Thirty students of second until sixth semester of English Department at Tidar University are the participants of this study. The data are collected by giving questionnaires to participants. The questionnaire consists of five questions that cover the purpose of the study. The data collection procedures of this study was started by giving the questionnaire, asking the participants to fill in the questionnaire and finally the researcher compiled the questionnaire that had been answered.

The questionnaire was chosen by adopting the research from O. Akarsu & T. Darıyemez, which conducted a research entitle *the reading habits of university students studying English language and literature in the digital age*. These are the question of the questionnaire:

1. How often do you read stories? (each day/week/month)
   Answer: _____
2. What kind of media do you use in accessing stories? (offline/online)
   Answer: _____
3. For students, in your opinion, what is the impact of the habit of digital native that mostly access stories by online?
   Answer: _____
4. For literature world, in your opinion, what is the impact of the habit of digital native that mostly access online stories?
   Answer: _____

Findings and Discussion

Digital native students' frequency in reading stories

There are 5 students state they are rarely read the books while the rest of them say "yes" if they like to read. These are the answers from Student A1, Student B3, Student C3 :

a. I rarely to read something because I'm not keen of reading
b. I read stories every day
c. I read stories once a week

Most of digital native are still eager to read despite a lot of disturbing factors such as social media, online games, etc. This good habit need to be developed more since reading will broaden students' perspective and push them to surpass their limits. In order to do so, big efforts in choosing good genre of stories will be really impactful.

Digital native students' preference in accessing stories

There are 7 students state if mostly they choose to read stories via offline while 14 of them prefer to read via offline, and 9 students state if they usually use both of methods in reading stories. These are the answers from Student A1, Student B3, Student C3 :

a. I prefer online media
b. I read stories by offline
c. I combine both methods in reading stories

It can be seen if most of students prefer to use online media. Accessibility and variety of online media play an important role to attract digital natives to read more stories. Accessibility of online media will ease digital natives to access stories from personal computer, laptop, or smartphone. Yet some of them also choose printed books over online media due to its convenience. Printed books offer the reader to read in comfortable situation since the readers do not need internet connection. Digital natives also combine offline and online media to afford their various conditions. When they want to read foreign stories which is unavailable in their country or want to read stories in rural areas which have bad internet connection, they may choose printed books. Not only that, digital native can also read various genre from various countries by accessing Wattpad website which will deepen and broaden their perspectives about literature.

Reading habit and the impact for digital native students.

Based on the open-ended questionnaire given, the students shared their positive viewpoints about The Digital Native reading habit and the impact for students were as follows:

1. The Digital Native reading habit on the online stories support paperless era.

2. It was an easier way to get many kind of stories.

3. It was cheaper than bought printed book.

4. The students could enjoy reading everywhere and every time.

5. The student could explore more stories from the world.

These benefits were proved by the students' responses. The responses were as the following.

Data 1
I get more efficient in reading online stories than read printed book. It made me never bring thick book or many books everywhere. I could save my money because I did not buy many printed stories books. (Student 3)

Data 2
I could explore many kind of stories from many countries. I would like to read it every day so I need the reading media which can I keep in my pocket or my small bag. (Student 14)

Data 3
I am one of many people who support the paperless era. I use online stories to decrease the percentage of using paper. Paperless means more trees save, it is will make our world better. (Student 23)

Data 1, Data 2, and Data 3 were the samples of students' viewpoints toward The Digital Native reading habit and the impact for students. It meant that they had positive perspectives about The Digital Native reading habit and the impact for students.

Regarding to the data above, it could be inferred that the students took advantages of reading online stories. Akanda, Hoq and Hasan (2013) state that more and more books and reading materials should be made available to students to increase their interest in reading. Moreover, they claim that as well as the content of the reading materials, the design and appearance are also of great importance in keeping the students interest. They also state that interesting and useful reading materials should be accessible online as young people are mostly interested in the World Wide Web, social networking, blogging, etc.

Barriers of reading habit on the online stories for digital native students

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In spite of the benefits, there were also found the barriers or problems faced by the students toward The Digital Native reading habit on the online stories. The problems covered several aspects, such as:

1. The signal or internet access.

2. The gadget addiction.

3. The eyesore effect and backache.

Those problem derived from several factors. The geographic condition in Indonesia make difficult to serve the strong and stable internet connection. Many internet providers do not have large network yet to serve internet connection in the whole island. The students in many locations which far away from the any big cities are so difficult to get the strong and good internet connection. Moreover, the gadget addiction be the habitual of the students in the capital or other big cities. That addiction makes seriously time-consuming and decrease socialization with other people.

The barriers found in this study were in line with Vural in Alnujaidi (2017), he contended that social media platform could waste the time, decrease socializing, violate privacy, and resulted addiction. The samples of participants' responses toward the barriers of reading habit on the online stories could be seen below.

> Data 4
> I cannot leave my gadget at home. I should bring and access it everywhere. My gadget especially my phone is the most important thing for me to access any online stories. (Student 5)
> Data 5
> I prefer spend my money for accessing the online stories by my gadget to buy the story books. (Student 19)
> Data 6
> My home located far away from the city. I often get seriously problem with internet connection. It makes me access online stories rarely. (Student 21)
> Data 7
> I cannot read online stories in a longtime. My eyes should be red and itchy. Numbness or tingling around my fingers also. (Student 25)

To solve the problems, the students need to prepare the best location or the best internet provider before access the online stories. They need to make sure how long maximum their eyes or hands can tolerate in accessing online stories from their gadget. They should make the activity of accessing online stories as chance to make socializing intensively. They can join in any group and make up the meet and greet with the group member.

The impact of the digital native students' habit for literature

Based on the open-ended questionnaire given, the students shared their negative viewpoints about the impact of Digital Native habit for literature were as follows:

1. Less appreciation for the writer.

2. Decrease the selling of offline stories.

3. The youth are unwilling to be a writer.

4. More online writer ignored the writing conventions.

These problems were proved by the students' responses. The responses were as the following.

> Data 8
> The appreciation for the writer is decrease intensively. Many people did not give the source or references. It is very terrible habit. (Student 10)
> Data 9
> The percentage of selling the offline stories are so bad. It's decreasing rapidly. The reader of offline stories leaves their habit and move to online stories. (Student 26)
> Data 10
> I often read any stories which did not follow some writing conventions. (Student 30)

Those problem derived from several factors. Many readers are not familiar with the writer. They also did not understand the whole of writing conventions. Many young people enjoy reading stories only without motivation to be a writer. Offline stories have replaced by the online stories and the selling of offline stories has decreased.

In spite of the problems, there were also found the positives viewpoints faced by the students toward the impact of The Digital Native habit for literature.

The benefits covered several aspects. They were:

1. Easier to publish the stories.

2. More chance for new writer.

These benefits were proved by the students' responses. The responses were as the following.

> Data 10
> It is very easy to publish our story. We do not need any publisher just upload it and many people will read our stories. (Student 11)
> Data 11
> There are so many platforms for the newbie to publish their stories. Although their stories are not perfect yet. It makes them can improve their ability. (Student 24)

Data 10, and Data 11 were the samples of students' viewpoints toward the impact The Digital Native habit for literature. It meant that they had positive perspectives about the impact of The Digital Native habit for literature.

In conclusion, the overall findings of the study showed that digital native who are university students, studying English Language and Literature had developed a certain level of reading habits. There has been towards reading online stories.

Conclusion

The habit of digital native sudents in reading the stories are various. Mostly they still spare their time to read stories periodically such as every day, once a week and many more. Digital native students mostly prefer to read stories via online, yet some of them also still use printed book or even combine both media to access stories.

Their habit in reading stories also affect their life as students and for literature itself.

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