The Correlation between Students' Digital Literacy and English Communicative Competence

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Abstract

In this globalization era, students are forced to understand the basic knowledge of digital literacy because of the transformation in the learning activity. Therefore, digital literacy also can be the medium to learn and develop students' English communicative competence. English communicative competence can be accomplished in many ways, but digital literacy is also taking a serious role in it. This study pointed to discover the correlation between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence. This study used a closed-ended questionnaire and an open-ended interview as instruments for a correlational investigation that was linked to a quantitative study. The participants in this study were fourth-semester UNISSULA English Education understudies. The results of this study revealed a shaky link between students' digital literacy and English communicative skills. It was established that the correlational coefficient value was less than the r table score of 0.350 0.432, which is between 0.20 and 0.399 in terms of correlation coefficient interpretation. It can be described that the correlation coefficient between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence is weak. Although the correlation was weak, digital literacy had an essential impact on students' English communicative competence. Then, it can also be said that H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected.

Keywords: Correlation; Digital Literacy; English Communicative Competence

Introduction

The ability in English communicative competence is very important nowadays for every human being. From two years old until 60 years old needs to be able to master the English language to develop their life. This phenomenon could not be avoided since English is the international language, that is why everyone should be capable of

English or at least understand the basics of it. Rao (2019) states that English has acquired familiar qualities; it has been approved as the international language among thousands of people of different languages.

In this modern era where technology takes control in almost every aspect of human life, we cannot deny that the educational area also needed the help of technology. The use of technology in this modern era cannot be denied because technology in the language classroom can motivate and stimulate students (Ekaningsih, 2019). Students are forced to master digital literacy skills to catch up with the transition of conventional to online learning methods. This study aimed to explore the correlation between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence. The writer would like to find out whether or not the massive improvement of technology, will it be able to help students in learning?

Digital Literacy is now very familiar for students who have got mobile phone or gadgets to search information they need. Frankel et al (2016) states that literacy is the activity involving reading, writing, and spoken language to take out, set up, combine, and analyzing meaning through interconnection and participation with multimode passage in the context of social situated practices. The tools like gadgets and mobile phones are both as media for learning too in the pandemic era of Covid-19. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, all students need to use digital platform for learning. As Tejedor et al (2020) states that the pandemic caused schools and colleges around the world to close their buildings and rapidly move normal education to separated and virtual learning. Buckingham (2016) also states that digital literacy often forces the user to understand the basic skill of software tools and use them effectively. Levinsen & Sørensen (2015) also stated that digital literacy is an underway, long-term learning activity. Another statement comes from Ayhan (2019) digital literacy is a process that reposes on knowledge literacy, internet comprehension, web comprehension, and digital comprehension. The writers also agree with the statements above because the process of being digitally literate is quite long since technology keeps expanding every day so we also have to improve as we learn.

As we know, English is the most popular language to be used as communication tool in the world. English language learning nowadays has been very useful for students who want to continue their study abroad. Mostly the students' requirement of going

abroad is English although passively. According to Gunantar (2016), recently English enhances one of the most used languages by the world population. That is why people nowadays think that if they are want to develop their skills or upgrade their social status, they need to master English. With this kind of mindset, then we need to prepare a generation where they all have the ability in understanding English. Then, how do we do such a thing is becomes the next challenge. The challenge of learning English is about the way how to be communicative in English by the use of digital literacy. Along with the evolution of technology, we could use it as a tool to help our generation become competent in the English language.

English competence means someone can possess the four proficiency of English which are reading, writing, listening, and speaking. While for English communicative competence means the ability in using a language to interact and understand messages and make ourselves understood in return. However, to be competent in mastering a foreign language, students need to learn frequently. Communicative competence is the capability in the application of language, or to speak, in an exceedingly socially-aware manner in order to get an interpretation and achieve social tasks with efficaciousness and naturalness within extended interactions, (Tarvin, 2014). Nishanthi (2018) states that it requires patience and diligence to learn English. In line with that statement, learning a new language requires a lot of time because when learning a language, students need to practice it every day so they would get used to it easily.

The problem about learning a foreign language frequently is, students are having many subjects in school, so it is quite difficult for them to learn about the foreign language outside school hours since they also have some assignments to be done at home. Then, to overcome this problem, technology comes to help us. Students could practice by using another method such as watching movies, playing a game, reading a book, or listening to a song of their target language. They can simply use their gadget as a tool to learn the target language. With this kind of learning, students are expected to be competent in the target language, or to be more specific is English.

The purpose of this study is to raise awareness for lecturers that digital literacy can be used as a medium for them to teach students about English communicative competence. This study also wants to warn students that with the help of technology in

the educational fields, it actually can help them in mastering their English communicative competence better. If students and lecturers already know the benefit of being digitally literate, then lecturers can provide a fun learning for the students, and then students can study effectively using their gadgets.

In this study, the writers were constructing the instruments as a tool to collect the data, and then the writers choose the population of the respondents. After that, the questionnaire was distributed to the respondents. And after the data is collected, the writers calculate the data by using SPSS software to conclude the findings.

Research Methodology

A correlation quantitative method was used in this study. According to (Surya Dharma, MPA., 2008) correlational research is another descriptive method often used in educational research. Another definition comes from Hasnunidah (2017) correlational research explain the relation between two or more variables, but it cannot proof to elaborate which variable is the cause which is the effect. This research studies how deep is the relationship between a variable to another variable. In line with those explanations, in this study, the writer wants to discover the relationship between digital literacy and students' English communicative competence. The correlational approach aimed to examine a hypothesis, held by measuring several variables and counting the coefficient correlation between those variables, so it can be determined which variables are correlated one to another.

The study was conducted at a private university in Semarang's English Education Study Program, with a population of 42 fourth-semester students divided into two classrooms. The writers then took 51% of the students from both classes to become a sample. The total sample in this study was 22 students consisting of 14 students of the E1 class and 8 students of the E2 class. The open-ended and close-ended questionnaire used as an instrument in this study, the close-ended questionnaire contains 20 questions related to digital literacy and English communicative competence. The questionnaire was made by the writers and used expert judgment as to the validation. As mentioned by Yusup (2018) validity is the accuracy and preciseness of an instrument. The purpose of validity itself is to find out how proper is one instrument to be used in the data

collection process so that it can bring a relevant and suitable result regarding the study. And the open-ended questionnaire consists of 5 questions related to the variables as well.

The use of questionnaire is very easy instrument to be used in this research. According to Hermawan (2017), research instrument is a tool that used to collect the research data so that the data could be easily processed and producing a good quality of research. Roopa & Rani (2012) states that a questionnaire is the main tool of data collection in a quantitative research approach. There are two kinds of questionnaires, open-ended and close-ended questionnaires. Roopa & Rani (2012) also states that in open-ended questions, the choices or certain categories are not limited. The respondent could answer it in their own words. While for the close-ended questions, the respondent's answer was limited by certain choices. In this research, the researcher used close-ended questions to be given to the respondents. This questionnaire was given to the students who become the sample of this study. For accumulating the data, the researchers arranged the questionnaire based on Likert scales.

This questionnaire was given to the students who become the sample of this research. In this study, the researcher used purposive sampling technique to acquire the sample. Etikan (2016) mentions the purposive sampling technique, which also called judgement sampling is the intentional choice of a population based on the qualities of the participant possesses. For collecting the data, the researchers arranged the questionnaire based on Likert scales. Sugiyono (2015) also argues that the Likert scale is used to calculate a perspective, assumption, and group or personal impression about a social phenomenon. In research, this social phenomenon is decided specifically by the writers, which are next referred to as a research variable.

Likert-Scales is a research scale used to calculate attitudes and opinions. With this Likert scale, the respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire that requires them to express their agreement towards various questions. This study, it was measuring students' digital literacy towards their English communicative competence.

After the questionnaire was distributed to the respondents, then the writers collected the data from all of the respondents. And then the data were analyzed using SPSS software version 25 by using Cronbach's Alpha formula to check the reliability of the questionnaire. Besides, the writer also used Pearson's Product moment to measure

the correlation of the variables and lastly used One-Sample Kolmogorov Smirnov to check the normality of the data.

Results and Discussion

In this part, the writers show the findings from the investigation and the result of the answers from the instrument. Then, on the discussion, we elaborate all the analysis based on the data of the findings.

Results

On the results, the validity and reliability of the questionnaire are elaborated clearly.

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

Validity is a measurement of how valid and legitimate is an instrument in the means of data collection. According to Yusup (2018) validity is the accuracy and preciseness of an instrument. The purpose of validity itself is to find out how proper is one instrument to be used in the data collection process so that it can bring a relevance and suitable result regarding the study. In this research, to calculate the validity of the instruments, the writers used statistical validity by SPSS software.

The internal validity of a test is determined by test re-test reliability, which guarantees that measurements taken in one session are both representative and stable across time. According to Roberts & Priest (2006), reliability defines how far a test, procedure, or specific instrument will bring the same result in a different situation. As for the questionnaire reliability of this study, the researcher uses the Cronbach Alpha Reliabilities formula to measure the reliability of the questionnaire of the sample by the newest SPSS software version which is 25.

Table 1 Reliability of Digital Literacy

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.659	5

While the result for the questionnaire of the English Communicative Competence variable shows that the Cronbach's Alpha was 0.932 as we can see in the table below.

It means that the questionnaire from the English Communicative Competence was also reliable and ready to be applied.

Table 2 Reliability of English Communicative Competence

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.932	15

While the result for the questionnaire of the English Communicative Competence variable shows that the Cronbach's Alpha was 0.932 as we can see in the table below. It means that the questionnaire from the English Communicative Competence was also reliable and ready to be applied.

All the data above showed that Cronbach's Alpha of Digital Literacy and English Communicative Competence was 0.659 and 0.932. An instrument was reliable if the value is higher than 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded the reliability which was stated at the level 0.695 and 0.932 can be categorized as significantly reliable.

Normality Test of The Data

The importance of determining the data's normalcy cannot be overstated. The results of the normality test are used to determine if the questionnaire items are distributed normally. The term "normal data" refers to data that has a significant level of greater than 5% or 0.005 on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test from the SPSS program. The result was shown as follows:

Table 3 Table of Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		22
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	0.0000000
	Std. Deviation	6.22728857
Most Extreme	Absolute	0.117

Differences	Positive	0.113
	Negative	-0.117
Test Statistic		0.117
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200[c,d]

Kolmogorov-Smirnov was employed to analyze normality data, and the results were 0.117 with Sig. (2-tailed) 0.200 > 0.05, indicating that the samples were normal.

Analysis of the Correlation of the Data

After gathering the data from the questionnaire, the writers analyzed the data and the correlation between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence. The both data had been analyzed. Data are from the questionnaire of digital literacy and questionnaire of communicative competence.

The main goal of this research is to look at the relationship between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence in the fourth semester of the English Education Study Program at Sultan Agung Islamic University's Faculty of Languages and Communication Science in the 2021/2022 academic year. The correlation test analysis result was computed and the data were statistically described using Pearson's Product Moment in SPSS 25 version.

The result was shown as follows:

Table 4 The Correlation Test of The Data

Correlations			
		Digital Literacy	English Communicative Competence
Digital Literacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.350
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.111
	N	22	22

English	Pearson Correlation	.350	1
Communicative	Sig. (2-tailed)	.111	
Competence	N	22	22

The Pearson connection between students' digital literacy and English communicative skill was 0.350, according to the table above. Because the value of the r table with N = 22 and a 5% significant level of 0.432. As a result, the findings suggest that students' digital literacy and English communicative skill are linked. Even though there is a correlation between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence, the correlation was weak between those two variables.

Close-Ended Questionnaire

Proven on the whole result of the closed-ended questionnaire, the majority of the result showed positive responses which got the results strongly agree, agree, agree on students' digital literacy and English communicative competence. Even though some of the respondents give negative responses, it can be concluded that digital literacy affects students' English communicative competence.

Open-Ended Questionnaire

As the previous chapter explained that the instrument was also an open-ended questionnaire. The writer had done it and would be analyzed in this sub-chapter. The writer would start from the first question to the fifth question that was answered by five respondents.

Based on the answer, the respondents answered in a positive response. It showed that the respondents agree that being digitally literate is very important for them. Especially with the happening of the technology that is in a speed of light, it will be a mistake if we are not catching up with something that can help us in improving our ability. Moreover, the learning process is done by online media right now, hence if students are not being digitally literate it will be a burden for them.

After the answer was concluded, all of the respondents answered in a positive response for the second question. It showed that they agreed that with the help of technology, their English communicative competence could be better. They said that

with the help of technology, they can learn the English language suitably. With a fun learning system, they believe they can improve their English communication competence.

Based on the respondent's answers, most of the respondents answered in a positive response. It showed that they were sure that they can communicate well in English. They believe that they can communicate well in English is because they like the English language, and learning the English language could be done in many ways, so it will be easier for them to learn English.

All of the respondents answered the question almost similarly. It showed that most of them found difficulties while learning through digital media, and the main problem was a bad signal. We all know that with varieties us geographical background it is quite hard for us to get a stable signal. Especially for those who live in an area that has not been fully covered by internet connection. So, even though learning English through digital media is easy and fun, there is also a problem that can be avoided such as bad signals.

According to all of the respondent's answers, they answered in a positive response. It showed that they agreed that they can be fluent in English. It is a good sign because the first thing that we can do before learning something new is to believe in ourselves that we are capable of it, and they all showed good behavior.

Discussion

Table 5 The results of the 20 questions on a questionnaire

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	4.5
	Agree	14	63.6
	Strongly Agree	7	31.8
	Total	22	100.0

The data above is the result of the twenty questions of the questionnaire. From the table above, we can conclude that the respondents mainly agree that by learning English through digital literacy can help them in mastering or developing their English

communicative competence better. There are fourteen students chose agree and seven students chose strongly agree. So, most students also believe that with the help of technology they can manage to improve their ability in English communicative competence.

From the twenty statements of the questionnaire, most of the questions had been answered positively. They agreed with almost all of the statements related to digital literacy and English communicative competence. The result showed that the correlation coefficient value was lesser than the score of *r* table or 0.350 < 0.432. The correlation coefficient value was 0.350, it is around 0.20-0,399. It can be described that there is a weak degree of significant correlation between student's digital literacy and English communicative competence of fourth semester students of English Education Study Program. They were all agreed that being digitally literate is very needed nowadays. Not to mention, the development of technology. As we can see from the result of the data above, it shows that to get competence in communicating using English, all the respondents believe that they need to learn about digital literacy, being digitally literate is a very basic skill to be possessed.

As we can see from the result of the data above, it shows that to get competence in communicating using English, all the respondents believe that they need to learn about digital literacy. As mentioned by Sopandi et al (2019) mastering literacy could be a solution in improving or developing our communication skills. In line with that explanation, all the respondents also agreed that they can manage to improve their communication skills using digital literacy. Even though there are many obstacles or problems while learning digital literacy, the respondents said that they still can handle it.

Digital literacy not only helps students in catching up with their oral skill of English communication competence but also for the written skill. Many students stated that after they continuously read an article, news, or any information written in the online media, they are now able to improve their writing skills. This phenomenon explained that being digitally literate does help students in every skill of the English language. They get better at speaking and listening by watching an English video from the internet, and they also get better at reading and writing by reading an article on the internet.

After interviewing five of the respondents, the writers tried to elaborate the students' answers specifically related to their answer according to the question given to the five respondents from the first until the fifth question. These five questions were asked a question related to English communicative competence. All of the respondents were asked the same question. Then, their answer was explained below.

Based on the data shown above from the first question, the majority of the respondents agreed that being digitally literate is very important nowadays. Because, with the development of technology and the globalization era, they think that it is very important for us to keep up with the surroundings around us. By being digitally literate means, we are preparing ourselves to always prepare with the newest development, and with that, we can improve our self-value.

From the second question, it is shown that the respondents agreed that with the help of technology, they believe they can improve their English communicative competence. Since they can use their gadget as a tool to find and learn much new knowledge. If they are studying using their gadget, it would be easier for them to study something that they found difficult repeatedly because it is impossible to ask the teacher to repeat several times about the material.

Based on the third question, all of the respondents believe that they can communicate well using English. Even though they are quite shy, not sure of their ability, they believe that they can communicate well using English in the future. They all believe that if they study the English language continuously using their gadget through many media, it can be easy for them to be competent in communicating well using the English language.

From the fourth question table above, all of the respondents found an error or problem while they were learning English through digital media. There was various reason faced by the respondents, such as bad signals, the inability to check whether they read the word correctly or not, and the inability to get a clear explanation from a certain material. The main problem is a bad connection, it happens because we all live in different places with different demography, this is the main reason why the internet connection is are not the same from one place to another.

Based on the last question, we can see that all of the respondents believe that they will be able to be fluent in using English as long as they want to keep learning and

practicing the English language with the help of technology. Learning English could be done in so many ways, and technology comes to help us with it. By learning a language using technology it can help us to learn a new language faster because of so many sources that we can get while doing so.

The writer delivered the result of the data statistically by using SPSS software. The writer did this study to find out the correlation between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence in fourth-semester students of the English Education Study Program, of Private University in Semarang in the 2021/2022 academic year. They were collected in the close-ended questionnaire and open-ended through Google form and WhatsApp chat. It contained 20 statements of close-ended questionnaire and 5 questions of the interview. As a result, the reliability was 0.659 and 0.932, the results were higher than Cronbach's Alpha value 0.659 and 0.932 > 0.05. It means the instrument was reliable.

Both students' digital literacy and English communicative competence have a normal assessment, according to data normality. The link between students' digital literacy and English communicative skill was 0.350, according to the correlation analysis. Because the r table value with N = 22 and a 5% significant level of 0.432. As a result, the results demonstrate that students' digital literacy and English communicative skill have a limited relationship. As a result, H1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted, whereas H0 (null hypothesis) is rejected.

Conclusion and Suggestion

In this part, the writers conclude all the analysis and show some suggestions to the lecturers and teachers, future researchers and students.

Conclusion

From the analysis above the writers showed that the digital literacy had correlation to the communicative competence although in a weak correlation. This correlation showed that if students used digital literacy in learning, their communicative competence had improved too. The communicative competence will be lower too if without the habit of digital literacy. The proved had been seen that the digital literacy had influenced the communicative competence for the students.

In relation to the hypothesis of this research, the study proved that Alternative hypothesis is accepted. As mentioned by Lolang (2015) that two kinds of hypothesis, are Null Hypothesis (H0) and Alternative Hypothesis (H1). The (H0) is rejected and H1 is accepted. This means that there is a link between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence in fourth-semester students of UNISSULA Semarang's English Education Study Program in the 2021/2022 academic year. It was agreed that the two sets of data had a considerable association. The correlation coefficient number was lower than the r table score of 0.350 0.432, indicating that the correlation coefficient number was lower. The correlation coefficient was 0.350, which is in the range of 0.20-0,399. It can be described that there is a weak degree of significant correlation between students' digital literacy and English communicative competence of fourth-semester students of English Education Study Program, of Private University in Semarang in 2021/2022 academic year. Thus, students' digital literacy is weakly correlated to English communicative competence.

Suggestion

Some suggestions are delivered after doing this research. We address the suggestions for lecturers, teachers, students and future researchers. For the lecturers as students' parents at the university should be able to help the students while studying in the university to give them support or advice on how to maximize the use of digital media as a tool for students to learn and develop their English communication better. If students were advised on how to use their gadgets wisely to learn English will be more organized and do not feel lost to start studying English using their gadgets. The lecturers' support is quite important for students.

To the students, they are expected to be able to be aware of and care about their ability in digital literacy and English communicative competence. They are expected to be understood the basic knowledge of digital literacy, be confident in learning English through digital media and be able to operate gadgets using the English language. For future researchers, the people who are going to conduct research related to this study should make a better improvement by using another indicator of this study.

Finally for the readers, this study hopefully will give the readers experience and information about students' digital literacy and English communicative competence. The readers can finally realize that digital literacy could help students in developing their English Communicative competence.

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