

## **Investigating English Teachers' Digital Literacy In The Context Of Online Learning**

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### **Abstract**

In particular cases, teachers still struggle to find valid content of material in the internet, it is because teachers lack comprehending about digital literacy. While education policy has flipped the teaching learning process to online learning based, the use of technology has increased significantly. As a result the ability to search, allocate and evaluate the information in the internet is a crucial thing to be acquired by the teachers. Therefore, this research aims to reveal teachers' levels of digital literacy and to find out what support teachers need to increase their digital literacy. This research was qualitative descriptive, gathering data through the interview with six teachers at two senior high school in Mataram. The result of the study showed that teachers have a medium level of digital literacy. Teachers' digital literacy levels involve four aspect of digital literacy competencies which is the ability to use digital tools, know its purposes, and able to operate it even in a complex way. In addition, the researcher also found the support that can increase teachers' digital literacy include; (a) teachers' development where teachers need to involve themselves in training and self development, and (b) the facilities/resources such as computer, laptop and internet connection

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Technology in this 21<sup>st</sup> century has been spread widely in most field of social works. This phenomenon also brought significant changes in the teaching and learning process. Following to this phenomem, individuals are expected to have 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in order to survive in this digital era. This skill also known as Digital Literacy. Digital literacy have gone hand in hand with the growth of English Language learning since it has a strong relation with the development of technology in educational systems nowadays. In relation to the current circumtences, educational field struggles with the pandemic called Corona Virus Deases 19 (COVID-19). Thus, during the pandemic the need of technology has increased significantly. Therefore, teachers require to use technology properly by being digitally literate.

Bawden (2007) extends the concept of digital literacy as the ability to understand and use information from various digital resources. Nevertheless, intergrating digital literacy into teaching English as Foreign Language is considered challenging. In particular cases, teacher still struggle to find a valid content of material in the internet, they might simply access the internet to find the information and material but they may not really understand about the information that they get from the internet and it could be not a genuiness information of the source. Hence, the ability to search, allocate and evaluate the information in the internet is a crucial thing to be acquire by teachers.

If individuals have become digitally literate they can simply find and evaluate the right information that they search in the internet. Teacher could access and share the material with the innovative way. Moreover, by being digitally literate teachers could create and produce a better teaching learning activities by intergrating the technology.

Besides, as a facilitator teachers are responsible to guide the students to deal with technology that grow rapidly. It is justified when Prensky (2009) argued that teachers are expected to understand how to leverage digital technologies to assist digital natives to use them effectively.

Therefore, in this study the researcher focussed on revealed digital literacy levels and the support they need to increase digital literacy. The researcher took the theory from Gilster (1997) who proposed four competencies to assess digital literacy level namely, internet searching, hypertext navigation, content

evaluation, and knowledge assembly. This research focussed on six teachers from two schools located in Mataram. Moreover, this research is needed to be conducted to get more detail information about teachers' digital literacy level and support they need as it is important to be an overview for the current educational policy.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses descriptive qualitative approach to presents a detailed and contextualized picture of a particular case or phenomenon (Crocker 2009). The researcher took SMAN 7 Mataram and SMAN 8 Mataram as the location of the research. It is because the research want to describe and contextualize the levels of digital literacy as well as to find out the support that they need to increase digital literacy.

The source of the data as the primary subject of the study are six English Teachers from each schools. The researcher took the data by using interview questions, researcher also took some notes during interview section. Researcher use semi-structured interview in order to make the subject can answer based on their own perspective.

In addition the researcher also can develop the question based on the subjects' condition and answer. Additionally, the research also took voice recording to support data collection. To analyzed the data, this research use data reduction, data display, and vefication (Miles, Huberman & Saldana : 2014). In this study the researcher reduced the data that had been collected, then the researcher made the data to be simple in form of short description and the researcher presented the data in the form of narrative text to decribe teachers' digital literacy level. after that researcher would conclude the data after do the data reduction and data display.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data that researchers obtained was from interview sessions with six subjects of the research. All of the subjects should answer ten questions out of four categories of digital literacy competencies: internet use and search, hypertext navigation, content evaluation and knowledge assembly. In answering the first question of the research related to teachers' digital literacy level, the result of the interview showed that:

- a) All participants had an advance level of internet use it can be measure from the indicator of each individual's ability to use the internet by actively utilized the online fiture such like Google or Youtube to search the information, reference, journal that they can use as a teachers.
- b) Three participants which are P2, P3 and P4 proceed in an advance level of navigation text because of their ability that managed to point out about the imporant of finding another information to verified the data that they had, managed to explain the charatistics of the web and know the differences of the information in the book and internet while the other three participants had a medium level of hypertext navigation although they able to distinguish the difference of searching information from the book and internet however they could not managed to point out the existencce of navigation text which can be seen from their responded which never look for other website in order to give them more related information.
- c) All participants had an advanced level on the content evaluation because of their ability that concent with the validation of the information and always sort out the information by being critical with the background of the information.
- d) P2, P3, P5 and P6 had an advanced level of knowledge assembly which can be seen on how they managed to do the cross check of the information and use other media to validate it while the two other participants in the medium level which they did not concern about the source of the informations in the internet.

As the form of the answer towards the second research questions, researcher display the answer from the Participant of two major point as a strategies in the implementation of increasing digital literacy ability during English teaching and learning. Bellow are the explanation from each strategies that found by researchers:

As one of the way in improving teachers digital literacy skills teachers' professional developments seems to be the most strategic way as it can enhance teachers' ability and emphazied their quality in term of digital literacy. As what had been stated by P2 and P6 they conyed the same arguments about the support they need. Both participants agreed if the fundamental support that they need is by conducting the training for teachers related to their teachers' development. They do bealive that the problem of teachers will be solved if they get the training by the government because they can get insightful information. On the other case, P5 and P6 stated differents thought about the support they need based on their answers teachers

development is not only limited to only do the training because the consistency on how they commit to use the digital tools properly is also the most important things that every teacher suppose to have.

On the other hand, resource or media to enhance teachers' digital literacy is a set of tools that can be used by teachers to assist them when utilized the internet itself. In relation to the data obtained, there is a different opinion come from participants *P3* and *P4*. Rather than focussing on teachers' development they more consider about the tools or resources itself, *P3* and *P4* believe that to support teachers' digital literacy government and schools need to provide and guarantee the access to the availability of all facilities in the schools by doing that the teachers will be easier to implemented the knowledges that they had about digital literacy into their online teaching learning

#### 4. DISCUSSION

According to the data obtained, among six participants, *P2* and *P3* managed to answer the questions and carry out all the indicators. It was proven by their answers during the interview section that they really active in the internet which included the whole indicator of digital literacy competence itself and they had been implemented it in real life. On the other hand, although the rest of the participants also had a good ability in the term of internet use and search. However, they still did not managed to carry out the indicators from one of digital competencies because they did not really understand and did not familiar with the term from the indicators of each competencies. Hence, according to the European Commission, it can be concluded that the participants had a medium level of digital literacy.

The measurement of medium level according to the European Commission is measured by looking at the ability of individuals in term of internet use and search. In this term, the ability to use and search in the internet is quite high because according to the confession from all participants they were very active in using the internet for the sake of pedagogical aspects and teaching matters. This finding also in line with the theory from Hendrickus Gerrits (2012) who explained that the use of internet for teachers fellows were more dominated by using for searching the source of the information related to their material subjects as well as the tools to communicate with their students.

Besides the ability to acknowledge search engines such like Google, participants also actively and accustomed with the use of social media such as Youtube, WhatsApp and Google Classroom in the internet. According to the data obtained five out of six participants were very active and accustomed to use Youtube as a platform to search additional content and WhatsApp to communicate with their students.

In the stage of medium level, besides being measured by teacher's ability in term of internet use, the teachers also have to know how to get the credible information through internet, manage to evaluate the information and gather all the information they get from the internet.

According to the data obtain, it found that half of participants able to access the credible content in the internet and it is related to the term of navigation text itself as a result they able to distinguish the different content from each website. While the the other three participants did not managed to acknowledge the existence of the hypertext navigation itself, because they only focuss on what they have been found at the first place as a result they become reluctant to go deeper in searching another the information.

Based on the answers, all participants expressed the common way to evaluate the content in which they will try to analyze the background of the information that they get through internet. While the ability in term of gathering the information all participants managed to do the cross check and expands the use of media other than internet. However, some of them still can not managed to go further in gathering the information because most of them did not go to online discussion group and sometimes being reckless of the source of the information in the internet.

Regarding to the explanations above, this finding has expanded the result of teachers' digital literacy level in the previous study that reported low level of teachers' digital literacy expressed by teachers themselves (Yuliani, 2019). On her study, she found that teachers' still lack of understanding the term of digital literacy it was proven by the interview section, where most of the participants did not managed to elaborate about the use of digital literacy into teaching and learning class. However, it turns out the factors that affecting them was because of the limitation from digital tools itself.

Khaira (2020) on her research also claimed that many English teachers in some asian countries, including indonesia, still have low literacy scale. Mostly teachers only use digital technologies related to the technical things (e.g. operating computer and projector). This competence is categorized as the lowest level in Bloom's digital taxonomi.

Meanwhile, in this present study researcher found that English teachers, specifically in Mataram were actively use the term of technology more than the technical things. It is included their understanding about the term of internet use and how they dealt with the various information in the internet. Based on the

results obtained in this present research, there was an improvement in the digital literacy level of teachers specifically in Mataram. Most of the teachers in this present study was able to expanded the use of technology and managed to reflect their abilities in utilizing the internet into their daily activities as a teachers.

Additionally, the researcher highlighted two major factors that can support teachers to increase their digital literacy. The teachers revealed about term of teachers' development as had been mentioned earlier. The part of teachers' development is by carrying out the trainings for all schools members. This is one of the way that teachers need to get from the schools because by involving teacher in integrated training it will give teacher a new insight of digital literacy itself. Another support that have been conveyed by the Participants were the existence of adequate resources and the facilities for maximized teaching and learning activities with digital literacy such as the availability of computer and digital devices as well as with the improvement of quality and the connection WiFi in the schools.

This finding is related to study conducted by Yentri et al (2019) which found that teachers who have basic and intermediate level of digital literacy need further professional development to support their teaching and learning in this digital age. Moreover, she also recommended the English teacher to join some training in order to develop the digital literacy competences. Hence, the factors that had mentioned by all the participants in this present study really give an overview on how to improve someone's digital literacy.

Integrating digital literacy into teaching learning in online context was quite different with the offline context. As what had been mentioned in the previous study, the result of the teachers' digital literacy was categorized low because the teacher still used conventional teaching method which the role of technology did not really matters in their class. As a result, most of the teachers can not achieved an advance level of digital literacy.

Teachers in the present study shows a different result of teachers digital literacy level because of the connection with teaching and learning process in online context. Teachers in Mataram already used the term of media internet and reflected it into their online classes. Furthermore, since they have to teach in online classes they managed to improved from conventional teaching method to the web-based course because most of the teaching activities done through the internet. Thus, at a medium level teachers from these two schools in Mataram are managed to acknowledge the term of digital literacy.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The research finally came to the conclusion, according to the research finding and research discussion that the researcher has described about English teachers' digital literacy level as well as the support that they need to increase their digital literacy it can be concluded that:

1. English Teachers in two Senior High School where the research had been conducted, have a medium level of digital literacy. In this stage teachers' ability based on the aspect of digital literacy competencies are able to use the digital tools and know its purposes, know the function and being able to operate it even in a complex way. The aspect of evaluating the information namely ability to think critically in finding and processing the information they got and managed to expanded use of the media other than internet. Unfortunately almost all participant were never doing a group discussion to share the ideas and information they get but however, teachers still able to managed to get and accesses the information they needs, they able to distinguished then modified (improved) the information they get.
2. Support that can increase teachers' digital literacy such as: (a) Teachers' development where teachers need to involve themselves in training in order to make teachers realize and more engaging themselves into digital literacy stuffs, and (b) facility/resource of digital based such as computer or laptop and internet connection.

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