

# Understanding EFL Students' Reading Motivation and Online Reading Practice in Relation to Their Reading Achievement in a Full Online Learning Context

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## ABSTRACT

The study aims to reveal the correlation between students' reading motivation, online reading practice, and reading proficiency. The participants of the study are students of Academic Reading Class in one of Islamic University in Kediri, East Java Indonesia. The data are collected through reading motivation questionnaire based on the Motivation for Reading English Questionnaire (MREQ), online reading practice questionnaire adapted from Putro and Lee (2017) and reading proficiency test. The result shows that high-reading motivation students do not necessarily have high reading achievement. On the other hand, students who do more frequent reading online have higher reading achievement. As a result of multiple regression analysis, both reading motivation and online reading practice give a potential contribution to the students' reading proficiency. EFL teachers and students are suggested to maximize the internet facilities to explore the information provided to support the students' reading activity.

**Keywords:** Full-online learning, motivation on reading, online reading, reading achievement.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant factors that determine the academic achievement among students of various ages and in different cultural contexts is reading performance, which is affected by different environmental and personal factors, most notably motivation to read (Putro & Lee, 2017; Salikin, Bin-Tahir, Kusumaningputri, & Yuliandari, 2017). Grabe (2009) believed that reading motivation as one of the key factors influencing reading comprehension and motivation to learn. Reading motivation plays an important role in the field of foreign language (FL) instruction, impacting the development of linguistic skills as well as attitudes towards FL learning and reading. While FL reading is an essential language skill in learning a foreign language (Grabe, 2009), the extent to which learners are able to sustain reading motivation during an online reading course, open to question, particularly when the course is mandatory for the learners. Therefore, true motivation for reading is vital since it can enable learners to read in greater quantities and then improve reading capacity.

Komiyama (2013) identified factors underlying second language reading motivation of adult EAP (English for Academic Purposes) students. The result

mentioned that the factors included are one intrinsically-oriented factor (Intrinsic Motivation) and four extrinsically-oriented factors (Drive to Excel, Academic Compliance, Test Compliance, Social Sharing). The results support the multidimensional nature of L2 reading motivation and the importance of intrinsic motivation in explaining L2 reading motivation. Larhmaid, Nour, and Afflerbach (2019) reported that students' motivation to read online is driven by the need to keep up with recent information and use usability features embedded with e-texts such as the 'Find' function and built-in annotation tools. A great number of students rated their overall online reading experience as satisfactory or enjoyable. In relation to the correlation between reading motivation and reading proficiency, some studies clearly show similar result that both of them have strong relationship (Chon & Kim, 2019; Dakhi & Damanik, 2018; Salikin et al., 2017; Schutte & Malouff, 2007). However, a study by Meniado (2016) revealed no significant correlation between reading interest/motivation and reading comprehension. However, there is positive correlation between reading strategies and reading motivation.

Marliana and Nurhayati (2020) mentioned that reading motivation is also resulted from how students interact with digital reading devices. The introduction of

digital technologies and the emergence of electronic reading devices have expanded the concept of literacy and shaped how readers consume information from texts, as well as how they perceive and interact with digital materials vs. print materials in academic settings. Several decades ago, reading was merely a characteristic of print. However, with today's advances in technology, most people are reading blogs, journals, newspapers, and other materials on digital screens, online. As a result, the ability to master digital literacy is growing rapidly every day. Students today may be digital natives, able to master technology only through their immersion in it. Another attribute attempts to digital literacy is the ability, competence, and behavior of students in using digital media in the learning process for educational purposes (Hatlevik, Guðmundsdóttir, & Loi, 2015). This activity can also be characterized by the students practice in reading online.

Online reading requires eye contact, computer screen, hypertext messages, and comprehension of verbal and non-verbal content (Silva, 2009). In the way readers read around the world, computers and the internet play a major role and could be the most extensive source of input (Nelson, Courier, & Joseph, 2011). Digital media and online literacy are now part of life and must be seen by educators as a crucial feature of literacy. Shen (2006) found that students prioritize the internet as a medium of information and go online primarily to get data, send and receive emails, download music, and use chat rooms. There is also speculation that for unproductive reasons students waste their time browsing the net (Alhajjar, 2014).

Research indicates that students' online reading is a highly potent strategy in enhancing reading habits among students (Larhmaid et al., 2019; Rimi, 2019). Concerning gender and hours spent on online reading, males appeared to read more hours than females. The gathered data provided interesting insights into online reading habits (Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, & Jesmin, 2011). The similar study (Abidin, Majid, Nalini, & Choon, 2014) revealed that the respondents were active Internet users preferring the use of English when they were involved in online activities. All respondents, regardless of gender and socio-economic status, had similar online reading habits and yet they were more inclined toward social networking activities rather than reading as an academic activity.

Theoretically, if the students have a good reading habit, their writing ability is also good. A good writer must be a good reader. Rimi (2019) revealed a correlation between student's online reading habits and their writing proficiency. Another study showed that there is a significant relationship between digital literacy and the use of e-resources. Marliana and Nurhayati (2020) showed that digital literacy has as high correlation with the use of e-resources. The study also showed that the use

of e-resources has a relationship with the reading culture. Research studies are likely to suggest that digital literacy affects reading motivation and reading comprehension. For example, Marliana & Nurhayati, (2020) they develop model of how the latent variables, digital literacy, use of e-resources and reading culture of students influence each other. Another study demonstrates how students has positive perception toward reading in digital era (Gilbert, 2017). The findings suggest that language learners engage in characteristically different reading practices and strategies when reading web text and that there is a need for digital literacy skills to be taught in conjunction with the development of traditional literacy skills in the target language. Technology provides a vast potential for students to access various resources in composing a writing product (Nelson et al., 2011). Also, providing various relevant sources would likely be helped students to improve their reading comprehension and writing ability (Larhmaid et al., 2019). In addition, Andina, Cahyono, and Widiati (2020) correlated language students' autonomy, digital competence and their writing achievement. The results of the study confirmed that learner autonomy was strongly correlated with writing achievement and digital competence was moderately correlated with writing achievement. Nevertheless, research on the relationship beyond reading motivation, online reading practice and reading comprehension is relatively rare in the EFL context. Particularly in Indonesia, this research will shed light on the potential of reading motivation, online reading practice to promote reading achievement.

Schutte and Malouff (2007) emphasize on reading motivation and realize the value of reading for their English development. Perceived competence, interesting reading materials, and the sociocultural environment are other reasons why they are motivated to read in English. Results underscore the importance of different types of motivation for reading comprehension and the different roles each motivational aspect may play in L1 and EFL reading. Namazianost, Nasri, and Esfahani (2019) suggest interactive type of input for the beneficiary of students' language skills development.

From those studies, if students' online reading practice and the reading motivation increase, it is expected that the students' reading proficiency will be higher. Thus, not only the quality of the academic assignments of students will improve, but also the quality of the students. In reference to the background of the study, the literature review, and to the best of the researchers' knowledge, rare studies, if any, have been carried out on the correlation among reading motivation, online reading practice and EFL learners' reading comprehension. To reach the purposes of the study, this study attempts to response the following research questions regarding the relationship between EFL students' reading motivation and their reading comprehension, the relationship between EFL students'

online reading practice and their reading comprehension, and the correlation between the combination of EFL students' reading motivation and online reading practice and students' reading comprehension.

## 2. METHOD

A correlational design was employed in this research. The research was conducted in one of the universities in East Java, Indonesia. The participants of the research were invited from third semester of EFL students in full-online Academic reading course during the Covid-19 outbreak. The students have already learned two courses on reading previously, Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading course. Therefore, it is assumed that the third semester students have already been familiarized with reading habit online or offline and have some achievement regarded reading practice. From 87 third semester of EFL students, 30 returned the questionnaire.

The data were collected by using questionnaires and test of reading proficiency. The instrument for taking students reading motivation is based on the Motivation for Reading English Questionnaire (MREQ) (Komiyama, 2013), which is originally designed for measuring L1 reading motivation and has subsequently been used for measuring L2 reading motivations. This MREQ consist of 25 statements and constructed by one intrinsically oriented and four extrinsically oriented factors. The first factor is intrinsic motivation; this factor consists of 8 items including curiosity, involvement, and preference for challenge items. The second factor is extrinsic drive to excel. This factor can show the desire of students in improving their second language reading ability. This factor has 6 items which is divided into eight competition's items and seven recognition's items.

The third is extrinsic academic compliance. The fourth is labeled as extrinsic test compliance. This consist of items related to students' desire in gain scores on English standardized test such as TOEFL, IELTS, etc. and the last one item is about the students read English just for passing the English course. The last factor is named as extrinsic social sharing. This factor consists of two items and focused on students sharing their experiences with friends, teacher or other adults (Komiyama, 2013).

Students' online reading practice is measured by the questionnaire adopted from Putro & Lee (2017) with 15 statements regarding students online reading practice. Finally, students' reading proficiency is measured by a reading proficiency test which is taken from Peterson's master TOEFL reading skills (eResource) (Hammond, Davy, & Peterson's, 2007). It consists of reading TOEFL like test with 30 items of multiple-choice that has been matched to the reading level of students. The bivariate Spearman and multiple regression used the SPSS 21 to

evaluate the outcome, since the design of the analysis was partial correlational design.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are presented according to the order of the research questions.

### 3.1. Correlation between EFL students' reading motivation and their reading comprehension

A Rank Spearman was used to examine the correlation between students' reading motivation and their reading comprehension. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

The result of the motivation survey shows that students have moderate motivation in reading English text. It is indicated by the mean score of motivation is 2,92 from 4 of Likert scale. Table 1 shows that there is a weak positive correlation between students' reading motivation and their reading proficiency with ( $r = 0.356$ ). The significant score of the p-value (0.054) is more than  $\alpha$  value (0.05). It indicates that there is no significant correlation between students' reading motivation and their reading proficiency. In other words, the higher the level of students' motivation to read English, is not necessarily the better their reading proficiency.

### 3.2. Correlation between EFL students' online reading practice and their reading comprehension

To analyse the correlation between students' online reading practice and their reading proficiency, Spearman's rho was also used. The result of the analysis is shown in Table 2.

Relatively, EFL learners have high online reading practice shown by the mean score of the survey on their online reading. With the mean score 3,32 of 4 Likert scale, they tend to have quite high frequency in reading online regardless the language they use.

**Table 1.** Correlation between students' reading motivation and their reading comprehension

Correlations				
		Reading motivation	Reading comprehension	
Spearman's rho	Reading motivation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.356
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.054
		N	30	30
	Reading comprehension	Correlation Coefficient	.356	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.054	.
		N	30	30

**Table 2.** Correlation between students' online reading practice and their reading proficiency

Correlations			Online reading	Reading comprehension
Spearman's rho	Online reading	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.485**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.007
	Reading comprehension	Correlation Coefficient	.485**	1.000
	Reading comprehension	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.
		N	30	30
		Correlation Coefficient	.485**	1.000

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 3.** The correlation between the combination of students' reading motivation and online reading practice and their reading comprehension

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2026.454	2	1013.27	6.590	.005 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	4151.413	27	153.756		
	Total	6177.867	29			
a. Dependent Variable: Reading comprehension						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Online reading, Reading motivation						

**Table 4.** Unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	-3.482	22.144		-.157	.876
	Reading motivation	.437	.293	.275	1.492	.147
	Online reading	.613	.298	.380	2.058	.049
a. Dependent Variable: Reading comprehension						

Table 2 shows that there is a mild ( $r = 0.485$ ) relationship between the ability to comprehend text and online reading practice. In other words, the more the students read online, the higher their reading proficiency. This finding is supported by the score of the p-value (0.007), it is less than  $\alpha$  value (0.05). Therefore, it can be said that indeed there is correlation between students' online reading practice and their reading proficiency.

### 3.3. Correlation between the combination of EFL students' reading motivation and online reading practice and their reading comprehension

Multiple regressions were performed to decide whether to have reading motivation and the practice of reading English online, reading proficiency could be projected. Table 3 indicates the outcome of the study.

The result of the ANOVA, F-test which indicated that the null hypothesis is rejected is presented in Table 3. In other terms, through reading motivation and online reading habit, 57.3 percent of the difference in reading achievement is clarified. The F test (6.590) is higher than the F-table (3.32) with N; 30, which indicates that the mentioned model had a highly significant amount of variance in the achievement of reading. The p-value (0.005) results is in a lower value than the alpha-value (0.05). It can be seen that the combination of students' reading motivation and online reading practice for reading comprehension was a simultaneous partnership. Table 4, which shows the coefficient between reading motivation and online reading practice, presents the outcome of further study.

The coefficient of online reading practice (0.049), as shown in Table 4, is less than 0.05. The coefficient of reading motivation of learners (0.147), however, is higher than 0.05. The calculated value of reading motivation (1.492) is also less than the t-table (2,052). On the contrary, the calculated value of online reading is higher (2.058) than the t-table. Although the combination of reading motivation and online reading practice is also associated with reading proficiency, online reading contributes to the prediction of the correlation more than reading motivation does.

Additional information taken from a small survey questioning what language their reading text is and how online reading practice revealed an interesting data. Of 30 respondents, only 31.4 % of them like to read in English. They also are more familiar to read text and information from the social media rather than any other sources like academic articles in journal or online newspaper. Moreover, it is surprising when some of the students, 37.3 % spend their time to read online more than two hours per-day, the rest are less than two hours.

The current study found that the greater the motivation of the learner to read, is not necessarily the higher their reading comprehension. This result confirm previous study which showed no relationship between EFL learner's reading motivation and reading comprehension (Meniado, 2016). This outcome goes with the results of Meniado (2016) that show that the motivation of Saudi students is not too high and not too poor. He discovered in his research that although some are naturally inspired to learn, others are not because it is needed. However, there is positive correlation between

reading strategies and reading motivation. The findings of this study interestingly contradict previous findings of most studies.

Previous studies found that students' reading motivation has a positive impact on the achievement of students in reading (Chon & Kim, 2019; Schutte & Malouff, 2007). It was declared that learners' motivation affects their readings. Learners with higher motivation are expected to read more in a wider range. In order to encourage students to obtain a better score in reading, it was found that greater learner reading motivation is important. The finding has an important effect on fostering learner motivation in the reading teaching and learning process, as Schutte and Malouff (2007) explained that motivation is an important aspect which helps learners read more and it has an important relationship with reading and recognizing texts. In other words, to enhance the standard of teaching and learning, the development of reading motivation in language learning is important. Another important functional consequence is that it may be beneficial for an efficient teaching and learning process to choose suitable methodologies and techniques to create a reading motivation environment.

However, reviewing studies showing that many learners' motivation to read declines over the school years. It is due to the development of educational technologies. For instance, studies (Putro & Lee, 2017; Singer & Alexander, 2016) recently found that students preferred reading digitally than reading in print. The current study is in line with Singer and Alexander (2016) and Abidin et al. (2014) study where students prefer to read through social media to printed book or article. In contrast, students reported that eyestrain, discomfort with online reading, and the credibility and quality of texts encountered online are major challenges and barriers to digital reading. Results revealed that students' satisfaction with online reading is positively correlated with the frequency of using digital texts (Larhmaid et al., 2019). Furthermore, the moderate correlation between students' online reading practice and their reading proficiency is consistent with Rimi (2019). She mentioned that a correlation between reading habits and reading proficiency has been drawn.

Another interesting finding pertained to the most motivating areas. It is interesting to know that students' motivation to read English is because they want to improve their grades, as stated in the reading motivation questionnaire number 20. As reported by Alhuwaydi (2020), students who are more anxious with their reading score tend to have less reading comprehension than students who have less anxiety. This result leads to the interpretation why their reading comprehension does not correlate highly with their reading motivation. Because they are more concerned about their score, and it can provoke anxiety. Hence the result of reading test is not disappointing since their score is average although it is

ranging from 43 to 97, with 76 as the mean score. As Meniado (2016) asserts that the use of metacognitive reading strategies when reading academic texts result in a desirable reading comprehension performance rather than reading motivation.

To conclude the result that both reading motivation and online reading practice should be integrated well during online reading course by the EFL teachers since they can give simultaneous impact to the students' reading proficiency. This finding confirm the studies by Chon & Kim (2019), Larhmaid et al. (2019), Meniado (2016), Namaziandost et al. (2019), and Rimi (2019). Reviewing the studies, a correlational research has been performed on various studies examining digital utilization and achievement. The outcome of the study indicates the decisive point on the moderate value of the relationship between students' practice in online reading and their reading score. It is believed that digitally literate students are the students who can assist them in reading by using suitable technology. This shows students who can navigate the educational technologies for reading; great results in reading are likely to be achieved, and this has high potential chance to happen during full-online learning. Furthermore, the results corroborate the theories of Chow, Chiu, and Wong (2018) who indicated that the success and motivation of EFL students in using learning techniques predicted areas of reading and listening achievement.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The study showed that there is a low correlation between the learners' reading motivation and the reading achievement, and there is a moderate correlation between online reading practice and the achievement of reading. In addition, the combination of reading motivation, and online reading practice for reading achievement have a moderate connection. It demonstrates that they can play more with the reading style as students get better reading proficiency with online resources and thereby become better readers. In view of these results, it is recommended that EFL teachers consider encouraging or training students when teaching reading online to improve their reading motivation and online reading practice. These results, however, are constrained by the use of a design for quantitative analysis. In order to explore more closely the relation between EFL learners' reading motivation, online reading practice, and reading proficiency, further qualitative study is suggested.

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