

The Use of Infographic to Enhance EFL Students' Reading Interest

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Abstract

This study was designed to review previous studies conducted by the other researchers related to the utilization of infographics to enhance the EFL students' reading interest and design a scenario of utilizing the infographics in the classroom to enhance the students' reading interest. The paper conducted library research to collect the data. Several studies that fulfilled the criteria were reviewed in the data collection. It was found that many other researchers found positive impacts from the utilization of infographics. It was also found that the utilization of infographics to enhance the students' reading interest was not very difficult since the high development of technology nowadays can help teachers to design the infographic using software and online platforms easier. The last result found were the benefits acquired from the utilization of infographics, namely reducing the students' boredom, increasing their will to read, and developing their ability to think critically and organize ideas.

Keywords: *EFL Students, Infographic, Reading Interest*

Introduction

Reading is considered a necessary skill that can help the students achieve their academic achievement. Students with advanced reading skills will make greater progress in all other fields of learning (Uslu, 2020). Reading activity is often related to the term reading interest. Reading interest can be defined as how often the students read in a week and also how many favorite books the students read in a month (Khairuddin, 2013). Reading interest plays an important role in comprehending the text since it serves as the basis for students to move towards their reading objectives (Wigfield et al., 2015). Students will not achieve their goal in reading without having any interest in what they read. Reading interest is also considered as the most important part of comprehending the text since it motivates students to read for enjoyment (Käsper et al., 2018). It means that the students will comprehend the text if they are supported by motivation and also enjoyment with the contents they read. One way to enhance the reading interest of the students is

by utilizing visual media that looks interesting which will not make the students not feel bored while reading something. Infographic is an example of visual media that can be utilized to enhance the students' reading interest.

The utilization of visual teaching media especially infographics has been widely used especially in the education system. Infographic has an exciting visual design because it has a purpose to persuade people. Infographics came from the words "Information graphic" which means pictures that combine a collection of data and graphics to deliver the messages briefly and create good communication with the audience (Smiciklas, 2012). It means that infographics have a purpose to make the message that we want to deliver becomes efficient and effective. Infographics have continued to become an important consideration for teachers nowadays to enhance the learning process quality especially in enhancing the students' reading interest. The interesting visual design from the infographic will attract the students' attention to read and also increase their willingness to read instead of only teaching them using the traditional material. This statement is supported by Shanks et al. (2017) who state that the interesting statistics, evidence-based and practice-based data, font that is easy to read, exciting color schemes, bold graphs, simple charts, and other graphics that provided in the infographics make the information delivered easily with the understandable format. Some characteristics of the infographic itself such as font that easy to read, free color scheme, and interesting statistics can improve the willingness of the students to read and enhance their reading interest.

Several studies were conducted related with the utilization of infographic in the educational system. Bicen and Beheshti (2017) conducted a research which has a purpose to investigate the students' perception of using infographic in education. From the results of the study, the students thought that using infographic helped them to master their learning skills, giving them motivation, and developing their creativity. The students preferred to study with visual materials rather than the traditional materials such as books. Another similar research was conducted by Alqudah et al. (2019) that has a purpose to investigate the impact of using educational infographic by focusing on the students' interaction and perception of the meaning of the transferred information. The results of this study showed that infographic had positive effect on both college's samples and it has been proved by comparing the students' quizzes scores between the control group and experimental group.

Alyahya (2019) conducted a qualitative research that has a purpose to investigate the use of an infographic as a tool for learning in higher education. The results of the study showed that most of the students stated that in depth analysis of the infographic make it easier to understand the concept and collecting information in relevant and efficient way can be easily done by understanding the subject in the infographic. Al-Mohammadi (2017) conducted a study to investigate the effectiveness of infographic as an approach to teach the programming fundamentals on developing analytical thinking skills. The results showed that infographics

provide an interesting method that make the students think faster than using the traditional method and it also helped to attract the students' attention and concentration.

Those previous studies found the benefits of the infographic utilization in educational system but those were not focused on designing the scenario for implementing the infographic in the classroom to enhance a specific skill, especially reading interest. Thus, this article was aimed to review the other similar studies conducted by the other researchers regarding the utilization of infographic in educational system and design a scenario of the infographic utilization in the classroom.

Method

This paper conducted library research as the method for collecting the data. According to Sarwono (in Sari & Asmendri, 2020), library research is a study that studies various references of books and the results of similar previous studies which are useful for obtaining a theoretical basis for the problem to be studied. This paper focused on reviewing theories and empirical evidence from other similar studies on the utilization of infographics especially for enhancing the students' reading interest. There was a criterion for the previous studies that were reviewed for this study. The study must be related with the investigation of the utilization of infographic in educational system.

Findings and Discussions

After collecting the data from previous researches and books, the author designed a scenario of utilizing infographics in the classroom to enhance the students' reading interest. The author also elaborates on several benefits from the utilization of infographics. Several steps and benefits are supported by theories and empirical evidence.

1) Utilization of Infographic in the classroom to enhance the students' reading interest

The author designed several steps in utilizing the infographics in the classroom to enhance the EFL students' reading interest. The utilization of infographics is appropriate and suitable to be conducted in every level of students but the teacher should know how to differentiate the difficulties for each level. The scenario that the author made is more suitable and appropriate to be conducted for junior high school students or senior high school students. The steps are elaborated as follows:

Design the infographic based on the topic that will be taught

The infographic can be created by using software or even online platforms. Teachers should avoid downloading the existing infographic from the internet. It will be better if the

teachers create their own infographic because the teachers know the students' characteristics, the conditions and situations in the classroom, and the context of the learning process. If they only download the existing infographic from the internet, it would be inappropriate and not suitable to be conducted in their classroom. It will be better if the teachers create the infographic if they teach junior high school students, but if they teach senior high school students, teachers should tell the students to create their own infographic. It is because junior high school students mostly face difficulties in operating the applications and also online platform while senior high school students are most familiar with the online platform or the applications used to design the infographic. The study conducted by Bicen and Beheshti (2017) revealed that infographics helped the students to master their learning skills, motivation, and creativity. After the students design their own infographic, they will exchange it with their friends so each student will still read and analyze the different infographics. The designing infographic processes are also not very difficult nowadays since the high development of technology. The software and online platforms that can be used to create the infographic are such as Canva, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Piktochart.

Make the message that we want to deliver clear and make the visual design interesting

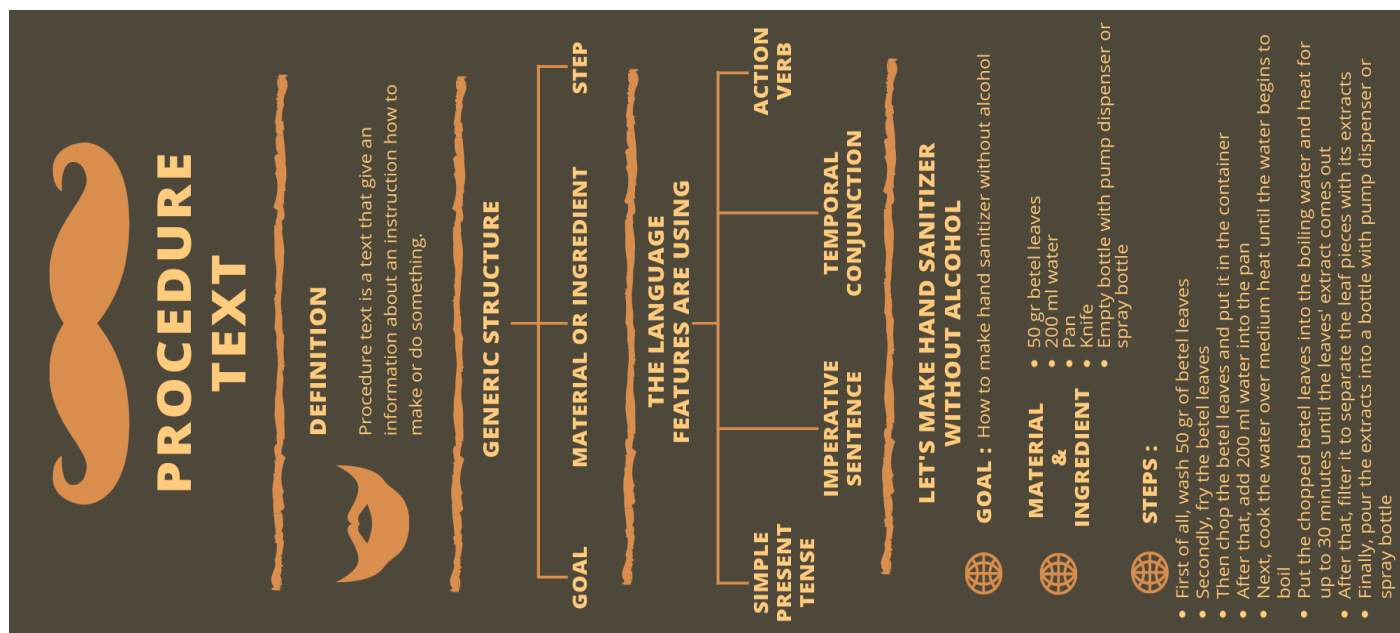
The infographic should have a clear theme and message, simple and effective, have an interesting design and visual, and consider the audience. The teachers can attract the students' attention by creating an interesting topic and title for the students. For example, if the students are learning about procedure text and the teacher wants the students to read and analyze the content of a procedure text, the teacher can create an infographic with the title "Let's Make Home-Made Hand Sanitizer" instead of creating a title "How to Make Hand-Made Hand Sanitizer" which probably will make the students less interest. This idea is also supported by Hidi (2001) who states that topic interest may have an important role in reading since students usually encounter the topic or the title of the text at the very beginning of their reading task. The message or purpose that the teachers want to deliver through the infographic should be clear and not confusing the students. The content of the infographics should not be complicated because the purpose of infographic itself is to deliver a message in a simple and effective way. The last one, by considering the audience, the teacher should make the design and visual of the infographic as interesting as possible to attract the students' attention. Remember that one of the purposes of infographics according to Ibrahim & Maharaj (2019) is to persuade so it is important to make its visual design drawing attention. For example, if the teacher is teaching English to young learners, it will be better to design the infographic using simple words and adding some cartoon characters.

Tell the students to read and analyze the infographic by themselves

This is the step where the students should read and analyze the contents of the infographic. This step is really important because we will recognize and find the result whether or not the

utilization of infographics manage to enhance the students’ reading interest. As what is mentioned in the first step, there are several online platforms and also software to design the infographic nowadays. The author suggested using the online platform because most of them are free to use while software such as Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator are not free to use and it will also take time to learn how to use the software. The author made an example of infographic using the online platform Canva and the infographic can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The example of an infographic



Ask the students to draw conclusion regarding to the contents of the infographic

In this final step, after the students finish reading and analyzing the infographic, the teacher will ask the students some questions and finally, make a conclusion related to the infographic that they have read. The examples of the questions are such as “What are the benefits that you can get after reading and analyzing the infographic?” or “Please mention the language features that you found from the example of procedure text in the infographic!”

2) The benefits of infographic utilization in the classroom to enhance the students’ reading interest

There are also several benefits from utilizing the infographic to enhance the students’ reading interest which is elaborated as follows:

Presenting the information in a simple and effective way

Infographics represent the text or content in a simple and effective way because it only focuses on the important points to present the data. Unlike the books that have many pages to

cover a lot of information, infographic only need one page to cover them all. Infographic can summarize information from one chapter of the book into one page such as the infographic that designed by the author entitled “Procedure Text”.

Exciting and interesting visual design

The exciting and interesting visual design of the infographic will attract the students’ attention and increase their willingness to read instead of only giving the students reading material full of text or traditional materials which probably makes them feel bored. It also gives a chance for the students to develop their creativity if the teacher gives them the opportunity to design the infographic by themselves.

Developing critical thinking

Infographic also develops the ability of students to think critically and organize their ideas while reading because they only provided with the important points of the learning material in the infographic which means they need to think critically to find the message or purpose that the teacher wants to deliver through the infographic. This statement is supported by Smiciklas (2012) who states that one of the benefits of using infographics is enhancing the ability to think critically. The study conducted by Al-Mohammadi (2017) also revealed that infographics provide an interesting method that can reach the students’ minds faster than the traditional method.

Conclusions

The utilization of infographic gives many benefits, especially to enhance the students’ reading interest as the students will read with enjoyment. The utilization of infographics is not very difficult to be implemented in the classroom since the high development of technology nowadays that provides many software and online platforms to design and create our own infographics. Some of them are paid but some of them are free to use such as Canva online platform. There are also several benefits from the utilization of infographic to enhance the EFL students’ reading interest. The infographic represents the contents in a simple and effective way, it will increase the will of students to read because of its interesting visual design, and it will also develop the students’ ability to think critically and organize their ideas while reading.

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