

An Investigation of Smartphone Reading Strategies Behaviours from the Views of Jordanian Students

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Abstract

The reading comprehension study is considered as one of the most important areas in language education. Smartphone considered to be one of the most and fastest which rapidly covered the world. Attention should be given to this technology and become new era of education even the perspective about the Smartphone looks like non-academic. Here the study present the first stage of applying the previous reading strategies into the easier way than carrying book by convert it to the Smartphone. Participant showed a positive attitude toward using the Smartphone as an academic tool which it will replace the tradition way of reading and teaching

Keywords: online reading, Reading strategies, Smartphone application

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Introduction

From the early days of Islam, reading has been given a special case as it was the first word revealed to the prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) which is (recite “read” by the name of the LORD: Al Quran 96:1). Thus, reading has been identified as a main and important process which can be developed through practice, improvement and adaption new methods which methods . Previously, there was only one traditional way of reading where people managed to read, collect and gain data and acknowledgement via newspapers, magazines and other resources based on papers as they used certain strategies of reading. The world now is moving forward and a lot of new technologies have been offered to people all around the world in order to compete and gain data and new knowledge faster than before. Thus, now people start using new style of reading which is online reading which has been clarified and identified as a clear development in reading process. Nowadays, human beings are more familiar with technology which leads the new generation to choose and prefer to use their smart phones in every single matter and issue which the researcher expects that soon the process of reading will be led by online reading. Many researchers have been conducted on online reading strategies (Anderson 2003; Huang et al. 2009). So the concern was about online reading materials not on mobile reading applications. Nowadays, it could be recognized that the new generations prefer to read news, surf web pages and search other information through online reading wherever they are. Since coverage area for internet connection nowadays is mostly available everywhere, this phenomenon leads young generations for mobile reading where most of the smart phones nowadays provided with this characteristic since it is easier, more effective and practical way to read. Yet mobile reading is not rapidly applied and still new among university students generally in educational system.

Objective of the Study

This study will contribute new strategies for mobile reading in general as well as it will contribute some aspects for mobile reading improvements. Which mainly will investigate the Jordanian students behaviour when they use Smartphone in their reading. EFL learners should possess reading capability which is referred and assumed to be as the most essential skill in educational settings. Therefore, in order to build and develop suitable reading programs or courses, it is such an important part for university EFL programs to expect and estimate their students’ reading capability. In addition most universities around the world prefer online method of teaching between students and their teachers due to time and duties and this strategy found to be a better link of communication between them where all the progress reports will be saved in new software application. The report can be read by the supervisors wherever they are and a part of this supervision, the progress report can be accessed through mobile unit especially smart phone because it comes with special software and application where this characteristic offers better and easier way to download most of the applications exactly like what we have in laptop and personal computer. So, clearly this tool is better, practical and smart since mobile device is smaller, easy to carry, easy to keep and easy to sleek compared to laptop.

Sample of the Study

Since English is widely used as a medium of instruction language among the Jordanian students and as a part of their studies, the main population of this study were Jordanian college-level students at World Islamic Science and Education University, Jordan. Subjects of the study have been selected from several different specializations.

Methodology

The general process that has been implemented for this work is a qualitative interview from volunteering participants. This task has been implemented for an attempt to identify and analyse the Jordanian postgraduate students' awareness of the various types of reading strategies (planning, attending, and evaluating); how often they usually use these strategies; their self awareness of the five facets of self-regulations; and finally to explore the (technological) features of the different mobile reading strategies.?

Since the general and crucial purpose of collecting qualitative data is to learn more about students' perceptions of reading strategies that might affect their overall achievement, the researcher follows-up with several questions (semi-structured interview) to analyse the students' awareness of the reading strategies types, their use, and their self-regulation facets.

Result of This Study

Reading increasingly has little to do with books or paper, and not all have been supportive of the growth of screen reading (reading digital texts from computer screens). It has been noted that opponents have argued that 'electronic text ultimately diminishes both the personal growth of individuals and the stability of our society.' Despite those and other reservations, screen reading has become so integrated into society and education that some researchers now claim that students accustomed to reading from a computer screen have trouble engaging with traditional paper books (Burke & Roswell 2008) and the assumption that electronic texts will increasingly dominate reading seems a safe one.

Narrowing this down to our current study, primary objective to investigate the behaviour of Jordanian students when they use smart phones to read materials. The first impression about the use of the smart phone in reading process was promising all respondent show high interests in using smart phone to read different tasks here are some response quoted from the interview;

“Interviewer: What is your experience in Smartphone reading?”

Interviewee1: I think it is a good Idea using smart phone very easier to use Smartphone especially when I try to read newspapers letters it's very easy to use Smartphone than using computer.

Interviewee2: Through the tasks that I have done I feel the process of reading using Smartphones would be easier and more accessible in the recent time

Interviewee3: I have I pad for the last 2 years before that I have I phone and I phone and I pad very good for reading and studying for me and make my study easier and make me study while I am traveling”

Generally speaking, almost all respondents have developed some good impressions on having a smart phone. The students favour using smart phones to perform their reading because of the fact that it is convenient and easy to do. One stated that his smart phone is the one gadget that was accessible to him. Another student pointed out that reading on smart phones is cutting-edge, where it will set to replace reading on lap tops and note books. A student praised his phone for having the touch-screen facility, where he was free to use his fingers to make the font of the texts bigger or smaller.

Another opportunity presented by screen reading is the ability to integrate questions within a text. Whereas in paper reading questions are generally separate from or at the end of a text, electronic versions allow for their insertion at various points within the text. The results indicate that integrated questions led to higher comprehension and that the best results on the task were from students who read a text with integrated questions and had on-line dictionary support (Al Shehri & Gitsaki 2010).

One respondent stated that he used his smart phone to read newspapers and letters, and he preferred this to using the computer. In support of this, BuzzFeed had published a piece called "Why I Bought a House in Detroit for \$500." The story ended up getting more than a million page views, which is notable because it is also more than 6,000 words long. The other notable thing: 47 percent of those views came from people accessing the story on mobile devices. And while people who read the piece on tablets spent an average of more than 12 minutes with the story, those doing so on phones spent more than 25 minutes—a small eternity, in Internet time.

A student mentioned that he started with a phone and then with an I-pad, and he found that both are gadgets that can facilitate reading. Some students mentioned that they tended to travel a lot, so having smart phones really helped them to pursue their reading activities while they were travelling

Next, some respondents did report that they used their smart phones for various purposes. When it comes to reading, they informed that they read news sometimes, but they tended to read jokes, and also to embark on pleasure reading (articles, messages). 'To play games' was also another purpose mentioned. Another student mentioned that he had downloaded a library of books for his convenience, so he would use his smart phones whenever he wanted to do any reading. Some of the books on the internet are free and are downloadable, so this is another reason why Jordanian students concerned find it convenient to read on their smart phones. Some social networks like Twitter and Facebook also contained many readable articles depending on the users' subscriptions, so as these students are registered with these social media, they are constantly exposed to all sorts of articles and they are inclined, sometimes, to read these articles on their smart phones. A student stated that they read news on their smart phones, other than their academic materials and at other times, the smart phones were used when the student wanted to access his Facebook account or going through videos on You Tube.

A respondent commented that one other plus point about having a smart phone is that you get to read at any place and anytime. He stated that he even read in the bathroom, while another mentioned that he read during his travelling. One more student stated that he was always on the commute, so he read during his rides or in-between his rides. The fact that reading can now be done on phones 24/7, means that it is a limitless, unrestricted activity. A student stated that he did not need to have a room with Internet provided or the library as he had his own Wi-Fi. He could read whenever he wanted, even in odd hours.

"Interviewee: I think some problems like pictures you don't see pictures in very good way sometimes small pictures sometimes large pictures (the student trying to talk about the screen size) the text and the size"

This Smartphone reading definitely has its own shortcomings. Respondents had complained about the limited picture size- "sometimes they are big, sometimes they are small", other than the fact that the quality of the pictures can be really distracting. The size of the text also matters to some of these students. One respondent complained that the size of text can be problematic

sometimes, especially when it involves long texts. The style of which the texts are written, the layout, the arrangement of paragraphs and pictures can also be a distraction. As our respondents are all students, they also mentioned that the application in their smart phones had made it difficult for them to convey their ideas for their assignments or writing tasks, because whenever they have ideas or want to revisit the points they read in the text (in the phones) they stated that it was often hard to scroll through to the points they needed to find. The reading can also be disturbed and impeded by the incoming messages. Additionally, a survey by Pew Internet and American Life Project highlights a few striking facts:

- Reading-from phone problems have plagued nearly 9 out of 10 American adults who have a cell phone.
- Other than reading issues stemming from lagging data and poor Internet provision, almost 70% of these phone users tend to receive uninvited sales calls, messages or spam letters.
- 8 in 10 smart phones are reported to suffer from slow downloading speeds, making reading from phone very time-consuming and a very hassling experience.
- Smartphone owners are more likely to experience various reading problems, as compared to feature phone owners. The screen size also tends to bother some of these Jordanian students. Some smart phones (for instance Blackberry) have small screens, while others like Galaxy Grand have screen size large enough to allow for comfortable viewing and reading.

One area which is seen as more problematic to screen reading is the ability (or lack thereof) to annotate texts. Numerous studies (O'Hara & Sellen 1997, Marshall 1997; Pearson, Buchanan & Thimbleby 2009; Rose 2011; Mercieca 2011; Chou 2012) report that annotation, be it highlighting, underlining or taking notes directly on what is being read, is an important feature of reading and one often utilized by students and seen as beneficial to their reading process. The inability to annotate digital texts is noted as a hindrance in several of the above studies.

S. Kol and M. Scholcnik (2000) in her article titled "Enhancing Screen Reading Strategies" as published in the Calico Journal points out that despite the fact that more and more reading seems to be performed on screen, there are still existing problems that have yet to be addressed regarding reading via screen-oriented gadgets. Smart phones can be taken on a bus or to the beach, but digital texts do not have the "unique tactile qualities of paper" (Dillon, 1992). When comparing paper books and electronic books, Stephen Manes (1999) states that other disadvantages of electronic books are that they require batteries, can break if dropped, that they are expensive, and because of that, they are probably difficult to lend or sell. On the other hand, he also points to some of their advantages: some smart phones are readable in the dark, easily searchable, have a bookmark facility, and there is a read-aloud facility.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there was a significant positive correlation between Exercise and Test ($r = 0.918$, $p < 0.05$). The relationship was strong as the closer r value to 1, the stronger the relationship between variables. The greater the exercise results, the higher the test results. In influencing Test, Exercise recorded a significant contribution ($\beta = 0.918$, $t = 5.657$, $p < 0.05$). From these results it can be seen that the level of comprehension is high when users use a smart phone to read English. This is due to the fact that this technology is relatively new and attracts students, as opposed to the traditional reading from a book or online materials. However, even

with the use of a smart phone, students need to practice that since it is a new way of reading reevaluation. The results show if the exercises were low, so were the test levels. This shows that even with the use of a smart phone, if the student does not perform well with the exercises, then he or she will not perform well on the test. However, the smart phone does allow for more comprehension than the conventional reading from a hard copy of the same material.

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