

Reading stories for pleasure: An insight into Indonesian university students' practice in online reading platforms

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ABSTRACT

Reading motivation has been extensively studied in online reading settings. However, little is known about what makes people want to read fiction online, especially in a foreign-language setting. As part of the growth of digital literature and cybernetics, online fiction is gaining popularity among young Indonesians. This research sought to explore Indonesian student-readers' motivations and preferences as they practiced and were engaged in reading online stories in English. One hundred twelve university students responded to a survey, and 14 were randomly selected for in-depth interviews to learn more about their reading motivations, preferences, and cybernetic literary practices. Analysis of data from the survey showed that most participants chose Wattpad and Webtoon as their favorite online platforms, with romance and fantasy as their favorite genres. They devoted many hours to reading novels on these platforms to seek enjoyment and improve their English vocabulary and language. Nevertheless, data from the interviews further revealed that readers read solely to seek enjoyment and pleasure. Also, readers were primarily silent, unwilling to participate in online conversations between readers and reader-authors but actively rating the novels after reading. Findings contribute to establishing views on online reading motivation and cybernetic literary practices for EFL fiction readers; reading for pleasure is the intrinsic motivation that triggers Indonesian university student-readers to stay online on the platform.

Keywords: Cybernetic literary practices; online platform; online story; reading motivation; reading for pleasure

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INTRODUCTION

Since the emergence of online reading, reading habits in Indonesia have changed (Kurniasih, 2017, p.7). People moved away from printed resources because of the accessibility of online books, including online stories. The online story platforms are products of popular culture that are currently mushrooming in urban society. These platforms, such as Wattpad and Webtoon, can be easily accessed to read digital works. Research conducted by Bal (2018) identified Wattpad as the most popular online reading platform and has become a

trend in mass reading and writing habits in the digital era. In fact, one of the other platforms, Webtoon, is used not only as a digital reading resource but also as a fan base, which is a new online-based community (Hedrick, 2020). New writers create an effective and economical online community, to produce and distribute content, build fan bases, communicate with the public, and disseminate work electronically (Carolan & Evain, 2013).

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Towards the beginning of 2020, Indonesia was in fourth place globally as the country with the largest population of online platform readers (Pinastika, 2020). By offering various genres such as romance, fan fiction, flash fiction, adventure, horror, fantasy, science fiction, and mystery, online stories develop extensively and have loyal readers. With a combination of multimodal, creative, and interactive elements, the online-based stories platform has become a popular reading resource for the younger generation in Indonesia (Pinastika, 2020). So, the fast growth of online reading platforms underlines their significance for further investigation.

In the case of global online readers, research on online-based story platforms has been widely conducted in the last three years. One prominent study examined the emergence of online-based social authors which emphasizes the phenomenon of the emergence of micro-celebrities—the interaction of new authors with readers as an online fan community (Ramdharsan, 2018). This research revealed that the micro celebrities function not only as authors but also as influencers. Other research concerns the experience of reading and writing Wattpad both in school learning systems and out of school (Bal, 2018). This study used a survey to show that the experience of reading stories online on Wattpad outside of an educational setting is more enjoyable than reading undertaken for formal educational purposes. Readers outside the school setting show more positive responses and motivation in their reading experiences. The research highlighted the interplay between the role of technology in learning to write and read, and the online communities with their respective roles in this digital era.

Most readers of English-language online novels are either readers from countries whose first language is not English, or speakers of second or third languages (Pianzola, et. al., 2020). What, then about the readers within this demographic? Why do readers who are foreign language speakers use online novel platforms such as Wattpad in English even though there are Indonesian reading options? This study investigates the phenomenon related to online EFL adolescent readers of English fiction in Indonesia who are university students. It attempts to answer the following questions about reading preferences, motivation, and the cybernetic literary practices of Indonesian EFL adolescent readers:

1. What are the preferences of EFL Indonesian students-readers when reading fiction in English?
2. What motivates them to seek out online stories in English?
3. How do they conduct cybernetic literary practices?

Reading motivation

There have been some studies demonstrating the use of technology to motivate adolescent readers, which can potentially improve digital literacy. Recent studies have been conducted by Forzani, et. al. (2020), who developed the MORQ (Motivations for Online Reading Questionnaire) research instrument in four dimensions: curiosity (the desire to learn more about topics of one's interest for enjoyment), value (the importance of reading online), self-efficacy (beliefs about one's ability to undertake the task), and self-improvement (beliefs about one's ability to improve with effort). The investigation was designed to address the complexity of online text with its greater range of variety and quality, and thus required a more comprehensive assessment to measure readers' motivation and engagement. The research of Forzani et. al. (2020) connected the elements of online reading motivation with adolescent readers. This present study bridges the gap in knowledge about online reading motivation and Indonesian foreign language (EFL) adolescent readers.

Adolescent readers can be motivated in two ways: intrinsically or extrinsically. A comprehensive study on reading motivation conducted by Gambrell, et.al. (2011) characterized engaged readers as those who are "intrinsically motivated to read for a variety of personal goals, strategic in their reading behaviours, knowledgeable in their construction of new understandings from text, and socially interactive about the reading of the text" (pp. 172–173). Similar claims are presented in a study conducted by Guthrie and Wigfield (2000: 45) who claim that "motivation is the underlying mechanism for reading engagement and is crucial for boosting reading accomplishment". Learners who are intrinsically motivated to read embody the "internal factors" of curiosity, enjoyment, value, interest, and understanding of reading, which are defined as "motivation via internal factor(s) from within" (McGeown, et. al., 2012; Schwabe, et. al., 2015). Schreuder and Savitzh (2020) found that reading for enjoyment motivated a seven-minute average daily reading time for teenagers and young adults (aged 15 to 24) in the US. Their research foregrounded two intrinsic motivations; enjoyment and self-interest, which enable readers to engage in their online reading. Similarly, Gilson (2018) formulates students' desire to read as influenced in part by their reading values, self-perception, freedom of choice, interest in the text, and reading ability. So, we structured this study, drawing from a number of the propositions mentioned above, by defining motivation as providing the direct energy for an activity and viewing beliefs as motives. The investigation of the intrinsic motivation of Indonesian adolescent readers in this context seeks to identify the prompts that lead to online reading activities.

Some external circumstances can drive second-language readers to remain engaged in their online story reading activity. The search for external motivation can be challenging because it can be complex to define the external motivation itself. Hebecker, et. al. (2019) contend that intrinsically motivated students read because they experience the activity itself as satisfying and enjoyable, whereas extrinsically motivated students read because they are driven by external subjective reasons and the expected consequences, such as grades, praise, or outperforming others (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Wang and Guthrie, 2004). Likewise, Hidi (2000) argued that extrinsically prompted reading is meant to obtain external recognition, rewards, or incentives e.g., attention from parents or instructors, excellent grades, meeting external expectations, or avoiding punishment. Therefore, drawing from a number of theories discussed, the effects of reading achievement on both intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation (and the inverse) seem plausible, yet correlations between extrinsic motivation and reading achievement are less well established.

Literacy practices for students must be in line with their beliefs, interests, and motivation (Lamb & Arisandy, 2020). These factors will encourage students to be more engaged with a text and enable them to sustain their motivation in reading over time. In addition, students would be more inclined to select books that speak to their individual interests and experiences. Thus, in terms of the students' motivations and preferences when reading online, the prevalence of the Internet as a reading context in today's society as well as the intense interest and engagement of our youth with online media should be taken into account (Buckingham & Willett, 2013; Hutchison & Reinking, 2011; Hutchison et al., 2016; Leu et al., 2019). Life is becoming increasingly facilitated by technological advancement including the prevalence of smart phones. Thus, daily routines are in many ways connected to mobile devices. Therefore, it is essential to understand the relationship between motivation and literacy practices when considering online reading behaviours.

Cybernetic Literature and Second Language Readers

Online story platforms, such as Wattpad and Webtoon are sources of cybernetic literature studies with a focus on the interactions between authors and readers. The concept of cybernetic literature implies public contributions, in this case the reader as a medium to "recreate" and "re imagine" events and plots in a story that is already running (Yeku, 2016; Thomas, 2021). The author and the reader share trends concerning the reproduction and circulation of cybernetic literary works (Shim, et. al., 2020; Lifiani and Krismayeni, 2020). Cultural mediation and the interaction of authors and readers have even

extended into opportunities to develop creative industries. Another aspect that deserves to be studied in cybernetic literature is the participation of online communities of fan fiction concerned with real people. Hedrick (2020) conducted a study on fan fiction about One Direction. The findings of this research suggest updates to sexual scripting theory and contribute to understanding adolescents' participation in online contexts involving sex. In the light of this study, reader interaction, for example, can be seen in the "fan fiction" genre which is gaining popularity in Indonesia today. Thus, it is interesting to see how reading the life of their idol and participating in the forum of real-life Fan fiction encourages Indonesian adolescent readers to spend time online and engage with the platform.

Pinastika (2020) explored the emotional characteristics of Indonesian readers to identify the reasons why they are loyal to online novel platforms, such as Wattpad, for a long duration. Pinastika found that technically Wattpad was easy to use, and the stories presented were interesting and remained in the minds of readers for a long time. In addition, readers find a pleasant online community in the context of communication between them and with the authors. The digital tools make authors accessible for readers, helping this online-based story platform to become popular. The loyalty of second language readers engaging with online stories in English received less attention; this is something that deserves investigation because reading in a second language can be particularly challenging.

Reading literary works as a second language speaker not only involves a critical process of extracting meaning, namely evaluating the content of the text but also reading by exploring creative understanding, the ability to express aesthetic and emotional responses in reading texts (Heryatun, 2020). However, our exploration of Indonesians adolescent readers begins from a lack of existing research on the experiences of second language readers. Thus, reading online fiction in English in the context of a second language is a subject that deserves to be explored in depth. The reading experience of a second language speaker is certainly different from that of a mother tongue reader.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed qualitative research with a focus on the design of a survey with open-ended questions and followed up with in-depth interviews. The data consisted of the responses obtained from the questionnaire and interview. The responses to the questionnaires completed by students were categorized into two groups: information regarding the reading preferences of student-readers and their motivation for reading. Interviews with 14 students

were recorded and transcribed. We assessed the response from the data interview to provide information about participants' cybernetic practices.

Participants

We devised questions to explore the motivations and preferences of EFL Indonesian adolescent student-readers. One hundred twelve survey participants in their academic years of 1 through 4 between the ages of 18 and 23 were recruited from ten universities in two provinces in Indonesia: North Sumatra and Special Region of Yogyakarta. The

study was conducted from December 2022 to February 2023. Fourteen participants were then randomly selected for in-depth interviews. The majority of the participants were learning English as their foreign language. The participants are learning English formally at the English literature and English education department. The first part of the questionnaire identified the characteristics of these student-readers; gender, study program and academic year. Items included questions about students' exposure to English, and language test score.

Table 1

Demographic data of 112 survey participants

Measure and items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	86	76.8
Male	26	23.2
Academic Year		
First year	50	44.7
Second year	47	42
Third year	6	5.3
Fourth Year	9	8
Cities		
Medan	59	52.7
Yogyakarta	53	47.3
Study Program		
English Literature	51	45.5
English Education	61	54.5
Participant Exposure to English		
5-7 years	34	30.3
8-12 years	36	32.2
More than 12 years	42	37.5
Language Test Score		
TOEFL (400-600)	46	41
IELTS (4.5-8.0)	15	13.4
Duolingo (80-140)	20	17.9
Never	24	21.4
Others	7	6.3

Tabel 1 presents full details, broken down by the total number of participants representing two regions. Of all the responses received, 112 responses were determined to be legitimate since they completed all the questions. Table 1 displays a summary of the survey responses from the students. Of the 112 participants, 86 (76.8%) were women, while 26 (23.2%) were men. 86.7% of the student-readers were in their first and second year, while 13.3% were in their final year. The survey also revealed that nearly half of the respondents (37.5%) had been studying English for over 12 years and that they took the TOEFL Test as an official assessment of their English proficiency

Instruments

This study employed qualitative research with a focus on the design of a survey with open ended questions, with follow-up in-depth interviews. A

multiple survey design was employed to examine the aspects of reading preferences and reading motivation. In-depth interview was conducted to investigate participants' cybernetic literary practice.

Adapted from multiple existing surveys of online reading motivation, the questionnaire was divided into three sections. In the first section, the questions elicited demographic information of the research participants. The questions in the second section examined their reading preferences. Questions in the last sections identified participants' reading motivation. Six open-ended questions populated the second and third sections.

A survey based on an investigation of Children's and Young People's Reading Habits and Preferences: The Who, What, Why, Where, and When (Clark & Foster, 2005; Maynard, et al., 2008) was first adapted. The survey was partly implemented to identify the participants'

preferences, in which some questions were created to position online reading settings and fiction for adolescents. Choices of online texts, platforms, devices and reading frequency modeled the second part of the questionnaire. Another pertinent survey design involved access to the Motivations for Online Reading Questionnaire (MORQ) that revealed a three-factor solution for the MORQ, including curiosity/value, self-efficacy, and self-improvement beliefs (Forzani et. al., 2020). The questionnaire was subsequently modified to include questions that are specific to the motivation of reading online fiction. The six open-ended questions were posed, focusing on the participants' preferences for stories on the online platform, their reading frequency, preferred story genre, and reading motivation. Structured questions were applied in response to the results of the survey data. The six open-ended questions were as follows:

1. To begin with, what platform of online novels do you often use when reading online novels in English?
2. How often do you read English stories or novels online?
3. How many hours do you spend once you get engaged reading the stories on the internet?
4. Which devices do you usually use when reading online fiction?
5. What genre do you love the most?
6. Which situation best describes your motivation for reading online stories in English?

To encourage participants to choose their own preferences, the statement "specify" came after the questions.

Procedures

All responses were submitted electronically because the poll was distributed as an online questionnaire, and the interviews were conducted online. The project has ethical approval from the Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. The questionnaire was developed using Google Forms Survey, and the link was disseminated using an instant messaging platform, WhatsApp. In order to reach a larger sample, researchers recruited 10 lecturers from 10 universities in two regions: North Sumatera and the special region of Yogyakarta. These lecturers distributed the link to students via WhatsApp, and they had access to the questionnaire for a duration of two weeks. The survey's objective was to gather

data on their motivation and reading preference when they accessed fiction in English online. 140 students answered the survey; 112 responses were complete and employed for the purposes of this inquiry to provide further insights. These responses were from 86 females and 26 males.

In addition to the survey, in-depth online interviews were conducted with 14 participants. The participants for the interviews were recruited to represent the two regions, i.e., North Sumatera and the special region of Yogyakarta, equally. They were invited formally and agreed to take part in the interviews. All of the 14 participants also took part in the qualitative survey, and their responses were included in the data analysis.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis was applied to analyse both the survey and the interview data. Thematic analysis was used to examine responses to open-ended questions in the survey (Mamali, et.al., 2022). It was selected because it is a theoretically adaptable method that permits the identification and investigation of recurrent themes and patterns in unorganized and organized written data. Likewise, thematic analysis works to analyse interview data since it is a technique applied to find patterns within and across data regarding the lived experience, viewpoints, behaviours and practices of participants (Clark & Braun, 2017). This study sought to determine how these student-readers perceive themselves as readers, how much they appreciate reading, and what they think, feel, and do during off-campus reading practice. Thematic analysis was used to identify dominant themes in the answers provided by participants.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Reading preferences: Responses to the survey

Modified from the survey conducted about children and adolescents' reading habits and preferences; The Who, What, Why, Where, and When (Clark & Foster, 2005), the six questions in the survey allowed the researchers to determine the reading preference of the participants. six questions in the survey enabled the researchers to learn about participants' reading preferences. The responses of survey participants were consistent, demonstrating their preference for reading online stories and engagement as foreign language adolescent readers.

Table 2
Participants' Preference Stories Platform

Online Stories Platform	Number of Responses
Online Stories Platform Preference	
Wattpad	70
Webtoon	58
Facebook Online Stories	10
Noveltoon	12
Others	11

The result of the open-ended questionnaire identifies the specific factors that contributed to these students' reading preferences, including choices of story platform, story genre, time spent by participants in the platforms and the devices used when reading online stories. As shown in table 2, participants in this study preferred to use online sites like Wattpad and Webtoon when reading fiction in English. As many as 70 participants reported that they used Wattpad as their online reading site. This is the highest number illustrated in the survey. This finding corroborates the data from existing research that identifies Wattpad as the major digital social

network in which there was a significant amount of reading taking place on a global scale (Pianzola, et al., 2020). This preference may be due to the fact that several elements on Wattpad are simpler to use than those of comparable online platforms. For example, there are accessible features such as filters for recently released stories and the best story of the year, and the genre one wishes to select is already there in the search engines. Thus, readers find it easy to surf in the Wattpad imaginary world. In addition, the available story genres are also diverse, ranging from romance, fantasy, fan fiction, and thriller to science fiction.

Table 3
Participants' Reading Preference

Measure and items	Frequency	Percentage
The Frequency of Reading Online		
Everyday	20	17.9
During weekend	48	42.8
Once in a month	28	25
Others	16	14.3
Time spent by participants on the platforms		
1-2 hours	66	59
3-4 hours	33	29.4
5-6 hours	10	8.9
Others	3	2.7
Devices used when reading online stories		
Mobile phone	103	91.9
Laptop	5	4.5
Tablet	3	2.7
PC	1	0.9

When participants were asked how often they read online fiction, almost half of the participants (42.8%) read during weekends (see table 3). Besides, it was discovered that the proportion of the adolescent readers reading online stories 'everyday' were those who had higher English competence scores. For those who had an average TOEFL, IELTS, and Duo-lingo tests, their frequency was significantly lower, which was only 'during weekend' or 'once in a month'. However, they can spend more than two hours once they get engaged with one of their favourite online stories.

For millions of individuals around the globe, mobile devices are the best option for reading devices (Shimray, et al., 2015). When they read on their mobile devices, people read more. As more modern smartphones develop their operating systems, the use of smartphones for reading increases. Many assert that their everyday lives revolve around their mobile gadgets. With efficiency, proximity, and convenience, mobile phones or smartphones follow their users from table to workstation to store to home again (Shimray, et al., 2015). Our survey showed that 91.9 % of

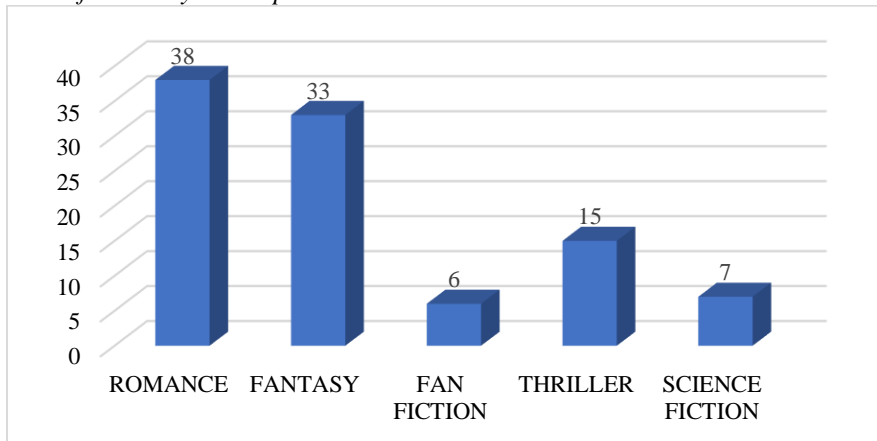
adolescent participants in this research used their mobile phones when reading online stories. The majority of the college-reader participants were interested in reading stories on mobile devices.

Next, 39% of participants chose romance as their most preferred genre, followed by fantasy with 33%. The kind of romance mostly found in young adult stories is relatable and realistic. Fantasy was selected by other readers to escape from real life. The survey results provided clear preferences: participants considered romance the most suitable genre for online stories for seven primary reasons: first, the storyline satisfies the readers; second, the characters are likable; third, the setting is appealing. Next, romance is known for having the most straightforward and predictable narratives and happenings; fifth, the level of language is not that difficult compared to other genres, like fantasy and thriller. Furthermore, the relevance of romance to their daily lives also encourages these adolescent language readers to stay online and finish the narrative. Over 76.8% of our participants were female, so we cannot conclude that responses are shared equally between male and female adolescent

readers. However, the statements gathered in the survey indicate that romance is the most popular genre among the participants. While specific data are not available for Indonesians readerships, we know that women are more likely to read novels generally and “According to the 2009 Romance Writers of America Reader Survey, women make up

90.5 percent of the romance readership” (Klems, 2009). These underpinning reader behaviors should be kept in mind throughout the following analysis. Regardless of the gender balance of the sample, it is clear that popular genre fiction, rather than literary fiction, are strongly preferred by all the readers surveyed.

Figure 1
Genre favored by Participants

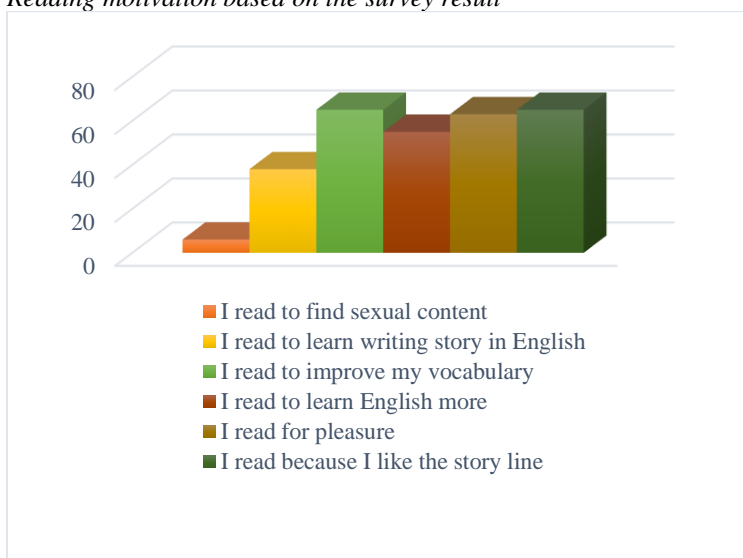


Reading Motivation: Survey Result and Interview

In the second part of the survey, participants were asked to choose two statements about why they prefer online fiction in English over Indonesian fiction. The statements provide insights into both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. As discussed earlier in the method section, four dimensions of MORQ (the Motivations for Online Reading Questionnaire) formulated by Forzani et.al. (2021) were adopted to identify motivations to read online stories in English. Researchers use phrases such as: "I read because I like the storyline", "I read for

pleasure", and "I read to find the sexual content in the story", to assess intrinsic reading motivation. Another three statements, "I read to learn English more", "I read to improve my vocabulary," and "I read to learn how to write stories in English", indicate extrinsic motivation. Six statements comprise curiosity as an enjoyment, value, self-efficacy, and self-improvement belief. The survey showed a balance between the elements of curiosity and self-improvement. The participants in this survey were able to articulate what makes them read online stories.

Figure 2
Reading motivation based on the survey result



The second method used to identify the reading motivation and engagement of Indonesian second-language adolescent readers was in-depth interviews. Each participant was asked to attend an online interview to provide the researchers with an understanding of their reading motivation and engagement toward literary and cybernetic aspects. Prior to the interview, the participants received an explanation of the research. The interview was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia so that participants could feel free to express themselves in the language they grew up with. In the following analysis, we have used pseudonyms to refer to the individual students involved in the interviews. The researchers prepared two qualitative questions based on the survey in the third section.

Qualitative Questions on Reading Motivation

1. Why do you choose stories written in English instead of Indonesian?

The qualitative question aimed to reveal the motivations that made these adolescent readers want to read online stories. These student readers were asked about their reasons for choosing English stories, while the choice of Indonesian novels was also possible. The question was drawn from previous research (Garcia-Roca, 2021; Pianzola et al., 2020;), revealing that stories written in English are read by users living in many different countries, and most readers are from countries where English is a second language (India, the Philippines, Indonesia, etc.). This work suggests the popularity of online stories written in English for Indonesian adolescent readers. Therefore, we decided to keep this question to fit into the phenomena of online story platforms, reading motivation of adolescent readers and student-readers out-campus reading practice.

Analysis of the responses in the interview showed that their reading motivations were due to English improvement, communal, and digital aspects of the online story reading experience. The majority of these student-readers (67%) reported that improving their English, especially their vocabulary and language style, became the main reason for their reading motivation, with several students stating that they found reading stories to be an effective vehicle for improving their English. One participant, Fima, heard someone mention in her class how to improve English: "They suggested me to read stories, English stories; it was easy for me to find them on the internet; I learned English through the story." On the other hand, Liam considered that he did not have any particular reason when starting his first English novel, but claimed, "I don't have any specific reasons why I chose English as my source of language to read novels online, but trying to test my language vocabulary and also range my knowledge in my second language, which is English, was perhaps the reason." Luke, another

participant, revealed the need to practice his English vocabulary and translation skills: "I want to improve my skill of translating text from English to Indonesian." Another participant, Joe, emphasized the importance of English mechanics, saying, "I want to learn English grammar and improve the syntax when I write."

The statements emphasize readers' external motivation. The necessity of making their English better through the act of reading stories seems vague and unproven. Interestingly, there is a perceived change in motivation during the interview. Their responses later in the interview showed consistency in comments that revealed their enjoyment and interest in reading online stories. Initially, they read to improve their English vocabulary; however, during the later course of the interview, the trend became reading for enjoyment; they read for pleasure. Hoffmann (2007) states that "The power dynamics of the interview must be recognized to understand better the interview process and the data they affect" (318). We may, therefore speculate that the interviewee may have begun by stating the "correct" answer, i.e. the response that they thought the interviewer wanted to hear. The interview transcripts show the participants addressing the interviewer as "Ma'am", indicating respect for a university lecturer in an educational setting. It may be that as the subject grew more at ease during the interview, they felt able to talk openly about reading for enjoyment, rather than the expected or more worthy answer of reading for educational improvement. One male participant stated, "It is only a bonus for me; reading English stories online is more about escape, and coping mechanisms." One female college student, Saia, who reads three to four hours a day, affirmed, "Once I could not find ways to improve my English, someone suggested that I visit an online story platform, and I found it beneficial, but now, I read for pleasure, I enjoy the character development instead of looking at new vocabulary like I used to do". Eventually, most readers confirmed their preferences to read English online stories in order to seek enjoyment.

Reading for pleasure is a prevalent motivation for these adolescent readers when deciding to read English stories instead of Indonesian versions. However, this motivation was not clearly expressed at the beginning of the interview. Most readers insisted on their reasons and sought improvement in English. However, lines from the interview indicated the tendency for the readers to read for enjoyment once they have achieved a certain level of proficiency in English, so motivation changes from improvement to enjoyment at a certain point in their English Language development. One female participant, Eni, confessed, "At first, I read to improve my English, but then I read to seek pleasure, and eventually, I prefer reading for pleasure/enjoyment from now on". Another female

participant Resa makes the point clearer by saying, “first my motivation, the biggest motivation is to learn English, and I started reading in English exclusively when I was in high school, and to switch back to Indonesia is kind of odd now, because I read a lot of in English and it just becomes more familiar to me than reading in Indonesia, it just weirder now”. In their early contact with the online stories in English, the participants aim to improve their English, yet it is the enjoyment that they have been craving when their English becomes better. Piechurska-Kuciel (2017, p. 97) hypothesizes “that a good command of language may be a source of elevated levels of enjoyment because greater language proficiency is connected with greater control perception, especially when learners attribute value to the language studied” (p. 97). This hypothesis resonates Forzani, et. al’s MORQ model, particularly the dimensions of self-efficacy and self-improvement (2020).

Enjoyment in observing characters' shifts and awakenings, enthusiasm to discover the unexpected plot switch, and amusement in discovering the unexpected ending while hoping for a happy ending, are regarded as reasons to read for pleasure. Participants demonstrated a keen appreciation of literary techniques when explaining their enjoyment.

Another finding obtained from the interview data is related to student-readers' preferences for dealing with the erotic content in online stories written in English. A majority of the participants in this interview believed that sexual content was not very important. This finding is in line with the result of the survey that indicated that fewer than 10% of respondents were willing to explore the sexual content in the story. To illustrate this case, Dewi, one female participant, answered, "I don't really mind the racy sexual lines, but it's not like I actively look for them.". Another female participant, Dian, confessed it timidly: "I enjoyed that part, but if it is too much, I skip it;".

Cybernetic Literary Practices: Interview Result

Online story platforms symbolize the emergence of the online story community and strengthen cybernetic literary practices. As discussed in the introduction, Wattpad readers provide inclusive spaces for authors and readers to build an online community, and a sense of social acquaintanceship is part of cybernetic literary practices. This research attempts to explore the role of Indonesian adolescent readers and their engagement in the Wattpad and Webtoon social communities. By giving comments and participating in the story-making, strong communities can be created through online interactions, thus providing readers with a sense of agency, authenticity, and belonging. These qualities are directly related to students' capacity to engage in deep literacy activities (Bowers-Campbell, 2011; Polleck, 2010). According to Larson (2009),

asynchronous talks in an online literature circle gave students time to reflect before making a comment, while threaded discussions gave them a place to speak up. All of which encourages students to express their opinions or beliefs and not passively accept the opinions of the majority of readers. Wattpad and Webtoon are two pioneer online story applications that implement the practices of cybernetic literature. Comments are circulated, and readers are free to criticize the flow of the story, a character's action, what a character says about another character, and the narrator's comments. The atmosphere is created in a forum where everybody can participate, even with their small emoticons. Thus, the researchers prepared the three following qualitative questions.

Qualitative Questions on Cybernetics Literary Practices

1. What particular elements of a story do you pay attention to? Characters, plot, setting, vocabulary, or language style?
2. Do you enjoy reading readers' or followers' comments?
3. Do you always rate the story after reading it?

The qualitative questions sought to examine readers' literary and cybernetic reading practices. It is evident that the readers paid more attention to characters than to any other elements of the story, like setting or conflict. One female participant named Riana recalled the moment when she adored a character's development in her first online story. "I enjoy the character who is self-inserting, so there is a main character, whom I can imagine as me in Wattpad. I enjoyed it more when she or he changed or progressed during the course of the story. Because the character is self-inserted, I feel empowered, so I'm more enthusiastic, and curious to finish the chapter." Another participant, Saza, also emphasized the relatable aspects of characters she read in online stories. "Sometimes I glance at stories on Wattpad with a few votes and a few readers, and the story resonates with me; even though the character is not male, she possesses the qualities and traits that I long for: strong goals, a unique motive in solving problems, and I would keep reading the story once I found that kind of character." It is conveyed throughout the interview that character is more important than any other part of the story. In their chapter, "Using Young Adult Literature to Motivate and Engage the Disengaged", Kelley, Wilson, and Koss (2012) found that “the students felt that books must contain relatable characters. A few of their comments about relatability include “being able to connect to the characters” and “being able to put yourself in their [the characters'] position and your heart beat faster just feeling what they feel’. Students were interested in reading about characters that were like them. Considering that

adolescence is a time of constant change, students preferred to read about characters who were wrestling with the same conscious and subconscious identity issues that they themselves were experiencing.” (p.85).

Perhaps also due to shyness or instability in adolescent identity, these readers were mostly silent readers in terms of establishing communication on the platform. Research conducted by Pianzola, et al. (2020) shows that Wattpad is one of the best story applications to understand how fiction is read currently and to gain unprecedented insights into readers’ interaction with texts and with other readers. Pianzola claims the activeness of Wattpad’s story readers. He further clarifies that readers were active based on their responses to and the reception of stories worldwide. Readers were engaged as measured by the quantity of written comments, reader interaction, and the relationship between the text and the reader’s reaction. However, when we invited our participants to talk about their role as social readers on Wattpad or Webtoon, most of them confessed to being inactive readers. The interview with the 14 participants revealed this further. One female participant named Nia stated, “I read a story on Wattpad, where we can comment on the author’s work, but I never felt the need to express my feelings. I just tell my friends or my sister about it, but I never comment online.” Another participant, Ali, continued, “I am a silent reader; I rarely give my comments; if I have to, I use few words, not even an emoticon.” These college readers enjoy reading the comments; sometimes their interpretation of the story relies on the reader’s comments and the dialogue between readers, but they don’t have the motivation to leave comments, unwilling to contribute social authorship within the platform. One male participant answered, “I don’t really like giving comments, because I feel like it was the author who owned the strengths and ability to write that story, not me, that is why I feel I don’t have a right to comment.”

In contrast, in the follow-up phase of the study, participants were asked whether they usually rated the stories after completing them. Nearly all participants rated the story, as accompanied by a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction. Daisy, one female participant, claimed to rate the story with high scores: “I gave it five stars for the story that wins my idol” and “four stars to appreciate the amateur writer.” Such an account of her subjective engagement contrasts with one male participant (Luke) who said, “I normally rate it when it’s finished; if it’s really good, I’ll give it a good rating, but if I don’t really like it, I will do it later to avoid the effect on the rating; the stars would go down. I only rated the good ones promptly.” This student seems to care for the author’s star rating and does not wish to be responsible for lowering it. This response evidences the interactions of cybernetic

literary communities, where concern for the author’s experience is as important as the reader’s enjoyment.

CONCLUSION

Indonesians who are learning English as a foreign language read online stories in English because they want to improve their English and seek pleasure in so doing. The result of the survey and in-depth interviews also reveals readers’ preferences and motivation. The survey indicates that readers choose to use a mobile phone when reading online, visit Wattpad as an online platform, and select romance and fantasy as their favourite genres. Also, the survey demonstrates the frequency of reading: readers spend their weekends reading online English stories rather than spending 1-2 hours every day. This preference indicates online reading as a leisure activity rather than an academic activity, as one way to improve English. In addition, the survey uncovers the reading motivation of EFL Indonesian adolescent readers who are university students. Both internal and external motivation point to almost similar statistics. On the one hand, they read when they feel bored and need to find an escape and enjoyment. On the other hand, they believe that their range of English vocabulary and language will improve. However, findings from the in-depth interviews reveal that these adolescent readers seek pleasure and enjoyment over education. Factors that concern them are not particularly about language or the story’s cybernetic elements. Indonesian adolescent readers devote their time to reading novels, enjoying the characters’ physical descriptions and the storylines. The reaction of this segment of readers toward the online novel platforms is somewhat vague in terms of the factors concerning their academic motivation as EFL language readers. The interviews point to readers’ intention to examine characters and plot switches but avoid looking up difficult vocabulary found when reading online novels. Interestingly, the findings also show the low interest of the readers in participating as social readers, they don’t leave remarks in the interaction section between the author and the readers. Intriguingly, an in-depth interview revealed that readers rarely commented in the interaction column between the author and the readers, or between readers and readers’ motivation, but actively rated the stories. Finally, the interviews, which focused on exploring Indonesian adolescent story readers’ motivations, evidently reported readers’ enjoyment of reading online novels written in English. They read for pleasure, not for their English or their cybernetic reading practices. By investigating the motivations of Indonesian adolescent EFL readers to read online stories in English, Wattpad authors may be able to help students develop motivation for reading outside of

school hours by creating a potentially more engaging new context. Also, university English instructors would benefit from utilizing online platforms to teach cybernetic literature with an emphasis on reading and writing.

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