College Students' Foundational and New Literacies: The Case of Offline and Online Reading

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Abstract: One research area that is worth focusing on is the one that looks into the new literacies that are to be acquired by learners at different levels and proficiencies today. *New literacies* is defined as the new forms of literacy that use new forms of technology. As reading is the key macro skill where the development and use of these new literacies are seen because of the Internet, it is interesting to know how learners report their motivation and anxiety and strategies when reading online, and then compare these with their offline reading self-reports. As technology (particularly the Internet) has become a tool in learning in countries (the ASEAN countries included), it is but important to gather empirical evidence that will guide teachers, curriculum developers, and other stakeholders in developing teaching and learning materials, lessons, and goals that will fit the needs of the times. Using six questionnaires, the study measures the participants' levels of reading strategy use, motivation, and anxiety when reading online and offline. Major results show that there is an over-all high use of reading strategies, average level of motivation and anxiety in both modes of reading. However, there is no significant difference as far as mode of reading and gender are is concerned, except for offline reading strategy use. Based on the results, it is recommended that learning materials and tasks in both types of reading be made more interesting to possibly increase learners' motivation and use of reading strategies and to lessen reading anxiety. Teacher modeling and explicit teaching of effective strategies are likewise proposed.

Key Words: offline reading; online reading; new literacies;

1. INTRODUCTION

On top of mastering foundational literacies, the 21st century poses a big challenge to both teachers and learners primarily on how to integrate technology in the lessons taught and learned in school. A particular research area worth studying is on how information and communication technologies (ICTs) assist in the development of literacy among tertiary-level students. A skill where the interplay of traditional and new literacies is clearly seen is reading. This is made more significant and meaningful when the various dimensions (like motivation, anxiety, and use of strategies) are discussed as well.

The concept of language anxiety has been discussed and examined to a fairly wide extent, but studies on anxiety in specific language domains like reading anxiety have not been quite as many. From the limited number of studies on reading anxiety, researchers are able to uncover interesting facets of this affective factor in language learning. There are those studies which revealed that learners could experience anxiety specific to a language macro skill. Al-Shboul, Ahmad, Nordin, & Rahman (2013) mentioned studies that found the distinguishable existence of listening anxiety, writing anxiety, speaking anxiety, and reading anxiety among foreign language learners.

Relatively few studies have been likewise reported on L2 online reading strategies. Online reading requires a different set of skills and strategies than offline reading. Reading from paper is faster than reading presented online (Center for Teaching & Learning, 2008). Anderson (2003) found that Online reading comprehension shared a number of similarities with online reading but also include more complex strategies

The same dearth has been observed in the very few studies that focus on online reading motivation. There is Yi-Chun Lai (2010) who had 982 national junior high school students in Taiwan as participants who was able to identify 10 factors of motivation of Internet-reading which include deep exploration, performance, satisfying fancy, expansion of the interpersonal

relationships, reading work avoidance, recommendation, sharing feedback, convenience among others. Similar reports were reported by Al Seghayer (2013) who did a study among EFL students from various Saudi universities. Results revealed that extrinsic value of reading online, attainment value of reading, intrinsic value of online reading, and reading efficacy positively affect the participants. Furthermore, although both male and female participants are highly motivated to read online, the latter are significantly more motivated.

As the ASEAN Integration is imminent, it is important that college students in the region are assessed and evaluated along these areas, so that their educational institutions may properly address any literacy concern that they may have. Collaborative actions, both at educational and societal levels, may likewise be created and implemented by common stakeholders among the countries concerned after valid assessment is made.

With this backdrop, the paper aims to identify, compare, and relate the various dimensions of offline and online reading such as the metacognitive strategies, motivation, and anxiety of 220 (115 males, 105 females) tertiary level students from different colleges of one Philippine university. Their mean age during the time of the study is 17.27. All participants have had at least 10 years of formal education in English prior to admission to the university. Likewise, they have passed an English-proficiency examination in addition to a general achievement and scholastic abilities test given in English. The participants gave their consent to the researcher and did not receive any reward/credit by participating.

The specific questions to be answered by the current study are the following:

1. What are the participants' self-reported levels of:
   a. reading strategy use (offline and online);
   b. reading motivation (offline and online); and,
   c. reading anxiety (offline and online)?

2. Is there a significant difference in the participants' motivation, use of metacognitive strategies, and anxiety in both domains?

3. Is gender a significant factor in reading anxiety, reading motivation, and use of reading strategies in both domains?

4. What are some significant characteristics/aspects of the participants' use of reading strategies, reading motivation, and reading anxiety?

2. METHODOLOGY

This descriptive paper will measure the participants' level of reading strategy use, reading motivation, and reading anxiety when they read offline and online. It will likewise test if gender is a significant factor in the various domains of reading. Specific reading strategies and causes of reading motivation and anxiety (online and offline) will also be identified, compared and analyzed using appropriate statistical treatment.

2.1 Participants

Two hundred twenty (220) students (115 males, 105 females) from different colleges of one Philippine university participated in this study. Their mean age during the time of the study is 17.27. All participants have had at least 10 years of formal education in English prior to admission to the university. Likewise, they have passed an English-proficiency examination in addition to a general achievement and scholastic abilities test given in English. The participants gave their consent to the researcher and did not receive any reward/credit by participating.

2.2 Instruments

Six instruments were used (Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) by Saito, et. al, Online Survey of Reading Strategies (OSORS) by Anderson, Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) by Mohktari and Sheorey, Adolescent Motivation for Offline and Online Reading Survey by (Coiro and Castek, and Henry,), and two researcher-modified instruments) to gather pertinent data.

2.3 Procedure

These instruments were administered to the participants during their English class. On the

average, the participants took forty minutes to answer all the instruments.

2.4 Data Analysis

Means were computed and compared and specific questionnaire items which received notable mean are reported. T-tests were likewise employed to find out if gender is a significant factor in the various domains.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results revealed that the participants report that in both modes, there is an over-all high use of reading strategies, except for online Support Reading strategies. Problem-solution strategies are the ones used the most among the three (3) types. For reading motivation, the average mean of the participants' offline reading motivation is 3.67 while that of online reading motivation is 3.72. This means that the participants are generally motivated to read both online and offline. Of the three sub-constructs of motivation covered by the items, those revealing Instrumentality received the highest scores in both online and offline reading motivation (3.9 and 3.8 respectively). The participants reported above average offline reading anxiety (2.92) and online reading anxiety (2.85).

A relationship exists between the participants' use of offline and online reading strategies (0.42, moderate). However, there is no significant difference between their offline and online reading anxieties. Their anxiety is mainly due to their unfamiliarity with the topic and content of certain reading materials. Furthermore, reading motivation online and reading motivation offline are correlated (0.45), however, there is no significant difference in the participants' motivation to read online

As to gender as possible factor, results show that there is no difference between the reading anxiety and motivation levels of the males and females. There is however, gender differences in

offline reading, (0.04, marginally significant) but not
in online reading.

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of Reading Dimensions

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Offline reading strategies	3.71	0.45	-					
2. Online reading strategies	3.52	0.49	0.42*	-				
3. Offline reading motivation	3.67	0.54	0.26*	0.24*	-			
4. Online reading motivation	3.72	0.51	0.21*	0.21*	0.45*	-		
5. Offline reading anxiety	2.92	0.53	0.13	-0.03	0.00	-0.04	-	
6. Online reading anxiety	2.85	0.54	0.15	0.08	-0.03	-0.05	0.68*	-

4. CONCLUSIONS

The implications of the results of this quantitative study include the need to prepare better reading tasks and materials to avoid possible feeling of anxiety among bilingual readers, the importance of pre-reading activities which could prepare learners for challenging reading texts, and the necessity to model good reading strategies to learners. Future research may include other variables such as SES, extent and quality of Internet use, and reading proficiency. For reading motivation, the same practical and useful reading tasks given in traditional reading should be employed to develop this new literacy. Learners should be led to realize other good reasons for doing other than for information-getting purposes and as a means to a (good) end.

Given the results of this present study, pedagogical implications are thus made. First, results clearly show that there is a need to teach strategy awareness and use among learners. Similarly, developing visual literacy among learners is indeed important. Lastly, to help ensure the success of teaching online reading more efficiently, the role played by the instructional environment should also merit some attention.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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