

First-year-students' perceptions of asynchronous media platform (AMP) for learning English

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received 16 June 2023

Revised 12 August 2023

Accepted 15 August 2023

Keywords

Asynchronous Media Platforms

Media

Reading Skills

Junior High School

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the attitudes of first-year university students toward the use of asynchronous applications in learning reading comprehension. The primary objectives were to determine students' perceptions of using smartphone-based asynchronous media platforms (AMP) for reading comprehension, assess how these applications enhance student engagement, and understand the rationale behind their use. Data were collected via a questionnaire administered to twenty-seven first-year university students. A case study approach was employed, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. The findings indicate that students have a positive attitude toward the use of asynchronous applications for reading comprehension, with high average scores on the questionnaire demonstrating favorable assessments of these tools. The positive student attitudes toward asynchronous applications suggest that integrating these tools into the EFL curriculum could significantly enhance reading comprehension and engagement. The use of asynchronous media platforms provides flexibility and accessibility, enabling students to learn at their own pace and on their own schedule. In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the potential benefits of asynchronous applications in EFL learning environments. By adopting these tools, educators can create more dynamic and interactive learning experiences that cater to the diverse needs of students.



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How to Cite: Masykuri, E. S., Vladimirovna, O. V., & Evgenevich, M. I. (2023). First-year students' perceptions of asynchronous media platform for learning English. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal*, 6 (3), 188-198. <https://doi.org/10.12928/eltej.v6i3.6661>

1. Introduction

Vocabulary is crucial to the reading process, and learners who are unable to master the vocabulary of the texts used in their classrooms typically struggle to comprehend the required reading material (Coxhead, 2012). While it is unclear precisely how much vocabulary English as an additional language (EAL) learners need to achieve academically in EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) schools, research indicates that EAL learners often struggle with two forms of vocabulary crucial for academic performance: high-frequency and academic vocabulary (Hawkins, 2005). A lack of vocabulary knowledge can significantly influence EAL learners' academic progress in reading comprehension, a specific and critical academic skill that EAL learners have been shown to struggle with (Droop & Verhoeven, 2003; Murphy, 1998).

Reading comprehension impairments are a significant reason for EAL learners' academic underperformance. In the UK, both research and national test scores indicate that a lack of reading comprehension in English is one of the key reasons why EAL learners continually suffer academically compared to their first-language English classmates (Murphy & Unthiah, 2015). Reading comprehension is a challenging ability for EAL learners to acquire due to the multiple components required to establish meaning from a written text (Twist et al., 2007). Lower levels of grammatical and lexical proficiency are often compounded by unfamiliarity with cultural references encountered in classroom texts (Burgoyne et al., 2009; Hill, C., 2011).

Despite the necessity of acquiring multiple language skills, reading is given primacy in language instruction. Globally, people are increasingly turning to the internet for aid with their normal activities and to satisfy diverse wants by reading. The rapid development of internet-related innovations has significantly altered many aspects of life, particularly in the areas of communication, commerce, and education. The digital world connected to the internet provides any knowledge people need, leading to substantial changes in students' behaviors regarding information collection. Students often access advanced texts online rather than going to libraries to hunt for paper books. The internet not only provides data but also facilitates communication about class topics and the exchange of academic concerns through various web-based media (Bana, 2020).

Reading on media apps in technology has advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, it makes reading and sharing information easier and more enjoyable. On the other hand, it poses a threat to one's capacity to comprehend societal norms. In the context of educational growth, a large quantity of reading material can be found with relative ease on asynchronous media platforms such as Sigil (Alperi, 2015). An asynchronous media platform (AMP) can be considered both an online journal and an electronic book (Alperi, 2015; Maharani et al., 2015; Sari, 2016; Wirasasmita & Uska, 2017). The content of an AMP can vary widely, from personal diaries and thoughts to comprehensive knowledge on any subject. It is important to stimulate KWL (Know, Want to Know, Learned) strategies in students. Compared to publishing in a magazine or comic book, publishing on an AMP is considerably simpler. AMPs, especially when created by students themselves, provide more control over their own learning.

The researchers' experience at Altai State Pedagogical University in Russia indicated that English teachers rarely use AMPs as reading materials in the learning process (Fitri et al., 2021). This study explores students' perspectives on the use of AMPs as English reading materials. Student perspectives on AMPs can vary from enthusiasm to disinterest. This research aims to determine whether students view AMPs as favorable or unfavorable English reading media, particularly considering the integration of text, audio, and visual elements.

1.1. Student's Perception in Language Learning

Research on student perceptions in language learning has been extensively conducted by Dewaele and Saito. According to their studies, student perceptions are divided into two categories: anxiety and enjoyment. Students' anxiety while learning a foreign language is a complex interplay of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors associated with classroom language acquisition. This anxiety emerges from the distinctiveness of the language learning process, where learners often feel a threat to their ego when attempting to express themselves in a potentially awkward manner in a second language. This fear of appearing abrupt or making mistakes generates anxiety (Dewaele & Saito, 2024). Such anxiety can sometimes align with students' expectations but also significantly diminishes their motivation (Asysyfa et al., 2019).

The second category is students' enjoyment while learning a second language. Enjoyment is a multifaceted emotion that combines challenge and perceived ability, driving achievement in difficult tasks. It is more than just a pleasant feeling; enjoyment occurs when individuals exceed their needs to accomplish something new or unexpected. Pleasure, on the other hand, is a more straightforward emotion associated with experiencing something agreeable (Dewaele & Saito, 2024).

A positive perception is characterized by a favorable judgment of all aspects and skills, whether recognized or not. Explicit perception refers to personal assessments and interpretations of phenomena in the surrounding environment (Zhang et al., 2020). When individuals hold a positive perception, they are likely to recognize and support the perceived object or activity. Conversely, implicit beliefs involve subtle experiences that may be perceived as undesirable or unsuitable, leading to opposition

and refusal of tolerated attempts (Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2023). In other words, a person's judgment of an object or activity in their environment can lead to a negative perception, resulting in opposition if they believe it to be ineffective.

This duality of perception—*anxiety and enjoyment*—plays a crucial role in language learning. Understanding these perceptions can help educators create more supportive and engaging learning environments that mitigate anxiety and enhance enjoyment, ultimately improving language acquisition outcomes.

1.2. Enhancing Student Learning with Asynchronous Media Platforms

The use of AMP has the potential to significantly improve students' interest in learning, thereby positively impacting their academic achievement and learning outcomes. AMP can enhance comprehension and increase the likelihood of successfully achieving learning goals (Hatmanto et al., 2023; Hatmanto et al., 2023b; Salsabila, 2013). As one of the emerging online discussion technologies, AMP provides flexible and accessible opportunities for collaborative and interactive writing and learning, both with professors and peers. This engagement helps students become more media and information literate, fostering a greater sense of self-assurance and enhancing their ability for self-expression.

Publishing their writing on AMP allows students to experience a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, as their work is accessible to a wider audience, boosting their confidence and overall happiness with their achievements (Kadir & Tasir, 2020). Additionally, using an e-book for maintaining an online journal enables students to discuss and reflect on their experiences. This process motivates them to better organize their material and make thoughtful decisions regarding the appropriate register and style for each task, driven by the commitment to meaningful exchange among their peers (Yamin et al., 2020). Overall, the implementation of AMP in educational settings can create a more engaging and supportive learning environment, promoting academic success and personal growth among students.

1.3. Asynchronous Learning

Asynchronous learning is often described as self-regulated, meaning that students have the ability to monitor and take responsibility for their own academic performance (De Bruin et al., 2011). The quality of learning may be significantly influenced by how effectively students can track their own progress. When students establish and follow consistent daily study routines, they are better able to comprehend information and acquire knowledge. Additionally, students who can self-regulate are more likely to improve their academic performance because they are more aware of the strategies they should use or prepare for in the future (Mahlberg, 2015).

1.4. Review of Related Research

The previous study examined the implications of increasing learners' motivation and repertoire of strategies for improving vocabulary size and depth (Lee et al., 2022). It focused on students' perceptions of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, investigating how students managed to pass exams without traditional classroom settings (Wijayanengtiyas & Claretta, 2020). Creative strategies in learning English (Masykuri et al., 2022; Parapi et al., 2020; Masyakuri, 2022) were found to motivate students by reducing anxiety and enhancing contextual visuality. This investigation involved an in-depth, qualitative approach, utilizing both interviews and surveys to gather data. The findings indicated that students at the University of Bengkulu had a positive perception of online learning. Another study conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic at the University of Bengkulu (Yunita & Maisarah, 2020) revealed a strong relationship between students' motivation and strategies in learning a second language. Additionally, research on "Practicing TEFL Using ICT" at IAIN Salatiga found that learning English through infographics had both advantages and disadvantages, highlighting the challenges and motivations of students (Muna, 2019).

In light of these considerations, the present study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What are students' perceptions of the usage of asynchronous apps in learning reading comprehension?
2. How does the usage of asynchronous apps raise students' attention?

2. Methodology

In this study, an empirical approach was adopted for the descriptive research. The aim was to understand first-year students' perceptions at Altai State Pedagogical University, Russia Federation, regarding the use of Asynchronous Media Platform (AMP) for English reading comprehension. Data were collected via an online questionnaire, following a systematic procedure. First, the researchers designed the questionnaire. Then, the respondents completed the questionnaire, which was made available through Google Forms. The study focused specifically on first-year Russian-speaking students. The questionnaire consisted of 15 items, where respondents indicated their level of agreement or disagreement using a Likert scale ranging from strongly satisfied (SS) to strongly dissatisfied (SD). The instrument measured students' competence in reading comprehension, categorizing their scores into five levels: Very Low (VL), Low (L), Medium (M), High (H), and Very High (VH). This classification provided a detailed description of the students' reading comprehension abilities (Table 1).

Table 1. Mean score interpretation based on interval

No.	Interpretation of mean score	Interval mean score
1	VL	1.00 – 1.79
2	L	1.80 – 2.59
3	M	2.00 – 3.39
4	H	3.40 – 4.19
5	VH	4.20 – 5.00

^a. (Source: Educational Planning and Research Division, MOE, 2006) (Zakaria et al., 2015)

3. Finding and Discussion

3.1. Findings

The results of this investigation are presented in this section. A Likert scale from 5 to 1 was used to score the questionnaire items: 5 for "strongly satisfied (SS)," 4 for "agree," 3 for "fair (F)," 2 for "disagree (D)," and 1 for "strongly dissatisfied (SD)." The table below presents the research findings for each indicator.

Table 2. Scoring pre-test and post-test and students' satisfactory

No.	Student	Pre-test		Post-test		
		Interval mean score	Interpretation	Interval mean score	Interpretation	Value
1	BK	VL	1.79	M	3.30	SS
2	AH	L	2.00	M	3.20	SS
3	BIII	L	2.39	H	3.48	SS
4	ДА	L	2.39	M	3.30	SS
5	MP	M	2.18	H	3.40	SS
6	ЭБ	VL	2.20	L	3.30	SS
7	KK	V	1.49	M	3.18	SS
8	УМ	L	1.80	H	3.30	SS
9	АБ	M	2.20	H	3.30	SS
10	MC	M	2.18	H	3.40	SS
11	TC	H	3.30	VH	4.30	SS
12	ДЛ	M	2.18	H	3.40	SS
13	СIII	L	2.20	H	3.48	SS
14	III	L	2.39	VH	4.20	SS
15	M	L	2.30	H	3.30	SS
			2.19.		3.45	

In Table 2, the total population consists of 15 students. The pre-test results, displayed on the left side, show an average score of 2.19, indicating a low level of satisfaction in the class. The researchers did not use AMP for scaffolding during this phase. On the right side, the post-test results demonstrate

a significant improvement, with the average score rising to 3.45, suggesting strong satisfaction with the scaffolding provided.

Table 3 provides detailed points from the 15 questions posed after the post-test to the same class. Students shared their opinions through Google Forms.

Table 3. Descriptive table of students' perception towards AMP as an English reading media

No	Statement	SD	A	F	S	SS	M	Value
1	AMP makes student easier to learn vocabulary.	0	0	12	2	3	3.30	SS
2	AMP makes students learn more enthusiastically.	0	0	11	2	2	3.80	SS
3	AMP is more fun.	1	0	12	2	1	3.80	SS
4	Students can learn anywhere and anytime.	0	0	8	2	3	3.00	S
5	AMP can improve students' understanding in text contextually.	0	0	9	0	6	3.00	S
6	Getting the hang of reading by utilizing AMP can't work on my inspiration in picking up reading.	0	0	11	4	0	3.30	SS
7	Learning reading by using AMP can help me focus more.	0	0	3	12	0	3.00	S
8	Students have issues utilizing AMP as a result of restricted smartphone offices, restricted web bundles, and helpless sign issues.	0	0	7	3	5	3.60	SS
9	AMP is difficult to use because of the lack of students' understanding of how to operate.	0	0	13	2	0	3.80	SS
10	Learning reading by using AMP is made me easier to resume what I have read.	0	0	12	2	1	4.00	SS
11	AMP is a learning process that utilizes internet networks as a learning tool.	0	0	4	11	0	2.80	F
12	AMP makes it simple for students or educators to impart and communicate whenever and anyplace.	0	0	9	6	0	2.80	F
13	AMP can save time in the learning process	0	0	6	9	0	2.80	F
14	Learning English using AMP is a waste of internet data.	0	0	14	1	0	3.00	S
15	In light of the refinement of innovation in this advanced period, AMP can keep on being created.	0	0	7	8	0	3.00	S
Total average							3.32	SS

The findings of this study indicate that students generally agree with the statement that "Learning to read by using AMP makes it easier for me to resume what I have read." Additionally, the statements "AMP can save time in the learning process," "AMP makes it simple for students or educators to impart and communicate whenever and anyplace," and "AMP is a learning process that utilizes Internet networks as a learning tool" received a "fair" rating (F), suggesting that while students agree, they are not completely satisfied with these aspects.

An analysis of the data from the digital questionnaire revealed that the majority of first-year students have a favorable view regarding the use of AMP for English reading. The mean score of the questionnaire was 3.40. However, many students still encountered difficulties when using AMP, with the software recording a mean score of 3.40, placing it in the "High" category.

Table 3 illustrates that students agree that using AMP presents several challenges, including limited mobile phone capabilities, restricted internet packages, and weak signal quality. The calculated mean

score of 3.40, which falls within the "High" category, reinforces this conclusion. These results provide a clear understanding of students' perceptions regarding the five indicators previously discussed.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of problems faced by students' perception towards AMP as an English reading material

No	Statement	SD	A	F	S	SS	M	SD	Interpretation
6	Concentrating on reading by utilizing AMP can't work on my inspiration in picking up reading.	0	0	11	4	0		2.8	F
8	Students have issues utilizing AMP due to restricted smartphone offices, restricted web bundles, and helpless sign issues.	0	0	6	0	9		3.0	SS
9	AMP is hard to utilize due to the absence of students' understanding the utilization of web websites.	0	0	13	2	0		3.0	S
14	Using AMP is wastefu of internet data.	0	0	14	1	0		3.0	S
	Total							3.4	High

3.2. Discussion

The discussion highlights that AMP, which focuses on the Know – What I already know, Want – What I want to know, Learn – What I learned (KWL) method, is a creative learning medium that can motivate students to improve their skills. This approach provides students with new experiences beyond the subject matter, fostering a broader scope of learning. Self-regulated learning fosters independence among students as they manage their own learning schedules, focus areas, and goals (Adie et al., 2018; Gardner, R.C., 1985; Hill & West, 2020). Integrating AMP via smartphones is crucial for learning English in the context of Education 4.0 0 (Kusuma et al., 2021; Parapi et al., 2020; Santoso et al., 2018; Masykuri et.al., 2022). This material emphasizes vocabulary building, aiming to extend students' vocabulary and comprehension. Effective vocabulary acquisition requires strategic techniques and combinations of tactics (Kojik-Kabo & Lightbown, 1999; Zhang & Lu, 2015).

Motivation plays a significant role in vocabulary acquisition, which is a key component of learning (Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2023). Technology allows students to enhance their English vocabulary in various contexts, enabling them to read anywhere and anytime. According to Tables 2 and 3, most first-year students accepted the change and did not experience self-anxiety, recognizing that anxiety can lead to complex self-perceptions and behaviors related to language acquisition (Asyfyfa et al., 2019; Dewaele & Saito, 2024). Autonomous learning benefits from teacher feedback, helping students set goals and self-motivation strategies. This platform aids in problem analysis and evaluation, reflecting the dynamic nature of social environments and cultural practices. The study's findings indicate that teacher feedback enhances students' ability to self-regulate their English language learning, consistent with previous research showing that feedback activities encourage self-regulated learning (Vatoy & Smith, 2019).

In response to the second research question, the study found that AMP can increase students' attention. AMP functions effectively by presenting content that appeals to young learners, such as text, comic strips, animations, and movies. These visual aids (Fig.1-3) scaffold understanding while reading. The asynchronous learning platform's smartphone-based accessibility allows students to read articles anywhere and anytime, enhancing their learning experience.

The integration of AMP not only improves students' engagement but also supports their autonomous learning by providing flexible and accessible learning tools. These findings underscore the potential of AMP to enhance vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension, ultimately contributing to students' academic success.



Fig. 1. Asynchronous Media Platform for Learning English



Fig. 2. Collection of books, notebooks, modules, and workbooks

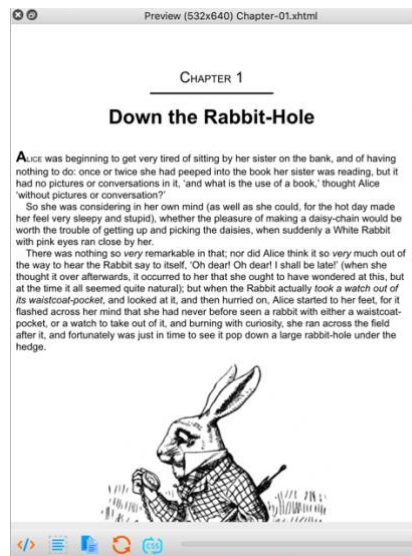


Fig. 3. Reading comprehension material for test A2

4. Conclusion

This study found that first-year students have a high perception of AMP as an English reading medium, with a mean score of 3.55, indicating strong satisfaction. This suggests that learning to read with AMP is easier and fosters students' enthusiasm. However, the effectiveness of AMP was hindered by poor internet connectivity, resulting in a mean score of 3.40, categorized as 'High.' This issue led to decreased interest and difficulty in comprehension among students. Despite these challenges, students exhibited enjoyment and curiosity rather than anxiety, demonstrating strong self-belief and motivation to learn more. Future research should include teachers' perspectives to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

Acknowledgment

Thank you to all the participants in this study who have given their time to provide information. We also thank Nebolsina Marina Sergeevna who kindly helped us in translating and interpreting Russian text, and also the rector of Altai State Pedagogical University who gave the permission for the study.

Declarations

- Author contribution** : Edi Sunjayanto Masykuri was responsible for the entire research project. He also led the writing of the manuscript and the collaboration with the second author. Voronushkina Olesya Vladimirovna supervised the first author and acts as an advisor and helped to find the correct method, managed the analysis, and revised the manuscript. Mezentsev Ivan Evgenevich proofread the final draft and revised.
- Funding statement** : This research did not receive any funding.
- Conflict of interest** : The authors declare no conflict of interest.
- Declaration of ethics** : We as authors acknowledge that this work has been written based on ethical research that conform with the regulations of our university and that we have obtained the permission from the relevant institute and participants when collecting data.

We support *English Language Teaching Educational Journal*, (*ELTEJ*) in maintaining high standards of personal conduct, practicing honesty in all our professional practices and endeavors.

- Additional information** : No additional information is available for this paper.

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