



Exploring The Correlation between EFL Students' Information Literacy and Media Literacy in Evaluating Hoax News

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Abstract. This research aims to explore the correlation between EFL students' information literacy and media literacy in evaluating hoax news. The subjects of this research were 101 EFL students in the 2021–2024 batch. This research used a quantitative approach with data collection techniques through questionnaires and reading test distributed online using Google Form. The results of the research showed that in the first hypothesis there was no significant correlation between information literacy and students' ability to evaluate hoax news, which means the null hypothesis was accepted. In the second hypothesis, it was shown that there was a significant correlation between media literacy and students' ability to evaluate hoax news, nevertheless the relationship was very weak, which means the alternative hypothesis was accepted. While in the third hypothesis, there was no significant correlation between information literacy and media literacy on students' ability to evaluate hoax news. These findings indicate that media literacy has a weak correlation in the context of hoax news evaluation by EFL students at Sintuwu Maroso University.

Keywords: Information Literacy, Media Literacy, Hoax News, EFL Students.

INTRODUCTION

Information literacy and media literacy are two important skills for EFL students at Sintuwu Maroso University, especially in evaluating hoax news. Information literacy can help them to prevent the spread of misinformation, namely by recognizing the signs of hoax news. Meanwhile, media literacy can help them to assess whether the news sources they get from various media are true or false information. In the context of education, these two literacies are very important considering the role of education students both as learners and future teachers. These two skills are very important because EFL students at Sintuwu Maroso University as future teachers, have an important role in disseminating correct information. Not only that, they, as active social media users, are also often the target of the spread of hoax news, especially in the current digital era.

In the current digital era, the spread of information and news content can be accessed anytime and anywhere. This ease of access to information is what causes the increasing circulation of hoax news that can disturb the public and become a challenge for future teachers as a young generation actively consumes digital information. Since the Internet has become the center of today's literacy and life, it has changed the way we access, use, and exchange information in our daily lives. Information literacy and media literacy are very useful to evaluate and identify hoax news. The future teachers can show their criticalness towards the information they receive, although many of them are lacking in this skill. If the future teachers have awareness of hoax news, there are still gaps in identifying hoax news. One of the gaps is the lack of future teachers' ability to verify the news. Limited skills in tracking news sources and checking facts are the main problem that the future teachers still have difficulty in evaluating hoax news.

Based on the researcher's initial interview to around 7 future teachers on December 2, 2024, it was found that they still had difficulty in identifying and evaluating hoax information in news. This is also experienced by researcher it self who is still confused about evaluating hoax news. Future teachers usually get information on the internet for their use both in collecting assignments and for their personal consumption. If the information is deemed suitable for the material being searched for, they can be used directly without looking at the credible sources that could be a hoax. The habit of future teachers in using information they get on the internet without checking the source is an example of lack of information literacy and media literacy skills that can cause future teachers to become dependent. The impact is that future teachers become more easily influenced by propaganda and can even be used as a tool to spread hoax news.

The example of hoax news that has recently appeared frequently and even often occurs in Indonesia is hoaxes about election, both presidential or regional head election. This hoax news is always present in every election in Indonesia and can be exploited by some irresponsible individuals to gain benefits for themselves or certain groups. If future teachers fall for hoaxes about election, for example irregularities in the political process involving educational institutions, then this can damage the reputation of their educational institutions. The future teachers may begin to see that their educational institutions are part of a system that is even considered dishonest or biased. This can also have an impact on prospective students, they may believe the hoax information and assume that the educational institution is too biased in discussing political issues, which can reduce academic credibility as an objective scientific institution. Based on TEMPO news that researcher read about political hoaxes ahead of the election, hoaxes about election are mostly found on Facebook with 34,4% and followed by TikTok, Twitter/X, WhatsApp and Instagram (Abdurrahman, 2024). Facebook is an application that has a group feature that allows users with similar interests to gather and share information even if it is not verified. Not only that, the Facebook algorithm often displays controversial and sensational content. Therefore, the importance of information literacy and media literacy in reducing negative impacts, especially ahead of the election.

There are several studies on information literacy and media literacy separately so that there is still a gap in understanding how these two literacies correlate and influence the ability of future teachers to evaluate hoax news. With this research, it is expected that it can fill this gap by exploring the relationship between information literacy and media literacy of future teachers in the context of evaluating hoax news among EFL students at Sintuwu Maroso University. This research is increasingly relevant because the future teachers can play a dual role as consumers information and shapers of literacy in the

future. This emphasizes the importance of strong information literacy and media literacy skills since the time of prospective teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This part discusses the concept used in this research. According to a book *Desain Gerakan Induk Literasi Sekolah* published by Indonesia Ministry of Education and Culture in 2016, it is said that literacy is more than just reading and writing, but literacy includes thinking skills which use various forms, namely digital, print, auditory, and visual (Wiedarti et al, 2016). These two types of literacy can contribute to EFL students at Sintuwu Maroso University abilities in evaluating the accuracy of the information they find. Therefore, further explanation is needed on correlating the information literacy and media literacy in the context of evaluating hoax news among EFL students

1. Information Literacy.

The term information literacy comes from English. Information itself comes from Old French, Information which is taken from Latin *Informationem*, which means outline or concept. Meanwhile literacy according to *KBBI* is the ability to write and read. The importance of information literacy is marked by the abundance of information. According to (Adıgüzel, 2005) there are 4 aspects in measuring the development of the information literacy scale, namely:

- a. Defining Information needs, which include what the information you want to know even need and how much the information is needed.
- b. Accessing Information, which includes the search system or information source used to access information.
- c. Using Information, which includes the right method in presenting information.
- d. Ethical and legal Regulations in Using Information, which include permission to use materials or information and certain policies regarding the acquisition, use, and dissemination of information

Information literacy can be said to be the ability to read information. If an individual is said to have literacy skills, it means being able to understand information even though information literacy is always associated with the use of technology and the use of libraries. Information literacy can be said to be the ability to find information that is found. Not only that, information literacy is also the ability to know how the library organization works and be familiar with the available resources including information formats and automated search tools. (Melani, 2019).

A research by (Pamungkas, 2020) entitled “*Pengaruh Tingkat Kemampuan Literasi Informasi Siswa Dalam Upaya Mencegah Sumber Informasi Hoax Di Sekolah Insan Cendekia Madani*” used Cognition Theory, namely the theory of studying human behaviour. This theory is significant because students' habits and behaviour in consuming information can change based on their level of information literacy and media literacy, especially in evaluating hoax news. For example, how students' behaviour in searching, using, even evaluating information or news from various sources. That way, these behavioural patterns can affect students' ability to evaluate hoax news. This theory emphasizes that behaviour can be formed through active learning., namely a person gets behavioural patterns through experience by evaluating the consequences of their behaviour. This theory is suitable for researching the influence of students' information literacy skills in efforts to prevent hoax information sources in civil society.

In evaluating hoax news, information literacy helps Sintuwu Maroso University students in identifying and evaluating news sources, so they can differentiate between valid and misleading information.

2. Media Literacy.

The terms of media literacy comes from English, which refers to the means of exchanging messages, and literacy which is the ability or literacy of something. Media literacy includes the ability to access, evaluate, and create information using media tools. By increasing the amount of hoax news, critical skills are becoming increasingly important for media customers. According to (Kertanegara et al, 2020) there are 10 dimensions used in measuring level of media literacy and the behavior of spreading hoax news, namely:

A. Dimension of The Level of Media Literacy.

This dimension according to (Potter, 2015) using 7 dimensions as follow:

1) Analysis Dimension. The indicators as following:

- a) Knowing how to analyze when receiving information.
- b) Looking for information that is similar to the information received.

2) Evaluation Dimension. The indicators as following:

- a) Comparing the information found with other sources.
- b) Knowing the difference in messages in information with other sources.

3) The categorization Dimension. The indicators as following:

- a) Dividing the information received into several categories.
- b) Frequency for dividing information into several categories.

4) Induction Dimension. The indicators as following:

- a) viewing the data as a basis for public opinion.
- b) Searching for valid survey data from the information received.

5) Deduction Dimension. The indicators as following:

- a) Conclude an opinion from the information that has been received.
- b) Conclude an opinion after seeing some information.

6) The Combination Dimension. The indicators as following:

- a) Adapting new information to the existing information.
- b) How much to accept new information?

7) Abstraction Dimension. The indicators as following:

- a) Understand the meaning of the information found.
- b) Make general conclusions from the information found.

B. Dimension of Hoax Spreading Behavior.

This dimension according to (Bandura, 1977) using 3 dimensions as follow:

1) Self-Concept Dimension. The Indicators as following:

- a) Knowledge about hoaxes.
- b) Ability to distinguish hoaxes.
- c) Knowing the consequences of hoaxes.

2) Environmental Dimension. The indicators as following:

- a) The intensity of receiving hoax information.
- b) Knowing the initial source/person spreading the hoax.

3) Action Dimensions. The indicators as following:

- a) Self-response when receiving a hoax.
- b) Knowing the reasons for the response

These dimensions have several indicators or concrete descriptions of a dimension so that it can be measured. These dimensions are also influential in this research because it is used in categorizing statements from the questionnaire of this research. One research that used these dimensions to analyze students' media literacy is from (Aprilianti, 2022), entitled "Describing students' Media Literacy Level at SMAN 1 Lore Selatan" also used a questionnaire adopted from (Kertanegara et al., 2020). In the research, the hypothesis test result showed that there is a significant relationship between students' media literacy level with their ability to analyze information and revealed that 25% of respondents answered very well through their ability to identify positive, neutral or even negative information.

Besides Aprilianti, other research by (Sya'diyah et al, 2021), entitled "Pengaruh Literasi Media Terhadap perilaku penyebaran Hoax di Kalangan Generasi Z" also used the same theory about media literacy by (Potter, 2015). Her research revealed that media literacy factors play a role in the behaviour of spreading hoax news, and this behaviour significantly influences the media literacy of each individual. If the literacy rate is high, the behaviour of spreading hoaxes decreases and vice versa. Media literacy can be used as a benchmark in seeing the behaviour of spreading hoaxes.

Media literacy skills can play a role if the public is critical of information in a media. One of these skills is criticizing the media. Students need to master the media, dig up data from various sources online, and have critical thinking skills about media content because the credibility of a media does not guarantee the truth or falsity of the data being informed. (Lubis et al., 2023)

3. Hoax news evaluation

Hoax news evaluation is the process where the individuals assess the information received based on relevant criterias, such as the accuracy, source, supporting evidence, consistency with existing knowledge. The challenge of hoaxes itself has become a major problem in the current era (Rusdiyanti et al., 2023). Hoaxes are created for various purposes, for example for jokes to serious situations. In Indonesia, the spread of hoaxes is very fast because of the large use of social media. Hoaxes aim to make people confused, uncomfortable, even unsafe. The confusion experienced by the community makes them wrong in making a decision. Based on *Indonesia Mendidik 2016* states that in the development of hoax news, political spin doctors see the effectiveness of hoaxes as a black campaign tool in the democratic party so that it influences the perception of voters (Kertanegara et al., 2020). Hoax is a news that is engineered in order to cover up the truth. Hoax news can also be said to be the provision of information by distorting facts so that the truth cannot be verified. Hoax news can spread very easily through social media, websites, or other digital platforms causing panic and confusion, even harm to individuals and society (Kustomo, 2022)

Based on those relevant studies, it can be said that information literacy and media literacy play an important role and complement each other in the ability to evaluate hoax news. Information literacy is the ability to identify information needs, access trusted sources and evaluate information critically. While media literacy is the ability to understand the characteristics of various media platforms, analyze media content and understand the motives behind production and dissemination of information.

METHOD

This research was conducted at Sintuwu Maroso University and focuses on EFL students batch from 2021-2024 with 2024/2025 academic year. This research used a quantitative method to find out the correlation between EFL students' information literacy and media literacy in evaluating hoax news. This research design is suitable to explore and measure the correlation between two main variables, such as information literacy and media literacy, especially in the context of EFL students' evaluation of hoax news. For the research sample, the researcher used convenience sampling technique which in this technique, the sample is chosen due to their willingness to be studied. In this technique, the researcher cannot be completely sure that the individual represents the population, but the sample can provide useful information to answer questions and hypotheses in the study (Zulfikar et al., 2024).

The data was collected in the form of a questionnaire that has been adopted from (Adıgüzeli, 2005) to measure the level of information literacy and from (Kertanegara et al., 2020) to measure the level of media literacy. This study also used a reading test to measure their ability in evaluating hoax news which will be carried out in the Critical Reading class in collaboration with the course lecturer. The researcher begins collecting data by distributing the questionnaires and reading test. The instruments were created in the form of a google form and distributed online via WhatsApp to make it easier for researcher and respondents to fill in the data in the instruments.

Technique of data analysis in this research were carried out systematically to test the hypotheses and answer the questions between EFL students' information literacy and media literacy in evaluating hoax news. After the data was collected through questionnaires and reading test, the data was processed using statistical software, namely SPSS. Before determining what techniques will be used to test the hypotheses in this research, the researcher conducts a normality test in order to determine whether the data is normally distributed. The data in this study was normally distributed, so the researcher used Spearman Rank Correlation to answer the hypotheses.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

3.1 Reability Test

Figure 1. Questionnaire of the development of the scale of information literacy

| Reliability Statistics | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .938 | 29 |

From the data above, Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.938 which is greater than 0.6. It indicated that the instrument was reliable.

Figure 2. Questionnaire of media literacy level and hoax news spreading behaviour

| Reliability Statistics | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .971 | 21 |

From the data above, Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.971 which is greater than 0.6. It indicated that the instrument was reliable.

Figure 3. Reading Test

Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .736 | 3 |

From the data above, Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.736 which is greater than 0.6. It indicated that the instrument was reliable.

3.2 Descriptive Statistic Test

Figure 4. Descriptive Statistic

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|---------|---------|-------|----------------|
| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Information | 101 | 29 | 130 | 60.60 | 16.936 |
| Media | 101 | 21 | 105 | 80.04 | 17.737 |
| Reading Test | 101 | 40 | 100 | 63.29 | 15.944 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 101 | | | | |

Based on figure 4, it is known that:

- Variable X1 (Information Literacy) has a maximum value of 130 while the minimum value is 29 and the mean value is 60.60. For the standard deviation of variable X1 (Information Literacy) is 16.936.
- Variable X2 (Media Literacy) has a maximum value of 105 while the minimum value is 21 and the mean value is 80.04. For the standard deviation of variable X2 (Media Literacy) is 17.737.
- Variable Y (Reading Test) has a maximum value of 100 while the minimum value is 40 and the mean value is 63.29. for the standard deviation of variable Y (Reading Test) is 15.944.

3.3 Normality test

Figure 5. Normality Test

| Tests of Normality | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|-----|------|--------------|-----|------|
| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Information | .079 | 101 | .129 | .957 | 101 | .002 |
| Media | .200 | 101 | .000 | .827 | 101 | .000 |
| Reading Test | .158 | 101 | .000 | .931 | 101 | .000 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on figure 2, it can be seen from the Kolmogorov Normality Test found:

- Variable Information: $0.129 > 0.05$ (Data is normally distributed)
- Variable Media: $0.000 < 0.05$ (Data is not normally distributed)
- Variable Reading Test: $0.000 < 0.05$ (Data is not normally distributed)

3.4 Spearman Rank Correlation

Figure 6. Correlation between Information Literacy and Reading test

| Correlations | | | Information | Reading Test |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Spearman's rho | Information | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | -.068 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .502 |
| | | N | 101 | 101 |
| Reading Test | | Correlation Coefficient | -.068 | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .502 | |
| | | N | 101 | 101 |

Based on figure 3, the correlation coefficient value is -0.068, indicating a very weak relationship between the information literacy variable and the reading test (ability to evaluate hoax news). The P-value is 0.502 which is greater than 0.05 ($0.502 > 0.05$), indicating that the relationship between the two variables is not statistically significant. This shows that there is no significant correlation between information literacy and students' ability to evaluate hoax news. Based on these findings, it is shown that in the first hypothesis, The Null Hypothesis was accepted and The Alternative Hypothesis was rejected.

Figure 7. Correlation between Media Literacy and Reading Test

| Correlations | | | Media | Reading Test |
|----------------|-------|-------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Spearman's rho | Media | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | -.223* |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .025 |
| | | N | 101 | 101 |
| Reading Test | | Correlation Coefficient | -.223* | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .025 | |
| | | N | 101 | 101 |

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on figure 4, the correlation coefficient value is -0.223, indicating a negative or weak relationship between the media literacy variable and the reading test (ability to evaluate hoax news). However, the P-value is 0.025 which is smaller than 0.05 ($0.025 < 0.05$), this indicates the existence of a relationship between the two variables. It can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between media literacy and students' ability to evaluate hoax news, nevertheless the correlation is very weak. Based on these findings, it is shown that in the second hypothesis, The Alternative Hypothesis was accepted and The Null Hypothesis was rejected.

Figure 8. Correlation between Information Literacy and Media Literacy with Reading Test

| | | Correlations | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Spearman's rho | Information | Correlation Coefficient | Information | Media |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .970 | .502 |
| | | N | 101 | 101 |
| Media | Media | Correlation Coefficient | -.004 | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .970 | .025 |
| | | N | 101 | 101 |
| Reading Test | Reading Test | Correlation Coefficient | -.068 | -.223* |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .502 | .025 |
| | | N | 101 | 101 |

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on figure 5, it can be concluded that The Spearman Correlation analysis shows that only media literacy has a significant correlation nevertheless the relationship is relatively weak, but the results still show the influence of media literacy on the ability to evaluate hoax news. This is indicated by the Sig value is 0.025 which is smaller than 0.05 ($0.025 < 0.05$) and the correlation coefficient of -0.223. This shows that media literacy plays a role or shows a relationship in the ability to evaluate hoax news, nevertheless the relationship is very weak. While information literacy does not show a meaningful relationship. Based on these findings, it is shown that in the third hypothesis, The Null Hypothesis was accepted and The Alternative Hypothesis was rejected.

Based on the results of the correlation test conducted to answer the three hypotheses, it was found that in the first hypothesis there was no significant correlation between information literacy and students' ability to evaluate hoax news, which means the null hypothesis was accepted. In the second hypothesis, it was found that there was a significant correlation between media literacy and students' ability to evaluate hoax news, nevertheless the relationship or influence obtained was very weak, which means the alternative hypothesis was accepted. While in the third hypothesis, there was no significant correlation between information literacy and media literacy on students' ability to evaluate hoax news. This is because only media literacy has a correlation while information literacy does not. With only one literacy having a significant correlation with students' ability to evaluate hoax news, it indicates that both of them together do not have a significant correlation with students' ability to evaluate hoax news, which means that the null hypothesis is accepted.

DISCUSSION

The researcher used questionnaire answers to determine the level of Information Literacy and Media Literacy in this study. The findings show that the variable data analysis does not fulfill the normality assumption. The normality test is carried out using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method because the data used is large so that the method is suitable for use in this study. Data analysis shows that the distribution of variables does not meet the assumption of normality, so the correlation test performed is Spearman Rank Correlation to answer the existing hypothesis.

The results of the analysis show that there is no significant correlation between information literacy and reading test, which means that The Alternative Hypothesis (H_a) was rejected and The Null Hypothesis (H_0) was accepted. This also shows that in this study, information literacy has no influence on EFL students' ability to evaluate hoax news. This shows that information literacy or students' ability to define information needs, accessing information, using information, and even ethical and legal regulations in using

information is still not in line with students' ability to recognize and evaluate hoax news. This can be caused by a lack of information literacy skills or it can be caused by students' low understanding of information literacy, which is only limited to knowing how to search or cite information without the ability to think critically about the information obtained.

For media literacy and reading test, there is a significant correlation, nevertheless the correlation is very weak. This shows that even though there is a correlation between media literacy and reading test, the influence is not strong enough to have an impact on the context of evaluating hoax news in this study. Therefore The Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) was accepted, namely that there is a significant correlation between media literacy and students' evaluation of hoax news, and The Null Hypothesis (H0) was rejected. Although there is a relationship or influence of media literacy on the ability to evaluate hoax news, it is not strong enough in influencing how students' ability to evaluate hoax news. This can be caused by how students understand media literacy in the context of daily life. The ability of students' media literacy is still not enough to influence how they evaluate hoax news, in this study there are 10 dimensions used in measuring level of media literacy and behavior of spreading hoax news, the weak relationship or influence of students' media literacy on the ability to evaluate hoax news can be caused because they only understand some of the 10 dimensions that exist, so that their ability to evaluate hoax news with their media literacy skills is lacking.

Based on the findings, only media literacy has a significant correlation with the reading test nevertheless the relationship is very weak. This shows that students with good media literacy tend to be more critical of hoax news. This states that The Null Hypothesis (H0) was accepted because of the two variables which means information literacy and media literacy, only media literacy has a significant correlation with the students' evaluation of hoax news, and the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) was rejected. This can be caused by students more often obtaining information or news through media such as news sites and social media. This shows that students' understanding of media literacy is good enough to affect their ability to analyze and evaluate hoax news. Compared to information literacy, which is rarely determined directly, such as searching for information or news on their own, students are quite able to recognize or evaluate hoax news from a given media, for example information on news sites or on social media.

The results of these findings are in line with previous research which shows that media literacy can affect news evaluation skills, but the influence of other factors not examined in this study. Research from (Sya'diyah et al, 2021) states that media literacy has a significant effect on the behavior of spreading hoaxes to each individual. Meanwhile, research from (Aprilianti ,2022) stated that the level of media literacy has a significant relationship with the ability to evaluate information. So it can be said that media literacy in this study requires a more approach in improving media literacy skills among EFL students at Sintuwu Maroso University. The ability to evaluate hoax news must involve other aspects, such as behavior in spreading hoax news.

For the information literacy aspect, not only how it correlates with the ability of hoax news, but the need for a further approach regarding how information literacy affects the evaluation of hoax news. In research from (Pamungkas, 2020) mentioned that in an effort to prevent hoax information sources, a further approach is needed, namely by using cognition theory which is a theory in studying human behavior. This was not done in this study, resulting in information literacy not having a significant correlation with the ability to evaluate hoax news.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of findings and discussions, it is found that in the first hypothesis, there was no significant correlation between information literacy and students' ability to evaluate hoax news, which means the null hypothesis was accepted. In the second hypothesis, there was a significant correlation between media literacy and students' ability to evaluate hoax news, which means the alternative hypothesis was accepted. While in the third hypothesis, there was no significant correlation between information literacy and media literacy on students' ability to evaluate hoax news, which means the null hypothesis was accepted. Based on these results, it can be concluded that only media literacy has a significant correlation with students' evaluation of hoax news, nevertheless the relationship is very weak. This shows that students with good media literacy tend to be more critical of hoax news. Students apply their media literacy skills in their daily lives because hoax news and misinformation are mostly spread in the form of professional-looking news, but in terms of content is false or manipulative. These news or sources of information can be obtained in various media, such as news sites and social media. Not only that, it can be said that media literacy in this research requires a more approach in improving media literacy skills among EFL students at Sintuwu Maroso University.

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