

AN INDONESIAN LEARNER'S READING JOURNAL FOR EXTENSIVE READING

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Abstract

Reading Journal is a possible instrument to find out what and how learners do extensive reading and explore their perceptions about what and how they read. This article is based on one of instruments for a study on Exploring Extensive Reading in Developing English Language Competency of Indonesia EFL Learners. The study is a case study and one of the data collected through journal entry. This article aims to present the findings of the study in terms of types of reading materials that an Indonesian learner read for extensive reading and learner's perceptions about the reading materials. The findings from this instrument are: (1) types of reading materials that an Indonesian learner read for extensive reading were a book about health and a novel about detective and (2) an Indonesian learner's perceptions' about reading materials were her interest in terms of the use for the book and pleasure for the novel. This study suggests that learners need to write journal for extensive reading materials. This study also recommends to include what learners learn in journal entry by reading the novel selected for further.

Keywords: characteristics and benefit of Extensive Reading

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a form of real communication especially for EFL learners including Indonesian learners. It is due to the fact that they are not immersed in the context in which English is used; however, they are expected to be competent in the language. Therefore, they need the exposure of the language through reading. They also have to have reading competency. In order to be competent in reading, learners are expected to love reading. It is mostly based on students' habit and interest in reading (Gopala Krishnan at all, 2013). He found that the students who read more in English have greater English language proficiency and students with a positive attitude generally read more than students who did not. The study also proves that many students who have good English proficiency come from homes of educated parents and these students have the habit of reading materials in English. On the other hand, students from labour class home have credible English language proficiency because they read a lot in English as

an entertainment. This study indicates that students should be attracted to be interested in reading; therefore, teachers should be as a role model of reading.

Interest in reading is based on the meaningful context of the text (O'Donnell and Wood, 2004). They learn for this situation that reading provides pleasure and information. Learners must reinforce to these insights in which they gain knowledge by reading. This is because an important goal at the initial stage of reading is the acquisition of beginning vocabulary. They recognize words referring to printed words recognized instantly.

Studies on extensive reading in Indonesia five years ago were efforts to make students interest to do reading and the goal is for creating reading habit. However, there was no study on the use of extensive reading. Kinds of this study are necessary to be conducted because readers' engagement in the reading process is based on their past experience (Aebersold and Field, 2011). The experiences help readers in doing the activities of reading. They can engage in reading since they know how to read and reading is as activities in lives. One will do reading relating how reading occurs in their daily activities. It is shaped by five sources; family, community, school, sociocultural environment, and individual differences (Aebersold and Field, 2011).

The characteristics of a successful extensive reading program described Day and Bamford (1998, 2004) are as the main concern of this study. The characteristics are often used as references by researchers and other writers. Those who are interested in extensive reading need to know about these characteristics. Day and Bamford (1998, 2004) emphasize extensive reading on the number and the various reading materials which are definitely read outside of the classroom. How, where, and when the students read are their own choice because reading in extensive reading is individual and silent. The materials are selected by students and reading its own reward because the purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding. Reading speed is fast, therefore reading materials are well within the students' linguistic competence. In order to make sense for students about these characteristics, teachers or lecturers are expected to orient the students to the goal of the programs. The teachers are also expected to be role models as a readers and the members of the classroom.

Day and Bamford (1998) point out goals of extensive reading program. They believe that after joining the program, students will have positive attitude toward reading in the second language. They will have confidence in their reading, they will have motivation to read in the second language, and they will read without look up dictionary. Students will know their purpose to read, therefore, they read appropriate rate for their purpose in reading. It is expected that students know how to choose appropriate reading materials for their interest and language ability and increase their word recognition ability. These goals can be gained at the end of a program. Nisdhino (2007) and Macalister (2008) found that learners have positive attitude on extensive reading. The participants said that they were satisfied after they finish doing reading. Rahim et al (2009) claim that the positive attitude of the students on extensive reading is not only in terms of language. Students who read more outside of the classroom got greater English language.

MacLeod (2007) believes that the aims of extensive reading are to build the readers' confidence and enjoyment. Generally, doing extensive reading is to improve

the students' reading ability, therefore, they can keep on doing reading. Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) emphasize that the goal of extensive reading program is to convince students of its value so that they will continue reading extensively on their own after the class is over. This is in line with Aebersold and Field (2011). They believe that extensive reading approach aims to improve the students' reading ability by reading for general comprehension of large quantities of texts. Ro (2013) studied that extensive reading can reduce the participant's anxiety towards reading in the target language and it can motivate to read. This is because they can learn the language and increase their reading proficiency through extensive reading.

Reading materials to be used in extensive reading need to be considered by teachers. Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) suggest that teachers are expected to provide which are appropriate for students' interest, language proficiency, and literacy skills. Teachers may consider several issues related to extensive reading as well as considering the number of reading materials they need to read and text types suggested. Day and Bamford (1998) and also quoted by Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) outline various genres of reading materials like; language learner literature, children's literature, magazines, newspapers, comic books, young adult novels, translations of works from students' first language. Teachers may provide models for making materials available like classroom or program library. It is also possible to encouraged students to have the materials, visit libraries, and conduct on line investigation. In selecting the materials, teachers are also expected to helps students to select appropriate materials in terms of their interest and difficulty level. The texts must be at or slightly below the students' current level of reading proficiency. It is expected in order they can understand the texts that they select. Students gradually may be encouraged themselves to read more challenging reading materials since the focus of extensive reading is to build confidence, motivation, and enjoyment in second language reading.

By doing extensive reading as its characteristics, EFL/ ESL learners will gain the benefit of extensive reading. Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) conclude six ways of the benefit of extensive reading. First, extensive reading improves comprehension skills through practice for background knowledge and reading skills to particular texts. Second, extensive reading develops automaticity through great reading. In the process of reading, learners recognize words as well as vocabulary knowledge, morphology and syntax in which the words occur. Third, extensive reading builds background knowledge by engaging in the texts read. The background knowledge prepares readers to the future reading. Doing extensive reading builds vocabulary and grammar knowledge by acquiring linguistic knowledge through reading. Fourth, Extensive reading can make learners acquire the language for their progress in the language because extensive reading is the exposure of the natural use of language in the printed materials.. Fifth, extensive reading improves productive skills through acquiring the input from reading for the output for productive skills. The last use of exstensive reading is to promote students with confidence and motivation.

Experimental studies have been conducted on the use of extensive reading for reading competency. Mermelstein (2014) studied the use of extensive reading in improving EFL learners' reading for non English major in Taiwan. The study proves significantly higher reading level gained by the treatment group. The study suggests that

utilizing extensive reading can provide a successful alternative to improve Asian learner's reading levels as well as considering pedagogical suggestion in implementing ER. Sarwo Edy (2014) studied the effectiveness of extensive reading on students' reading comprehension achievement and students' motivation at STAIN Curup, Indonesia. The study proves that students taught by the extensive reading activity showed higher scores than those taught by conventional way; however, there is no interaction between students' motivation and extensive reading. The practice on extensive reading in this study was only for reading course in which the goal is for comprehension. Therefore, Sarwo Edy suggests make special course for extensive reading in order to enhance the students' reading skills and reading habit. Ho-Hyak Jang et al (2015) studied the effect of English extensive reading activities on the students' reading proficiency and reading motivation in Korea. The study found that extensive reading activities have a positive influence on students' reading proficiency and their intrinsic motivation.

Extensive reading is also useful for writing competency. Nasser Saleh Al-Mansour and Ra'ed Abdulgader Al-Shorman (2014) studied the effect of extensive reading on the writing performance of Saudi EFL University Students. The study proves that extensive reading program have a significant positive effect on learners' writing performance. This study recommends that further studies might describe what teachers should do with extensive reading. This study also recommends that another study be conducted to investigate the effect of the program on the learning of language skills such as reading and oral skills. The writers also suggest that research in this area should identify the needs of both language learners and instructors and the role that effective extensive reading education and integration can play to meet learners' needs. Moreover, universities, ministry of education and other educational institutes are recommended to make use and benefit from the extensive reading program of this study when designing their curricula. Notash (2015) explored about the effect of extensive reading (ER) on advanced learner's expository paragraph writing to English Department students in Iran. This study found that the participants were in favor of extensive reading as a source of improvement of their L2. This study suggests the future research investigate the effects of extensive reading on enhancement of finer-grained dimensions of grammatical accuracy such as tenses, clause units, connectors, modals, and structures.

Kiyomi Yoshizawa et al (2014) prove in their study in Japan that learners show individual differences in their growth rates. The study indicates that the learners who had limited language proficiency at the beginning of ER course tended to gain at rather faster rate than those who had higher language proficiency. Chin-Neng Chen (2013) studied the effects of extensive reading of e-books on Taiwanese tertiary level EFL technological students' English reading attitude, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. The study found that extensive reading of e-books facilitates Taiwanese tertiary level EFL technological students' English reading attitude, reading comprehension, and vocabulary growth. The finding also indicates that extensive reading via e-books could improve tertiary level EFL students' L2 learning. The experimental group achieved larger gains in reading attitude, comprehension, and vocabulary growth, and their conscious acquisition of the target language was accelerated. The findings suggest that certain tasks used in extensive reading may help

development of learners' reading comprehension and vocabulary growth, such as finding out key words/ phrases worth studying in this reading, guessing word meaning from context; connecting the contents of the reading selection to current or past real world events and experiences, finding passages they would like to/ should hear; writing their reflection toward the reading text in the weekly individual reading journals as well as groups' reading work sheet.

Rania Adel Ibrahim Ahmad and Hussan Rajab (2015) investigated the impact of extensive reading on developing second Language (L2) reading comprehension and writing skills among primary school EFL Learners in two Arab countries, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The study has proven that extensive reading can improve the second Language (L2) reading comprehension and writing skills among primary school EFL learners in two Arab countries, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The study also proves the role of teachers in terms of engaging in reading and the exposure of young EFL learners to sufficient and suitable materials. learners have limited chance of L2 interactions outside the classroom boundaries; therefore, they need to be exposed to massive text input. The writers also suggest establishing vision of promoting ER in young learners in order to lead them to gain self-efficacy and self confidence on their academic lives. Therefore, reading as a major L2 skill, needs to be reconsidered in the EFL context in general and in the EFL for young learners in particular. The researchers expect that the study will contribute to a growing compendium of literature aimed at developing a much wider and deeper understanding of the benefits and advantages of EFL enrichment programs in EFL young learners.

The studies about extensive reading prove the benefits of extensive reading for EFL/ ESL learners. They are in terms of language competence; language components and language skills, and learners' attitude, motivation, and confidence on learning language generally and specifically on reading. These are as the reflection of characteristics of extensive reading indicating the activities of extensive reading

One of activities for extensive reading is reading journal. The use of reading journal has been included in the reading curriculum of English education department in Kansai University of International Studies, Japan (Aliponga, 2014). The result of the study indicate that reading journal motivated students to read more, enabled them to understand the main idea and important details of the reading materials of their choice, and enabled them to think critically. The study also indicates that the students enabled to learn new vocabulary, increased their reading speed, and enabled them to concentrate. The researcher believes that reading journal serves as the learning strategy for students that developed their self-efficacy to be motivated to read more. The finding is in line with Yamashita's (2014). The study proves that extensive reading affected L2 reading attitudes in which it had a greater positive influence on feelings and emotions. It also indicates the increase in comfort and intellectual value and a decrease in anxiety.

The benefit of extensive reading has been proven by researchers and teachers. It can not only improve students' reading ability, but it has also been shown to expand knowledge of vocabulary, raise the general level of a language testing, and improve fluency and accuracy in writing. Brown (2001) claims that extensive reading component in conjunction with other focused reading instruction is highly warranted. Yamashita (2008) and Iwahori (2008) found in their study that extensive reading improve the

students' reading rate or reading strategy and the general language proficiency. Yamashita (2008) believes that the students' recognition on reading strategy makes them quickly learn to apply the effective strategies to L2 reading and extensive reading is also as the form of acquiring micro level linguistics.

Learners need to do some activities after reading (Nuttall, 1982). The activities are eliciting personal response; linking the content with the readers own experience; considering the significance of the texts; establishing the connection between the content and other work in the same field; suggesting practical applications of theories principles; working out the implications for research/ policy/ theory/ of the ideas/ facts in the text; drawing the connection/ contrast between facts in the texts and others; recognizing relationship of cause and effects; ascertaining chronological sequence; tracing the development of thought/ argument; distinguishing facts from opinion; weighing evidence; recognizing bias; discussing/ evaluating characters, incidents, ideas, arguments; speculating about what had happened before/ would happen afterwards, or about motives, reasons, feelings. The activities after reading is only as the basic media to communicate the prior knowledge to the readers' opinion and perception after reading.

Indonesian learners have been exposed to extensive reading through the learning materials in their national language at secondary school level. No extensive reading in English is done at that level. It is only when they are at the university level that they are exposed to extensive reading. However, it is taught as a subject where students learn about what extensive reading pertains. The English Study Program learners of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Siak University may or may not do extensive reading. It probably depends on how the lecturer runs the class and how the learners do extensive reading. The learners may and may not do extensive reading. They may only do it to fulfill the requirement of the course. One of the ways to know how the learners do extensive reading is by analyzing their reading journal. It can be as the instrument used in the study. The result of the data analysis will indicate the types of reading materials the learners read. It depends on their purpose when they do reading.. Therefore, this article aims to present the findings of the study in terms of types of reading materials that an Indonesian learner read for extensive reading and learner's perceptions about the reading materials.

METHODOLOGY

Yin (2009) defines that research design is a logical plan for questions to be answered through a number of major steps like collecting and analyzing data. The major procedures of the design are discussed in the ways how the data were collected and analyzed by referring to the type of this research. Meanwhile, Merriam (2009) states that the major characteristics of qualitative research are understanding, meaning, process, and the researcher. Maykut and Morehouse (2003) classify the characteristics of a qualitative reasearch into exploratory and descriptive focus, emergent design, a purposively sampling, data collection in natural setting and emphasis on human as instrument. In the context of this study, the focus is in-depth study purposively on the students' experiences in extensive reading. The experience explored in this study is the

individuals' experiences in terms of the process of developing the English competence through extensive reading.

The qualitative research design that suits the purpose of this study is a case study. A case study focuses on a few instances of a particular phenomenon; in this case English language competency develops through extensive reading; to provide an in-depth account of the event, relationships, experiences or processes occurring in the particular instance this is inline with (Martyn 2007; Bernard and Ryan 2010). This study is described in the form of explanatory of how the phenomenon takes place (Willis, 2008).

The participant for the purpose this article is one of the learners involving in the study who is an English Study Program learner of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Siak University, Indonesia. As this is a case study, the participants was purposively chosen in the attempt to explore her reading journal. Gay and Airsian (2000), Maykut & Morehouse (2003), and Louis Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2008) point out that qualitative research generally relies on purposive selection of participants.

The instrument to the data gathering is the learner's reading journal. In this study, the participant wrote their experiences in reading a novel for one semester. Journals was also considered because as a part of documentation as suggested by Yin (2009) for data for case study. The purpose for using these instruments is to gather insights on the participants' experiences in extensive reading and how the experiences contribute to their language competency. This is to know "how" the participants' experience in doing extensive reading outside of the classroom develop their English competency. It is in line with what the lecturer expected in which the students read novels outside of the classroom. Leung (2002) proves that diary studies have been important introspective tool in language research because they can provide the perspective of learners' learning experiences and process. The data gained was transcribed in the forms of verbatim transcription and analyzed into themes (open coding).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the data analysis based on verbatim transcription for themes (open coding) of the learner' reading journal is presented in terms of types of reading and learner's perception about reading materials. The types of reading materials read by the learner refer to the result of verbatim transcription.

Learners' Reading Journal

Learner' s Response

I choose to read this book because to find out more about the disease that my mom had and I read straight to page 449 in which the content about it.

I choose to read this book because I like detective novel, mysterious kind of story, and story about an adventure.

Also because this book reading is an assignment from my Extensive Reading lecturer.

I read the novel in the middle of my free time while waiting for another one of my class to start. Lately, it's hard for me to find sufficient time to read books. So while I have nothing to do but only sitting around waiting for my lecturer to come, I brought the novel on purpose, then I read it.

While sitting outside of the class with some of my friends chatting next to me, I choose to read this book.

The learner wrote in her reading journal that she read books or novels for reasons. The reasons are based on interest engaging her to read the book and the novel. She read for information about her mother disease.” I choose to read this book because to find out more about the disease...” (Entry1). It means that she had a purpose to read the book. She also had intention to find other related books. She read the novel she enjoyed as well as she read for assignment. She could spend any time she intended to read. Choosing book and novel she read is really based on her intention and she read seriously.

The result of learner's reading journal indicates the characteristics of extensive reading as what Day and Bamford (1998, 2004) mean. They reveal that learners read various reading materials outside of the classroom in extensive reading. How, where, and when the students read are their own choice. The materials are selected by students and the purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding. To the context of this study, the purpose makes the learner know how she found the information she needs from the text. She read wherever and whenever it is possible for her to do reading. The purpose directed her to read as what she stated on her reading journal “...and I read straight to page 449 in which the content about it “(Entry1). She was not bothered by the situation “While sitting outside of the class with some of my friends chatting next to me, I choose to read this book” (Entry 2). Junko Yamashita's (2014) also proves that extensive reading affected L2 reading attitudes in which it had a greater positive influence on feelings and emotions. The attitude on reading is important for learners because it arises the positive feeling on reading. They will keep on reading any time they think, they can make it.

To the context of the participant of this current study, the learner has proven her positive attitudes towards reading. She directed herself to find the book to find detail information about type of her mother disease. When she found the book, she read directly the chapter about the disease. In reading a novel, she could spend her time to the novel she is interested in. Her positive attitude toward reading makes her enjoy keeping on reading the novel in any context.

The learner's reading material as written in her reading journal shows the finding of the first objective of this article which is types of reading materials that an

Indonesian learner read for extensive reading were a book about health and a novel. These types are based interest and aim which control reading in the process, and she gain what she needed from the text

Themes (Opencoding) of Learners' Journal Entry

Themes (Open Coding)

relating to mom's disease
own interest
pleasure
reading for task
effort in finding information
choosing a book
go to particular page
keep on reading waiting for the class
intention to find out other sources

Thematic analysis proves that the learner chose the book in order to find information and novel to have pleasure. These are as the reflection of the characteristics of extensive reading (Bamford, 1998, 2004) as well as the benefit of extensive reading (Hedgcock and Ferris, 2009). If the students do extensive reading as the characteristics of extensive reading, they will gain the use as the benefit of extensive reading. It is in line with the research finding of Ho-Hyak Jang at all (2015). He found that extensive reading activities have a positive influence on students' reading proficiency and their intrinsic motivation.

The finding for the second focus of this study is an Indonesian learner's perceptions' about reading materials was her interest in terms of the use of the book and the novel. The book is for finding the information and the novel is pleasure as well as for assignment. The learner showed their intention to read these two types of reading. It supports Ho-Hyak Jang at all (2015) stating that extensive reading activities have a positive influence on students' reading proficiency and their intrinsic motivation. The learner in this current study felt free in reading the book and novel because she did it based on her own motivation, therefore, reading activities she did builds her reading proficiency and motivates to do reading any reading materials she is interested as well as the reading materials she has to read.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Extensive reading can improve EFL/ ESL reading comprehension, language components, and productive skills. Learner will involve and do the activity of reading if they gain the experiences around their environment. Families foster a variety of experiences that affect reading. The experiences done by the family members, especially parents are in terms of model of reading behaviours, habits, and attitudes. Parents read or gain information about their professions, about world and community events, about house maintenance; to relax or to explore new interests. Reading for

relaxation and enjoyment can be individual or a family activity. Reading is a powerful activity that confers knowledge, insight, and perspective on readers. Readers can do reading based on their and write the journal of their reading.

Different studies might have different focus about extensive reading. The previous researches found the benefits of extensive reading after implementing extensive reading to EFL/ ESL learners. This current study proves how the learners could gain the use of doing extensive reading. It was based on how she chose the reading materials she chose. She chose the texts for information and pleasure as well as for assignment. These purposes direct her to decide the reading materials to be read. Therefore, learners need to write what they read in reading journal in order to identify their purpose and how they engage with their reading based on their purpose. It is expected that this study has the implication in terms of providing the learners with reading journal for the process of their extensive reading activity. This study recommends for further study to include what learners learn in journal entry by reading the novel selected.

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