

Scrutinizing Activities in Online Extensive Reading Classrooms: Highlighting Students' Voice

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ABSTRACT

Extensive reading, an activity of reading numerous easy texts, has successfully proven in building the students' reading motivation and interest. Different from intensive reading which forces students to comprehend all of the words in the text, this activity is beneficial to develop a love of reading. In this study, several activities have been conducted in an online extensive reading classroom. Not by giving comprehensive questions like intensive reading, this kind of activity provides interesting classroom activities underlying their general understanding of the text, such as creating reading logs, joining group discussion, giving responses on the text, creating creative writing such as making a letter to one of the characters on the story, changing ending/beginning of the story, etc. Thus, this study focuses on scrutinizing classroom activities in an online extensive reading classroom by focusing on investigating the student's voice. A survey encompassing 149 students was conducted to find their perception related to the activities of extensive reading in the virtual classroom. The findings show that most of the students show positive perceptions on the activities. The use of online platforms such as blogs, WhatsApp, zoom, and google classroom also contribute to the students' enjoyment and engagement. It undoubtedly forces them to be active in the classroom and show their best performance during joining the classroom activities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is known as a powerful activity helping students not only to get new knowledge and information but also to enhance brain connectivity, promote a sense of empathy, and diminish stress. Especially for language learners, reading becomes an important language skill that is necessary to study.

Springer and Dole in Study & State (2020) emphasized that reading is valuable as the bridge to the students who want to have to integrate interactive ability. Reading can reinforce other language skills; listening, speaking, and writing, and provide many insights on developing students' vocabulary and basic comprehension. Students who love reading will have better success in their learning progress. Therefore, the encouragement to help students build their reading interest needs to be developed by the teachers.

To build the students' reading interest, teachers may use extensive reading in which they are given a chance to choose the texts they like. As a pleasurable reading activity, Extensive reading has been widely recognized by many EFL practitioners (Fatimah, 2019; Meng, 2009; Safaeia & Bulca, 2013). Different from intensive reading which focuses on reading a shorter piece of text to gain a deeper understanding, extensive reading is known as individual reading for enjoyment and confidence. Fatimah (2019) mentioned that extensive reading is the activity of reading a large amount of text and enjoyable input to get the information by using an interesting way. In this activity, the students are forced to read as much as possible and get a general understanding of the text. Students are encouraged to read fast by avoiding the use of a dictionary. They need to guess the meaning of the words from the context of the text. As a result, their vocabulary mastery is improved.

Day, Richard and Bamford (2002) emphasized 10 principles of extensive reading. They are: 1) The reading material is easy, 2) A variety of reading material on a wide range of topics is available, 3) Students choose what they want to read, 4) Students read as much as possible, 5) The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding, 6) Reading is its own reward, 7) Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower, 8) Reading is individual and silent, 9) Teachers orient and guide their students, 10) The teacher is a role model of a reader. In extensive reading, students should have easy texts to help them enjoy the process of reading. By having a pleasurable feeling in reading, they will love their activity and feel confident while reading. In addition, since extensive reading forces the students to conduct a silent reading, they need to independently get the general meaning of the texts they read. This activity undoubtedly can provide pleasurable circumstances because they read for enjoyment without the pressure of tests and comprehensive questions (Anshorah et al., 2019).

Many studies have found that extensive reading not only gives valuable experiences for the students but also increases their cognitive and affective ability. Grabe, W. (2009) mentioned that extensive reading can enlarge the students' vocabulary knowledge, enhance the overall level of language testing, and increase their writing fluency and accuracy. In addition, the students can also develop their reading strategies and general language skills. Extensive reading subconsciously increases their reading speed, confidence, and motivation to read, and promotes independent reading (McLean & Rouault, 2017). As the soundless and individual reading, they can interact actively with the text and get the general understanding without recurrent stops to find the meaning of unfamiliar words in the dictionary.

However, since extensive reading is individual and silent reading, lecturers might find some challenges to monitor the students' reading progress and help students keep on track with their reading. Teachers need to creatively give fun extension activities to motivate the students to continue their reading. Bamford & Day (2004) said that teachers can give follow-up activities after reading to help students keep track of their reading. He added that the main activity in extensive reading is reading. It means that this activity only assigns the students to read. Teachers can ask the students to report their reading by creating reading logs, reading aloud, joining group discussions to talk about what they comprehend, responding to the text by writing creatively, etc. (Bamford & Day, 2004; Sweet, 2000). Reading logs can help students to interact with the text. By creating a reading log, students can create a summary, evaluate and connect the texts with their personal feelings or experiences. Reading logs also can help them to record their view and reaction through the texts they read (Fakhrudin, 2018). Moreover, students also can discuss what they read with their friends to find the other's point of view about the text. Finally, creative writing also can become an activity after reading. They can use their

imagination and be involved in the texts they read. Therefore, this study employed those activities to facilitate the students to conduct extensive reading activities. By using the virtual meeting due to COVID 19, the students still can get reading sources from the internet and conduct classroom activities and discussions using online platforms such as WhatsApp, Zoom, and Google Classroom. This study aims at scrutinizing extensive reading activities viewed from the students' voices. A survey study is implemented on 149 freshman students in one of the universities in Indonesia to find out their perception through the activities of extensive reading conducted in online learning classrooms.

Pedagogically speaking, this study can give insight to English teachers to provide interesting online classroom activities by giving a choice to the students to read the texts they like. Teachers may avoid students' boredom when they need to comprehend the text by answering the question in intensive reading tasks. As one of the factors contributing to the students' learning success, reading motivation needs to be improved and developed, thus extensive reading becomes essential to apply. Furthermore, this study also shows several online platforms which can be applied in virtual extensive reading classrooms. Since technology becomes a vital tool in this recent era, teachers need to integrate some apps and learning platforms to facilitate the students to study and increase their competence, especially their reading ability. For future researchers, this study may give insight and inspiration to conduct other studies relevant to the topic in this study. More importantly, this study is expected to give stimulation for the students to enrich their language competence by building their reading motivation, reading habits, and confidence.

2. METHODS

Using a survey study, this study aimed at scrutinizing the students' perception of the activities of extensive reading in online classrooms. This method was used due to a large amount of data from many people taken in a relatively short time. Creswell (1998) mentioned that the survey was applied to make a generalization of students' behavior, facts, and claims as a population. This study used the total population sampling technique. Thus, the researchers used all the population as the sample. It encompassed 149 freshman students in the English Education Department in one of the universities in Tasikmalaya consisting of 46 males and 103 females with an age range between 17-20 years old. They joined extensive reading in the second semester after previously taking an intensive reading course in the first semester.

To collect the data, a questionnaire was given to the participants. A questionnaire was used since it is very beneficial to gather survey information related to the students' perception in this study. This technique can provide a fast, cheap, and efficient method to get a large amount of information from many respondents. Moreover, there were two kinds of questionnaires used in this study. They were open and closed-ended questionnaires. In an open-ended questionnaire, the researchers did not provide the response options, it is what the participants do instead. On the other hand, in closed-ended questionnaires, the researchers proposed statements and offers preset response options for the participants. These questionnaires were adapted from the previous studies conducted by Bamford & Day, 2004; Fatimah et al., 2020; and Meinawati et al., 2021). It consists of 23 statements consisting of 10 statements in open-ended questionnaire and 13 statements in closed-ended questionnaire. After having the result of the questionnaire, the researchers analyzed the data by calculating the data of close ended questions using descriptive statistics. Moreover, the researcher explained descriptively the result from an open-ended questionnaire.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To find out the students' perceptions of the activities of extensive reading, questionnaires were administered to 149 students in one of the higher educations in Tasikmalaya. It focuses on scrutinizing their perception of extensive reading activities conducted in 14 meetings online classrooms. This subject actually aims at promoting the students' reading confidence and motivation by asking them to read

numerous texts that they like and understand. This course provides numerous opportunities for the students to select their text and build their reading habits (Delfi & Yamat, 2017; Pichette, 2006; Pretorius & Lephala, 2012). As one of the valuable language skills, reading has become a compulsory subject for all EFL learners. Before they increase their reading skills, it is important to develop their reading interest. A love of reading will be beneficial and important for their language development. However, although the students can choose the text they read, the lecturer still decides the topic and creates guidelines for reading the text. Here are the topics read by the students in this study;

Table 1. Topics of reading passage

No	Topic
1	Comic
2	Fable
3	Biography
4	Description of place
5	Synopsis
6	Short story
7	Procedure text

In this study, the students' perceptions through the topics given in their extensive reading activities are analyzed, the results are as follows;

Table 2. Percentage of the students' preferences on the text

Statements	Comic	Biography	Fable	Short story	Synopsis	Description of place	Procedure text
Type of texts I like in this course	64.2	47.3	57.3	72.3	42.6	52.7	41.9

The table showed that most of the students were interested in reading all of the topics given. 72.3 % of students (108 persons) mentioned that they like to read short stories. Since extensive reading allows the students to choose the text they like, this becomes a motive to create reading enjoyment and confidence. The use of short stories can develop the students' English language skills and effortlessly attract the students' attention and motivation (Fatimah et al., 2019; Khatib & Nasrollahi, 2012). P1 uttered, "Because in the short story I can read in short time, besides there are many messages for me from it". This statement was also supported by P2 who mentioned, "Reading short story is very interesting. It can increase my attention because the story is not long and easy to understand." Short stories provide authentic and socio-cultural benefits that can develop their students' reading enthusiasm. Different from novel which provides many conflicts and plots, short stories are brief but gives positive stimulation for the students to increase their reading motivation. Short stories contribute to increase the students' willingness to read more and appreciation for literature. Short stories can help students to recall emotional responses by allowing them to relate what they read to their own experiences. In addition, 64.2% of students (96 persons) said that reading comics is appealing. Since comics provide pictures and brief text, students felt enthusiastic to read and comprehend the text. P3 1 mentioned, "Reading comics is my favorite activity. Although the task of reading comics is over, I still continue to read because I am curious and it is very appealing". The statement shows that reading motivation is improved in the process of reading comics. P4 added, "Because comics are sort of book-movies. I get the visual action, the set-up shot, the special effects, and we are able to read elegant prose, snappy dialogue, or amazing one-liners. "Comic consists of picture and a few words which are usually appealing for the students. Fatimah et al., (2019) argued that comics provide special elements which encourage the students' natural attention. This text gives everlasting visual elements that can give different content, cultural aspect, and communicative competence. It can help students to acquire a new language and authentic language learning materials. Furthermore, 57.3% of students (79 persons) like to read fables. P5 uttered, "Reading fable is easier to

understand and there is moral value in the story." Fables gives didactic animal stories which provide a pertinent life lesson. Reading fables can become interesting since it is very short but gives moral values which might inspire the students to create a better life (Abrar, 2016; Sari & Jufri, 2018). The table also showed that 52.7 % of students (85 persons) like to read descriptions of places. Many students argued that reading descriptions of places can help them to get detailed information about the place they want to visit. As P6 stated, "I like reading about describing places because when I read that, I feel like I'm traveling. I also came to understand a place that I had never known before. So, I can determine where if later I will go traveling, I hope so. Reading about the describing place also made me understand about the culture there, their special food, traditional houses, customs, etc. And it will be very useful if later I plan to visit it." Reading descriptive text especially place can help the students to get new knowledge and experience. There are several pictures of the places which also have an effect on the students' reading enjoyment. Additionally, 47.3% of the students (70 persons) mentioned that reading a biography is enjoyable. P7 said, "Reading biography can motivate me because I can get many insights from reading the life experience and story of the character. Therefore, I like to read this text." Biography can provide detailed information about the famous person which can inspire the students since they can choose to read their favorite persons and get many insights from their experiences. Finally, 42.6 % of the students (63 persons) argued that reading synopsis is meaningful. They will have an overview of their favorite movies and guess what plot will be provided in the story. P8 mentioned, "I like movies or Korean dramas. and before watching, I read the synopsis first".

Blogging in Extensive Reading: Digital Reading Logs

In this contemporary and pandemic era, the use of online learning has been widely developed since the growth of technology increased from time to time. Especially in extensive reading courses, students may get numerous reading sources from the internet and find many apps for having reading passages such as Webtoon, Aldiko, Wattpad, and so forth. In this study, students' extensive reading activities were carried out outside the classroom where they can be free to find their reading enjoyment and build their reading confidence. Therefore, since the lecturer needs to check the students' reading progress, the students are asked to report their reading activities by creating a reading log, reading aloud, joining group discussion to talk about what they comprehend, responding to the text by writing creatively, etc. (Bamford & Day, 2004; Sweet, 2000). In this study, students were asked to create a reading log every week. They need to write the title of the text they read, the main idea of the text, time for reading, and new vocabularies they found on the text. Fakhruddin (2018) said that Reading logs can help students to interact with the text. By creating reading logs, students can create a summary, evaluate and connect the texts with their personal feelings or experiences. Reading logs also can help them to record their view and reaction through the texts they read. Here are some examples of the reading logs created by the students:

Picture 1. Example of Digital Reading log

No	Day	Name of place	Why I am interesting to read	Questions before I read
1.	Friday	Borobudur Temple & Prambanan Temple	Because I have come to Borobudur Temple and also I want to know Prambanan temple.	What history is there in the two temples?
2.	Saturday	Bali Island & Lombok	Because the view of the ocean and the sea is very beautiful, and also very famous abroad as well.	What about the real beauty of the beach?
3.	Sunday	Bromo Mount & Toba Lake	Because of its familiar beauty in Indonesia, it is absolutely breathtaking.	How are the natural and historical references to it?
4.	Monday	Makkah & Madinah	Because all muslims would be anxious to get there, including me.	How to get there?
5.	Tuesday	Daris & Sarul	Barucosa H'e	Lines outstare about

Picture 2. Example of Digital Reading log



In this study, a blog was used as the learning platform facilitating the students to report the text they read. The students argued that reporting what they read through blogs was effective to help them monitor their reading progress. Since extensive reading forces them to read numerous texts, blogs can provide systematic review helping them to reflect what they learn on this activity.

Table 3. Percentage of the students' perception of the use of blogs

No	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SD
1	Reading log on blog can help me to monitor my reading progress	18.2	62.8	16.2	2	0.7
2	Reading log on blog can help me to reflect the process of my own learning	30.2	52.8	16.2	0.8	0

Note :

SA= Strongly agree

A = Agree

N = Neutral

DA= Disagree

SD= Strongly disagree

The previous table showed that 18.2 % of the students (27 persons) chose strongly agree (SA), 62.8 % of the students (95 persons) chose agree (A), 16.2 % of the students (24 persons) chose neutral, 2 % of the students (3 persons) chose disagree (D), 0.7 % of the students (persons) chose strongly disagree on the first statement. It means that most students agreed that reading log on blogs facilitated them to monitor their reading enhancement. Since blog is electronic journal which published and displayed in chronological order, students effortlessly can see and monitor how many texts they read and what content they got from these activities. Fatimah (2019) in her previous study stated that blogs were really valuable to provide an appealing platform for the students and helped them to monitor and reflect the process of their learning.

Furthermore, the data showed that that 30.2 % of the students (45 persons) chose strongly agree (SA), 52.8 % of the students (79 persons) chose agree (A), 16.2 % of the students (24 persons) chose neutral, 0.8 % of the students (12 persons) chose disagree (D), 0 % of the students) chose strongly disagree on the second statement. It means that blogs help the students to reflect what they have learnt through this activity. Blogs play an important role helping the students to see and check what text they read, what new vocabulary they obtained, and the time they spent on their reading. Blogs consist of online hypertext journals which allows students to post their written work and obtain feedback from the readers (de Andrés Martínez, 2012; Johnson, 2004; Yu, 2014). Fatimah et al., (2020) in her previous study emphasized that the use of blogs in an extensive reading classroom allowed students to develop

their learning autonomy and creativity. The students enjoyed their learning and their reflective skills were also improved.

Extensive Reading in Digital Platforms: Video Presentation, WhatsApp Group Discussion and Poster Presentation

In this online learning classroom, there were several platforms used. Especially for sharing the text, students were allowed to discuss via Zoom, WhatsApp group and google classroom. There were three activities conducted after the activities of individual reading, they were discussion on WhatsApp group, poster presentation and creating video presentation. The use of technology in this course contributed on the students' engagement and effortlessly create interactive classroom situation and benefits for students' learning progress (Fatimah & Santiana, 2017; Santiana & Fatimah, 2017).

Table 4. Percentage of the students' perception of the activities to share and discuss the text

No	Statements	Yes	No	Maybe
1	I like to explain the text I read on the video presentation	35.8	20.9	43.2
2	I like to discuss the text I read on classroom discussion via WhatsApp Group	67.6	6.1	26.4
3	I like to explain the text I read on the poster	60.8	8.1	31.1

Data showed that 67.6 % of the students (101 persons) argued that discussing the text via WhatsApp group was appealing. WhatsApp Messenger application has been commonly used by many teachers as an educational platform that provides simple and valuable features which allow students to send text messages, photos, videos, documents, and voice notes to social networks or groups and their contacts. This app was useful for creating collaborative works in which the students can share their voice, and discuss the material (Afsyah, 2019; Fatimah et al., 2019). WhatsApp can be downloaded effortlessly and all of the students undoubtedly have this app on their smartphones (Afsyah, 2019; Ahmed, 2019; Asmara, 2020; Kumar & Sharma, 2017). In this study, the lecturer frequently guided the students to select their text and forces the students to get the benefits from their reading experience. By using this app, the students were asked to share the text they read and discuss the idea and new vocabulary which they got from the activities of reading. From the questionnaire given, it was found that only 6.1 % of the students (9 persons) disliked using this platform as a media for classroom discussion, and 26,4 % of the students (39 persons) felt doubt about the statement. Napratilora et al., (2020) mention that WhatsApp has become an excellent platform for teaching reading. This app can enhance students' reading interest by providing pleasurable learning experiences and meaningful classroom discussions.

In addition, 60.8 % of students (91 persons) said that they like to explain the text they read through poster presentations. In this study, poster presentations was conducted using google classroom platform in which the students created a poster after they read the text and explained the text through their poster. Marlina et al., (2020) mentioned that poster presentation can be used to facilitate learning and becomes essential to develop the students' communication skills and students' positive attitudes in learning. By using posters, the students can easily recognize the general meaning of the text and visually obtain the idea of the text. Posters can provide visual graphic and verbal information which show the students' understanding of the text. In addition, posters can motivate students because it becomes a communication medium providing brief information and appealing appearance which can create a meaningful interaction between the students and the audience (Prichard & Ferreira, 2014; Tanner & Chapman, 2012).

Finally, 35.8 % of students (53 persons) argued that presenting their text through video presentation was interesting. Video presentation has become a common activity in higher education

especially in online learning context. Video is audiovisual media that can support the students' critical thinking and self-directed learning. Using video presentations can help them to develop their communication strategy because they can see, analyze and reflect their performance on the video (Ag Ahmad & Peter Lidadun, 2017; Saputra & Fatimah, 2018; Willmot et al., n.d.) The table shows that 43.2% (79 persons) felt doubt about the use of video presentations. In online extensive reading classrooms. Since they need to create an effort to record their presentation and upload it on YouTube, they prefer to use posters as the media for presentation and discuss the text via WhatsApp messenger application.

Creative Writing in Extensive Reading Classrooms

In this course, the lecturer provides some follow-up classroom activities to help the students keep on track with their reading. Students are guided to respond and discuss the text to find the other's point of view about the text. Moreover, creative writing is also conducted to make them involved in the text. Here is their perception of the activities:

Table 5. Percentage of the students' perception of the activities on responding the text

No	Statements	Yes	No	Maybe
1	I like to create a sequel from the story	55.4	10.8	33.8
2	I like to change the beginning/ending of the story	44.6	10.8	44.6
3	I like to create an imaginary day with the person on the text	68.7	8.8	22.4
4	I like to create a letter to the person on the text	56.8	16.9	26.4
5	I like to continue the story from the text	62.8	4.7	32.4
6	I like to change one the characters on the story	51	18.1	30.9
7	I like to create and perform the dialogue based on the text	56.1	10.8	33.1

The table showed that most of the students argue that the activities are motivating. Most of the students mentioned that they like to do creative writing such as creating letters, dialogue, writing imaginary days, and changing the ending, beginning, or one of the characters in the story. From the previous statements, statement 5 had the highest score. It means that 62.8% of the students (94 persons) mentioned that continuing the text is interesting. Then 32.4% of the students (48 persons) felt doubt and 4.75 of the students (7 persons) said that this activity was not interesting. On the other hand, statement 6 which contained of changing one of the characters on the story had the lowest score in this study. Data showed that only 51% of the students (76 persons) liked to do this activity. On the other hand, 30.9% of the students (46 persons) felt doubt and 10.8% of the students (27 persons) said that they disliked this activity.

The data showed that most of the students enjoy their activities. By reading a large number of texts, students can get comprehensible input which makes it easy to have the ideas of their writing (Campbell, 2003; Krashen, 1982). Extensive reading can engage the students to have the entertainment of reading which can force their imagination and creativity in their creative writing (Tian, 2014). Since creative writing is writing with feeling, this activity becomes valuable to connect their reading experience with the knowledge they got from reading and what they produce in their writing. As the result, their language development is developed.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings in this study showed that most of the students show their positive perception through the classroom activities provided in the online learning context. Since extensive reading

focuses on increasing the students' reading motivation and confidence, the students feel free to choose the text they like and join online the activities enjoyably. Furthermore, classroom discussion in this course is effortlessly conducted with the help of technology, such as WhatsApp, zoom, and google classroom. Pedagogically speaking, it is recommended to the educators to apply these classroom activities especially when they need to conduct an online extensive reading classroom. They may provide video presentation, poster presentation, and creative writing practice as the tasks to help the students keep on track with their reading. These activities successfully contribute to develop students' language competence and give a meaningful and pleasurable atmosphere for the students

In this study, there are some limitations need to improve in future researches. Since questionnaire becomes the only technique used for collecting the data, future studies may add various data collection techniques as a manifestation of triangulation such as interview, or observation and use other method studies related to the topic. They may try to conduct reflective practice by focusing on the teachers' reflection in this classroom or do narrative research to explore the students' experience on joining online extensive reading classrooms.

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