



SNAP TO READ

EFL STUDENTS' RESPONSES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EXTENSIVE READING PROGRAM TO BUILD LOVE OF READING IN ENGLISH

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Abstract:

People agree that reading is essential skill to get any knowledge in order to get the success of life either academically or socially. Reading needs to be embedded and nurtured because it is not a born skill. Still, the fact shows that EFL students in Indonesian context have not established good habits in reading English, as also experienced by EFL students in IAIN Tulungagung who are also categorized as reluctant readers due to their lack of vocabulary knowledge and number. Many studies on Extensive Reading (ER) indicate its positive impact on nurturing good habits of EFL reading in English. Accordingly implementing Extensive Reading Program to help them build love of reading is necessary. This article is then intended to dig up their responses on the implementation of ER program to the establishment of their love of reading. This research objective was achieved by distributing Reading Log during implementing Guided Extensive Reading Program (GERPro), distributing Questionnaire, and conducting interview to those involved in this ER program. The result of this research reveals that the EFL students joining this ER program claim that for those who do not establish good habits in reading English, ER proved to be able to embed their awareness of love of reading in English, and for those who already built reading love in their mother tongue-Indonesian language, their reading love in both Indonesian language and English gets increased. In addition,

this GERPro contributes to the establishment of EFL students' love of online reading. In short, this research result can be pedagogically implemented by EFL teachers who would like to help their students nurturing good reading habits in English. However, for those who are moody, this GERPro does not work well. Consequently, the next researcher needs to conduct a research on how to work with moody EFL students so that their reading habits can be well established.

Keywords: *Guided Extensive Reading Program, Love of Reading*

People agree that reading is the key to get success. It is the most critical [skill] for future success in school as well as throughout life." It is the first verbatim word of God revealed to human beings as explicitly stated in QS Al-'Alaq 1-5. However, the Indonesians' reading habit is low (Kompasiana.com, 2015, Media Indonesia, 30 August 2016; Redaksi Nusantaranews.com, 2016, Hasan, 2017). Specifically, the EFL students' reading habits in English is low (Iftanti, 2012). Considering that Reading is not born-skill, it needs to be nurtured. Some studies prove that Extensive Reading Program successfully help EFL students' not only establish good habits of reading in English, but improve their English competence as well. It was globally started in Fiji China, when implementing intensive reading program to help the EFL students to build good reading habits, but it did not work well. Therefore, another research done by Elly and Mangubhai which is well known as Book Flood was done to solve such a problem. The result reveals the significant improvement on the EFL students' love of reading. The other research conducted in Korea also proves that ER can bring considerable gains in overall development of reading comprehension, reading rate, reading strategies, reading fluency, reading habits, vocabulary, writing, listening, grammar, speaking, and test-taking skills in both L2 and EFL settings (Eur, 2013). Moreover, ER proves to be able to improve language proficiency and reading ability of EFL students in Taiwan (Sheu, 2003); promote students' reading habits (Palani, 2012), and to be effective to enhance EFL students'

reading comprehension and word recognition (Khansir & Bafandeh, 2014). In short, many studies prove the advantages of Extensive Reading Program to improve EFL students' reading habit and language proficiency as well. However, it is also widely known that the portrait of Indonesian reading habits at present is similar to that in China in 1980s. Therefore, the successful story of ER Program toward establishing love of reading needs to be implemented in Indonesia, starting from EFL students of IAIN Tulungagung experiencing the same case of bad reading habits in English. Accordingly, this research focuses on what are the EFL students' responses on the implementation of ER to the establishment of their love of reading in English. This research focus is broken down into three research questions, namely 1). What is the pattern of the implemented ER Program?; 2). How is it implemented?; and 3) what are the EFL students' responses on the implementation of ER to nurture their love of reading in English.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was conducted under this theoretical framework. First of all, Extensive Reading as stated by Day and Bamford (1998) is an approach to language teaching in which learners read a lot of easy materials in the new language. The idea of Extensive reading is further elaborated that the EFL students choose their own reading materials and read them independently of the teacher. They read for general meaning, overall meaning, for information and enjoyment and are encouraged to expand their comfort zone of reading. In addition, Extensive Reading belongs to the language classroom. Accordingly, Extensive Reading taken as an approach of language learning is appropriately implemented for nurturing the EFL students to have the joy of reading in English. Moreover, Healy (2002) states that reading is not a born skill which means that children are not natural born readers. Instead, reading is a complex process which requires a careful and systematic instructional approach. It is dependent upon a number of factors including a child's world knowledge, vocabulary and memory skills. Therefore the facts

say that EFL students are reluctant readers because of having limited number of vocabulary, because vocabulary and reading is believed to be reciprocal (Chou, 2011). People also agree that of all the skills children must acquire in their lives, reading is the most critical one for future success in school as well as throughout life. Since long time ago UNESCO through Professor Bamberger (1975).has given much attention on how to promote the reading habit and an examination of variations in reading habits from nation to nation demonstrates that the place occupied by books in the scale of values of those responsible for their promotion is of first importance: all State, community and school authorities, every teacher, parent and pedagogue must be seriously convinced of the importance of reading and books for individual, social, and cultural life if they are to work towards improvement.

Many studies have proved that Extensive Reading is essentially help the EFL learner to improve their reading comprehension, reading rate, reading strategies, reading fluency, reading habits, vocabulary, writing, listening, grammar, speaking, and test-taking skills in both L2 and EFL settings ((Eur,2013; Sheu,2003; Khansir & Bafandeh,2014) and help nurturing reading habits (Palani,2012). As stated in Extensive Reading Foundation's Guide to Extensive Reading, the purpose of Extensive Reading is to help the student become better at the skill of reading rather than reading to study the language itself. When students are reading extensively, they READ which means that they Read quickly Enjoyably with Adequate comprehension so that they Do not need a dictionary. Therefore Extensive Reading can also be known as Individualized Reading, Self-Selected Reading, Sustained Silent Reading_SS, Drop Everything and Read_DEAR and they are considered as types of Extensive Reading Program. Therefore, considering that the EFL students in Indonesian context are mostly reluctant readers which mainly resulted from limited number of vocabulary and low reading motivation, this Extensive Reading can be as a meaningful way of helping them nurture good habits of reading English and increase their vocabulary number in a simultaneous way.

METHOD

To know the EFL students' responses, the design of this research is Descriptive Quantitative through a Questionnaire Survey. As quoted by Cohen et. al (2002: 167) from Best (1970) that "*...descriptive research is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist; practices that prevail; beliefs, points of views, or attitude that held; process that are going on, effects that are being felt; trends that are developing*". The instrument of questionnaire developed through several stages, namely reviewing literature, drafting, validating, revising, and writing final draft was distributed to 130 EFL students of Islamic state Institute of Tulungagung joining Extensive Reading Program for 1 semester. The quantitative data collected from Questionnaire were validated by conducting an interview to get the detail information on the EFL students' responses on the implemented ER Program. The quantitative data gained from questionnaire were then analyzed descriptively showing the number of quality reflected in each element of the instrument, i.e. The Amount of Reading Practice after Extensive Reading Program, The Duration of Reading Practice after Extensive Reading Program, Types of Text to Read after Extensive Reading Program, Difficulties During Reading Practice, Impression During Reading Practice, and EFL response on the ER Program. Another instrument to collect the data on how the ER program was conducted is *Reading Log*. This instrument was used to collect data concerning with types of book to read, reading process, reading duration, impression on their reading result, and difficulties of reading practice. All the instruments used were validated through trying them out to EFL students sharing common characteristics with the subjects of this research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data analysis indicate some important findings related to the research questions.

#Q1. The pattern of implemented ER Program

The pattern of ER Program implemented in his present study is **Guided Extensive Reading**. With this pattern, the EFL students were guided through some steps namely 1).Lecturing on how to select an interesting readers and how to read strategically; 2) Whole Reading Class (WRC); and 3) Self-Selected Reading (SSR) equipped with writing Reading Log and developing students' pocket dictionary. The 1st step reveals the raising of EFL students' awareness on how, where, and what to read. This means that they can do offline and online reading. In doing reading practices, the EFL students are not restricted on only reading hard files of any types of readers either fiction or nonfiction. This voice can be explicitly found the following quoted interview.

I know that I don't need to go to the library to find the readers I want, because I can browse from my mobile phone. "(Putri)

"...I see Mam, so I can read through mobile phone.." (Fatmala)

The 2nd step- Whole Reading Class reveals that they could not read strategically and joyfully yet. This finding can be clearly found form the process of reading classically that many of the EFL students were not able to comprehend their selected texts.

#Q2 The Way of Implementing ER Program

The Guided Extensive Reading Program was implemented in two main steps, namely Whole Reading Class (WRC) and Self Selected Reading (SSR). Each is implemented for different purpose and in different procedures. The WRC which is intended to give a model on how to read strategically and joyfully was conducted using the procedures below:

- Using U seat arrangement
- Providing students' with several simplified fiction books of about 50 pages and other non fiction.
- Asking students to select which would be read together. It was found that 73% of then EFL students select fiction

Modeling how to read joyfully and strategically was in short done

through the following procedures:

- a). How to find explicit and implicit meaning
- b). How to make inference
- c). How to build powerful vocabulary
- d) How to preview and predict
- e). How to find moral values

In the step of doing this WRC, first of all, the seat was arranged in the form of a half circle or U format in order that each student can be proportionally given attention and equal chance of practicing reading. Subsequently, The provided various types of fiction and non fiction works such as articles, scientific books, biography, history, novels, short stories, and poems available in the form of soft files were carefully selected by the students altogether. Most of them selected simplified novel which is categorized as fiction. The selected novel, “Woman in Black” by Susan Hill and retold by Margaret Tarner, consists of only 35 pages. This was selected with the consideration that this seems like an interesting story which attracts the EFL students’ curiosity, the vocabulary used in the novel is in line with the students’ level of English vocabulary knowledge, and the language used is also appropriate with their own level of English proficiency. After selecting the novel, the next procedures are giving them chance to read loudly and immediately understand what they have just read and giving them chance to discuss their reading with their peers. Meanwhile the researcher was listening and giving some comments on they way they read, pause, and put correct intonation, so that they are hopefully able to comprehend the texts at time of the reading process. The researcher gave a model as well on how to read strategically. Subsequently, under the guidance of the researcher, they were given opportunity to find the impressing thing from the novel they have read. This is hopefully able to lead the students to have fun to read. During the process, the finding indicates that the EFL students’ could not read strategically yet. This is due to the facts that their vocabulary number are in level of limited number, since there are many unfamiliar words for them.

Moreover, their reading practice on texts in English is also considered very limited, because the EFL students commonly read when they are assigned to read. As a result, they were asked to read another text of their own selection in the same way given in the modeling step. The findings of this WRC step indicate three main points, i.e. 1). limited number of vocabulary, 2). limited access of readers, and 3). Low reading habits in English.

In order to train the EFL students to nurture good reading habits, they were given chance to select their own selected interesting readings taken from either library, book stores (hereafter considered as offline reading) or from the Internet. Then they independently read their selected texts both inside and outside the classroom. Such a way of reading practice is known as *Students Self Reading (SSR)* with which the EFL students select, read any readers and find the impression and or moral values independently. This means that SSR was conducted in two steps Inside Classroom SSR and Outside Classroom SSR. Inside Classroom SSR emphasizes on assessing the EFL students' self reading assessment and Outside Classroom SSR emphasizes on regular joyful reading.

The process of Inside Classroom SSR with the duration 120 minutes was implemented through strategy of *Retelling-Listening-and Summarizing-RLS* and *Summarizing, Developing T/F test, Reading, Doing Peers' T/F test – SDRD*. This means that firstly, students who were grouped in four retell their own selected texts in return one another. When one member of the group retells the read texts, other members listen and summarize (make a resume). It was until all members of the group pass through the whole steps of RLS. This strategy was implemented after having about 60 minutes reading for the first six meetings of SSR. Subsequently, the Summarizing, Developing T/F test, Reading, Doing Peers' T/F test / SDRD was done by each member of the group in return one another through three steps, namely: 1). Summarizing the read students self selected readers; 2). Developing T/F test; and 3). Reading their peers' summaries and doing T/F test.

Meanwhile *Outside Classroom SSR* was conducted as the EFL students'

independent regular Joyful reading. Such an SSR done in outside the classroom of their own time and place, they passed through 3 activities, i.e. 1). they read their own selected readers in English; 2). they fill their reading log; and 3). Develop self dictionary. The real Extensive Reading Program was really conducted, because they have to find any readers that they think of their own level of interest and that of difficulties in terms of the language used and vocabulary familiarity. They can read offline or online anytime anywhere at their own convenient. In order to check their regular independent reading, they are supposed to fill in *a reading log* from which each EFL student's Extensive Reading Practices can be clearly seen. Moreover, to help them increase the number of vocabulary, they were supposed to write down their own new words found during their reading practice, arrange those words alphabetically in a small notebook easily brought everywhere, so that they can put in their pocket. It is then named "pocket self-dictionary". Although this is not the main step of doing Extensive Reading Program, at least this can help the EFL students to solve the problem of the limited number of vocabulary found in the previous stage of this ER Program. This Outside Classroom Extensive Reading Program is not compulsory for each student to do. If they do not want to do such independent and joyful reading, they can do so.

#Q3 the EFL students' response on the implemented ER Program.

Concerning with the third research question, the findings of this study indicate that, *firstly*, Guided ER Program helps the EFL students to establish their awareness of the importance of reading. This finding is significant as the first gate of willing to read of their own consciousness. No matter the number of pages, the types of readers to read either fiction or non fiction, no matter where to read and when to read, the awareness of reading is necessarily important to start having love of reading. This finding is explicitly reflected in the following quoted interview.

I like reading now and I know that reading is interesting. (Syahroni)

My reading habit reduces my hobby in watching drama (Amalia

Rahman

After joining ER Program, I feel that reading book is interesting especially I choose my own book. ...I like reading books consisting of more than 50 pages..I started to read everyday and I love biography and fantasy, mythology, and fiction book (Fitriani)

The result of the questionnaire survey shows that most of the respondents were happy to read their own selected book with the increasing number of reading duration after joining this ER program. This finding shows their positive attitude toward reading attitude as in line with some previous studies proving that ER brings about positive change in reading behavior (Tien,2015; Rodrigo et.al, 2014), affects their reading attitude (Yamashita, 2013) and it is a good way to learn English on the survey (Sabet & Rostamian,2016). The EFL students' awareness of reading has positively affected their daily life, such reducing their hobby of watching television which is sometimes considered as an annoying hobby because it takes times useless. In the contrary, this ER Program has led them to get an interest of reading their own selected readers in English.

Secondly, this ER Program establishes good reading habits in English as reflected in the students' claims that "Yes, actually before joining this ER program I don't like reading, I never read novel or short story in English (istikromah)." and "...Yes, and I want to maintain my new habit of reading (Ummah). Their joy of reading English readers is due to some facts that reading is useful for giving them some lesson and knowledge in addition to gain new vocabulary. Increasing number of vocabulary has affected their language learning. This is supported from the quoted interview below.

I love reading after joining this Extensive Reading class. This Program makes me enjoy reading everyday than before. I am curious with new vocabulary and main points of stories and articles that I read. It gives me some lesson and knowledge. It also deliberately makes me always search an English text and read it. (Qurrotul Husna)

This is parallel to a study conducted by Chang and Renandya (2017) showing that the majority of the respondents had some experience in

implementing ER and had strong beliefs regarding the effects of ER on language development; Furthermore, they claim that in fact reading is beneficial to get some moral values and any new information within the book, as reflected in this quoted interview. “I love reading after joining this program, because from reading I get new information and many moral values, Although previously I do not like reading but now ... (Amalia). this ER Program has changed the students’ reading habit from zero reading to “hero” reading. After enjoying reading their own type of texts in English to read, some claim that they start to be fond of reading

Yes, actually before joining this ER program I don’t like reading, I never read novel or short story in English (istikromah)

I like so much when I have this program, because it makes me diligent to read. (Nuresar Neesa)

I like to read Indonesian books and reading in English is still difficult but after following ER program I started to read English and painstaking to read it (elistaria)

Thirdly, the finding indicates that ER Program strengthens good habits in reading both Indonesian and English readers. Some of the students have already established love of reading in their own mother tongue, Bahasa Indonesia. Yet, this ER program has made them get love and love of reading both Indonesian and English texts. Their book collection and vocabulary number has increased because of having regular reading English text. This finding supports some previous studies revealing that ER increased L2 vocabulary acquisition (Suk, 2016) and benefited to develop their own vocabulary (Lee, H. N., & Mallinder, M. (2017). So, they do not only enjoy reading but getting new vocabulary as well. This can be seen in following quoted interviews.

I love reading so much and after joining ER class my reading practices get stronger. This program works well for me. My book collection and my vocabulary increase. I also get so many inspiring stories. (Elic Damayanti)

Actually before this program, I already love reading . My hobby is collecting novels and reading it. I just read novels in Indonesian

language. Then, when I get this ER program, I feel interested to collect and read novels and other readers in English language too. So, I love reading very much. (Isroin Tri)

Such an ER Program has helped the EFL students to strengthen their established love of reading not only reading in their L1 but also in their FL. This ER has also triggers the EFL students to be more challenged to read English book not translated books anymore. This indicated the improvement on their reading comprehension in English. As explicitly stated that “...Previously, I just read Indonesian books and find the translating of English novel etc. I feel more optimistic and challenging to English books (Harist Fajrin)”. This finding support a study done by Al-Nafisah, (2015) revealing the positive effect of extensive reading on EFL learners’ reading comprehension.

Fourthly, the response of the EFL students toward implementing this ER Program has shown a shifting from offline reading which is through going to library or bookstore to find printed books to online reading through making used of their mobile phones connected to Internet to find any reading texts in both Indonesian and in English. ER Program then contributes to the establishment of “online reading” which is helpful to create love of reading as being revealed in a study done by Iftanti (2015) that Internet contributes to the establishment of good habits in reading English. These is due to the fact that online reading can be done in an unlimited time and place with more various types of texts to read compared with having offline reading. The finding of the present study is also in line with Chang and Renandya (2017) who prove that teachers perceived wide reading (reading a variety of texts) is more effective than narrow reading (i.e., reading genre-specific texts). So, Internet development is helpful to implement real extensive reading program which is beneficial to nurture good habits of *digital reading*. These facts are clearly reflected in the quoted interview below.

I love reading after joining this ER Program. It makes me get used to open the smartphone and read some stories in webtoon. (rahmawati)
Now, I like reading many English articles in Internet, not only

Indonesian articles. And sometimes spontaneously I open my handphone and then I open the Google searching about English articles. And I enjoy it a lot. (Sandityana)

Fifthly, this ER Program does not work well few of the EFL students joining this Program (3.8 %) mainly those who are moody and frustrated readers. The low motivation and obstacles faced during doing reading has inhibited them to nurture good reading habits in English. This can be explicitly seen from the following quoted interviews:

I do not love reading although I joined this ER program. I found many difficult words and to understand the meaning I often open my dictionary (Aqmarina)

I do not love reading very much because I read only once in three days (Cahyaningsih)

I have bad habit, that is LAZY (Bashori)

Moreover, the EFL students' belief and passion have influenced their preference of reading practices. "I don't like reading English but I like reading Holy Qur'an. (Izzudin). This quoted interview clearly indicates this fact which also support a study done by Chang and Renandya (2017) revealing that student-related difficulties includes lack of interest in reading, not used to doing independent reading, and reluctance to do voluntary reading.

CONCLUSION

This present study reveals two main points. Firstly, most of the EFL students claim that Guided ER Program done both inside and outside the classroom setting can establish their awareness of the importance of reading and nurture good habits of reading in English, in addition to strengthen good habits in reading both Indonesian and English readers and contribute to the establishment of "online reading". However, it does not significantly work for reluctant (moody and lazy) EFL students. In accordance to this research finding, it is suggested to conduct further study to find a way of motivating the EFL students to abolish their laziness and mood because these are two

great constraints of changing bad habit to good habit of reading in English specifically.

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