

THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING EXTENSIVE READING MATERIAL BASED ON CEFR FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

Extensive Reading is an activity to read a text-based on someone's interest, and it is an effective method to improve reading skills. Nowadays, the university promotes Extensive Reading to boost students' interest in reading along with improving reading skills. The purpose of this research is to investigate the students' perception of using material Extensive Reading based on the CEFR Framework. This research using the qualitative method and collecting the data through SHOWeD. The participants in this research were 14 EFL college students of University in Indonesia who are following the Extensive Reading class for 16 meetings in 4 months. The result finds out that the students have positive perceptions toward Extensive Reading based on CEFR as material in reading.

Keywords: CEFR Framework, Extensive Reading, Perception

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Introduction

English is an essential means of communication that is used worldwide. In some countries, English is defined as a foreign language. This is why the governments choose English to be taught in all levels of education, such as elementary schools, junior high schools, senior high schools, and universities. Nevertheless, most of the students are have no interest in English, especially reading English text, and their ability to comprehend the texts is still low. As a proof, McCollister (2019) reported that according to the Language Teaching and Training Center at National Taiwan University, the students' score of GEPT is far from ideal and their score of TOEIC is somewhat worse compared to South Korea and China which are ranked in the top 10 in reading interest. This is happening because the students are rarely told to read outside the classroom. Cahyono & Widiawati (as cited in Nurhadi & Larasaty, 2018) argued that since students learn English in elementary school to college, they

tend to be taught intensive reading rather than Extensive Reading. Besides, in reading classes, the teachers only provide text that suitable to the syllabus and rarely allow the students to read text that they like.

Therefore, nowadays, University promotes Extensive Reading to boost students' interest in reading and to improve students' reading skills. As the standard of Extensive Reading, the University can use CEFR *descriptors*. CEFR is a useful tool to teach Extensive Reading because "It was designed to provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency" (Council of Europe (COE), 2001). Also, Bahmani & Farvadin (2017) informed that the students who are taught reading with CEFR standard have several advantages such as having better quality in reading comprehension along with the low level

of reading anxiety, increasing enthusiasm in reading extensively, and enhancing the students' knowledge about English vocabularies they use in daily life.

A recent study reported that based on students' perception, Extensive Reading is a practical activity to boost their interest in reading along with improving reading skills (Gabriella & Diptoadi, 2019). More research also described that the majority of the students certainly enjoyed Extensive Reading, and they would choose authentic books as Extensive Reading material (Lien, 2017). Day and Bamford (1998) stated that with the Extensive Reading, students become willing, have interest and motivation in reading English text. Furthermore, Extensive Reading can improve students' reading skills together with L2 vocabulary acquisition (Suk, 2016).

Moreover, Extensive Reading improves students' proficiency (Nakanishi, 2015). Besides improving students' proficiency, McLean et al. (2017) also said that Extensive Reading is an effective and efficient method to improve students' reading rates. So, it is proved that the Extensive Reading approach is more focused, as good as, or better than the Intensive Reading approach. Meanwhile, looking at the standard of the Extensive Reading approach in previous research above, there have been no studies that used CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) as the international standard for material in Extensive Reading.

Considering the positive impact of Extensive Reading based on CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) to increase students' interest in reading English in universities, this research investigates at the students' perception on using the material of Extensive Reading based on

CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Language). A research question was investigated for this research: What is students' perception toward Extensive Reading based on CEFR as material in reading?

2. Perception

Perception is someone's point of view about something that we can get when interacting with the surrounding environment. It starts by managing the information from his/her sensors (Gibson, 1950). The same as the reading process, perception is divided into two types: bottom-up and top-down. In brief, the bottom-up perception process refers to what someone sees at that time would be immediately interpreted, and the top-down perception process refers to what someone sees at that time will be integrated with what he saw before. After that, it will interpret. When someone expresses perception through a questionnaire or interview, he tends to use the top-down process because he relates his opinions to his prior knowledge. In this research, the participants gave their perception about Extensive Reading-based On CEFR.

The related study, Day and Bamford (1998), defined Extensive Reading as "the independent reading of a large quantity of material for information or pleasure." Besides, Extensive Reading is an activity which can affect vocabulary improvement because while reading a text the students can find many repetitive words, try to infer the meaning of words in context, have a large number of words which can influence incidental vocabulary learning (Ng, Renandya & Chong, 2019). The efficiency of Extensive Reading on reading fluency improvement has been studied in some researches. The research in Saudi learners (Al-Homoud and Schmitt, 2009) stated that "learners who self-

selected and read graded readers for pleasure... improved at least as much on every measure as students who received intense instruction in reading" (p. 399) and found that Extensive Reading is a feasible teaching approach and can reduce stress. A meta-analysis of 34 empirical studies on the efficiency of Extensive Reading said that in improving the numerous language skill, the experimental groups (Extensive Reading) were more efficient than the control groups.

Nevertheless, as Nakanishi (2015) highlighted, there are two critical boundaries in the Extensive Reading study. First, in some research, Extensive Reading group participants did Extensive Reading while control group participants took part in no activities. Second, in several researchers, the control group participants took part in Extensive Reading in less time than the Extensive Reading group participants.

Deal with considerable empirical evidence concerning the positive effects of Extensive Reading, Grabe (2009b) proposed five reasons why EFL learning and curriculum design rarely use Extensive Reading. Each of these occurred particularly to EFL teaching in Japan. First, grammar-translation, language skills, vocabulary building, and learning skills are the common aims of the reading subject or curriculum, not fluent reading. Second, several reading teachers in EFL contexts assured that the process being a fluent reader is to improve appropriate comprehension skills, although it is a slow process, and need or initiative hand over to more improvement. Third, teachers with no language and reading ability themselves are not prepared to think twice how to teach reading. Fourth, stakeholders and teachers are unpleasant out of the explicit, direct, transmission style of teaching and learning. Fifth, Extensive Reading

requires large amounts of reading material and a significant amount of time. Based on these arguments, and to resolve the institutionalized barriers which exist, the firm researches of Extensive Reading demands to give stronger evidence of the efficiency of Extensive Reading in the instructional situation. These kinds of researches could confirm the application and enlargement of Extensive Reading in EFL language learning curricula. As explained before, nowadays, some of the universities used CEFR as the standard of Extensive Reading.

CEFR (The Common European Framework of Reference for Language) is an international standard to portray language skills. CEFR consist of six levels: primary users (Levels A1 & A2), Independent users (Levels B1 & B2), and Proficient users (Levels C1 & C2). CEFR levels define "in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they should develop to be able to act effectively" (Council of Europe (COE), 2001). In this term of Extensive Reading, CEFR defined Extensive Reading as a leisure activity, and the material based on students' interest includes both fiction and non-fiction involving imaginative text, different forms of literature, magazines, and newspaper articles, blogs, biographies, etcetera. Furthermore, there are six key concepts of Extensive Reading based on CEFR. The key concepts are length, types of texts, topic, and types of language, ease of reading, and depth of understanding.

Methodology

The participants of this research were 14 EFL college students of University in Indonesia, consists of 3 male college students and 11 female college students with an average age of

20 years old. In collecting the data, just 12 out of 14 who are participated in this research, and 2 of them not respond to the SHOWeD analysis. They had studied English as a foreign language for more than ten years. This semester (5th semester), the participants took 12 courses from Monday to Friday. As suggested in the introduction that this research aims to observe the students' perception of the material of Extensive Reading based on CEFR. There are seven materials of Extensive Reading based on CEFR: newspaper, film review, poem, song lyric, travel diary, short story, and article journal. This research was conduct in the Extensive Reading class, which met once a week among 100 minutes per session for 16 meetings per semester.

This research deliberated as descriptive research utilizing survey design. Data collection used in this research starts by using SHOWeD analysis through photovoice. Wang & Burris (1994) said that photovoice aims to help participants interpret or share what they know through photographic documentation. SHOWeD analysis arranged and adapted based on the theories of the previous researches. To collect the data, we used a SHOWeD analysis and related it to the principles of Extensive Reading by Day and Bamford (1998). The principles are: First, the reading material is easy. Second, the variety of reading material on a wide range of topics must be available. Third, learners choose what they want to read and read as much as possible. Then, the purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding.


Moreover, reading is a reward, individual, and silent. After that, reading speed is usually fast rather than slow. Last, teachers orient the students, guide their students, and as a role model of a reader.

We collect the data by distributed SHOWeD to the participants. After that, we analyze the data by using coding. The purpose of this activity was to find out the students' perception of Extensive Reading. To analyze the data, we use three kinds of coding. They are coding lexical, coding thematic, and coding theoretical.

Findings and Discussion

Based on Day and Bamford (1998) Extensive Reading consist of two indicators, reading for getting information and reading for getting pleasure. 12 out of 14 participants gave their responses to the material of Extensive Reading based on CEFR through SHOWeD. SHOWeD analysis enhances the participants to share their opinion about what they see and what they hear (Wang & Burris, 1994). The results showed that almost all participants experienced those two indicators.

SHOWeD Analysis



Questions	Answer
What is SEEN here?	I'm a silent reader. I usually read text silently since it is more comfortable for me. In my Extensive Reading class, I read many kind of texts. In the beginning of the semester, we were asked to read anything that we like. It can be novel, poem, recipe, news, etc. However, after that my lecturer determined the text that we should read each week. There are many, such as song lyrics, poems, short story, travel diary, news, articles, etc.
What is really HAPPENING?	I like to read novels or short stories. In ER class, my lecturer asked us to read two short stories. However, we were not asked to read novel since it takes a long time to finish even only one novel. And for the genre of the short stories, I tried to find the genre I like so I can enjoy reading the texts. For the sake of ER class, I tried to find text that is not too easy nor too hard for me to understand. But I normally read text that I consider as difficult, so I can improve my English skills.

Picture 1. The example of SHOWeD analysis from the participant

How does this relate to OUR lives?	From extensive reading class, besides know many kind of texts, I also know many information within the text I read. For example, when I read travel diary about Dubai, I finally know what kind of food or hotels exist in Dubai. By reading short stories from the past, I know many legendary author. And the most important thing is that, I got a new idea to teach my future students in reading class and also to motivate them to read. I used to like reading, but sometimes I have no time to do that. By joining ER class, I became more motivated to read in my hectic schedule. No, ER class doesn't really have impact on my understanding towards the content of the texts.
WHY are things this way?	The lecturer gave us many guidance, like what website should we access to find the texts or what to do with the text. ER is important to improve our motivation in reading. People are usually interested in reading texts that they like. When they like the texts, they will get more comprehension towards the texts and be motivated to read similar texts.
How could this image EDUCATE people?	The advantages are ER can improve our motivation, vocabulary, knowledge and reading skills. The disadvantage is somehow we don't have time to do that. I do feel that ER increase my reading ability. I become more critical reader and improve my vocabulary.
What can I DO about it? (What WILL I or WE do about it?)	I enjoy joining this class. I got to know many kind of texts and lots of new other knowledge. Since ER is reading for enjoyment or pleasure, I become more relaxed when joining this class.

Picture 2. The example of SHOWeD analysis from the participant

Table 1. Students' Perception of Extensive Reading based on the indicator (getting information).

Items for getting information	Percentage
Getting new vocabularies	75%
Getting new information	42%
Getting new knowledge	50%
Getting a new idea to teach	8%
Improve reading comprehension	58%
Improve reading speed	16%
Improve critical thinking	16%

From the table above, we can see almost all the participants agreed that they get some information from Extensive Reading. 9 out of 12 participants said that their vocabulary has improved after joining the Extensive Reading class. As we know that vocabulary is one of the crucial components in English. Ghanbari and Marzban (2013) confirmed that if the students read extensively, their

language skills will improve like speaking, grammar, writing, and vocabulary. One student mentioned that:

“By joining extensive readings, my celerity in reading a text has improved, my vocabularies have been plentiful than before.”

Furthermore, if students have many vocabulary, they can have good writing. Besides, the participants also get a lot of new information and knowledge, such as the background of the author, the cultures of another country, and types of texts. Extensive Reading also inspired one of the participants to get a new idea to teach her future students. Moreover, Extensive Reading can improve students' reading comprehension. For instance, one student said:

“My understanding of the content of a text has been better than before.”

According to Rankin (2005), the more students interact with text, their ability to understand the contents of the text will increase. Then, 2 out of 12 participants felt their reading speed increase after reading extensively, and they think that Extensive Reading materials are suitable to be implemented in the classroom. Extensive Reading also can encourage the students to be critical readers. As stated by Yu-hui et al. (2010) reported that "reading is a thinking process to construct meaning." These are some responses of SHOWeD analysis:

"I can have the opportunity to practice my reading speed."

"I become a more critical reader and improve my vocabulary."

Table 2. Students' Perception of Extensive Reading based on the indicator (getting pleasure).

Items of getting pleasure	Percentage
Read their materials	83%
Motivate to read a lot	75%
Relax and happy to read	75%
Build positive attitudes and self-confidence	8%

The students got pleasure in the Extensive Reading class because the students can choose their material based on their interest and ability in reading. Based on Extensive Reading from CEFR Framework, the students can choose several texts such as newspapers, poems, short stories, song lyrics, travel diaries, etcetera. Because they can choose their text in Extensive Reading, it can help the students motivated to read more (Hofer, 2011). Some participants reported that:

“I feel more relaxed and happy. Because I enjoy reading (but on a certain topic based on my interest).”

“The benefits are I read a lot of different kinds of text that I never try to read like a movie review, travel diary, etc.”

9 out of 12 participants said that in Extensive Reading class, they felt relax and happy because they can choose their text based on CEFR that is suitable for their reading ability. Besides that, one of the participants said that Extensive Reading could build his positive attitudes and self-confidence because after joining the class, he said that he knew about the way in understanding the content of the texts quickly. Furthermore, an Extensive Reading class also can build students' habit of reading whereas one of the participants said that after joining the Extensive Reading class, she spent her spare time to read extensively.

Table 3. Students' Perception of Extensive Reading based on CEFR

Items of ER based on CEFR	Percentage
Like to spend their spare time to read	8%

This study reports that the participants have positive perceptions toward Extensive Reading based on CEFR as material in reading. The result supports the previous study that said Extensive Reading boosting students' interest in reading along with improving reading skills (Gabiella & Diptoadi, 2019). We can see that 75% of students motivated to read extensively, 58% of students can improve their reading comprehension, and 16% can improve their reading speed after joining the Extensive Reading class. Even though several participants said that Extensive Reading improves their reading comprehension, one of them said that Extensive Reading does not have an impact on her understanding of the content of the text.

As Suk (2016) points out, extensive reading can improve students' vocabulary acquisition. This study provides evidence that 75% of students said that they got much new vocabulary in Extensive Reading. Furthermore, McLean et al. (2017) stated that extensive reading is an effective way to improve students' reading rates. It was surprising to find out that after four months of having an Extensive Reading class with 100 minutes each week, 16% of students said that their reading speed improves by reading extensively. Although CEFR Framework defined Extensive Reading is reading as a leisure activity, one of them said that she has to spare her time to read extensively and 2 of them said that Extensive Reading is consumed lots of time and sometimes they use their spare time to do other activities like doing the assignment.

Conclusion

This research examined the students' perception toward Extensive Reading based on CEFR as material in reading. As we know that Extensive Reading is an activity to read some text extensively to get information and pleasure (Day & Bamford, 1998). The participants of this research were the students who attended the Extensive Reading class in one of the universities in Indonesia. That class using CEFR Framework as material guidance for Extensive Reading. To know about the students' perception of using material Extensive Reading based on CEFR, the participants should fill the SHOWeD analysis, which has been distributed by the researchers. The SHOWeD analysis is made according to the theories of Extensive Reading and CEFR. The findings show that the students' have positive perceptions about the Extensive Reading based on CEFR, and their perceptions are support the theory above. After having an Extensive Reading class, almost the students said that they get much information related to the texts which have they read. In the class, the students also feel happy because they can choose their material freely based on their interests and reading ability.

Besides that, some of the students are motivated to spend their spare time to read extensively. On the other hand, several students share their perceptions that Extensive Reading does not have an impact on their understanding of the content of the text, also Extensive Reading is consumed much time, and they have to spare their time to read extensively. Considering the result above, it is suggested that Extensive Reading should be applied in Universities to increase students' motivation in reading and to improve students' reading skills. Also, the teacher can use Extensive Reading to

improve his/her students' reading speed by targeting students to read several texts in a week. Then the students' critical reading can be built if the teacher applied Extensive Reading in his/her class by providing various texts based on CEFR. It is better than the texts contain a lot of moral values and related to students' life to build their positive attitudes and self-confidence.

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