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STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO EXTENSIVE READING ACTIVITIES IN ONLINE CLASSROOM

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Received: August 22, 2022

Accepted: Oct 06, 2022

Published: Nov 28, 2022

Abstract

This study focuses on Book Report class where students are required to read books or articles and make reports of what they read. This subject also requires students to present the reports to their lecturers and/or friends using various activities. However, his pandemic has forced Book Report classes which are based on Extensive Reading Principles to be conducted online. This condition makes lecturers and students unable to conduct activities that are designed predominantly for offline classes. Therefore, the writer had to make some adjustments to the online learning environment. This practice is not yet studied extensively, hence, this paper aims to find out students' perceptions related to extensive reading practices and how the implementation helps them learn English by analyzing data from Google Form, interview results, and lecturer's notes and observation. The participants of this study are twenty-six students from Book Report D. The results of this study show students' positive perception towards all activities in the class (ranging from 40.7% to 66.7% for each activity) and 96.3% of students considered they have positive progress from the beginning until the end of the class. These results show that despite the challenges, educators should still apply extensive reading practices in their classes considering the benefits students could get from doing so.

Keywords: Extensive reading, book report, students' perception, online classes

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 forces teachers and students to teach and learn differently (Berger et al., 2021; Irfan et al., 2020; Kanojiya, 2020; Mulyana et al., 2020; Mustajab et al., 2020; Pathak, 2022; Suputra et al., 2020; Yudiawan, 2020). Designed activities which were majorly set for on-site classes are somehow not relevant for today's condition in terms of class meeting time and activities done in the class (Chen Hsieh et al., 2017; Twigg, 2011). The condition disrupted the class and at the same time, this condition is also perfect for major changes in this area which has not changed for a long time (Faridah & Rukminingsih, 2021). One of the affected subjects is Book Report class which is based on Extensive Reading principles.

Book Report class is a subject in which students are required to read books or articles and make reports on what they have read. Other than writing the reports, students need to also present or report them to the lecturers or share them with other students. This course is set to be a catalyst for students' reading habits and enjoyment of literary works (Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Sanata Dharma, 2021). Consequently, lecturers need to

encourage students to read a lot of literary works while reading is essentially a personal activity in which students need to comprehend what they read (Permatasari et al., 2020).

Reading requires students to actively engage with the text. During the reading, students need to use their critical thinking, reasoning, vocabulary, and background knowledge to engage with the text. (Pang et al., 2003). Thus, comprehension is not a passive process, but an active one. Readers actively engage with the text to construct meaning. This process makes reading activity seems to be burdening for students if there is no encouragement, especially in the Indonesian context.

Consequently, the researcher proposed Extensive Reading for Book Report class to help students both enjoy reading and learn English skills. Day & Bamford (1998) state that one of the principles of Extensive Reading is offering students various easily intelligible English literature of diverse genres which allows students to enjoy the learning process while concurrently improving their competencies. In addition, students are asked to read extensively for general meaning and information, and pleasure (Day, 2004). Research has demonstrated positive effects on several cognitive and affective factors (Takase, 2007; Yamashita, 2008). The implementation of extensive reading helps students develop good reading habits and fluency (Stoller, 2015) and critical thinking (Faridah & Rukminingsih, 2021; Yunus & Ubaidillah, 2021), build up their vocabulary knowledge (Anindita, 2020; Krashen, 1989; Liu & Zhang, 2018; Webb & Chang, 2015) and enhance positive reading attitudes (Fithriani et al., 2020; Lekawael & Ferdinandus, 2021; Liu & Zhang, 2018; Novita & Setiawan, 2020; Permatasari et al., 2020; Raunaq et al., 2021). Further, Liu, and Zhang (2018) showed students at the university level got the highest impact from the Extensive Reading implementation. Therefore, these principles are suitable with Book Report goals and could help students engage in their reading and reporting activities.

Due to the current situation, Extensive Reading in the researcher's university cannot be done in on-site classes and should be done in the online setting. Fortunately, some studies are showing Extensive Reading in online settings using various means that prove the effectiveness of their implementation. Students commonly have positive attitudes toward digital reading when they have to read extensively (Iftanti & Shofiya, 2018; Ni'mah & Umamah, 2020; Umar, 2020; Yuwono et al., 2021) and the implementation of extensive reading using various applications improves reading performance (Sulistianingsih, 2021). Their study found that the practicality, flexibility, accessibility, portability, and affordances of online sources helped them apply extensive reading. However, there are some challenges faced in implementing extensive reading in the online setting. Cote and Milliner's (2015) mentioned there are some problems they found such as technical problems with the software, insufficient software training, and a lack of understanding of Extensive Reading principles. Hence, the researcher used applications well known by almost all students and indirectly mentioned ER principles.

In this study, the researcher implemented some Extensive Reading principles from (Day & Bamford, 1998, pp. 137–141) principles namely,

1. The reading material is easy
2. A variety of reading material on a wide range of topics is available.
3. Learners choose what they want to read.
4. Learners read as much as possible.
5. Reading is for pleasure, and to gain information and general understanding.
6. Reading is the reward itself.
7. Learners generally read quickly and not slowly.

8. Reading is silent and individual.
9. Teachers orientate and guide students.
10. The teacher models being a reader.

For principles number 1 until 8, students were free to choose what and the topics they wanted to read. They could be e-books, online articles, printed books, magazines, e-comic, comics, and any other sources available for them and some themes like love, sports, nature, etc. After students read a story/article, they are asked to share the stories with other students by using various means. These activities are based on principle number 9. For principle number 10, the researcher showed the collection of books/articles he had read and shared them with students. In some activities, some students chose the same books as what the researcher had read so that there were some discussions in the class. The implementation of Extensive Reading is facilitated by various means such as some web-based applications, tools, and Learning Management System (LMS).

There are some studies that have discussed the implementation of Extensive Reading in classes both online and offline modes. Iftanti and Shofiya's (2018) and Takase's (2007) studies focus on how Extensive Reading helps students love and be more motivated in reading activities. In addition, Fatimah's (2019) and Mede et al.'s (2013) studies portrayed how Extensive Reading helps students to become more autonomous. Lastly, some studies show the students' vocabulary improvement after being exposed to Extensive Reading activities in their classes (Buana & Syafitri, 2021; Nursiwi & Floriasti, 2020; Siregar, 2020; Yuwono et al., 2021). This study focuses more on how students perceive the implementation of Extensive Reading practices applied in Book Report class and how the implementation of Extensive Reading helps students acquire English skills needed for teacher candidates.

METHOD

This research is survey research. It allows the researcher to summarize the attitudes and opinions toward some issues (Ary et al., 2010). The researcher developed questionnaires containing closed and open-ended questions and interview guidelines to find out the most beneficial activity, enjoyable activity, and how Extensive Reading activities help students learn. Firstly, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to all students in the class. All students in this class were from the English Education department. Twenty-six students out of thirty-one students in Book Report class filled out the form. The participants then were coded using pseudonym "A", "B" to "AA".

The closed-ended data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel to find out the mean of students' answers regarding the most beneficial activity and enjoyable activity for students. For the open-ended data, the researcher focused mainly on how Extensive Reading activities help students learn English in general. To confirm students' answers, the researcher interviewed 5 students. The researcher coded the students' explanations using QDA Miner Lite based on themes the researcher had set to find the major themes from the data. To elaborate on all data, the researcher also used the lecturer's note and observation sheet. After analyzing all data, the researcher asked an expert to review the analysis. Then, the researcher revised the analysis based on the expert's suggestion. Finally, the researcher presents and interprets the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Students' Perception of Extensive Reading Practices in Book Report Class

The Most Enjoyable Activities

Based on students' responses, here are some activities students enjoy the most:

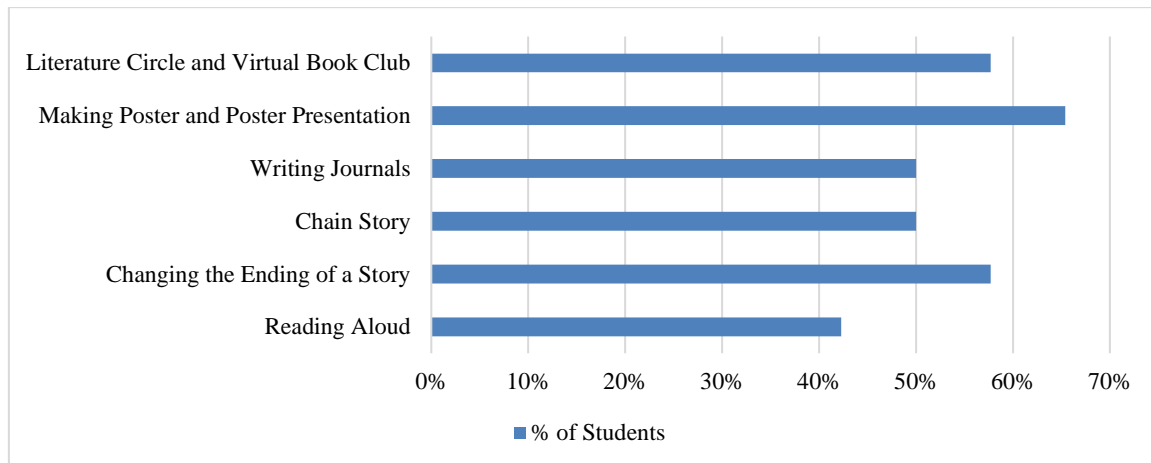


Figure 1 The Most Favorite Activities Perceived by Students

There are four main activities students enjoy the most namely, making poster and poster presentation, virtual book club, changing the ending of a story, and writing journals (see table 1). Two of the most enjoyable/favorable activities include speaking and sharing to other students. Changing the ending of a story and writing journals also indirectly ask students to communicate what they have written both in the forum in the LMS and using other activities.

The findings show that students longed for interaction in the class, especially during the pandemic. The researcher especially would like to highlight the virtual book club activities. Giving students a short material but meaningful one helps students to relate well. At that time, students were asked to read Michael Rosen's "Sad Book". In their breakout rooms, students also told what they were feeling during the pandemic and other sad moments in their lives. Their reflection showed that they realized that sadness was a real thing and people around them felt that and they should acknowledge that. In this case, students got the chance to also listen to their friends and not feel alone since they have other friends who experienced more or less similar experiences (Wanner & Palmer, 2015). This class gave chances for students to talk about what they are reading and elaborate on it with their own experiences. Hence, most activities in the class got positive responses from students.

Based on figure 1, the researcher could also conclude that the students' chances to participate in the activities influence the way they perceive an activity (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020; Krause & Coates, 2008; Webb & Cotton, 2019). Even the least favorable one, chain story, asked students to participate in writing the story in their version. Based on the researcher's reflection, chain story got the least favorable position since the researcher challenged students not to communicate when they write their ideas and waited for their turn. It turned out, that students might feel isolated since there is no real communication although they are working on the same page (Joia & Lorenzo, 2021; Martin & Bolliger, 2018). In this context, Extensive Reading provides chances for students to experience a more enjoyable language learning experience (Renandya, 2007).

One astonishing finding is related to journal writing activity. The researcher firstly thought that this activity would burden the students and become less favorable. However, the data showed that this activity became one of the most favorite activities in the class. One of the factors that contributed to this finding is the consistency of this activity (Anandari & Iswandari, 2019) which was done for the whole semester, and the abundance of reading students had read in which they became more familiar with them (Renandya, 2007).

In conclusion, most students perceived the activities they did in the class positively. The researcher also noted how students behaved during the session and it could confirm this finding. One of the most influential factors is related to the chances for students to interact and how relatable the materials and activities are to students.

The Most Beneficial Activities

Figure 2 shows students' responses.

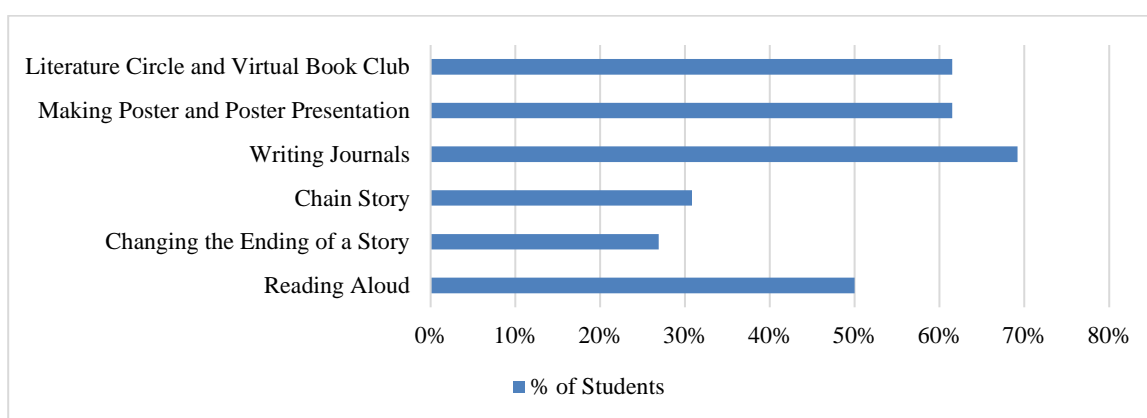


Figure 2 The Most Beneficial Activities Perceived by Students

Based on students' responses, the most beneficial activities were writing journal, making poster, and doing poster presentation, virtual book club, reading aloud, chain story, and changing the ending respectively. As mentioned earlier, writing journal was thought to be the least favorite activity but it turned out to be one of the most favorable ones and in this section, it became the most beneficial activity for students. There are several responses students made regarding journal writing.

The most useful activity (for me) is journal writing. The reason is that I have to be diligent in reading and disciplined to write the journals. This activity helps me to understand reading and learn new vocabulary. When writing a journal, I can practice good writing skills such as paragraph structure, grammar, and reflection. (*L, interview*)

Honestly, Making journals. I learn to write and express my feeling in my writing. (*R, Google Form*)

This activity required students to be disciplined and able to manage their own time (see table 1) (Nückles et al., 2020). Some students considered this activity motivated them to read more and at the same time help them to be more autonomous (Fatimah, 2019; Mede et al., 2013). Students would likely get a direct reward from this activity in the form of other activities such as literature circle/virtual book club, making a poster and poster presentation, and changing the ending of a story and the consequences of not writing journals. Students who had done reading and making the report would likely have no problems in the previous activities and could follow the activities well and even get meaningful experiences. Journal

writing also helped students to express their thoughts and feelings in their writing as R mentioned. Consequently, the researcher could conclude writing journals is the backbone of this class.

The second most beneficial activity is making a poster and doing poster presentation. Not only does it become the most enjoyable activity for students, but it is also the second most beneficial activity according to students. In this activity, students actively participated in the assessment process using the "Workshop" activity from Moodle. There are some aspects students considered beneficial in this activity

This class also make me creative, especially in making poster and then I should do a presentation. Without realizing it, this class also make me confident because of it. (*F, Google Form*)

This activity encouraged students to be creative in creating their poster and later present it. Since what they presented was one of the stories they reported in journal writing (1-3), they were confident in doing so. Thus, it, directly and indirectly, helped their speaking skill.

The last notable activity considered beneficial for students is literature review and/or virtual book club. V mentioned,

I am very happy to be in this book report class, there are many ways that help me master English skills, for example, writing journals and joining a virtual book club and also when zooming (in the breakout room) in I was given the opportunity to tell stories that I read it really helped me to hone my skills in English language. (Interview)

I also said,

In addition, the virtual book club helped me to be more confident in speaking English. Because I read the book (Into the Magic Shop) and liked the story, I got excited during sharing activities and became confident. (Google Form)

The researcher also observed that when students were in breakout rooms, they could express what they thought freely and they were confident since they talked to other students. As per the previous section, giving students chances to engage with other students by talking about what they read and experience makes learning more meaningful and fun at the same time.

In conclusion, most students considered the activities they did in Book Report Class were beneficial for them. The benefits they experienced are related to the improvement of English skills and becoming more motivated, disciplined, creative, and confident. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the activities should be done continuously for future classes and improve activities, especially the activities considered less beneficial.

The Implementation of Extensive Reading Activities that Helps Students Learn English

Classroom Activities

Here are the activities students did in the class:

Table 1 Activities Descriptions

#	Name of Activities	Description
1	Writing Journal	Students needed to report what they read in the LMS . The reading could be anything as long as they were interested in that area. Students needed to report the short summary and what they felt after reading. There were 6 journals students have to submit. The lecturer only set the deadline for the first journal. After that, students could submit the journal whenever they finished reading article/story/novel/comic/something else.
2	Literature Circle and Virtual Book Club	Students shared what they read guided by questions using wordwall.com (spinning wheel) in Zoom breakout rooms . Each meeting had different themes: literature aspects, characters and characterization, and feelings in general. After that, students needed to reflect/share what they felt when they were in the group. This activity was done four times during the whole semester.
3	Chain Story	Lecturer provided a sentence taken from different sources and students in groups, in turn, continue the story. Students used Google Docs to write collaboratively. This activity was done once for the whole semester.
4	Changing the ending of a story	Lecturer gave chance to students to change the ending of a story and asked students to tell reasons why students changed the ending of the story. Students needed to submit their version to the LMS . This activity was done once for the whole semester.
5	Making Poster and Poster Presentation	Students needed to make a poster about article/story/novel/comic/something else they read using Canva/Microsoft PowerPoint then explain why other students need to read what they read in the form of video. Students are required to upload their video to YouTube. Then, students submit the video to the LMS (specifically, it is named <i>workshop</i>). Students will later assess their friends' works. This activity was done once for the whole semester and it was a Midterm-test project.

All activities in Book Report class were mainly using technology to enhance students' experiences and help students express what they learned, felt, and experienced. Most students perceived the use of technology in this class positively. One student said,

Technology (used in this class) helps me to communicate and complete tasks well. In group work, I use **Zoom** or **Google Meet**. When I get an assignment to create a poster, I also use Canva to complete it. Also, since I don't have many books, I can search the

internet for the books I want to read. With the **e-book**, I can read the book anytime and anywhere. The **Learning Management System** also has a vital role in providing direction in carrying out tasks. (W, interview)

E in the interview also said similar experiences.

The dynamics of learning the use of **Zoom, WA, and LMS** are very crucial. For me, information, materials, and assignments have been very clearly conveyed through technology. Besides that, the feedback I received helped me to evaluate myself. In addition, group work using **Google Docs** also makes it easier to discuss making a written work. (E, interview)

Based on the students' responses, the researcher could conclude the use of technology and internet sources supported and facilitated students' learning (Ardi, 2017; Enfield, 2013; Fung, 2020; Omar, 2018; Rasmitadila et al., 2020). It is very crucial since at that time there is no option for both lecturers and students to meet directly so the reliance on technology was relatively high. In addition, this study also find that most students choose online sources than printed books. To be exact, 70.8% of the total students choose online sources for this book report class. It is per Indriastuti's (2021) and Iftanti and Shofiya's (2018) studies which showed almost all students prefer and become more familiar with materials from the internet rather than finding them in the library.

How Extensive Reading Activities Help Students and Their Perceived Progress

There are some themes found based on students' responses regarding to how extensive help students. Here is the result:

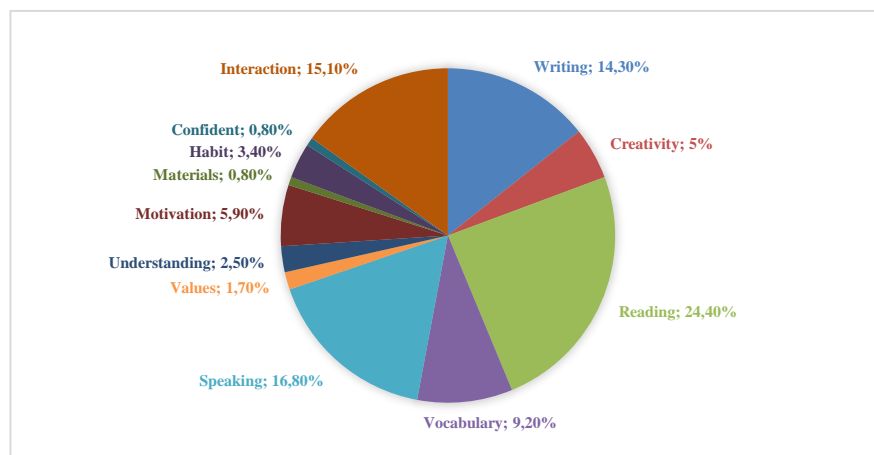


Figure 3 How Extensive Reading Help Book Report Students

Students perceived many aspects of the class that could help them develop their English skills and components. The data above show how this class provided some chances for students to learn. The dominant aspects are chances to develop their reading skill and habit in various activities, speak up and interact with other students confidently, write summaries/responses correctly, add their vocabulary from writing, and other aspects such as creativity in doing their project.

The researcher also asked students about their perceived progress before and after joining the class. Here is the result:

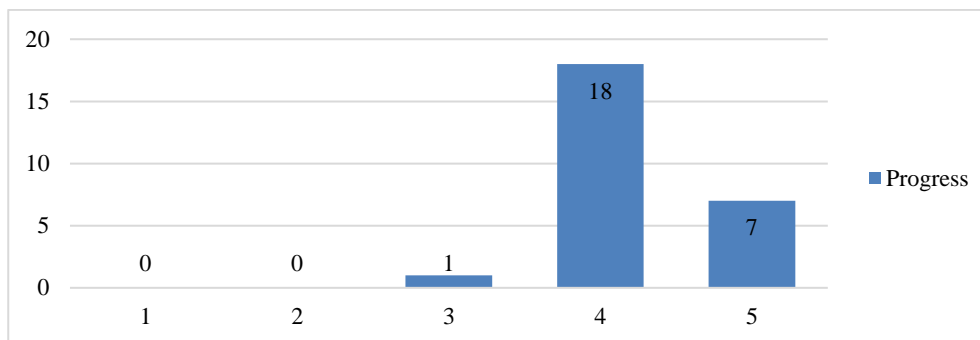


Figure 4 Students' Rating on Their Progress during Book Report Class

Figure 3 shows how students perceived their progress using Likert Score (1-5). 1 means there is no progress and 5 means the progress is very significant. Based on the data, 69.2% of students said they experienced significant progress in Book Report Class while 26.9% of students said they experienced very significant progress. In other words, 97.1% of students considered they had significant progress after joining this class.

The progress I felt when I took the book report class was quite significant. At first, I didn't really like reading books, especially those in English. I prefer to read illustrated comics. However, in this book report course, I was encouraged to get out of my comfort zone. Because of learning from book reports, I became more accustomed to reading books in English. In addition, my basic knowledge of books has also increased. In the book report, not only skills in reading are prioritized, but also skills in writing and speaking. I feel that my skills are developing in the book report course. (W, Interview)

If I counted on a scale from 1-10, I'd choose 9. This is because it helped me to read stories in a genre I've never read before, and it's a lot of fun. I also learned how to write stories which helped improve my writing skills. In addition, the virtual book club helped me to be more confident in speaking English. Because I read the book (Into the Magic Shop) and liked the story, I got excited during sharing activities and became confident.

The researcher also noted relatively significant progress in the number of words they read from journal 1 to 6 and the way they communicate their message. Additionally, there is relatively significant progress in terms of the way students spoke and pronounced words notably from reading aloud (final project) to poster presentation (mid-term test 1).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, there are three main themes the researcher could conclude. First, the majority of students perceived positively the activities they did in Book Report and they considered most of the activities were beneficial for them. Second, students thought their English skills and components improved after joining the class. Lastly, students considered themselves more confident, disciplined, and creative. Those findings emphasized the importance of Extensive Reading in this pandemic situation and later in normal conditions. Teachers, lecturers, school/university administrators, and students should explore more the implementation of Extensive Reading integrated with technology in their own bases.

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