

INTRODUCTION TO EXTENSIVE READING USING GRADED READER BOOKS ON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN EAST JAKARTA

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ABSTRAK

Pelaksanaan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kompetensi siswa dalam membaca teks berbahasa Inggris melalui pengenalan membaca ekstensif menggunakan buku Graded Reader. Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan di SMP Al Qolam dan SMP Uswatun Hasanah di Jakarta Timur. Pada kelas membaca ekstensif, digunakan buku Graded Reader level 2 dan 3 yang dipilih berdasarkan tingkat kemampuan siswa dan jumlah kata yang digunakan dalam teks bacaan. Untuk melihat hasil dari kegiatan membaca ekstensif ini, maka diberikan tes membaca kepada siswa berupa soal pilihan ganda. Hasil tes menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan membaca ekstensif dapat meningkatkan kemampuan membaca para siswa dengan nilai tes rata-rata sebesar 70 untuk SMP Al Qolam dan 81 untuk SMP Uswatun Hasanah. Kelas membaca ekstensif ini juga menarik perhatian siswa karena mereka yang terbiasa memanfaatkan Lembar Kerja Siswa (LKS) untuk latihan harian menjadi lebih tertarik belajar bahasa Inggris ketika menggunakan buku Graded Reader karena level kosakata yang sesuai dan teks cerita yang penuh ilustrasi dan gambar-gambar. Guru-guru juga menyatakan bahwa pelafalan kosakata berbahasa Inggris dan kemampuan menulis para siswa mereka berkembang dengan lebih baik setelah kegiatan ini dilaksanakan.

Kata kunci: membaca ekstensif, Graded Reader, teks

ABSTRACT

This community service program aims to improve the competence of students in reading English texts through the introduction of extensive reading using a Graded Reader book. This activity was carried out at Al Qolam and Uswatun Hasanah Junior High School in East Jakarta. Graded reader's book level 2 and 3 are used in the extensive reading class which are selected based on the student's level of ability and the number of words used in the reading text. To see the results of this extensive reading activity, a reading test is given to students in the form of multiple choice questions. Test results show that extensive reading activities can improve students' reading abilities with an average test score of 70 for Al Qolam Middle School and 81 for Uswatun Hasanah Middle School. This extensive reading class also attracts students' attention because those who are accustomed to using Student Worksheets (LKS) for daily practice become more interested in learning English when using a graded reader book because of the appropriate level of vocabulary and story text that is full of illustrations and pictures. The teachers also stated that the pronunciation and writing ability of their students have better developed after this activity was carried out.

Keywords: extensive reading, Graded Reader, text

INTRODUCTION

UNESCO data shows that Indonesian's interest in reading is still very low. It can be seen from Indonesian's reading level index which is only 0.001 percent. It means that from 1,000 Indonesians, there is only 1 person who has an interest and seriousness in reading books. In ASEAN region, Indonesia ranks at the third lowest with Laos and Cambodia in terms of reading and writing habits. Even though many parties have initiated and conducted dissemination related to reading activities, in fact, the reading interest of Indonesians remains stagnant. The condition is worsened by the development of

technology encouraging people to prefer accessing the internet and watching television to reading various reading materials, especially books. At last, reading is no longer a part of the daily habits of the community, especially students. For this reason, there must be efforts to increase students' fondness for reading.

English is one of subjects taught in schools in Indonesia. Indonesian people have even learned it from Kindergarten level. One of aspects taught in English subject is reading. However, reading has not received much attention from schools because most Indonesian schools today tend to focus their English teaching on grammar and vocabulary mastery so that their students do not have great motivation and interest in reading. This often happens in Junior High Schools (SMP) in Indonesia, such as in Al Qolam Junior High School and Uswatun Hasanah Junior High School, both located in East Jakarta.

Based on the problems previously explained, Community Service team initiated an activity to build a reading culture by introducing to extensive reading using Graded Readers. The activity was carried out as an effort to promote an extensive reading activity in the school environment in order to improve students' reading skills.

Reading is one of basic skills that must be mastered in learning a language. Students will get a lot of useful knowledge and information through reading activities. The knowledge and information they get from reading activities can be the foundation for three other basic skills, namely listening, writing and speaking. Hence, reading is a basic thing that should be considered if you want to have good language skills and understanding. The understanding process must be first conducted by the five senses. In this case, the eye must be first active, while for the blind, they use Braille before understanding the mental activity contained in a reading material (Wardani, 2009).

Richards and Schmidt in Azmuddin, et. al. (2014) state that extensive reading is reading in large numbers with the aim of gaining reading comprehension to improve vocabulary mastery and language structure which will later encourage the desire to enjoy reading. The main principle of extensive reading is to read a number of texts that are adapted to one's linguistic abilities with a reading speed adjusted to their respective expertise. Students in Indonesia are not in an environment using English as a formal or informal language. One thing that allows them to be involved in various aspects of language is through reading activities with a variety of reading materials. Therefore, doing a lot of reading can develop students' language competence (Delfi & Yamat, 2017).

Macalister in Yulia, (2018) mentions 7 principles of extensive reading, namely:

- 1) The purpose of extensive reading is to obtain information in a fun way and to gain a general understanding of a number of reading texts;
- 2) Reading speed is generally faster;
- 3) Reading is carried out individually;
- 4) Reading material is easy to understand;
- 5) The teacher's task is to guide their students in reading;
- 6) The teacher gives a model/example in the reading process;

7) Students read as many reading materials as possible.

All of these principles can be implemented in the classroom by first negotiating with students with the aim that the reading activity will be their routine activity.

In the case of reading materials to be chosen in an extensive reading class, students must be exposed to various forms of texts with the level of expertise adapted to their level. They can be given online texts, comic books, Graded Readers, or materials written by the teacher. The teacher has a duty to ensure that students have access to a number of reading materials with various types of genres. In extensive reading classes, students must get balanced reading materials between narrative text and expository text that matches the ability level of students with the reason that these two genres have different types of vocabulary despite having the same theme (Yulia, 2018).

The use of reading materials based on the level of student ability can also be the key to success in learning to read (Harmer, 2007). Similar to Harmer, Clarity (2007) says that the selection of reading material based on the level of student ability or also called Graded Reader, will greatly help students to build their confidence because they will not experience difficulties in understanding the contents of reading materials. To improve students' reading skills, they must read books written with different levels of difficulty with the use of variations in grammar, vocabulary, and graded plot (Azmuiddin, et. al., 2014).

In this community service program, the team chose the Graded Readers with classic tales published by Oxford University Press as the main materials in the extensive reading class. This Oxford book is available in five levels, but, after considering the level of student ability, the team selected two levels that are appropriate to the conditions in the field. The two levels chosen are level 2 (150 main vocabularies) and level 3 (200 main vocabularies).

Motivation is a student's individual need that encourages him to do something successfully and satisfyingly. The factors affecting motivation are as follows. First is the encouragement of parents. Home and family atmosphere is a very important encouragement to motivate students. The attitude of parents who are open and close to children, parents who like reading, the arrangement of the learning or reading rooms, the provision of reading books they want, and the giving of gifts to children will also generate children's motivation. The second is encouragement from the teacher. Generating motivation by teachers is to give assignments to the students with interesting strategies, in which students must be placed in a classroom environment that will make them want to read widely, then they are given awards if they can complete their assignment well (Pertwi, 2012).

METHOD

The community service was carried out for four months. The implementation was arranged based on several necessary work adjustments.

1. Pre-Implementation of Activity

The implementation team sought information related to Al Qolam Junior High School and Uswatun Hasanah Junior High School to find out the needs of schools. The results of the team discussion provided the data about the needs of students in the school environment. The lack of ownership of reading materials that support learning English was also a highlight of the implementation team.

2. Implementation of Activity

The activity was carried out so that the participants can be more proficient in reading and can improve their English skills.

3. Evaluation of Activity

After the dissemination was complete, the community service team conducted an evaluation to see the results obtained from the dissemination. This activity is also an evaluation of the shortcomings of the implementation of extensive reading dissemination by using graded readers. During the dissemination, the community service team also observed whether the objectives and targets of the implementation of this dissemination had been achieved as well as discussed the obstacles encountered in the implementation of the activity.

RESULTS

The community service was carried out using lecture, discussion, and direct practice in the English class as a pilot class to try Graded Reader books in extensive reading activities. To achieve the expected purpose of the dissemination, there were some steps to be conducted as follows:

1. Lecturing method which covers,
 - a. What is extensive reading?;
 - b. What is a graded reader?;
 - c. The needs of students in reading class.



Figure 1. Team is disseminating extensive reading to the teachers

2. Choosing Graded Reader books to be used in an extensive reading class that are adjusted to students' abilities. It was decided to use class VII as a pilot class and use a graded reader book level beginner with the title "Rainforest Boy" with 150 keywords and "The Heron and The Hummingbird" with 200 keywords. The books

do not only contain text but also have illustrations and drawings with interesting colors so that students are expected to be more interested in reading class activity.

3. Conducting an extensive reading pilot class by using books that have been previously selected. This pilot class is divided into 4 sessions namely,

a. Reading Aloud Class

This class aims to train students to read correctly and improve their English pronunciation.

b. Reading Comprehension Class

This class teaches students how to understand a text, in this case simple narrative text, by asking questions about the text they have read. In addition, students are also asked to find on what page they can find statements (in simple sentences) written by the teacher on the whiteboard.



Figure 2. Extensive reading practice using graded reader book

c. Vocabulary Understanding Class

Vocabulary understanding is conducted by asking students to guess the meaning of difficult words from the text they have read. Guessing this vocabulary is conducted by giving clues or using images in the book. In addition, exercises are also made to choose the right vocabulary in short sentences written by the teacher.

Examples of vocabulary understanding exercises:

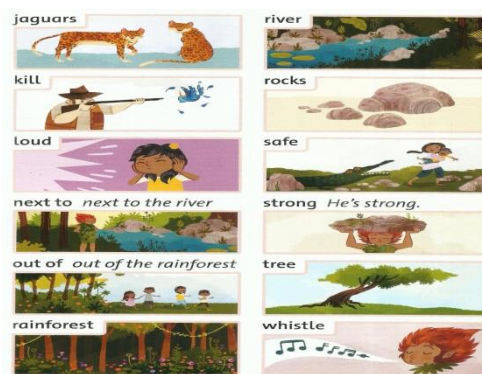


Figure 3. Word meaning guessing exercise

Discussion on Activity Results

The series of the dissemination were carried out in several stages with the aim that the teacher understands that an extensive reading class can develop a variety of students' language skills. In addition, teachers can also develop their abilities in making learning activities interesting to students.

In the pilot class, tests were also conducted on students to see the results of the extensive reading class they obtained before. The results are as follows:

Table 1. AL Qolam Junior High School Test Results

No	Name	Score
1	La Ode Alfa Pinaría	60
2	M Aziz Harefa	63
3	M Irfan Fadillah	73
4	Zaki Abdullah Farin	70
5	Real Wildan Prima Rizky	66
6	M. Alfán Reza	70
7	M. Akmal Syarif	73
8	Sulthan Albany Bahartha	70
9	Haikal Azmi Burhan H	86
10	Luthfi Lim	66
11	Fachreza Ahmad Rizky	70
12	Fauzan Arobih	63
13	M. Al Fatih	83
14	Arya Yoga R A	73
15	Maulana	86
16	Muhammad Fahrán Rizal	63
17	Raihan A M	60

Table 2. Uswatun Hasanah AL Qolam Junior High School Test Results

No	Name	Score
1	Firda Maulina	86
2	Nagia Tri M	86
3	M Dzikri Khairi	76
4	Febriansa	80
5	Mutia Aisyah Cahyani	66
6	Fadillah	83
7	Febi P S	86
8	Rangga Yudha Zanetti	86
9	Fasya	86
10	Lady M	90
11	Kurnia Rakha Wibowo	80
12	Syifa Karmila	83
13	M Eka	76
14	Adin	86
15	Hafiz Abdul Aziz	83

16	Satrio	60
17	Cherly Mellani	73
18	Rikaldi	86
19	Wage Danuarta Putra	86
20	Aulia Warda Khairunisah	86
21	Rizky Samudra Ilmi	73
22	Syiffah Putu Pratama	80
23	Gusti Andhiwa	66
24	Elvin	70
25	Ridho Saputra	80
26	Imam Elmuttaqin	83
27	Cassiopeia Pye	90
28	Siti Chaerunnisa	86
29	Novia Eka Rahma	86
30	Achmad Ramadhani P	83
31	Rahadi Dwi Pramono	86
32	Gita Rahmah P	83
33	Zaida Zahra	90
34	Rikaldi	86
35	Wage Danuarta Putra	86

Test results from both pilot classes show that extensive reading classes using Graded Readers are quite successful for students with an average test score of 70 for Al Qolam Junior High School and an average score of 81 for Uswatun Hasanah Junior High School.

The teachers in Uswatun Hasanah Junior High School give the opinion that this extensive reading class attracts the attention of students because those who are accustomed to using Student Worksheets for daily practice become more interested in learning English when getting story books full of illustrations and drawings. The teachers also feel the pronunciation and writing of English of their students develop better by using the exercises given in the pilot classes.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the dissemination of extensive reading using a graded reader is conducted successfully by considering the following:

1. There is a positive response from the dissemination participants who are willing to attend the activity;
2. The teachers are willing to use the materials and exercises offered by the community service team and they use them in the pilot class;
3. Students' reading test scores are quite good with an average score of 70 for Al Qolam Junior High School and 81 for Uswatun Hasanah Junior High School.

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