

## BUILDING POSITIVE ATTITUDES OF ENGLISH STUDENTS DEPARTMENT THROUGH EXTENSIVE READING

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### Abstract

This study focuses on the role of Extensive Reading lesson to develop students' positive attitudes. The positive attitudes may develop through the experiences of reading novels or short stories. Since they acquire a good comprehension of various reading texts, reading novels or short stories containing moral values may contribute mostly to shape their attitudes. A qualitative study was done which some interviews were done to the students and lecturer and interestingly, in fact it is found that it is highly motivating their critical thinking to come up with some considerations to take into account because they have more spaces to exploit reading to the fullest to be more confidence and internalize what they have read.

**Keywords:** Extensive Reading, Positive Attitudes, Short Stories

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini berfokus pada peranan mata kuliah Extensive Reading untuk membantu mahasiswa dalam hal pengembangan sikap positif mahasiswa. Hal ini dapat dikembangkan melalui pengalaman mahasiswa dalam membaca novel atau cerita pendek. Adanya pemahaman yang baik yg mereka dapatkan ketika membaca cerita pendek yang mengandung pesan moral sebagai materi perkuliahan, berkontribusi dalam pembentukan tingkah laku yang positif. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dimana pengambilan data dilakukan melalui wawancara dengan mahasiswa dan dosen pengampu, dan menariknya bahwa aktivitas membaca tersebut sangat memotivasi berfikir kritis mereka dengan beberapa pertimbangan tentunya untuk mengambil sisi positif dari cerita yang dibaca karena mahasiswa mempunyai akses ruang yang lebih untuk memanfaatkan aktivitas membaca tersebut untuk lebih percaya diri and dapat menginternalisasi apa yang mereka baca.

**Kata Kunci:** Extensive Reading, Tingkah Laku Positif, Cerita Pendek

### A. INTRODUCTION

Literatures are required to teach English skills especially Reading. It has several advantages such as contributing to a better linguistic understanding, a development of creative skills, and a higher language proficiency, it also makes an important contribution to literary appreciation (Ramsaran, 1983). Means, reading several literatures especially short stories, students are exposed to understand the words, the plot, the characters, and the deepest meaning what actually the stories talk about. Those

things sometimes affect students tend to explore more related literatures they want to.

In relation to Reading class, to avoid boredom in case of the activity, the lectures used short stories for several meetings of fifteen meetings. Students were given short stories such irony, exposition, climax, narration and so on. Those literatures may develop readers' language and literary awareness (Okumu, 2016: 312). The literary awareness involves the way how they grasp the content of works and how they interpret the works by themselves. It becomes clear for this research that the main problem was how the students can internalize the result of their

reading into their way in doing and behaving something positively since it is short, and aims at giving a 'single-effect', there is usually one plot, a few characters; there is no detailed description of setting and some moral values inserted. As a fact, most of the students had low motivation to read. They just read texts if the lecturers asked them (Ulfa, 2015) It is actually in line with what has already stated in the lesson plan of Extensive Reading that This course focuses on an interactive approach to reading that engages the students to critical and extensive reading activities for developing critical thinking skills. This approach includes aspects of both intensive and extensive reading, which enables the students to develop their independent reading ability by means of authentic and full-scale texts of various disciplines while exercising particular aspects of critical reading strategies. In so doing, the students are encouraged to freely contribute in the selection of reading texts and to actively participate in classroom activities to develop their critical reading requiring critical thinking skills as it is cited from the lesson plan made by the lecturer.

Regarding to the passages above, the writer constructed several research questions to be taken into account such as, first, does reading short stories broaden students' perspectives for the events they never experienced before? Second, does reading short stories provide students with a better understanding for different behavior? Next, does reading short stories make students may develop empathy with the people in different situation? Then, does reading short stories show the students different life styles? Does reading short stories provide students with a comparison between your own culture and other cultures? Does reading short stories teach students ethical and moral values of other cultures? And the last was, does reading short stories make students more tolerant?

In order to find out the answers, it is needed to go deeper firstly to the related literatures to come up with some considerations.

## B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1. *Extensive Reading*

From the four skills in English, reading seems to be the hardest activity to be conquered by students. They need to be focus on many things actually, the difficult words, sentences, complex sentences and so on. They really need to be on the right track to understand the content otherwise what they have read just 'Gone with the Wind'. One of the terms of Reading activity in English Department of STKIP PGRI Bangkalan is Extensive Reading. It is the highest level of Reading level to be given to the students. Furthermore, the Extensive Reading (ER) is widely accepted as an effective assignment in many university English curricula (Kano, 2015:211) means ER is suitable to be used as an activity of reading for university students. There are a lot of things can be done through this ER, but mostly, the activity goes around the way how students can be actively involving their knowledge and imagination to exploit reading materials. Besides, students on the assumption that students; attitudes and motivations might be important factors in the success of any reading program (Özönder, 2015: 723).

### 2. *Teaching Extensive Reading through Short Stories*

Choosing short stories as the materials in teaching Extensive Reading may become a better consideration since students of sixth semester need to be exploited to different types of reading text. It is important for them also to give them alternatives in responding to the texts of their own way. Ariogul (2001) points out the benefits of using short fiction as in his study: (p. 11-18) as cited in (Okumu, 2016): it

- Makes the students' reading task easier due to being simple and short when compared with the other literary genres,
- Enlarge the advanced level readers' worldviews about different cultures and different groups of people,
- Provide more creative, encrypt, challenging texts that require personal exploration supported with prior knowledge for advanced level readers,
- Motivates earners to read due to being an authentic material,
- Offers a world wonders and a world of mystery,
- Gives students the chance to use their creativity,
- Promotes critical thinking skills,
- Facilitates teaching a foreign culture \_i.e. serves as a valuable instrument in attaining cultural knowledge of the selected community),
- Makes students feel themselves comfortable and free,
- Helps students coming from various backgrounds to communicate with each other because of its universal language,
- Acts as a perfect vehicle to help students understand the positions of themselves as well as the others by transferring this gained knowledge to their own world.

Those benefits may become good reason why in Extensive Reading an activity of reading short stories should be included. The examples of the short stories used in the classroom were taken from [http://www.ezsoftech.com/ebooks/100morals\\_tories.pdf](http://www.ezsoftech.com/ebooks/100morals_tories.pdf). There are a lot of good stories and students are free to read them by themselves. Yet the limited meetings, the lecturer only ask the students to be focus on selected stories.

### C. RESEARCH METHOD

#### 1. Participants and Settings

This study was conducted in an EFL setting, at English Department of STKIP PGRI

Bangkalan. This study also was carried out with 24 intermediate level students who participated in the study.

#### 2. Instruments

In answering the research questions, the researcher used qualitative approach. The in-depth students interview was used to obtain some answers related to the research questions. The interview was given to both the students and the lecturer. The interview questions were divided into two parts. The first part was aimed to gain any information about the number of short stories they have read also the genres; the second interview was focused on the idea of how extensive reading gives impact to their attitude. It also involved five different categories as cited from (Kulaç and Walters, 2016) such as importance of reading, personal investment and vocabulary in reading.

#### 3. Data Collection Procedure

For this research, 24 students and one lecturer were interviewed. All the interview was done personally in English Department office. The interviewa were recorded and also the researcher jotted down some important information while doing the interviews. Besides, researcher also got some data regarding to their attitudes from other lecturers. When we were having some small talks in the office, all the lecturers also gave some comments related to students' attitudes when they received some lessons.

### D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There a lot of stories that students have read. In reading the stories, there are some aspects like character of the story, setting, genre, plot, style, symbol, point of view and moral values. From the stories they have read, seemingly gave new atmosphere for the students in experiencing new things. One of the example was when they read short stories, they react differently. Several examples of short stories that were given such

as *Parable of the Pencil*, *The Devoted Mother*, *Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover*, *The Thirsty Cow*, *The Boy and The Apple Tree*, *Mentally Retarded*, *A Hole in the Fence* and *Just P.U.S.H! Pray Until Something Happens!*

The lecturer was intentionally choosing the titles due to some reasons. The stories were appropriate with students' level of reading and also easily grasped. Each story has its own implication for its reader and sometimes even often affect its reader to behave well to others. When the researcher asked the students of how the stories affect them in behaving positively, they answered it enthusiastically that what they have read really touching and merely appear to their life. Such as a story entitled *Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover* taught them how to be tolerant and not to judge friends only from their appearance. And interestingly found that they just apply what the stories has said. This is what actually something can affect someone randomly.

Other positive attitudes that can be seen through eyes opened are appreciating other cultures and different lifestyle. For the term of R.S.V.P which they never know before means when someone invites people to come to an occasion, they need to give response whether they might come or not. On the other hand, in Indonesia has different style when someone invites others to come to her or his party or house, they tend to not to give any message whether they could come or not. It again gives students new experience of how other cultures of other nations. They have their own point of view for the stories. University students are actually people who learn something from different situations, and reading short stories may the best way to teach them to have good and positive attitudes in their life especially in their campus. Furthermore, it helps students to develop empathy with and a better understanding for the people in different

situation and behaviors (Okumu, 2016). Extensive reading may have helped the to exploit texts fully since Extensive Reading can be defined as reading a large quantity of text, where reading confidence and reading fluency are prioritized (Ghanbari and Marzban, 2014). There are actually so many good strategies can be used as choice but for Extensive Reading, giving students short stories may contribute much to them and their environment. Using internet and other valid resources may extract different reading strategies which seemed matched for the level of the students and introduce those strategies to them in order to improve their reading ability (Raissi and Roustaei, 2013).

While doing the reading activity, the lecturer did some discussion towards the content of the stories. Besides the interaction between the reader and the text, the lecturer also helped them in asking some questions to emerge students' comprehension toward the text. The assumptions proposed by McNeil (1992:16-18) may contribute much to the process of students' reading. First, what students already know affects what they will learn from reading. Means, students have their own prior knowledge while interacting with the texts. Their background of knowledge determines their own interpretations and inferences. Second, both concept-driven and data-driven processes are necessary in comprehending text, these two concepts are playing important roles in how readers find out the gap of information of the texts. A reader may use top-down or bottom-up strategy. Third, the deeper a person processes text, the more he or she will remember. Indeed, focusing on reading particular texts, need concentration. And it can be something difficult to achieve many things without having the ability to read fluently and with good comprehension (Conference, English and Language, 2015), Making elaborations is such a good idea, students while reading a text use

their prior knowledge, making inferences, paraphrasing the text into their own language and relating the text into their own purposes yet Extensive Reading means reading in quantity and in order to gain general understanding of what is read (Yamashita, 2013). The last is the context in which reading occurs influences what will be recalled. It is dealing with process of reading involve constructing meaning among the parts of the text and between the text and personal experiences. From those discussion, it is absolutely agreed that reading may affect its readers differently.

### **1. The Function of Extensive Reading in Language Learning**

Besides discussing the implication of short stories to students' positive attitudes, remaining the objectives of the study of Extensive Reading in English Department of STKIP PGRI Bangkalan.

- a. It enhances students' general language competence. Texts in short stories may a complex and complicated words to be grasped. It again teaches students to be more aware and improve their language competence to understand the text well.
- b. It helps students master vocabularies. Yet many vocabularies stated, students are more exposed to new vocabularies that they never know before. An important issue to be held is about the a consideration the arrangement the level of the extensive material (Amir and Bulca, 2013).
- c. It motivates the students to read more. If they like the texts or the stories, they will go further to find out what is next.
- d. It can help students to play with their imaginations. Since the stories consist of many unpredictable things, it sometimes attracts students to guess themselves and imagining what would it be if I they were that woman or man. Such a good scenario

of life if they can apply what actually stories talk about.

## **E. CLOSING**

### **1. Conclusion**

For the conclusion, Extensive Reading is quite helpful in shaping and affecting the readers (the students) to have positive attitudes such as more appreciating their colleagues, cultures, life styles and be more focus in doing particular things. It cannot be separated actually from the process they have made while reading the texts. The processes may different from one to others. Moreover, the choices of the stories given also determined the results. Choosing the suitable texts and really "touching" a life of university students may become one of good alternatives to be used in Extensive Reading class since it has been recognized as the most successfull approach in second and foreign language education (Abedelqader and Salameh, 2017).

### **2. Suggestion**

The suggestions may go for the students and for the lecturer. The students should be really focus on their own reading purposes in order to have good comprehension well. They need to activate their schemata well when reading short stories, jotting down some difficult words are quite possible to be done in order to make them easy in recalling similar stories. In contrast to the lecturer, choosing appropriate stories for students may quite difficult, but maybe by asking students' preferences may help the lecturer easy to determine what kind of stories should be given to them, but again it should be fulfilling lecturer's goal in teaching Extensive Reading.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank to the lecturer who teaches Extensive Reading and all students in 6A for your time and feedback. I would also like to express my gratitude to my friends in English Department for the constructive comments and likely to give related literatures I need mostly for Reading Comprehension cases.