

E-NOVEL: FOSTERING EFL STUDENTS' EXTENSIVE READING

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Abstract

For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, reading novel seems tiring and boring since there are hundred pages and many difficult words in it. Students tend to read simplified version better than the original text. That is why students often miss the detailed information which are stated in the novel. From that problems, the writer will choose the novel that can be read digitally. It is more effective since the activity of reading electronic novel can be done anytime and anywhere. Besides, the reluctant students are also helped with this electronic novel because they only need free internet access in campus area to get the materials. From the observation, it can be seen that boring situation in the classroom is changed into interactive activity since the story in the novel become alive. The aim of the study is to portray students' activity perform in reading class context. The objective of the study will give description on how students read the novel. This qualitative study focuses on investigating the phenomena of a specific case. Therefore a case study is selected as the method of the study. Finding of the study emphasizes on classroom description while participating in reading novel activity.

Keywords: *EFL, reading novel, boring, electronic novel.*

1 INTRODUCTION

Reading is a private, individual activity that can be done anywhere, at any time. Readers can start and stop their reading activity or read at the speed they are comfortable with. They can visualise and interpret what they read in their own way. They can ask themselves questions (explicit or implicit), notice things about the language, or simply let the story carry them along (Maley,2010).

For students in EFL context, reading is the recognition of words, from simple recognition of the individual letters and how these letters form a particular word to what each word means not just on an individual level, but as part of a text (Tennant, 2013). There are two types of reading which are studied in university level. They are intensive reading and extensive reading. In intensive reading, it

will be focused on the activity of reading text or reading passage. The purpose of this reading is the learner read the text to get knowledge or analysis through reading shorter text and to get specific information about particular topic.

In different with intensive reading, the extensive reading class will be focused mainly on teachers and students activities. Students silently read large quantities of materials. These materials are usually at a level that permits students to gain at least a fair understanding of what they are reading without outside help (Aliponga, 2013). The students' activities in reading materials provide large amounts of comprehensible input in their new language. This will give benefits in their reading proficiency in overall language.

Novel is a kind of textbook which is determined as extensive reading materials.

This novel commonly contains for many pages. It provides plot, characters, context of settings which contribute to the engagement of the reader. Besides, it is regardless of specific proficiency levels, grammatical figures or writing exercises.

Extensive reading is based on the principle that we learn to read by reading. Appropriate selection of the material for extended reading is an important factor to be considered. Therefore, literary texts (novels) are recommended to be used for extensive reading due to four reasons (Garies et al, 2004).

First, from linguistic development: novels are ideal instruments to support isolated skills due to their length, varied content and to support integration of skills. Novels support the teaching of grammar in both integrated and isolated curricula through built-in context and reforming of forms and structures (Garies et al, 2004).

Second, from cognitive reasons: literature (novel) develops critical thinking skill as they are engaged in the literary texts. The learners are also able to apply their own feelings and ideas regarding them.

Third, from motivation: Garies (2004) stated intensive reading textbooks in the traditional ESOL text books seemed boring. On the contrary, using novels as the course books made readers more enjoyable and it helped them to vary their reading habits.

Fourth, from cultural awareness: learners can discover the way the characters behave, feel and think. Thus, literary works develops understanding of the communication that takes place in that country.

As a part of extensive reading activity, reading novel will be done by students in various ways. They can read the paper books or in the form of e-

books. There is a growing interest in converting paper books to bytes (Shiratuddin, al, 2003) as well as writing new titles in digital form. Through digitising processes, paper books had been converted to a digital format that will be displayed on computers. It is called e-book. It has been extended that book titles that are available online can be retrieved by a portable electronic reading device, or as a file that can be downloaded to a computer (Shiratuddin, Landoni, Gibb and Hassan, 2003).

Based on a 2014 study published in the journal *Library & Information Science Research* found that out of 143 of 10th grade students, most preferred e-readers. Boys and those who did not care much for reading also shared a strong preference for e-readers. They said that "An e-reader has more in common with the electronic devices that young people use all the time, like smartphones or iPads, than a paper book, when it comes to turning of pages, the possibilities of adjusting font size, etc.

From the explanation, it can be stated that reading novel is quite interesting for students in extensive reading class. It can be in the form of paper novel or e-novel. In this article, the writer will focus on describing students' activity while participating in extensive reading class. Besides, it also perform the obstacles which are faced by students in e-novel reading activity.

2 MATERIALS AND METHOD

There are some benefits of using novels as authentic texts to develop students' reading comprehension skills in extensive reading class. Here are some explanations from many previous studies. Based on Tsou (2007), he stated that careful selection of novels as text books is a crucial factor to teach to students of all levels of proficiency. In contrast, with this views other researchers expressed the

obstacles of considering unabridged novel as a course material that may seem as a saying “too radical a leap from tradition”

While Thiongo (1986) mentioned through using well known literary texts and engaging learners in English culture, we are imposing a kind of “cultural imperialism”. In different with the previous researcher, Garroli (2002) stated that there is a need for qualitative studies, focused on learners to explore the relationship between literature, language and students.

Therefore, another factor is to consider students’ opinion about reading novel rather than concentrating on the teachers or instructors alone. The numbers of studies on the use of literature such as short stories and novels as the basic source of authentic texts have been increased. Therefore, the results of EFL /ESL studies on the effect of using stories and novels on reading comprehension were not homogeneous. Ghiabi conducted a research on Iranian students. This study, considered novel as an authentic auxiliary source of reading for Iranian EFL students investigated the possibility of using a novel as the auxiliary material in a college reading course. It focused on evaluating the impression of novel-teaching in terms of students’ subjective perceptions instead of objective linguistic gains (Ghiabi, 2014).

In this article, the writer will focus on the description on e-novel reading activity in extensive reading class. People think that e-novel is one of e-book that is really needed by students in extensive reading activity. Because of the shift paradigm, students tend to get e-novel better than paper novel. Even though the book's migration to the digital world would not be a simple matter, but it would change the way people read books in profound ways. There is great promise and

opportunity in the digital-books revolution (Johnson, 2009).

The students prefer to read e-novel since it is searchable digital text and they can read it on many electronic devices(Mason, 2015). Even though high levels of screen luminance from an electronic device can contribute to visual fatigue. The condition marked by tired, itching, burning eyes. In contrast many people reports that a large percentage of young people read e-novel on their cellular phones while waiting a coffee queue or on public transport. So, it will support the argument that the reading activity by using e-novel is more effective than reading paper novel. Besides saving the money, students can get free internet access easily.

This study was conducted in extensive reading class offered at Tidar University. The class constitutes sixteen weeks meeting in one semester. Each meeting was done in 100 minutes. It had a general goal to foster students’ reading ability in extensive reading class. There are four classes consisted of 30 students for each class. Students’ ages ranged between 19 to 22 years. Since the limited time in this study, the writer only took a class which consists of 25 female students and 5 male students.

The writer carried out a qualitative study to know the students’ opinion when reading e-novel in classroom activities. Besides, it also describes the obstacles when they read e-novel in extensive reading class.

The writer used questionnaire and observation to get the needed data. From the questionnaire, the writer asked some questions like students’ interest in extensive reading class, students’ opinion about e-novel in extensive reading class.

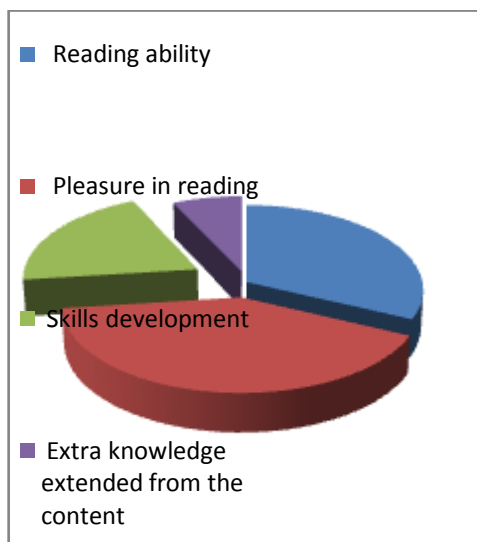
Besides questionnaire, observation was done to know the students’ behaviour when they participate in extensive reading class. The students are also being observed to know whether they enthusiast with e-novel or not.

3RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The writer observed the teaching-learning process in extensive reading class by using the observation sheet. The result of the research showed that many students feel bored in extensive reading class, especially when they have to read paper novel that consists of hundreds pages.

When they read e-novel they were enthusiastic to do the tasks, because they could find many sources in the internet. But, for students who did not have internet access, they might join others to get the materials. The novel is not only in the form of written but it is also completed with audio and visual devices. It gives many benefits to students since the story in the novel become alive. When the teacher asked students to make e-novel review by using various sources in the internet, they were so enthusiastic. They were able to make a short video of novel summary that describe the story in short. From this task, it can be seen that reading e-novel is not difficult as they think in the beginning. Based on the observation, here are the complete results:

Figure1: Students' purpose in reading e-novel

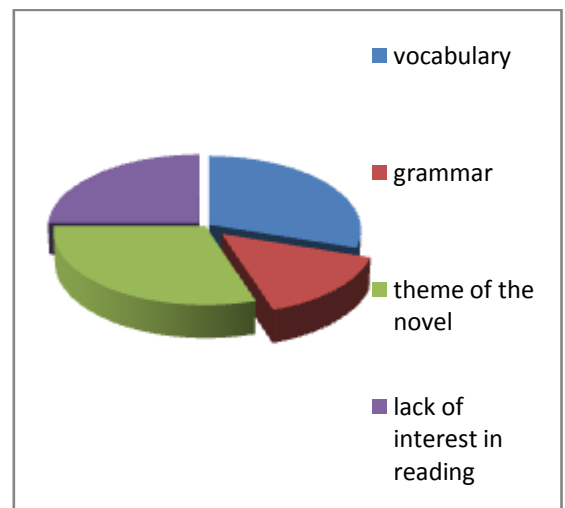


From figure 1, it can be seen that students purpose on reading e-novel mostly for pleasure in reading. They feel

that reading e-novel gave more entertainment in compared with reading another textbook. Besides, the students also got knowledge which relate to their skill in reading. They were trained to read fast without consulting some difficult words in the dictionary. They apply the technique on guessing unknown words through context. In addition, they also got extra knowledge extended from the content. This activity would support students' skill development in reading e-novel in extensive reading class.

There were also some obstacles faced by students during reading e-novel. They are vocabulary, grammar, theme of the novel and lack interest in reading. The result of obstacles faced by students can be seen in the following figure.

Figure2. Obstacles during e-novel reading

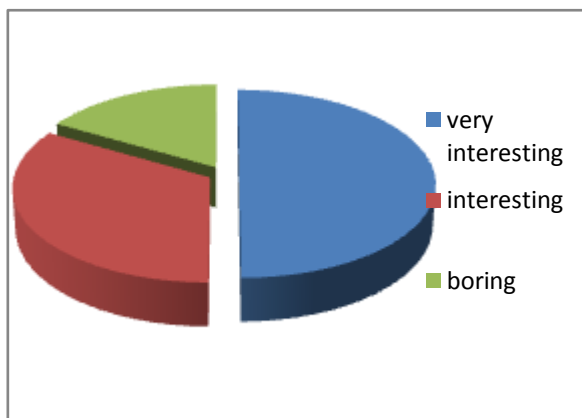


From figure 2, it shows that students mainly have difficulties in grammar and vocabulary, but they can overcome this problem by guessing unknown words. For grammar problem, they tend to leave their problem and continue reading because they think that the point of the story in the novel is more important than its grammar. Besides, they also lack of interest in reading e-novel since they prefer to find the movie version that is easier to understand. But of course there are some missing points in the movie. Students also have difficulty in deciding the

theme of the novel. Their focus is in finishing their novel and finally they are able to do the task dealing with the novel.

Reading e-novel is more interesting when compared to reading paper novel. Students can read the novel anytime and anywhere. They commonly use their laptop or cellular phone to browse the given novel from the teacher. Furthermore, they even can choose their favorite best seller novel from their gadget. Nowadays, many places like shopping mall, café or even bus are completed with internet access facilities (wifi). The result of students' opinion on e-novel can be seen in the following figure

Figure3. Students' opinion on reading e-novel



From figure 3, it can be stated that students' interest on using e-novel are good enough. They explain that reading novel task can be done anytime and anywhere since they do not need to bring thick novel during their activity. Besides, students also realize that there is shift paradigm in recent year. Many literatures and references are available in e-book.

The writer also observed students' activity in reading e-novel during extensive reading class. From the classroom situation, it can be seen that most of the students have already downloaded e-novel which is determined by the teacher. For some students, reading e-novel is interested activity because they can spend their spare time with enjoyable activity. However, on the contrary,

students who cannot afford to have electronic gadget, they prefer to choose paper novel which was borrowed from library. Most of the students think that reading e-novel is interesting since they can read many versions of the novels which are completed with visual figures. It can make the class activity become more alive. Almost a half of students in extensive reading class are very interested in reading e-novel. This result shows that e-novel gives significance support for students during classroom activities. Only the small parts of students in the class say that e-novel reading is boring.

4 CONCLUSION

Extensive reading activity is successful if there are many factors to be considered. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that reading e-novel motivated students to read more, avoid the boredom activity in reading materials of their choice, and enabled them to think critically. Students' responses revealed that they were motivated to read more because e-novel is more interesting to be read especially which is completed with visual figures.

The obstacles come to students when reading e-novel. Some of the students encountered the problems at the initial of reading novels, the high frequency of referring to a dictionary gradually wore out their patience and high frequency of complex grammatical patterns made the content of novel difficult to understand. Because of the limited class hours, some students couldn't participate in the discussions to share data by the whole class in each session. Finally, a few students were not much interested in the classical novels and they are suggested to have an opportunity to select their favourite novel before reading the guide questions in e-novel were believed to be a contributing factor in achieving students goal in extensive reading class.

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