

Reinforcing Reading Comprehension with Summarizing Activities in Extensive Reading Class

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ABSTRACT

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Reading comprehension is crucial for it is indispensable to the formation of an individual's knowledge and perception about particular information obtained. In case of extensive reading context, reading comprehension can be facilitated through various strategies or activities, and one of them is summarizing activities. This study aims to scrutinize the summarizing activities performed by students to reinforce their reading comprehension of extensive reading projects in college. An interview study was employed as the research method by involving three English department students and one extensive reading lecturer as the research participants. Open-ended questions were used to guide the data collection process, and the data were further analyzed qualitatively. The results informed that students did the summarizing activities through several stages, such as dividing the book into several pages to be distributed to all group members, reading their respective pages, doing a focus group discussion (FGD) to discuss their readings, and making a comprehensive summary to be presented in front of the class. These activities were confirmed to facilitate the students in establishing better reading comprehension. In spite of that, any other activities to reinforce reading comprehension still need further investigation to provide several alternative options for use in more specific contexts.

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Introduction

In the process of learning English, students come to recognize the existence of four fundamental skills that must be mastered (e.g., speaking, reading, listening, and writing). One of the most crucial skills is reading proficiency, as it provides students with invaluable exposure to the fundamental aspects of the English language. Reading texts affords students the opportunity to hone their language skills, including vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the construction of sentences, paragraphs, and texts (Harmer, 2001). It is reasonably evident that students' vocabulary expands when they read. This is because reading provides access to a vast array of words, as evidenced by many studies (Elleman et al., 2019; Haerazi et al., 2019).

Furthermore, comprehension of a text is an essential component of reading. It is through this process that students develop their perceptions of reading texts. Moreover, the capacity to discern or identify the information is essential and will not be developed over time. The act of reading can be defined as the process of understanding a written text. This understanding is comprised of two key elements: recognition and perception (Dechant, 2013). This is done to enhance students' critical thinking abilities with regard to their reading comprehension, as proficient reading skills facilitate the ability to discern the information that is required (Par, 2020; Smith et al., 2021).

The development of reading skills can facilitate the construction of more nuanced representations and abilities to comprehend and reconstruct sentences within a text with greater clarity. Dechant (2013) defines reading as the construction of an image of text and as a process of word recognition and comprehension. The integration of these two subprocesses represents a crucial element in this definition. In essence, reading constitutes an indispensable fundamental element, as it inherently facilitates the acquisition of other components of the English language structure.

The development of critical thinking is also contingent upon one's reading habits, which in turn contribute to the formation of a valuable reading skill (Alsaleh, 2020; Bezanilla et al., 2019; Nadeak & Naibaho, 2020). Celik (2019) posited that during reading, the individual establishes a correlation between their existing knowledge base and the information presented in the text. This suggests that an individual can integrate their existing knowledge with information from a reading text to form a novel, continuous concept (Hattan, 2019; Catts, 2022). Therefore, reading plays a pivotal role in the advancement of foreign language learning, as it facilitates the mastery of the language.

The act of reading is an activity that is intrinsic to human existence. Based on their cognitive processes and prior knowledge, readers may internalize the information they are reading (Ma'rifah et al., 2017). When individuals seek to obtain information from a given source, whether online or offline, they will naturally engage in reading and examination until they have successfully acquired the desired information. It is unfortunate that students sometimes encounter difficulties when reading, such as the challenge of reading in English, which is not their native language, and subsequently failing to comprehend the information they read.

The above-mentioned difficulties need to be explored more in-depth. Firstly, some students may encounter difficulties in learning to read English due to the perception that reading is challenging, which can subsequently lead to feelings of inadequacy and a lack of motivation to study the language (Nurmalasari & Haryudin, 2021; Septia et al., 2022). The inability to read English and a lack of vocabulary both contribute to low self-esteem (Guban-Caisido, 2020; Sunarti et al., 2019). Furthermore, it diminishes the student's motivation to persevere with the task at hand (Mao et al., 2020). A second issue is that students are unable to read printed text effectively. This suggests that

students are unable to comprehend the written material (Widyawati & Fahri, 2014). Consequently, students are expected to develop proficiency in a number of key areas to support their reading ability and facilitate the acquisition of desired information, including vocabulary, sentence structure, and an understanding of word meanings.

In order to facilitate the development of students' reading abilities, a number of strategies can be employed. The process that facilitates comprehension is referred to as a "strategy," which encompasses the reader's understanding of comprehension challenges and the selection of the most appropriate method to address them (Brevik, 2019). These strategies include planning, monitoring reading, and evaluating reading (Shih & Huang, 2018). In this context, planning reading entails an initial assessment of the material, based on the title and cover design, to determine whether it is likely to be a source of interest. In other words, the visual representation of the text to be read will be continuously present in the mind of the reader. Consequently, when the student engages with the text, they are able to anticipate the content and envision the information in their mind's eye. During reading activities, students can engage in self-monitoring of their reading by checking unfamiliar words. This process can facilitate the expansion of their vocabulary. The extent to which students may utilize the knowledge obtained through reading in different contexts is a subject of debate (Do & Phan, 2021). From these inquiries, they can assess the outcomes of their reading.

Visual imagery can also serve as an advanced strategy that facilitates the development of reading skills (Guo et al., 2020). By presenting an engaging text, students can develop a visual representation of the text in their mind, which they can then use to explain the ideas they have gleaned from the reading. In this reading comprehension approach, students employ visual imagery to learn new content by converting the information to be acquired into meaningful visual, aural, or kinesthetic pictures (Nadhif & Hidayat, 2019). This strategy is regarded as an efficacious approach to enhance students' reading comprehension, as it is designed to facilitate their understanding of a given text. Furthermore, this visual imagery will facilitate students' transition to a more sophisticated reading method, namely extensive reading.

Extensive reading is an evidence-based method that students can use to enhance their reading abilities (Ateek, 2021; Azkia et al., 2021; Meng, 2009). Extensive reading is a method of reading in which students select the books that align with their personal interests, thereby fostering a relaxed and enjoyable reading experience from the outset. Extensive reading (ER) represents an instructional and learning strategy that offers a substantial amount of input in the target language (Fujii, 2022). It is essential that this method be undertaken in a relaxed manner, with students deriving enjoyment from the books they read. It is not feasible for students to engage in extensive reading for an extended period if they do not derive enjoyment from the process. As a result, they

may opt to discontinue the practice of extensive reading, citing tedium or ineffectiveness as their rationale (Fujii, 2022). Moreover, English is a foreign language for Indonesian students. This can result in difficulties when reading an English book. It is therefore hoped that the Extensive Reading strategy will enable them to improve their reading skills as much as possible.

The strategy of extensive reading is designed to facilitate the development of reading skills by providing an enjoyable and engaging experience. Consequently, students will be motivated to read more frequently and at a faster pace. This is the constructive feedback cycle that has been shown to have a beneficial impact on comprehension (Mikulecky & Jeffries, 2007). Furthermore, the extensive reading method is regarded as a valuable approach for enhancing reading comprehension abilities. By engaging with books that are both engaging and aligned with their personal interests, students can foster a deeper understanding of the subject matter. It is therefore crucial to select an appropriate text in order to achieve the desired outcomes of this extensive reading method.

To enhance the efficacy of extensive reading, a technique may be employed: namely, summarizing. In extensive reading, students typically select the books they find most appealing to read. Therefore, summarizing can serve as an indicator of students' comprehension of the books they read. Summarizing is regarded as one of the reading techniques that enables pupils to comprehend the text more thoroughly while also serving as an indicator of comprehension (Pečjak & Pirc, 2018). Furthermore, summarizing can assist students in conveying the essential elements of the books they have read to an audience. The act of summarizing information enables students to elucidate its significance and retain it in their long-term memory (Ramirez-Avila & Barreiro, 2021). It is thus anticipated that the implementation of summarizing will facilitate an enhancement in students' reading comprehension abilities, as facilitated by the extensive reading method.

A number of studies have been conducted on the subject of summarizing. The study conducted by Widyawati and Fahri (2014) demonstrated that the utilization of summarizing as an instructional approach for teaching students to read narrative texts could facilitate their acquisition of new vocabulary. The utilisation of summarizing techniques has been demonstrated to enhance reading comprehension, facilitate the rapid comprehension of textual content and foster inventive writing. This assertion is further supported by a study conducted by Ma'rifah et al. (2017), which indicates that educators can utilize summarizing exercises to assist students in comprehending textual material more effectively, particularly in discerning the text's central argument. There has been an observable increase in vocabulary, inference, information discovery, and other skills. However, the component that has demonstrated the most significant growth is the one that determines the key concept. Additionally, students indicated that summaries facilitated their comprehension of concepts and served as a measure of their knowledge. The use of summaries as a teaching method has been demonstrated to be an effective approach for enhancing students'

reading comprehension across diverse textual and subject matter domains (Ramirez-Avila & Barreiro, 2021). Nevertheless, there is a paucity of research at the university level.

Additionally, several studies have been conducted regarding extensive reading. The study conducted by Thanh & Vien (2021) indicated that the implementation of extensive reading (ER) in reading courses not only enhances students' reading abilities but also cultivates a passion for reading. This is corroborated by the assertion that the preliminary phase of substantial reading is a crucial element in the initiation of instructors and students. A comprehensive study has also demonstrated the multifaceted benefits of extensive reading for language acquisition (Tien, 2015). Moreover, Suk (2017) asserted that despite the allotment of merely 30% of the available instructional time to the teaching of rigorous reading, the L2 reading abilities and L2 vocabulary acquisition of the students exhibited notable improvement. Nevertheless, it is challenging to locate research studies that utilize students as the primary subject of investigation.

The objective of this research is to investigate the benefits of incorporating summarizing activities into extensive reading classes. Despite the fact that some studies employ students as research subjects, it remains challenging to locate research that specifically focuses on students with an English major as its primary research subject. The research question addressed in this study is as follows: (1) How do students reinforce their reading comprehension through the use of summarizing activities in Extensive Reading class?

Method

The research subjects are students from the University of Muhammadiyah in Banjarmasin. This research was conducted on November 13th. In this study, the researcher analyzed the students' summarizing activities after presenting their book in class. The subjects of this research are 3 students of the English Department batch 2021/2022. The subjects were purposely chosen since they were considered the best student of the lecturer's suggestion that known how students' progress in Extensive Reading class this far. The summary assignment was carried out with the hope that these students would build their speaking skills and enhance their critical thinking in speaking English. It is crucial for them to be able to communicate confidently and critically so that they can function in an academic society and perform well in their studies.

This study employed a qualitative research approach, involving data collection, classification, analysis, and conclusion drawing without generalization. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative research investigates and comprehends the meanings individuals or groups assign to social or human problems. It aims to uncover the reasons and mechanisms behind social phenomena. The qualitative method was chosen as the research sought to describe a specific phenomenon, providing an explanation of a factual occurrence in the field. This study focused on summarizing activities among students in an extensive reading class with three student subjects and one teaching

instructor.

The researchers employed semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. These interviews were conducted to obtain additional information pertinent to the research study. In the context of descriptive qualitative research, semi-structured interviews are often the most appropriate interview type. This interview format effectively balances structured and unstructured elements, providing both guidance and flexibility. Notably, semi-structured interviews are particularly well-suited for descriptive qualitative research because they follow a predetermined series of open-ended questions while also allowing the interviewer the flexibility to explore topics in greater depth as they arise during the conversation.

The primary characteristics of the data collection method are its structured format, which includes a well-defined set of questions or topics that guarantee the coverage of all pertinent areas. This systematic approach facilitates the comprehensive description of the phenomenon under investigation. Furthermore, the method incorporates flexibility, allowing the interviewer to delve deeper into specific responses provided by the interviewee, thereby uncovering more comprehensive and detailed information. Depth and breadth interviews facilitate comprehensive data acquisition, encompassing both the overarching scope and the intricate details of the subject matter. Furthermore, adaptability empowers the interviewer to modify questions to align more effectively with the context of each interview, rendering it suitable for diverse participants or environments.

This research used informed consent to fulfill research ethics. Informal consent has been prepared before conducting research in the designated place. This research was carried out with the permission of the parties involved, so that the data obtained was legal and could be explored in more depth. There are three main types of informed consent: implied, oral, and written ([Jameson & Al-Tarawneh, 2022](#)).

Qualitative research, particularly in this study, was conducted after obtaining the necessary approvals and permissions from the research participants. It is imperative for the researcher to diligently consider any potential negative consequences that any of the participants may experience as a result of their involvement in the study ([Dooly et al., 2017](#)). Consequently, despite the researcher's best efforts to anticipate and address ethical concerns, unforeseen negative consequences may still arise. In such instances, the study should be promptly terminated or modified accordingly. Furthermore, researchers must give careful consideration to the protection of participants' confidentiality and privacy. This privacy is exclusively granted to the research participants.

It was essential to establish meticulous agreements with the study participants to ascertain whether their identities would be revealed. Another consideration was the potential usage of videos

and other identifying elements. Informed consent was directly linked to this as the core component of an ethical research form. Research subjects were entitled to adequate information about the study to make an informed decision regarding their participation. In the case of minors, parental consent should be mandatory (usually obtained through schools or specific clubs) (Dooly et al., 2017). This protocol facilitated increased comfort and cooperation from the participant while the researcher collected data to obtain the results and findings of the study.

After collecting the necessary data, it was further analyzed through several stages known as the interactive model of qualitative data analysis promoted by Miles et al. (2014), namely data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The first stage of data analysis in the current study is data condensation, which was carried out during and after the research, mainly in the steps of transcription and coding. Both transcription and coding are essential for the analysis process that will be further presented in a specific diagram or table, as will be discussed in the data analysis stage that follows in this study. Data condensation is followed by data display, therefore all the implications learned from the condensed or concentrated data should be covered by the data explained in this study. Since conclusion is the last phase of data analysis, all of the final reports produced in the first two phases—data transcription and coding in the first stage, and data matrix or presentation in the second—are represented in this conclusion.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the summarizing process undertaken by students in the extensive reading class entails retelling the books they have read in groups, with the pages from each book divided among group members. As stated by Participant D, she distributed the pages of the book to her group members, who then organized them in a way that allowed them to relate the information on each page to one another. Furthermore, Participants B and C indicated that they were encouraged to select the book they were most engaged with, with the objective of facilitating their summarizing process. This approach was deemed to enhance the efficacy of the summarizing activity, as it aligned with the participants' intrinsic motivation and interest. This assertion is corroborated by the lecturer of the extensive reading course, who asserts that students are capable of producing effective summaries if they possess a foundation of fundamental reading skills. One such strategy is to afford students the autonomy to select the book that most piques their interest. This approach is designed to facilitate the attainment of the subject's extensive reading objectives, including fostering comprehension of the books they read.

*"In my extensive reading class, I put students into several groups and **asked them to choose the one they were most interested in. Then, I asked them to read every chapter of the book and present the results in front of the class every week.**" (Lecturer, live interview, 2022)*

Furthermore, participants A, B, C, and D asserted that through the process of summarizing the books they read, they perceived a gradual enhancement in their reading abilities, as they endeavored to discern the intended message of the text. This assertion is corroborated by the opinions of the course lecturer, as conveyed in the course interviews. The lecturer's view is that for the course to meet its objectives, students must gain an understanding of the books they read.

*"In this field, I **want** the students to inure reading English book as far as they can. As the output, I asked them to resume the book for every chapter. **From this output, I want to know how far they can understand the book kindly.**" (Lecturer, live interview, 2022)*

In recounting the books they had read, all participants indicated that, in the initial stages of the process, they had engaged in summarizing as a means of facilitating the retelling of the books. In this instance, Participant A stated that to reinforce the process of summarizing the book, they also linked the resulting summary to everyday life, thereby facilitating a deeper comprehension of the conveyed message among the listeners. This assertion was corroborated by the opinion of Participant B, who also linked the summarizing results to everyday life, thus ensuring the accurate conveyance of the intended meaning.

*"Well, when the lecturer asked us to resume the book, obviously I think I need to summarize the book and get the meaning. **To support my summarizing result, I linked every important part of the book to increase my understanding of the book, and of course to make sure my summary is already correct.**" (Participant A and B, live interview, 2022)*

In addition, Participant C indicated that to obtain optimal summarizing outcomes, they engaged in discourse with their colleagues to align the content of the book with the intended meaning, thereby ensuring the accuracy of their summarization. Subsequently, participant C integrated the outcomes of his summarization with the context of everyday life, thereby enabling listeners to comprehend the intended meaning.

*"Well, this is my first time to resume the whole book and present it in front of the class. It is quite hard for me to summarize it, and I do not really understand English books. **That is why, to resume the book, I usually discuss my result to my teammates, just to make sure my summary could make sense and the audience can understand what I am saying.**" (Participant C, live interview, 2022)*

This viewpoint was also endorsed by participant D, who asserted that to achieve the optimal summarizing outcomes, participant D engaged in a similar process with their group members, facilitating a more straightforward retelling of the book in question and enhancing the comprehension of the listeners. Participant D engaged in this process because, in addition to achieving the desired summarizing outcomes, she encountered significant challenges in

comprehending the narrative of the book in question.

*“Summarizing texts from English book is my weakness. This is not because of the English, but it’s really hard to understand the book this far. From this assignment, I challenge myself to summarize the book as good as I can. After I summarized the book, **I always ask my friend to give the same perception. We are doing this because every chapter has correlation, and I think this is going well because we did the correlation kindly.**”*

(Participant D, live interview, 2022)

In relation to the book students were required to read, they were permitted to select the books they wished to read in order to fulfill the purpose of reading, thereby affording them the opportunity to read widely and discover English phrases, both of which have been demonstrated to enhance reading comprehension and enjoyment (Selian et al., 2022). This view is also supported by the opinion of the lecturer who teaches this extensive reading course. He stated that students are able to produce effective summaries if they have a solid foundation in basic reading skills. One such skill is the ability to choose a book that aligns with their interests. This approach allows students to engage with texts that resonate with them, thereby facilitating the attainment of the extensive reading course's objectives. One of these objectives is for students to comprehend the messages conveyed in the books they read. Moreover, students will demonstrate a notable enhancement in their curiosity and reading motivation. Given the intrinsic appeal of the subject matter, it is reasonable to posit that students will evince a greater enthusiasm and eagerness to read. Students will require less time to read the content if they are accustomed to using this method (Widyawati & Fahri, 2014). Therefore, this approach allows students to develop their ability to summarize by selecting books that pique their interest.

Another step in the process of summarizing text is to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant knowledge, which will facilitate students' ability to comprehend the text. The act of summarizing is a technique that enables students to organize their thoughts even in lengthy reading sections, which are often perceived as intimidating (Küçükoğlu, 2013). This approach will facilitate the students' familiarity with English-language books, given the extended timeframe, and will enhance their reading abilities over time.

The results of this study demonstrate the efficacy of utilizing summarizing activities to enhance reading skills. Participants A, B, C, and D expressed similar opinions regarding the enhancement of their reading abilities. The participants indicated that they are becoming more accustomed to reading books throughout the course of the semester and are beginning to discern meaning from the texts they have read. The students indicated that reading tactics such as revisiting, recognizing a story's aspects, and noting the most crucial details could facilitate comprehension of descriptive and informational literature (Ramirez-Avila & Barreiro, 2021). Despite persistent challenges in

reading books, participants have begun to familiarize themselves with the vocabulary encountered in English-language texts. This is due to their engagement in summarizing their reading materials, which enables them to translate and adapt the meaning of challenging vocabulary to align with the context of the original sentences in the book. In essence, the summarizing activities undertaken in this extensive reading class have led to notable advancements in their reading abilities.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that students' reading skills were enhanced through the implementation of summarizing activities within the context of extensive reading. These activities facilitated the development of summarizing skills through the retelling of the contents of books read in groups. In reading the book, students were permitted to select the book that most piques their interest, thereby optimizing the results of their summarization. This approach is also contingent on the students' fundamental reading abilities. The topic's intrinsic appeal will engender enthusiasm and eagerness to read among the students, and the time required to read the content will be reduced if they are accustomed to using this method. Thus, students were afforded the opportunity to read the books of their choosing in a relaxed and unpressured manner. All participants in this study exhibited an enhancement in their reading abilities. The students indicated that, over the course of the semester, they had become somewhat accustomed to reading books and were beginning to discern meaning from the texts they had read. Despite remaining challenges in reading books, the students reported an increased familiarity with the vocabulary encountered in English-language books. In essence, the summarizing activities undertaken in this extensive reading class have led to notable advancements in their reading abilities.

In light of the findings yielded by the research, a number of recommendations can be put forth for consideration by lecturers, students, and other researchers. The following recommendations are proposed: 1) It is incumbent upon lecturers to establish an engaging learning environment for students and to implement effective learning strategies that align with student summarization activities, thereby ensuring the attainment of learning objectives. Moreover, lecturers may offer consultation sessions to students encountering difficulties in the summarization process. Furthermore, it is recommended that assignments in the form of summarizing books be continued, as this will facilitate familiarity with English books and facilitate the improvement of reading skills over time. 2) It is imperative that students avail themselves of every opportunity to address the challenges they encounter while reading this book. It is anticipated that students' reading skills will increase in a relatively short period of time, with the expectation that they will reach a satisfactory level within the allotted timeframe of one semester. 3) The authors hope that future research will yield findings that differentiate between students, as this study is limited to students enrolled in extensive reading courses.

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