❏   172

Extensive reading among Agroecotechnology students: What and why they read?

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	Reading is a pivotal skill for non-English department students as a vehicle to update their knowledge. One of reading activity which is beneficial is extensive reading. Several studies have proved the advantage of extensive reading, but study regarding what reading material is read by students is under explored. To fill this gap, this research aimed to uncover what non-English department students read during extensive reading program and why they chose that theme. The participants were Agroecotechnology students (n=52). The data was collected from the reading log sheet and participant interview. The reading log sheet was analyzed by the researcher to find the theme of the text that students read. The interview was conducted in Indonesian to make students at ease. After the interview, the transcript was written and translated into English. The result shows that there are 32 types of themes with various frequency distributions. Theme that students read is mainly caused by their hobby, favorite idol, and a senior student who influence them to read certain theme.

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1. INTRODUCTION

First Language (L1) reading is a skill which is initially taught in school. Student is introduced to alphabet at their early education and, then, learn how to read a text. In similar vein, Second Language (L2) reading is also introduced at first during student learn L2 language. Student learns various reading strategies in order to fill the purposes of reading. It is also the case for non-English department who take English course. In English course, non-English department students are equipped with reading skill. It is expected that the students can gain information related their major of study by reading. Therefore, reading is pivotal skill for non-English department students as a vehicle to update their knowledge.

For non-English department students, vocabulary development assists them comprehend text related their major of study. Reading provides vocabulary learning for students. By reading a lot, students can encounter word with varied use. During reading, students can give attention to words to acquire them because vocabulary learning depends on "the quality of meetings" with the word [1]. Nation [1] mentioned two types of attention that students do (incidental and deliberate attention). With a lot of vocabulary knowledge that student have, they will not find difficulty to read text. Therefore, vocabulary learning plays as fuel, while reading plays as vehicle for non-English department.

Regarding the importance of reading for non-English department students, teaching reading activity needs more attention in classroom. Students needs reading classroom activity which cover vocabulary

learning. One of reading activity which is beneficial is extensive reading. Extensive reading means students read a lot of reading text in accordance with their language competence. Extensive reading offers students with text exposure. Students, with the text exposure, are expected to gain vocabulary and knowledge related to their major of study.

Several studies have confirmed the benefit of extensive reading. Nhapulo *et al.* [2] found that extensive reading improves students reading speed. Macalister [3] added that students have positive response toward extensive reading in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program. Suk [4] found that extensive reading can increase students' vocabulary.

The objective of English course in the present study is to help student to improve their writing ability and also equip students with reading ability so that students can read references related to their major of study. Therefore, extensive reading was applied in the classroom in order to familiarize students with text. Several studies have proved the advantage of extensive reading, but study regarding what reading material is read by students is limited. To fill this gap, the present study aimed to uncover what non-English department students read during extensive reading program and why they chose that theme.

2.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reading is an essential part for learning a language. It provides language input for acquiring new vocabularies. Renandya and Jacobs [5] stated that L2 learners gain improvement in vocabulary by exposing them with a lot of language input. The more learners get an access to large portion of language input, the more likely they learn language. One alternative to offer students with a lot of language input is extensive reading. Yamashita [6] supported that input-rich learning environment is through extensive reading.

Extensive reading is defined that students read a lot of texts that they want to read. Several studies implement extensive reading by using graded readers [3], [7], [8] because the graded readers have a scaffold level, from easy to difficult, for students to choose. However, Waring [9] contended that extensive reading is not required be in scaffolded or graded. The reading materials for extensive is not always graded readers, it can be teacher-made reading materials if the school cannot afford to purchase the published graded readers.

Abundant extensive reading researches have been conducted using various research participants and settings. In South Korea setting, Lee *et al.* [10] conducted an experiment study to find out the effect of extensive reading and translation on grammar knowledge and attitudes involving middle school students. They concluded that extensive reading and translation activities was effective to improve grammar knowledge. In Mozambique, Nhapulo *et al.* [2] conducted extensive reading for 16 weeks. The participants were university students majoring in Journalism. They conclude that extensive reading gave a good impact on students' reading speed and reading comprehension. In Japan, McLean and Rouault [11] conducted experimental research about the effect of extensive reading on reading rate. Their participants were university students. They used graded readers for extensive reading group. They found that extensive reading significantly affects students' reading rate. In addition, Aka [12] also found that extensive reading affects high school students' language knowledge and reading performance.

In Indonesia, Wardani [13] conducted speed reading and extensive reading activities on the improvement of students' reading fluency. Her research involved secondary school students. She used classroom action research design. Her findings showed that speed reading and extensive reading can improve students reading fluency. Wahjudi [14] applied extensive reading in her class named extensive reading course for sixth or seventh semester students of English department. She suggested that extensive reading can be applied earlier, and match the kind of readers with students' proficiency and interest. Edy [15] also conducted extensive reading research. He used quasi-factorial design. His participants were second semester students of English department. He tried to know the effectiveness of extensive reading on reading comprehension and the students' motivation. His result showed that extensive reading is effective to improve reading comprehension, but "there was no interaction with students' motivation". Those previous researches in Indonesia reveal the effect of extensive reading on reading ability and the participants were secondary and English department students. Extensive reading for non-English department university students is rarely conducted. Furthermore, extensive reading regarding the reading text that students read and the reason why the students read a particular text is under explored. To fill this gap, the present research aimed to uncover what non-English department students read during extensive reading program and the reason why the students read a particular text.

3.   RESEARCH METHOD

The participants of this research were students from Faculty of Agriculture majoring in Agroecotechnology. The site of the research was one of university in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. There were two classes involved in this research (n=52). The participants were informed about the research to ask

whether they were willing to join or not. They were willing to join the research. The participants were freshmen. The freshmen were chosen because, based on curriculum, English course was offered for the first year students. The class were held twice a week lasts for 100 minutes each. Furthermore, the participants come from different region of Indonesia with various reading interest. The research was conducted for seven weeks starting from beginning of semester until midterm semester.

The participants were given a weekly reading log sheet. Students filled out the weekly log to monitor their readings [16]. The reading log sheet consisted of five columns, namely week, title, comment, vocabulary, and sources. Week was the due date when students submit the reading log. Title was an article students read. Comment was students' opinion after they read the article. Students only write two or three sentences in the comment. Vocabulary was difficult vocabulary that students found in the text. Students should write the Indonesian meaning of difficult vocabulary in that column. Sources was the source where students get the text e.g., website or book.

During the research, the participants were asked to read any text such as website article, novel, research article outside classroom weekly. The participants can read everywhere using their smartphone. They were given freedom to read anything they liked. They were required to read one article every week and fill out the reading log sheet. There was no theme limitation about what students may read in order to be in line with the objective of the research. The reading log sheet was submitted to the lecturer on the due date. The reading log was signed by the lecturer to indicate that the students had already submitted weekly, and then returned it to students.

The data was collected from the reading log sheet and participant interview. There were 364 texts from all participants (n=52). At week seven, the reading log sheet was submitted and kept by the researcher. The reading log sheet was analyzed by the researcher to find the theme of the text that students read. The title was analyzed and source was opened to read the article and then find the theme of the article read by the students. After that, the same theme was grouped and tabulated. Students who had read the same theme for seven weeks were interviewed. Semi-structured interview was used for interview. The interview was used to know why students chose that article. The interview was conducted in Indonesian to make students at ease. After the interview, the transcript was written and translated into English. From the transcript, the researcher identifies the reason why student chose that article. The interviews were stopped when the data was saturated.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
4.1. Students' reading themes

Based on the analysis of reading log sheet, the following results were obtained. It is found that there are 32 types of themes with various frequency distributions. The total number of frequency distribution of the theme is 364. The list of themes and the frequency distribution are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. List of themes and its frequency distribution

No	Theme	f	No.	Theme	f	No.	Theme	f
1	Technology	11	16	Education	16	31	Novel	10
2	Story	20	17	Fisheries	1	31	Photography	1
3	News	66	18	Games	1	32	Art	1
4	Animal	3	19	Religion	3			
5	Tourism	10	20	Psychology	10			
6	Entertainment	33	21	Culture	4			
7	Sport	29	22	Biography	1			
8	Agriculture	44	23	Ecosystem	1			
9	Traveling	4	24	Architecture	1			
10	Automotive	2	25	Parenting	1			
11	Music	12	26	Food	8			
12	Health	41	27	Mining	3			
13	Economy	8	28	Livestock	2			
14	Environment	11	29	Politics	1			
15	Fashion	3	30	Science	2			
							Total frequency	364

Table 1 shows that the theme that students read are diverse. The theme is free-ranging starting from art to science, from education to politics, from health to entertainment, from sport to travelling. This wide range theme which students read offer students with different reading strategy and purpose. Renandya [17]

stated that extensive reading provides students with various genre and topic therefore students can read for different purpose.

The most frequent theme that students read is news, followed by agriculture and health. This result is surprising because students' major of study is Agroecotechnology which is closely related with agriculture, but agriculture theme is in the second highest frequency, not the highest frequency. It is possibly caused by students' study period. They are still in the first year of study therefore they are lack of exposure about agriculture theme. They just read what interest them. News is the most interesting theme for students by looking at the result on Table 1. It implies two things. First, students want to update their knowledge by reading news. Second, news is easier to find in internet. Students just insert keyword in search engine. Then, a lot of news suddenly appear. As stated in interview "I inserted keyword in search engine "*berita dalam bahasa Inggris* (news in English)". It came up with BBC website".

In sport theme, students like to read popular sports such as football and basketball. Students read sport because it interests them. Students stated in interview "basketball is interest of me" and "I do like football". Education theme is interesting to note because students are amazed with other country education system. They want to know how an education system looks like in overseas. By looking at the comment column in reading log sheet, students ask the government to implement the education system in Finland because Finland has a good education system.

In news theme, students read both domestic and international news. They read wide range of news topic including plane crash in Nepal, mount eruption in Indonesia, political issue and others. The news students read is updated. It implies that students want to read to gain information or knowledge. Renandya [18] stated that extensive reading can expand student's knowledge. In agriculture theme, students are interested in this theme because her laboratory assistant told her. As stated in interview "since I was in first semester, I started to be interested in this theme because of my laboratory assistant". It shows that student I interested to a particular theme because other people encourage her to read.

Entertainment is also interesting to note because this theme has relatively high frequency. Students only read international celebrities including actors or actress, singer, boyband and film. Students want to know the update information about their celebrity idol. Students follow a certain international celebrity because of his/her physical appearance. As in interview "because Zayn Malik is handsome".

Some students like to read serious to pleasure theme. It implies that students read based on their interest. Extensive reading provides students with maximum exposure to read text attracting their interest [19]. They just want to read what they want to, regardless their major of study. Renandya [17] stated that "students choose what they want to read". Furthermore, they read not only non-fiction but also fiction. Novel and story are also read by students. Students read extensively not only to improve reading skill but also to gain information and pleasure.

4.2. Students' response on their texts

By looking at comment column in reading log sheet, researcher can know what student opinion after they read the text. A student wrote that she gains information by reading that text "*this article is great because it informed us more about a healthy diet and a good food for teens*". Day and Bamford [20] stated that one of the reading purposes in extensive reading is obtaining information. Another student gave suggestion after he read the sport theme as if he were the manager of football team. He wrote "*Perhaps Chelsea FC must stop buying loads of players, loaning them out and then complain about having a small squad. Try giving your academy player chance*". Still the same student gave his analysis about football game. He wrote "*I think that the weakness of Dortmund in its defensive line causing a draw result against Augusburg*".

A student also wrote a hope for Indonesia education in her comment. She hopes that Indonesia education system can replicate the system in Finland. She wrote "*After reading this article, I can find out what kind of school system in Finland and my opinion need to be emulated and applied in Indonesia because it's very effective to produce students who are successful in academic*". Another student expresses her feeling toward the story she read. She wrote "*the story was deep insides and touching me because we can learn that a family and life are valuable in the world*". The student understands the story therefore she feels touching. Through reading story, student does not only express her/his feeling but also learn moral value embedded in the story. As a student wrote "*work today and you can reap the benefits tomorrow. That's the moral you can get from this text*".

A student invites other Indonesia citizen to preserve the culture that Indonesia has. She wrote "*as citizens of Indonesia, then our duty is to preserve batik*". Reading text sometimes motivate a student to be better like what a student wrote in his comment "*this makes me more motivated to become a reliable billiard player*".

Students write down comment after they read text as a follow-up activity. Making oral or written review, discussing with peers and making presentation regarding the text read are an alternative for post-

reading activity [21]. From this comment, it is known how far student understand about what they read. Some students give comment variously based on their understanding. Day and Bamford [20] stated that follow-up activities are used "to find out what student understood and experienced from the reading". Wahjudi [14] added that post-reading activity is used to record students' accomplishment.

4.3. Students' reason in choosing the theme
          There were seven students interviewed. They were interviewed because they read same theme during 7-week. The results of interviews were transcribed and presented in Transcript 1- transcript 7.
Transcript 1
          "*Why did you choose sport theme?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Basketball is interest of me*" (Student)
          "*When did you start to like basketball?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Junior high school*" (Student)
          "*Did you like sport text*?" (Lecturer)
          "*Yes. I followed NBA*" (Student)
          "*How did you get the text? Were you googling or to the website?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Website and Instagram*" (Student)
          "*Did you follow the website?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Yes. I firstly followed the Instagram but I open the website for details*" (Student)
          "*So, you like basketball thus you follow the website updates*" (Lecturer)
Transcript 2
          "*Why did you choose sport theme?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Because I like sport, especially soccer*" (Student)
          "*When did you start to like soccer?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Elementary school. I joined soccer school when I was in elementary school*" (Student)
          "*How did you get the text?*" (Lecturer)
          "*From one website because the website is complete and keep update daily, like information about player transfer*" (Student)
          "*Did you frequently open the website?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Yes, especially when I had a free time and wanted to transfer of player*" (Student)

          From the transcript, it shows that students read sport theme because they like sport "*because I like sport, especially soccer*" and "*basketball is interest of me*". Students read information regarding their favorite sport. They do not want to obsolete of information regarding their favorite sport. They read some texts which is interesting for them. Factor that urges student to read is students' favorite theme. They read because they like that theme, and update information by following a certain website and Instagram.
Transcript 3
          "*Why did you choose entertainment theme?*" (Lecturer)   :
          "*At the beginning I was confused. Then, I searched for entertainment like BTS, Ariana Grande because I like BTS, and also, I am fans of Ariana Grande*" (Student)
          "*What is BTS?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Bangtan Boys, Boyband from Korea*" (Student)
          "*Did you follow the career of BTS?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Yes, I like the song and personnel*" (Student)
          "*How did you get the text?*" (Lecturer)
          "*I searched in google, then it comes up the information about BTS. Thus, I did not follow the website*" (Student)
          "*What key term did you insert in google?*" (Lecturer)
          "*New news BTS, new single of Ariana Grande*" (Student)
          "*So, you have predetermined topic before you browse internet*" (Lecturer)
Transcript 4
          "*Why did you choose entertainment theme?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Because I was interested in entertainment*" (Student)
          "*What was interest of you?*" (Lecturer)
          "*I'm fans of Zayn Malik*" (Student)
          "*Why?*" (Lecturer)
          "*Because Zayn Malik is handsome and has good voice*" (Student)
          "*How did you get the text about Zayn Malik?*" (Lecturer)

"Firstly, I followed Instagram, then I opened the website for details because Instagram
provide only a glimpse, not complete" (Student)
"So, you have a predetermined theme, then browse internet" (Lecturer)

From Transcript 3 and 4, it shows that students are the fans of celebrity. The reason why students like that celebrity is physical appearance *"Zayn Malik is handsome"*. They read the updated information about their celebrity idol. Students insert key term in search engine *"new news BTS, new single of Ariana Grande"*. It implies that students keep updated information regarding their idols. In addition, they also follow Instagram in order to be updated. From the interview, it shows that students are encourage to read because of their celebrity idol updates. They read Instagram and then open website address for details to read the updated information regarding their idols.

Transcript 5

"Why did you choose agriculture theme, especially pest?" (Lecturer)
"Since I was in first semester, I started to be interested in this theme because of my
laboratory assistant" (Student)
"Were you a laboratory assistant?" (Lecturer)
"No, my laboratory assistant last semester" (Student)
"What do you mean?" (Lecturer)
"Assistant who taught me in practicum" (Student)
"How did you find the text?" (Lecturer)
"I have the book" (Student)
"Are you interested in pest?" (Lecturer)
"Yes, because my laboratory assistant told me that the book is the basic that I should read if
I want to take plant and pest disease study program" (Student)
"What information did you get form reading the book?" (Lecturer)
"The book provides characteristics of pest, its ordo, specified plant that the pest eat, way of
life and breeding" (Student)
"So, you have a book and interested in pest. Therefore, you deepen your knowledge" (Lecturer)

Transcript 5 shows that student is interested to read a particular theme because someone told her. Her laboratory assistant told her to read the book because the book contains a lot of information regarding pest and it is a basic book for plant pest and disease *"my laboratory assistant told me that the book is the basic that I should read if I want to take plant and pest disease study program"*. Student have already planned what she wants to study further. She equipped herself by reading book related to her interest of study. She wants to take plant pest and disease study program.

Transcript 6

"Why did you choose a novel?" (Lecturer)
"Because I had novel at home" (Student)
"Is the novel in English?" (Lecturer)
"Yes. I used to buy English novel but there was no time to read" (Student)
"When did you start to buy English novel?" (Lecturer)
"Senior high school" (Student)
"Do you have a lot of novels?" (Lecturer)
"No. not many just a few" (Student)

From transcript above, a student read novel because she has few novels at home which she did not read yet. The reason why student read is that the available readings at home is novel. Student stated *"because I had novel at home"*. It shows that extensive reading give opportunity for student to read something which was not read before. In addition, student read readings available at home. The students read the books they have at home [22].

Transcript 7

"Why did you choose news theme?" (Lecturer)
"I inserted keyword in search engine "news in English" then it came up with BBC website" (Student)
"Were you googling?" (Lecturer)
"Yes" (Student)
"No predetermined theme? Just googling?" (Lecturer)
"Yes googling" (Student)
"What information did you get from reading the text?" (Lecturer)
"Overseas information like a lion ate its hunter" (Student)

> "*When you were in BBC website, there are a lot of news titles, why did you choose that news?*" (Lecturer)
> "*I was interested in the title of news that I read*" (Student)
> "*How about the vocabulary? Easy or difficult?*" (Lecturer)
> "*I understand the vocabulary. The vocabulary is complicated but I understand*" (Student)
> "*Did you look up dictionary?*" (Lecturer)
> "*Sometimes*" (Student)
> "*So, you did not have predetermined theme to browse. You just insert news in google, then it comes up with news*" (Lecturer)

From script 7 shows that students like to read news because she inserted news keyword. A students stated "*I inserted keyword in search engine 'news in English' then it came up with BBC website*". She read overseas news without predetermined news topic. She just chooses news title attracting her "*I was interested in the title of news that I read*". When she reads, she knows her purpose of reading. She did not need to know all the vocabulary but she still understands the content. As she stated "*The vocabulary is complicated but I understand*". Hitosugi and Day [23] contend that it is no need to get complete comprehension but sufficient understanding is enough to fulfill the reading purpose. Furthermore, she uses Bottom-up reading strategy because she uses dictionary if she encounters difficult vocabulary. Hayashi [24] stated that Bottom-up processing is data driven strategies such as use of dictionary.

From the above interviews imply that students mostly choose a topic based on their preference. They already had a topic in their mind before they browse the internet. Learners are responsible for their own learning when they are allowed to self-select reading and have a goal-setting [25]. The topic chosen is affected by students' interest. Regarding interest, it is not always come from students herself but sometime interest come from other. In this case, student's practicum assistant has attracted her interest to read a certain book.

5. CONCLUSION

Students read 32 themes during extensive reading, namely education, novel, technology, photography, story, fisheries, art, news, games, animal, religion, tourism, psychology, entertainment, culture, sport, biography, agriculture, ecosystem, traveling, architecture, automotive, parenting, food, music, health, mining, economy, livestock, environment, politics, fashion, science. The theme is not always related to their major of study. Theme that students read is mainly caused by their hobby, favorite idol, and a senior student who influence them to read certain theme. Most of students use Instagram to get initial text, then they access the website to read the full text.

The pedagogical implications that other lecturers can do are suggested. Extensive reading should be accompanied with other activities in order to maximize its impact. Firstly, students are assigned to post their comment online about the text they read therefore other students can also give comment about the text. This activity can practice students' writing ability. Secondly, students can do a role play if the text is news. One student can be a reporter and the others can be interviewee. This activity practice students' speaking skill. In sum, extensive reading is not only reading activities, but also it can be accompanied by other activities.

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