

# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF READING INSTRUCTION IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

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**ABSTRACT:** The aim of this research is to investigate the implementation of reading instruction in EFL classroom. The method used was a survey research. The data for this research was gathered by distributing a questionnaire. The questionnaire was formulated based on the theories of experts about the ideal reading instruction. The data were analyzed descriptively by looking at the percentage of choice derived from the subjects of the research. This research discussed six best characteristics of reading instruction. It also presented six less implemented characteristics of reading instruction in EFL classroom.

**Keywords:** reading instruction, EFL classroom.

## A. INTRODUCTION

**N**owadays, English serves as the international language since it is widely used by most countries in the world. Harmer (2007) believes that the reason is because English now serves as a lingua franca. Lingua franca means that English is a communication language used by two people speaking different languages. When two people from different national languages meet overseas, they will use English to ease their communication. Since English serves as the international language, English becomes the used language in many texts all over the world related to technology, transportation, tourism, culinary, health, and so on. This phenomenon encourages some countries to take English into account.

Indonesia is one of the countries that concerns about the importance of English. One of the concrete actions taken by the Indonesia government is by covering English in the curriculum. It means that the Indonesia government requires its students to master English. In Indonesia, English serves as a foreign language in which English is formally learned since the students are in junior high school. English becomes one of the school subjects that is considered by Indonesia government. It is reflected in Indonesia national examination every year. English becomes one of the school subjects that is assessed in the national examination. By passing the English examination, it means Indonesian students master the English language at a certain level.

English has 4 major skills namely reading, writing, listening, and speaking. However, in Indonesia national examination, it is in the form of paper-based test. Hence, the students have to read some texts to answer the questions. It requires the students to master the reading skill to help them answer the questions in the examination.

Although mastering reading will make students pass the national examination of English, reading is more important than that. Reading plays an important role in wider aspects of students' life. Indonesian students need to master reading to support their career or university life later (Hermida, 2009; Bayless, 2010). There are a lot of challenges waiting for the students out of school life that oblige them to be able to read in English.

As has been discussed previously, English plays a crucial part in people's future life. For that reason, reading English will ease Indonesian students to persevere development of the era. Indonesian students need to master English so they can read texts coming from abroad that have significance for their future career or study. Indonesian students will gain much information and knowledge by reading English. From reading, they can gain some knowledge and information coming from abroad.

Society of Chief Librarians (2011) suggests that reading influences people's literacy levels, information and knowledge, digital literacy, social skills, health and happiness as well as providing fun and meaningful activities. Further, they argue that reading can help the students to develop their mind, enhance their creativity, and aid them in learning and discovering new things. Primarily, reading is a cognitive process. When someone reads a text, he will activate his cognitive or recall his knowledge related to the text. This cognitive process becomes the key of fluent and effective reading. (Eskey, 1983; Kalayci & Humiston, 2015; Rathert, 2012 in Kaya, 2015).

It can be seen that reading is essential for Indonesian students. The classroom is one of the places exposing the students with reading activities that will enhance their reading ability. Reading instruction in the classroom plays an important role to support the students' learning. Therefore, this research has an objective to investigate how reading instruction in the classroom is implemented in Indonesia context which places English as a foreign language. In this research, the researcher portrayed some theories from some experts on how ideal reading instruction should be implemented. Those theories became the base of the instrument making. Those theories, then, were compared with the questionnaire filled by the students.

## **B. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### ***1. The Definitions of Reading***

Reading has been widely discussed across centuries. Reading is the basic skill needed for the foreign language learners because by reading they can gain input needed for learning a language. Reading is an interactive process and meaning that is composed as an outcome of the dialogue between a text and a reader (Rosenblatt, 1996 in Naiditch, 2015). Reading is not a passive process. The readers need to interact with the texts so they will be able to understand what message the texts try to convey. It is in line with what Johnson (2008) highlights. Reading is the act of using text to create meaning. If there is no meaning being created, there is no reading taking place. The readers need to grasp the meaning of the texts so they can comprehend those texts.

Mikulecky (2008) states that reading is a conscious and unconscious thinking process. It is conscious because the reader applies many strategies to form the meaning that the writer is assumed to have intended. Reading is unconscious because the reader does reading activities by comparing information in the text to his or her background knowledge and prior experience. Wolf (2007) defines reading as a neuronal and intellectual act that enriches knowledge and thought from the text. Frankel, et al. (2016) define that effective reading is shaped by language processes and contexts. Further & Frankel, et al. (2016) argue that reading is an activity that deals with strategy, motivation, and engagement meaning that reading is a continuously developing set of practices. Purcell-Gates, Duke, and Stouffer (2016) believe that definitions of reading must go further by attending to the process as it occurs in the context of social and culture in the reading practices. Purcell-Gates, et al. (2016) consider that reading should include values, beliefs, and power relations that are related to language, gender, ethnicity, religion, economics, and so on. Including values, beliefs and relations will make reading instruction in the classroom more meaningful for the students. It helps the students to relate the texts to their daily life.

### ***2. The Importance of Reading***

Some experts have portrayed the importance of reading. One of them is Bojovic (2010) who believes that reading is a multifaceted, purposeful, interactive, comprehending, flexible activity meaning that readers should maintain the flow of information at a sufficient rate to make connections and inferences of their reading. Each reader has his or her own purpose in reading.

He may read some texts related to entertainment, information, or research. Reading skill is a cognitive ability which a person is able to use when interacting with the written text.

Comparable to Bojovic (2010) who believes that readers have their own purpose to read, Bayless (2010) considers reading as a habit for people. If people do reading as a habit, reading will lead them to a successful academic and a productive life. After all, reading becomes the basis of instruction in all aspects of language learning. Students will need reading in using textbooks for language courses, writing, revising, developing vocabulary, acquiring grammar, editing, and using computer-assisted language learning programs. Lastly, Mikulecky (2008) emphasizes that reading instruction, therefore, is a crucial part of every second or foreign-language curriculum.

### ***3. The Ideal Reading Instruction***

The reading instruction in EFL classrooms requires more than answering the questions from the texts done by the students (Sander, 2016). Wray et al (2000) believe that context is another essential thing in teaching reading in the classroom. Some experts have suggested some roles that should be accommodated by both teachers and students. The roles of the teachers and students are presented below.

#### *a. Teachers' role*

Ruphley, et al. (2009) suggest the teacher build teacher–student interactions to impart new information to students in the classroom. In this teacher-student interaction, teacher guidance of the students learning will facilitate the students in reading activities. Inviting the students to ask in the classroom then the teachers give a further explanation in order to help the students understand the text can become one of the classroom interactions. Teachers' guidance is essential since it enables students to decode text and comprehend the texts given. Ruphley, et al. (2009) further argue that comprehension is the goal of reading instruction. Once the students are able to comprehend the texts, the students will be able to express their idea of their reading.

Guthrie, et al. (1996) suggest the teachers encourage students to initiate learning by constructing their own questions from their own observation in their real world. In addition, reading instruction should accommodate students' autonomy. It can be done by supporting the students to choose topics, books, texts, or peers by themselves. Sander (2016) suggests the teacher involve the students in the meaning-making process of reading. It is supported by Ko (2013) who states that some other experts also believe that reading instruction should teach students basic language skills to be able to communicate. Then, the teachers also need to develop

students' critical consciousness, so they can formulate questions rather than passively accept the information they read.

In the ideal reading instruction, teachers tend to assign students by involving more than one text, sentence, and word level (Wray, 2000). By doing this, the students will be able to make connections between these levels. Another remarkable feature of the reading instruction is that the teachers make the purposes and processes of classroom reading explicitly for their students.

Garcia and Godina (2004) propose some basic characteristics of reading process. This includes the use of trade books, writing from multiple drafts, integrating reading and writing activities, peer interactions; a student-centered curriculum or students' choice for reading and writing. The teachers should provide English language learners with the necessary vocabulary, and discourse structures needed to further their learning in the specific domain. Jiménez, et al. (1995) in Garcia and Gordina (2004) believe that questioning, summarizing, making accurate inferences, and using context to figure out unknown vocabulary are necessary for the students' success in reading a foreign language. Garcia and Gordina (2004) also recommend teachers to stimulate the students in using knowledge and high-level strategies.

*b. Students' role*

Guthrie, et al. (1996) state that in the reading instruction, the students need to initiate learning by constructing their own questions from their real-world. In addition, the students need to create opportunities for them to express their thought. That kind of self-expression can be done through writing or group discussion. Wray, et al. (2000) suggest the students make active connections between levels of knowledge. Garcia and Godina (2004) believe that students' active participation in the reading instruction will be crucial. The students should actively take part in communicating their thought both in written and oral form. The ideal literacy instruction proposed above will be used to formulate the questionnaire for this study.

### **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

The type of this research is survey research since the objective of this research is to investigate the implementation of reading instruction in the EFL classroom in Indonesia. Survey approach is used when the researcher wants to gather opinions, beliefs, or perceptions about a current issue from a large group of people (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler, 2010). This research was conducted in 6 high schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. There were 168 high school students that became the subjects of this research. The subjects of this research were the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>

grade students of senior high schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was formulated based on the theories portrayed in the literature review stating how reading instruction should be implemented. There were 22 items in the questionnaire.

Before being used to gather the data, the instrument was tested to find out its validity and reliability. The validity of the instrument covered content, construct, and face validity. The reliability of the instrument was found in the pre-data-collection done in one high school that has the same characteristic with the subjects of this research. In the pre-data-collection test, there were 20 students that filled the questionnaire. Based on the result of the pre-data-collection test, the Cronbach's Alpha was 0.538. This result was compared to r-table with  $N=20$ . The significant of r-table was 5%. The r-table for  $N=20$  was 0.444. Hence, Cronbach's Alpha  $0.538 > r\text{-table } 0.444$ . It meant that the questionnaire in this research was reliable and could be used to gather the data for this research.

The data of this research were analysed descriptively. The researcher tried to find the top and the bottom 6 from 22 items based on the frequency of choice from the 168 subjects of this research. The top 6 chosen-items reflected the characteristics of reading instruction that were implemented in the 6 high schools. The bottom six chosen-items showed that those items were less implemented in the six high schools in the EFL classroom.

#### **D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The Likert-scale questionnaire that had 22 items of the question was used to gather the data for this research. Based on the result of analysis of 22 items from 168 subjects of research, there are six highest-score items and six lowest-score items. The scores are transformed into percentage to ease the interpretation. The six highest-percentage items represent the six characteristics of reading instruction that best implemented in the EFL classroom. Meanwhile, the six lowest-percentage items show that those characteristics are rarely implemented in the reading instruction in the EFL classroom. The result of the research is presented in Table 1 below:

In Table 1, there are only two scales which are Agree and Disagree because the scales namely "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" belong to "Agree" scale. Then, "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" scales belong to "Disagree" scale. The Likert-scale questionnaire is presented in the appendices of this writing.

**Table 1. The Analysis of Research**

Number of Items	Percentage		Number of Items	Percentage	
	Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree
1	85%	15%	12	79%	21%
2	77%	23%	13	71%	29%
3	83%	17%	14	73%	27%
4	79%	21%	15	65%	35%
5	46%	54%	16	46%	54%
6	76%	24%	17	65%	35%
7	91%	9%	18	85%	15%
8	87%	13%	19	57%	43%
9	73%	27%	20	22%	78%
10	85%	15%	21	26%	74%
11	43%	57%	22	30%	70%

**Note.**



Items that are best implemented in reading instructions  
 Items that are less implemented in reading instruction

From Table 1, it can be seen that the six highest-percentage items that represent the best characteristics of reading instruction in the EFL classroom are items number 1, 3, 7, 8, 10, and 18. Meanwhile, the six lowest-percentage items that show the characteristics of reading instruction that rarely implemented in the EFL classroom are items number 5, 11, 16, 20, 21, and 22. Both the highest and lowest-percentage items will be portrayed below.

Those six items of reading instruction that are mostly implemented in EFL classroom are:

1. The teachers encourage the students to ask questions related to the topics learned in the classroom. It means that the teachers have already implemented what Guthrie et al (1996) believe. Once the teachers let the students ask questions in the reading instruction, it means the teachers let the students be involved in the learning process. It implies that teachers in EFL classroom initiate student-centred learning. The teachers no longer serve as the speaker in the classroom, instead, the teachers serve as the leader of a discussion in the classroom.
2. The teachers clearly answer the students' questions and give further explanation. This characteristic is the continuum of the first characteristic above. When the students have opportunities to formulate questions and express them in the reading instruction, the

teachers need to give proper answers and explanations to the students. The teachers do not have to necessarily answer every question by themselves. They can lead the discussion in the reading instruction and invite the students to respond one another's question. By doing so, the teachers can trigger students' participations in the reading instruction. From these points, it seems meaningful teacher-student interactions and teacher guidance portrayed by Ruphley, et al (2009) have been implemented.

3. The teachers facilitate the students in understanding the texts. As has been defined by some experts, reading is done when people want to grasp the meaning and message from the texts. In this research, the teachers in EFL classroom have been facilitated the students in comprehending the texts given. By comprehending the texts, the students can learn something from the texts. As empowering students to comprehend the texts is the goal of reading instruction (Ruphley, et al. 2009).
4. The teachers give some opportunities for the students to express their thought and opinion related to the texts learned in the classroom. From the result of this research, it can be said that the teachers of reading in the EFL classroom are quite democratic. The questions related to it are answered mostly good by the subjects of this research. The teachers of reading instruction in EFL classroom give space and opportunity for the students to express their reading. This kind of interaction shows that meaningful student-teacher interaction has started to be implemented. The teachers do give the students opportunities to express themselves after reading, but, the students do not express themselves after reading in the classroom. It will be discussed in the six lowest-percentage items of this research.
5. The students read the text given by the teachers in reading instruction. Most of the subjects of this research claim that they read the texts given by the teachers in the reading instruction. It implies that the subjects of this research are involved in the reading activities in the EFL classroom. By comprehending the texts, the students can learn something from the texts.
6. The students have the chance to choose their own partner or group in reading instruction. This characteristic is related to the students' autonomy in the classroom. By letting the students choose their own partners or groups, the students will find their comfort. It is hoped that the students can perform better in reading instruction by choosing their own partners or groups. Students may enjoy classes more if they are allowed to choose who to work with, resulting in more positive interpersonal experiences (Ciani, et al. 2008).



After portraying the six highest-percentage items. The following is the discussion of the six lowest-percentage items. From Table 1, the six lowest-percentage items are number 5, 11, 16, 20, 21, and 22. Those six characteristics of reading instruction that are less implemented in EFL classroom are:

1. The teachers do not know whether their students like to read or not. Whereas, Wigfield, et al. (2008) argue that teachers can see their students' motivation by knowing whether their students like to read or not. It is important for the teachers to know whether their students like to read or not. It can help the teachers to choose appropriate texts for their students. If the students do not like reading much, the teachers can choose familiar and quite short texts for the students to read. Besides, the teachers can remind the students the importance of reading for the future. Meanwhile, if their students like reading, the teachers can choose the texts that are challenging for the students. Those challenging texts can motivate students and improve students' reading skill. The teachers can find out whether their students like to read or not at every beginning of the semester.
2. The students rarely formulate questions from their real-world observation to be asked to their teachers in reading instruction. This characteristic shows that students have not linked their real-world observation to their reading activities in the classroom. It implies that their daily life is not so close to their reading in the classroom. Guthrie, et al. (1996) state that in the reading instruction, the students need to initiate learning by constructing their own questions from their real-world.
3. The students do not have many chances to choose reading topics based on their interest. Accommodating students' topic interest is one of the characteristics of ideal reading instruction proposed by Guthrie, et al. (1996). Giving the students chance to choose their own topics of reading is one of the ways to accommodate students' autonomy in the reading classroom. The teachers can investigate the students' interest at the beginning of the semester in the form of needs analysis.
4. This finding is based on the questionnaire number 20 and 22. It has been mentioned earlier, the teachers do give the chances for the students to express themselves after reading. However, from the questionnaire, it can be seen that the students do not express their opinion about their reading both in written and oral form. Asking students' opinion, both in writing and speaking, about their reading will stimulate the students' way of thinking. It

led to critical thinking because if the students are accustomed to criticizing the texts, they will be more sensitive in reading.

5. Lastly, the students rarely summarize the texts they are reading. Summarizing is another way to stimulate the students' critical thinking. By summarizing, the students can retell to others what the text is about. Jiménez, et al. (1995) in Garcia and Gordina (2004) believe that questioning, summarizing, making accurate inferences, using context to figure out unknown vocabulary are necessary for the students' success in reading a foreign language. Garcia and Gordina (2004) also recommend teachers to stimulate the students in using knowledge and high-level strategies.

## E. CONCLUSION

Both the six highest-percentage items and the six lowest-percentage items of this research can become the evaluation of the implementation of reading instruction in the EFL classroom. The good characteristics that have been implemented in reading instruction should be maintained. Meanwhile, other things of reading instructions should be improved to enhance the effectiveness of reading instructions in the EFL classroom. Although this research belongs to quantitative research meaning that the finding of this research can be generalized, there is no best research. This research is appropriate for the context of Indonesia. Further research can be conducted in other contexts by involving more characteristics of ideal reading instruction with more number of subjects.

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## APPENDIX

### Angket

Sekolah	
Kelas	

Berilah tanda centang (✓) pada salah satu kotak yang mewakili pendapat Anda!

ST : Sangat Tidak Setuju

T : Tidak Setuju

S : Setuju

SS : Sangat Setuju

No	Pernyataan	Tanggapan			
		ST	T	S	SS
1.	Guru bahasa Inggris saya meminta siswa bertanya di kelas tentang topik yang sedang dipelajari.				
2.	Guru bahasa Inggris saya menjelaskan hubungan antara teks yang dibaca siswa dan kehidupan siswa sehari-hari terkait teks yang dibaca.				
3.	Guru bahasa Inggris saya menanggapi pertanyaan siswa dengan jelas.				
4.	Guru bahasa Inggris saya suka membaca.				
5.	Guru bahasa Inggris saya tidak tahu bahwa saya suka membaca.				
6.	Selama pembelajaran <i>reading</i> , guru bahasa Inggris saya membahas fakta-fakta yang berhubungan dengan teks yang sedang dibaca.				
7.	Guru bahasa Inggris saya membantu siswa dalam memahami sebuah teks.				
8.	Guru bahasa Inggris memberikan saya kesempatan untuk mengajukan pendapat terkait teks yang sedang dibaca.				
9.	Guru bahasa Inggris saya menyampaikan tujuan membaca dengan jelas.				
10.	Selama pembelajaran <i>reading</i> , saya membaca satu teks bahasa Inggris (misalnya, <i>narrative, descriptive, fable,</i>				

	<i>etc.)</i>				
11.	Saya tidak mengajukan pertanyaan tentang hal di luar kelas yang saya tidak pahami kepada guru bahasa Inggris saya.				
12.	Teks yang digunakan di tiap awal pembelajaran <i>reading</i> termasuk teks yang mudah dipahami.				
13.	Teks yang digunakan pada pembelajaran <i>reading</i> makin lama makin sulit.				
14.	Saya tidak suka dengan teks yang dipilihkan oleh Guru bahasa Inggris saya.				
15.	Saya tidak mengetahui teks seperti apa yang penting untuk dipelajari.				
16.	Di kelas bahasa Inggris, saya memiliki kesempatan untuk memilih topik bacaan yang akan dipelajari.				
17.	Teks yang saya baca tidak berhubungan dekat dengan kehidupan saya sehari-hari.				
18.	Saya diperbolehkan memilih anggota kelompok saat belajar bahasa Inggris.				
19.	Saya mengkritisi teks yang saya baca.				
20.	Setelah membaca, saya tidak menuliskan pendapat saya di buku catatan saya.				
21.	Saya tidak meringkas teks setelah membaca.				
22.	Setelah membaca, saya mengungkapkan pendapat saya di kelas.				