

TEACHING EXTENSIVE READING PROGRAM WITH CHARACTER BUILDING THEME: FROM ZERO TO HERO

Ary Setya Budhi Ningrum
STAIN Kediri
email: arysetya@yahoo.com

Abstract: This paper gives a try to presents the complete action plan in setting up an extensive reading course that is not only for fostering the students' English proficiency but also for building up their character as well. This paper addresses that sets up a good theme before teaching is necessary. Henceforth, this program lies 'from zero to hero' as the theme. In teaching this program, a problem-based approach and lexically-based language teaching are adopting and integrating as an instructional methodology. The explanation of it will be divided into two parts. First part is the review of theory underpinning the implementation of this program, and the second part is the detail of the action plan.

Keywords: *extensive reading, character building, problem-based approach, lexically-based language teaching*

PENGAJARAN PROGRAM MEMBACA EKSTENSIF DENGAN TEMA PEMBENTUKAN KARAKTER: *FROM ZERO TO HERO*

Abstrak: Penulisan ini menyajikan rencana lengkap dalam menyelenggarakan kursus membaca ekstensif yang tidak hanya untuk mengembangkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris para siswa tetapi juga untuk membangun karakter mereka. Makalah ini merujuk pada pentingnya menentukan tema yang baik sebelum mengajar. Untuk selanjutnya, program ini mengambil tema '*from zero to hero*'. Dalam mengajar program ini, pengajaran bahasa berbasis masalah dan pengajaran bahasa berbasis leksikal diadopsi dan diintegrasikan sebagai metodologi instruksional. Penjelasan akan dibagi menjadi dua bagian. Bagian pertama adalah tinjauan teori yang mendasari pelaksanaan program ini, dan bagian kedua adalah detail dari perencanaan.

Kata Kunci: *membaca ekstensif, pendekatan berbasis masalah, pengajaran bahasa berbasis leksikal*

INTRODUCTION

Deciding what the most appropriate approach in teaching extensive reading is not an easy task as there are many aspects come to be considered. In extensive reading course, as its given name, students are encouraged to read as much as possible, but it has been rarely seriously considered the goals. It is only suggested for most part that extensive reading is for enjoyment and pleasure time. However, in fact, reading more than that as reading involves the core components of phonemic awareness, de-

coding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation (McShane in Greenberg et al, 2006).

In EFL context, extensive reading can be means of increasing the students' reading ability in the target language, developing positive attitudes toward reading, increasing motivation to read, and making gains in various aspects of proficiency in the target language, including vocabulary and writing (Bamford & Day in Greenberg et al, 2006). To accommodate such purposes two approaches are brought to the field.

The first is a problem-based approach and the second is lexically-based language teaching. Those two approaches are integrated to teach an extensive reading program for the students of counseling and guidance department. Thus, here English that is used as a means of language instruction is carried as a language for specific purposes (LSP).

Extensive Reading Program

Some experts propose strong reasons defining the effectiveness of extensive reading. Nation (2001:150), for instance, points out three reasons why learners can develop best through extensive reading. First, reading is essentially an individual activity; therefore, learners of different proficiency levels could be learning at their own level without being locked into an inflexible class program. Second, having an extensive reading activity, students are allowed to follow their interests in choosing what to read, and thus, increase their motivation for learning. Third, extensive reading provides the opportunity for learning to occur outside the classroom.

An ideal extensive program should introduce students to the dynamics of reading as it is done in real life by including some elements of real-life reading such as the choice of books to read and the purpose of reading. To be more practical, Day and Bamford & Day (2000:7-8) characterize an ideal extensive reading program in ten points.

- (1) Students read as much as possible, perhaps in and definitely out of the classroom.
- (2) A variety of materials on a wide range of topics is available so as to encourage reading for different reasons and in different ways.
- (3) Students select what they want to read and have the freedom to stop reading material that fails to interest them.
- (4) The purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding. These purposes are determined by the nature of the material and the interests of the students.
- (5) Reading is its own reward. There are few or no follow-up exercises to be completed after reading.
- (6) Reading materials are well within the linguistic competence of the students in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Dictionaries are rarely used while reading because the constant stopping to look up words makes fluent reading difficult.
- (7) Reading is individual and silent, at the student's own pace, and, outside class, done when and where the student chooses.
- (8) Reading speed is usually faster than slower as students read books and other material that they find easily understandable.
- (9) Teachers orient students to the goals of the program, explain the methodology, keep track of what each student reads, and guide students in getting the most out of the program.
- (10) The teacher is a role model of a reader for students—an active member of the classroom reading community, demonstrating what it means to be a reader and the rewards of being a reader.

Without leaving the main characteristics of extensive reading, not all of the above ten characteristics of successful extensive reading course are going to be applied in this study as it will be combined with the two other approaches.

Problem-Based Approach

There are some main features of problem-based approach that need to be taken into account for extensive reading program. Referring to Savery (in Neville and Britt, 2007), there are three main features of constructing knowledge in problem-based learning that employ student-centered learning. This approach requires the learners to take an active role in the construction of knowledge by (1) developing metacognitive learning strategies; (2) working in small groups; and (3) solving realistic ill-structured problems.

Instead of promoting a teacher-centered learning environment, problem-based approach places students in the centre of the instructional paradigm. The primary aim of the students-centered learning environment is the creation of effective problem-solving strategies (Neville and Britt, 2007). In the track of LSP, the implementation of this approach, however, leads to the question whether the majority of undergraduates have sufficiently developed linguistic backgrounds as a problem-based scenario demanding. Thus, to cope with such problem students need to be scaffolded. As the semester progresses, this scaffolding gradually would be withdrawn until students are able to function completely autonomously. As a consequence, an instructional design should provide guidelines for structuring an effective scaffolded curriculum.

There are three primary areas would need to be scaffolded (Neville and Britt, 2007).

- (1) Supportive information that assists in the performance of nonrecurrent module tasks,
- (2) Part-task practice items derived from recurrent aspects of module activity, and

- (3) Just-in-time instruction providing students with step-by-step knowledge needed to perform recurrent tasks.

In problem-based approach, problems precede the learning sequence. It means that instead of equipping students with the necessary information required to solve the problem before entering the problem space, problem-based approach enters the problem space at the outset and then works toward a synthesis of problem-solving knowledge (Neville and Britt, 2007). Barrows (in Neville and Britt, 2007) describes those problems in problem-based approach as being very similar to what students will encounter in real-world practice.

Unlike in traditional classroom instruction that makes use of problem primarily as an evaluative measure, problem-based approach uses problems as tools to develop problem-solving schemata (Neville and Britt, 2007). The design problem appears in problem-based approach is characterized "as ill-structured" since they have ambiguous specifications of goals, no determined solution path, and there is no solution that is satisfying or acceptable to most people, thus, there are compromises implicit in every solution.

Although ill-structured problems very rarely have a single best solution on account of numerous solution paths that can be explored, Jonassen (Neville and Britt, 2007) outlines seven steps that facilitate the development of metacognitive strategies. These steps include:

- (1) the articulation of the problem space, which will by nature be highly contextualized and emergent, and the identification of primary problem of primary problems components;
- (2) the identification of alternate opinions, positions, and perspectives of stakeholders;

- (3) the generation of possible solutions, including their logical outcomes, and the construction of mental models of the problem that can undergo preliminary testing;
- (4) the assessment of alternative solutions and the construction of arguments for and against the proposed solution;
- (5) the continual monitoring of the problem space and the defined solution options in order to determine if the proposed solutions remain valid;
- (6) the implementation and monitoring of the solution; and
- (7) obtaining feedback and adapting the solution.

Since problems in problem-based approach are used primarily as a learning tool and not for assessment, quantitative and qualitative evaluations need to be administered. The qualitative evaluative is an assessment to know how well students understand a topic and can transfer knowledge to new situations (Neville and Britt, 2007). Mayer (Neville and Britt, 2007) outlines several qualitative evaluation strategies such as the use of conceptual questions, which require the learner to uncover an underlying principle of the problem space; redesign questions, which require the learner to redesign the problem space in order to accomplish a given function; troubleshooting questions, in which the learner must determine why failure is present in a problem space; and prediction questions, in which a learner must determine what will happen in a problem space given certain circumstances.

Quantitative evaluation is used to provide a quick overview of general course trends such as mastery of *topic-specific vocabulary*, and relevant *grammar structure* (Neville and Britt, 2007). Therefore, it is a wise decision if there is integration bet-

ween problem-based approach and lexically-based language teaching since the lexically-based language teaching is the most suitable approach in assessing the students' vocabulary as well as fostering their English proficiency at the same time.

Lexically-based Language Teaching

An extensive reading program is not just a matter of reading for enjoyment and pleasure activities, but more than that it could also foster the students' vocabulary as well if it is conducted in appropriate way. It has been widely believed that vocabulary is the key to fluency itself (Kweldju, 2000). Furthermore, Kweldju points out that to guarantee success in foreign language learning students must have solid vocabulary and always improve their vocabulary and stylistic skill in order to attain fluency and idiomaticity like a native speaker (2004b:2-3).

Thus, deciding lexically-based language teaching as an approach in an extensive program is an appropriate decision. Lexically-based language teaching holds the view that facilitating learning is more important than teaching itself. The lexically-based language teaching concentrates on developing proficiency with lexis, or words and word combination. The benefit of this approach is a lexically-based did not make distinction between vocabulary and grammar. Kweldju (2004b) points out that grammar and lexicon were inseparable. They formed the so-called lexico-grammatical units, showing that grammar and vocabulary meet in patterns to form chunks. A language consisted not only of individual words but also larger lexical items. These were known as collocation, which was of major importance in the lexically-based language teaching. Collocation was

the way one word co-occurs with another word in a predictable combination (Kweldju, 2004a:48).

Lexically-based language teaching can be applied to either adults or younger learners. However, each needs different treatments in terms of the proportion and ways of doing the activities that facilitate acquisition. Lexically-based language teaching for adult learners gives more emphasis on deliberate learning of vocabulary through library researching, recording, and memorizing new lexis and stylistic form. Such learning lends support to improve the vocabulary size. Besides, they must also do incidental learning through extensive reading regularly, which is intended to expand and strengthen the vocabulary.

THE ACTION PLAN

Part II of this article outlines the complete action plan of an extensive program for students of counseling and guidance department, in which the concept of lexically-based language teaching and problem-based approach is integrated.

Program Description

Bringing up the theme "From Zero to Hero", the goal of the lesson focuses on giving motivation to the clients. There are three kinds of clients that the students must deal with. The first is giving counseling to the clients who are underestimating themselves due to their background family. The second is giving motivation to the clients who are fighting the cancer. The last is delivering motivation to the clients with no limbs. Each case will be accomplished in four meetings. Each meeting is 100 minutes length.

Instructional Goal

Having conducted extensive reading on the biographies of successful person related to the topic (the client's case), students will make some notes about the lexico-grammatical units they found out in the text to help them in preparing the oral reports, and then summary the successful persons' experience in the form of mind mapping.

Learners' Description

The students have intermediate competency in English, with low proficiency in reading and writing, and are skilled in counseling program.

Activities

In this program, the students are assigned to seek out of reading material for their own, and make summary from the text they read in the form of mind mapping, then collecting and comprehending lexico-grammatical units found in the reading material text. The last is they should do oral reports how to motivate their clients by using the successful person's biography that has the same cases with their clients.

Finding a text for your own to read

In this activity, the students are assigned to find any text from any books, English newspaper and magazines, or the internet as the reading materials. The texts must be relating to the case of their clients. The students need to find out the appropriate figure of successful person in the world who has the same cases with their clients. For the first cases, it is assumed that students are not familiar yet with this approach. Thus, the scaffolding is provided by giving such examples to make the students understand what they should do in this program.

The first case is giving motivation to the clients who underestimate themselves due to their background family. The teacher gives an example of the figure such as "Oprah Winfrey" and also gives an example of the text that is taken from the internet website <http://www.woopidoo.com/>-

[biography/oprah-winfrey.htm](http://www.woopidoo.com/biography/oprah-winfrey.htm), retrieved on 27 March 2011.

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Oprah Winfrey Biography : Talk Show Host, Actress & Pioneer (The Oprah Winfrey Show)

Famous for : Coming from an abusive upbringing to be one of America's most wealthy and successful women. Pioneering the talk show program with her "Oprah Winfrey Show".

Winfrey details : Born - USA January 29, 1954 Lives - USA

More Information : The Oprah Winfrey Show

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Biography - Information

Oprah Winfrey came from a humble background to become one of America's most influential women. Winfrey has amassed a great fortune through her media and publishing interests and uses her fame and wealth to positively influence the lives of people in need. Born Orpah (after a character from the Bible) Winfrey on January 29, 1954 in Kosciusko, Mississippi - USA, but now goes by the name of Oprah. At a young age Winfrey's parents separated and sent her to live with grandparents in very poor surroundings until the age of 6 when she moved to live with her mother. She was consequently sexually molested by male relatives at a young age and endured the hardship up until she was 14 when Winfrey moved to live with her father in Nashville Tennessee.

Living with her father did not eliminate her problems even though he was loving (yet strict) towards her. Winfrey struggled with drugs and rebellious behavior and lost a baby after giving birth to it prematurely. Although her wild behavior conflicted with her father's strict rules and high standards she eventually began to settle after being awarded a University Scholarship.

"I knew there was a way out. I knew there was another kind of life because I had read about it. I knew there were other places, and there was another way of being." Oprah Winfrey

Winfrey studied at the Tennessee State University and received a BA in Speech and Performing

Arts. Her father's high standards inspired her to aim for and achieve more from life. Winfrey became involved in several groups and pursued her interests in media and journalism while at University. Even though her early years in life were filled with hardship, she was always gifted with intelligence and she graduated as an honors student.

Oprah Winfrey's career in the media industry began as a news anchor and reporter for a television station in Nashville (although she also worked in radio during high school as a newscaster). She was the first black African American woman television news anchor to work in Nashville on the WTVF-TV station at the young age of 19. Winfrey never felt comfortable in her position as a news anchor and only began to enjoy her work when she was moved to the early morning talk show "*People are Talking*" at WJZ-TV in Baltimore where she was able to be herself and express her own opinions and share her true feelings about topics that moved her.

Winfrey's career really began to take off after moving to Chicago in 1984 to host "*AM Chicago*", an early morning talk show at WLS-TV's. It went on to become the number one ranked talk show shortly after she started and it was renamed "The Oprah Winfrey Show" after one year.

The Oprah Winfrey Show went on to become one of the most successful and highest ranked television talk show programs in history. The program is viewed by more than 20 million Americans (USA) every week and broadcast Internationally to more than one hundred countries worldwide. Winfrey's production company "Harpo Productions, Inc" produces the program and she is the host.

The daytime talk show focuses on issues close to Winfrey's heart and she has continued to cover topics of value to her mostly female audience for more than 17 successful seasons of broadcasting. The Oprah Winfrey Show started the wildly influential "Oprah's Book Club" in 1996 where Oprah endorses what she considers to be books of value. Books that received the Oprah endorsement often suddenly went to number 1.

Winfrey's business and personal interests are wide ranging and she has managed to accomplish success in several areas. Apart from being a successful Talk show host she is also a producer, successful actress, Founder of the successful "O, the Oprah Magazine", co founder of "Oxygen Media", and a generous Philanthropist. Her entrepreneurial spirit and desire to change society for the better have brought her and her numerous companies many awards and achievements.

"What material success does is provide you with the ability to concentrate on other things that really matter. And that is being able to make a difference, not only in your own life, but in other people's lives."
Oprah Winfrey

Oprah Winfrey continues to follow her dreams through her many business and media interests. She is one of the wealthiest women in the United States of America and is regularly placed high up on the Forbes magazine Rich List each year. Winfrey continues to influence and inspire people worldwide with her example of overcoming great odds to achieve great success financially, spiritually and socially.

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Oprah Winfrey Quotes

What I know is, is that if you do work that you love, and the work fulfills you, the rest will come.

Oprah Winfrey - Work - Happiness - Success –

You know you are on the road to success if you would do your job, and not be paid for it.

Oprah Winfrey - Work - Money - Success -

::: more Oprah Winfrey quotes

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Recording Lexico-Grammatical Units (Vocabulary)

Record the lexico-grammatical units in the text you read that you feel will be valuable in helping you do oral reports in the end of the program. It will help you to increase your vocabulary size and to make you more familiar with the collocation. Write them in the notebook in the form of a table as exemplified below.

In this activity the students are asked to write the meaning of the lexico-gramma-

tical units in the form of Indonesia words as it is assumed if they are asked to write the meaning in English it will burden them as they still do not know the meaning of it.

Making summary

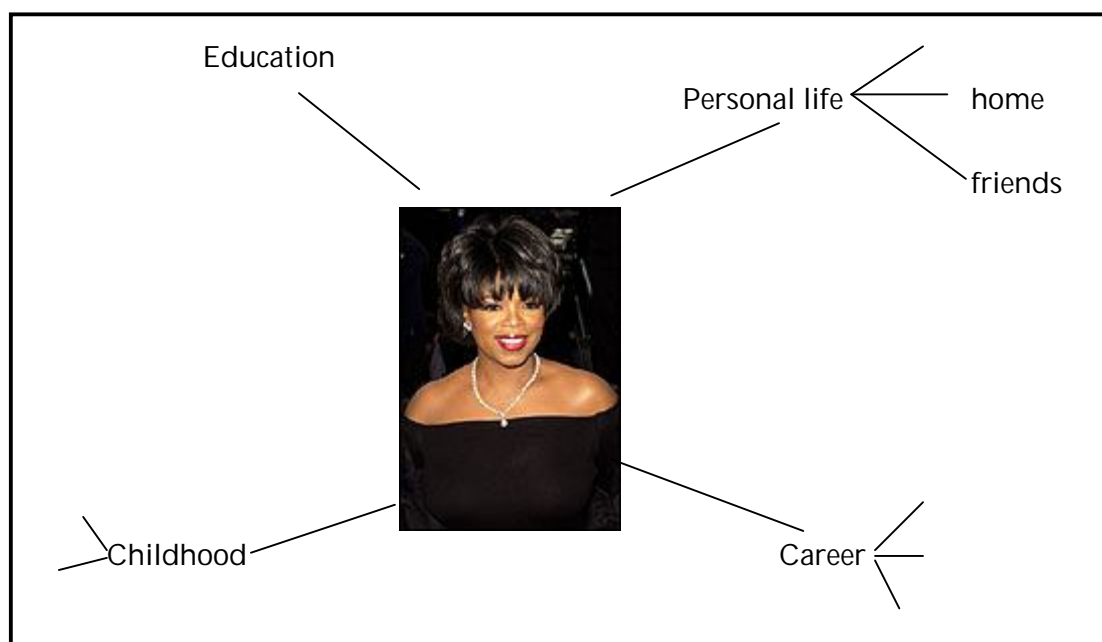
Make a cluster-word webbing based on the text you have read. It is aimed to know your understanding about the text you read.

No.	Lexico-Grammatical Units from the Text	Meaning in Indonesia
1.	Coming from an abusive upbringing	Berasal dari asuhan yang kejam, hina
2.	Came from a humble background	Berasal dari latar belakang keluarga yang sederhana

Oral reports

In this activity the students are asked to give counseling by giving motivation to the clients. It is kind of role play in which one of the student as a counselor and the rest of the class are the clients who have the

same cases. Any media used in presentation are allowed. The students could do their presentation by playing the video related to the figure they choose to motivate their clients, or using power point.



Meeting Schedule

Meeting	Topic	Notes
1	Introduction.	
2	Introduce the case: motivate the clients who have underestimated themselves due to their background family.	i.e Oprah Winfrey
3	Recording lexico-grammatical units (vocabulary)	Teacher checks students' memorization on their notes by asking the student the meaning of the lexico-grammatical unit they have noted, or in the other way around the teacher gives the meaning in Indonesia and then they have to translate it in English.
4	Making summary using a cluster web-webbing	To check the students' understanding of the content of the text they read.
5-6	Presentation/Oral reports	Role play. Give motivation to the rest of the class. Two sessions as considering the number of the students in the class.
7	Introduce the case: motivate the clients who are fighting the cancer.	i.e Lance Armstrong
8	Recording lexico-grammatical units (vocabulary)	Teacher checks students' memorization on their notes by asking the student the meaning of the lexico-grammatical unit they have noted, or in the other way around the teacher gives the meaning in Indonesia and then they have to translate it in English.

9	Making summary using a cluster web-webbing	To check the students' understanding of the content of the text they read.
10-11	Presentation/Oral reports	Role play. Give motivation to the rest of the class.
12	Introduce the case: motivate the clients who do not have limbs.	i.e Nick Vujizic
13	Recording lexico-grammatical units (vocabulary)	Teacher checks students' memorization on their notes by asking the student the meaning of the lexico-grammatical unit they have noted, or in the other way around the teacher gives the meaning in Indonesia and then they have to translate it in English.
14	Making summary using a cluster web-webbing	To check the students' understanding of the content of the text they read.
15-16	Presentation/Oral reports	Role play. Give motivation to the rest of the class.

CONCLUSION

The integration between a lexically-based language teaching and problem-based approach hold a potential way to create a combination both of the target language and academic interest come together in an exciting and interesting extensive reading program. A set of activities problem-based material and memorization of lexical-grammatical units could foster the students' critical thinking in solving the problems at the same time leads to the fluency of the target language and next the accuracy itself. The combination of those two approaches has a great contribution in producing graduates with self-reliance, fundamental skill sets, and real-world experience to compete successfully in increasingly competitive and global markets. However, don't forget that teaching is not only to make your students smart but also having a good character. Henceforth, setting up a good theme for your teaching program is worth paying at the end. It can

foster your students' intelligent and emotion in facing this life.

UCAPAN TERIMA KASIH

Ucapan terima kasih saya sampaikan kepada kawan-kawan yang telah bekerja sama dan membantu terlaksanakannya seluruh rangkaian kegiatan pembelajaran sehingga dapat diselesaikan sesuai dengan rencana. Semoga sumbangsih kawan-kawan mendapat ridho Tuhan dan dihitung sebagai amal ibadah. Amin.

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