

EFL LEARNERS' COMPREHENSION OF EXTENSIVE READING BASED ON HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS.

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SUBMISSION TRACK	A B S T R A C T
Submitted : 7 July 2023 Accepted : 23 July 2023 Published : 25 July 2023	This study, conducted at a private university in Kuningan, West Java, aimed to understand the comprehension of learners based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Extensive Reading classes as well as to identify the reasons why some students find it challenging to understand reading based on HOTS in these classes. The three steps of the HOTS definition by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) were analysis (C4), evaluation (C5), and creation (C6). The research is descriptive-qualitative, and the methods for gathering data include interviewing and observation. Second-semester students at a private university in Kuningan, West Java, served as the study's subjects. The observation's findings showed that the majority of second-semester students were capable of analyzing the information (Analyzing, C4), evaluating the text's main ideas (Evaluating, C5), and coming up with new ideas to use in other situations (Creating, C6), whether outside of the classroom or on other occasions. Moreover, based on the results of interviews with 10 students in the classroom, there were 5 main factors that affect the students' reading comprehension based on HOTS which were: lack of vocabulary, lack of focus, lack of time, not having basic knowledge and not interesting in reading.
KEYWORDS	
Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS), Reading Comprehension, EFL Learners, Extensive Reading, Reading Difficulties.	
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Introduction

Reading is a receptive skill, which is one of the most important for students to develop because they may learn a lot from different letters and words through reading. Reading also gives us the opportunity to express our emotions and thoughts, learn a lot, and develop our intellect and creativity. According to Silalahi, *et al.*, (2021), reading can help people learn a lot because there is a lot of information out there that we don't know but can be acquired by reading. Reading is the most crucial activity in every language lesson since it helps students develop and enhance their language abilities in addition to being an enjoyable and informative activity. The research is descriptive-qualitative, and the methods for gathering data include interviewing and observation. Second-semester students at a private university in Kuningan, West Java, served as the study's subjects. The observation's findings showed that the majority of second-semester students were capable of analyzing the information (Analyzing, C4), evaluating the text's main ideas (Evaluating, C5), and coming up with new ideas to use in other situations (Creating, C6), whether outside of the classroom or on other occasions.

As a means of enhancing students' linguistic proficiency. Students are assisted in reading courses, also known as reading courses, at the English Language Education study program, where teachers give instructions on reading strategies and approaches that are helpful for enhancing students' reading abilities. is the most crucial activity in every language class since it helps students improve and develop their language abilities while also providing information and entertainment (Hadiwijaya, 2028). The word "extensive reading" is used in reading courses. Students' reading comprehension is enhanced by extensive reading. A comprehensive reading program is the most efficient technique to

increase vocabulary and reading abilities in general for overall meaning and for material that is enjoyable, according to Day & Bamford (2004) in Ferdila (2014). However, according to Aliveya (2021), "Extensive Reading offers opportunities to see language in context, allowing learners to expand their understanding of how grammar is actually employed. Learners who read extensively improve their reading fluency and speed. The ability to read quickly is particularly crucial since it facilitates quicker and better language comprehension in learners.

Students can't just rely on their lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) to increase their skills in extensive reading since, with LOTS, they are only able to recall, comprehend, and apply the material they are given (Lusi, 2019). Even pupils ought to have the freedom to critique the material they are given. Because reading activities that develop reading skills must be used to direct the development of new information and skills, reading skills are the foundation for detecting and clarifying meaning. Students are still struggling to understand a book because they are not accustomed to thinking critically, according to the phenomena that researchers are examining around them, particularly the issues faced by English Education students. Research on this topic is highly intriguing since critical reading requires a strategy from students, and these students frequently make the mistake of reading without using the criteria. When students read texts, a lot happens because they are preoccupied with their own dynamics and thoughts. Students are unable to completely comprehend the rationale behind the text's content as a result (Lusi, 2019). Because students at the higher education level are not only equipped with Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) but also higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), the instructor needs to build a suitable method to increase students' thinking skills in order to teach skills in Extensive Reading.

The use of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) in Extensive Reading Learning is clearly beneficial for student learning, especially for students in higher education where the ability to think critically and creatively is required. This conclusion can be drawn from the explanation provided above (Alfari, 2022). When determining whether students possess strong analytical, comparative, mathematical, and other skills, the implementation of learning-based HOTS is highly helpful. Due to the implementation of HOTS, students are motivated to think critically. Because of this, students cannot simply rely on an answer pattern that results from memorization of language or material without comprehending the relevant topic and concepts. Furthermore, in the twenty-first century, students need to be able to employ HOTS, which integrates critical, creative, collaborative, and communicative thinking.

Although there are some previous researchers discussed about the implementation of HOTS (Nurmaharaeni & Uyyunasirah (2022), Dumaris E. Silalahi, *et al.*, (2022), Yuliati & Lestari (2018), Thamrin & Agustin (2019)). However, none of them discuss the implementation of reading comprehension based on HOTS through extensive reading directly. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent of students' comprehension of reading based on HOTS and to identify any obstacles that students may encounter.

Based on the statement above, the researcher determined the research questions as follows:

1. How is students' comprehension of reading based on HOTS in Extensive Reading?
2. What are the difficulties of students' comprehension based on HOTS in Extensive Reading?

Research Method

This study aims to determine students' reading comprehension and to identify the elements that influence students' reading comprehension in prolonged reading using the HOTS approach. Since this study is mostly qualitative descriptive, it fully describes the phenomenon that occurred in the classroom. This research was carried out in a lengthy reading course at a private university in Kuningan. This study involved one second semester class of students. 5 male and 17 female students belong to class B's 22 students, who range in age from 18 to 25.

The information gathered through classroom observations and interviews was then subjected to a qualitative analysis utilizing categories created based on ideas associated with the HOTS technique. Four meetings were observed, and ten students were questioned in accordance with the recommendations made by Burke's reading interviews (2005), Ifanc and Wales (2010), and Burns, Maki, and Karrich (2013). The interview criteria outline information on students' behavior when reading passages, their level of content understanding, and their use of higher order thinking strategies when it comes to reading comprehension in extensive reading class. In analyzing the data, the researcher uses steps of analyzing qualitative data proposed by Yin (2011) which include;

1. Compiling: The researcher will select data collected from observations and interviews.
2. Disassembling: The researcher will break the data into more specific or smaller pieces. In this case, the research will try to classify the data into several aspects of HOTS level and extensive reading skills.
3. Reassembling: the researcher will depict the data and serves it in graphic or tabular forms.
4. Interpreting: the researcher will explain the data collected and analyze it using her own interpretation and assumptions supported by theory.
5. Concluding: The researcher will conclude the result of the research which is proven by the data and theories.

Result and Discussion

Students' reading comprehension through HOTS

There were several steps that researcher did. Two weeks before conducting the research, the researcher asked permission from the study program and the lecturer of the extensive reading course to conduct the research. After getting permission to conducting research. Then, the researcher conducted a pre-observation by asking the lecturer of the extensive reading course about the condition of the students in the classroom before the implementation of HOTS. In the beginning before the implementation of HOTS in classroom, students only qualified the following criteria:

1. The students could actively retrieve knowledge from long term memory (C1-phase) by retrieving the book by analyzing headlines and supporting ideas by involving their prior knowledge and their previous experience.
2. The students used their skills in constructing meaning from instructional messages, including oral, written, and graphic communication (C2- phase)
3. The students applying a procedure to a familiar task (C3- phase) by summarizing. The text and retelling it to their friends in the classroom in two or three sentences.

The researcher concluded that students had not reached the stage of being able to criticize the information they got. This happens because second semester students are still

categorized as new students who are transition from senior high school to university level. So, it is very natural that in the first semester they are still at the C1-C3 level because they are not familiar with learning based on HOTS, especially in the case of learning based on HOTS, it takes a long time to make students improve their ability to think. So that students still feel that they have difficulty in understanding reading because students still lack understanding of a text and also they do not think critically. This is in accordance with the script interview that has been conducted by researcher with students, students explained that:

“Student 8 : The difficulty is having to organize myself to focused and calm while working on the questions so I can understand the questions and the text.”

The response of student 8 shows that he has problems in reading comprehension based on HOTS because it is difficult to focus on reading which makes him difficult to understand the book or text he has read. This indicates that the learning strategy applied in extensive reading should be able to make students better in reading comprehension and improve students' ability to think from the lower order thinking skills (LOTS) to the higher order thinking skills (HOTS) are consisted of 3 aspects category which are Analyzing (C4), Creating (C5), and Evaluating (C6). In short, the main purpose of HOTS is that the students are able to analyze the information, evaluate it and generating new ideas to be implemented in any other situations they have, beyond the classroom or any other occasions.

Analyzing (C4)

One of the strategies used by the lecturer to build students' interest of reading in the extensive reading class, the lecturer provided students with the experience of being able to read a book that they like. For example, at the class meeting on Tuesday, March 6th, 2023 at 08.00 - 09.40 a.m., the learning material is about analyzing fiction books that students like. Students are required to bring a fiction book to motivate students to read the books they like. Based on the observation, the following are the steps of HOTS strategy implementation:

- a) The first step, the lecturer explained about how to determine a main idea in a paragraph. The lecturer explained that the main idea in the paragraph can be at the beginning of the paragraph, in the middle or at the end of the paragraph. In addition, the lecturer also explained that in determining the main idea, it can also be marked by the pattern of organization which includes: chronological, compare-contrast, order of importance, sequence, spatial, cause-effect and problem-solution.
- b) The second step, students are asked to understand the concept of pattern of organization that has been explained.
- c) The third step, students are asked to read a fiction book that they have and begin to written the main ideas they find in the book, and analyze them into patterns of organization.
- d) The fourth step involved the lecturer asking students to present the results of their reading as well as their analysis. Students deliver their analysis results spoken in front of the class by reading their notebooks.
- e) The fifth step, after the students submit their reading results. The lecturer asks questions about the book they have read, such as: what information they get from the book, what patterns of organization are in the book, how they determine the topic in a sentence and what lessons can be taken from the book they have read.

As we can know, at first students when reading they were only able to achieve the criteria of retrieving knowledge from long-term memory (C1- phase), constructing meaning from instructional messages, including oral, written, and graphic communication (C2- phase) and applying a procedure to a familiar task (C3- Phase). However, after getting teaching from the lecturer, students have been able to achieve the criteria in phase C4 or analyzing because it is in accordance with the criteria of the HOTS rubric, namely "Students are able to decompose information into related parts and are able to analyze parts of a text or stimulus".

Evaluating (C5)

There are learning activities related to the process of phase C5 or evaluating as in the class meeting on Tuesday, March 21st, 2023 at 09.40 - 11.00 a.m., at the next meeting in the extensive reading class the teacher applied learning strategies that were fun for students, so that students could have experience and interest in reading books. Based on the result of observation was conducted by the researcher, the researcher found there were some tendencies that has been done by the students as follows :

- a) When the lecturer gave an assignment for students to visit a bookstore and buy books that they like to read, many of the students chose fiction books rather than academic books. For example, in the class meeting on Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at 9:40 - 11:00 a.m., from the many reading books they prepared, there was a student who brought a book about self-improving titled "Filosofi teras". Meanwhile, one of the fiction books they brought was "The swan".
- b) The lecturer asked the students to presented their reading in front of the class. The lecturer asked about the 5W+1H related to the content of the book they had read, including: the price of the book, the number of pages, the chronology of the story, the characters in the book, the moral value obtained from the book and the conclusion.
- c) Based on the results of their presentations, they were able to conveyed the results of their reading and given conclusions from the books they had read without much trouble when they did it. In this third meeting, many of the students could describe the information they got to their friends including the headline, main idea, the content and summarizing the book well using their own perception.
- d) When giving conclusions from the results of student reading and when answering questions from the lecturer. Students can answered questions well because they feel well-prepared, so they can answer questions well.

From the observations above that have been conducted by the researcher, the learning activities are in accordance with the criteria of the C5 phase or evaluating that is "Students are able to evaluate in accordance with the objectives and make judgments based on standards or criteria". Because in this case, students can properly evaluate the books they have read and provide an evaluation of what they have gotten from the reading results by being able to judge and share information objectively about the contents of the book informatively. This shows that students have improved in the application of each phase. which was at the beginning in phase C4 or analyzing now the students can also qualify the criteria in phase C5 or evaluating

Creating (C6)

There are learning activities related to the process of phase C6 or creating as in the class meeting on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., at this meeting the

lecturer gave a test to the students about reading comprehension based on HOTS, multiple choice questions containing reading comprehension related to analysis questions that require students to be able to understand a short article on the topic of reading, answer a short narrative on an academic subject, determine the answer related to information in the article either stated or implied.

For example, a part of the question given that asks about detailed information:

“All of the following are true, except....”

“We know that from the text that a compromise....”

Based on the results of the researcher's observations, the researcher found several things:

1. Students are able to answered questions in reading comprehension which required students to be able to understand a short article on the topic of reading and make conclusions from a paragraph.
2. There are some things that make students confused when answering reading comprehension questions because the text is long and they lack focus when reading the text. However, students also explained that answering reading questions would be easy especially if they could focus and know the context of the reading they read in detail. They also explained the connection with their personal knowledge, ideas, or beliefs. This is one of their answers:

“Student 4 : It depends yaa, if we are thorough and know how to analyze how it will be easy. but if, for example, you are not thorough and don't know how to analyze it, it will be difficult because you also don't understand the question.”

Factors that cause students' difficulties in reading comprehension based on HOTS Lack of vocabulary

Student 4 response was categorized as C6 phase because it matched with the criteria from the rubric which was “Students can unite elements to form a unit or rearrange elements to form a new structural patterns.” Because in this case students can make a product that is described by students being able to answer reading comprehension questions based on HOTS which in each question consists of 3 phases: Analyzing, evaluating and creating. By students being able to answer the questions well, it indicates that they have been able to apply the C6 or creating phase by linking their abilities to be able to answer each HOTS question given. Also tudents can answer questions related to generating solutions for a problem (C6-phase).

Students are still constrained by the understanding of vocabulary they have, many of the students cannot understand a text or book they read because of the lack of vocabulary they have. Vocabulary is very influential with students' reading comprehension, because if students do not know the meaning of a word from what they read, it will also make it difficult for students to understand and answered questions based on the text. For example, in class on Wednesday, March 29th, 2023 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., when the lecturer gave students a news text entitled "Unusually Rich Tax Official and Father of Assaulter Removed from Post" which was taken from the jakartaglobe.id. the teacher asked students to write down unfamiliar words that they found in the news text and also write down their meanings. It turned out that from the reading results they found many unfamiliar words so they had to often open their dictionaries to find out the meaning of the word in order to understand the text well.

Unfamiliar Words

Unfamiliar word	Meaning
Assault	<i>Menyerang</i>
Lavish	<i>Mewah</i>
Wealth	<i>Kekayaan</i>
Probe	<i>Penyelidikan</i>
Flaunted	<i>Memamerkan</i>
Bound	<i>Terikat</i>
Branch	<i>Cabang</i>
Formerly	<i>Dahulu</i>
Duties	<i>Kewajiban</i>
Sake	<i>Kepentingan</i>
Sparked	<i>Memicu</i>
Referring	<i>Merujuk</i>
Violations	<i>Pelanggaran</i>
Outcry	<i>Kemarahan</i>
Costly	<i>Mahal</i>
Severity	<i>Keparahan</i>
Servant	<i>Pelayanan</i>
Violence	<i>Kekerasan</i>

(taken from students' result discussion)

From the notes above, it shows that there are many vocabulary that the students do not know. It can be concluded that the more vocabulary they do not know, it will also affect students' comprehension in comprehending a reading text. So they must often open the dictionary to be able to know the meaning of the vocabulary they do not know.

Lack of focus

The difficulties faced by students in reading comprehension based on HOTS are due to students who lack focus in reading, so they cannot get the important points in the text or book. For example, on Wednesday, March 15th, 2023 at 10:00 - 11:00 am., when students were given test questions about reading comprehension based on HOTS many of the students were still wrong in choosing the right answer, this was due to students who were less focused in reading so that as a result students could not understand the question properly. This is in accordance with the student's statement in the interview :

"Student 3 : I also have difficulties, because there were several answers that seemed to be correct but turned out to be wrong in the reading comprehension questions.

Student 8 : The difficulty is having to organize myself to focused and calm while working on the questions so I can understand the questions and the text."

The responses from student 3 and student 8 showed that they had problems understanding the reading text because they could not focus on reading. To train students' focus in reading, students must start practicing reading every day so that they can get used to being able to organize themselves to focus.

Not interesting with reading

Furthermore, the difficulty experienced by students in reading comprehension based on HOTS is because students are not used to reading so they find it difficult to

understand the text or book they read. Reading is an easy job, but not everyone can do it well because it needs to be built by our habit to want to read. For example, on Tuesday, March 6th, 2023 at 09.40 - 11.00 a.m., the lecturer asked students to finish a fiction book that they like to read, and present the reading results in front of the class. However, there are some students who have not finished their reading so that when presenting in front of the class they are not so detailed in conveying information with the reason "*Belum selesai membaca, karena bukunya tebal ma'am*". This statement is in accordance with what researchers found in the interview's script:

“Student 2 : Yeah, I think I have some difficult because I don't interesting with reading.

Student 3 : I have difficulty because I do not like to read, so it's difficult to find answers to questions.”

The responses from student 2 and student 3 show that they have problems in understanding reading texts because they are not used to reading, so when they have to read and comprehend a text they will find it difficult. Students should be able to better increased their interest in reading because reading is a receptive skill, which is the most important skill for students to learn because through reading students can gain a lot of knowledge from various letters and words. In addition, by reading we can communicate with our thoughts and feelings, obtain a lot of information, and increase intelligence and creativity.

Not having basic knowledge

Another issue from the students' perspective is the difference in basic knowledge from the prior school. Varied levels of cognitive ability lead to different levels of proficiency in students. It has a significant impact on HOTS teaching and learning since the specified teaching and learning cannot be implemented because learners who have not yet mastered the primary skills require extra attention. This is in accordance with the student's statement in the interview as follows :

“Student 2 : It's my first time learn about HOTS because at senior high school I don't learn with HOTS.

Student 3 : I have only ever read the HOTS questions but haven't studied about it.

Student 4 : Never before, because I just knew the term HOTS when I was at university.

Student 5 : Never and just found out about HOTS at university.

Student 9 : Never before and just know about HOTS now.”

The responses from student 2, student 3, student 4, student 5 and student 9 showed that they had difficulty in reading based on HOTS because they did not have prior knowledge. Learning by implementing HOTS strategies does take a long time. Students must also be trained frequently to get used to learning with the higher order thinking skills (HOTS) system.

Lack of time

In the teaching and learning of HOTS, time is a major challenge. The reason for this is that students' thought they didn't have enough time to master HOTS. Maulidina, (2020) claims that growing HOTS is a timeconsuming process. However, due to each subject's tight schedule, students may struggle to comprehend HOTS-filled courses that must be completed in one or two class periods. The interview below will discuss the time that became a challenging factor for students when learning using HOTS. This is in accordance with the student's statement in the interview as follows:

- “Student 1 : The problem is because we don't practice HOTS questions, we have to think higher but we still tend to be less focused and not used to it.
- Student 4 : When we are required to think in a HOTS way, we have to think higher and read it too, so the obstacles are lack of understanding and lack of practice.
- Student 5 : The obstacle is because to lack of practice working on HOTS questions so when I found questions like that I found it difficult.”

The responses from student 1, student 4 and student 5 show that in working on questions based on HOTS they often experience difficulties because they have less time to practice so that when they have to work on questions of this type they are still not familiar. Time has become an important factor in the learning process, particularly for based on HOTS learning. As a result, it's not unexpected that time is one of the most challenging aspects for students to deal with when answering HOTS questions.

Conclusion

In an extensive reading lesson, there are primarily two types of students' reading comprehension based on HOTS. Analyzing, evaluating, and developing are the initial complex steps in the HOTS strategy (C4-C6 phase of HOTS). Determine main concepts, absorb language, draw inferences, and detail information are the second, which are related to text comprehension. Students prefer to start using their past knowledge, experience, and logical thinking after learning about the stages of extended reading and reading comprehension from the lecturer during classroom activities. In this example, the students were split into LOTS and HOTS groups depending on how much they used HOTS to respond to the lecturer's topic and demonstrate their reading comprehension.

There are several factors that cause students to experience difficulties in reading comprehension through HOTS in extensive reading classes including; lack of vocabulary, lack of focus, lack of time, lack of basic knowledge and not interested in reading.

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