The Implementation of Progressive Approach in Learning Reading Course by the Third Year Students of Sumatera University (Pseudonym)

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ABSTRACT

This is a case study research design. The purposes of the study are to explore the students' learning reading activities taught through progressive approach and the classroom environment in learning reading at the University of Sumatera. There were 20 students involved as the participants of this study. The data were collected through field note, observation, and interview for a triangulation method. This triangulation was done to ensure validity and reliability of the data. The data analysis technique answered the research question of the study. The findings of this study illustrated that the students read text individually and discussed with peer. They also discussed difficult materials with lecturer and then share ideas to friends. In addition, the students showed creative reading where they did independent reading even though the lecturer did not encourage further extensive reading. In general, the findings indicated that the progressive approach was implemented by students in their reading activities in learning reading III course and classroom environments were conducive at the beginning and while learning process. However, a number of activities and classroom environment still did not encourage the implementation of progressive approach and these have contributed to the students' reading comprehension problem. This impies that the implementation of progressive approach can increase students' reading activities and participation in learning reading course but not for the reading comprehension achievement. There is a need to be improved and to ensure that students comprehend well of what they read and thus improve their reading ability.

Keywords: progressive approach, learning reading

Introduction

In Indonesia, English is perceived as the language of science and technology, and is used in many scientific journals in many countries (Nunan, 1991). It is given a status and taught as a foreign language (FL) in which the teaching of English is focused on the four language skills; namely listening, speaking, reading and writing as learning subjects. Among these four language skills, reading is regarded as the most important skill for university students to study as reading is a means of accessing knowledge. Hence, the directorate of higher education curriculum allocated eights credit hours for reading in English subject namely, Reading I, Reading II, and Reading III and two credits for Academic Reading and Writing (DIKTI 2000). In addition, based on the survey on the teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia, it was found that the university students' scores on reading comprehension test correlated

positively to their scores on writing test (UNRI, 2011).

Teaching reading is significant because at university level learning involves reading academic texts and journal articles which requires a student to have a good competency in the language in order to comprehend the text provided. This is so because in reading academic materials, students need to not only read and comprehend but also to be critical of what they have read. This requires a higher ability as there is a difference in acquisition and developmental patterns between conversational language or language for interaction and academic language (Christophel, et.al 2012). This is also what Cummins (1979) termed as Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS are language skills needed in social situations or day-to-day interaction to interact socially with other people. This skill is not very cognitively demanding while CALP refers to formal academic learning which includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing about subject area or content material. This distinction is significant as they highlight misconceptions about the nature of language proficiency which often contribute to academic failure for university students (Christophel, et.al 2012). Tomlinson (1990) too had earlier noted that majority of learners could not use academic English for oral or written communication.

It is assumed that students have developed proper reading skills from previous academic years for 12 years. Reading materials at university level are more cognitively demanding and require students to read critically than at school level or even any non-academic reading materials. At school, based on the curriculum 2006

(School-Based Unit Curriculum), the reading texts are focused on reading for social communication function, such as interpersonal, transactional, and functional (Kemendkbud, 2010). The interpersonal function of the language involves communication strategies, by which people maintain and/or establish social relationship; or people use language to help them establish social order and maintain a good relation with other people. Halliday (1978) further says that language as a social phenomenon has different functions such as textual, ideational, and interpersonal.

Then, by transactional text, people use language to achieve optimal and efficient transference of information. The functional text also varies in terms of its function, generic structure, language features and vocabulary. Then, English materials are focused on components such as: sounds, phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and discourse; on language macro skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing; on language micro skills such as discriminating sounds, recognizing language device function such as introducing, greeting, informing, and language notion such as time, equality, cause, existence, ownership, duration, size, language aspect (structure, pronunciation, and vocabulary) (Halliday and Hasan 1976).

Moreover, at university level, the English reading materials are focused on academic texts including journal articles which require student to read critically. This means that in choosing their methods of teaching reading to university students, lecturers should address three aspects that affect students' reading ability. First, the students' cognitive skills in reading; second the academic content (reading material);

and third, the critical language awareness (Cummins 2008). These reflect the need for a teaching approach that give focus on students' ability and need namely progressive-approach. A progressive-approach focuses on the students' needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles. The activities are acknowledge students' voice as a central to the learning experience for every learner. In the context of teaching reading in English, this approach focuses on the needs of the students rather than those of others involved in the reading process. Hence, this approach has many implications for the design of the curriculum, course content, and interactivity of the course.

A progressive-approach has long been incorporated in the Indonesia education system and included in the curriculum for Indonesia University. The approach has been incorporated in the Competency Based Curriculum (BNSP 2004) since 2004; through the Cara Belajar Siswa Aktif (CBSA) or Active Learner Learning Style in 1979 and later in the Pembelajaran Aktif, Kreatif dan Menyenangkan (PAKEM) or Active, Creative and Joyful learning in 2006 (KTSP 2006). This curriculum is still implemented at present. Hence, it is expected that lecturers incorporate a progressive approach in their teaching and that students are aware of and are experiencing the approach in their learning process. Apart from that, the students of English are encouraged to develop active interaction and intra-action in learning reading in English through progressive approach.

The data of the reading comprehension tests performance among students who have completed the Reading I, Reading II, and Reading III shows that between 64% - 92% of the students failed (UNRI, 2013).

Based on this analysis, it is a wonder why students at the University of Sumatera are still not performing well in reading although they have learned English for 12 years. Several causes may be related to this situation. Perhaps, the teaching of reading in English is not fully or correctly implemented. Perhaps, the students are not aware of, trained or capable of activities of progressive approach in learning to read in English. Or perhaps, the teaching of reading in English as a foreign language is more effectively done through a different approach. There are many possibilities in answering or explaining why the Indonesian students at University of Sumatera are not performing well in the reading course.

Several studies have been carried out in Indonesia in the attempt to illustrate several of these causes in explaining the students' poor performance. For example; lecturers' competence was found to be insufficient to enable students to achieve standard communicative competence (Dardjowidjodo 2000; Wijaya & Sanjaya 2007); limited time allocated for teaching reading, students do not have enough time to practice in reading activities, and the use of unauthentic material (Yuwono 2005); and the absence of a socio-cultural aspect of the reading texts (Mustafa 2001). However, there are still lack of studies that explore how exactly the progressive approach is implemented by the students in learning to read at university level, identify the causes to understand why university students still do not perform well in reading tests. Hence, this study was aimed to explore the students' learning reading activities taught through progressive approach and the classroom environment in learning reading course at the University of

Sumatera. The research questions of the study are:

1. How are the students' learning reading activities taught through progressive approach at the University of Sumatera?.

2. How is the classroom environment in learning reading course at the University of Sumatera?.

Since this study was conducted in a specific place and involved the participant from the University of Sumatera, the research methodology appropriate for the purpose of this study is a case study. As the findings of the study therefore cannot be generalized to other situation, it is uniquely confined to the scope defined in this study. It means as the strength of this study as a case study is an in-depth study of a particular situation which leads to further understanding of the phenomenon under study (Creswell 2005).

The limitation is related to the participants of the study. They were the students enrolled in the Reading III course who have undergone the Reading I and Reading II course. The data gathered therefore were their reading activities and their experiences in learning to read in English. Their responses were based on their interpretations of the phenomenon where the behavior observed, interviews recorded, and the field note taken were analyzed. The findings might give a better understanding of how the approach is perceived and practiced in different parts of the world where English is a foreign language. In addition, the findings also provide insights regarding characteristics of learners from different social and cultural contexts. This study highlights the theoretical and conceptual understanding on how the

learning to read in English is experienced by EFL learners whose mother tongue is not English and who are studying in the foreign language context.

A progressive-approach is a way of teaching that shifts the focus of activity from lecturer to learner (Felder 2012). The principles of teaching are intended to apply as a whole learning referring to cognitive, motivation, affective, development and social, and individual difference factors influencing learners and learning (APA BEA, 1997) where teaching took a very logical turn to focus on the person being taught (Woolfolk 1998). In the context of learning reading, a progressive-approach is a process of learning to promote students to be active in the classroom activity. Reading comprehension performance is constructed by students and that the lecturer is a facilitator of learning rather than as the presenter of information (Kember 1997). Many different approach or activities can be effective if the activities can create a positive classroom environment in which students' cognitive engagement is involved.

In reading comprehension process, readers reflect their background knowledge with the text read by enhancing specific action to get better reading comprehension performance. Through this process, the cognitive constructivism theory is applied. Cognitive constructivism is the learning theory underpinning the progressive approach. This process promotes active participation of the learner in classroom activity while lecturer is a facilitator because students take an active role in classroom interaction. Simon (1999) highlighted that this approach is linked with the process of development or reading readiness, i.e. learners will learn when he/she is ready. This means that lecturer should not interfere with the process of

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learners' achievement but act as a guide in the classroom. In this study, the progressive-approach is expected to be implemented by the students in learning reading III course. .

Methodology

The aim of this study was to explore the students' learning reading activities taught through progressive approach and the classroom environment in learning reading at the University of Sumatera. The students' performance in the reading comprehension subject taught is still low despite it's curriculum is based on a progressive approach. Hence, there is a case to be explored to understand further by gathering insights of the phenomenon and the complex interrelationship among all aspects (Stake 1995). This illustrates that a Case Study research design suits the purpose of the study where the complex and real data of the phenomenon were gathered via observations, field note and interviews. In the context of this study, the qualitative approach enables the researcher to observe, take a field note and to interview (Tong et. al 2007) on how learners learned reading in the classrooms and react to the lecturers' teaching approach.

The participants were the students who involved in the teaching and learning of reading III course at the University of Sumatera academic year 2012/2013. This is because the students had undergone the Reading I, and II courses. Therefore, they would have done reading activities in a progressive-approach classroom. In determining the number of cases or participants; it was based on the accessibility as well as time allocation. There were a total of 70 students with

similar proficiency in English enrolled in three Reading III course: namely Classes A, B and C. Due to the frequent absence of the lecturer in Class B, and the decline to participate by the lecturer in class C, only Class A was selected to be the case of this study. There were about 20 students enrolled in Class A and all of them were involved in the classroom observations. There were 12 classroom observations carried out through the semester.

Meanwhile, for the interview, all 20 students were interviewed during the first interview. However, only 12 students remained as interviewees for all three interview sessions. Only three interviews were conducted as the students were already giving similar responses then. Hence, the total number of interview sessions gathered from these 12 students was 36.

The instrument of this study was observation, field note, and interview. These were to gain a validity and reliability through triangulation methods of data collection which is a criterion for qualitative research design (Creswell 1994). Classroom observation together with field note were employed to gather data on how the students responded to the lecturer's instructions in reading activities through progressive approach. The students' responses were observed to indicate whether or not the students were participating and understanding in the teaching and learning process. The observations included three stages of teaching and learning activities (pre, while, and post teaching) done by the students.

For the purpose of this study, the semi-structured interview was employed (Denzin & Lincoln 1998) as it allowed all issues pertinent to the research questions to be

asked through open-ended questions. This semi-structured interview explored personal and perhaps sensitive aspects of the students' experiences in the teaching and learning reading in English. The interview protocol consisted of 22 interview questions. This interview was gathered to get in-depth information on the implementation of progressive approach from the perspectives of the students. The items included questions related to students reading activities, students' role, reading materials. One-to-one interviews with the students were employed to ensure privacy and ease for the participants. The participants were asked to talk about their activities in learning of reading.

The data collection procedure involved three phases: observations, field note, and interviews. What were observed were also asked in the interviews for verification as well as to initiate discussion. The verbatim transcriptions were done and then analyzed to identify themes through a constant comparative process (Strauss & Corbin 1990) as interpreted by the researcher and shown to the participants. The reliability and validity will be achieved when the steps of the research are verified through examination of such items as raw data, data reduction products, and process notes (Campbell 1996). The back and forth analysis or constant comparative and the data reduction are measures to verify the data collected (Strauss & Corbin 1990). Apart from that, a member checking process (Cohen 1980) of external or face validity and reliability were also done.

Result

a. Findings, Interpretations and Discussion of Observation and Field Note.

The purpose of the observations and field note were to capture the implementation of a progressive approach in learning to read and the students' responses to the lecturer's teaching approach. The observations included observing the students' activities in the reading classroom, the lecturer's activities in teaching learning to read. The themes were identified through thematic analysis of the observations and field note at the three stages of the teaching and learning process: pre, while and post stages. These themes were then categorized and analyzed to illustrate whether or not the characteristics of progressive approach appeared in the learning reading activities.

To answer the research question, the data analysis was done based on the principles of progressive approach described by Woolfolk (1998), Nunan (1999). Mock Soon Sang (1993), Brooks and Brooks (1993).Then, the principles of teaching and learning reading proposed by Leu and Kinzer (2003), and Weinstein and Mayer (1987) were also considered.

A total of 23 themes were identified from the observations and field note of the students' activities during the reading class. Two themes were identified at the pre teaching (opening) stage, 13 themes at the while teaching (development) stage and 8 themes at the post teaching stage. These themes were then categorized in the second level analysis. Two categories identified from the observation at pre teaching stage were active learning and attitude. Six categories identified from the observations on the students' activities at the while teaching stage were active learning, attitude, background knowledge, peer

learning, autonomous learning, and resources. Five categories identified from the observations on the students' activities at the post teaching stage were attitude, resources, thinking, active learning, and peer learning. Table 1 illustrates the themes and categories of the observation (Date observation: 23 Sept 2015– 10 January 2016).

Table 1   Themes and Categories of Students 'Activities at Pre, While, and Post Teaching Stage

No	Behaviors at pre reading stage	Themes	Category
1	Paying attention, answering, responding, asking, asking and answering real experience, questioning, playing scrabble, forming group work, singing together	Activity	Active learning
2	Just sitting, looking around and talking to class, Not focusing, talking via mobile, no greeting, no QA, not all are serious, playing with pen, putting her ring to mouth, going out out for a photo copy	Negative behavior	Attitude
No	Behaviors at while reading stage	Themes	Category
1	Answering questions directly, giving various answer, asking lecturer about the task	Activity/ QA	Active learning
	Answering the questions freely, asking about the new materials, listening to the lecturers' explanation, receiving quiz, asking, paying attention to lecturer's explanation, giving their friend clues, writing down notes, writing the explanation, working seriously.	Active learning	
	Writing various types of essay in learning activities. Writing reading summary, students working on their own, taking note without being asked, doing the exercises, playing scrabble	Activity	
2	Answering based on their comprehension	Comprehension	B. knowledge
3	Explaining to friends, giving friends clue, provide an example, singing together	Peer learning	Peer learning
	Forming group and sharing their answer, asking friends to match answers with other friends, peer discussion, Making a 'Rock and Roll' gesture, motivating each other, discussing, supporting friends, working in groups, responding to peers' questions.	Group work	
4	Checking dictionary on their own, reading the material without being asked, reading the questions	Activity	Autonomous learning
	Speaking confidently	Confidence	
	Thinking about the lecturer's question	Thinking	
	Writing essay on their own, writing various types of essays, writing reading summary	Self-learning	
5	Checking work on line, searches the words in internet, use mobile as learning aid	Use of media	Resources
No	Behaviors at post teaching stage	Themes	Category

1	Busy with their own work, chatting, giving key of her bike to other, laughing, smiling, and gossiping. playing mobile.	Negative attitude	Attitude
2	Using dictionary on their own	Learning resources	Resources
3	Drawing conclusion, doing reflection, requisitioning	Conclusion, Reflection, Questioning	Thinking
4	Writing summary Listening to lecturer's explanation	Activity Attention	Active learning
5	Discussing and answering the questions with each other, explaining opinion to friends, giving clues to each other, group work.	Peer work	Peer learning

The first category is active learning. This means that the students showed active interaction in the opening stage. They were observed active in reading comprehension as the lecturer encouraged them to engage in dialogues with the lecturer and peers. (Observation September, 23rd –January 10th, 2013). The students were responding to the lecturer's questions by referring to their own experience and participating actively in dialogues with both the lecturer and their peers. These behaviors may be seen as the students optimizing their ability to involve actively in classroom interaction (Depdikbud (2013). Similarly, at the while teaching stage, the students were also observed to be actively responding to the lecturer's and their peers 'questions. They were doing classroom reading activities through questioning and answering and active learning.   Attitude, Resources, Thinking, Active learning, Peer learning

Finally, at the closing stage, the students were still showing active participation. They were observed doing active learning, thinking, peer learning even though they seemed to have negative attitude toward learning.   Their behaviours indicated that they were interested in the lecturer's teaching and they were involved actively in the reading activity. All of these behaviours of active learning reflect the characteristics

of students in a progressive approach. This reflects the literature review on Depdikbud (2013) description that creative students must be doing active learning by listening, reading, writing, discussing, engaging in solving problem and evaluation either and doing the reading tasks designed by the lecturer.

The second category is Background knowledge. This was based the behaviors when they answered the questions related to the reading skills. The students were observed reflecting and relating their background knowledge where their responses indicated that they had used their background knowledge to help them comprehend the reading material. As was discussed by Mickulecky (1987:12) that in the reading process, "the reader constructs meaning of the text through an interaction between his or her background knowledge and with what is actually present in the text". This illustrate that the students were optimizing their own ability by activating their background knowledge. It indicates a social constructivism process of learning that the acquisition of knowledge and understanding is an on-going process that is heavily influenced by a student's prior knowledge (Doolittle & Camp 1999). Learning reading by promoting background knowledge to build new learning

experience is a concept of an interactive approach to reading.

The third category is Peer learning. This was observed in the while and post reading stages where they were doing peer work and peer learning during group activities as the category of peer learning. These behaviours were interpreted as activities and components of a progressive approach. Hence, the students were motivated to express what they have read in their own words to each other and the lecturer was merely facilitating the peer learning process. This peer learning too maximizes opportunities for interaction and language acquisition to take place (Doolittle & Camp 1999).

The fourth category is autonomous learning. The students were observed doing many things on their own in classroom reading activities without waiting for their lecturer's instruction. All these were interpreted as they showed their roles as autonomous students. They were self-directed and independent in solving problems and function with minimal guidance (Betts and Knapp 1981), and they were linking new information with their existing knowledge in meaningful ways' (Wool folk 1996: 480). In addition, students learn at different rates, learn best by doing, and actively engage in what is to be learned, and use language far more than they customarily do in most classrooms (Acquavita 1978). The fifth category is Recourses. The students were using electronic dictionary on their own to search for information they needed to ensure their understanding of the text being read. They were using these learning resources to enrich their own knowledge. The use of these learning resources helped students understand better and create learning outcomes. Meaningful learning is one of the characteristics of a student centred approach that contributes significantly to students' reading ability (Mok Soon Sang 1993).

The sixth category is attitude. There were behaviours that were interpreted as positive and negative attitude. Those discussed earlier are indications of positive attitude where the students were participating actively and demonstrating being autonomous in their reading process. These attitude were also shown by most of the students (between 15 to 16 students) . The following Table 2 indicated the students' negative behaviours which were further investigated in the interviews to understand why they were displaying those behaviours.

Table 2. Students' Negative Behaviors towards Learning

No	Behaviors at pre teaching stage	Themes	Category
1	Just sitting, look around and talk to class, not focused, talk via mobile, no greeting, no QA, not all are serious, play pen, put her ring to mouth, went out for a photo copy	Negative behavior	Attitude
No	Behaviors at while teaching stage	Themes	Category

| 1 | Go out, cheat, cough loudly, make noise, makes a task from other lesson, play with lap top, see her camera and take photo, play mobil phone, group not discuss, no qa, no respond, no discipline in learning, sleep, smiles to his friend, busy with their own business, talking each other, talking, laugh, play mobile, chatt and talk, do not answer, two students lay on table. | Negative behavior | Attitude |
| 2 | Few look around, look behind, uses paper for fan, covering their face with paper and hand, sticks her hand to the wall, group decide who is the next (obs 5). | Not focus. Negative behavior | |

No	Behaviors at post teaching stage	Themes	Category
1	Busy with their own, chatt, give key of her bike to other, laugh, smile, and make gossip. play mobile, play mobile, less serious in closure	Negative attitude	Attitude

There were several students (five to six students) were observed doing negative behaviours at the pre reading stage as merely doing no positive activities. (Observations October 12th, October 26th and November 2013).

Meanwhile, at the while teaching stage, the students were still demonstrating that they did not like the way the lecturer was teaching. They was no positive behavior they performed during lesson as there was no question and answer taking place in the group discussion and no responding to the lecturer's questions. The students were not focused towards learning. The lecturer was observed ignoring the students' behavior. This may be interpreted that the students began to take charge of the learning environment.. The lecturer was also observed no handling these negative behaviours. This implies that taking charge may at times be a negative factor if not managed well. And then, a lack of classroom management that may contribute to a classroom environment that is not conducive for learning in general or the reading activity specifically.

Similarly, at the post teaching stage, negative behaviours towards learning were still performed by these students. They were less serious in the closure activities conducted by their lecturer. This may seems common at the end of a lesson. However, for a progressive approach classroom, the closure stage is as important as the other stages, should be an important stage as the lecturer would be summing up the lesson which should involve the students. In other words the students themselves should be able to conclude what they have learnt. Activities such as making reflection or summarizing should be carried out. This implies that the progressive approach was not totally implemented by the lecturer.

b. The Findings, Interpretation, and Discussion of Interview with Students'

As described in the methodology, interviews with the students were also a means of a triangulation. Mainly, the students were asked on matters related to their views on their lecturer's teaching in the Reading class. The categories were gathered from the interviews with the students. It is related to the reading strategies the students employed in

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classroom activities as well as learning environment. There were several sub-categories under each categories. The following discussions present both the categories and sub categories as categories.

The main category developed from the interviews with the students was reading strategies employed by the students. A total

of 52 themes was identified from the strategies or ways the students said they employed in the Reading III class. These themes were then put into categories. The following Table 3 illustrates the themes and categories of the students responses on the reading strategies they employed in learning reading activities.

Table 3. Themes and categories of students responses on strategies
they employed in reading

No	interview responses	Themes	Categories
1	I apply reading method reading	Reading method	Reading method
2	I am praticing reading more news,	Newspaper	Reading material/ sources
	I read all passages or text, news, and from internt , i read all topics in englis. I am reading electronik book, many passages , article in internet and news flipboard.	Text, news, internet	
	I read any books out side, i read news paper.	Read book out side	
	We read the novel, song. Magazine, newspaper, book.	Novel, song, news paper.	
	We are reading in english material	Reading material	
	I am reading novel reading news,		
	I am reading short stories, journal		
	I read some interesting material		
	I read some passage		
3	Lecturer gives instruction and we work on reading aspecs ,	Give instruction	Active learning
	I resume in my log book	Work on reading	
	I am used to searching article.	Activity	Activities reading
	I sum up read at leasure time,		
	I read and write whatever and whenever.		
	I write a poem.	Activity	Activity writing
	I write essay and poetry read,		
	I write in my reading log		
	I write out side.I write the sinopsis		
	I read and write what ever and whenever.		
	I watch movies with subtittles, news	Watch movies with subtitles, news	
	I make a note,	Make a not	
	I make a report	Make a report	
4	I do individual work.	Individual work	Learning style
	I am inquiring new vocabulary		
5	Learning watch english movie,	Watch english movie	Resources
6	I disccuss, we are participating in discussion	Discussion	Group work
	We ask each other,	Interaction	
	answerring,	Participation	

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7	We are having fun activities,	Fun activity	Fun learning
	Pair works,	Pair work	
	I work in game	Games	
	We are playing games.		
	Playing scrable,		
8	I do exercise and quiz,	Do exercise and quiz	Activity
	i am finishing the exercise,		
	I find main idea, etc.	Find main idea	
	I find out dificult words	Find out dificult	
	We are doing task	Do task	
	I read, like toefl, just reading to read.	Just reading	
	I am listening to english song	Use songs	Learning strategy
	I practice reading out side,	Practice reading out side	
9	I browse internet,	Internet	L. strategy /use technology
	I read	Re-read	Reading strategy
	I read and predict	Read and predict	
	Read and answer	Read and answer	
	Read by skimming	Skimming	
	Read by skimming. Read more,	Skimming	
	I pply reading method , reading	Reading method	
	I practice reading ,	Reading	
	I am praticing to read more news.	Practicing	
	I act as reader and writer,	Role play	
10	I give advice and teach friends	Give advice	
	I am telling friends	Teach friend	
	I work as a team work	Team work	Peer interaction
	Whole class work, we are working actively	Whole class work	
	I explain to friends clearly	Explain to friends clearly	
	I help friend by explaining		
	Friends helps me a lot		
	Presenting in front of class,	Sharing	
	Sharing and try to give information		
	We sing a song		

The students admitted that they did "apply reading methods… and read various reading materials …all passages or text, news, and from internet, read all topics in English, electronic book, many passages , article in internet and news and flip-board, newspaper, novel, song, magazine, newspaper, book, novel, short stories, journal, some interesting material, and some passage or books outside". Apart from that, the students' responses indicated independent reading and employing other strategies that may have contributed to their reading skill such as "log book…searching article … sum up reading at leasure time … read and write what ever and whenever … read and write poem … write the synopsis" (Appendix , O; interview 3). These indicate that the students were engaged in the reading process as discussed by Aquavita (1978).

The engagement were also dependent on the students' learning styles or preferences. Several students said that they did "individual work … listening to English song, practice reading outside, browse internet" while others said that they did "participate in discussion …teach friends, participate in team work …". The students also said that they had fun learning activities where the "lecturer provides a games, prepare game, facilitates scrable game, speaking aloud students and peers work" (interview 4,7,20,22.) These indicate the various strategies employed by the students either individually or as a group.

The third main category developed from the interviews with the students is related to the learning environment. As discussed earlier, a good classroom instruction would create a good learning environment where the lecturer maintain their management system by preventing problems and keeping students engaged in learning activities (Weinstein and Mignano 1993 in Woolfolk 1998). This implies that how a lecturer creates or conducts the classroom will have an impact on the students learning reading process.".

The discussion of the findings presented answered the research questions. How are the students' activities in learning reading II course at the University of Sumatera?. The findings indicate that the students employed the principles of a progressive approach through their reading strategies where they were actively interacting with the lecturer, learning by inquiry and experience, using affective reading strategies, interacting with peers via cooperative and collaborative learning, experiencing meaningful learning, employing cognitive, metacognitive and

affective reading strategies, and being autonomous.

How are the classroom environment in learning reading activities at the University of Sumatera?. It would be an environment that promoted learning reading activities in a progressive approach context. In general, the learning environment was conducive. It implies that the learners have created a good classroom environment where they were *"happy to learn"*.

Conclusion

The aims of the study to explore the students' learning reading activities taught through progressive approach and the classroom environment in learning reading course at the University of Sumatera. As discussed previously, the Indonesian curriculum has included a progressive approach in their education system. Yet, the problem raised and as evident in the problem statement that despite the implementation of a progressive approach, the students' performance in the reading section was still low.

Findings from the observations, interviews and field note indicated that the progressive approach was implemented by the students in learning reading activities and that the students had positive perceptions towards it where the lessons progressed accordingly and the students' gauging their background knowledge at pre to while-teaching stage and until post teaching stage. The classroom environment was also conducive as observed and reported by the students in the interviews.

Group discussions were also run since the students experienced the meaningful learning through their interactions with each other. This social-constructive

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approach includes reciprocal teaching, peer collaboration, problem-based instruction, anchored instruction and other methods that involve learning with others (Aquavita 1978, Shunk & Zimmerman,, 1998).

More specific evidence of a progressive approach is the independent reading that the students did along with follow up activities which they initiated such as writing a summary of what they have read outside of the classroom. This indicated the student's role as autonomous learners. Hence, it may be concluded that a progressive approach was implemented in learning reading activities which have affected the students' development as independent learners but may not have affected their performance in their reading and the classroom environment was conducive where students were happy to learn.

This leads to the recommendation that more studies be carried out from the perspectives of those involved in the phenomenon being studied or explored. However, perhaps focus may be given on the challenges faced by the participants and how they overcome these challenges. In relation to the theoretical implication, it is recommended that further studies on measuring the impact of approaches, methods or strategies implemented by the government be carried out in order for more relevant assessment measurement could be recommended. This would be significant not only for practitioners (teachers/lecturers/educators) but also for policy and curriculum developers as well as for training organisations.

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