Digital Text Comprehension: How to Keep it on Track with Self-Regulated Learning?

Ratih Laily Nurjanah
Universitas Ngudi Waluyo
ratihlaily@unw.ac.id

Arif Suryo Priatmojo
Universitas Negeri Semarang
arifsuryo@mail.unnes.ac.id

Armeita Rahma Wulandari
Universitas Ngudi Waluyo
armeitarahmaw@gmail.com

Abstract

The era of technology brings some changes including the involvement of technology in the classroom. Among of them are reading comprehension activities. With the existence of texts in the internet, digital reading becomes a new literacy form in the learning process. Guided activities are considered important to help students deal with digital reading well. This study aims to propose activities based on Self-Regulated Learning strategy to be integrated with digital reading to keep the activities on track. This is a case study involving survey design and in-depth interview. A questionnaire was distributed to lecturers to assess how they conduct their reading classes with digital reading inside. The results can be arranged into 3 phases; Forethought and Planning phase, Monitoring phase, and Self-Reflected phase. It is important to give students time limitation to help them set their goal of learning. The monitoring of the activities can be reported in form of blog entry or on digital classroom or learning management system developed by institutions. The self-reflection can be conducted by asking students to retell the text they have read, the difficulties found and how they overcome the problems in form of podcast entry. Having these activities will help students to get involved more in various forms of technologies assisting them in learning process. These activities highlight the importance of guidance and instructions given by lecturers despite the involvement of technology and independence in learning.

Keywords: classroom technology, digital reading, self-regulated learning

INTRODUCTION

Technology development brings changes to many aspects of life including classroom activities. The teaching and learning process nowadays involves technology as media. It includes the process of teaching and learning reading skill. Reading no longer needs printed text but digital text becomes trends for students also. They become familiar with digital text more than printed ones. This brings a challenge to teachers related to how to keep the students on track during reading activities with the digital text. The internet or gadgets can become distractors for students in reading their digital texts. This is highlighted by Tanjung and Gultom (2017) in their study discovering that students are more interested in

spending their time with gadgets to read daily articles or information. This shows that it is very important for teachers to accommodate the shift of interest in order to keep students interested in reading activities in terms of learning activities. This is also supported by a study conducted by Satriani (2019) stating that online reading gives positive changes in terms of reading motivation since it turns reading into fun activity besides the support from teachers, parents, and environment.

Reading habit gives positive effect on reading comprehension which becomes one of the indicators in reading class. This is stated by Septiarini and Rahmat (2018) who present that students with good reading habit have higher comprehension in reading than those who do not. It is also discovered that students have positive perception to online or digital text as what stated by Islami and Warni (2020).

The use of digital text in reading classroom has been widely implemented. One of them is proposed by Handayani, Youlia, and Febriani (2020) in their study. They use digital reading text to teach reading narrative text. The study revealed that using digital text as teaching media can help students more enjoy reading activities and they give positive perception towards the learning activities and the media. Although it states that teacher uses the digital text well, it does not describe how teacher integrate the media in teaching and learning activities.

Digital texts are mostly used in the extensive reading level where the reading activities are meant to be fun and enjoyable for students. In their study, Ng et al. (2019) proposed that extensive reading also needs students' comprehension while doing it. It also helps students to gain more vocabulary which will support them in other skills of language. It is also believed to support students' ability in grammar because students acquire the knowledge while reading the story. Extensive reading is also mentioned to gain positive perspectives from students since reading story is more enjoyable for them.

Despite the popularity of digital text in reading classroom, teachers still have problems dealing with how to work with the texts in learning activities. This is stated by Laeli et al. (2020) where teachers are said to have positive perspectives on the use of digital reading to teach reading. However, this interest is not supported by any workshops or training that can help them work with digital reading with students. From this study, it is concluded that there is still a need to support or give insight to teachers on how to use of digital texts effectively.

It can be quite challenging since students may be easily distracted while working with digital reading. Teaching with digital texts requires teachers to break down the phases of learning first. As stated by Lim & Toh (2020), it is important to develop students' knowledge in terms of linear and deep reading strategies to motivate students to develop critical questions as part of gathering information. Being able to work with digital text also requires students to work with digital devices to allow them access information from online sources. This process includes the understanding on schema or structures of digital environment. Digital text may come with audio, videos, or pictures. This causes students to have the knowledge on how the audio, pictures, videos are integrated to convey the meaning or message delivered by the text. This is called multimodal semiotic awareness which works on how students find and produce multimodal text by considering the layout composition, use of text, and images with aspects of colors, size, and so forth. While these aspects are expected to support the text, they can appear as distractions for students.

To avoid the distractions, it is prominent to provide teaching strategies that support the reading classroom with digital text. Reading class can be conducted with various strategies and techniques. DRTA (Direct Reading Thinking Activity) and KWL (Know, What, Learn) are used by Andriani (2017) to improve the reading comprehension skill. It is stated that effective comprehension instruction includes the use of strategies and engagement in terms of content. Students who are considered as good readers need to apply strategies before, during, and after

reading activities. This shows that students need strategy that allows them to do the sequence of activities.

One of the strategies that involves the sequence is self-regulated learning strategy. This strategy implements three phases; Forethought and Monitoring phase, Performance Monitoring phase, and Self-Reflection phase. The first phase is where students are expected to do pre-reading activities. They are expected to be able to set their goal in reading, set their time spent to spend on reading, and comprehend their own goals in reading. The second phase helps students monitor their own reading activities by later identifying their difficulties during reading activities. The last phase helps students to evaluate their activities after reading to then plan the next plans. This phases are proposed by Zimmerman (2014) in his theoretical research on Self-Regulated Learning (SRL).

This strategy has been implemented in various studies especially reading comprehension. A study by Sholich (2018) presents that SRL is used in teaching reading comprehension for 11th grade students by implementing the three phases. Students were required to set their learning goals and select best strategies for their own goals including direct and indirect strategies including memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social strategy. Students then monitor their own progress and adjust their strategies when needed. If the progress is not expected, they are encouraged to change the strategies for the next tasks.

SRL is also proven to be one of the effective strategies to improve students' ability in reading comprehension. In their study, Jafarigohar and Morshedian (2014) apply SRL in reading comprehension class and found that SRL is effective in improving the ability especially in making inferences within text. This study does not describe the clear steps on how to implement the SRL in reading classroom so it can improve students' ability.

SRL is also considered helpful while conducting a classroom through online learning.

This is proposed by Wandler and Imbriale (2017) who implements SRL in online classroom for undergraduate students. This study shows the importance of instructions, instructors and learning media and materials to support the implementation of SRL in online classroom. This study also provides the implementation guidelines and empirical evidence linked to improved SRL strategy. The limitation of this study is it does not describe which course where it is implemented.

The implementation of SRL in the classroom should be supported by proper instructions. In their study, Nurjanah and Pratama (2020) develops the instructions based on SRL phases that can be applied in the classroom. This goes along with El-henawy, Sayed, and Dadour (2010) who integrate SRL with learning instructions. In their study, Tasnimi & Maftoon (2014) also implement the SRL strategy to improve students' reading comprehension.

This present study proposes the description of the classroom activities where students implement the SRL phases with digital text as the learning media and give instructions based on the strategy used.

The purpose of this present study is describing the steps conducted by teacher in teaching reading comprehension with digital text through the online learning conducted especially during pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

This present study applies case study design where it is mentioned as taking an example of an activity using multiple method and data sources to explore them and interrogate them. It aims to give rich description of a phenomenon as stated by Somekh and Lewin (2005)

The subject of this study is a lecturer of English Literature Department of Universitas Ngudi Waluyo who teach reading comprehension on the level of Extensive Reading.

The data are gathered through observation on on-site documents such as lesson plan and learning materials. A questionnaire and in-depth

interview were also conducted to get more description from the lecturer.

The data then analyzed by using data reduction, data display, data conclusion/ verification (Huberman & Miles, 1984).

The procedures of the study were; first, distributing the questionnaire consisting of:

Q1. How is the use of digital text in online reading classroom?

Q2. What are the advantages of using digital text in online reading classroom?

Q3. What are the challenges of using digital text in online reading classroom?

Q4. What strategy is considered best to use to support the use of digital text in online reading classroom?

The second step after transcribing the results of the questionnaire is conducting an in-depth interview. The interview guidelines is presented as follow:

1. Why did you choose the specific strategy to use together with the digital text in reading class?
2. What do you give to students to help them get through the first stage of reading (pre-reading activities)?
3. What do you give to students to help them get through the second stage of reading (during reading activities)?
4. What do you give to students to help them get through the third stage of reading (after-reading activities)?

The third step is matching the answers with the on-site documents such as lesson plan and learning materials.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the questionnaire, it was found that;

Q1. The digital text in reading classroom was chosen and used to accommodate the students' interest on digital stuff and technology. The topics chosen should be vary so students are not bored. Digital text is also easy to find and use.

Q2. Using digital text brings more fun in the classroom. Students spend more time with laptop, mobile phone, so reading digital text make them do not need to get on their books. Digital text brings more chances for them to explore more about a topic given.

Q3. The challenge in using digital text is making sure students do not explore too far that actually will bring them away from the topic discussed and finally do not get the point of learning. Another challenge is to keep them always alarmed that they have something to do with the text.

Q4. Considering the fact that I, as the lecturer, am not always around them, it is important to make sure they know what to do by growing out motivation in learning. Self-regulated learning is considered best because it explores and guides students' competencies in learning by themselves by making use of the materials or guidelines given.

The results of the interview show that SRL was chosen by the lecturer because it matches the needs of conducting reading activities in 3 phases of pre-reading, during reading and after-reading.

The pre-reading activities are given based on the phase of Forethought and Planning phase. Students were shown the materials and they got explanations related to the objectives of the learning, what the text is about, and what they had to do with the text. From the explanation, students were then guided to make their own goal based on the learning objectives. They then related the goals with the time they would allocate to complete the tasks. Since it is an extensive reading class where the students are not in their beginner level, the tasks mostly require them to do in-depth analysis like summary, give their opinions based on the text, and analyzing the text with various genre of texts from the internet, e-book, wattpad, and e-novels. In lesson plan, the phase is shown by stating 'planning activities".

The during reading activities are integrated with Monitoring performance phase of SRL. In

this phase, students were encouraged to keep monitoring their activities. Students were asked to keep their activities in a journal stating the title of a text they read, the link or source of the text, the difficulties they find from reading the text, the fun part of reading the text, what strategy they apply and what results brought by the strategies, how much time they allocate in the planning and how much time they spent in reality. In lesson plan, this phase is stated by including "making journal log" as the activities. Students were then asked to retell what they have got from reading activities to their peers related to the content of the text, the interesting part and not-so enjoyable part. In the lesson plan, this is stated as "retell information". This will help students' abilities in improving their comprehension about the content of a text. The retelling activities can be done through online conference.

The after-reading activities are integrated with Self-reflection phase of SRL. Students were encouraged to evaluate their process of reading extensively by looking at their personal journal. Then, they were asked to present their reflection to the peers and lecturer so others can learn from the problems faced by each other. In the lesson plan, this is stated with "evaluation".

Based on these results, some contrast and comparison are made based on the previous studies mentioned above.

These findings are considered solving the gap resulted from Andriani (2017)'s study where strategies that support the three phases of pre-reading, during, and after reading activities are needed. SRL in reading classroom as conducted in present study is implemented in 3 phases.

This present study goes along with a study of Sholich (2018) but different in terms of the setting of the research. This present study shows that it is possible to integrate the SRL phases in extensive reading classroom with students considered as adult students.

The present study also goes along with Jafarigohar and Morshedian (2014) where SRL in reading classroom helps students' reading comprehension. The different part is that this present study highlights the students' ability in

comprehending text shown by how they retell the text.

Related to the implementation in online learning environment conducted by Wandler and Imbriale (2017), this present study supports the finding where SRL can be implemented via online by keep minimizing students' chances of getting trouble with technical issues. This is because the students do not need to always have online conference in every meeting of reading class. It is possible for them to have the online conference once in a while to report their progress or their reading journals.

The implementation of SRL in this study applies the principles and instructions developed by Nurjanah and Pratama (2020) also El-henawy, Sayed, and Dadour (2010) where the instructions are given in the beginning of every digital text used in the learning activities. Compared to the previous studies where they developed the instructions, the present study shows how the instructions are explicitly given and included in the learning materials and lesson plan.

Bringing SRL into classroom is believed to have some benefits for students. Since SRL does not require particular level of ability, it helps students to understand and develop. In her book, Nilson (2013, p.10) proposed that SRL enhances students' achievement, the depth of student cognitive skill, the students' focus on learning, and the development of responsibility.

CONCLUSION

From this study, it is concluded that it is possible to implement SRL with digital text in online learning environment. The activities developed based on SRL strategy are considered useful in terms of keeping the students on track. The planning and setting goal including time management is useful in preparing students before they work with digital text. They know what to do with the text, and how the text should be involved on their learning activities. The performance monitoring phase is used to help students monitor their progress whether they explore too far or not. The self-reflection phase is

useful so students can set their next cycles based on their previous experiences.

The limitation of this study is that it does not involve students as the subjects of research in terms of observing their reading skill ability and their perspectives. For further researchers, it is expected to work on how SRL with digital texts improve their ability in reading skill and how they see SRL in the classroom with digital texts.

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