

## INDONESIAN EFL COMMUNITY-BASED ENGLISH CLUB AND ITS CONTRIBUTION ON AUTONOMOUS READING BEHAVIOR

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### Abstrak

Mendorong pemahaman membaca pada negara-negara dimana bahasa Inggris menjadi bahasa asing membutuhkan pendekatan yang berbeda dimana harus membuat pelajar dapat membaca secara mandiri. Maka dari itu, autonomi pada membaca sangat dibutuhkan untuk memungkinkan mereka belajar bahasa yang ingin mereka kuasai (bahasa Inggris) dengan nyaman dan mudah. Tujuan dari tulisan ini adalah untuk menjabarkan aktivitas-aktivitas yang ada di *English Club* di sekolah-sekolah Indonesia yang berdampak terhadap autonomi pada membaca lalu membahas kemungkinan aktivitas-aktivitas tersebut digunakan secara sering dan bagaimana aktivitas-aktivitas tersebut mempengaruhi cara pelajar membaca. Penggunaan riil dari aktivitas-aktivitas tersebut dan bagaimana pelajar dapat menggunakannya sendiri juga diberikan. Ditemukan bahwa aktivitas-aktivitas yang ada di *English Club* ternyata didukung oleh banyak penelitian-penelitian pada masa lalu: dimana aspek-aspek tersebut memiliki hasil positif terhadap kemampuan membaca siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** membaca, autonomi dalam belajar, autonomi dalam membaca, *English club*.

### Abstract

Promoting reading comprehension in an EFL country requires a different approach that should enable learners in reading independently. Thus, autonomy in reading comprehension is needed to allow them learning target language (in this case, English) comfortably and efficiently. The purpose of this paper is to breakdown numerous activities of Indonesian English club and its activities that might have an effect to autonomy in reading comprehension, discussing its feasibility being used often, and how it affects learners' way of reading. Practical use of its activities and how it can be utilized by the learners themselves are also offered. It is found that the activities in English club are backed up by numerous researches in the past; which indicated their positive impacts on reading skills.

**Keywords:** reading comprehension, learning autonomy, autonomy in reading, *English club*.

### INTRODUCTION

Learning reading is the foundation of language learning and gaining literacy at the same time; crucial in obtaining information for numerous domains of language engagement, especially academic one. Zhang & Seepho (2013) explained that in gaining communicative and developmental potential for EFL countries such as Indonesia, reading is the main way in achieving such goals.

In many senior high schools in Indonesia, one of the ways for students to familiarize themselves with English is by joining English Club. Unlike reading club or similar clubs in English speaking countries, English club in Indonesia focuses more on doing activities that can enhance learner's English skills, especially their autonomy in learning the target language.

English club in Indonesia is also considered as an example of community-based learning. Kathleen & Smedley (2016) explained that involves individuals voluntarily with the same goal in learning English, which gathers semi-informally (since it does not include in-school curriculum). The main goal of the club is to communicate and practice English. It incorporates all four main skills of English; listening, speaking, reading and writing with additional skill of critical thinking (Afia, 2006; Malu, 2013; Costa et. Al., 2014; Thomas, 2014; UNICEF, 2015). However, its main focus is to enhance the members' oral speaking and critical reading, which also requires the members to obtain various information from reading.

A handful of researchers has shown that Community-based learning (CBL) is highly beneficial

on the members' engagement (Mueller, 2005; Kirk & Riedle, 2005; Strain, 2005; Ngai, 2006; Hart & King, 2007; Lundy, 2007; Prentice, 2007; Sather et al., 2007). Academic, socio- personal, and civic engagement of the members seemed to be affected in a positive way. Moreover, due to the abundance of positive impact found on CBL, it is commonly used as a way to enhance learners' oral ability and critical thinking (Moser & Rogers, 2005). Thus, Indonesian English club was chosen as the focus since it is one of the most used community-based learning in Indonesian high school.

Making meaning for the text is the true definition of reading comprehension; understanding what the text intends to describe instead of just obtaining the translation of the text to mother tongue (Anderson, 1985; Dhieb- Henia, 2003; Eskey, 2005; Wooley 2011). The misconception in reading for EFL students is that it has to be done from translating and gaining the information from small scale (words, phrase) to the bigger one (paragraph, text)(also known as "top-down") until the meaning intended is found (Anderson, 1985). However, EFL students cannot truly learn and obtain meanings and information this way. They have also to involve utilizing the information they had gain previously combined with their experiences in reading.

Students' autonomy is also often discussed under the theme of reading comprehension (Chamot, 2004). Autonomy in reading is required by EFL learners in enhancing their reading comprehension since it makes learners employ planning, monitoring, and evaluating their reading comprehension process from beginning to end (Zhang & Seepho, 2013). Gilakjani (2016) mentioned some ways in improving reading comprehension skills; namely reading strategies (which is in line with what was stated by Zhang and Seepho three years earlier), the use of previously known information gained from reading and experience, predicting what may be discussed, summarizing what has been read, visualizing the text and put it into context, and monitoring their comprehension. The ways mentioned are mostly related to learners' autonomy in reading comprehension. Moreover, the ways mentioned above are also encouraged in almost all of English club's activities.

English club in EFL countries promote approaches that enable learners in being language-independent; giving them tools and knowledge in learning by themselves. Hence, this article aims to look at English club activities that employ reading autonomy for EFL learners.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Formulated from the background and gaps mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, two research questions are discussed in this paper:

1. What are the activities of Indonesian English

club that utilize reading skill?

2. How do the activities impose reading autonomy on the English club members?

## **LITERARY REVIEW**

### **A. Reading Autonomy**

Smith (2008) explained that autonomy is a term for describing people's ability in taking charge of their learning; which came from the interest in widening and promoting lifelong learning, and giving opportunities in learning foreign languages in a resources center which is free from teacher's direction, even if the learners do not necessarily have the competence in taking charge of decision-making in institutional areas such as objectives, content, stages, methods, and techniques, and evaluation process.

In short, reading autonomy refers to the ability of learners in planning their reading thoroughly to learn the target language, starting from setting their goal, choosing the approach, mitigating problems, to evaluating what they read (Anderson, 1985; Treiman, 2001; Chamot, 2004;Wooley, 2011; Anam & Stracke, 2013).

Learner-centred, which is what autonomous learning is about, is described as the courses in which controlled by the learners in some degree (Aebersold and Field, 1997). They explained that autonomy benefits learners to have control over their learning process themselves, boosting their confidence, enabling them to make their own decision, putting the responsibility on their own hands, and building independence and self-reliance over the long term.

In achieving such goals, an individual way in organizing and in using particular skills in learning or in accomplishing tasks more efficiently and effectively (Schumaker & Deshler,1992), or also known as a learning strategy is highly needed. And it has been proven (Lenz & Hughes, 1990; Hughes & Schumaker, 1991; Graham, Harris, MacArthur & Schwartz, 1991) that learning strategy improves students' performance in various settings and tasks. Moreover, Lenz and Hughes (1990) have given a basic proof that the use of learning strategy improved their subject's reading comprehension scores for all students on ability level and grade materials, while also decreasing their oral reading errors. This gave the researcher a fundamental fact that in reading, learning strategies, whether they are employed consciously or unconsciously, it benefits them.

Learner-center, which is the point of autonomous learning, is described as the courses in which controlled by the learners to some degree (Aebersold and Field, 1997). They explained that it

gives many benefits to learners who have control over their learning process; it boosts their confidence, they make some of the decision-making themselves, the learning responsibility is put in their hands, and it builds independence and self-reliance over the long term to make them able to read by themselves independently.

However, teachers often do not introduce reading skills and strategies that their students need to succeed in higher education since it requires a high amount of lengthy text reading (Spohn, 2000). She stated that teachers should at least equip their students' strategies in five aspects of reading: The purpose of the reading session, type of the text that is read, information about topics discussed in the text, way to understand the big picture, and evaluation of the reading comprehension session.

Previous researches (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Park- Oh, 1994; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995; Oxford, 2003; Little, 2005; Smith, 2008; Tassinari, 2012) also stated that students' achievement and proficiency is highly related with the use of learning strategy. Good language learners use a certain type of strategies constantly, even though there are no specific strategies that can assure its user of being a good language learner. However, studies found that the use of strategies in an uncontrolled manner leads to "less able learners". In contrast, effective learners orchestrate the use of strategies in a systematic way to do a specific task (Chamot, 2004). Nunan (1991) also showed that the ability to reflecting and articulating language learning processes differs effective learners from less effective ones. Green and Oxford (1995) further explained that successful learners use strategies for active involvement more than the less successful ones.

Lerner and Kline (2006) explained that there are some aspects of reading autonomy, which are as follows:

Reading Autonomy Aspects	
Strategy	Definition.
Rehearsal	Figuring out what is known from the topic that is going to read.
Elaboration	Picking and elaborating background knowledge with the information read.
Organization	Connecting background knowledge with the information read in the text.
Analyzing	Problem-solving strategy in which learners use previous knowledge to new situations.

Lerner and Kline (2006) also explain about metacognition in aiding reading autonomy. They stated that it consists of the monitoring process, and making changes for adapting the strategies which occur simultaneously, by connecting prior knowledge to the new information, selecting the strategies deliberately, while planning, monitoring, and evaluating the thinking process. What makes metacognition different from cognition is that it occurs before or and after the cognitive activity. They also added that in developing metacognition, learners could model their self-monitoring processes, provide some explanation of some strategies that may be useful, clarify the strategies chosen, and evaluate and question why the particular strategy works in helping them.

Zhang & Seepho (2016) stated that reading independence (autonomy) has a massive toll in understanding and gain comprehension. Strategies have been known to help readers in many aspects, namely social, linguistic, and cognitive. It is also found that reading achievement is significantly affected in a positive way by reading autonomy; and the autonomy used by the reader comes naturally as they kept on reading (Wen, 2003). Zhang & Seepho's research showed that reading autonomy has a positive impact on reading comprehension; reading test scores get higher as students do more reading comprehension task. Learners who are using metacognitive strategy also able to make appropriate adjustment, get feedback through self-assessment, and take remedial action accordingly. In conclusion, metacognitive strategies play an essential part in reading efficiency since they enable learners to read adequately (Zhang & Seepho, 2016).

## B. English Club

English Club in Indonesia can be categorized as community-based English club with the purpose of practicing English (Malu & Smedley, 2016); however, it is mostly formal and somewhat involuntarily done in Indonesia, and although the members should be committed to speaking English during the meetings, they are not obligated to do so.

The club's main objective is to communicate and practice English (Malu & Smedley, 2016). The activities of the club consist of the four basic skills of English: listening, reading, speaking, and writing but focuses more on listening and speaking. The members of the club engage in activities that answers to the community's needs (i.e. engineering vocational high school English club most likely covers activities that enhances their skills in orally

speaking and listening to technical terms learnt explicitly for the engineer).

Some researchers (Vygotsky, 1987; Daniels, 1994; Au, 1998; Afia, 2006; Costa et. Al., 2014; UNICEF, 2015) noted that English club should be promoted by EFL teachers. Language acquisition is best made when the learners are using the target language for meaningful purposes that has contexts and utilize the learners' knowledge, culture, and experience through language use. The members have considerable opportunities in connecting their expertise to the target language since the topics discussed are meaningful and useful for the members. English club also enables them to constructs two of the essential ingredients in learning; language and thought. This kind of atmosphere also ensures that the members are most likely be committed to the club and its activities for an extended period of time.

**METHOD**

This case study was done using observation and interview; in which the researcher observes 10 English club members of a particular high school in Mojokerto since the English club has been established from quite a long time and the researcher has more accessible access to observe the school. Moreover, that particular English club is known for its participation in numerous English language contest, i.e. debate, speech, etc. all-around Java. The researcher observed the English club doing their activities & interviewing the members (from members, rules, time & places, to the activities) and check whether those activities have effects on enhancing learners' reading comprehension and their autonomy by using past researches as the reference and standard. Furthermore, since the English club in that particular school was actively using WhatsApp messenger group as their means of communication, the researcher was also invited to be the member of the said messenger group to trace any sign of reading autonomy outside of the club meeting.

The researcher spent around two months observing the English club both directly by being in the meetings and indirectly by joining their social media (WhatsApp) group as well as getting updates from the club leader and advisor. The researcher was only able to interview two of the members; Student A, the students with the highest achievement and proficiency in English and Student B, a regular member.

This research was done only to find traces of autonomy in reading induced by English club activities, without measuring how far or how great the reading autonomy affected by the activities by using observation notes and interview transcripts as the data to be analyzed.

The procedures of the document analysis are as follow

- 1) The researcher searched for a school in which English club is registered as one of the additional activities that students may join.
- 2) The researcher got permission from the English club advisor to observe how the English club operates and done
- 3) The researcher observed the English club first-hand by being in the room when the activities happened, without being an intrusion in which may affect the members.
- 4) The researcher interviewed some of the members in order to find out more about the English club and its activities
- 5) The researcher collected a wide variety of articles in regards to *reading, autonomy, and English club or community language learning*. The researcher made sure that reputable presses publish the articles, have been reviewed, available to be read, up-to-date (excluding some sources that contain the basics of either reading comprehension or autonomy), and also relevant.
- 6) The researcher skimmed the articles for the activities, methods, behavior, etc. that encourage autonomy in reading comprehension as well as increasing language proficiency in English.
- 7) After breaking down the activities done by Indonesian English club, the researcher compared them to the activities that enhance reading comprehension as well as autonomy found in the articles.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**1. CLUB ACTIVITIES UTILIZING READING SKILL**

The club activities were organized and planned by the advisor and the leader of the club; which are selected based on the member's interest and goals in learning the language. However, after a few meetings, the activity selection involves the members fully. Most of the activities done from the point of the shift are thought by the members.

Activity	Reading	Students' Remarks
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1	<b>Debate</b>	Articles/journals on fundamental social topics (i.e. “How Internet Affects Young Children’s Behavior”).	“I usually need to read at least four texts before the day of debate. I did not have to, but if I want to understand completely about the topic. I found that it is easier for me to build strong arguments when I know how things work related to the topic”. - Student B-
2	<b>Social Change</b>	Articles/journals on social topics that are more specific; are happening or are in trend at the time the activity is done (i.e. “9 Years Old Internet Addict Found with Major Brain Damage”).	“I actually like this activity. I follow a lot of social media account shares news or articles regarding recent issues and trend. I can find many of sources for social change plan”. -Student B-
3	<b>Story Relay</b>	Literary works (specifically light novel).	“I’m always excited when the advisor told us about story relay. I started to read quite a lot of light novel, fan fiction, and such stories so I can do story relay really well”. -Student A-

**Note :**

1. The amount of texts read varies on the students since they are originally NOT obligated to read in doing the activity, they read on their own’s will.
2. Four to five articles / journals are shared on the WhatsApp group before the activities started by the members.
3. The amount of light novel and novel that the students read were also varies based on many things; namely their mood, the availability, their health, their fatigue, etc.
4. Reading log were NOT made by any of the members since the activities themselves were not about reading; the reading that they had done was on their own’s will.

**A. Debate**

This activity was the one that required the members to read the most. Structured debate enabling members in presenting two sides of controversial issues. This activity could bring out

the members information and personal experiences; making them feel challenged and may change their point of view without making them change an opinion they disagree with. The advisor and the leader used websites for the structured debates information such as <https://how-to-teach-english.ontesol.com/teaching-speaking-skills-debates-in-the-esl-classroom/>.

**1. Debate Format**

The topic was given by the advisor, in which also acting as the adjudicator for the debate. The topic had a pro and con side and is represented by different groups of members. Here are the examples of the topic with pro and con:

- Students should be given more freedom in choosing their attire at school.
- Male and female students should have separated classrooms.
- School should give more recess time for the students.

After the topic has been chosen, they were assigned into different groups randomly and were given a week to prepare for their speech in the debate. Members often utilized social media as their way of communicating and discussing what they have found on the topics; sharing their online finding, showing what they have found on the library, and sometimes just giving their revelation on the topic discussed.

*“We always start the discussion with journal hunt; we try to find as many journals as possible related to the topic” – Student A.*

This showed clearly that although debate mains on speaking skills, it also triggered the members to read in order to find information that they need for the debate; or in short, intensive reading.

*“It is not about whether we like reading or not, but in order to construct the best arguments and preparing rebuttal, we need to read quite a bit” – Student B.*

After the debate was done, the advisor(s) gave them an insight into what was done well and what needed improvement on their findings and stands. This activity encouraged a lively discussion in a controlled manner, giving the members opportunity in expressing themselves in English in a structured way.

**B. Social Change**

This was one of the most important activities in a community-based English club. It started with

discussing the critical issues in their community. They were told to imagine that they are the one in charge of solving the issue based on findings instead of feelings and personal thoughts. In which the result was given in the written form. First, the club should identify the issue that they want to bring up to the whole club; brainstorming their way out of the topic finding. The brainstorming activity should follow these guidelines:

1. Accepting all kinds of ideas – without saying “NO” right away before giving feedbacks.
2. Knowing that all ideas may be used and may be crucial for the community.
3. Building each other’s idea.
4. Knowing that the more is better.
5. Being creative.

After brainstorming, list of problems they had around their community should already be made. Each of the members was assigned different issues and was given a week time to formulate a paper discussing the issue and finding the solution for the issue. However, after the brainstorming, they were given time to discuss together with other club members on their vision and their point of view on different issue, providing their friends with something to work with. Since this activity did not have a winner, the members were encouraged to help each other. Usually, the advisor would treat the whole club when the result of the social change papers is exceeding her expectation.

What the researcher found during the observation is also quite uncommon for Indonesian learner; their social media group was filled with journals and papers that they found during the discussion time. Soon after, the class got a bit quieter since most of the members are reading the materials that their friends had shared in the group chat while also taking notes.

*“There’s no way for us to do this task without actually reading a novel or such. Believe me, I’ve tried, and it was not as good as my friends’. We usually give each other recommendation of novels to read even a week before story relay is done; giving us more time to understand how to develop literary stories and how it is written” – Student B.*

In their social media group, approximately four to five journals / articles were shared for each preparation of story relay; followed by about three other journals / articles during the weekdays. This number may vary since there was no actual rule about how many texts they should read, since this activity was done voluntarily by the members. The

club’s advisor also stated that the members did not actually need to read that much, everything happened naturally. The members also were not told or obligated to have reading logs, since the activity is not about reading, but it required them to read.

During the week, they need to find out as much as they can about the problem; forcing them to read many articles, news, and also online sources to understand the issue and finding whether the solution that they come up with has been used or not. The group chat also indicates that they read a lot of the journals during the school week, shown by countless of screen captures with annotations that they made; either to show what they have found, or what they do not understand.

Moreover, the leader of the club also stated that it was rather unusual if there is no journal being shared in the group at all. Almost every day, they share bits of what they have read and simply tell their friends to discuss it later when they meet each other.

The social change paper is in the form of an action plan, in which the template is given by the club leader for the members to modify according to their requirements and issues. The finished paper will be discussed during the final week of the second month; having the whole meeting hour to discuss the social change action plan.

ACTION PLAN					
The issue that needs to be solved is...					
_____					
_____					
My proposal in solving the problem					
_____					
Use this box in helping you creating the action plan. You may add more boxes according to your needs and the issue you are working with					
What Work	Who People responsible	When Timeline	How Materials needed	Results Solutions	Complete Does it work? (yes / no)
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

### C. Story Relay

This activity was done quite more frequently than any other written or read based activities; which involves members’ ability in making stories

freely with limitation. Story relay started with the leader showing three paragraphs story with a certain topic and storyline. Then, the members were asked to continue their story based on their interpretation and imagination.

The members might change the mood and the vibe of the story freely, giving full control of the story to the members. New characters, new plot, even plot twists were something common and expected in this activity. The members were also allowed to adapt their continuation of the story based on existing stories on novels, books, short stories, etc.

The members were always keeping each other in check in terms of novels to read. Even before the story relay began on Friday, they usually had given each other titles to read.

*“There’s no way for us to do this task without actually reading a novel or such. Believe me, I’ve tried, and it was not as good as my friends’. We usually give each other recommendation of novels to read even a week before story relay is done; giving us more time to understand how to develop literary stories and how it is written” – Student B.*

This showed that story relay encouraged them in reading literature writing in order to understand the story that the writer is trying to get across, and how the story is developed; or in short, extensive writing.

Most of the time, they were given an hour to complete the story. However, it varied depending on the type of story opener that the leader gives them. For instance, the example given above needed to be done for a week since the way it was written novellike, and many details of the story are still vague. However, this kind of story was much preferred by the members since they could expand the story much more freely.

After they had done completing the story, instead of presenting it to the whole club, they were required to pass their stories to their peer members to read for another week. In which their peers provided feedback and what they think about the story read.

James woke up with a grin on his face, facing his little sister, Joanne. “What’s with that smile on your face? I’m still not doing it!” She shouted. James ignored his sister and head straight to the closet, in which he pulled an odd-shaped book and put it on the table besides his bed.

“Even without your help, I will find mom and

dad” James mumbled. He opened the book to a page in which he had put a thin small fabric taken from his shawl, and he started to recite something that couldn’t be figured out just by listening to it.

“I’ve told you not to do that. We’re not ready yet James!” Joanne exclaimed. “do we have a choice? Feel free staying here waiting while their chance of surviving is getting slimmer for every second, we waste!” He shouted. Joanne couldn’t say anything but giving him a light nod. Suddenly, a huge mark emerged from his face, a black mark that looks like an upside-down pyramid with flowers under it. “THOU REQUIRED MY POWER?” a screeching scream was heard from the book’s page.

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Student B mentioned that they usually read about one novel per two weeks or less. Since this type of reading was not something that required the reader to fully analyze the text; they read them on their leisure time. The exact number of hours put into reading the novel varied, however they mentioned that approximately four to ten pages was read each day depending on how intense the school subject on the day was. They tend to read more when there were many free classes (when the teacher did not show up) and when there were not many assignments needed to be done the day after.

**2. HOW READING AUTONOMY WAS IMPOSED BY THE ACTIVITIES**

This part discusses how the activities of the club may have a positive effect on students’ reading autonomy which leads to better reading comprehension based on previous researches that are relevant to the topic discussed in this paper. The observation of the club meeting and the social media group discussion showed that members’ behavior towards debate and social change activities are similar; The type of text they were sharing with each other (expository texts) and the goals that they were trying to achieve from what they were trying to read (finding specific arguments and/or figuring out what caused the problems risen on the texts). Thus, debate and social change are put in the same section.

Activity	Reading Autonomy Aspect	Students' Remarks
1 <b>Debate</b>	Planning (Advanced organizer, selective attention).	"In reading the texts for preparing my arguments, I always figure out what I need to know first. For instance, I want to know how dyslexia works, so I only scan for that specific information". -Student A-
2 <b>Social Change</b>	Planning (Advanced organizer) & Evaluating (self-reflection).	"When I read for making a social change plan, I always look for the source of the problem of a certain issue from various sources. After knowing exactly why a certain issue happened, I try to reflect on what I read then making a suggestion plan based on what works and what does not from the articles that I have read". -Student A-
3 <b>Story Relay</b>	Planning (Advanced organizer) & Monitoring (Comprehension monitoring).	"I read novels to prepare myself for story relay. I always know I read to understand the story. I always try not to focus on certain things, but rather just enjoy the story so I can get a better idea of how the story develops. This helps me a lot since story relay requires me to develop a story from few strange paragraphs that are still unclear". -Students B-

Note :

1. The amount of texts read varies on the students since they are originally NOT obligated to read in doing the activity, they read on their own's will
2. Four to five articles / journals are shared on the WhatsApp group before the activities started by the members
3. The amount of light novel and novel that the students read were also varies based on many things; namely their mood, the availability, their health, their fatigue, etc.
4. Reading log were NOT made by any of the members since the activities themselves were not about reading; the reading that they had done was on their own's will.

#### A. Debate and Social Change

Debate and social change can be considered as the main activities that make the members read independently; whether they like it or not. Both of those activities require the member to find information from various sources (approximately four to five articles); enforce them to read in order to be able to have decent arguments and solutions for the issue given

*"Well, I am one of the laziest here, but if I do not read the materials that my friends shared, I would not be able to know what they are talking about in the club's meeting. I just HAD to read although I read by my phase, one page at a time"* – Student B.

The fact that the students have their own social media group for exchanging information on their own have shown a form of autonomy in their learning; in which they create their way of exchanging information without the needs of an educator's teaching. (Park 1994; Kato, 1996; Ku, 1995; Oxford and Ehrman, 1995; O'Malley, 1997; Wen, 2003; Lerner & Kline, 2006; Zhang & Seepho, 2016).

Finding specific and detailed information from texts is the most common type of reading done in Indonesian language learning at school. (Z. A, 2015; Cahyono & Widiati, 2006). This kind of reading is also considered as a tool in achieving comprehension in which lead to a way to comprehend and gaining understanding (Paran, 2013). Both debate and social change activity require the members in using tools specifically to find what they need to find in a text; whether they are points that can support their arguments or simply facts regarding a certain situation that they can use to propose a solution in the social change plan.

On the other hand, some researchers (Nation, 2009; Hedge, 1985) regard Intensive reading has two goals in language learning; comprehending text which enforce controlled reading strategy and improving the readers' knowledge in not only what the writers trying to say, but also the language features in the text. Nation (2009) added that it is also a way to expose learners with a wide variety of text since intensive reading typically requires less time to do; since in Indonesia, reading strategies that focus only on finding specific information on the text is taught widely and is used mainly for facing

national exam (Sugianto, 2016).

Furthermore, their autonomy in trying to exchange information also lead to them reading articles related to the issues that they are given. Since they need to find only specific information for debate and they need a general understanding of social change. That process enforces them in being autonomous in their reading comprehension since they have to deal with specific goals in reading, in which they have no educator to help them with but their peers (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Anderson, 2002; Dhieb- Henia, 2003; Chamot, 2004; Eskey, 2005; Brantmeier, 2005; Zhang & Seepho, 2013).

*“After few months of joining the English club and acquiring the habit in it, it was much easier for me to apply it to many other subjects that require me to read such as sociology and history” – Student A.*

## B. Story Relay

The Story relay is giving them exposure to literature reading in which the students read with the intention of understanding the text as a whole instead of finding certain information in the text, as well as enjoying the text. This is also important in familiarizing them in the culture of English-speaking country based on the literature that they need to read. Amer (2012) mentioned that literature works in language learning has increasing interests from time to time. Langer (1997) showed that personal and meaningful engagement could be utilized using literature works in the place of educative reading such as journals, repositories, etc. Literature’s benefit expands not only to the way they understand the culture but also in creating a natural repetition of the target language, how parts of the language are used in various situations that are not overly-formal (strong, 1996).

*“I managed to understand many grammatical aspects that I thought I had never understood. Many of them have been taught by my teacher, but I could not even figure out what those aspects are for. For instance, I was reading a novel suggested by my advisor, and since the novel is talking about people vision of the future, I thought that I would understand a bit more about future tenses; and I DID!” – Student A.*

It also has an advantage over the non-literary works; its interpretation depends highly on the reader, and it is unique to the readers only (Widdowson, 1977). Furthermore, several types of research (Cho, Ahn, & Krashen, 2005; Hess, 2006) has found that it plays a significant role in language learning. It builds vocabulary (Wang & Guthrie, 2004) as well as gaining more comprehension (Holden, 2003). Literature works also give learners plain text that they might enjoy

reading (Krashen, 2004) which will impose a positive attitude in understanding the text read.

Literature works also has an impact on learners’ autonomy. As Kim (2004), Dornyei (2005), and Morrow (2004) explained that it leads to them reading independently and gaining acquisition autonomously while also enjoying what they do in doing so. Not only increasing the language acquisition autonomously in general, but it also boosts learners’ independent vocabulary building and its development (Kuhn & Stahl, 1998; Beck & McKeown, 2001; Dixon-Krauss, 2002; Holden, 2003; Wang & Guthrie, 2004).

*“I did not notice it at first; I read the book they suggested since I had no choice but to do that. I could not even figure out what the story was talking about. It was all fuzzy and confusing. After a few novels, however, I was starting to have my way of understanding a text that long: read the synopsis to get the general idea of what I was going to read, it made everything MUCH easier to understand” – Student B.*

This way, the members are exposed to how the language is used in an informal stage in the story since many novels that interest teenage learners are mostly fantasies and romance. Familiarizing themselves with the culture of the language through reading is also a beneficial thing in boosting reading comprehension (Goodman, 1967; Gough, 1972; Anam & Field, 1997; Cho & Krashen, 2001; Treiman, 2001; Zhang et. Al., 2008; Oxford, 2003); in which they have to understand the text altogether.

Without actually knowing the culture of the language, many meanings that the author tries to pass through will be lost in mere translation. Butler (2006) also mentioned that reading literature works enhances critical thinking skills; appreciating the differences between cultures and gaining insight by examining other societies and cultures as well (Leahy and Lo, 1997). Thus, it encourages the learners to understand real-life problems, knowing the causes and how to deal with them, and also comparing their values with others (Amer, 2012). This enables the learners to participate in a broad and vibrant discussion about their values; since explaining things with their own words is also a part of comprehension.

Moreover, Amer (2012) mentioned further how it is utilized in teaching language. Literature works done by extensive reading has no competition in teaching them by *natural repetition* (repetition of certain grammatical aspects in the story), and also the grammatical aspects are integrated into the literature works for the reader to familiarize instead of having to be explicitly told (Heath, 1996; Elley, 1997).

Lastly, it is also noted that the activities mentioned has a positive impact on multiple domains of

members' engagement in using English namely Personal development (Barbee & Scherer, 2003; Jones & Hill, 2003; Chen, 2004; Ellison, 2005; Kirk & Riedle, 2005; Mueller, 2005; Strain, 2005; Hirschinger-Blank & Markowitz, 2006; Lundy, 2007; Paoletti, et. Al., 2007; Ibrahim, 2010), civic engagement (Bentley & Ellison, 2005; Kirk & Riedle, 2006; Ngai, 2006; Prentice, 2007; Sather et al., 2007), and academic development (Geiger & Werner, 2004; Bentley & Ellison, 2005; Hirschinger-Blank & Markowitz, 2006; Hart & King; Lundy, 2007). The improvement on these domains was acknowledged by the advisor of the club, in which the members were not only getting better scores on their English lessons but also were getting better in their social skill in general. However, the researcher was not able to gain access to the members' actual English scores since at the time the researcher was observing, the students of that high school have not received their reports card yet; the data was classified (kept secret) and was off-limit for everyone except the board of teachers.

#### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

English club as a whole is one of the ways of learners in getting better grasp at the target language. Many activities of English club has an effect on learner's ability in acquiring information for their debate arguments; starting from how the members are given different roles of pros and cons; how they are required to have a discussion in which they need to utilize their prior knowledge and experience; how they form their way of exchanging information regarding their activities in learning the language; and how they need to build autonomy in reading comprehension to enable them finding various kinds and types of information to form a conclusion.

Furthermore, both intensive and extensive reading are covered by club activities that are related to reading. This type of reading enables them to equip them with tools in finding specific information to be used in their school study, namely in tests and in the national exam. The extensive reading opens their knowledge and ability in gaining information regarding the language culture as well as passively enhancing their familiarity with grammatical aspects that are put in non-academic texts.

The researcher also found that many of the activities in the English club tend to familiarize the members with autonomy in learning since English club is an activity done outside of the classroom requiring them to be active and independent in their learning. Moreover, the fact that members are indirectly required to read by themselves might certainly build their reading comprehension autonomy up to some degree; depending on their planning and evaluating the process of the reading.

The result of this research is expected to show to school boards all across EFL country that English club is also a viable way in enhancing learners' language aptitude without the needs of additional courses that may cost quite a lot. Moreover, this opens the opportunity for future research regarding how each skill of language acquirement can be assisted and promoted by the activities of English club.

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