

# HASIL CEK\_COUNTRY DETAILS INTERNET SEARCHING: AN EXTENSIVE READING ACTIVITY TO PROMOTE MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS

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# COUNTRY DETAILS INTERNET SEARCHING: AN EXTENSIVE READING ACTIVITY TO PROMOTE MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS

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## ABSTRACT

Living in 21<sup>st</sup> century deals with global world and technology. Teachers, including English teachers, should help the students to learn about cultural competence and ICT minded. Multicultural awareness as first stage toward cultural competence can be introduced through classroom task wrapped in internet research project. Country details internet searching is student-centered classroom activity conducted at extensive reading class in English department of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan. This paper shares teaching experience and reported the students' response toward the task.

**Keywords:** Extensive Reading, Multicultural Awareness, Task Based Language Learning, Internet for English Teaching.

## INTRODUCTION

There are many resources listing about 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, including ATC website from University of Melbourne. This academic web page categorizes 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into four areas:

- a. **Ways of thinking.** Creativity, critical thinking problem-solving, decision making and learning
- b. **Ways of working.** Communication and collaboration
- c. **Tools for working.** Information and communications technology and information literacy (ICT)
- d. **Skills for living in the world.** Citizenship, life and career, and personal and social responsibility (<http://atc21s.org/index.php/about/what-are-21st-century-skills/>)

Regarding the skills above, teachers, including English teachers, have important roles to provide task for the students so they experience learning through the designed tasks. Nunan (2004: 12) writes that intellectual growth occurs when learners engage in and reflect on sequences of tasks".

As to support the tools for working, nowadays teachers should compatible to the development of ICT. One of the ideas is using internet in the language classroom. This idea of using internet for English teaching had been written since early twenties and considered as full of advantages. Warschauer et al (2000) claimed that internet for English teaching deals with ALIVE (Authenticity, Literacy, Interaction, Vitality and Empowerment). One of activities for using internet in English class is student research (Warschauer et al, 2000: 49).

Multicultural awareness is another keyword for 21<sup>st</sup> century regarding the last points mentioned by ACT website, **skills for living in the world**. Multicultural awareness is the first stage toward multicultural competence. This has been sounded about two decades ago by Cates (1990) and Jacobs and Cates (1999) language teachers have to deal with knowledge, skills, attitude, and action toward global education to create better world.

In this paper the writer shares her experience of teaching extensive reading in English department where she teaches. The writer also reports her class survey of the students' response toward the activity. Although this writing looks like a brief classroom action research report, the writer does not mean it. The problem in this classroom activity is not systematically formulated and the procedure is not rigorously and collaboratively planned and organized, so this does not deserve to be called a research report. This piece of writing is more like teaching experience sharing. The writer claims that the task could promote students' multicultural awareness.

## DISCUSSION

This section will be mainly divided into two. First is about the activity description and procedure. Second is about the students' response toward the activity.

### Description and Procedure

*Name of the activity* : Country Details Internet Searching

5

*Class Description* : The class subject is called extensive reading. Extensive reading (Bamford and Day, 2004: 1) defines extensive reading as "an approach to language teaching in which learners read a lot of easy material in the new language. They choose their own reading material and read it independently of the teacher. They read for general, overall meaning, and they read for information and enjoyment." The students' English proficiency is intermediate level. The students are aged 20 - 22 years old (young adults). The session is once a week, 100 minutes per meeting. This activity was done in 3 weeks (3 meetings). These are the details of each meeting.

### Step 1. Preparation

In the first meeting (14/3/2014), the teacher invited the students to imagine their dream country to visit then asked the reason why they want to visit the country. Next, the teacher introduced the task that was doing internet research about a country. The teacher motivated the students by mentioning some advantages of doing the task, such as get more knowledge and become more empathic. Then the teacher invited the students to mention what points to search about a country. From this brainstorming activity, the class could collect as many as 29 points to search. The following table I was the brainstorming result.

Table 1. Classroom Brainstorming Result

No	Item
1	Name of the country and the capital city
2	Geographical Position of the country
3	Brief History of the country
4	Brief description of the country, icon
5	Currency and amount of conversion to IDR
6	Famous places (Tourism Places), describe...
7	Seasons and Whether
8	The best time to visit, why?
9	Useful expression
10	Do and don't
11	Best flight from indo How's the flight look like? Name of the airport
12	Minimum money to prepare
13	The best length to stay
14	Population
15	Relation to indo
16	Visa information
17	Local Dish Recommended,
18	Halal food corner
19	Historical Places, describe
20	Festivals
21	Flag, meaning
22	Traditional Music Instrument
23	Traditional Cloth
24	The best souvenirs, where to buy
25	Government
26	Famous People from the Country
27	What people are doing for living
28	Things to bring 15 kg 7 kg cabin
29	Pictures

The class then agreed that everyone in the room would work to find information through internet of a certain country within a week and made a report in English. Everyone in the class chose one country to dig and none was allowed to choose the same country. The teacher, then, shares some experience for some useful sites and the students added more useful website: such as agoda, currency converter, and embassy. The students called this activity as Country Details Internet Searching.

## Step 2. Searching Report

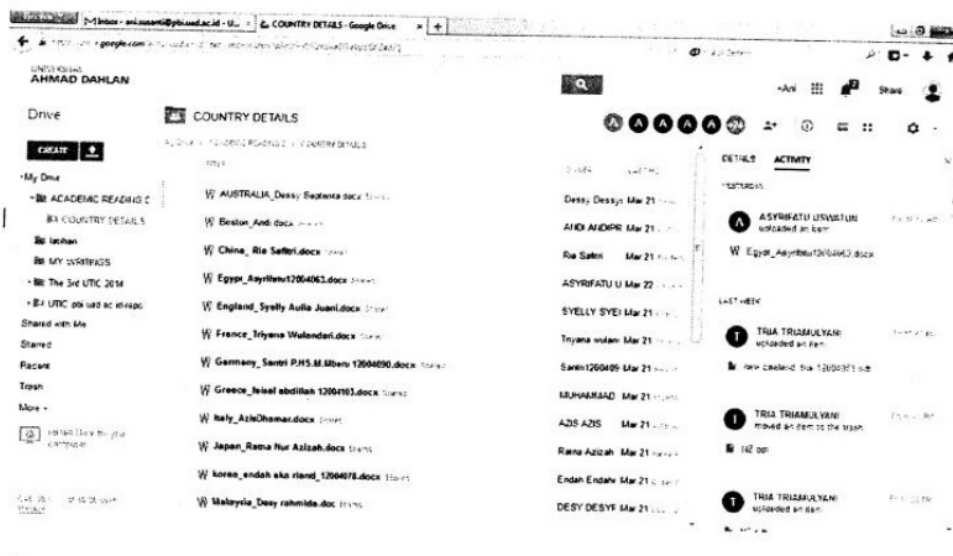
The next meeting (21/3/2014) the students worked in pair. They exchanged their printed works and reported their searching result. They confirmed their findings with the checklist. The checklist was designed based on the 29 points – brainstorming result. After this peer work, the students were the invited to response the activity by answering three question via online form:

1. What do you learn from the task?
2. How do you enjoy the task?
3. What are the challenges of doing the task?

## Step 3. Follow up

The students uploaded their searching report at a share folder in google drive. They Named their file in a template (country\_their name) This following figure shows the folder of their searching report.

Figure 1. Country Details Folder Content



The students were encouraged to read their friends searching report and welcomed to comment through online room chat. By the time this paper was written, the students have not yet started to do chatting about this task.

## Students Responses

Response to Question Number 1. What do you learn from the task?

There are 30 students in this class and 28 of them completed the online form. The students said that they got new knowledge from doing task.

many knowledge that can I get from the task, I learn about the Country of Philippines. I learn about the culture, government, their economic, their living, and so many more. Learn about Philippines, there are many thing that we can do and don't in there. I also learn little about the greeting likes, thank you we can say with "salamat", if we say good morning we use magandang umaga" and so on. not only that, I also learn about Philippines festival, and I just know that in there every month any some festival like in january, any three kinds of festival there are "BULaklakan, Feast of three kings, and alakyan festival. And I dreaming that I will spent my money about 90 million. I'm happy for that. (Respondent 15)

I learn for the explain to England country and I invite special places along trip there. when I visit to England many thing which I get along there. England is one of country in Europe, London is capital city in England, UK. Geographically England includes the central and southern two-thirds of the island of Great Britain, plus such offshore islands as the Isle of Wight and the Isles of Scilly. It is bordered by two other countries of the United Kingdom to the north by Scotland and to the west by Wales. In England I can travell to traditional places as museum and parliament building. Then, I also visit to a famous places in London as Clock Tower Big Ben, Biritish Museum, Tate Modern and etc. Besides it, I tried a favourite food in London, England. Favourite fish and chips, Bangers and Mash (mashed potatoes and sausages). (Respondent 2)

They become more confident with their knowledge, as written by one of the students.

the task tell me all In New Zealand. Form the task i know the local people, the culture In New Zealand, food, the historical place, general information about New Zealand etc. After i know that, i can get an information so i never feel minder (unconfidence) with the other people. (Respondent 30)

The students can appreciate their own country more.

i learn that so many culture, art, tradition etc. in the world. but after we looking from the other country, how about our country? so many beautiful places in this country that we not feel it before. we have learn some knowledge. (Respondent 25)

Response to Question Number 2. How do you enjoy the task?

All the student states than they enjoy and excited doing the task.

I can know many thing about Malaysia and I feel happy and very enjoy (Respondent 27)

Really really enjoy, sometimes I feel that I goes to the country I don't know why may be because I flow in. (Respondent 9)

I very enjoy it much, because Australia has culture and so different with Indonesia, I like holiday in Australia, someday I will make this plan come true (Respondent 8)

The students found this tasks easy and flexible.

Its very easy and excited cause we just have to do a browsing so we can do it anytime anywhere. (Respondent 7).

This task leads to useful imagination. Imagination has been known as beneficial I language learning (...)

I can imagine it although its not real but I eally enjoy to imagine. and it make really want to go tazmania (Respondent 19)

I can imagine that country and I feel very enjoy for this task (Respondent 29)

Response to Question Number 3 what are the challenge of doing the task?

The students said that they have to work hard to find the details. it took time to find the information details and it made them tired and less sleeping.

I do that assignment full day so iam very tired to do this assignment (Respondent 20)

The challenging is we should browse from Google about everything with so many time wasted. (Respondent 17)

I have to search and know about the mother country and because this task, I have to late to sleeping. (Respondent 18)

Another challenge is the lack of resource for the detail information. Not every country has all details.

When I search about the popular people in Singapore. I found nothing. Because, in Singapore no one be the popular like the celebrities around the world. And also I barely found the traditional instrument there. Singapore is multicultural country, so it has particular instrument. (Respondent 3)

The writer believes that knowing difference teaches the students about understanding and empathy.

The other challenge is related to slow connection. As their work depends much on internet, connection is vital to support their task.

Slow connection and too much photos that we have to spend more to print it.  
(Respondent 1)

## CONCLUSION

The students found this activity interesting and fun. They consciously learn about the details of a certain country and unconsciously learn about research skills, reading skills, internet usage for learning, new vocabulary, reporting skills, empathy, cultural awareness, autonomous learning, and nationalism. This activity was conducted in university level but possible to be used in any level. The number of searching points can be adapted to the students' level.

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