

The Impact of Extensive Reading as a Supplementary Material on Upper-Intermediate EFL Learners' L2 Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

The present study sought to investigate the impact of extensive reading as one of the supplementary materials on reading comprehension among upper-intermediate EFL learners. The participants were 60 Iranian male and female EFL learners from Tabarestan-e Farda English Language institute. Three different instruments were used to collect the relevant data: 1) Oxford Placement Test (2011) to determine the anticipating EFL learners' proficiency level, 2) Pearson Longman Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Test to assess the participants' reading comprehension, and 3) Davis, et al (1992) questionnaire for measuring students' attitudes toward extensive reading. Paired-Sample T-Test was used to analyze the data. The results proved a significant impact of extensive reading in reading comprehension. Also, the participants' attitude toward extensive reading was found to be positive. The major implication of the study is that extensive reading as an important supplementary material should receive further attention in language teaching programs.

Keywords: extensive reading, L2 reading comprehension, supplementary material, EFL learners

INTRODUCTION

Successful Second Language Learning (SLA) is what most teachers are looking for. Many studies have been carried out in different aspects in this field. We have seen that students who study English language learning programs at the same time in different institutions perform differently. There are individual, social, and cognitive factors which can cause these differences. However, the role of materials in different programs should not be ignored. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) believe in textbooks as a heart of ELT program which are used to benefit both teachers and learners. Reading comprehension as one of the indispensable part of SLA has been into fashion from early on (Grammar Translation Method). According to Scrivener (2011) lack of vocabulary knowledge, feel dependent to the dictionaries and reading word-by-word are some of the difficulties that learners are faced with when reading a foreign language. He also stated that "for

making students better readers it is needed first of all to raise their awareness that it is not always necessary to realize every word" (p.264). That is why we use extensive reading (ER) to supplement the main course book. Brown (2001) defined ER as "Extensive reading is performed to gain a general understanding of a usually somewhat longer text (long article or essays, book, etc.)" (p. 313). According to Elley and Mangubhai (1983) learners who read a large number of high-interest story books written in a second language progress at twice the rate of those students who do not read such books.

Thanks to technology and advance in communication systems, sources for reading for pleasure are totally available which means a vast use of in the language learning programs. But the question is that; are they effective? Are they being used in way that it should be used? As the previous paragraph implies, ER may play a crucial role in students reading comprehension. Mechanics, grammatical structures and vocabulary are more comprehensible to the learners, when they are faced with the reading text. On contrary, comprehension questions have been considered as a problematic area. In this respect researcher tried to improve the comprehension of the learners via ER.

ER may help English language learners to comprehend reading better than ever before. Thus, heterogeneous reading comprehension scores in a situation where all students are given the same instruction and facility is the problem under investigation in the present study, and using and not using ER can be a potential reason for this problem.

The Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of ER as a supplementary material in reading comprehension in an EFL setting. The findings of the present study can help EFL learners to achieve a better understanding of the materials (core materials). The importance of this study is not limited to EFL learners, other stake holders such as teachers, curriculum designers and researchers can take an advantage of this research for the better fulfillment of their career.

If the role of ER in reading comprehension is found to be positive, this understanding can help curriculum designers to include some ER exercises in their syllabus. It also can help teachers to consider ER as an important part of teaching, not filler! The result can also provide an impetus for other researchers for more follow-up studies at larger scales in Iran or even at national level.

The main questions which the study tries to answer are as follow:

1. Does ER have any significant impact on upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension?
2. What is the attitude of upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners toward ER?

Concerning the research questions, the following null hypotheses will drive the present study.

1. ER does not have any significant impact on upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension
2. There is not any statistically significant attitude in upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners toward ER.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension has taken all the attention from early on. First well-established method in language learning, Grammar Translation Method, has been established based on reading. However, the real attention to reading comprehension began in the late 1960s the mid-1970s. Goodman (1965), Goodman (1970), and Smith (1971) had psycholinguistic perspectives, which looked at reading in its natural state, as an application of a person's general cognitive and linguistic competence. Neither Goodman nor Smith distinguishes between reading and reading comprehension. They concluded that reading could be regarded as a reading, when it comprehends.

Springer (2011) stated that reading is a very complicated cognitive activity. Learners are not just information passive recipients but they are meaning active constructors. Skillful learners utilize a wide range of language skills to understand text meaning by building a text-based model while they rely on their own background knowledge at the same time to make a situation model of the understandings related to the text. For being effective, in the reading process readers require to be engaged actively using their metacognitive skills to monitor and regulate their own meaning making processes. Some of the factors affecting comprehension are situated either in the reader or are discovered outside of them. He likewise believed that four main variables are available for readers within the socio-cultural context that effect on the reading comprehension efficiency for any reader: (a) the text, (b) the task (c) the reader features and (d) the aim of the activity. Each of these elements may work together in a way that readers with reading difficulties may find themselves in a reading failure. What is obvious is that reading comprehension difficulties are seen often as a complex combination of related problems. Some other theories have also been proposed in reading comprehension one of them is very effective and popular, *Schemata* theory. Clarke and Silberstein (1977) stated that, according to schemata theory, more information is involved with the reader rather than the text. Readers can understand the text because of the connections they can make between the text and the already-existing concepts in their memories. In other words, reading comprehension depends on the efficient interaction between linguistic knowledge and the knowledge of the world.

Bottom-up and top-down approaches, schemata theory, reader-response theory, and many other theories and approaches along with the dozens of strategies and micro skills in reading comprehension prove its importance in SLA.

Extensive reading

The theoretical frameworks supporting extensive reading in L2 research include input hypothesis (Krashen, 1985,) and pleasure hypothesis (Krashen, 2004). Krashen believes that language is acquired in a low anxiety environment. Krashen (1989) also stated this theory as: “comprehensible input is the required environmental factor—specified internal language acquisition device also creates a significant contribution to language acquisition” (p. 440). Following the hypothesis predictions, when the language acquisition device is involved, learners acquire target languages subconsciously. Learners are less conscious of language acquisition and achieve incidental learning by paying attention on meaning rather than form (Krashen, 1989, p. 440). Later in 1993, Krashen proposed the facilitative impact of extensive reading on different abilities such as reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling (Table can confirm the postulate).

Krashen’s (2004) hypothesis also supposed that pedagogical activities which help acquisition of language should be enjoyable for learners, “but enjoyment merely does not warranty language acquisition” (p. 28). He stated that there is proves that voluntary reading outside the classroom is enjoyable. For example, the participants in ER studies in Mason and Krashen (1997) showed positive attitudes growth toward reading.

Assuming these hypotheses to be correct, the more comprehensible aural and written input is provided, the more language acquisition occurs. Regardless of whether or not one completely agrees with these hypotheses, increasing interest in ER has been observed among researchers and educators involved in L2 instruction. They deal with the essence of ER and the necessary conditions and methodology for its success, so Day and Bamford (2002) put forward ten principles for an extensive reading approach to teaching reading. In the professional development interests, the authors inspired teachers to utilize the principles as a tool to check their beliefs about reading in general and extensive reading in particular, and the ways they teach reading. These principles are:

1. Easy reading material.
2. A wide range of topics must be available on a different reading material.
3. Learners choose what they like to read.
4. Learners read as much as possible.
5. The aim of reading is usually related to enjoyment, information and general understanding.
6. Reading is reward by itself.
7. Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower.
8. Reading is individual and silent.
9. Teachers guide their students.
10. The teacher is a reader role model.

Ellis (2005) proposed the importance of massive amounts of input for second language acquisition. Extensive reading was recognized as one of the easiest ways of

implementing pedagogically the input-rich learning environment. Research has reported beneficial impacts of ER on different aspects of L2 ability; for instance, reading comprehension and reading speed (Bell, 2001), vocabulary (Grabe & Stoller, 1997; Horst, 2005; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006), grammar (Yang, 2001), reading and writing (Hafiz & Tudor, 1989), writing (Tsang, 1996), a collection of disparate abilities/skills (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983), and general L2 proficiency (Mason & Krashen, 1997).

Shazila Abdola et. al (2012) stated the reading importance for enjoyment through " Poor readers are not only unwilling to read, but they also in performance tests often score poorly. The failure in answering correctly reading comprehension questions could only show that they failed to understand the given texts." (p.233). So the reading importance and specifically reading for enjoyment that can be assumed as a subpart of ER has been highlighted.

The Impacts of Extensive Reading in EFL Context

Sheu (2004) reported two studies on the effect of an ER program on the reading development and learning attitudes of Taiwanese 2nd-year junior high school students. In each study, two ER groups using graded readers and books for native English speaking children respectively, and one control group receiving grammar-based instruction, were involved. The results indicated that limited reading time, improved the reading speed of the three groups, but they performed in the language tests differently after the experiment, and also their attitudes became negative to English learning and reading. By doubling the time and including collaborative activities, the two ER groups came out as clearly better to the control group in all aspects of language development, and also developed positive attitudes. This recommended that the longer the learners are immersed in an enjoyable and meaningful environment, the bigger the benefits they will receive. Implications are deduced for language policy in input-poor settings, and for such concepts as the use of L1 materials and supportive activities in the organization of ER programs.

Yamashita (2008) presented a study to explore different effects of extensive reading on different aspects of L2 ability. Specifically, the general reading comprehension ability improvements and ability of lower-level linguistic. From a pretest to a posttest improvement was found to be significant for reading ability, but linguistic ability was not significant. The results declare that the effects of ER might be appeared more quickly in general reading skills than in L2 linguistic ability, at least for adult L2 learners.

El-Deen (2009) had a thorough study on the effectiveness of the Assisted Extensive Reading Program on developing reading comprehension strategies, namely; skimming, scanning, guessing meaning of words in context and inference of ninth graders in Gaza governorate. The study examined the improvement shown by the experimental group 1 who received reading comprehension strategy training only, and group 2 who received strategy training integrated with 9-week extensive reading program and the control group who received no treatment. An achievement, pre and posttest were administrated

and a statistical analysis was conducted to collect data. Comparing the results of the pre-post tests, it was concluded that the Assisted Extensive Reading Program proved to be the most efficient in developing reading comprehension strategies. Strategy training alone was useful but the rate of the progress was not significant. On the other hand, the traditional method was ineffective in that students made very little progress on all levels. Comparing the scores achieved by the three groups at each of the four strategies, it was found that group 2 who received both strategy training and extensive reading program was always superior to the other two groups, and group1 who received strategy training only achieved some progress but it wasn't significant when compared to the scores of the control group.

Rashidi and Piran (2011) conducted a study to investigate the effect of Extensive and Intensive Reading on Iranians' EFL learners' vocabulary size and depth. To this end, 120 participants took part based on their Oxford Quick Placement Test (2004) scores. They were divided into two groups, intermediate and advanced. Then the participants in each group were further divided randomly into two groups, one receiving Intensive Reading treatment, while the other Extensive Reading treatment. Schmidt's Vocabulary Levels Test (2001) and Read's Word Associates Test (1998) were administered. The results of the study indicated that both IR and ER have significantly an impact on learners' vocabulary size and depth and that the students' vocabulary knowledge in terms of size and depth had increased. Moreover, the students at the intermediate level took more advantage of IR than ER, but in the advanced group the students benefited more from ER than IR. Finally, the study indicated that ER and IR can lead to development of vocabulary in a way that the number of vocabulary in terms of each word's synonym, antonym and collocation significantly will be improved.

Yamashita (2013) examined the effect of extensive reading on L2 reading attitude. Participants of the study were 61 undergraduates EFL learners at a Japanese university. Five attitudinal variables namely; Comfort, Anxiety, Intellectual Value, Practical Value, and Linguistic Value were measured using a 22-item questionnaire scored on a Likert scale. Linguistic Value was removed because of a ceiling effect, the result in Comfort and Intellectual Value showed increases and a decrease in Anxiety, with no effect on Practical Value.

Mermelstein (2014) had a thorough study on Improving EFL Learners' Reading Levels through Extensive Reading. Many studies conducted in this area, but none of them focused on this subject. The procedure is as follows: This is a quantitative study. Participants (N=87) are from a Taiwanese university, and it took 12 weeks to be done. It should be noted that all the students are heterogeneous. Oxford Bookworms and the Penguin Classics are the reading materials. ER treatments used every week in class activity as sustained silent reading (SSR). Other than the classroom treatments, students are supposed to continue extensive reading in their free time. The study contains four-group assessment, two formal reading level assessments and two informal reading assessments. The first informal data collection methods used was classroom observations, and the participants' graded reader record sheet was the second informal

instrument. The purpose of this task was to intrinsically motivate students and tracking their improvements. The results indicate a high, almost perfect, direct relationship between extensive reading and EFL learners' reading level improvement. It means that ER has a main role on students learning. Let say a huge amount of input prescribed with specific directions.

He (2014) tried to find out whether extensive readings promote reading speed or not? As we already know, reading in English is a slow, yet long-term process for ESL and EFL students. According to the paper, lack of knowing enough vocabulary is the main problem of slow readers. It is suggested that, participants can increase their reading abilities by reading a vast amount of reading. So, the more they read, the more their knowledge of vocabulary will be increased. Another stance looks at the level of difficulty of the reading materials, and its impact on the outcome. Design of this study is experimental. Participants (N=66) were divided into two homogeneous groups. Two reading treatments are used: free treatment (N=33) and integration reading treatment (N=33). Oxford Bookworm (OBW) used as a main instrument. The first group was told to read without any boundaries. Whereas the integration reading participants, the second group, had daily extensive reading assignment with specific directions. After a one-year program, it was confirmed that all participants in the free reading group and the integration reading group had read the same, and their reading speed gradually improved. It was concluded that there was a spectacular improvement in both groups. Reading speed of free reading group increased about 45%. The increase for the integration reading group was around 60%. Students from both groups made an astounding progress during the project. It is safe to say that there is a positive relationship between extensive reading and the readers' reading speed.

METHOD

Participants

The initial sample of this study consisted of 86 Iranian EFL learners aged from 18 to 28. The participants were both male and female with Persian as their native language. To include only upper-intermediate learners, Oxford Placement Test (2011) was administered. 66 of the initials sample were selected as being upper intermediate English language learners. In order to minimize the effect of any possible assumption of having extra learning through authentic materials or extensive readings outside the classroom, an interview has been administered. 6 of these participants have also been omitted from the study as being exposed to English outside of the class; namely watching movies, chatting with foreigners, regular traveling abroad and etc. Finally, based on the mentioned criteria 60 participants out of 86 were selected for this study.

The participants were studying in upper intermediate and advanced levels of Tabarestan-e Farda English Language institute in 6 different classes. Tabarestan-e Farda Institute is a well-organized institute with more than 15 years of experience in Sari, Mazandaran. Selection of the institute was based on non-probability or convenience sampling, as the researcher was a shareholder and also a teacher there.

The researcher had also easier access to the EFL learners there and could administer a time-consuming test, perform a questionnaire twice and 10 sessions of teaching with less difficulty.

Materials

Four different materials were used to collect the relevant data in this study. The Oxford Placement Test 3 (2011), 15 hours (10 sessions) of teaching reading comprehension to two different groups, extensive reading questionnaire developed by Davis, Gorrel, Kline, Hsieh (1992), and Pearson Longman Grade 4 (Upper Intermediate) reading comprehension test.

In terms of evaluating the students' initial level selecting them as upper intermediate, Oxford Placement Test 3 (2011) was used as the pre-test of the study to determine participants' level of proficiency. The test consists of 50 grammar and vocabulary multiple-choice items, and the standard time allocated to the test is 50 minutes. The extensive use of this placement test in numerous studies is an indication of its being appropriate.

After selecting the final participants of the study (N=60) they have been divided into two groups (experimental and control). In both classes, students were taught *Select Reading Book; upper intermediate level*. In control class, that was the only source which was taught, whereas in the experimental one, the participants have been suggested to read *Oxford Bookworms Library Series; upper intermediate level* for the extensive reading purposes. Additively, they have been under the observation of the present researcher during their extensive reading.

In order to have an accurate result on reading comprehension of both classes, Pearson Longman Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Test has been chosen. This test consists of two general passages following with 16 comprehension questions, both multiple and essay type questions which can evaluate participants' reading comprehension ability. In order to check the reliability of the passages, a pilot study was carried out with 10 EFL learners similar to the participants of the study to ensure the reliability of the passages through KR 20 technique. The result was found to be .89, which is considered a high reliability of the instrument and allows us to use the test in the current study.

Davis, et al (1992) questionnaire was the other instrument to be used. This questionnaire is a survey on students' attitudes of English toward extensive reading. The aim of this questionnaire is to find out the students' attitudes toward extensive reading. This questionnaire contains 10 questions and the participants will be asked to express their degree of agreement/disagreement with each statement on a 4-point Likert system: 4 for strong agreement, 3 for agreement, 2 for disagreement, and 1 for strong disagreement. Instrument has strong face validity and extensive research results show the predictive validity of the instrument. Alpha reliability is ranged from .85 to .90 for the instrument. In order to remove any possible misunderstanding of the questionnaire's items, it was translated by an experienced translator. Performing a

Test-retest reliability with different participants similar to the participants of the study, confirmed the transition reliability.

Design of the study

The current study is a quantitative with a quasi-experimental design. The quantitative part is the impact of extensive reading on students' reading comprehension, and the part which deals with the study of the students' attitudes towards reading. This study was conducted to determine the impact of ER as a supplementary material in reading comprehension among upper-intermediate EFL learners. Extensive reading and reading comprehension are the independent variables. And participants' language proficiency as upper-intermediate level, and native language of the participants, Persian, are also controlled.

Data Collection Procedures

In this study, four sets of data were collected.

First, The Oxford Placement Test 3 (2011) as the pre-test of the study was used to determine the proficiency level of the participants as upper-intermediate. This test was administered in the researcher's presence and the goal of the test was totally explained to the participants. The test was distributed by the present researcher among 86 initial participants at their classroom hour.

After selecting the final participants and dividing them into two different groups, the present researcher started teaching reading comprehension for 15 hours (10 sessions) in both groups. The instructor tried his best to keep a same pace, and using a same method to eliminate any instructor effect on learning. So both groups were receiving same amount of teaching except that group A benefits further information of extensive reading, whereas the other one lacks. Extensive reading, as the name implies, means reading for pleasure, and when something is dictated as syllabus is usually not for pleasure! So, it was decided to find students interests and make them curious, and then suggest some reading textbooks. The class itself had more than 70 graded books on different kinds of topics which could be counted on as extensive reading materials. Beside these textbooks, lots of others among some websites suggesting PDF books have been offered to the participants.

After teaching reading comprehension to both groups, Pearson Longman Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Test has been administered to all participants of the study. The test was taken with the researcher's presence to ensure the participants' understanding of items. The obtained scores determined the participants' level of reading comprehension.

The questioner was utilized to describe participants' reaction toward extensive reading at the end of the program, so after preparing questionnaire including questions on attitudes for the first group (which took the extensive reading class) towards extensive reading comprehension program, the researcher elicited the required information. To

do this, at first, the researcher administered the attitude questionnaire among 30 participants who were briefed about the idea of extensive reading and its goal, and the participants' anonymity was guaranteed.

Data Analysis

After collecting all the data, they were subjected to statistical analysis. In the placement test and reading comprehension test, scores were set according to participants' correct answers. Participants' responses to the questionnaire were calculated and then converted to percentage. In order to find the impact of extensive reading in reading comprehension, two sets of scores (reading comprehension scores of experimental group and control group) were analyzed using Paired-Sample T-Test. A t-test helps you compare whether two groups have different average values or not; in another words, it compares the means between two groups on the same continuous. For the analyzing the questionnaire, as the responses have numerical value (4 for strong agreement, 3 for agreement, 2 for disagreement, and 1 for strong disagreement), participants' answers are summed and after converting them into percentage, they will be discussed. To analyze all these data, the SPSS software (Version 22) was utilized which is commonly used for analyzing the results of the studies in social sciences. The results will be thoroughly discussed in the following chapter.

RESULTS

This section reports findings in two different phases based on the research questions; the impact of extensive reading on reading comprehension, and the attitudes of the participants toward extensive reading.

The obtained data were analyzed to determine the mean, mode, and standard deviation of two sets of score (Reading comprehension scores in both groups).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation
Experimental	13.1333	15	1.45586
Control	10.5333	14	1.56983

Figure 1 shows all participants' reading comprehension test scores for the experimental group. The lowest score is found to be 10, where the highest one is 15. Therefore, the range of the scores is calculated to be 6, and as Table 1 suggests, mean of the scores is found to be 13.13 and standard deviation 1.4.

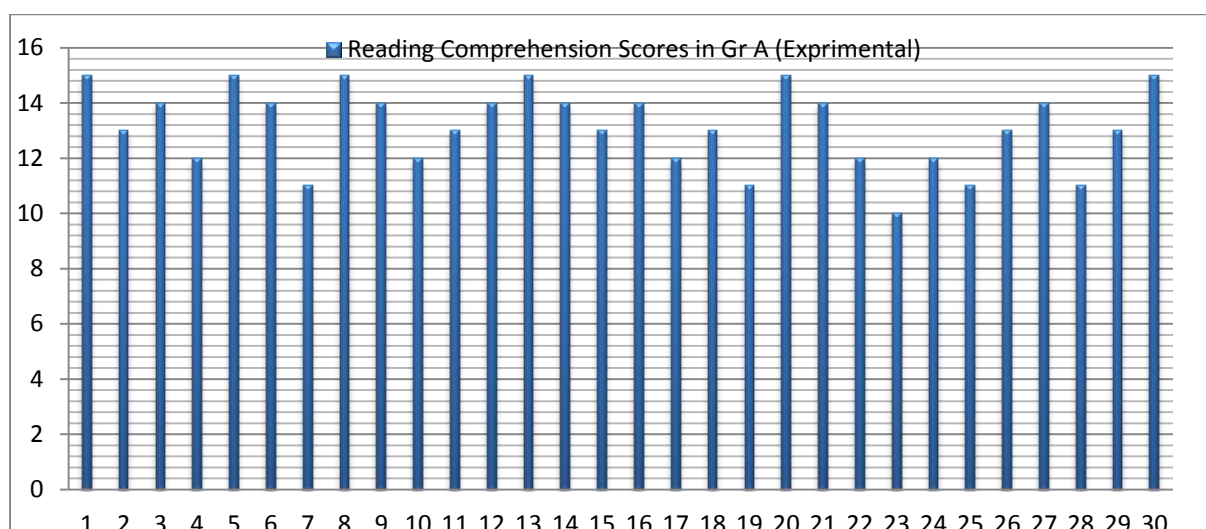


Figure 1. Distribution of participants' Reading Comprehension scores - Experimental Group

Figure 2 details the participants' reading comprehension scores in the control class. The scores range from 8 to 14. Based on Table 1, the mean and standard deviation of this set of scores are 10.53 and 1.56 respectively.

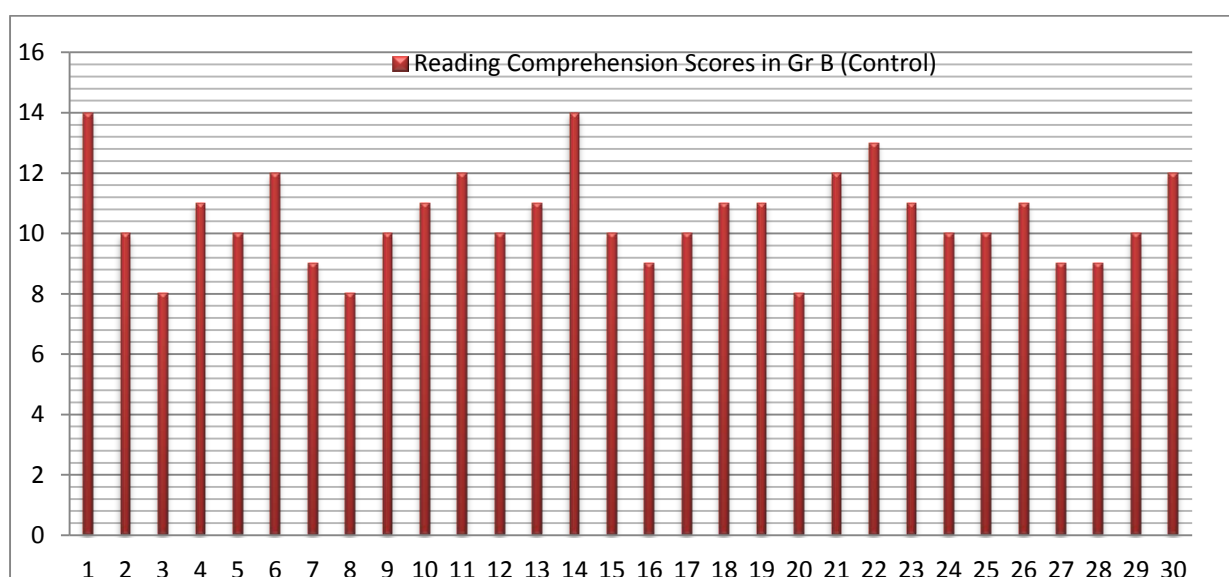


Figure 2. Distribution of participants' Reading Comprehension scores - Control Group

Figure 3 depicts both classes' reading comprehension test scores in one chart. As the blue line (experimental group performance) is constantly higher than the red line (control group performance), it shows the better performance of participants in experimental group than control group.

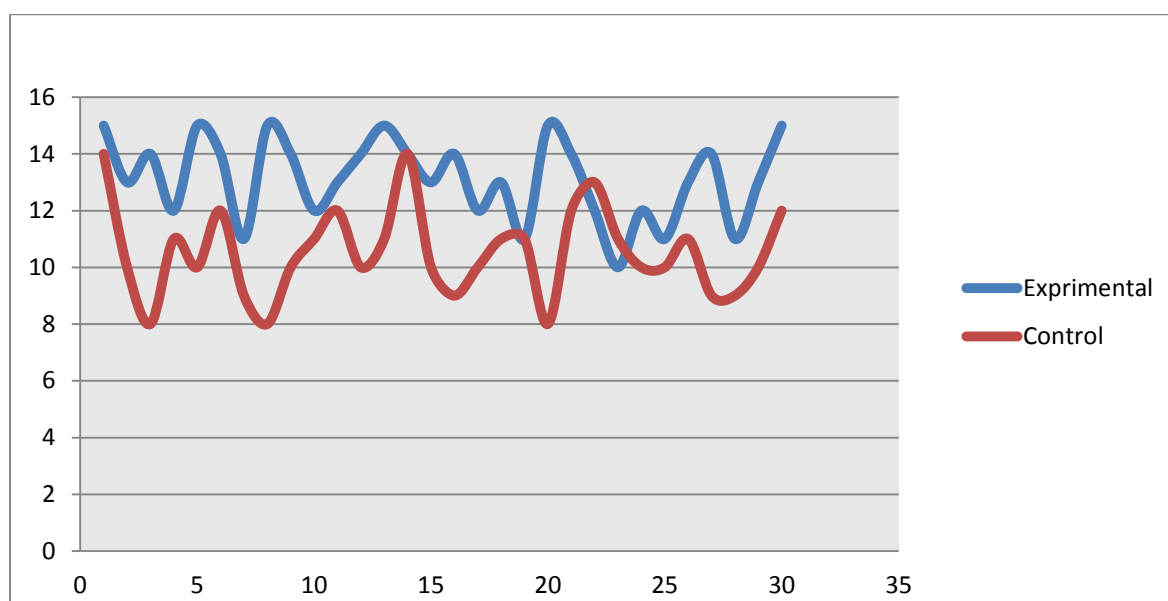


Figure 3. Distribution of participants' Reading Comprehension scores - Both Groups

Sometimes, we don't just describe one group of data. Instead, we consider analyzing two groups of data at the same time and compare them. If we want to compare two groups T-test is usually suggested. T-tests are used often for comparing two different groups' means. They can help you find out if means are significantly different from one another or if they are relatively the same. T-test has many different kinds regarding the data being analyzed, one of the most popular one is Paired-Sample T-Test. These types of tests are used to compare groups that are related in some way.

The two tables below describe Paired-Sample Statistics (Table 2), and Paired-Sample T-Test (Table 3) for the experimental and control groups of the study.

Table 2. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Experimental	13.1333	30	1.45586	.26580
	Control	10.5333	30	1.56983	.28661

Table 3. Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Experimental - Control	2.60000	2.11073	.38536	1.81184	3.38816	6.747	29	.000

In the Paired Samples Statistics Box (Table 2), the mean for the participants who were exposed to the extensive reading program (group A) is 13.13. The mean for the participants who haven't received any extensive reading program (group B) is 10.53.

The standard deviation for the group A is 1.45 and for the group B, also 1.56. The number of participants in each condition (N) is 30.

According to Table 3, condition; $t(29) = 6.747$, $p = .000$. This table also reports the all detail about this T-Test, which will be discussed in "Discussion" section of the present chapter.

Attitude toward Extensive Reading

In order to analyze the participants' reaction toward extensive reading, at the end of the program Davis, et al (1992) questionnaire including questions on attitudes towards extensive reading comprehension have been administered. This questionnaire has been distributed among group A of the study who were familiar with the idea of extensive reading and were exposed to it at least for two months. This questionnaire contained 10 questions and the participants were asked to express their degree of agreement/disagreement with each statement on a 4-point Likert system: 4 for strong agreement, 3 for agreement, 2 for disagreement, and 1 for strong disagreement. Since all the questions had positive idea about extensive reading, we can conclude that the participants whose answers tend to be "strong agreement" or "agreement" have better idea about extensive reading. And as the scores for their idea increases with their degree of agreement, it is safe to say that, the higher their scores, the better idea they have about extensive reading.

So in order to find out the participants' degree of agreement, their answers were submitted to SPSS to get a whole score for each participants. If one participant answers all the questions as "strong agreement" gets 40, and if one answers "strong disagreement" gets 10, so the range of scores will be from 10 to 40.

According to descriptive statistics below (Table 4), the lowest score was found to 25 and the highest one was 35. So the mean is calculated to be 31.03, and standard deviation 2.56.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of the Participants' Scores in Questionnaires.

N	Lowest	Highest	Range	Mode	Mean	Std. Deviation
30	25	35	11	35	31.0333	2.56614

As it was mentioned earlier, the possible range of scores is 30 (10 to 40). If we divide this range and add it to the lowest possible score, the result shows the average score of the questionnaire. So dividing 30 into 2, would be 15, and if we add this score to 10 (the lowest possible score), the result would be 25. So if the mean of the score are more than 25 we can say that the attitude toward extensive reading comprehension is positive.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study proved a significant impact of extensive reading in reading comprehension among upper-intermediate EFL learners. Based on the findings of the study, the mean score for group A is reported to be 13.13 and for group B, 10.53. Using Paired-Sample T-Test, SPSS reported the P value between aforementioned variables to be .000 (condition; $t(29) = 6.747$, $p = .000$). And according to Paired-Sample T-Test, if the Sig (2-Tailed) value is less than or equal to .05, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the two conditions. This result is in line with most of the study mention in second chapter of the present study like, El-Deen (2009) who found the same result that more extensive reading makes reading more comprehensive, or Sheu (2004) and Yamashita (2008). This result also confirms the findings of Mermelstein (2014), who concluded that reading comprehension improves through extensive reading. Rashidi and Piran (2011) study had different result. They concluded that intensive reading comprehension is more effective than extensive reading comprehension among intermediate EFL learners. However; the result was vice versa for advanced EFL learners.

The findings of the study proved a positive attitude of participants toward extensive reading. The means score for the participants' answers was reported to be 31.0333, which is more than 6 digits more than the average score which is 25. When the mean score is higher than average score it is safe to say that the attitude toward the variable is positive. It is interesting that even the lowest score is not less than the average, and it is 25 whereas the highest one is 35. The finding is in line with Sheu (2004) who found a developing positive attitude toward extensive reading among EFL learners. Also Mason and Krashen (1997) found the same result as the participants in ER studies indicate growth of positive attitudes toward reading. Yamashita (2013) found the result that showed increases in Comfort and Intellectual Value and a decrease in Anxiety, with no effect on Practical Value.

CONCLUSION

The present study attempted to find the impact of extensive reading in reading comprehension among upper-intermediate EFL learners. Now the research questions are answered, and research hypotheses are checked.

The study found a significant impact of extensive reading in reading comprehension among upper-intermediate EFL learners. So the related null hypothesis was **rejected**. Based on the findings of the study P value was reported to be .000 which shows the significance of the impact. The finding confirms that extensive reading as one of the main and the most frequent kinds of supplementary materials in language learning has a significant impact in reading comprehension. Therefore, we can conclude that with respect to other supplementary materials, the more the learners read for pleasure, the more comprehensive the readings would be for them.

The finding found a positive attitude of participants toward extensive reading. So the related null hypothesis was **rejected**. The means score for the participants' answers was reported to be 31.0333, which is more than 6 digits more than the average score which is 25. In these cases, if the mean score is higher than the average, it is common to say that the attitude is positive.

The study confirms the positive attitude of the participants toward extensive reading. It can be concluded that more extensive reading programs in different kinds of classes, not only can help learners with their reading comprehension ability but also increases their self-confidence, comfort, and motivation, and decreases stress, and anxiety. Therefore, including such program in syllabus will help the learners to gain the self-confidence that all teachers are complaining about lack of it among EFL learners.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION

Since the impact of extensive reading in reading comprehension has been confirmed to be significant, in any language program, extensive reading should be focused on more than ever. Based on this conclusion, it is suggested that after performing a placement test, the instructors design the course along with their students which can facilitate learning process and can remove the excuses of not being interested in the subject arise by students! This conclusion brings the idea of negotiated syllabus design into fashion again. The study predicts a better learning when students are assigned some extensive reading activities

The conclusions can help teachers to improve their teaching quality. Considering students' taste, teachers can select techniques and procedures which suit the learners best. In addition, researchers can try to define methods in a way that extensive reading is given due attention. It can also help the school designers to design a small library in a school keeping books for different tastes, and a small board suggesting new books, and a small bookcase in each

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There were some limitations in the current study about participants. Not enough participates to divide them into two or three levels of proficiency or even put those into different age groups were the ones worth of mentioning.

There were also some delimitations. This study focused on learning English in institutes in EFL context and specifically in Iran; therefore, some of the results may not be applicable to other contexts such as ESL. Upper-intermediate level is the level which has been investigated in the study and the results might not apply to other levels of proficiency.

Based on the findings of the present study, the following suggestions for further research can be proposed.

As one of the supplementary materials in reading comprehension was significantly positive, the first and foremost study which comes to one's mind is a study on the impact of other supplementary materials like: videos, games, flash cards, and storytelling in reading comprehension. Another topic could be the impact of extensive reading in another receptive skill, listening comprehension, or even other language learning skills like speaking and writing.

Finally, looking back on the abovementioned suggestions and the findings of the present study, it seems evident that the impact of extensive reading in reading comprehension among upper-intermediate EFL learners is not negligible. Therefore, the current study suggests more studies on this issue with different levels of proficiency, and adding different age groups to the study, even a wider or different context is also suggested. It is hoped that the future research shed light on the role of this important variable in language learning and provide us with deeper insights into how extensive reading can be dealt with in language classes.

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