

## Teacher and Student Perceptions of Extensive Reading Activities

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This study explores teacher and student perceptions of and experience with various extensive reading activities in two L2 classes over a 15-week semester. Eight extensive reading activities were selected and implemented to best facilitate students' engagement in reading in English. The activities were evaluated based on data collected from students and the teacher (i.e., teacher's reflection notes, interviews, activity evaluation survey, and personal communications with students) throughout the semester. To analyze the qualitative data (i.e., teacher's reflection notes, interviews, and personal communications with students), the entire data were examined to find recurring characteristics and themes across all responses. The quantitative data (i.e., activity evaluation survey) was analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine general characteristics in the data. Findings of this study shed light on the feasibility of those extensive reading activities in L2 reading classes and students' responsiveness to them in the setting. In general, the students in the study showed a favorable predisposition toward extensive reading activities. Six (out of eight) extensive reading activities were perceived as effective in terms of facilitating students' motivation to read in and out of class. The study suggests important implications for L2 reading curricula when programs implement extensive reading.

[second language reading/extensive reading activities/

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Extensive reading has been proposed as one of the most effective approaches for developing L2 reading abilities because it exposes L2 learners to ample amounts of reading input, motivates L2 learners to read, and leads to the development of reading abilities. A

number of studies have reported that extensive reading has a positive impact on L2 reading abilities (e.g., Al-Homoud & Schmitt, 2009; Beglar, Hunt, & Kite, 2012) and vocabulary acquisition (e.g., Horst, 2005). In addition, studies have shown that L2 learners develop positive attitudes toward L2 reading and become motivated to read as a result of extensive reading (e.g., J. Park, 2015; Takase, 2007).

The benefits of extensive reading have facilitated the incorporation of extensive reading into many L2 reading courses, and extensive reading has been practiced in various ways in L2 and foreign language settings (Day & Bamford, 1998; Grabe, 2009; Krashen, 2004). As the popularity and importance of extensive reading increase, it is necessary to explore how extensive reading should be practiced more effectively and what types of extensive reading activities can best facilitate students' reading in and out of class. Effective instructional practices that facilitate students' engagement in reading in L2 over a long period of time can make a great impact on the outcome of an extensive reading program.

Reading scholars have suggested various instructional techniques to increase L2 students' reading engagement (e.g., Bamford & Day, 2004; Grabe, 2009; Jacob & Farrell, 2012). To help teachers implement extensive reading successfully and systematically over an extended period of time, Grabe (2009) recommends ways to engage students in extensive reading; they include (a) providing students with various interesting reading materials and reading time in and out of class, (b) reading interesting materials to students, (c) monitoring students' reading preferences and progress, (d) keeping records and providing simple and appropriate rewards, and (e) having students share and recommend what they read. Bamford and Day (2004) also present numerous reading activities to promote extensive reading in L2 classrooms.

Many researchers have incorporated various extensive reading activities in their studies to encourage students to read more. Yet, to date, there has been little research exploring the effectiveness of specific extensive reading activities in L2 settings. Most studies of extensive reading have focused on the effectiveness of extensive reading on different areas of L2 learning (e.g., reading comprehension, reading rate, vocabulary, writing, and motivation). Relatively few empirical studies have documented how teachers and students perceive extensive reading activities in terms of engaging students in reading in and out of class. Therefore, as a first step for a successful implementation of an extensive reading program, this study investigated the effectiveness of various extensive reading activities in an L2 setting through teacher and student perceptions of the activities to discover whether the activities could motivate L2 students to read more.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

An extensive reading approach can be defined as reading in large quantities within students' linguistic abilities (Grabe & Stoller, 2011). In discussions of extensive reading, English language teaching professionals often refer to Day and Bamford's (2002) top ten principles, which propose (a) the concept of reading a variety of easy, self-selected reading materials as much as possible for the purpose of reading for enjoyment and information and (b) the importance of teachers' role in terms of orienting and guiding students and serving as a role model of a reader. The definition of extensive reading mentioned above and Day and Bamford's principles of extensive reading have been used as the basis for determining what should be considered when implementing an extensive reading program.

Extensive reading activities and ideas on how to do extensive reading have been suggested by several reading scholars (e.g., Bamford & Day, 2004; Grabe, 2009; Jacobs & Farrell, 2012). Bamford and Day (2004) introduce more than 100 extensive reading activities that can be incorporated into language classrooms based on their top ten principles. Grabe (2009) points out that the successful implementation of extensive reading in L2 classrooms requires substantial effort to motivate students to read. Both Bamford and Day's (2004) and Grabe's (2009) extensive reading activities and ideas serve two similar purposes in implementing extensive reading: engaging students in reading and monitoring students' reading. How these two purposes are achieved in extensive reading programs over an extended period of time can have a great impact on the outcome of the programs.

Numerous studies on extensive reading have incorporated specific activities into their studies (e.g., Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), book reports, discussions, summary writing, oral presentations) not only to help students sustain or develop students' motivation to read but also to help teachers monitor students' reading throughout an extensive reading program (e.g., Al-Homoud & Schmitt, 2009; Beglar et al., 2012; Horst, 2005; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Takase, 2007). However, the effectiveness of each extensive reading activity has not been the focus of those studies. It is worth exploring what kinds of activities have been incorporated in extensive reading programs and research.

SSR has been a core practice in many reading classrooms, and most extensive reading studies have employed the activity (e.g., Beglar et al., 2012; Horst, 2005; Mason & Krashen, 1997). SSR provides students with time to engage in self-selected reading for short periods of time (e.g., approximately 10-15 minutes) depending on the context. Studies of extensive reading both in the first language (L1) and L2 classrooms have shown that SSR has a positive impact on students' reading abilities (Krashen, 2004, 2011). However, SSR may not work well when the teacher is also reading and may fail to monitor students' reading (Stahl, 2004). Reutzel, Fawson, and Smith (2008) found concerns with SSR and proposed Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR), a variation of a free reading activity.

To fill the gap that traditional SSR has, ScSR utilizes silent reading of various texts, accompanied by the teacher who is monitoring and interacting with students, in addition to holding students accountable for what they have read. ScSR can be beneficial to L2 learners if implemented effectively because it can play a key role in increasing reading engagement and reading achievement.

One other way to increase students' reading engagement is introducing interesting and appropriate books to students in class (Bamford & Day, 2004; Grabe, 2009; Jacobs & Farrell, 2012). Bamford and Day (2004) suggest several activities for introducing students to linguistically appropriate and interesting reading materials. For example, in an activity labeled "Identify the Books" (Yamanaka, 2004), students try to match short descriptive paragraphs about books (i.e., book blurbs) with the books themselves. Another way to engage students in reading is that teachers can choose an interesting story and read it to the class. For instance, in an activity labeled "Reading with Children" by Nation (2004), a teacher reads aloud an interesting book to students and involves students in the reading by asking students to make predictions of the story. These activities can enhance students' motivation for reading the books introduced in class.

As another way to promote students' reading engagement, a short presentation or an oral reading report by a student has also been employed in several extensive reading studies (e.g., Lee, 2007; Stoeckel, Reagan, & Hann, 2012). This activity can serve two purposes: to give students opportunities to share and recommend what they have read to the class and improve students' oral fluency. Several activities for oral reading reports are introduced in Bamford and Day (2004). For example, Schmidt (2004) introduces an activity entitled "Favorite Books" that asks students to talk about their favorite books for a short time. Having students share and recommend books by giving short presentations or oral reports can create positive reading experiences among students.

One other way to boost students' reading engagement is encouraging students to read more while in school. Providing students with more time to read in school can enhance students' motivation for reading because students are more likely to find the book that they are reading interesting or find an interesting book when they read more (e.g., Krashen, 2004, 2011; Miller, 2009). Book clubs, as one example, can be an important way for teachers to integrate more reading in classrooms. In L1 pedagogical contexts, book clubs have been around for a long time usually in the form of literature circles, which are defined as "small, peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article, or book" (Daniels, 2002, p. 2). In L2 settings, book clubs (i.e., literature circles) have been implemented and have shown a positive impact on reading engagement in extensive reading (Shelton-Strong, 2012). These reports suggest that incorporating book clubs into L2 pedagogical settings can yield positive effects on students' motivation for reading.

To monitor students' reading progress as well as to increase students' motivation, numerous studies of extensive reading have employed various kinds of post-reading activities, such as book reports, short summaries, and comprehension quizzes. In various studies, after finishing reading, students were required to write about what they had read as a follow-up activity (e.g., Beglar et al., 2012; Horst, 2005; Lee, 2007; Mason & Krashen, 1997). For example, the "One-Sentence Check" activity, advocated by Day (2004), asks students to write one-sentence summaries of their books in two or three minutes. Although there is little empirical evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of these activities, they can be useful because teachers can determine whether students have actually read their books and further help students improve their writing abilities.

The book report activity is another widely practiced extensive reading activity in studies (e.g., Beglar et al., 2012; Mason & Krashen, 1997). The book report activity can be used to check whether students finished their books and to provide students time to reflect on the books they read, but should be done quickly (Bamford & Day, 2004). In a similar vein, Krashen (2004) suggests that extensive reading require the least amount of accountability (e.g., a short summary of what students read), which means that teachers should not require any imposing accountability tasks to determine whether students actually read the book. As an alternative to the practice of book reports, Miller (2009) suggests book reviews because they provide an opportunity for students to share personal reactions and opinions about the books they have read. In summary, as long as time spent on writing tasks as post-reading activities is minimal, incorporating book reports or book reviews into an extensive reading program can meet two purposes: holding students accountable for their reading assignments and increasing students' engagement by sharing their thoughts about the book they read.

As another way to check students' reading done in and out of class in lieu of book reports, students are usually asked to answer comprehension questions (e.g., Beglar et al., 2012; Robb & Kano, 2013). Because students in extensive reading programs typically read different books, chosen based on their own interests and reading levels, teachers find it daunting to individualize comprehension questions for all their students. To cope with this problem and to hold students accountable for what they read, using the Moodle Reader (an old name for M-Reader), a database of online quizzes for various graded readers, has been suggested as a substitute for individualized comprehension questions (Robb, 2011; Robb & Kano, 2013). After reading a book, students can take a short Moodle Reader quiz on the book they read to show that they have read the book with appropriate comprehension. Incorporating the Moodle Reader into an extensive reading program can help the teacher check students' reading assignments done outside the class and hold students accountable for their reading.

The extensive reading activities mentioned above are reported to facilitate students'

reading in and out of class in terms of enhancing students' reading engagement and monitoring students' reading. However, the reviewed literature reports limited evidence to support the claims researchers and educators have made with respect to specific extensive reading activities. The effectiveness of specific extensive reading activities in L2 settings is not clear, and research has not examined carefully which activities contribute to students' reading engagement and lead to a successful extensive reading program. Therefore, this study investigated the effectiveness of eight selected extensive activities through teacher and student perceptions of the selected activities over a 15-week semester in an ESL setting. The eight extensive reading activities were selected from among the ones introduced in the literature review. The goal of this study was to find out teacher and student perceptions of extensive reading activities in and out of class. The following research question motivated the present study: What were L2 teacher and student perceptions of extensive reading activities in terms of engaging students in reading more in and out of class?

### **III. METHOD**

#### **1. Participants**

Participants of this study were 27 low intermediate to intermediate proficiency level students (with scores of 45-56 on their placement test or their TOEFL iBT) enrolled in an ESL program at a U.S. university. The students (3 female and 24 males) were from two intact ESL reading classes. The two classes consisted of 20 students from Saudi Arabia, 5 from China, and 2 from Kuwait. Students' ages ranged from 17-25. The students had been in the U.S. for one month to one year at the beginning of the study. More than 70% of the students in the study were returning students who had experience with extensive reading in the previous semester(s). The researcher was the instructor of the students in the two classes.

#### **2. Eight Extensive Reading Activities Implemented in the Study**

Eight extensive reading activities were implemented to facilitate students' reading engagement during the 15-week extensive reading program. The eight extensive reading activities included in the study are listed in Table 1. See Appendix 1 for the procedures of the activities.

**TABLE 1**  
Eight Extensive Reading Activities Implemented in the Study

Purposes	Extensive Reading Activities
To provide reading time	Scaffolded silent reading (ScSR); book club
To introduce reading materials	Book blurbs; listen to a story and respond
To check students' reading done in and out of class	Three-minute paper; Moodle Reader; book reviews; book presentations

### 3. Procedures for Instruction

The 60-minute class time was usually divided in the following way. First, each class started with ScSR for 15 minutes; however, the length of ScSR gradually increased up to 25 minutes toward the end of the semester to provide more in-class reading time. Graded readers from different publishers were chosen as reading materials for the participants. After ScSR, the students shared what they had read with a partner or as a class and then wrote a three-minute paper about what they had read. The next 10 minutes were dedicated to increasing students' reading motivation through the use of one other extensive reading activity, selected from among these activities: *book blurbs*, *listen to a story and respond*, or *book presentations*. The remaining 20-30 minutes of class were used to meet the needs of existing course objectives focusing on reading skills (e.g., activities for main ideas, major and minor details, inferences, text structures).

In terms of book selection, the students were advised to start to read a graded reader at one level below their reading level. The students were told to choose a graded reader in which they found no more than one or two unknown words on a page. The purpose for choosing a graded reader below the students' linguistic level was to help the students gain a sense of accomplishments after finishing a book easily, which can boost the students' self-efficacy.

Students were required and encouraged to reach a goal of reading 100,000 words by the end of the semester. In order to hold the students accountable for reading outside the class, the students were required to take a quiz on the Moodle Reader website <moodlereader.org> after they finished a book. In addition to taking a quiz on the website, the students were required to post a book review on the Moodle Reader blog about the book they had finished reading.

### 4. Data Collection

This study employed exploratory research using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Data collected over the 15-week semester included (a) teacher reflection on each class, (b) interviews (See Appendix 2), (c) activity evaluation survey, and (d) personal

communications with individual students throughout the semester. In order to check students' reading amounts achieved over a semester, individual students' records for reading amounts from the Moodle Reader were collected. Records from the Moodle Reader provided the total number of words each student read over the semester. Teacher reflection notes after each class contained information about the extent to which specific activities worked, or did not work, and why. A four-point Likert scale activity evaluation survey was carried out in the middle and at the end of the semester. At the end of the semester, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven students who read consistently; two students among the seven students joined the book club. Two additional students, who came to the book club relatively consistently, were included in the interview; therefore, a total of nine students were included in the interview. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

## 5. Data Analysis

The current study employed both quantitative (i.e., activity evaluation survey) and qualitative (i.e., teacher's reflection notes, interviews, personal communications with students) approaches. To analyze the qualitative data, this study followed Creswell and Plano Clark's (2011) recommendations. First, the teacher's self-reflection notes including personal communications with individual students as well as the students' interview data were assembled and transcribed. Second, following the ground theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), the researcher read through the data for general understanding, kept notes of emerging ideas from the data, and examined the data to find recurring characteristics and themes across all responses. Third, the data were grouped into relevant themes associated with the eight extensive reading activities; differences and similarities within the relevant themes were identified. Fourth, the different types of data were compared to determine relationships across the data. Finally, to confirm that the qualitative data was accurately reported, the researcher checked for the accuracy of the information by rereading the data multiple times. For the quantitative data analyses of survey questionnaires and amount of reading done by students, descriptive statistics were used to report the mean, standard deviation, range, and median to determine general characteristics in the data.

## IV. RESULTS

The amount of reading done by the students during the semester was determined based on reports from the Moodle Reader. Table 2 indicates the number of books and words read by the entire 27 students and 7 students who read most consistently. According to the

results from the Moodle Reader, the 27 students read a mean of 57,481 words (6.44 books) whereas results from the seven students who read most consistently throughout the semester show that the seven students read a mean of 141,453 words (12.43 books) during the program.

**TABLE 2**

## Amount of Reading

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Median	Range	Total
Number of Books Read ( <i>N</i> = 27) <sup>a</sup>	6.44	5.28	7	0 – 24	161
Number of Books Read ( <i>n</i> = 7) <sup>b</sup>	12.43	4.65	12	8 – 24	87
Number of Words Read ( <i>N</i> = 27) <sup>a</sup>	57,481	68,239	36,897	0 – 325,163	1,494,512
Number of Words Read ( <i>n</i> = 7) <sup>b</sup>	141,453	82,033	109,964	95,451 – 325,163	990,173

Note. <sup>a</sup>Total number of participants; <sup>b</sup> participants who read most and consistently

Teacher and student perceptions of each activity are reported based on the teacher reflection notes, interviews, activity evaluation survey, and personal communications with individual students.

With respect to ScSR, most students were engaged in reading during ScSR throughout the semester. Results from the activity evaluation survey also suggested that the students had positive attitudes toward this activity. Table 3 shows that the students perceived the activity as helpful, and the students enjoyed the reading time in class. Data from the teacher's reflection notes shows that several students were often observed to continue reading after ScSR. Because of the increased reading time toward the end of the semester, the students mentioned that they “read more pages in class” and were “more engaged in reading” as the semester progressed. Two students' comments also included:

I enjoyed the in-class reading time because it's quiet and everyone is reading. (Student 3, Interview)

I don't have enough time to read after class. I like to read in class. It's quiet.  
I can focus on reading. (Student 5, Interview)

Overall, it appeared that most students benefited from the quiet and uninterrupted reading time in class, and this activity seemed to have contributed to facilitating the students' motivation to read.

Regarding the three-minute paper activity, results from the survey show that most students agreed that the three-minute paper activity helped them with their reading (*M* = 3.19). Several students commented that the task was “easy to complete” and the activity gave them “time to think about what they read.” In addition to the students' favorable

attitudes toward this activity, the teacher also benefited from this activity. She was able to ascertain whether the students were on task during ScSR.

**TABLE 3**

Survey Results of Extensive Reading Activities ( $\alpha = .91$ )

Extensive Reading Activities (Strongly Disagree = 1; Strongly Agree = 4)	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
ScSR			
This activity was helpful because it gave me time to read.	24	3.67	.56
Book blurb			
This activity helped me find an interesting book to read.	26	3.42	.64
Three-minute paper			
The activity helped me improve my reading.	26	3.19	.85
Moodle Reader			
It was helpful for me to take the quiz.	19	2.95	.78
Book review			
This activity helped me improve my reading.	16	2.31	1.25
Book presentation			
As a presenter, the activity gave me the opportunity to share information about books that I read.	24	3.42	.72
As a listener, it was useful to listen to information about books.	24	3.38	.65

Note. *Listen to the story and respond* and *book club* were not included in the survey.

The book blurb activity seemed to be perceived as useful; several students demonstrated their interest by reading the books introduced in the activity. In addition, most students actually read book blurbs when choosing a book to read. Results from the activity evaluation survey are also positive ( $M = 3.42$ ). Students commented that they found the activity “helpful” because they “developed a habit of reading blurbs when choosing books” and they “could find interesting books.” When asked how they had chosen a book, the followings were included from the students’ responses:

Now I read book blurb and decide. (Student 2, Personal Communication)

I read the blurb. If it’s interesting, I choose the book. I can choose interesting books. (Student 6, Interview)

The listen to a story and respond activity was not included in the survey because several students were not able to recognize this activity due to their being absent when the activity was implemented in class. The teacher’s observation of the class and personal conversations with several students show that the students who participated in the activity found the activity “interesting” and they enjoyed the activity. The students demonstrated their interest in the books introduced by the activity and checked out the books. Overall, the students were more willing to read the books introduced in class. This activity seemed

to have increased several students' motivation to read the books introduced in class.

With respect to the Moodle Reader activity, a number of students showed negative attitudes toward this activity. Results from the survey also revealed that the students perceived this activity less favorably compared to the other activities. However, most students admitted that this activity pushed them to read more outside the class. The Moodle Reader activity seemed to have boosted several students' self-efficacy. One remark was:

I think for teachers it is good to check. For me, it is also good because it makes me know I read it with focus. I felt happy when I finished a book and more happy when I passed the quiz. Now I know reading is very important. (Student 1, Interview)

The seven students who read consistently also demonstrated positive attitudes toward the Moodle Reader activity. The students agreed that if there had been no Moodle Reader activity, they could not have reached their goal of reading 100,000 words during the semester. For example, one student showed strong extrinsic motivation:

Sometimes the books are not interesting, but I don't stop reading. I keep reading. I want to finish it because I want to take a quiz. (Student 4, Interview)

In general, the Moodle Reader activity was perceived as effective in terms of motivating the students to read outside the class – holding students accountable for the reading assignments – whereas the results from the survey were less encouraging.

As for the book review activity, most students interviewed showed positive attitudes towards this activity. However, results from the survey indicated that in general the students perceived this activity as the least helpful among the eight activities. A few students showed a negative attitude towards the activity. For example, one student stated:

I don't think it is helpful. If we take the quiz, we don't have to repeat the information again. And I haven't read any book reviews. (Student 7, Interview)

Like this student, the majority of the students did not read other students' book reviews, which shows that the activity did not seem to contribute to helping other students find interesting books by reading book reviews.

With regard to the book presentation activity, most students seemed to enjoy book presentations either as presenters or as audience. Results from the survey and interviews

also indicated that the students had favorable attitudes toward this activity. However, this activity did not seem to succeed in motivating the students to read more. For example, two students commented:

Most books, I finished reading. I know the stories. (Student 6, Interview)

I liked the activity, but I didn't read the books because I already read the books. (Student 3, Interview)

The students who read consistently did not seem to benefit from this activity because they had already read most of the books presented.

Four students voluntarily joined the book club. The book club seemed to have a positive impact on the four students' attitudes toward reading. Three main reasons seem to have contributed to the students' positive attitudes toward the book club. First, finishing a book in the book club seemed to boost the students' self-efficacy. Second, the quiet, uninterrupted, and flexible time to read provided the students with good time to engage in reading. Third, the teacher's encouragement motivated the students to come to the book club. For example, a student stated:

Enough time to read ... not noisy and good time after we finish our classes ... If I want to stay more, we have a choice to stay more. I like to read more. It makes me feel good about myself because I came to learn. You encouraged me a lot. (Student 9, Interview)

One important finding from the book club is that two struggling readers in the book club seemed to find themselves becoming readers. One of the two struggling students found himself becoming a reader although he denied the fact that he was becoming a reader. He commented: "I think I start to love reading. No, no... Reading is not good. It's boring. It's not good I like reading. But I think I start to like it. When I read, I like to read more and more." The teacher asked why he liked reading and he remarked:

At the beginning, I didn't read because I have something make me didn't read. This thing is I thought if I read, maybe this book have more words I don't understand, and I can't understand the story. I have to translate a lot of parts and I will be disappointed. But now I know reading and about reading English. It is easy and very good. And another thing... The reading will make me read better. (Student 8, Interview)

The results suggest that the book club seemed to have contributed to increasing and/or sustaining the students' motivation to read and boosting their self-efficacy.

## V. DISCUSSION

The eight extensive reading activities were designed for the purpose of engaging students in extensive reading by (a) introducing interesting reading materials, (b) providing time to read, and (c) monitoring students' reading (Day & Bamford, 1998; Grabe, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2011). Introducing interesting and appropriate graded readers through two of the activities (i.e., *book blurbs* and *listen to a story and respond*) encouraged the students to read the books introduced. In addition, the book blurbs activity helped the students find an interesting book on their own by reading blurbs when choosing books. At the beginning of the semester, most students seemed to fail to find an interesting book and did not know how to choose a book. The teacher often witnessed most students choosing a book by only looking at the picture on the cover without understanding what the title meant. However, after these two activities were implemented in class, several students showed their interests in reading the books introduced, and they seemed to be more independent and autonomous in choosing a book based on their interests.

Providing more time to read (Krashen, 2004, 2011) during ScSR in class and in the book club outside the class helped the students engage in the books that they were reading. At the beginning of the semester, the teacher often found that most students were reading only 2-4 pages during 15-minute ScSR time although they were reading books within their linguistic levels. It seemed that the struggling readers read only a few pages and did not get to the interesting parts of the book that could motivate them to read more. As the time for ScSR increased, the students were able to read more pages and seemed to become more engaged in their books. In addition, two students, who joined the book club, supported the idea of having enough time for reading to engage in the books they were reading. The students in the book club had longer time to read at one sitting, so they were more likely to be engaged in reading.

Holding the students accountable for what they read is another factor that motivated students to read (Robb, 2011). Although the majority of the students did not like the Moodle Reader activity, this activity made a major contribution to motivating the students to finish books. Having been able to finish books also developed several students' self-efficacy. Results from the Moodle Reader showed whether the students were actually reading the book with appropriate comprehension. Most students who completed a book without any linguistic difficulty and took a quiz regularly felt a sense of accomplishment after passing quizzes. Although there was a group of students who had negative attitudes

toward the Moodle Reader activity, most students admitted that they read more because of the Moodle Reader.

Although taking a quiz for the Moodle Reader activity was done outside the classroom, and it was the students' job to complete the assignment on their own, this activity seemed to require careful monitoring from a teacher. Teachers need to be aware of what students are reading and how they complete the assignment. In this study, several students failed quizzes in the beginning, which seemed to create negative attitudes toward the activity. The teacher tried to find out why the students were failing/passing the quizzes by communicating with the students who failed the quizzes and those who passed the quizzes. For example, one reason for failing quizzes was that some students had difficulty in following stories with many characters. The students who had trouble understanding a story with a complicated plot were not able to pass the quizzes, which seems to imply that the students were not reading books linguistically or topically appropriate for themselves and needed more guidance in terms of book selection.

Two activities among the eight activities, book reviews and book presentations, were perceived as less effective. Although the teacher benefited from reading the students' book reviews because she was able to monitor what students read and what they thought about the books, most students did not read their classmates' book reviews. While several students perceived this activity as beneficial for their writing, the majority did not perceive the activity as helpful. This activity seemed to have imposed more work on the students as a result of extensive reading. This suggests that post-reading tasks be minimum without taking time away from reading (Day & Bamford, 1998; Jacobs & Farrell, 2012; Krashen, 2004).

The book presentation activity was also perceived as less effective. One main reason that the activity did not succeed in encouraging other students to read the book presented was because the book presentation was given toward the end of the semester when most students had read the books presented. It might have been more effective if this activity had been implemented at the beginning of the semester. Another reason might be due to the insufficient number of graded readers. Students who found the books that were presented interesting and wanted to read the books were not able to check out the books due to their unavailability. This implies that access to various, interesting books is an important factor for a successful extensive reading program (Krashen, 2011). This activity could have facilitated the students' reading engagement if it had been introduced early in the semester and there had been more interesting books available.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study explored the effectiveness of eight extensive reading activities in L2 classes over a 15-week semester. In general, the students in the study showed a favorable predisposition toward the eight extensive reading activities implemented in the study. The participants perceived six extensive reading activities as effective in terms of motivating them to read more whereas they perceived the other two activities (i.e., *book presentations* and *book reviews*) as less effective. This study suggests that extensive reading activities be incorporated into an extensive reading program to sustain and increase students' motivation to read (e.g., Bamford & Day, 2004; Jacobs & Farrell, 2012). Teachers can incorporate extensive reading activities that (a) provide students time to read, (b) introduce interesting reading materials to students, and (c) check students' reading done in and out of class to facilitate students' reading engagement.

As mentioned at the beginning of the article, little research has explored the effectiveness of extensive reading activities. This study has a modest but meaningful contribution to understanding teacher and student reactions to specific extensive reading activities. The findings shed light on the incorporation of the specific activities into extensive reading programs in ESL/EFL settings. However, the findings of this study should be viewed with caution because the number of the participants in this study was relatively small. In addition, this study was carried out in an ESL setting. Additional future studies carried out in different ESL/EFL settings are needed.

The current study further suggests that a successful extensive reading program requires a fairly demanding level of preparation and effort on the part of teachers. It is sometimes noted that the teacher's role is missing or taken for granted in extensive reading classes because the teacher is not teaching and students are reading independently. However, in order for an extensive reading program to be successful, a strong teacher orientation toward extensive reading should be one of the key elements. Successful implementation of extensive reading requires constant monitoring of students' reading, by encouraging and motivating students to read for a long period time (Grabe, 2009). This study suggests that teachers also need a high sense of self-efficacy in order to sustain and develop their students' motivation. Needless to say, much more research is needed on the role of the teacher in extensive reading programs, as well as the opportunities such roles provide.

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## APPENDIX 1

### Eight Extensive Reading Activities

Activity: *Scaffolded Silent Reading (ScSR)* (Idea developed from Reutzel, Fawson & Smith, 2008)

Goal / purpose: To increase students' reading time in class to develop their reading habit and skills

Materials needed: Graded readers

Procedures: Before the class, set a stopwatch to 15 minutes.

Students: Read self-selected graded readers independently for 15 minutes at the beginning of a class.

Teacher: Monitor students' reading and provide assistance.

Teacher: Ask if a few volunteers share what they read with the class. Ask students to (1) report the title and the author by showing the book to everyone, (2) give a brief summary of what they have read, and (3) state whether it is interesting or not.

Activity: *Three-minute paper* (Adapted from Bamford & Day, 2004)

Goal / purpose: To check students' reading done in class; to improve writing & vocabulary

Materials needed: Worksheets for three-minute paper activity

Procedures: After ScSR,

Teacher: Distribute handouts. Set a stopwatch to 3 minutes. Ask students to write a short summary of what they read including a character, place, or the topic.

Students: Write three-minute paper.

Teacher: Collect the paper after 3 minutes.

Activity: *Moodle Reader* (Idea developed from Robb, 2011)

Goal / purpose: To check students' reading requirement

Materials needed: Access to a computer

Procedures: Students are encouraged to finish a book per week and to take a quiz on the website, moodlereader.org. Students can take a quiz anywhere they have an access to the Internet.

Students: Go to moodlereader.org and take a quiz about the book you read.

Teacher: Check students' reading progress on the website. See whether students are passing or failing quizzes. If they passed a quiz, a teacher can assume that they read the book, which also means they completed their reading assignment.

Activity: *Book blurbs* (Adapted from Yamanaka, 2004).

Goal / purpose: To introduce books to students; to help students with choosing an interesting book

Materials needed: Book blurb activity worksheet

Procedures: Explain what a blurb activity is. Distribute handouts. Do one blurb with the class.

Students: Walk around the classroom to find a book which matches a blurb. There are 7 books around the classroom, but 6 of those books match with the blurbs on the handout. Students are also directed to find the book which does not have a blurb.

Teacher: After most of the students have finished the task, as a class, go over each blurb by asking questions (e.g., what is the title for the first blurb? Why do you think so?) and show the book which matches the blurb by using PadCam. Upon completion of the review, encourage students to read blurbs on the back covers of books to locate books, which sounds interesting to them.

Activity: *Book reviews* (Adapted from Miller, 2009)

Goal / purpose: To share information about the books students read with classmates

Materials needed: Book review instruction; access to a computer

Procedures: Give instructions about what to include in book reviews.

Students: Post a book review on Moodle Reader blog after finishing a graded reader.

Teacher: Check students' reviews on the website. As long as the book review includes required information (e.g., a brief summary and their opinions about the book they read), give a credit for doing the assignment.

Activity: *Listen to a story and respond* (Adapted from Bamford & Day, 2004)

Goal / purpose: To motivate students to read more by introducing an interesting passage from a book

Materials needed: Reading passage from a graded reader

Procedures: Teacher reads aloud a part of graded reader. (Three different variations were practiced)

Variation 1: Students listen and draw pictures about the story.

Variation 2: As the teacher reads the passage aloud, students read the along silently and guess the title of the story. After the listening segment, the teacher shows three books using PadCam, and students compare their guesses of the titles and predict the story.

Variation 3: As the teacher reads the passage aloud, students read the passage silently and make predictions, or write a summary of the segment of the story.

Teacher: Encourage students to check out the books and find out whether their predictions were right.

Activity: *Book presentation* (Idea developed from Miller, 2009)

Goal / purpose: To provide students with an opportunity to share the books they love; to encourage other students to read the book

Materials needed: Book presentation guideline; presentation response sheets

Procedures: Give instructions on what to include in book presentation. PowerPoint slides can be used as visual aid for the presentation. Set a timer up for 2 minutes.

Presenter: Give a presentation about his/her favorite book.

Listeners: While listening to a presentation, answer questions provided on the response sheet.

Teacher: Collect the response sheets.

Activity: *Book club* (Ideas developed from Krashen, 2004, 2011; Miller, 2009)

Goal / purpose: To provide students with more reading time out of class

Materials needed: Graded readers

Procedures: Greet students and check what they are reading.

Teacher and students read for 30 minutes to 90 minutes depending on how long students want to read for the day. When a student finished reading a book, he/she can start reading another book or take a Moodle quiz. Teacher and students discuss what they read for 20 minutes.

## APPENDIX 2

### Sample Interview Questions

1. Greetings
2. Do you like reading in English?
3. When/where/how often do you read outside the class?
4. What is your favorite book?

5. What do you think about the books you read?
6. Were they difficult?
7. What did you do when you encountered difficult words while reading?
8. What do you think about the Moodle Reader (ScSR, book blurbs, listen to a story and respond, three-minute paper, book review, book presentation, book club) activity?
9. How long did it take for you to finish a book?
10. Do you think you are reading faster now?
11. Do you think your reading abilities have improved?

**Examples in: English**

**Applicable Languages: English**

**Applicable Levels: Tertiary**

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