



**READING MATTERS:  
A DIARY STUDY ANALYSIS OF  
EXTENSIVE READING IN L2**

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**Abstract:**

Extensive reading is to read large quantities of materials for global understanding or for pleasure, which can be a useful way of learning a foreign or a second language. Diary studies, on the other hand, are the studies conducted to investigate participants' experiences in a detailed way since they allow researchers to shed light on the challenges participants faced during the whole process. Numerous recent studies examining the process of extensive reading in a foreign or a second language have revealed highly encouraging results. However, there are few studies which collected data through both participants' diaries and researchers' logs. The current single case study was conducted with the aim of investigating the effects of extensive reading on an adult's self-study of English over a 20-week period. To present a detailed picture of what the learner experienced during the process, data were collected through semi-structured interviews administered in the beginning and at the end of the study, and through learner's diaries. The Constant Comparative Method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was utilized to analyze the qualitative data. The results showed that extensive reading in English had favourable effects in the participant's gaining reading habits in English, improving reading speed and comprehension, and increased the participant's motivation towards learning English. Furthermore, the findings indicated that extensive reading in English lowered the participant's worries about reading in English. The problems the participant encountered during the study and the ways she coped with these problems were also investigated and discussed in detail.

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## 1. Introduction

Unfortunately, there is a common belief that learning a language can only occur in a classroom environment since such a process needs instruction; however, learning continues or even may occur outside the classroom if the students are oriented correctly (Tiryaki & Tütüniş, 2012). When learning a language outside the classroom is taken into account, one can easily find numerous ways (e.g. through online tools or mobile applications, reading books in English, watching movies in English, listening to English songs), and it has been indicated in previous studies that reading extensively is one of the best ways to learn a language. Numerous studies report that extensive reading (ER) provides gains in vocabulary acquisition (Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Tiryaki & Tütüniş, 2012), reading proficiency and reading habits (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003; Renandya, 2007; Macalister & Tabata-Sandom, 2009), reading speed and comprehension (Bell, 2001), writing ability (Krashen & Mason, 1997) and even spelling (Day & Swan, 1998; Krashen, 1989). At this point, the fascinating slogan of Nuttall (1996) helps us understand better the relation between learning a language and ER: the best way to improve your knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers; the next best way is to read extensively in it. As it can easily be understood from this fascinating slogan, ER is very useful way of learning a language. To understand better the relationship between L2 learning and ER, firstly what ER is should be enlightened.

Extensive reading is a language teaching procedure where learners are supposed to read large quantities of material or long texts for global understanding, the principal goal is to obtain pleasure from the text (Bamford & Day, 2004). Davis (1995) also defines ER as means of giving students the time, encouragement, and materials to read pleurably, at their own level, as many books as they can, without the pressures of testing or marks. These two definitions provide an overview of ER. However, at this point, the remarkable characteristics of ER should be summarized in order to provide a detailed information about ER (Nuttall, 1998):

- Students can access a variety of materials.
- They read a large quantity of printed materials.
- They have freedom to choose or change books.
- They read at their own pace for pleasure or information.
- They can engage in tension-free and enjoyable learning environment.
- They are giving opportunity to experience real-life reading.

After discussing what ER is and what the characteristics of ER is, guided extensive reading will also be discussed since the current study is conducted in a different context in which the researcher acts as a guide and mentor, which will be discussed in methodology section. In fact, the guided extensive reading (GER) program shares the same characteristics with the ER program: the GER program is aimed at motivating students to read extensively - to read as many books as possible, and to be excited about reading, and it is thus aimed at having students read books for pleasure (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003). Asraf and Ahmad (2003) also point out the key features of the GER program as follows:

- The teachers need to be well-informed about the books and reading materials that would appeal to their students.
- The reading materials should be within the students' level of competency.
- Students are given the opportunity to choose the books that they would like to read.
- The program needs to be conducted on a regular basis.
- Established routines, aimed at inculcating the reading habit and love of reading among students, are an important part of the program.
- Students' reading progress is monitored and reinforced by giving words of praise and encouragement or by awarding them "stars", etc., for books read.

As it can be seen, the features of GER and ER are almost completely the same with each other. In GER, the teachers have a more significant role since they should act as a guide and model for their student to make them more motivated to read and involved in the process whereas ER process is more individual.

However, GER programs gather under the same roof of ER, and recent studies by Tiryaki & Tütüniş (2012), Liburd & Rodrigo (2012), and Yamashita (2013) collectively point out that ER is an applicable and important way of learning a language. However, most of the recent studies on ER are quantitative and conducted in classroom settings. They are obtrusive and controlled, objective, generalizable, outcome oriented, and assume the existence of 'facts' which are somehow external to and independent of the observer or researcher (Nunan, 2008). On the other hand, there are a few recent qualitative studies on ER. They assume that all knowledge is relative, that there is a subjective element to all knowledge and research, and that holistic ungeneralizable studies are justifiable (Nunan, 2008). I have the opinion that ER process should also be investigated in a qualitative way since this process is private: students choose the books to their delight, read at their own pace, and they have freedom to decide what to read and what to do. However, the number of the qualitative studies on ER is not more than the quantitative ones and the prominent purpose of this study is to fill this deficiency in literature through diaries written by the learner.

### 1.1 Previous research

As mentioned above, there are several recent studies which collectively affirm that extensive reading is a viable and perhaps even a significant means toward enhancing second language acquisition, in terms of both lexical and grammatical development, as well as a way of increasing reading fluency and overall cultural literacy (Rankin, 2005).

Sheu (2012) conducted a study in which the effects of extensive reading approach on language learning in the setting of Taiwan were investigated. The participants were second grade students, they chose the books among 57 graded readers and 55 books for native English-speaking children, read only in the classroom and then completed a reading record about the book. The researcher divided the students into three groups, two of them were the experimental groups and one was the control group. During the study, the experimental groups read and completed the records whereas in the control group, the teacher reviewed part of previous English lessons that the students had difficulties understand, gave time to students to memorize vocabulary and grammatical rules, and gave them exercises in the reading textbook or self-study and practice books. A language proficiency test, a reading speed test, two questionnaires including an attitude questionnaire and a reading difficulties questionnaire, and reading records were used to collect data in this study, and the results has shown that extensive reading programs can be successfully implemented with ESL/EFL beginners in a traditional setting where grammar translation based method monopolizes reading instruction and ER can be very helpful in learning language if a reading situation where students are able to choose and read for meaning and pleasure is created. This study reinforces the idea that ER is a very ideal way of learning a language but its focus is to unravel the impact of extensive on L2 development rather than clarifying the affective domains of reading.

Yamashita (2013) has conducted a study to fill this gap by examining the effect of extensive on L2 reading attitude. 61 undergraduates learning English as a foreign language at a Japanese university participated in the study, 500 graded English readers were used as reading materials, participants chose the books according to their pleasure, read the books both in and outside of class, and submitted a book report on each book they read. A 22-item questionnaire scored on a Likert scale in the categories of Comfort, Anxiety, Intellectual Value, Practical Value, and Linguistic Value was used to collect data and the findings showed that extensive reading increased students' feelings of comfort and reduced anxiety towards EFL reading, and also had a positive effect on the intellectual value that the students attached to reading. However, it did not increase perceived practical value despite the fact that the students knew that the amount of reading they did would be reflected in their class grade. Considering that, it requires a time commitment for ER to be reasonably successful (Grabe & Stoller, 2011) and the period of 15 weeks is not necessarily sufficiently

long for the full benefits of ER to materialize, this result shows that ER's effects on reading attitudes can manifest in a relatively short period.

The 5-week study of Liburd and Rodrigo (2012) is another study which clarifies the affective domains of ER by investigating whether a short-term extensive reading program implemented in the second semester of Spanish at the college level can make students realize of the value of extensive reading and its implementation in the curriculum, and affect student reading attitude and confidence in their language skills. 6 undergraduate students that were enrolled in a second semester Spanish class at a university in the southeastern United States participated in this study, and three of them were in the experimental group while the other three were in the control group. The experimental group read one graded reader per week (for a total of 5 weeks) and met with the researcher, the first author to select and check out books. They also filled out a short book evaluation sheet to track reading progress during these weekly meetings. The control group, on the other hand, just met in the first and last week with the researcher. At the end of the 5 weeks both the experimental and control groups completed an affective questionnaire about their reading attitude before and after the program, confidence in their reading ability, their perception of the value of extensive, and their opinion regarding whether extensive should be incorporated into the Spanish curriculum. The results indicate that extensive can have a positive impact on affect, since the experimental group had a better attitude towards reading in Spanish, higher confidence in their reading ability, and a strong perspective on the need to implement extensive in the language curriculum in just 5 weeks and after reading 5 books. These two studies conducted by Yamashita (2013) and Liburd and Rodrigo (2012) make the affective domains of reading clearer and fills the gap in literature but as mentioned before, some qualitative studies also should be done in order to provide the detailed picture of ER process and to develop an in-depth exploration of ER process.

The case study conducted by Ro (2013) is one of the recent studies on ER which has a qualitative point of view and uses a pattern-matching, single case study research design to examine an adult reader's motivation and anxiety shifts towards second language reading. The researcher collected data through three self-reported questionnaires, three interviews, and observations in 24 extensive reading sessions over an 8-week period, so the researcher had the chance of looking the ER process, that is, what the participant experienced during the process, what problems she had, how she felt about her failure and success. In the end, the results indicate that reading extensively lowered the participant's fears while increasing motivation towards second language reading. Furthermore, ER was found to be very useful and convenient in the participant's gaining confidence, enjoyment, and satisfaction towards L2.

The case study conducted by Leung (2002) is another recent qualitative study on ER but it has a difference from the previous one conducted by Ro (2013): the participant of this case study is also the researcher and the author of the paper, which gives the researcher the opportunity to experience what it is like to engage in extensive reading from the learner's perspective. The researcher collected data through a learner diary, audio-recordings from several private tutorial sessions, and vocabulary tests. Results of the vocabulary test show that Wendy's vocabulary knowledge improved by 23.5% in one month. Data collected from journal entries and tutorial sessions indicate that extensive reading helped the participant acquire vocabulary in various ways: first, a large amount of input increased opportunities to be exposed to words previously learned, which reinforced the participant's existing knowledge of certain vocabulary items and allowed to apply vocabulary knowledge in a meaningful way; second, the participant read different genres, which allowed her to learn words or phrases that would not normally be found in textbooks; third, the participant's reading children's literature both help her repeat vocabulary items in a favorable way and enabled her to discover the meanings of certain words through pictures and contextual cues; fourth, ER gave opportunities to discover new and alternative meanings for certain words already known; fifth, the participant also learned new words incidentally. In short, this single case study shows that if learners are given the opportunity to read extensively for pleasure and develop a passion for reading, they can become more eager to learn the necessary reading skills and vocabulary they need in order to enjoy what they read (Leung, 2002). In addition, Leung (2002) points out that extensive reading also gives learners more control over and confidence in their own learning.

As mentioned before, researchers in foreign language education have shown considerable interest in ER; however, most of them have targeted groups of learners and do not present a detailed picture of individual experience.

## **2. Research questions**

To contribute to the limited research on ER having a qualitative point of view, this study aimed to discover the effectiveness of ER and better understand ER process from the perspective of both a foreign language learner by presenting a detailed picture of individual experience in ER process and taking advantage of diaries written by the learner. For this aim, the following research questions were addressed in the study:

1. Does ER influence reading comprehension?
2. How does ER affect attitudes to reading in a foreign language?

### 3. Material and Methods

#### 3.1 Participant

The participant of this case study, Summer (pseudonym), is a 21-year-old Turkish female who was born and raised in Turkey. When learning English in Turkey, it was mostly through the methods of grammar translation and audio-lingual taught by teachers who were primarily concerned with students' scores on exams and quizzes in preparation for the university or high school entrance examination, emphasizing grammar and vocabulary knowledge. As she indicated, even with more than 10 years of mandatory English education (mainly through reading and translating), she was still not confident with her use of the English language especially while speaking. However, she wanted to learn English since she was a student in Civil Aviation department in a university in Turkey, and she had to learn English in order to get a job. When the study began in November 2016, Summer and the researcher had private lessons for 6 months; they started private lessons in June and went on face-to-face until September, and they had to go on in a distance setting through weekly schedules prepared by the researcher every week after September. As for face-to-face lessons, they had six-hour private lessons in a week: two hours on Mondays, two hours on Wednesdays and two hours on Fridays.

Until they came to an end in September, Summer had developed both her listening and reading skills in English but still had problems about speaking and writing in English.

As mentioned above, after September, the researcher and the participant had to live in different cities in Turkey but Summer indicated her willingness to go on studying English with the researcher. As a result, they made a decision to go on their lessons from a distance. They went on with this distance instruction method for 3 months until November when the study began.

#### 3.2 Context of the study

This case study was conducted in a distance setting: the researcher prepared weekly schedules for Summer every week, "Sunday" was chosen as the day for sending the previous week's assignments, giving feedback and discussing about the previous week's experiences, and then giving the new week's schedule. During this process, the researcher acted as a guide and a mentor preparing Summer's weekly schedules, giving feedback, helping Summer when she had problems about a grammar topic or the book read. The feedback sessions were conducted in English mostly via voice messages and text messages, the researcher used L1 when a situation in which Summer needed extra detailed feedback for her better understanding. In addition to voice and text messages, the researcher and Summer had phone calls when there was a new thing for the next week's schedule and

Summer needed detailed information about what to do with the new material the researcher sent along with the new schedule. The researcher asked the participant's opinions both before starting to send schedules and during this process.

Regarding the current study, before starting, Summer was given details about the nature of the study: what ER is, what they will do during the study, what is expected to happen in terms of gains in language proficiency in the end, the researcher answered these questions under the light of the researches on ER. The participant was very willing to participate in the study and indicated that she would do that with all her heart and soul. The researchers also were very enthusiastic about this study, and both the researchers' and the participant's being full of enthusiasm about ER made the process much more productive.

### **3.3 Data collection instruments**

Interviews; one in the beginning of the study (see Appendix 1.) and one at the end of the study (see Appendix 2.), were carried out in order to make the participant's reading habits and awareness clear. The interviews constructed by Macalister and Tabata-Sandom were adopted but a modification was applied since those questions were on extensive reading in Japanese. The pre-interview consisted of two parts and 11 questions: the first part was on her L1 reading awareness and habits; the second part was on her L2 reading awareness and habits. The post-interview was only on L2 reading awareness and habits and included 15 questions. The interviews were conducted in Turkish. The researchers recorded, transcribed, and translated them into Turkish.

Learner's diary; The participant kept a diary after finishing each book. Learner's diaries were used to collect qualitative data since they have been an important introspective tool in language research because they can provide an emic perspective of learners' learning experiences and processes which may be "hidden" or "inaccessible" through observation from investigators (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983). The researcher gave the participant some guiding questions, which was adopted from the book evaluation form prepared by Turkish Ministry of Education, since the participant had not had such an experience also in her L1, so she was confused about what to write and asked for the researcher's help.

### **3.4 Procedure**

The current study began in the last week of September, 2016. At first, the pre-interview was conducted to get Summer's opinions and views on ER in both her L1 and English. After that, on November 3, 2016 the first schedule was sent to Summer. She read approximately two books weekly but sometimes she could not read any books or one book because of her exams at school or personal problems. The researchers did not force her to read two books every week since reading extensively means reading for pleasure, without pressure (Davis, 1995).



In the beginning, the researchers chose the book to be read for Summer since she indicated that she was not sure about what to read, and for the beginning it would be better for her if the researchers could choose the books. So, it can be said that GER was implemented in the beginning upon Summer's request. For 5 weeks, although the researchers pointed out that she was free to decide what to read, Summer kept indicating her willingness on the researchers' choosing the books read. However, after completing the fifth week, the researchers gave four books to the participant and wanted her to choose two books to read among the four books. The aim was to decrease the guidance step by step by giving Summer the freedom to decide what to read to her own delight. Finally, henceforth, Summer started to choose the books on her own. She went on reading freely for 5 weeks and ER process came to an end on February 28, 2017. So, ER process lasted for 18 weeks: from November 3, 2016 to February 28, 2017.

After ER process completed, the post-interview was carried out in the first week of March, 2017 to shed light on to what extent Summer's views about reading in L2 changed.

### 3.5 Materials

Before starting the study, the researcher and Summer had an interview, the interview constructed in Macalister & Tabata-Sandom (2009) was adopted. The results of the interview will be discussed in detail but now it can be indicated, as for the materials, the aim of carrying out the interview was to be aware of Summer's reading habits and awareness in order to make the materials used more suitable for her reading taste.

The books read during the study were a series of graded readers published by Penguin and Macmillan. They were all 'Stage 0', oversimplified versions of classic novels since Summer, the participant had just began learning English so she was a beginner learner of English.

In addition to the graded readers, 'New Grammar Practice for Pre-Intermediate Students' book whose publisher company is "Longman" and written by Elaine Walker and Steve Elsworth was used in order to create opportunities for Summer to practice the grammar and vocabulary topics. Moreover, every week the researcher wanted Summer to listen to some songs related to the week's grammar topic and to watch 5 videos from an application which they had downloaded before starting their new distance instruction method. Summer was free to choose the videos. The videos were designed to learn English by practicing new grammar points or vocabulary items through videos from different categories, all kinds of videos from food to sport could easily be found in this application, some of the videos were authentic whereas some were especially designed for practicing a specific point and the application was easy to use. The researchers brought these materials to

Summer's learning context since Summer's aim was to learn English and all these materials helped her during this process.

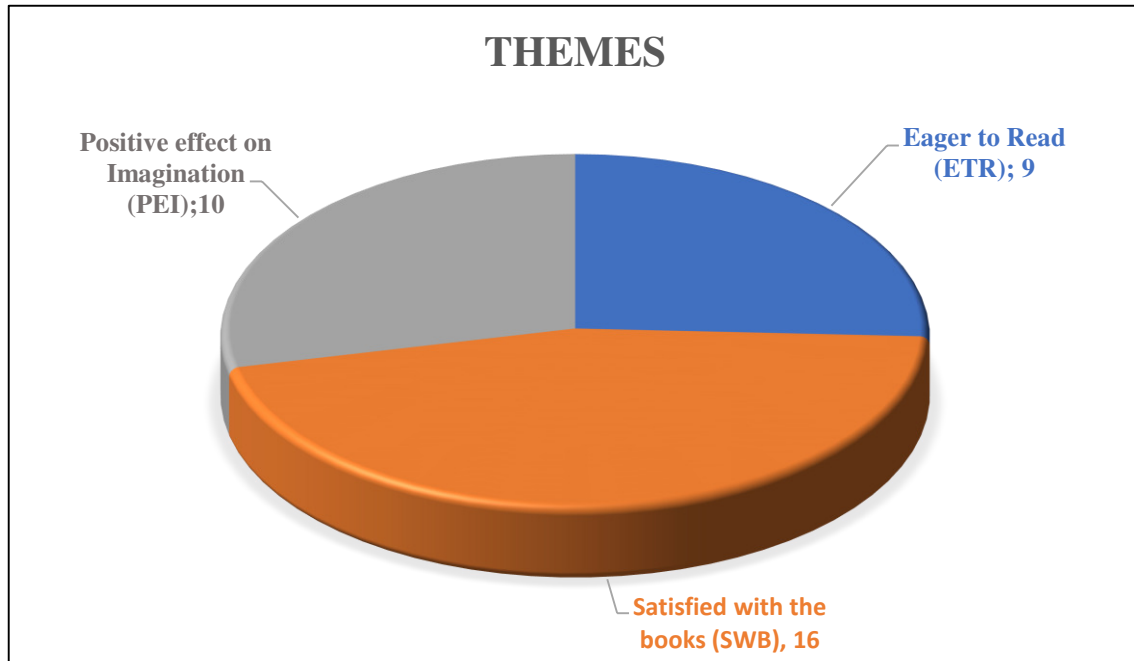
#### 4. Results and Discussion

##### 4.1 Research question 1: How does ER affect attitudes to reading in a foreign language?

As it was mentioned previously, the first research question of the study is about attitude change. To find out the answer of the first research question, 3 themes were created: satisfied with the books (SWB), eager to read (ETR) and positive effect on imagination (PEI). Different codes were formed for each theme. The diary of the participant was investigated through framework analysis, a type of content analysis. The findings obtained via the analysis were represented in the following figure (see Figure 1), and the themes with samples were displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Themes and sample sentences

Case	Theme 1: Eager to read (ETR)	Theme 2: Satisfied with the books (SWB)	Theme 3: Positive effect on imagination (PEI)
Summer	... I began with bells on. (P.1, Diary)	I really liked the book. (P.3, Diary)	... I wanted to be with April. (P.3, Diary)
	... Let's see what is going on here. (P.4, Diary)	... I believed it helped me. (P.3, Diary)	... I did not want to be in any characters' shoes.
	... Let's see what is waiting for us. (P.6, Diary)	It is a suitable book for my level of English. (P.5, Diary)	I would like to be in Fogg's shoes and travel with a sense of adventure. (P.8, Diary)
	It seems like an attractive book, doesn't it? (P. 10, Diary)	... I think it is effective. (P.8, Diary)	
	I like reading books and honestly I like reading more by reading such books. (P.31, Diary)	Thanks to the books and the books I will read soon, I am getting closer to success. (P. 46, Diary)	



**Figure 1:** Frequency of themes

Figure 1 indicates how often themes were mentioned in the participant's diary. Summer, the participant wrote sentences suitable for SWB theme sixteen times. From this result, it can be concluded that Summer is satisfied with content, difficulty level and wording of the books since the most used and repeated theme is theme SWB. Sample sentences of SWB theme was represented in Table 1. Furthermore, as it can be seen in Figure 1, PWB theme was repeated ten times in the participant's diary. Summer put herself in the characters' shoes several times. She looked at the situations with the eyes of characters within the stories. She made sentences as "if I were ..., I would do ...". And the third theme is eager to read (ETR) theme. Results show that the participant is eager to read. In the pre-interview conducted just before the study began, Summer said that reading books arouses her interest but it is seen within the diary that her attitude towards reading books has changed in a positive way.

#### 4.1.1 Interview Analysis

##### A. Pre-interview

The interviews reveal significant findings indicating Summer's attitude change and improvement. Content analysis was utilized to analyze data obtained via interviews.

Section 2 / Q2: Have you ever finished an English book? If you started to read a book but could not finish, why didn't you finish the book?

Summer: 'No, I didn't finish an English book. I tried to start. However, I was getting bored when I didn't understand. And reading English books didn't attract my interest.'

Summer's response indicates that reading English books did not excite her attention. She pointed out that she got bored while reading since she didn't understand, and for this

reason, she gave up reading. However, when the diary kept during the study was examined, it is understood from Summer's notes that her eagerness to reading English books increased, she was satisfied with the books she read, and her imagination developed by reading. This improvement can be displayed in the following part of Summer's diary:

Summer: *'Thanks to the books and the books I will read soon; I am getting closer to success.'* (P.46, Diary)

*'I couldn't wait for starting to read this book because I am taking the first step of reading English books experience and I began with bells on. I believe my enthusiasm will continue.'* (P.1, Diary)

*'Moreover, I liked the book very much. It is a short and sweet book, and easy to understand. Its content is useful and it is suitable for my level of English.'*

*'I like reading books and honestly I like reading more by reading such books.'* (P.31, Diary)

Section 2 / Q4: When you try to read in English, what comes as the biggest obstacles?

*'My vocabulary knowledge is not much enough and I am not keen enough on English'*

On the basis of Summer's response to the question, it is understood that Summer has difficulties in comprehending what she reads because she doesn't know enough words. She also states that she is not interested enough in English. Throughout the study, while writing comments for the first books she read, she writes as if she were writing to one of her friends, and she does this in English; e.g. *Hi, my friend'* (P.13, Diary), *'Hi, my sweet diary'* (P.17, Diary), *'Howdy my sugar diary'* (P.32, Diary).

Additionally, in the twelfth week Summer started to write in English. When the diary is examined, it is seen that summaries of the last six books were written in English. From this result, it can be concluded that attitudes of Summer, stating that she did not have curiosity for English in the pre-interview, towards English have changed enormously, and this change has such a positive effect on her that she began to write in English.

Summer is a participant who is aware of her lack of vocabulary knowledge. To fill her deficiency of vocabulary, she is trying to learn meanings of unknown words while reading. Notes, words and meanings of the words she wrote down on her diary reveal her effort to learn new vocabulary. Summer also points out that writing a diary will develop her vocabulary, and she is able to repeat and revise the words she learns with the help of reading books and writing diary. The samples given below indicate her efforts to learn new vocabulary:

Summer: *'Let's write down the words'* (P.31, Diary), *'Let me write down the words I have learnt straight away'* (P.29, Diary), *'Now, let's write down the new words we have learnt'* (P.23, Diary), *'And by the way, let's note down the new words we have learnt straight away so that we can revise what we have learnt'* (P.16, Diary), *'There are a bit many words I learnt from this book, so we should note down them immediately'* (P.9, Diary).

## B. Post-interview

Q6: Do you think that your attitudes towards reading long texts (books, articles, etc.) are different now?

Summer: *'I had prejudice against English beforehand because I didn't lean towards English. Since I had some difficulties in grasping meanings of the words, I knew that I would get stuck and I wouldn't be able to get my tongue around words, I was getting bored in no time at all. However, as I mentioned before, now I am very enthusiastic, and at the same time I am also developing my vocabulary as I have begun to get my tongue around words, which affects my pronunciation and knowledge and I, of course, want to read more.'*

The extract above indicates that Summer's attitudes towards reading in English have changed considerably in a positive way.

Q8: What was the most rewarding thing in reading English texts?

Summer: *'First of all, fortunately I have started such a thing. And secondly, this type of reading got me taken pleasure in what I am reading, and I can say that I luckily read a book once reading it. I enjoy reading a book that I previously put aside.'*

*'I can truly read a book in English without reading its Turkish version.'*

The participant now has developed positive attitudes towards reading in English whereas she had negative attitudes before the study was conducted. It is seen that there is an increase in Summer's reading desire to not only reading in English but also in her mother tongue.

Q13: In the future, if you have very limited time for reading, which do you think you will choose an English book or a Turkish book?

Summer: *'Honestly I choose an English book since I think that reading a different book written in a different language will enlighten someone much more.'*

In conclusion, it can be stated that there are positive changes in Summer's attitudes towards reading in English as a result of the extensive reading implementation conducted within the study. Summer, who formerly was afraid of not understanding what she read and had prejudice against reading in English, is very eager to read in English currently. The answer to be given as a response for the first research question is the fact that extensive reading has positive results in the participant's attitudes.

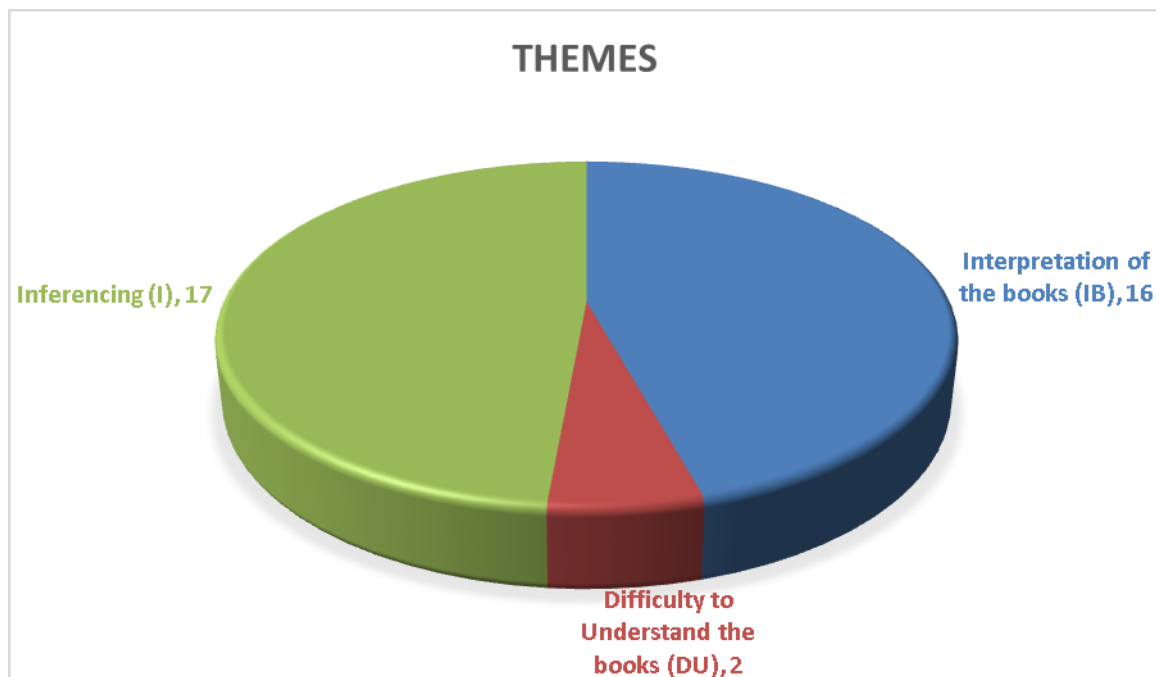
### 4.2 Research question 2: Does ER influence reading comprehension?

3 themes were created to find out the answer of the first research question: interpretation of the books (IB), difficulty to understand the books (DU) and inferencing (I). Different codes were formed for each theme. The diary of the participant was investigated through framework analysis, a type of content analysis. The findings obtained via the analysis were

represented in the following figure (see Figure 2), and the themes with samples were displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Themes and sample sentences

Case	Theme 1: Interpretation of the books (IB)	Theme 2: Difficulty to Understand the books (DU)	Theme 3: Inferencing (I)
Summer	... This is a very happy moment for April. (P.2, Diary) ... I am finishing my diary at this point. (P.5, Diary)	The book was enjoyable but there were some parts that I couldn't understand. (P.8, Diary) It looks like that the book has a simple wording yet it was a bit complicated for me, that is, I was not able to understand certain part. (P.29, Diary) ... I couldn't understand the content. (P.29, Diary)	... Getting chances and putting them to a good use are only up to us. (P.2, Diary) ... Reading is the most precious wealth. (P.5, Diary) ... Man can always take the bull by the horns if he is sure of himself. (P.9, Diary) In my opinion, one should think before prejudging... (P.12, Diary) ... If there is trust, one can make friendship with everyone. (P.15, Diary)



**Figure 2:** Frequency of themes

Figure 2 indicates how often themes created are mentioned in the participant's diary. The participant used expressions and made sentences matching with inferencing (I) theme

seventeen times. This finding shows that the participant understands and interprets what she reads, and she evaluates what she reads according to her own point of view. Furthermore, the participant wrote down her value judgments depending on each book she read. Within the diary, it is possible to see that extensive reading positively helped the participant understand and comprehend what she read. Sample sentences for the theme are displayed in Table 2. The other theme is interpretation of the books (IB) theme, which was repeated sixteen times in the participant's diary. The fact that Summer was able to comment on what she read indicates that she understood what she read. Another significant finding is that she gave more detailed information about the books and her interpretations for the books improved considerably in the following weeks. Sample sentences of this theme are also displayed in Table 2. And the third theme is difficulty to understand the books (DU) theme. This theme was only mentioned twice in the diary. Sample sentences for DU theme were indicated in Table 2, too.

The extract below reveals Summer's response to one of the questions in the post-interview.

Q3: What kind of texts (books, articles) do you think is easy for you to read at the moment?

Summer: *'I think I will also be able to read and understand the books one level above the books I have read as long as they are not novels difficult to read.'*

Before the study, Summer mentioned several times that she couldn't understand what she read in English. When examining the response given after the study was conducted, it is seen that now she is able to understand what she reads. Another important point is that she says she feels ready for one level above the current implementation.

Q8: What was the most rewarding thing in reading English texts?

Summer: *'Now I can truly read a book in English without reading its Turkish version.'*

It is clearly seen that Summer will be able to read a book, she is interested in, in English.

Q15: Any other comment?

Summer: *'This process made me much better. Now I am more motivated and full of enthusiasm. And now I can go on reading even if I don't know the meaning of the word.'*

As a result, Summer comprehended contents of all the books and wrote detailed summaries. She looked up unknown words while reading and she also wrote them down again in her diary so as to remember. In the light of the findings, a positive answer can be given to the second research question since the participant wrote highly detailed and relatively long summaries in the following weeks whereas she wrote shorter summaries without giving details in the first weeks. And another finding is that she began to write summaries in English in the following weeks while she wrote in Turkish in the first weeks.

## 6. Conclusion

Reading books is a fascinating way for language learners to make progress in English language learning. Thus, it provides interesting plots, characters, values and authentic context to language learners. Extensive reading increases motivation of language learners to read a large number of texts on a wide range of topics. That's why students can select the reading material themselves based upon its relevance to their interests, knowledge, and experience. Thus, they are not getting bored during extensive reading. Additionally, learners read texts that appropriate for their language level, and they choose the time and place to read the materials (Lyutaya, 2011). The current research was guided by two research questions. First research question is related with language learner's attitudes. How does ER affect attitudes to reading in a foreign language? Extensive reading has positive effect on language learners' attitudes, which was confirmed through data of the current research. Thus, participant stated that she developed positive attitudes towards reading in English. However, she had a negative attitude before the treatment. Second research question asks whether extensive reading has an impact on reading comprehension or not. Findings show that extensive reading develops language learners' reading comprehension. Extensive reading allows language learners to acquire new vocabularies and increase their proficiency in English. Additionally, participant of the current study gained an overall understanding about literature and short stories. She learned reading strategies. In addition to this, extensive reading provides active participation in learning process. In this case, Summer experienced active language learning during the treatment. It was observed that she made inferences and dreamed about the situations. This study was carried out with one participant. A more comprehensible study may be carried out with large numbers. On the other hand, Summer provided a very deep understanding about the nature of extensive reading and its impact on language learning. In a nutshell, it is hoped that English language learners use this path and empower their proficiency in English.

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