

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

THE IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF EXTENSIVE READING IN A
JORDANIAN EFL CLASSROOM

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A Thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Anglia Ruskin University for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Dedication

In Loving Memory of My Brother, Dr.Salah. You Have Been My Role Model At All Times. "Deep In My Heart You Will Always Stay Loved and Remembered Everyday."

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ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY
ABSTRACT

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THE IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF EXTENSIVE READING IN A
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Extensive reading, which implies reading large quantities of easy, comprehensible materials for pleasure, is widely believed to enhance foreign language learning through its wide range of benefits (e.g., increasing reading speed and vocabulary knowledge). Jordanian EFL students are reported to suffer from reading boredom, demotivation and lack of reading fluency and therefore this study proposed the extensive reading approach as a potential solution in a Jordanian EFL context. This study investigated the impact of an extensive reading approach on Jordanian EFL students' reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies, productive skills, motivation for and attitudes towards reading in the target language.

A total of ten Jordanian EFL students participated in the study. They were situated in a print-rich environment, where they experienced flow reading and did various extensive reading activities in and out of class. A mixed methods action research design was employed over a 12-week extensive reading programme.

Data were collected from multiple sources (e.g., tests, checklists, diaries, interviews and focus group) to add more credibility to the study. The resulting data were both statistically and thematically analysed. The findings of the study showed that the impact of the extensive reading approach was positive on the students' language skills and motivation to read in the target language. The results also revealed a positive correlation between extensive reading and the language skills i.e., reading speed, vocabulary knowledge and reading strategies. As far as their productive skills were concerned, the results of the study showed little development in the students' speaking skill and even less visible improvement in their writing skill. The implications of extensive reading in FL curricula are discussed.

Key words: extensive reading, Jordanian EFL classroom, foreign language learning.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The development of reading skills can have a profound impact on personal fulfilment and development; in addition, it is strongly linked with academic achievement, success and life-long learning skills. Reading is an important foreign language (FL) and second language (L2) skill in academic settings, where FL/L2 learners read to learn.

Capwell (2012) asserts that children who are exposed to a print-rich environment from an early age have higher rates of school readiness, which generally contributes to their success in their academic careers or lives. Moreover, through reading, students gain the new information and knowledge that is essential for making educational advances (Noor, 2011). The development of reading abilities can increase brain capacity for language and literacy skills, as well as vocabulary knowledge, listening and language skills, attention and curiosity (Almahroqi & Denman, 2016). Reading can also broaden students' perceptions and choices, and it helps them to enhance their learning skills, achieve higher scores and make academic gains (Guthrie, 2008; Shoebottom, 2015). Simply put, reading can make a substantial difference to FL learners' learning process and contribute to their academic success.

The benefits of reading are not only limited to academic success, but they also extend to pleasure and personal development. According to Terlitsky and Wilkins (2015), reading can increase children's levels of happiness and self-confidence, while decreasing emotional and conduct problems. Rebuck (2015) claims that people who read experience high levels of self-esteem and develop more planning and decision-making skills. In the same vein, Carter-Jones (2015) maintains that reading enables people to improve their thinking skills and gain a better understanding of themselves and the world around them. As a result, this could lead to the development of a life-long learning process. In addition, reading aids readers to expand their knowledge base and to create values (Carter-Jones, 2015). This, in turn, guides and shapes students as people with the potential to be critical thinkers, moving beyond their own boundaries.

Given the importance of reading in academic contexts (i.e., the context of this study) and also other contexts, a main issue raised here is how FL reading is best

developed. From both the perspective of this study and research on the issue to date, consistent exposure to comprehensible and meaningful input is a very effective method for developing reading ability. The gradual development of FL reading ability is only likely to happen if FL learners are consistently exposed to comprehensible, meaningful, easy, interesting and abundant input, or what is known as extensive reading (ER) (Day & Bamford, 1998; Grabe & Stoller, 2011).

It has been widely acknowledged that language learning is enhanced strongly when students have sufficient exposure to the target language. The exposure, when combined with high motivation, helps FL students to learn more and better. In the field of FL, literature on ER asserts that the more the FL students read, the better readers they become (Grabe, 2009; Krashen, 2011). In other words, FL students learn to read by reading. The idea that reading ability develops through extensive practice is a well-established notion in literature. ER has been proposed as one of the most effective FL teaching/learning approaches for developing reading abilities, as it exposes FL students to large amounts of comprehensible reading input, motivates them to read, fosters positive attitudes towards reading and leads to the development of their FL skills.

A key benefit that FL students derive from ER is exposure to sufficient amounts of reading input; this exposure leads to various gains in language skills. In addition to ample and sufficient input, providing students with freedom to choose their own reading material in an ER programme is another major tool for learning. In the FL classroom context, students are usually required to read what is given to them in their textbooks, regardless of whether the reading passages are of interest or not; such practice often provokes negative feelings towards reading in the target language (i.e., motivation and attitudes towards reading in the target language). Therefore, the importance of ER lies in providing students not only with freedom to choose materials to suit their interests, but also with opportunities to read for pleasure (Krashen, 2011). The advantages of ER could be obtained through giving students access to large quantities of easy and interesting reading material, so they could experience reading for pleasure. The impact of ER on language learning can be significant especially in FL settings, because FL students rarely receive exposure to the target language or its literature either in or out of class.

There is a growing body of research which supports the use of ER for improving FL competence, and academics have been pushing for the use of ER as a

language learning approach. The main goal of ER is to get students to read in the target language and enjoy it (Day et al., 2011). To enjoy reading, students need to experience reading flow. Csikszentmihalyi (1991) emphasises that ER contributes to students' experience of reading flow, where they are completely engaged in reading, effortlessly. This flow experience is what FL students need in order to enjoy reading as well as to develop their language skills. However, FL students are not likely to have experienced flow reading since the conditions required for facilitating the flow experience are unlikely to have been met. Especially in FL contexts where the exposure to the target language input is limited, students need to be learning in an environment that motivates them to read by offering, for example, large amounts of easy and interesting reading materials, freedom of choice and encouragement. It can be said that ER is an effective FL teaching approach that can contribute to developing students' reading abilities, improving their language competence and motivating them to read in the target language.

Having outlined the effectiveness of ER on language learning, establishing the context and background of this study is a key factor in understanding its rationale and importance. One context in which English is regarded as the most dominant FL is the Jordanian context. Thus, proficiency in English is an important goal in Jordanian professional life; however, achievement is limited. English is a compulsory subject in all stages of Jordanian education (i.e., primary schools, secondary schools and universities). Proficiency in English is also an entry requirement for public and private universities in Jordan; this does not come as a surprise since it is considered as the language for international communication, trade and science. The diversity of international communities, nowadays, makes learning a FL a critical step for achieving professional success. English has become "the world's lingua franca" (Krashen, 2005, p.100), the most important one. In addition, it has become the world's language for science, technology and research, as evidenced in the vast amount of research documented in English (Nunan, 2003). English is also the "language of business, popular entertainment, and even sports" (Nunan, 2003, p.590). Therefore, mastery of the English language becomes a threshold for success if one is to compete in the world job market or other fields, mentioned above.

In the Jordanian English as a foreign language (EFL) setting, students often learn through reading written materials. Thus, reading is the most important and

sometimes the only source of learning, in light of lack of technology or communicative methods in the classroom (Alhabahba, Pandian & Mahfoodh, 2016). This, in turn, makes reading of prime importance to Jordanian EFL students to both acquire knowledge and promote professional interest. In spite of these emphases, different studies and international organisations, which focus on reading assessment worldwide, indicate that Jordanian and Arab students' reading abilities are statistically significantly below the average (Al-Yacoub, 2012; Alhabahba, Pandian & Mahfoodh, 2016). Although the focus and setting of this study is the Jordanian EFL context, its effect could extend to include the Arab EFL context, because of the many similarities between the Arab countries' educational systems and teaching methods.

The issues of a lack of reading culture and poor attitudes towards reading, in the Arab world, are claimed to be common issues (Almahrooqi & Denman, 2016). For example, it has been reported that while the average European reads 35 books a year, the average Arab reads a fraction of a book (Al-Yacoub, 2012). Different studies have been conducted to examine reading habits among Arabs; most of their results report how Arab EFL learners struggle with reading and that they lack pleasure in reading especially for English language texts (Alyaaqubi & Al-Mahrooqi, 2013; Rajab & Al-Sadi, 2015). Different reasons for the reading skill weakness have been provided, such as: the absence of reading culture, ineffective teaching methodology and socio-economic factors. These findings are also in line with those made available by international organisations. For example, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), based on a variety of international assessment tools such as the PISA, places Jordan among the five lowest-ranked nations in terms of students' maths, reading and science results, taking into account that only 70 countries worldwide are participants in this assessment (PISA, 2012). In addition, Education First (EF), that examines and ranks the average level of English language skills, indicates that the Middle East and North African (MENA) states scored the least among 70 countries around the world in English proficiency (Education First English Proficiency Index, 2015).

In a context more connected to this thesis, the most recent report by EF indicates that Jordanians have "very low" levels of English proficiency, and that Jordan was ranked 53rd out of 70 countries worldwide in this regard (Education First English Proficiency Index, 2015). Also, test scores of Jordanian students who

took International English Language Testing System (IELTS) in 2014 were not better than other data presented earlier, particularly in the reading component (International English Language Testing System, 2013–2014). It can be shown that “the average of the test takers score, across years, deemed the lower band and were ranked, as well as the rest of the Arab countries, the lowest in language proficiency” (Alhabahba, Pandian & Mahfoodh, 2016, p.3).

The scope, rationale and setting for this study, in tackling the problem of Jordanian EFL students’ weakness in reading abilities, emerged from previous research (PISA, 2012; Alhabahba, Pandian & Mahfoodh, 2016) evidencing this issue as well as from my observations through my EFL teaching experience in Syria and Jordan. With more focus on the Jordanian EFL context, the problems stated in this study were identified when I was teaching EFL, in 2012, in an authorised IELTS centre in Amman, Jordan. I spotted a serious problem the students had; that was their reading skill weakness, mainly in reading fluency. Students were reading passages at hand word for word and mostly translating the unknown words without trying to predict meanings from context. I approached the IELTS administrator at the centre and asked about the general scores of Jordanian students at IELTS, and I learned that their reading skill scores were usually lower than other skills. Driven by a personal interest into this field, I tried to explore the problem and its reasons through making some observations, asking students and teachers about this issue.

Having collected some data on the issue, it turned out that students, in Jordanian EFL reading classes, are usually taught to analyse the language in short challenging texts and are required to memorise difficult words in these texts. Following this traditional intensive reading method, students are usually asked to analyse the text, translate it line by line and refer to dictionaries every time they encounter unknown vocabulary; thus, some students might view reading as a “laborious” task (Samuel, 1994, p.822). Similar concern about heavy use of intensive reading in reading instruction is that it fosters negative reactions and attitudes for students to read in English, and that could be attributed to the focus of reading on the analysis of short paragraphs and on the absence of conditions that facilitate reading for pleasure (e.g., sufficient exposure to interesting reading input and freedom to choose reading materials) (Cho, 2007). Although the intensive reading approach could be effective (Paran, 2003), its sole use in teaching reading seems to have limited Jordanian EFL students’ exposure to the target language and

resulted in problems, mentioned earlier, because students need to learn how to read both intensively and extensively, according to the goals for reading (Horwitz, 2008).

One of the main problems for teaching reading in the Jordanian EFL classroom seems to be intensive-reading-only instruction, which is not sufficient to improve overall reading abilities, especially fluency. The Jordanian students' low proficiency level in English in general, and reading in English in particular, as evidenced in scores and ratings from OECD, EF, IELTS and from different studies, is evidence of the necessity to make effective changes to improve English language proficiency levels.

In light of these problems, proposing or implementing any reading approach should aim to develop students' reading abilities, while motivating them to read in the target language. In this regard, different EFL settings have implemented the ER approach, as studies confirm its positive impacts on FL learning (Cirocki, 2009; Belgar, Hunt & Kite, 2012; Huffman, 2014; Ro & Chen, 2014). However, ER has not been widely incorporated in Jordanian EFL settings. Although there is a growing body of research on the ER impact on different contexts, far too little attention has been paid to its effectiveness in the Jordanian EFL context. Given the problem identified in this study as well as the benefits of ER, implementing an ER approach in a Jordanian EFL setting could be one method of solving this problem (i.e., reading skill weakness). ER can play a crucial role not only in developing students' overall language competence, but also in creating a relaxed atmosphere to motivate students to read in the target language (Cho, 2007). Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of ER in a Jordanian EFL setting, by implementing a stand-alone ER programme, where 10 Jordanian EFL university students and recent graduates participated as students in this research study.

The following research questions guided the study:

- (1) To what extent does ER improve Jordanian students' EFL reading speed?
- (2) To what extent does ER increase Jordanian students' EFL vocabulary knowledge?
- (3) Does ER expand Jordanian students' EFL reading strategies? And what reading strategies do Jordanian students use while reading English extensively, before, while and after reading?
- (4) In which ways does ER develop Jordanian students' productive skills?

(5) To what extent does ER change Jordanian students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in the target language?

To answer these research questions, the current study employed a mixed methods action research design. In addition, this study is based on the social constructivist methodological paradigm, which looks at knowledge and reality as a socially constructed process. Since this study is immersed in the philosophy of social constructivism, the literature review of this study will also adopt the same framework.

The social constructivism philosophy is a flexible research perspective, which permits the researcher to use multiple research methods to carry out the research. It does not limit the study to using only one method (Mertens, 2010). Constructivism describes contextual factors, to develop and create theories out of the interrelated communications and experiences in a situated phenomenon in the research (Mertens, 2010; Lincoln & Guba, 2013). In language education, this philosophy notes that student understanding is formed through observations and reflections on their personal experiences. Knowledge is constructed by humans, through social interaction and must be studied subjectively, through the interaction of participants in the research experience (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Based on the fact that reading is viewed as an interactive process (Sweet & Snow, 2002), and the ER programme as a socially interpreted and constructed reality, the questions and goals of this study determined the appropriate choice of social constructivism as a paradigm for this research. The purpose of this research, therefore, is to offer understanding both of the effectiveness of ER in the Jordanian EFL context and of the students' interaction and reflections on ER, in a bid to add insight into the issue at hand.

Although there have been a series of studies on ER and its effects on language learners in FL/L2 settings, as discussed in Chapter 3, little research has addressed the impacts of ER on various areas of language learning. This study research has examined the effects of ER on different areas in EFL learning (i.e., reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies, productive skills, motivation for and attitudes towards reading). Although different studies addressed the impact of ER on one or two areas (skills) of language learning, only a very limited number of studies have investigated the ER effect on reading strategies (Nishino, 2007). Previous studies on reading strategies, however, examined the ER effect on reading

strategies while reading only. This study has investigated the ER impact on reading strategies before, while and after reading.

In spite of the increasing number of studies, teachers and educators that confirm the effectiveness of ER on language learning, ER has not been widely practised or implemented in the Jordanian EFL setting, nor in the Arab EFL setting, as very little research has been conducted on ER in that region (Al-Homoud & Schmit, 2009; Al-Nafisah, 2015). The current study demonstrates the extent to which ER could be effective in the Jordanian EFL setting, the feasibility of ER in the Jordanian EFL classroom; and it provides a rich account of Jordanian EFL students' reactions to ER. In this study, ER was implemented systematically throughout 12 weeks, as a stand-alone programme; it included in and out of class activities that encouraged students to read in English. As a result, this study could offer insights to Jordanian EFL teachers into the benefits of ER and the ways it could be implemented in their classes; this could also be used by teachers in different EFL settings, including the Arab EFL setting.

By exploring the Jordanian EFL students' experience throughout a 12-week ER programme, the current study provides an in-depth view on the students' perceptions and practices of ER. Understanding these perceptions and practices makes an important and practical contribution to the existing literature on ER. Furthermore, these perceptions could serve as practical guidelines for teachers who want to implement ER in their classes. To fill such gaps in the literature, this study was designed to give the Jordanian EFL students the opportunity to experience ER, and then elicit its benefits as well as the students' perceptions to obtain a better understanding on ER and provide insights into its implementation in the Jordanian EFL setting.

So far, this chapter has discussed a brief rationale for ER in language learning, described the setting and scope of the study (i.e., the Jordanian EFL setting), stated the problem of the study, its questions and philosophy, and set out the importance of this study. The remainder of this thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter 2 discusses the importance of reading in an FL, looks at the mechanism and processes of reading comprehension and ends by explaining some models of reading.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature of ER in FL/ L2 settings. This chapter details different definitions of ER, outlines its characteristics and explores its benefits through discussing previous research conducted on the effectiveness of ER on

various aspects of language learning in different FL/L2 settings, as well as gaps in research. The last section of the chapter deals with practical guidelines for implementing ER in the FL classroom, including directions for setting up an ER programme, library and activities; in addition, it discusses the role and responsibilities of teachers in ER programmes.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed description of the methodology employed in the study. It explores research and research methods in language education and the rationale for using mixed methods action research. Then, it looks at research questions, population, procedures, tools, data analysis and ethics. This chapter also reports the piloting used to develop some data collection tools used in this study.

Chapter 5 presents the results and discussions of the study in accordance with the research questions. The first section of the chapter presents the findings and discussions that relate to the effect of ER in improving the students' reading speed. The second section explores the results of the ER effect in increasing the students' vocabulary knowledge. The third section explores whether ER increased the students' reading strategies, and which strategies they used. The fourth section investigates and discusses the impact of ER on the students' productive skills, namely speaking and writing. The last section discovers how ER changed the students' motivation and attitudes towards reading in English. All sections follow the same structure; that is, for each research question, the findings are presented first, followed by the discussion in each section.

Chapter 6 provides a summary and the conclusions of the study. Then, drawn from the study, the chapter presents pedagogical implications in relation to English language education as well as material development and reading curricula. Later, the chapter details the limitations of the current study, and concludes with directions for future research.

Chapter 2

Reading in a Foreign Language and what it entails

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the research, and explores the importance of reading comprehension in general and reading in an FL in particular. It also looks at the mechanism of reading comprehension, some models and approaches to reading, and reading as an interactive, creative and social process. The body of research on this topic is of substantial size. Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, the most relevant aspects of reading will be selected and discussed.

It must be clarified from the very beginning that the purpose of this chapter is to provide a solid basis for the empirical project presented in the ensuing part of the thesis. More specifically, in order to attain a coherent discussion on ER, which is the main focus of this study, there must be a smooth transition from general understanding of the mechanism of reading comprehension to how ER works. Additionally, since this volume is written with English language teachers in mind, this chapter seeks to broaden their knowledge on various theoretical aspects of reading. Reading is a complex process that is influenced by linguistic, psychological and socio-cultural factors. However, as recent research reveals (Piasta et al., 2009; Wasik & Hindman, 2011), teachers' knowledge and understanding of these different factors are limited. While they teach reading, teachers' main focus is reading comprehension; they hardly ever perceive reading as interactive and social processes. Thus, in order to effectively promote ER in their teaching practice, it is essential that teachers have a sound grasp of what reading is and what it entails.

Learning a foreign language is in fact a significant practice around the world. A large number of students learn to read a foreign or second language as a school subject without much practice outside educational settings. Learners in FL contexts are exposed to the target language only inside the classroom and they rarely, if ever, have the opportunity to be exposed to the target language outside the classroom (i.e., the context of this study), while learners in L2 contexts are usually exposed to the target language both inside and outside the classroom.

Reading is of particular importance for the crucial role it plays in the daily and academic lives of people in all parts of the world. Reading is a skill that many people take for granted. The fact that so much of the world's population can read is

remarkable, even if the level of ability varies from one reader to another. However, some developing countries still suffer from higher levels of illiteracy than those in the developed world. Thus, the top priority for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is global literacy, and they make every possible effort to achieve this. Grabe (2009, p.4) states that “efforts need to be made to reduce illiteracy levels.”

Reading varies in the way readers read and depending on the goals of their reading. Some texts are read on purpose, while others are encountered during our daily life. People, without any doubt, read more than they expect, and that is because the printed word is all around them, a factor which makes learning to read all the more necessary. Now that the world has essentially become a small village by way of developments in communication technologies, large numbers of people are learning to read foreign languages (Almahroqi & Denman, 2016). The reasons for this include: interactions within and across multicultural countries, massive waves of immigration and relocation, global transportation, advanced educational opportunities, and the search for better professional and occupational settings (Koda, 2005). In addition, a lot of communication, which historically would be face to face, or using spoken language now takes place in written form (email, text messaging, online social networks, etc.) These academic and professional settings have pushed people to engage more in reading, as this is how a great deal of learning occurs. The more people read, the more they learn; and part of that learning requires readers to synthesise, think critically, evaluate, and use information from texts selectively. These processes occur in order to enable readers to cope with and carry out the tasks and goals that they set themselves or that are set for them (Hudson, 2007).

2.1. Defining reading

Reading is an ability that allows people to communicate via a visual system of symbols and deliver different kinds of messages with different purposes to one another. Through script, writers are able to go beyond their imagination in delivering their messages to people even at great distances. Readers, on the other hand, are able to turn the script into meaning, yet with different interpretations (McRae, 1991; Goodman, 1996). The complexity of this process has led many researchers to investigate its nature.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the nature of FL and L2 reading (Alderson & Urquhart, 1984; Oakhill & Beard, 1999; Stanovich, 2000; Koda, 2005; 2007; Cain, 2010; Adolf, Perfetti & Catts, 2011; Zhang, 2012; Wang, Liu & Perfetti, 2014). Many researchers have attempted to define reading and explain the nature and role of the reading process. In spite of its complexity, reading has been often defined in a few words and statements such as the following definitions: Widdowson (1979, p.8) defined reading as “the process of getting linguistic information via print.” Similarly, some linguists have focused only on some aspects of reading ignoring the others in their definitions. For example, Perfetti (1985) defined reading as a skill in which the reader transforms printed words into spoken words. The first definition, along with certain aspects of the latter one, have been criticised by many linguists, for their generalisation. For example, Alderson and Urquhart (1984) commented on Widdowson’s definition saying that it

... is an attractive one, and a useful corrective to more restricted approaches. But as it stands, it is probably too general and all-embracing to be of much particular value. There are so many different kinds of information, so many purposes for reading, that a general definition is in danger of being trivial or banal (Alderson & Urquhart, 1984: xxvi).

This criticism is valid in the sense that reading is not only decoding printed symbols, as there are many essential factors (e.g., cognitive processes) ignored in some of the previous definitions. Similarly but in a broader way, Urquhart and Weir (1998) define reading as a process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form through print. Also, Koda (2005, p.4) defines reading as follows, “Comprehension occurs when the reader extracts and integrates various information from the text and combines it with what is already known.”

As can be seen above, reading has been viewed from different perspectives. However, this does not mean that one definition is better than another; it is a matter of addressing the definition of reading from different perspectives. It seems necessary to specify what kind of reading is being defined, and for what purpose. In this section, the emphasis will be on two definitions, one by Aebersold and Field (1997) and the other by Grabe (2009), related to the processes involved in reading, and the interactions occurring while reading. Focusing on these definitions,

especially Grabe's, comes as a result of their connection to this study and its social constructivist philosophy, because they look at reading as a social interaction process and focus on reading fluency, which is strongly linked to ER.

For example, in his book, Grabe (2009), has set out ten processes, as he tries to define reading through addressing the characteristics of reading by fluent readers. He notes that reading is understood as a complex combination of processes.

Grabe (2009, p.14) suggests that reading is a "rapid" and "efficient process" in the sense that fluent readers read 250-300 words per minute (wpm) in most materials, and efficient in the sense that various processing skills work together smoothly. Obviously, readers read to understand and get the message of the writer and that is why it is a "comprehending process." The interaction occurs in two ways: the first comes through the cognitive processes working together while reading, and the second comes through the interaction between the reader and the writer. The extensive number of skills used by the reader makes it a "strategic process." As the purpose for reading changes, the reader adjusts reading skills and goals, which makes it a "flexible process." Taking into account that there are different purposes for reading, reading is a "purposeful process." The way readers respond to a text makes reading an "evaluative process." There is no doubt that most of the learning comes through reading. Last but not least, the morphological, syntactic and semantic knowledge of a text play an essential role in comprehension, which makes reading a "linguistic process."

Another attempt to define reading has been made by Aebersold and Field (1997). These writers have demonstrated that the act of reading is not completely described. In an attempt to get that act understood, they defined reading as the following, "Reading is what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols of that text" (Aebersold & Field, 1997, p.15). This definition is based on the Rumelhart (1977) description of reading, which involves: the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text. To begin with, readers use their previous knowledge based on past experiences, referred to as schema, in learning how to read and also the ways reading gets into and shapes their lives. Each reader differs from another in the way they approach, handle, and think about the text. Respectively, different knowledge bases, coming from different sources, evolve these differences between readers. According to Aebersold and Field (1997), there are five different knowledge and information

sources which shape the life experiences that readers bring to reading, including: family, community, sociocultural environment, and individual differences in motivation, aptitude, and other personal characteristics.

As a result, families foster different experiences that affect reading. Parents model reading habits and behaviours. Readers who grow up in a place where reading is rarely seen view reading differently from those who grow up in a place where print is all around them, whether that print is books, newspapers, stories, or any other type (Horiba & Fukaya, 2015). Likewise, communities provide readers with a variety of experiences that shape their bases of knowledge, and affect the way they consider reading. The society and culture surrounding readers, are effective knowledge sources. Societies, as cultures, differ in the sense that they have high and low rates of reading among different societies, which in turn, affect how readers view reading in the social frame. Every individual acquires and perceives experiences whether from family, school, or society and obtains knowledge from them in different ways (Bowerly, 2005). Brown and Briggs (1989) state many individual factors that influence language learning, such as: self-esteem, anxiety, motivation, attitude, and risk taking. In addition, the way these factors operate differs from one reader to another.

The second integral entity of reading is the text. Texts can widely vary from one type to another, so people read the print not only from books, but also wherever it exists. Newspapers, advertisements, labels, instructions, different kinds of books and articles, and many other printed materials represent different types of texts (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). Thus, the more the readers know about these types, the better the understanding of text will be obtained. Knowing these types allows readers to adjust their reading skills and expectations to the text at hand. What actually makes the text special is that it is still and inactive; it does not change once written, whereas readers' comprehension may change over reading and rereading (Alderson et al., 2015). Furthermore, there are many features and characteristics that texts can reveal which, in turn, facilitate or hinder readers' comprehension. These characteristics include: organisation of information, syntax and grammar including cohesion, and vocabulary (Perfetti, 1999). In other words, complicated structures, many unfamiliar words and disorganized information can hinder the comprehension process (Perfetti, 1999).

The last entity of reading is the interaction between the reader and the text. The reader and the texts are two faces of the same coin (reading process), where they complement each other and this complementation occurs through their interaction. It is worth mentioning that the meaning the reader receives from a text may differ from the meaning the writer wishes to convey (Hoey, 2001). Likewise, the meaning that a text has may differ from one reader to another based on their different knowledge bases and sources. Social constructivism, the philosophy in which this study is immersed, emphasises that meaning is socially constructed and differs from one reader to another, because of the differences in social environments, attitudes and cultures (see 2.2.6). Therefore, “reading comprehension differs from one reader to another” (Aebersold & Field, 1997, p.15).

2.2. The mechanism of reading: How reading works

Having defined reading in the previous section, it is now reasonable to shed the light on reading comprehension, how reading works, and what cognitive processes are involved in reading. Reading comprehension is a central component in the reading system, and plays a key role in understanding this system in general. A large and growing body of literature (e.g. Adams, 1990; Urquhart & Weir, 1998; Koda 2005; Hudson, 2007; Cain, 2010; Baddeley, 2013; Alderson et al., 2015) has investigated the nature of reading comprehension. Consequently, different theories and assumptions in explaining how reading works have emerged. However, reading comprehension is widely agreed to be not just one thing, but many. Furthermore, it is also widely agreed that reading comprehension involves many cognitive processes (e.g., inferencing, metacognitive awareness, goal setting, and comprehension monitoring), which operate in many different kinds of knowledge to carry out different reading tasks. Thus, the reader builds one or more mental illustrations of a text message as comprehension occurs (Perfetti & Adlof, 2012).

According to Ashby and Rayner (2006, p.52), “Once reading becomes an automatic process, it feels effortless.” Over the past 30 years, several studies investigating the nature of reading have been carried out in an attempt to understand how its component skills work together to build reading comprehension (e.g. Aebersold & Field, 1997; Urquhart & Weir, 1998; Alderson, 2000; Koda 2005; Baddeley, 2007; 2013). One question raised here, however, is whether skilled readers are mindful of these components and of how they build their

comprehension. According to Ashbey and Rayner (2006), skilled readers are rarely aware of the cognitive processes involved in reading. Many factors have to be taken into account while attempting to study the nature of reading. Moreover, these factors and groups set out the basic guidelines required to obtain a full and clear understanding of the building blocks of reading comprehension.

Grabe and Stoller (2002) list four groups that should be kept in mind while trying to grasp the complex nature of reading. These groups have been chosen to be explored because they perfectly sum up the effort and research done in the field of reading comprehension, yet they might need books to be explained in detail. Firstly, the components of reading forming the first group include: working memory processing which operates on many different levels based on the complexity of the reading task as well as how skilled the reader is, lower-level components (i.e., word recognition, syntactic parsing, and semantic proposition formation) and higher-level components (i.e., text model formation, situation-model building, inferencing, executive-control processing, background knowledge, and many other processes). Secondly, models of reading formulate the second group (bottom-up, top-down, and interactive models). Thirdly, reading varies in its purposes. We read to search for simple information, to skim quickly, to learn from texts, to integrate information, to critique texts, or simply to enjoy ourselves. Finally, the fourth group consists of processes required for fluent reading; these processes have been mentioned earlier in this chapter through Grabe's definition (see 2.1). To serve the purpose of this study, I will only explain the first and second groups in detail, in this part and the following one of this chapter.

2.2.1. Lower-level processes

As mentioned earlier, the first group of reading comprehension comprises the components of reading, where lower-level processes form the first component. Before explaining what lower-level processes are, it is important to keep in mind that "lower-level" does not mean that they are inferior to "higher-level" or that they are undemanding; rather, they are basic elements in the reading process. In other words, they form the fundamental elements for fluent reading when they become automatised (Anderson, 1999; Hulstijn, 2001). They are called lower-level processes because they build the base of the pyramid for fluent reading moving up to the higher-level processes, which are mainly represented by the text and

situation. The lower-level processes include: word recognition, syntactic awareness, and semantic-proposition encoding (Baddeley, 2013). They are fulfilled as part of working memory and comprehension can never happen without the integration of these processes. They are also detailed in the following three sections below.

2.2.1.1. Word recognition

This section considers the process of word recognition in detail, and then focuses on the factors that affect and influence this process. Word recognition is the first lower-level process that contributes to the reading process. Fender (2001, p.320) defines word recognition as “the ability to identify the printed form of a word or lexical item in order to retrieve the word’s syntactic (e.g., part of speech), semantic (e.g., conceptual meaning) and pragmatic information (e.g., world knowledge associations).” The importance of word recognition comes from the fact that rapid and effortless word recognition is the main component of fluent reading (Yamashita, 2013a). A considerable amount of literature has been published on word recognition and identification (Fender, 2001; Koda, 2005; Perfetti, 2007; Yamashita, 2013a, Kida, 2016). These studies have demonstrated that word recognition is a main predictor of later reading abilities. However, due to the growing number of studies focusing on the importance of word recognition in contributing to reading comprehension, there are some voices criticising cognitive research and focusing on the primacy of higher-level processes, which suggests that word recognition is not reading comprehension (Stanovich, 2000). Although it is true that word recognition is not reading comprehension in all, but a serious weakness with their argument is that higher-level processes cannot be achieved without going through the lower ones, which are largely represented by word recognition.

In her book, *Reading Development and Difficulties*, Cain (2010, p.26) maintains that “words are the basic units of meaning that make up sentences, paragraphs and longer pieces of text, so successful word reading requires fast and accurate retrieval of the meaning of the word.” According to Cain (2010), real words are those known by the reader where they have come across that word before, and those words form the reader’s store of words (reader’s lexicon).

Word recognition and reading occurs when the reader is able to correctly pronounce that word or access its meaning. A critical question arising here is that of

how the words access the lexicon. Urquhart and Weir (1998) identify two routes in which words access the reader's lexicon. The first, called the direct route, starts with the visual input and continues directly to the meaning without going through the sound; the second, called the phonemic or phonological route, starts with visual input going through the sound and then the meaning. The fact that readers of English largely depend on the direct route comes from consideration of the writing system, where this system includes too many irregularities to rely totally on the phonological route. The phonological route comes from phonological influence on word recognition; that is, "recognition of words like 'touch' have been shown to be slowed down when they are preceded by, in this case, the word 'couch'" (Urquhart & Weir, 1998, p.52).

As the previous example reveals, it is obvious that readers need first to transform the letter strings into its spoken representation (sound), before finally accessing the meaning. What matters for successful reading to occur, is that a reader must be rapid in recognising the words in a text, activate links between the graphic form and phonological information, activate appropriate semantic and syntactic resources, recognise morphological affixation and access their mental lexicon. These sub-skills provide a complete description of the word recognition process. Perfetti and Hart (2001) and Perfetti (2007) have identified these sub-skills as constituents of word recognition; word recognition involves the interaction of orthographic, phonological, semantic and syntactic processes.

Having explained the process of word recognition, mentioning the factors affecting this process is another important aspect to discuss for the sake of clarification. Some factors, like frequency and regularity, are specific to the word itself, while other factors, which are external to the word, are associated with the context of the word. To begin with, the frequency of the word refers to how common the word is in the language and also how often it occurs in the language (Nassaji, 2003). The more frequent the word is, the faster it will be recognised and processed. Cain (2010) explains that more frequent words are processed more quickly than less frequent ones. This factor is of prime importance to this study, as extensive readers thrive through sufficient exposure to reading input, which makes frequency of words a common aspect.

Secondly, regular words in which their graphemes match their phonemes (grapheme-phoneme correspondence) tend to be read more quickly than irregular

words which do not conform to phonetic rules (Cain, 2010). Regular words take less time to be processed than irregular ones (Kida, 2016). For example, regular words which can be pronounced using grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC), like: wet, car, start are easier to pronounce and faster to read than irregular words like: chaos, chrome. In addition, irregular words will be pronounced incorrectly if the reader depends completely on the phonetic rules.

Moving to the second type of the factors influencing word recognition, the effect of context is relatively significant on word recognition. Perfetti (1999) argues that context does not provide much help for word recognition processes. He supports his claim by pointing out that context information takes time to register and become available. However, context may become more useful for slow and weak readers, or may be useful in processing difficulties and ambiguity in learning situations; other researchers (Cain, 2010; Urquhart & Weir 1998) argue that words are processed more quickly when presented in supportive contexts. For example, the word book will be processed more quickly when presented in the sentence: *The professor has given me a book to read* than when the sentence context is neutral as in: *He has a book*. No doubt these factors, whether related to the word itself or the context, affect word recognition, even though some of them, such as regularity and frequency, have a greater impact than others, such as the context.

2.2.1.2. Syntactic parsing

Having explained word recognition, this section explains the second part of lower-level processes which is syntactic parsing or syntactic awareness. Recognising the words out of order does not make any sense or create a comprehensible meaning; therefore, sentences have to follow certain structural rules to make sense. In an attempt to highlight the importance of grammar to reading, Perfetti (2003, p.3) says, “Reading has universal properties that can be seen across the world’s writing systems. The most important one is the universal language constraint: All writing systems represent spoken languages, a universal with consequences for reading processes.” The reader needs to extract the relationships between words in the pursuit of comprehension, and that is what makes syntax a significant component of reading comprehension. Different studies and an increasing literature highlighted the role of syntax in reading (Bowery, 1995; Demont & Gombert 1996; Nagy, 2007; Shiotsu, 2010). When a reader starts looking at a text, processes of word

recognition are involved, and the syntactic information, extracted by the reader, begins. Syntactic information from word ordering, tense, modality, subordinate clauses, and other information, provides precious instructions for building text comprehension (Nagy, 2007). Experimental research, led by Carpenter, Miyake and Just (1994), and Kintsch (1995), shows that the grammatical structures and information have an impact on reading processing time. In other words, syntactic structures of a complex and ambiguous nature have a consistent measurable impact on reading processing time.

Syntactic parsing happens at every level of reading and also in every second of fluent reading, supporting the comprehension process (e.g., Bowery, 2005; Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005; Nagy, 2007). There is little awareness of how syntax works while reading and most people are not aware of the role of syntax in comprehension because they are fluent readers. However, weak readers and FL students are more aware of the syntactic role in reading and they apparently recognise if the clause misses syntactic information, which hinders comprehension. Moreover, syntactic information is not only limited to L1, but also extends its effect to involve FL and L2 (Nagy, 2007). Alderson (1993), in a research on IELTS development, has provided clear evidence of a strong correlation between reading and grammar. The writers of the test items were told to design a grammar test that could be used along with different tests of reading, listening, and writing. The results showed a high correlation between the grammar test and different tests of reading. Also, the correlation between the grammar test and the science and technology reading test was 0.80. In the FL context also, Enright et al. (2002), in a research on the development of the New TOEFL, showed a strong relationship between reading subsections of the Computer-Based TOEFL and the structure ($r= 0.91$).

In brief, syntactic parsing contributes to reading comprehension through grammatical knowledge and cueing systems. For example, the word gives signals that it is a transitive verb which must be followed by an object. Grammatical structure also helps by distinguishing the main from subordinate information as well as signalling new information in the sentence. Therefore, reading comprehension cannot be built without syntactic parsing which is a main block for semantic- proposition encoding. The latter is presented in the following section.

2.2.1.3. Semantic-proposition encoding

Reading, with its different purposes, is shaped and primed for the objective of meaning construction. The main requirement of language comprehension is a well-defined system of semantic analysis. Simultaneously, words are being activated and structures are being parsed, the reader extracts information out of these words and structures to build meaning units (Koda, 2005). These semantic or meaning units are called semantic propositions. The sentence is an abstraction of the grammatical and lexical content of an utterance, while the proposition is a further abstraction of the logical context of the sentence. In other words, one or more elementary ideas underlie each sentence (Singer & Leon, 2007).

The semantic propositions are constructed hand in hand with and at the same time as word recognition and syntactic parsing. Kintsch (1998) represents semantic knowledge as a connective net, and meaning propositions are the nodes of this net. These nodes include a head and a number of slots for arguments. The slots are responsible for clarifying and specifying the nature between the head and the argument. Thus, the head in this context is equivalent to the propositions used to represent texts. In a clearer explanation, semantic proposition could be imagined as a central network including small packets of information that are connected together in a meaning unit. For example, in the sentence *The teacher explained the lesson*, the predicate (*explained*) is the activated node of information and the head of the sentence, which urges the reader to think about explanation (Grabe, 2009). This node is linked to the slots (*the teacher, the lesson*) that are responsible for elaborating and explaining the argument.

The semantic proposition is built simultaneously with the syntactic parsing of the sentence for the reader to extract meaning. Semantic propositions are absolutely essential to reading comprehension because they are the main building blocks of text comprehension.

Reading is a complex cognitive skill that requires coordination between various components. These components refer to different skills and sub-skills that contribute to successful reading comprehension. In addition, these components include lower-level (explained above) and higher-level processes; and for reading comprehension to happen, coordination between these processes is required.

2.2.2. Higher-level processes

Reading is not a single process; rather, it involves a complex combination of cognitive, linguistic, and non-linguistic processes that interact together to build comprehension (Yamashita, 2013a). These processes range from the very basic low-level skills involved in word recognition, phonology, syntactic and semantic awareness to high-level skills or processes of text interpretation. Therefore, the best way to understand the reading process in general is to understand the roles of lower and higher level processes, which complement and integrate with each other to build reading comprehension. Higher-level abilities include: text comprehension, situation interpretation and a number of other processes that are carried out under the command of working memory, such as: goal setting, inferencing, metacognition awareness, strategy use, comprehension monitoring, and background knowledge or what is also called schema (Hudson, 2007). In this section, some of the higher-level skills and processes will be explained, with the exception of background knowledge, which will be discussed later, in a separate section, as it needs more elaboration than the other processes. Moreover, background knowledge works as an umbrella term which contains topical knowledge, text forms, and cultural knowledge; and it is more connected to this study. All of these types of knowledge will also be discussed later (see 2.2.4).

2.2.2.1. Text comprehension

At first glance, it seems that readers start to comprehend a text automatically after recognising the words of the text and parsing the sentences of that text, and then they move on to comprehend the sentences leading to text comprehension.

However, this does not provide a robust explanation of how texts are comprehended, because text comprehension requires more processing information than word recognition, syntactic parsing and propositional encoding.

Alderson (2000) and Pressely (2006) point out that text comprehension involves the blending of currently formed information with active information that has already been integrated into a network of ideas, and this is referred to as a text model of comprehension. The most activated information forms the important ideas which are central ideas of the text, and the ideas that are less important are most likely to fade below the central ones (Hoey, 2001).

A text model of comprehension also requires the use of inferences and discourse markers, which work as a bridge connecting the new propositions to the network of already active ideas, thus keeping the mainstream of ideas coherent. Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) also discussed the same idea arguing that the propositional representation consists initially of a list of propositions that are derived from the text. After having read a complete sentence, this list of propositions is transformed into a network of propositions. If the text is coherent, all nodes of the network are connected to each other. The new elements may directly connect to already active information, thus connecting directly into the network and reinforcing that element in the network (Pressley, 2006). The new information may also be linked to an existing idea, thus supporting that idea in the network. The new information may also be linked by a discourse proposition showing example, cause, effect, contrast, and so on and so forth (e.g., “so” as a link of an effect relation).

As the words are recognised by the reader and the sentence structure is used to produce meaning propositions, the reader starts to build a network of ideas that is responsible for maintaining the coherence and comprehensibility of the text (Hamada, 2015). As readers continue reading, they start to connect pronouns to already activated nouns in the text; they start to make linkages between ideas through inferences; less important details start to fade and the more important ones become prominent; and the most essential ideas are given strong activation through repetition and inferential links (Grasser, Singer, & Trabasso, 1994).

Readers’ knowledge of text types provides them with massive help and allows them to adjust their reading skills and expectations to the text at hand. Texts are static and do not change; unlike readers’ comprehension, which may change over time, experience or perhaps rereading the text. Readers, therefore, must adapt their skills and carry out some operations to build a text model of comprehension (Kintsch, Patel, & Ericsson, 1999; Hamada, 2015). Readers use their knowledge of the world (background knowledge) to activate some information linked to the text for facilitating the comprehension process, and leave some parts of the text image empty until it is filled in later through the continuation of reading. Readers repress marginal and minor information that is not repetitive and does not carry a main idea. Readers also summon the genre knowledge associated with the text at hand, and the

main predicates of the text may be reconstructed to emphasise the main elements and summarise the text (Kintsch, Patel, & Ericsson, 1999).

In summary, building a text model of reader comprehension requires the activation of some operations. These operations involve: making connections into a network which grows while reading, reconstructing, and suppressing the peripheral ideas. The reader does not only use these operations and the network of information to comprehend the text, but also brings his or her understanding and interpretation to the current information at hand, building what is called the situation model of reader interpretation (situation interpretation).

2.2.2.2. Situation model of reader interpretation

Comprehension does not only involve understanding a text structure, but also integrating the mental representation and interpretation of that text (Zwaan & Rapp, 2006). Zwaan defines situation models as the following:

Situation models are mental representations of the state of affairs described in a text rather than of the text itself... Comprehension is first and foremost the construction of a mental representation of what that text is about: a situation model. Thus, situation models are mental representations of the people, objects, locations, events, and actions described in a text, not of the words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs of a text. The situation- model view predicts that comprehenders are influenced by the nature of the situation that is described in a text, rather than merely by the structure of the text itself (1999, p.15).

While reading, readers bring their own world to the process of interpreting and comprehending a text. This includes: knowledge of the text content at hand and its connection with past instances of reading similar types of text, purpose and motivation of reading, knowledge of the text genre, and attitude towards the text, the author and the genre (Horiba & Fukaya, 2015). At this point, it is important to draw a distinction between schemata (see 2.4) and situation model.

According to Zwaan and Radvansky (1998), schemata are mental representations of stereotypical situations. The distinction between the two can be portrayed as “one between types (schemata) and tokens (situation models)” (p.162). In addition, schemata can be used as building blocks for constructing situation models (Grabe, 2009). Mostly, readers insert inferences that reflect their attitude towards the message of the text as well as their expectations and interaction with

the text. For example, when reading a narrative text, readers feel that they live inside the story. They eagerly wait to see what happens next, they also interact with the characters and events of the story. Also, they feel happy when good events spread over the story, worry when risk follows the protagonist, and feel sad when catastrophes strike. In this way, a text can be discussed both in terms of what the writer wants to convey and how the reader feels and interacts with that text and the author (Perfetti, van Dyke, & Hart, 2001; Rapp et al., 2007; McRae, 2014; Horiba & Fukaya, 2015).

There are some factors which affect construction of a situation model. These factors include: the reader's purpose and expectation, knowledge of text genres, similar types of text and instances, background knowledge, inferences added for text interpretation, and attitudes towards author, text, and genre. As readers start reading, they start activating their background knowledge and recalling similar instances already stored in long-term memory (Crossley & McNamara, 2016). They also set our purposes of reading and activate current goals through working memory. Moreover, readers start to activate attitudes, expectations and feelings in response to what they read (Perfetti, van Dyke, & Hart, 2001; Rapp et al., 2007). Eventually, since information is already activated with possibility of further activation, readers become ready for building the situation as the information unfolds.

Another important issue to consider is that different purposes of reading and different types of texts strongly influence situation-model construction. For example, when readers intend to read critically for evaluative purposes, they will invoke a high level of effort and activate much more information that will adjust how the real text information is interpreted (Perfetti, Landi, & Oakhill, 2005).

In summary, words are connected to make sentences and these sentences carry meaning propositions, which are connected by inferences and that is the so-called text model. However, every reader interacts differently with these texts and has different feelings towards the text and information. These differences create different text interpretations and that is the so-called situation model. It is clear from the previous explanation of these two models (text and situation) that they both play a major role in comprehension and complement each other in processing texts.

2.2.2.3. More higher-order processes related to working memory

It is not only the text and situation models that are responsible for reading comprehension, there are also other mental and cognitive processes that are relevant to comprehension. These processes work as part of working memory (see 2.2.3). A central part of working memory, which is essential to comprehension, is executive control (Cain & Oakhill, 2004; Cain, 2006).

Executive control processes deal with how individuals organise thoughts and actions and select and arrange different available cognitive processes for attaining some goal. According to Cain (2006) and Michael and Gollan (2005), the executive control mechanism carries out some suppressing of peripheral information processing, and updates working memory information. The executive control mechanism also carries out many cognitive processes in a bid to achieve goals, which is comprehension in the case of reading, and these processes are mostly called attentional processes (Grabe, 2009). Attentional processes involve: goal setting, inferences, strategy use, metacognitive awareness, metalinguistic awareness, comprehension monitoring, background knowledge, problem solving and many others. Only some of the attentional processes will be explained in this section; i.e., goal setting, inferencing, metacognitive awareness and comprehension monitoring; this is due to their importance and more prominent effect on comprehension than other processes. Background knowledge is the subject of the next section. The main objectives of using these processes are: to achieve reading goals and purposes, to use background knowledge appropriately, to provide inferences for text comprehension and coherence and to monitor text comprehension (Michael & Gollan, 2005; Cain, 2006).

Goal setting is a major cognitive process which involves setting achievable, realistic and time-targeted goals. Every human activity can be explained through knowing the goals that lie behind the activity. Readers, with their different academic and proficiency levels, establish different goals for their reading and use a variety of strategies and plans for achieving these goals (Horiba & Fukaya, 2015). When readers set their goals, they become more motivated to achieve success than those who do not have pre-set goals. Goals vary from simple goals (e.g., text comprehension, finding general ideas of a text) to more advanced ones (e.g., summarising or interpreting a text, preparing for exams, or writing an argument or a piece of research). The executive control mechanism carries out goal setting and

produces goals, which are integrated with motivations towards what readers read and the situation in which reading occurs. When readers set their goals, they become conscious and aware of these goals, and the attention given to these goals has a positive impact on comprehension (Perfetti, Landi, & Oakhill, 2005).

Inferencing is also an essential cognitive process, controlled by the executive control mechanism, which attempts to bridge what readers are attempting to comprehend with long-term memory that provides background knowledge. People's goals, attitudes and intentions are inferred from their actions and the awareness of these actions (Pressley, 2006). Inferencing is not limited to reading comprehension; rather, people start making inferences from a very early age in many variable contexts and situations (Zwaan & Radvansky, 1998). However, the dominant effect of inferencing on interpreting texts and on reading comprehension leads us to refer to it as a reading strategy. The reader should make inferences either to connect the elements of a text together, or to elaborate the coherence for attaining text comprehension (Perfetti, Landi & Oakhill, 2005).

Readers make many types of inferences (e.g., text connecting or gap-filling) to get a deeper comprehension of a text. In a text-connecting inference, readers could be required to make a referential link between noun phrases in consecutive sentences. In the gap-filling inference, meanwhile, readers could be asked, for example, to fill in gaps about the setting of the story. With inferencing explained, one critical question which needs to be asked here is what contribution inferencing makes to reading comprehension. Mason and Just (2006) have identified some contributions involving abilities to connect current information with background knowledge, interpret and situate text information, produce information from many cues and evaluate information based on a reader's goal and attitudes.

Metacognitive awareness is also a cognitive process which is dependent on attentional processes and is partially controlled by the executive control mechanism (Gombert, 1992). Generally speaking, metacognitive awareness is when learners are aware of the learning process (e.g., FL learners), how they think and what it takes to achieve goals and tasks (Goh, 1997; 2008). More specifically, when it comes to reading, metacognitive awareness means that the reader uses multiple attentional resources to ensure that comprehension is happening, and to avoid any comprehension breakdowns (Nagy, 2007). Metacognitive awareness helps readers become more effective and autonomous (Goh, 2008). There are two different

aspects of metacognition related to reading. The first is the reader's knowledge of the strategies used for meeting the reading goals, the text structure, the situation in which the text is taking place, and the reader's awareness of their strengths and weaknesses as a reader. The second is the reader's control over his or her actions while reading for different purposes (Bialystok, 2001).

Metacognitive awareness plays an essential role in reading and this role manifests itself when Hudson (2007) mentions that good readers show higher levels of metacognitive awareness and regulation of their own reading; while novice readers demonstrate lower levels of metacognitive knowledge. Controlling one's reading is a vital aspect of metacognition, and that control occurs through the use of different strategies for different reading purposes (Goh, 1997). Expert readers use a variety of strategies appropriate to the reading task at hand. Moreover, there is a clear correlation between strategic readers and metacognitive awareness. According to Brown and Briggs (1989), strategic readers set goals for their reading, choose reading strategies appropriate to the text, monitor their reading to determine whether comprehension is occurring and have a positive attitude towards reading. In other words, successful readers have awareness and control over their cognitive reading skills and strategies. They know which strategies to use, when to use them and how to use them.

The last cognitive process, carried out by the executive control mechanism, is comprehension monitoring. Readers who seek coherence in their interpretation of a text have to show their ability to monitor their comprehension. As humans, we monitor our actions, speech, events and also the world around us in order to function well. Likewise, readers monitor their comprehension to verify their understanding and to make necessary repairs when they face any comprehension breakdowns (Alderson et al., 2015). Skilled readers can detect breakdowns through monitoring and apply appropriate strategies to repair them; while less-skilled readers may not involve this monitoring in their reading process. Skilled readers use a variety of strategies to address any comprehension failure. These strategies vary depending on the purposes and goals of reading, the readers' expectations and the situation in which comprehension takes place (Han & Stevenson, 2006).

Having explained all the cognitive processes that are relevant to comprehension and connected with working memory, the following section discusses how working memory is correlated with reading comprehension.

2.2.3. The correlation between working memory and reading comprehension

Memory is a key concept in all aspects of cognition processes (Kintsch, Patel, & Ericsson, 1999). Working memory allows readers to perform all tasks required for reading. To begin with, a distinction between long-term memory, short-term memory and working memory has to be drawn. On one hand, long-term memory refers to the continuing storage of information, as it also involves all permanent records of experiences and information that explain our environment (Neisser & Hyman, 2000). On the other hand, short-term memory is the small amount of information that we hold in mind actively and readily for a short period of time (Burgess & Hitch, 2013). The duration of short-term memory for keeping information stored is believed to be approximately 20-30 seconds, but it can be only seconds if no rehearsal has been applied (Grabe, 2009). Similarly, the capacity of short-term memory is also small, often plus or minus seven items (Burgess & Hitch, 2013).

Working memory, however, is a system for temporarily storing and managing the information required to carry out complex cognitive tasks such as learning, reasoning, and comprehension. Working memory is involved in the selection, initiation, and termination of information-processing functions such as encoding, storing and retrieving data. Thus, working memory has the ability to both store and process functions (Baddeley, 2006; 2007). Long-term memory is a valuable resource for reading comprehension, but the key memory resource for reading is working memory. Working memory has a limited capacity in terms of storage, linkages to long-term memory and processing multiple functions simultaneously (Baddeley, 2013). Working memory keeps information active for a very short time, that is one or two seconds, but information can remain active for a longer period of time through practice and rehearsal (Kintsch, Patel, & Ericsson, 1999).

Working memory plays a well-established role in lower-level and also higher-level processes of reading comprehension. As for its role in lower-level processes, working memory reinforces all components of word recognition whether phonological, orthographic, or morphological processing. It stores words that have been activated and rehearsed, it supports syntactic and semantic processing and it also retrieves and stores the relevant information for building text comprehension. To the reader's surprise, it also suppresses peripheral information without the reader consciously recognising this ability (Friedman & Miyake, 2004; Baddeley,

2006; 2007). Working memory also develops a network of connected information at word and clause level to comprehend a sentence, and then moves on to build text comprehension through the efforts made to build a coherent representation of a text. As for the role of working memory in higher-order processes, the executive control mechanism is the main aspect of working memory, which controls most of the higher-order processes (Baddeley, 2007).

This section has discussed the essential role of working memory in reading comprehension; the following section explores how sources of knowledge build and affect reading comprehension.

2.2.4. Different types of knowledge and reading comprehension

According to literature (e.g., Stanovich, 2000; Koda, 2005; 2007; Hudson, 2007), background knowledge means any prior information and experiences that can be brought to understand a situation. It is worth mentioning right from the beginning that the term ‘background knowledge’ here works as an umbrella term, which includes topical knowledge, text forms and cultural knowledge.

Reading is not merely decoding the written material of language; rather, it is bringing our world to interact with language. Language and reality are strongly interconnected with each other (see 2.2.6). Background knowledge plays a major role in determining how much readers will comprehend a given text based on their level of knowledge about the topic of that text, and this is known as topical knowledge (Crossley & McNamara, 2016). For example, readers whose knowledge of physics is decent, will, while reading a text about physics, comprehend faster and more efficiently than those whose knowledge of physics is insufficient. Thus, skilled readers make use of every prior experience or knowledge, related to a given text, to ease comprehension and make it efficient. The significant role of background knowledge in reading comprehension is widely accepted (Zwaan & Rapp, 2006; Alderson et al., 2015; Crossley & McNamara, 2016). Koda (2007, p.4) states, “Successful comprehension is achieved through the integrative interaction of extracted text information and a reader’s prior knowledge.” Some important aspects of background knowledge (topical, cultural and text forms of knowledge) will be addressed in this section.

In his book, *Teaching Second Language Reading*, Hudson (2007) mentions two different types of schema or background knowledge; those are, content schema

(topical and cultural knowledge) and formal schema (text forms knowledge).

The first type is the prior knowledge related to the content area and cultural knowledge. Background knowledge has a smoothing effect because a reader with rich prior knowledge can fit incoming textual information into that knowledge more easily (Horiba & Fukaya, 2015). Also, prior knowledge of a topic increases the amount of information that is recalled from a text on that topic. The literature demonstrates that stories that are culturally familiar are read more efficiently and with better comprehension than those which are culturally unfamiliar.

Lipson (1983) conducted a study about the effect of background and cultural knowledge on reading performance. The participants of that study were children in the fourth through sixth grades with different religious backgrounds: Catholic and Jewish. Each of the subjects read three passages: a culturally neutral passage, a Catholic-related passage and a Jewish-related passage. All participants, after reading each passage, were asked to write a free recall of everything they remembered about that passage and answer ten recall questions. Lipson found a significant effect in terms of reading time, with each group taking less time to read the culturally familiar passage. The subjects also recalled more information from the culturally familiar passage than from the less familiar passage. The results show that cultural and background knowledge and content knowledge enhance comprehension of a text.

The second type of schema is formal schema, which refers to the reader's knowledge of the formal and rhetorical organisational structures of different kinds of texts, as well as of how syntax is used to structure text and the cohesive relations in a text. Formal schema knowledge plays an important role assisting in reading comprehension. Hudson (2007, p.199) clarifies the importance of formal schema and how it works to achieve better comprehension:

Default concepts of how script functions, how syntax operates, what creates a cohesive text, and how text is structured exert a strong influence on how any reader attempts to process text. The second language reader needs to master these aspects of text processing at some yet to be determined threshold. However, it is clear that the more mastery the reader has, the better he or she will be.

It is worth mentioning that formal schematic knowledge can be taught to L1, L2 or

FL language students and they can use that knowledge in recall and comprehension of text.

In both FL and L2 settings, research stresses the role of background knowledge and the importance of activating and building it on reading comprehension (Aebbersold & Field, 1997; Hudson, 2007; Horiba & Fukaya, 2015). Aebbersold and Field (1997) mention three benefits that readers can achieve from background knowledge activation. First, it helps them to recall any information they might know about the text topic, and thus makes the comprehension process easier. Second, calling the prior knowledge up should increase readers' interest in the topic and thereby increase their motivation to read the text. Third, prior knowledge may also help readers to think about the formal schema related to a given text; thus, they recall all relevant structures and cohesive relations that assist in comprehension. All in all, if we explore background knowledge and its significance in reading comprehension in greater depth, we will find an enormous number of benefits that background knowledge has for reading comprehension. However, there are many factors that interact with background knowledge while reading takes place, and the nature of this interaction is not very transparent.

2.2.5. Reading as an interactive process

As the foregoing discussion reveals, reading is a cognitive process, as it takes place largely in the brain. This has made reading of great interest to many cognitive psychologists, and this interest has pushed them to look for ways to investigate and test hypothetical models of reading. More research has been carried out on first language (L1) reading models than on FL or L2 reading models (Hudson, 2007). These models of reading attempt to describe how reading works, based on different philosophies.

Reading comprehension, in the past, was believed to follow either the interpretations of bottom-up models (see 2.2.5.1), which saw the reading process as a text-driven process where only the text holds the meaning regardless of the reader interpretation, or top-down models (see 2.2.5.2), which viewed the reading process as a reader-driven process with text interpretation residing in the eye of the reader. Recently, however, reading is seen to be an interactive process. In this context, to comprehend a text, there must be interaction and communication between the different processes of reading and between the reader and the text (Horiba &

Fukaya, 2015). In a middle stage between bottom-up and top-down models, interactive approaches are the ideal compromise between the two. Most researchers, currently, have agreed on some versions of an interactive model which present a great deal of interaction between bottom-up and top-down processes. However, Grabe (2009) notes that the term interactive does not have an agreed meaning. Some writers assume that it implies the interaction between the different skills of reading, while others assume that it refers to the reader interacting with the text. Models with interactive nature of reading see that both the bottom-up and top-down models are inadequate and simplistic in explaining the nature of reading. The interactive models propose that reading involves the interaction and application of higher-order mental processes, context, and background knowledge as well as lower-order processes and features of the text itself.

The conceptualisation of literacy has been redirected from the view of reading as an individual, product-oriented process to a socially constructed one (Sweet & Snow, 2002). Thus, according to Horiba and Fukaya (2015, p.170), “Meaning-making processes should be examined in light of interactional, collaborative activities that result in the co-construction of meaning between and among readers and not just as the product of a single reader’s individual process.”

Interaction can be characterised in two ways. It can refer to the reader’s use of both bottom-up (lower-level) and top-down (higher-level) processes, simultaneously; or it can refer to the interaction between the reader and the text, while activating the readers’ schema and background knowledge (Hudson, 2007). Moreover, since reading is considered a socially constructed process (see 2.2.6), reading comprehension could result from an interaction between two readers, when they jointly construct meaning (Horiba & Fukaya, 2015).

The main assumption of the models with interactive nature is that useful elements from both the bottom-up and the top-down processes can be combined together in an interactive set of processes. Lower-level processes, mainly controlled by the text, represent bottom-up models, while higher-level processes, mainly controlled by the reader, represent top-down models. To grasp the notion of interactive processing, there must be a full and detailed explanation of bottom-up and top-down processing, which are presented in the following sections.

2.2.5.1. Bottom-up models

Bottom-up models view reading comprehension as a serial order of meaning construction from the smallest units of a text into the text itself. This model assumes that the reader constructs meaning from letters, words, phrases, clauses and sentences by converting the text into phonemic units that represent lexical meaning, and this process happens in a serial and linear manner (Koda, 2005). In general, there is an assumption that information is received in a passive way, that processing is fast and efficient, and that the information that has been gained, processed and stored in memory has little impact on how the processing happens (Rayner and Pollatsek, 1989). In this model, readers recognise letters by a scanner (reader's visual system), and then the gained information is passed to a decoder, which converts letter into systematic phonemes. After that, these phonemes are recognised as words with the help of the lexicon. The reader proceeds in the same way until all words of a sentence have been recognised and processed. At this point, they proceed to a component called merlin, in which syntactic and semantic rules are processed to add meaning to a sentence (Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

The bottom-up models of reading comprehension mainly focus on automatic processing of text and word identification, in a linear manner. This model emphasises the reader's ability to recognise words in isolation by mapping the input directly to the mental lexicon, independently of context. Context and reader's background knowledge have no room and do not play any role in bottom-up approaches. The reliance on context is viewed as a strategy used by weak readers rather than by skilled readers (Nicholson, 1993). However, the role of context and background knowledge in reading comprehension is undeniable according to any current reading model, and this seems to be a weakness of bottom-up processing.

2.2.5.2. Top-down models

Unlike bottom-up models, top-down models view the reading process as a reader-driven rather than text-driven process. Top-down approaches assume that a reader controls the comprehension process, and approaches a text with concepts that already exist in the reader's memory, above the textual level, and then operates down to the text itself (Alderson et al., 2015). The expectations of the reader play a crucial role in the processing of a text. The reader brings these expectations to bear on the text, and then samples information from the text to confirm or deny his or

her expectations (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). In addition, strong versions of top-down models assume that the reader is not text-bound, in the sense that s/he samples from the text to confirm predictions about the text (Smith, 1994).

Readers use their linguistic knowledge (syntactic and semantic) to reduce their reliance on the print of the text, in contrast to bottom-up models in which the reader completely depends on the print. The reader makes predictions about the meaning of the text, and then samples enough information from the text to confirm or deny the predictions. In this way, readers are active in the processing of the text, while they were passive in the bottom-up models. Also, reading is an active process in which the reader brings to the text not only knowledge of the language, but also experiential and general background knowledge (Hudson, 2007). It is worth mentioning that the reader samples information efficiently by “directing the eye to the most likely places in the text to find relevant information” (Grabe, 2009, p.89), not by reading the text word for word as done in bottom-up models.

Smith (1994) points out that a moderating aspect in the process is the limited quantity of data the visual system can process into the reader’s working memory. In his discussion about the role of long-term memory and short-term memory in the top-down nature of reading, Smith (1994) points out that prediction and context work as facilitators, removing blocks of memory while reading. He also stresses the importance of background knowledge in the meaning construction of a text, and he states that “knowledge of relevant schemes is obviously essential if we are to read any kind of text while comprehension” (1994, p.15). Smith views reading as selective and purposeful in that readers process and attend only what is relevant to their purpose of reading.

It is not obvious what the reader can learn from a text if s/he needs first to have predictions about the text. However, this does not undermine the importance of predictions, background knowledge and context in meaning construction. Few reading researchers adhere to the strong version of the top-down models, as indeed few researchers adhere to the bottom-up models. If we consider these two different sets of models for a moment, we think of bottom-up models as text-driven models (also text models, and lower-level processes), and of top-down processes as reader-driven models (also situation models and higher-level processes). The mediating models between the two opposite bottom-up and top-down models are the interactive models or approaches.

2.2.6. Reading as a creative and social process

Similar to the reading as an interactive process model, this model views reading as a creative and social process in nature. First, reading is creative because readers construct new knowledge. This construction emerges from negotiation and interaction between the reader and the writer through the text (Sweet & Snow, 2002). If readers construct meanings for texts, the question to be answered is that of how they construct meanings. According to the terms of social constructivism, texts must be activated so that meanings can be constructed. When readers are faced with textual input, they create meaning. Readers are engaged in constructing meaning through social interaction, which also assists in building human knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Readers are continuously engaged in constructing meanings and interpretations of texts. For example, when schemata and background knowledge (see 2.2.4) are activated, reading comprehension is facilitated (Cirocki, 2016). Consequently, this means that FL readers utilise their prior knowledge, sociocultural and personal experiences to facilitate their reading comprehension (see 2.2.4). Since these experiences and knowledge differ from one person to another, so does meaning-construction, and that is what makes reading creative.

Second, reading is also a social process as we deal with social interaction and negotiation between the reader and the writer, the reader and another reader and the reader and the text, through dialogues, conversations, etc. Reading is constructed through social interaction in the reader's social environment. Family, parents, school, teachers and friends form the reader's social environment. Therefore, people do not find truth but construct it through their life experiences and social interactions. Since knowledge and reality are socially constructed, they vary across cultures and different societies because different cultures hold different beliefs in relation to learning and human development (Vygotsky, 1987). Thus, interpretations of texts and shades of meaning differ from one reader to another (McRae, 2014).

In summary, this model of reading is mainly derived from the philosophy of social constructivism, as social environment plays a major role in the formation and development of the reader's reading process. Also, readers construct their own interpretations and representations of texts and the world (Mertens, 2010). For these reasons, reading is a creative and social process.

2.3. Conclusion

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the reading skill is an essential one in people's daily and academic lives. There have been so many attempts made by countries, organisations and educational systems to minimise illiteracy levels as much as possible (Grabe, 2009). The massive efforts made to spread literacy worldwide, in addition to the big budgets set for that same purpose, reflect the importance of reading. Thus, reading experts (Koda, 2005, 2007; Hudson, 2007; Cain, 2010; Adolf, Perfetti, & Catts, 2011; Wang, Liu, & Perfetti, 2014) have focused extensively on reading comprehension and tried to explain the processes triggered within reading comprehension in order to achieve better teaching and learning results. The meaning of the term reading has been viewed from different perspectives and as a result different definitions have emerged.

Defining reading is not enough in itself to resolve the complexities of reading. Understanding the mechanism of reading, how reading works and what cognitive processes are involved while reading is also essential. In brief, these processes mainly involve: lower-level processes (word recognition, syntactic parsing, and semantic proposition encoding), higher-level processes (text comprehension, situation model, and other processes controlled by and related to working memory), the correlation between working memory and reading comprehension, and the connection between different types of knowledge and reading comprehension. Also, this chapter has looked at reading as an interactive process, a creative and social process, and described what bottom-up and top-down models are.

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a full and detailed explanation of reading in FL/L2 and the mental and cognitive processes involved in it. Bearing this in mind and in order to attain a coherent discussion on ER, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Extensive Reading in the EFL/ESL Classroom

In the previous chapter, the significance of reading and the process of reading itself were explored in order to explain the nature of reading. The chapter also focused on the psycholinguistic aspect and therefore it is now appropriate to present various pedagogical issues related to the concept in question. It is essential that pedagogical aspects are discussed in detail, so that the empirical project and its design are fully understood. This chapter will explore ER as a proposed approach to addressing the problem which is the focus of this study. Different perspectives have been provided to deepen our knowledge of ER and a proper understanding of it is an essential goal of this study, because the way ER is perceived can greatly affect how it is practised.

This chapter constitutes the theoretical framework of the research and discusses ER, its characteristics, its importance and role in developing FL/L2 learners' language proficiency levels. It provides a detailed account of the cognitive and affective gains of ER based on previous research. Then, the implementation of ER in the classroom is explained in detail. This chapter also looks at the different materials used in ER and how ER libraries are organised. Finally, it explores different ways to transform a reading classroom into a reading community and how to establish a community of fluent readers.

3.1. What is ER?

Reading of all its types, is of a particular importance in transferring knowledge from one generation to another and in keeping the cycle of literacy and development going (see 2.1). ER is no exception. In addition to contributing to building that bridge between generations, ER “in the EFL/ESL context is an approach to teaching reading whose goal is to get students reading in the English Language and enjoying it” (Day et al., 2011, p.10). ER means reading large amounts of text and easy materials for pleasure, enjoyment and general information. The golden principle on which ER is based is that we learn to read by reading (Smith, 1994; Krashen, 2011).

Many different names and terms have been used when referring to ER. Michael West (1936 cited in Day & Bamford, 1998, p.5), the designer of the methodology of ER, calls it supplementary reading. Elley (1981 cited in Day & Bamford, 1998,

p.5) calls it book flood, which suggests the continuity of reading as a main principle of ER, i.e., reading book after book. Another name suggested for ER by Mikulecky (1990) is pleasure reading, which insists on reading for pleasure and enjoyment as a main characteristic of ER. In his book, *The Power of Reading*, Krashen (1993b) terms ER as free voluntary reading. ER has also been called “sustained silent reading, drop everything and read, or independent reading” (Day & Bamford, 1998, p.5). All these terms relate to the same objective - to build lifelong readers and provide pleasurable reading for learners. In addition, their aim is to assist struggling or reluctant readers to become effective readers.

According to Preddy (2007), there are three types of readers: “the resistive and struggling reader, the apathetic and reluctant reader, and the effective reader” (p.24). Resistive and struggling readers lack reading competency and have low confidence in their reading abilities. Resistive readers also seem to intentionally avoid reading and that leads to poor performance in school. They experience frustration in their academic life which can lead to failing at school or even self-concept deficiencies (Worthy, 1996). In contrast, apathetic and reluctant readers show reading competency. However, apathetic readers are likely to be reluctant to read: they do not read unless there is an external force which pushes them to read such as a school assignment or a test. Although apathetic and reluctant readers have reading competency, unlike resistive readers, they are unmotivated to read, mainly due to the unavailability of books that interest them. The last type is the effective reader, who reads effectively and is motivated to read. Effective readers show a great deal of reading ability, competency, intrinsic motivation and a positive attitude towards reading (Preddy, 2007).

Linking to the current study, Chapter 1 explained the poor reading experience of Jordanian EFL students, mostly as struggling readers; thus, the provision of equal learning opportunities for all types of learners and readers needs addressing and this could be achieved through free reading or ER. Also, providing a significant amount of interesting reading materials and sufficient time for individual reading are vital steps in the process of building effective readers. A large body of literature stresses the importance of free reading in enhancing learners’ motivation and fostering positive attitudes towards reading (Takase, 2007; 2009; Chen & Ro, 2014; Ro, 2014). More importantly, free reading could be the pathway for reluctant and resistive readers to be effective readers (Krashen, 2011).

Over the past two decades, ER has attracted the attention of many language educators in the field of language pedagogy and language learning, especially FL/L2 learning. This focus on ER has led to many publications discussing ER as a style and also as an approach to FL/L2 learning. Language educators and reading specialists have defined ER in various ways. The earliest definition of ER can be traced back to Palmer who was the first academic to call it extensive reading. The term extensive reading, for Palmer, meant “rapidly reading book after book. A reader’s attention should be on the meaning, not the language, of the text” (Palmer 1917 cited in Day & Bamford, 1998, p.5). This definition identifies two of the main characteristics of ER. The first is that the continuity of reading leads to building efficient readers. In other words, learners should read as much as possible, so they learn reading by reading. The second is that the attention and the focus of learners should be focused on the general meaning of texts rather than their language.

Another very simple definition suggested by William and Moran (1989) is that ER is a way or style of reading in language-teaching terms. Skimming, scanning, intensive reading and ER are the four suggested styles. Clearly, this definition does not disclose much information about ER, but it states that ER is a style of reading. Brown (1994) views ER as one of the two subcategories of silent reading: oral and silent reading (intensive and extensive reading). It includes skimming, scanning and global reading to create a general meaning and sense to the text being read. ER “is carried out to achieve a general understanding of a text. All pleasure reading is extensive. It is a relatively rapid and efficient process of reading a text for global or general meaning” (Brown, 1994, pp.297-298). Brown’s definition also implements some of the main principles of ER: reading for general meaning, reading for pleasure and fluent reading.

In addition, ER has been regarded as a language teaching approach. ER is a very powerful approach to teaching reading as it introduces students to the key elements of real-life reading-purpose and choice (Davis, 1995). Reading is an individual activity that students should learn and read at their own level and pace in their own time. They choose to read what interests them based on their linguistic competence. When they read on the basis of their own interest, choice and competency level, their motivation for learning and reading increases (see 3.3.2). Davis (1995, p.229) offers a useful ER definition from a classroom perspective:

An extensive reading programme is a supplementary class library scheme, attached to an English course, in which pupils are given the time, encouragement, and materials to read pleasurably, at their own level, as many books as they can, without the pressures of testing or marks. Thus, pupils are competing only against themselves, and it is up to the teacher to provide the motivation and monitoring to ensure that the maximum number of books is being read in the time available.

Davis stresses the importance of sufficient time and materials, variety of materials, students' choice of what to be read and reading for pleasure as essential elements of ER implementation in the classroom.

Bamford and Day (2004, p.1) describe ER as an approach to language education "in which learners read a lot of easy material in the new language. They choose their own reading material ... They read for general, overall meaning, and they read for information and enjoyment." In the same vein, ER has become a main feature of many EFL/ESL programmes. It has also gained the attention of many language educators and curriculum designers to adopt it and make it an integral part of language education process. ER is an approach to reading pedagogy that aims to encourage students to read more in the target language and enjoy it (Day et al., 2011).

In a more recent definition, Jacobs and Farrell (2012, p.2) clarify that "ER is a simple idea. By reading regularly and in quantity, students learn to read better and come to enjoy reading more". This definition establishes a widely-held notion, in the field of ER, that students learn to read by reading.

Another way of defining ER is by contrasting it with intensive reading (IR). Not only important to the literature, this contrast is also essential to this study, taking into account the fact that Jordanian EFL students rely intensively on IR, which has created a learning problem, as described in Chapter 1.

ER is frequently contrasted with IR in most of the literature on reading (Grabe, 2009; Day et al., 2011; Jacobs & Farrell, 2012). For example, Bamford and Day (1997, p.1) explain that "intensive reading often refers to the careful reading (or translation) of shorter, more difficult FL texts with the goal of complete and detailed understanding". ER greatly differs from IR in many ways. In IR, students translate short and difficult texts or passages into their first language. Then, they study the passage for language analysis, usually grammar rules. This approach to language learning surely enriches students' translation competence and might help them to become good translators but definitely not good readers (Day, 2013). The

reading lesson in IR appears to be a language lesson rather than a reading lesson. The second big difference between ER and IR is that students in IR usually read very short and difficult passages, followed by some comprehension questions to check their understanding (Day et al., 2011). Then, they analyse the passage (s) for certain grammatical aspects (e.g., present perfect, question tags or passive voice). A large body of literature draws some significant and critical differences between ER and IR (Day & Bamford, 1998; Grabe, 2009; Day et al., 2011; Jacobs & Farrell, 2012). Table 3.1 compares these two approaches to learning to read.

Table 3.1. A comparison between ER and IR

Extensive Reading (ER)	Intensive Reading (IR)
General comprehension	100% comprehension
Read as much as possible	Passages are short and reading is limited
Easy texts	Difficult texts
Each learner chooses their own reading material	The teacher chooses the reading material
The focus is on fluency, confidence and pleasure	The focus is on word-for-word reading, learning new grammar, vocabulary and translation
No direct teaching of grammar or reading strategies	Direct teaching of grammar and reading strategies
Learners read in and out of class when and wherever they choose to	Learners usually read only in class
Reading is not usually followed by comprehension questions or follow-up activities	Reading is usually followed by comprehension questions and language activities
Learners either ignore new words or predict meaning out of context	Learners use dictionaries for new words
Teachers, if at all, assess learners through book reports, diaries, book discussions, etc.	Teachers always assess learners through tests, exercises, comprehension questions, etc.

The question that is worth asking and answering here is whether to use ER, IR

or both in the classroom. The key to a successful reading programme is balance. Too much IR leads to insufficient work on developing a fluent reader. Too much ER can lead to a learner not noticing certain language and too much work focused only on reading skills will lead to insufficient practice of the skill of reading. A lack of adequate work on vocabulary leads to learners who cannot develop their reading fast enough. The balance of these elements for learners at different ability levels must be determined before the programme can take shape (Waring, 2010).

ER, in the early part of this century, took on a special meaning and attention in the context of teaching and learning modern languages (Day & Bamford, 1998). It is defined as an approach to teaching and learning FL/L2 in general and, as a method or style, to teaching and learning FL/L2 reading in particular. However, all these definitions share virtually the same idea; that is, that ER involves reading large quantities of easy materials. ER is reading for pleasure; ER is flooding learners with books and easy reading materials and ER is focusing on the content being read rather than on the language of the text. In addition, the main goal of ER is to establish good reading habits, to develop knowledge of the target language and to foster positive attitudes towards reading (see 3.3).

3.2. The characteristics of ER

Having now defined ER, this section will explore the characteristics and main principles of ER. Before doing so however, it is important to discuss first what paved the way to the development of ER. A theory underlying the preliminary development of the ER approach in the FL/L2 classroom is Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985). The hypothesis suggests that the following conditions are needed for acquisition to take place: students should read or listen to materials that are understandable to them; L2 acquisition will be facilitated through making interesting, comprehensible and compelling reading or listening materials available to learners; the available and accessible input should be a little bit above the learner's current linguistic competence ($i + 1$); and the input must be abundantly available (Krashen, 1985; 2003). $i + 1$ refers to the input and that it should be slightly above the student's linguistic competence, while $i - 1$ means the input should be slightly below the student's linguistic competence.

When these conditions (e.g., understandable, easy and interesting materials and a rich environment of input) are met, and when the learner is repeatedly exposed to

a lot of meaningful messages, they gradually acquire the forms in which they are couched (Elley, 2001). Krashen has also stressed that an effective tool to expand learners' language proficiency and increase literacy is free reading (Krashen 2003; Cho, 2007), in which readers or learners choose the materials they want to read freely. Krashen's Input Hypothesis is very similar and linked to Vygotsky's (1987) theory.

According to Vygotsky, instruction and learning should occur in the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is defined as "the distance between the actual development level... and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (1987, p.86). As can be noted from this definition, learners construct meaning through social interaction, and experts play a facilitating role and assist the less capable learners in their learning and cognitive development. Therefore, the ZPD is "a space for social interaction, which links learning with development" (Cirocki, 2016, p.37). Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Vygotsky's ZPD are both linked to social constructivism, which was discussed in Chapter 1. Constructivism is a philosophy of knowledge and learning, which stresses that reality is constructed by the learner throughout the learning process. Social constructivism considers that human personal cognitions are socially constructed (Cirocki & Caparaso, 2016).

The ER approach also relates to another hypothesis, that is the "Affective Filter Hypothesis" (Krashen, 1985). The affective filter should be sufficiently low for the comprehensible input to reach one's language acquisition device (LAD). Affect refers to non-linguistic variables such as motivation or anxiety. When learners are highly motivated with little or no anxiety, the comprehensible input is understood and reaches their LADs (Krashen, 2003). The main relationship between ER and Affective Filter Hypothesis is that the latter permits acquirers to select reading materials that are of their interest and linguistic level. Thus, giving them freedom of choice helps to lower the affective filter. The ER approach frees learners from the pressure of tests and promotes reading for pleasure. Such factors help to create a friendly environment in the classroom and such an environment sustains learners enabling them to become motivated to read in the FL. Both of the above mentioned hypotheses facilitated the development of the ER approach in the FL/L2 classroom.

As for discussing the concept of ER, there are ten characteristics or principles of ER, which have been identified by Day and Bamford (1998, pp.7-8) as main

factors in successful ER programmes. They are briefly presented below.

- (1) *“Students read as much as possible, perhaps in and definitely out of the classroom”*

ER means reading large quantities of easy materials in the FL/L2 language. This is the core of ER, and all its benefits are built on it. We learn to read by reading (Krashen, 1993a). Thus, the more students read the better. To achieve the goals of ER and build lifelong readers, the minimum required amount of reading is a book a week, which is a “realistic target for all proficiency levels, as books written for beginners or low-intermediate learners are very short” (Day & Bamford, 2002, p.3). The reading materials are also different in terms of type, genre, level and content (see 3.4.2.1).

- (2) *“A variety of materials on a wide range of topics is available”*

Since the main goal of ER is to build fluent readers and keep learners reading more and more, this means that a large number of interesting and attractive materials which are at a range of appropriate levels and topics and of an appropriate length, should be made available to learners (Day & Bamford, 1998). The availability of these materials helps in hooking students and reeling them in. An ER library (see 3.4.2) should include different kinds of materials (e.g., books, magazines, comics, etc.) based on the purposes for which the learners want to read (e.g., texts to entertain, texts to inform, texts for general information or knowledge, etc.). When students are drawn to reading by attractive and easy materials with different topics and levels, they start to read for different reasons (entertainment, information). Then, as a result, they begin to read in different ways (e.g., skimming, scanning, more careful reading) (Day et al., 2011).

- (3) *“Students select what they want to read and have the freedom to stop reading material that fails to interest them”*

It has been mentioned above that one of the main differences between IR and ER is that in IR the teacher selects the reading material, while students choose their own reading material in ER (see Table 3.1). Proceeding from the main principle of freedom of choice, students should be given the opportunity to choose material that interests them, since they are more likely to read material that appeals to them.

This, in turn, could enhance students' autonomy, so they take greater responsibility for their own learning (Judge, 2011; Cirocki, 2016). Also, reading material that is not of interest to students or within their reading comfort zone raises anxiety and reduces their motivation to read more. Thus, freedom of choice helps to lower anxiety and consequently the "Affective Filter" (Krashen, 1985).

(4) *"The purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding"*

Students read for different reasons based on different factors. The nature of the reading material determines the purpose of reading (Day & Bamford, 2002; Cirocki, 2016). For example, readers usually read fiction for pleasure and entertainment, while they read fact files or biographies for general information and knowledge. It is not only the reading material that determines the purpose of reading, but also the interests of the students (Bamford & Day, 2004). Full reading comprehension is not a goal for extensive readers. The focus shifts from comprehension achieved to the reader's personal experience, in terms of the reading outcomes (Day et al., 2011).

(5) *"Reading is its own reward"*

Day and Bamford (1998) suggest that reading itself is a reward and that no follow-up activities or exercises are needed after reading. However, this view seems to have been adjusted later by Day et al. (2011). Day et al. (2011) mention three reasons why ER activities and exercises should be used. Those are: to help monitoring students' reading, to bring joy to the classroom and to develop students' skills in English. In this regard, ER and ER activities could be considered as rewards for students.

(6) *"Reading materials are well within the linguistic competence of the students in terms of vocabulary and grammar"*

Materials are the essence of any ER programme and therefore they should be chosen carefully for the students in order to insure success for any ER programme. Reading materials or texts in ER must be easy and well within the students' reading competence in the FL/L2 (Bamford & Day 2004; Cirocki, 2016). For beginning learners, there should not be more than one or two unknown words per page to

make the reading fluent. For intermediate learners, there should be no more than five difficult words per page. Learners must know at least 98% of the words in a fiction text for assisted understanding (Hu & Nation, 2000). In other words, the level of the texts must be *i minus 1*, in contrast to Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), which implies that the input should be slightly above the learners' current proficiency level ($i + 1$). When the material is at the same level as the students' language proficiency level or slightly below ($i - 1$), reading becomes fluent and learners feel more confident and motivated to read.

(7) *"Reading is individual and silent"*

Students are not only free to choose the reading material, but also to choose when and where to read that reading material. Students read at their own pace. Most ER is done outside class (see 3.4.1), at the students' own pace, when and where they choose (Day & Hitosugi, 2004).

(8) *"Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower"*

Materials in ER must be easy. Because students read materials that are easy to understand, it urges and fosters fluent reading (Day & Bamford, 2002). Dictionary use is frowned upon in ER. Students are advised to try to ignore or predict the meaning of unknown words, as using dictionaries interrupts fluency in reading (see 3.4.1). Three elements are described as being closely linked to one another: reading speed, enjoyment and reading comprehension (Nuttall, 1996, p.128). She described the vicious circle of the weak reader as follows, "Reads slowly; Doesn't enjoy reading; Doesn't read much; Doesn't understand; Reads slowly..." ER can help readers "enter instead the cycle of growth ... The virtuous circle of the good reader: Reads faster; Reads more; Understands better; Enjoys reading; Reads faster..."

(9) *"Teachers orient students to the goals of ER"*

ER is not a traditional approach to language learning and therefore teachers need to orient, guide and explain to students what ER is, why they are doing it and what benefits ER could bring to them. Teachers should also discuss with students the ER library, reading material, self-selection and purposes of reading. In addition, teachers should keep a record of what and how much students read and their reactions to the materials they read, in order to guide them (Bamford & Day, 2004;

Day & Hitosugi, 2004).

(10) *“The teacher is a role model of a reader for students”*

By getting involved in the reading community, teachers demonstrate to students what it means to be a reader and the benefits of being a reader (see 3.4.3). If a teacher reads the same materials as their students and discusses the various topics with them, this provides students with a model of a reader (Day & Bamford, 1998).

To sum up, ER is an approach to language teaching and learning in which students read large quantities of easy materials in the target language. Students in ER have the freedom of choice in what, when and where to read. Moreover, they are free to stop reading if the material fails to interest them or is beyond their comfort zone. To help students become fluent readers, the ER library should include a wide variety of reading materials on different topics. Fluent reading is also encouraged through providing easy materials and through teachers' constant support and guidance. Nuttall said, “The best way to improve the knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers. The next best way is to read extensively in it” (1982, p.168). This section offered a detailed explanation of the characteristics of ER; however, for a more practical perspective, the following section explores different research studies conducted on ER.

3.3. Research on ER in FL/L2 context

The past three decades have witnessed a significant increase in publications on ER, with considerable attention given to ER as an approach to language teaching and learning. The current study aims to examine the impact of ER on Jordanian EFL students' reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies, productive skills, motivation for and attitudes towards reading. Therefore, this section aims to shed light on various empirical studies conducted on ER, thus facilitating the understanding of ER and demonstrating the gaps in research. This section will provide a detailed account of the cognitive and affective gains of ER based on previous research. Cognitive gains refer to students' intellectual abilities and skills while affective gains refer to students' attitudes, feelings and values (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). In other words, this section will tackle two dimensions of ER: the linguistic dimension (cognitive) and the psychological dimension (affective).

3.3.1. The benefits of ER

Language educators would not give ER careful and considered attention if it was not helpful. They would not encourage teachers to use ER in the classroom and push curriculum designers to implement it in course books if it was impractical. Research has shown various benefits that language learners can gain through ER: learners could increase their vocabulary knowledge and reading speed, enhance general language competence, develop both receptive and productive skills, increase reading strategies, increase reading motivation and foster positive attitudes towards reading in the target language (Bell, 2001; Leung, 2002; Mohd Asraf & Sheikh Ahmad, 2003; Nation, 2009; Cirocki, 2009; Fernandez de Morgado, 2009; Day et al., 2011; Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman, 2014; Huffman, 2014; Ro & Chen, 2014; Mermerstein, 2014; Pereyra, 2015). These benefits, based on research studies relevant to each of them, will be listed thematically and focus on: reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies, linguistic competence, and motivation for and attitudes towards reading. They are discussed in detail below.

3.3.1.1. Reading fluency/speed/rate

Much of the current literature on ER pays particular attention to the relationship between ER and learners' reading speed. Reading speed has been identified as a major contributing factor to improving one's reading comprehension and is related to reading fluency or flow. Slow reading, on the other hand, has a negative effect on one's general comprehension and may prevent information from reaching readers' long-term memory, which, in turn, may prevent information processing (Koda, 2005). Slow reading also contradicts the main purpose of ER; that is, reading for pleasure. Obviously, slow reading deprives readers the enjoyment of reading, and it is worth questioning whether ER increases reading speed or not.

There is a large volume of published studies describing the role of ER in increasing reading speed (Mason & Krashen, 1997; Iwahori, 2008; Al-Homoud & Schmitt, 2009; Cirocki, 2009; Tamrackitkun, 2010; Belgar, Hunt & Kite, 2012; Beglar & Hunt, 2014; Huffman, 2014). For example, Mason and Krashen (1997) conducted a study with three experiments using ER groups and comparisons or control groups, to investigate the ER effect on 114 EFL Japanese university students' reading comprehension, reading abilities and reading rates. With the focus on the ER impact on reading rates, in their third experiment, they used three groups

of subjects to participate in the study: English-response group (subjects use ER and write their summaries in English), Japanese-response group (subjects use ER and write their summaries in Japanese) and comparison (i.e., control) group (subjects use IR and traditional intensive work). To assess the students' reading speed, the students were required to record the time they spent on reading an assigned book at the beginning of the year, and also to record the time they spent on reading the same book at the end of the year. Results showed that extensive readers, in the English and Japanese response groups, outperformed traditional readers in the comparison group in terms of reading speed and also in writing. The ER with the Japanese response group made greater gains than the other two groups; however, the English response group significantly outperformed the comparison group. Although the study shows the positive effects of ER, it does not report how much students read during the study.

In a similar EFL setting, Iwahori (2008) conducted a study over seven weeks on 33 beginning EFL Japanese high school students, using pre-tests and post-tests to explore whether ER increased the reading speed for the subjects. The students read extensively from graded readers and comics only out of class, as homework. The researcher used one-minute pre-and-post speed tests; the same text was used for the speed tests. The results showed that the mean reading rate from the pre-test to the post-test increased from 84.18 to 112.82 words per minute (wpm). This study also fails to indicate how much students read during the 7-week study.

In an Arab EFL setting, Al-Homoud and Schmitt (2009) examined the ER effect on 70 male EFL Saudi university students' reading speed, vocabulary knowledge and attitudes towards FL reading. As this section focuses only on reading speed, the following sections discuss research on other language aspects (see 3.3.1.2). The students were divided into an IR group ($n=23$) and an ER group ($n=47$). Students in the IR group were taught new words and reading strategies and given quizzes, while those in the ER group were given time for silent reading from books of their own choice and taught vocabulary learning strategies and reading strategies. The researchers used three reading passages from a graded reader to measure the students' reading speed. The results showed that students in the ER group (a mean gain of 33.49 wpm) showed significantly greater improvements in their reading speed than those in the IR group (a mean gain of 26.13 wpm).

In a more recent study, Beglar and Hunt (2014) have hypothesised that a

greater volume of reading results in higher reading rates. They used 76 first-year Japanese students attending a large private university in Japan as a sample for their study, which lasted over one academic year and implemented an ER programme. Pre- and post-reading rate tests were administered, and they showed that more reading resulted in greater reading rate gains. The findings of the study confirmed the authors' hypothesis.

Another recent study supports the previous research on the positive role of ER in increasing EFL learners' reading speed. Huffman (2014) conducted a one-semester study on 66 female first-year students at a private nursing college in Japan. Huffman proposed two hypotheses: 1) Reading rates will be greater for extensive readers than for intensive readers in a one-semester college course; 2) a greater amount of reading will yield greater reading rate gains for extensive readers. The resulting data from the study confirmed the first hypothesis; the mean reading rate gains for the ER group was 20.37, while it was -0.62 for the IR group. However, results refuted the second hypothesis.

To summarise, previous studies mentioned in this section, and others, support the claim that ER improves EFL students' reading speed. Most of the studies that investigated the ER impact on reading speed resulted in positive findings in this regard. Moreover, research also shows other benefits that ER could bring; one of which is vocabulary knowledge. This concept is examined in the following section.

3.3.1.2. Vocabulary knowledge

ER can be a straightforward path for learners to build strong vocabulary knowledge. Koda (2005) notes that vocabulary knowledge is an essential predictor of success in L2 reading comprehension. In other words, each learner's comprehension level is strongly connected with their lexical item system.

Vocabulary knowledge is not only a key to better reading comprehension, but is also a crucial factor in learners' fluent reading. Grabe (1988) argues that "fluent readers need a massive amount of receptive vocabulary that is rapidly, accurately, and automatically accessed and lack of such a vocabulary knowledge may be the greatest single impediment of fluent reading by ESL students" (p.63). One of the main aims of ER is building fluent readers through reading extensively. The strong correlation between vocabulary knowledge and fluent reading raises the question of how learners can expand their vocabulary knowledge. Reading a lot is one highly-

recommended method that is supported by research (Kweon & Kim, 2008; Horst, 2009; Yamamoto, 2011).

Reading a large amount of text and materials is the main characteristic of ER, which contributes to the development of learners' sight vocabulary and expanding vocabulary knowledge through repeated encountering of individual words over and over again (Horst, 2005). A large and growing body of research has shown a strong relationship between ER and reading comprehension, but less research has been conducted on the relationship between ER and vocabulary acquisition/ learning (Krashen & Cho, 1994; Hermann, 2003; Horst, 2005; Kweon & Kim, 2008; Cirocki, 2009; Horst, 2009; Yamamoto, 2011).

Krashen (1989) proposed, as is the case with L1 vocabulary, that L2 vocabulary knowledge can be developed and expanded through ER. Krashen (1989) argued that the Input Hypothesis (see 3.2) can be extended to L2 vocabulary acquisition through ER, rather than by the traditional way of direct instruction. He states that reading will result in vocabulary acquisition. Following Krashen's proposition, several studies showed evidence of L2 incidental vocabulary acquisition (Pitts, White & Krashen, 1989; Day, Omura & Hiramatsu, 1991; Dupuy & Krashen, 1993; Horst, Cobb & Meara, 1998). For example, Pitts, White and Krashen (1989), in a replication study, investigated gains in vocabulary by conducting two experiments on ESL adult learners in the United States. The ESL learners who read the first two chapters of *The Clockwork Orange* made notable gains in their vocabulary compared to the control group who did not read the book. However, after taking a 30-word multiple-choice test on the nadsat words (target slang words in the novel whose origins are Russian), the results showed a small increase in L2 incidental vocabulary knowledge.

Similarly but in a different context, Day, Omura and Hiramatsu (1991) examined whether students studying EFL, in a country where English was not the first language (unlike Pitts, White & Krashen's study setting), could also learn vocabulary incidentally while reading. They reported that incidental vocabulary learning occurred among both Japanese high-school and university students while reading silently for entertainment in the classroom. They used a reading passage from *Mystery of the African Mask* containing 17 target words and a 17-item multiple-choice vocabulary test with five choices per item. They changed the setting of the story to a Japanese one, and "edited the story to provide opportunities

for the 17 words to occur with ample frequencies and in sufficient contexts to allow for reasonable guesses about their meaning” (Day, Omura & Hiramatsu, 1991, p.543). They finally concluded that their study provides empirical evidence for the claim that FL students can learn and improve target vocabulary through reading.

In the same vein, Krashen and Cho (1994) provided four ESL adult learners (three Koreans and one Spaniard, all living in the United States) with a set of young-adult novels, the *Sweet Valley* series, and asked the learners to read for pleasure with no specific amount of reading set since the purpose was reading for pleasure. Krashen and Cho had hypothesised that as ESL learners became more immersed in reading the right texts that were within their current linguistic levels, they would read more, acquire more lexical items, and consequently develop their reading competency and show clear progress in SL acquisition. The findings of the study confirmed the authors’ hypothesis.

Horst (2005) mentions that research tells us little about how ER increases vocabulary knowledge, as research seems to focus on other, more general aspects of language development. She lists some flaws in the previous research on ER and vocabulary knowledge: most of the studies took place in English milieus (mostly in the UK and the US) and that makes the results of the studies neither very reliable nor sufficiently valid since no one can establish whether learners’ improvements are attributable to the study or the environment in which it took place (e.g., Pitts, White & Krashen, 1989; Cho & Krashen, 1994); and the learning results in some studies are based on limited amounts of reading (e.g., Day, Omura & Hiramatsu, 1991). Responding to these criticisms, Horst (2005) avoided the flaws of previous studies and developed a more accurate and robust methodology for assessing vocabulary gains achieved through ER. She conducted a two-month study on 21 ESL adult learners at a community centre in Montreal where the everyday spoken language is French. Students had access to more than 150 books (75 different titles). Horst found that the participants increased their vocabulary knowledge and obtained new knowledge of more than half of the unfamiliar words that were in the ER materials they selected.

Pigada and Schmitt (2006) noted that most of the previous studies had exclusively focused on word meaning and all of them were conducted on EFL/ESL learners. Therefore, they conducted a one-month case study in the UK, probing the correlation between ER and vocabulary acquisition using a 27 year-old Greek

learner of French and found the significant role of ER in enhancing the spelling, meaning and the understanding of the grammatical behaviour of words in the text.

Similarly, Kweon and Kim (2008) examined gains in vocabulary of EFL adult Korean learners. The learners were asked to read three novels in five weeks. They were assessed by one pre-test and two post-tests, one immediately after the five-week reading period and the second test one month later. The results showed large vocabulary growth from pre-test to the first post-test. It is worth noting that the words that gained from reading were largely retained for the second post-test, indicating that learners not only acquire but also retain vocabulary items through ER.

In a more recent study, Yamamoto (2011) investigated the effects of ER combined with writing tasks on 67 EFL Japanese university students' receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge through a 13-week study. The students were divided between two groups: control group ($n=34$) and experimental group ($n=33$). The researcher used three vocabulary tests to monitor changes in vocabulary size. This research study did not show significant differences between pre-and post-tests for either the control group or the ER group. However, the study showed that ER helped to increase the ER students' sight vocabulary. This study, like many of the previous studies, has two major limitations. Firstly, it did not test the vocabulary that the students might have encountered while reading extensively because it used general vocabulary tests. These tests might not have included words learned from ER. Secondly, it did not report how much the students read.

In summary, literature and research provides good evidence that ER helps language learners to develop their vocabulary knowledge of the target language; therefore, it is wise to promote ER use for learners as it provides a stepping-stone for readers to build strong vocabulary knowledge.

3.3.1.3. Reading strategies

Probably one of the most under-researched areas in reading is the effect of ER on reading strategies. Research has shown that poor readers have a small number of skills and strategies, while good readers are equipped with many skills and strategies (Lee, 2012).

Reading strategies are the direct path and the prerequisite for reading comprehension. Reading strategies are defined as “deliberate, cognitive steps that readers can take to assist in acquiring, storing and retrieving new information” (Anderson, 1991, p.460). Reading strategies are a set of abilities that readers use consciously and controllably, and they vary due to the text genre, the context and the purpose of reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2007). As mentioned in Chapter 2, several studies describe reading as a complex, interactive cognitive process (see 2.2.5) which involves the reader and the text in building meaning (Cain, 2010; Zhang, 2012; Wang, Liu & Perfetti, 2014). To build reading comprehension, research findings have clarified that reading strategies, in particular, are essential to students’ comprehension, and not only can build reading comprehension, but also distinguish good comprehenders from poor ones (Lee, 2012).

In addition, reading strategies reveal how readers conceive a task, how they build a meaning of what they read and how they respond when understanding is blocked. These strategies consist of a whole range of strategies including skimming and scanning, contextual guessing, reading for meaning, utilising background knowledge, recognising text structure and many more (Cohen, 1998; Hsu, 2006). Reading strategies assist learners to improve their reading comprehension, and to enhance efficiency in reading (Chen & Intaraprasert, 2014). Thus, readers use a variety of strategies to aid their understanding of reading materials.

Empirical studies reveal that success in reading is highly correlated with the quality and quantity of reading strategies used, where avid and effective readers are more aware of strategy use than less effective readers (Anastasiou & Griva, 2009; Saengpakdeejit, 2009; Maarof & Yaacob, 2011). Although extensive research has been carried out on the relationship between reading strategies and reading comprehension in IR programmes, far too little attention has been paid to the relationship between ER and reading strategies and whether ER contributes to the development of reading strategies. So far, very little has been done to investigate to what extent ER increases reading strategies, or what reading strategies are used while reading for pleasure.

For example, in a study with less focus on ER and reading strategies, Robb and Susser (1989) carried out a study on 125 Japanese college freshmen at a university in Kyoto in order to investigate the effectiveness of explicit strategy instruction on the language learners. Strategy instructions were received by two groups: (a) skills-

based intervention group and (b) ER one. The resulting data revealed that the participants of the ER group were noticeably more successful in using strategies effectively.

In a broader way of investigating the ER impact on reading strategies, Nishino (2007), in a longitudinal case study on two middle school students in Japan, investigated two areas: 1) what reading strategies these two Japanese students used while reading for pleasure, especially when they encountered unknown words; and 2) if their motivation changed after reading extensively. During this two and a half year study, the researcher employed several tools to collect data. Nishino used interviews four times and gave tests on a regular basis, in addition to the researcher's observation in each reading session. Results showed that the two participants used a variety of reading strategies while reading extensively. The main objective of this study was to specify what reading strategies these two Japanese high school students used while reading extensively, not whether ER increased their reading strategies. However, results indicated an increase in reading strategies and reading motivation. The taxonomy of reading strategies, used by the researcher, was based on Hosenfeld's (1984) taxonomy (e.g., referring to glossaries, using background knowledge and guessing word meaning), but additional strategies were reported by the participants (e.g., grouping words and using a dictionary). However, this taxonomy did not involve any division of reading strategies used before, while and after reading.

The relationship between ER and reading strategies has been neglected in the research. The importance of learning reading strategies to build avid readers and learners as well has been clarified at the beginning of this section. Therefore, the necessity for carrying out more research regarding this relationship and to discover the impact of ER on developing learners' reading strategies is urgent.

3.3.1.4. Linguistic competence

As the existing literature proves that ER is an efficient way to assist students in enhancing their reading speed, vocabulary knowledge and reading strategies, so it does with enhancing their linguistic competence; however, research has paid far too little attention to the ER impact on reading strategies. This section looks at research on the ER impact on reading comprehension, listening, speaking and writing. However, among these skills, the focus will be on the productive skills (i.e.,

speaking and writing), since they are investigated in this study.

In addition to evidence of improvement in other skills, ER has been reported to develop L2 reading comprehension through various and numerous classroom-based and experimental research studies (Leung, 2002; Mohd Asraf & Sheikh Ahmad, 2003; Day & Hitosugi, 2004; Tanaka & Stapleton, 2007; Yamashita, 2008; Nakanishi & Ueda, 2011; Mermelstein, 2014;). For example, Day and Hitosugi (2004) conducted a one-semester study to investigate the role of ER in increasing the reading ability of learners of languages other than English. The participants were 35 university students who had engaged in an ER programme on a Japanese course. The researchers employed a reading test in three parts to assess the learners' progress. The results showed that the Japanese learners who participated in the ER programme outperformed those who were taught traditionally without the exposure to ER. The main and greatest increase occurred in reading comprehension and positive affect.

Also, Yamashita's (2008) study investigated the effect of ER on general reading comprehension using 31 Japanese university students as a sample for the study. Yamashita concluded that the benefit of ER is manifest in developing learners' general reading comprehension. Similarly, Nakanishi and Ueda (2011) conducted a one-year study to probe the effects of ER on performance in reading comprehension tests. The participants of the study were 89 Japanese university students, divided into two experimental groups and two control groups, majoring in science. Three reading comprehension tests were administered (one pre-test and two post-tests) and the results of the post-tests showed substantial improvement in the learners' reading comprehension after using ER as a method of learning.

In another line of research, Elley and Mangubahi (1983) had hypothesised that L2 pupils exposed to a rich environment of illustrated story books would show greater than normal gains in English language. For their two-year study, they used pupils in classes 4 and 5 (9-11 year olds) and divided them into three groups: two groups participated in an ER programme in the form of SSR sessions and the Shared Book Experience and one control group. The findings strongly support "this hypothesis for the receptive skills during the first year of the project and for all language areas sampled during the second year" (Elley & Mangubahi, 1983, p.65). The authors also concluded that the participants who had shared in the ER project

showed greater gains in their listening comprehension than those in the control group.

In a similar vein, but more directly connected to this study, the four participants in the Krashen and Cho's (1994) case study showed not only improvement in their vocabulary knowledge after reading for pleasure, but also improvement in their speaking and listening abilities. What interested the authors was that their participants found reading very helpful in their oral/aural language proficiency. One participant, while being interviewed, reported her growing confidence in conversations with native speakers and felt that she speaks English more correctly. Another participant reported the same and added that reading helped her to understand better the American TV shows in which she heard many words and structures that she had already seen in reading.

Cirocki (2009), in an action research study in a Polish secondary school, investigated how the ER approach to literature affects both EFL learners' linguistic competence and EFL learners' (inter) cultural competence. The data of the study were collected from 20 Polish EFL learners of English, using both qualitative and quantitative tools. The results showed gains in most of the language skills and sub-skills (vocabulary knowledge, reading speed, speaking, writing, listening and use of English). After administering pre and post-tests, the results showed improvements in speaking and listening skills. The mean gain reported in listening was 24%, while the one for speaking was 26%. Cirocki concluded that "the more the readers read in the target language, the better their gains in speaking were" (Cirocki, 2009, p.542).

ER has also been demonstrated to enhance learners' writing skill (Tsang, 1996; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman, 2014; Mermelstein, 2014). For example, Tsang's (1996) study used a group of Cantonese speaking students in Hong Kong who participated in three English programmes in which one implemented ER. Tsang reported that the ER programme based on Krashen's Input Hypothesis was more efficient in enhancing learners' writing competence than the writing programme without reading. Mason and Krashen (1997) conducted three experiments on ER to confirm the value of ER in EFL. In all three experiments, an intact class quasi-experimental design was used and there were ER groups and comparisons or control groups. The results showed that extensive readers made gains superior to their comparisons, especially in reading and writing skills.

More recently, Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman (2014) conducted a study to investigate the ER effect on the writing performance of Saudi EFL students. The sample of the study consisted of 48 students, randomly chosen from a Saudi university, who were assigned to a control group and an experimental group, each comprising 24 students. The study followed a pre-post-test design, where the data collected were within a month. The control group received traditional instruction as followed by the university, while the experimental group followed an ER programme. The study findings showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in writing performance. They concluded that the ER programme may have had a positive impact on the students' writing performance.

Another recent study was carried out by Mermelstein (2014) to examine the ER effect on 211 Taiwanese EFL university undergraduates' writing skills. Through a one-year study, the researcher focused on an enhanced ER design aimed at improving students' writing skill. He also used a pre-post-test design for the study. Results show that adding ER to the existing instruction could result in significant writing gains among students.

3.3.2. Motivation for and attitudes towards reading

One of the other advantages of ER is that it increases students' motivation to read and fosters a positive attitude towards reading (Grabe, 2009). ER motivates FL students to read in the target language because the reading materials are self-selected, based on students' interest and are well within their linguistic competence. This section starts with defining motivation and attitudes. Then, it looks at some well-known models in FL/L2 reading motivation and attitudes. Finally, a number of studies on the ER effect on motivation and attitudes towards reading are discussed. Defining the terms in question, and discussing some models in FL/L2 reading motivation and attitudes, is important and serves as an essential factor for understanding the data analysis and discussion for this study (see Chapter 5).

Having said that, it is essential to define what motivation and attitudes are, in the contexts of FL/L2 reading, and how they pertain to language education. Reading motivation has been defined as "the learners' emotional drive or lack thereof, that makes people do (or not do) something" (Day & Bamford, 1998, p.27). Mori (2002) attempted to define FL reading motivation by outlining four subcomponents of reading motivation: intrinsic value, attainment value, extrinsic

value, and expectancy for success. She also noted that motivation to read in an FL is a multidimensional phenomenon. Motivation is “another well-known affective domain of language learning that plays a vital role in successful L2 reading ability” (Ro, 2013, p.215). On the other hand, Ro (2013) argues that positive attitudes or feelings towards reading are different from motivation towards reading. Attitude is a complex psychological concept (Yamashita, 2013b). Reading attitude has been defined as “a state of mind, accompanied by feelings and emotions, that makes reading more or less probable” (Smith, 1990, p.215). Positive attitudes play a big role in encouraging readers to read more (Judge, 2011). Judge (2011) continues to note that attitude also has a significant effect on motivation, but is affected by motivation.

Motivation has been studied for a long time, which has resulted in a number of models used to describe the nature of motivation. The socio-educational model (Gardner, 1985) and the process model (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998) are probably among the most well-known and dominant models in FL/L2 reading motivation. The socio-educational model argues that motivation has a direct effect on second language acquisition (SLA), and that a strong integrative orientation (desire to contact with native speakers of the target language and the culture of the target language) is a more “solid predictor of successful SLA than other motivational orientations such as instrumental orientation (desire to master the subject for utilitarian purposes such as job enhancement or increased income)” (Judge, 2011, p.162). The process model, on the other hand, argues that motivation changes and develops over time, dividing the process into ‘preactional’, ‘actional’, and ‘postactional’ stages. The process model attempted to reconceptualise motivation as “dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person” (Dörnyei, 2009, p.196). In the preactional stage, choice motivation explains how initial wishes are transformed into goals and then into intentions. In the actional stage, the more pragmatic stage, actualising executive motivation leads to achieving the goals. In the postactional stage, actions are retrospectively analysed (de Burgh-Hirabe & Anne Feryok, 2013).

Day and Bamford (1998) have developed two useful models for understanding motivation and attitude in the context of FL/L2 reading. They hypothesised that four sources pertain to the formation of students’ attitudes towards L2 reading. These four sources are: L1 reading attitudes, previous L2 reading experiences,

attitudes towards the L2 and its culture and people, and the L2 classroom environment. In short, learners who have a positive attitude towards reading in their first language are more likely to have a positive attitude towards reading in the L2. Previous successful experiences with learning to read L2s will motivate learners towards the new language, whereas unsuccessful ones can turn them off (Yamashita, 2013b). Also, positive attitudes towards the L2 motivate learners to read in that language about its culture and people. Finally, the more the L2 classroom environment (the teacher, classmates, materials, tasks, and so on) is favourable, the more positive attitudes towards reading in the L2 can be fostered.

Day and Bamford (1998) also proposed a model, expectancy+ value model, specifying factors motivating the decision to read in the L2. L2 reading motivation “has two equal components: expectation and value” (Takase, 2007, p.2). This model is made up of four major variables that are proposed to influence the decision to read in an L2: materials, reading ability in the L2, attitudes towards reading in the L2 and socio-cultural environment, including influence of family and friends (Day & Bamford, 1998). The model maintains that reading materials (how interesting, linguistic level, attractiveness, and availability) and reading ability are related to expectancy, while value comprises attitudes and socio-cultural environment. Among these four variables, Day and Bamford stated that ER materials and L2 attitudes have primacy over the other two components in determining motivation to read in an L2 (Yamashita, 2013b). The reading materials used in ER motivate the decision to read in the L2, as they are interesting, at the appropriate linguistic levels and available (see 3.4.2). Low-level reading ability would normally demotivate students to read. However, learners in ER do not experience this frustration because they read at levels appropriate to their linguistic and reading abilities. Moreover, the ER approach is more likely to produce positive attitudes towards reading in the L2, and creates a favourable environment for the learners, which encourages reading.

Another recent interesting model, more related to ER, is the de Burgh-Hirabe and Feryok’s (2013) model of motivation for ER. This model appears linear, including preactional, actional, and postactional phases. The phases described are influenced by Dörnyei and Ottó’s (1998) model and from Day and Bamford’s (1998) model. The noticeable difference from the other two models is that the actional phase of this model includes three sub-phases. The intention to read is

contextualised in the preactional sub-phase; the actional sub-phase occurs once the reader starts to read; and “the postactional sub-phase involves the learner's evaluation of ER and possible inferences for future ER” (de Burgh-Hirabe & Anne Feryok, 2013, p.75).

As mentioned earlier, one of the main principles of ER is that students read materials that are well within their linguistic ability (see 3.2). Unlike other FL/L2 reading approaches where the level of reading materials may pose challenges to learners with a heavy focus on grammar translation and short texts, learners in ER are enabled to read easy and attractive materials. Through reading easy materials, learners experience successful reading achievements in contrast to their difficulties in other reading classes. According to Jacobs (2014), these successful reading achievements in ER build a greater confidence and autonomy in learners and they come to believe that they can read in the L2 and that it is rewarding. As learners discover their reading abilities in the FL/L2, they come to enjoy reading, develop positive attitudes towards reading in the FL/L2, and consequently become motivated to read FL/L2 materials and learn the target language. This immense impact of ER is called “the extensive reading bootstrap hypothesis” (Day & Bamford, 1998, p.30). Similarly, ER builds EFL/ESL learners’ confidence about reading longer texts, as they will develop and employ various reading strategies to complete a whole book (Kembo, 1993).

In a similar vein, and as mentioned earlier in this chapter, ER relates to the Affective Filter Hypothesis (see 3.2). When learners are highly motivated with little or no anxiety, the comprehensible input is understood and reaches their LADs (Krashen, 2003). The main relationship between ER and Affective Filter Hypothesis is that the latter permits acquirers to select reading materials that are of their interest and linguistic level. Thus, giving them freedom of choice assists in lowering the affective filter and encourages reading for pleasure, not only for tests. Such factors help to create a friendly environment in the classroom, and such an environment helps learners to become motivated to read in the FL/L2. All these issues are discussed based on results from the current study (see Chapter 5).

There have been numerous studies reporting the positive effects of ER in fostering learners’ motivation to read in the FL/L2 (Leung 2002; Nishino, 2007; Takase, 2007; 2009; de Burgh-Hirabe & Anne Feryok, 2013; Ro, 2013). For instance, the effect of ER on an adult’s self-study Japanese for a period of 20 weeks

was investigated in Leung's (2002) study. Data were collected mainly from the learner's diary in addition to audio-recordings and vocabulary tests. An analysis of the learner's diary entries indicated that her attitude towards reading Japanese became more positive throughout the ER course.

Likewise, de Burgh-Hirabe and Anne Feryok's (2013) study investigated the impact of ER on the motivation of 9 Japanese EFL learners. Resulting data, from interviews and journal entries, showed an increase in learners' motivation to read in the target language, and led the researchers to conclude that ER has a positive effect on learners' motivation.

In a case study on one unmotivated L2 reader, Ro (2013) investigated the ability of ER in lowering participant's anxiety towards reading in the target language, and motivating an unmotivated reader. The participant of this case study was a 28-year old South Korean female studying EFL. Questionnaires, three interviews and observations of 24 ER sessions over an 8-week period of time were employed to collect the data. Results suggested that ER lowered the learner's fears and anxiety while increasing motivation towards L2 reading.

In a similar vein, other studies have investigated students' positive perceptions of ER itself (Mohd Asraf & Sheikh Ahmad, 2003; Fernandez de Morgado, 2009). Asraf and Ahmad's (2003) study aimed at motivating students to read extensively in English in order to assist them to overcome their problems in comprehending English texts and to improve their language proficiency. Four EFL classes participated in the ER programme. Results showed that the majority of the students in the study increased their motivation, developed positive attitudes towards reading in English and showed increasing curiosity to read other books as the course progressed. Having said that, the benefit was also dependent on providing the students with supportive and non-threatening environment, which made them more confident to participate more. Also, the pedagogical implications of the study suggested that the success of a reading programme depends on many factors, such as: teachers' ability to motivate students, how organised the programme is, how students' reading is monitored, and how teachers feel about ER, as it is unlikely that an ER programme could be a success if teachers do not believe in its benefits. Likewise, learners who participated in an ER programme believed that ER increased their vocabulary knowledge and enhanced their language competence, as results showed in Fernandez de Morgado's (2009) study. Moreover, self-selection

of books, which are interesting to the students, made them perceive ER positively.

Another line of research has probed the effects of ER in fostering positive attitudes towards FL/L2 reading and learning (Tamrackitkun, 2010; Yamashita, 2013b; Ro & Chen, 2014). Feelings of comfort and anxiety represent the affective component, which was mentioned earlier in this section. Understanding the Affective Filter Hypothesis is crucial for understanding how important it is to lower students' anxiety for enhancing language learning. Yamashita (2013b) carried out a study for a 15-week period on 61 undergraduates learning EFL at a Japanese university, to examine the effect of ER on attitudes towards FL reading. Results revealed that ER had positive impacts on three variables: ER increased students' feeling of comfort, "reduced anxiety towards EFL reading, and also had a positive effect on the intellectual value that the students attached to reading" (Yamashita, 2013b, p.256). In a different context, Ro and Chen (2014) conducted a study on 60 non-academic ESL learners to investigate the factors that influence the participants' reading attitude. The resulting data showed that the participants with positive attitudes towards reading had the tendency to read more. This finding is a confirmation of one of the four criteria of the expectancy value model (Day & Bamford, 1998). It also asserts the importance of having positive attitudes towards reading to read more.

One of the questions of this study deals with motivation and attitudes. A considerable number of the interview questions, before and after the programme (see Appendix H), was built on the two models of Day and Bamford (1998), the expectancy-value model and the model of the acquisition of L2 reading attitudes. These two models deal with a variety of factors influencing students' motivation and attitudes. Day and Bamford (1998) conclude that the ER approach is more likely to produce positive attitudes towards reading in the L2 and also increase motivation to read in the FL/L2. In addition to fostering the motivation to read and to learn a language, ER also forms positive attitudes towards the culture and people of the FL/L2.

3.3.3. Gaps in previous research

Although the majority of previous research reports the positive effects of ER on EFL/ESL learners' reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies, linguistic competence, motivation and attitudes towards reading, limitations and

gaps exist in these studies.

First, to better understand ER, it is important to investigate further what areas ER could contribute to language learning and why. Most of the previous studies investigated one or two areas of language learning, and they used a limited number of measures. Very few studies have used triangulation (see 4.3.2). Thus, it becomes a necessity to develop different and varied measures to examine gains in several areas in an ER programme. Such research would contribute to the field of knowledge and to understanding ER and its effects on language learning.

Second, although there are numerous studies on the ER effect on some areas (e.g., reading comprehension), very little attention has been paid to examining the ER effect on reading strategies. Given the importance of reading strategies in language learning and reading comprehension (see 3.3.1.3), it is essential to investigate the ER effect on reading strategies and examine what reading strategies extensive readers use before, while and after reading.

Third, one main concern revealed from previous studies is the measurements used in most of these studies to investigate the ER effectiveness on vocabulary knowledge. As mentioned previously, the majority of these studies seemed to fail to measure words that students encountered in their reading in an ER programme, because they used general vocabulary tests that might not measure words which were encountered by students while reading extensively. Some exceptions were made in this regard, in Horst's (2005) and Cirocki's (2009) studies, where vocabulary test items were taken from the books that the students read in both studies.

Fourth, there is a lack of research on ER and its effectiveness in the Jordanian EFL context. Far too little attention has been paid to ER in the Jordanian EFL context, and this could be one of the reasons why Jordanian students suffer from weak reading skills and slow reading, which was discussed in Chapter 1.

Finally, most of the previous studies failed to show how much students read in the treatment groups. Knowing how much students read would ease the learning process, and help language educators and teachers in setting reading target amounts for their students, according to their linguistic levels. Teachers would set the right target if they knew how much reading students are required to read.

Taking these limitations into account, this study attempts to fill in the gaps in the existing literature by employing a mixed methods study, using both qualitative

and quantitative analysis, to examine the ER effectiveness on several areas in language learning. Among these areas are reading strategies, where the study investigates the ER impact on reading strategies and what reading strategies Jordanian EFL students use before, while and after reading. In addition, the vocabulary tests used in this study featured words from the graded readers the students read in the ER programme (see 4.1).

3.4. Implementing ER in FL/L2 curriculum

Having discussed previous studies on ER in the preceding section, it is time to explore ER from a more practical perspective. This section looks at the importance of implementing ER in the classroom and the different ways for the implementation to take place. It explains about the different materials used in ER, and how ER libraries are set up. It also discusses different ways and activities to be used in order to transform a reading classroom into a reading community, and how to establish a community of fluent readers.

It is more reasonable to clarify the reasons why ER should be implemented in the curriculum design before discussing the ways in which ER could be implemented in the EFL/ESL classroom. Needless to say, there is a large array of studies on ER and its benefits and contribution to the EFL/ESL learners' language development (see 3.3). These benefits, reported in research and literature, guarantee not only the importance but also the indispensability of integrating ER in the EFL/ESL classroom.

Reading, in most language programmes, is considered a supplemental rather than an integral part of language programmes, in which learners are not required to read much (Waring, 2009). Many voices call for a shift to give more importance to reading in language education. Nuttal (1996), for example, says that the only way to learn reading is by reading, and students can read better if they read more. Belgar and Hunt (2014, p.31) also suggest that ER is "arguably the primary way that EFL learners can build their reading vocabulary to an advanced level".

Waring (2006) explains in details why ER should be implemented in the classroom. Waring mentions that most language programmes are designed to study the language, focusing on introducing pieces of language and asking learners to analyse them and discover how they work (intensive study or reading), rather than learning to use the language. There is such a large number of language features that

students do not have time to go through and learn them methodically and course books cannot possibly teach even a small fraction of them. Course books usually introduce the language items and deal with initial meetings with language. The question which then arises is how are the students going to deepen their knowledge if they do not have time to learn and encounter these things often enough, and the course books do not revisit the features they teach? The answer could be through sufficient exposure to the target language. For Waring, “The answer lies with graded or extensive reading” (2006, p.4). Focusing on meaning and being exposed to large quantities of easy materials within one’s comfort zone is the opportunity for learners to learn the language and consolidate the language that was learnt before.

Bamford and Day (1997) compare reading with any other learned human skills such as cooking, driving or riding a bicycle; the more you practise it, the more fluent and skilled you become. They continue their argument of the indispensability of ER in the classroom saying, “no matter how sophisticated the teaching profession's understanding of and ability to teach the reading process, until students read in quantity, they will not become fluent readers” (Bamford & Day, 1997, p.2).

Having explained why ER should be implemented in the EFL/ESL classroom, there are different ways of including ER in the FL/L2 curriculum. Day and Bamford, (1998) list four broad ways of integrating ER in the curriculum. These four ways could be integrated within different contexts of language programmes, whether general English courses, EFL/ESL courses, English for academic purposes or English for specific purposes, in school, university or language centres.

First, ER could be implemented as a separate course. This typically includes what establishing any course requires: a teacher, a syllabus, a classroom, materials and a timetable. Day (2003) describes this as an ideal way to integrate ER in the curriculum, in which students do activities in- and out-of-class. The amount of time for ER in the curriculum should be calculated and decided in harmony with the entire goals of the language curriculum. This could vary according to how much time could be saved for ER (e.g., a single 50-minute period once a week to five times a week for 50 minutes each meeting) (Day & Bamford, 1998). Realistically, however, there is not enough room for a new course to be put into the EFL curriculum.

Second, ER could be implemented as a part of an existing course. This way

involves incorporating a certain amount of ER into an existing course (Day, 2003), for example, reading a certain number of books per week or per semester both in class and out of class. The reading could be either voluntary or required. The credit for ER in the curriculum can be calculated in accordance with the percentage of how much time ER occupies within the curriculum time.

Third, ER could be incorporated as a noncredit addition to an existing reading course. Taking into account students' interests and linguistic abilities, students are encouraged to read for their own enjoyment. No credits or marks are given to the students. However, extra credit could be granted to the student if the teacher was confused about the final mark for the student, say between a B and a C (Day & Bamford, 1998). The success of this method depends on the teacher's commitment to and enthusiasm for ER, so students catch the teacher's enthusiasm and make ER and reading part of their learning development (Ihejirika, 2014).

Fourth, ER could be implemented as an extracurricular activity. This approach involves adding ER to an EFL programme through an extracurricular reading club. Suitable reading materials should be made available to all different levels, and the ER club can be open to anyone, with all students encouraged to join. The meetings, as with any other extracurricular activity, are held after school and could vary from a weekly or semi-monthly activity to twice or three times a week for an hour, if it is of the participants' interest (Day, 2003).

These four ways for integrating ER in FL/L2 programmes are not exclusive. ER could be included differently, depending on the overall goals of the curriculum and how much time is left. However, once the benefits of ER are realised, ER could be fully integrated in the curriculum (Day & Bamford, 1998). In a link to this study, the ER programme for this study was a separate stand-alone course (see 4.6).

Although research and literature approves of the efficacy and essentiality of ER in developing language learning, it is still not common in educational settings. Various reasons could be attributed to the unpopularity of ER in the classroom. Day and Bamford (1998), Brown (2009) and Day (2013) suggest some reasons including: cost, where the ER library which includes different books with different titles and for different levels should be funded and the money should be available; the amount of time, attention, organisation and work required to set up an ER programme; ER not linked to the syllabus or examination; the difficulty in finding room for ER in the already-crowded curriculum; teachers used to traditional roles

and ways of teaching could find their role in ER difficult and confusing; the controversial nature of the reading material; the dominance of the reading skills approach; the belief that reading should come after students are able to speak and understand the FL/L2; and the confusion between ER and class readers.

These are the major problems that face curriculum designers and teachers while considering the inclusion of ER in the curriculum. The question remains: is it worthwhile to commit to the resources required and work on overcoming these problems in order to bring ER to the classroom? The answer lies at the beginning of this section when an explanation was provided of why ER should be integrated in the EFL/ESL curriculum. Having decided to integrate ER in the classroom, the mechanism for setting up an ER programme in the classroom is explained in the following section.

3.4.1. Setting up an ER programme

The first step for integrating ER in the curriculum is achieved when teachers or administrators decide that ER would greatly assist language learners. Like any programme, ER programmes should be carefully planned in order to get the desired results. Part of this planning includes specifying goals for any ER programme, so the people involved work to achieve these goals. Short-term, random and unsystematic planning leads to failure. Long-term planning with a vision increases the chances for any ER programme to grow each year to survive any potential threats (Hill, 1997b). Some of these threats could be: lost or disorganised materials, shortage of funding and resources or insufficient resources to keep a library running and teachers without experience of how ER programmes are set up and run (Waring, 2010).

Setting goals for an ER programme establishes a framework for the programme and helps to tell whether the programme is a success or a failure. These goals could be, for example, to develop the students' language skills, foster positive motivation and attitudes towards reading, decide how much reading should be done and have a reading library. In addition, the goals differ according to different settings and teaching contexts (Day, 2013).

Having set the goals of the ER programme, the question posed here is how these goals could be achieved. Waring (2010) provides an answer through describing some steps for initiating an ER programme. The first step is to find room

for ER to fit into the current curriculum. The ER programme should be guided with a clear purpose that should fit within the aims and objectives of the curriculum (whether in a school, university or language centre). The ER programme needs to be part of a larger language reading and learning programme, but not a sole and exclusive method for reading and learning instruction because ER is only one type of reading instruction. It has been mentioned earlier in this chapter (see 3.1) that too much IR leads to not building a fluent reader, and too much ER can lead to a learner not observing certain language aspects. Balance is the key to a successful reading programme (Waring, 2010). The next step is to ensure that everyone is involved in the planning stage and also in taking decisions as a group. This reinforces the feeling of commitment to make the programme a success. Involving people (e.g., teachers, learners and even parents) means making the goals and aims of the ER programme understood by them. Starting the library and getting funding for reading materials comes next.

Having decided to proceed with the ER programme, some curricular questions need to be addressed before starting the programme. These questions are mainly answered in Day and Bamford's (1998; 2004) books, Day et al. (2011) and in Day (2013).

a- What kind of material should students read?

This question could be addressed from two perspectives, the level of difficulty and type of materials. Appropriate reading materials are the essence of any ER programme. Students read a large quantity of easy, interesting, engaging, comprehensible and available materials if they want to read extensively (Jacobs, 2014). Appropriate reading materials mean any text in the target language that is easily understood with little or no assistance. These materials may include materials written for first language readers, SL/FL readers, comic books, or online materials. The Internet also gives a wide access to reading materials (Day, 2013).

Any text in the target language that is at or below the students' current reading competence can be used as ER materials. Reading easy books, at the $i - 1$ level (Krashen, 1985), without translation might be a new experience to students, but this will build confidence and develop their sight as well as their general vocabulary (Day & Bamford, 1998). It is important that students start with easy books, challenging the approach that learning should start difficult, and make their gradual

development in language learning by laddering up. Consequently, their comfort zone will start to expand and the difficult materials will then become easy for them. It is the students' decision to determine which level of difficulty and whether this level is the appropriate level to read. Teachers could help them by letting them know in more depth about the approach and the appropriate level, but not by deciding for them.

Moving to the type of materials, one of the most common materials that are written for FL readers are graded readers. Graded readers (see 3.4.2.1.1) are “simply books, fiction and non-fiction written for language learners; the content is controlled to match the language ability of learners” (Day, 2013, pp.11-12). Authentic and non-authentic materials, language learner literature, online sources, and many other sources could be used as ER materials (see 3.4.2.1). Regardless of the source, a wide variety of interesting books and materials with different levels should be made available to students. In addition, a wide selection of different genres should also be available because students' tastes in reading are different (Day et al., 2011). Last but not least, ER materials should be subdivided into difficulty levels, so that learners with different proficiency and reading ability levels can find materials appropriate to their level easily. It is worth mentioning that ER materials will be explained in detail later in this chapter (see 3.4.2).

b- How much reading should students do?

ER means reading a large amount of material in the FL/L2; students should be encouraged to read as much as is reasonably possible. Moreover, there is no specific amount of reading that qualifies for the term extensive (Robb & Kano, 2013). Students and learners differ in their circumstances and reading abilities; thus, how much they read is relative to their abilities and circumstances and even to their goals of reading. Two main considerations are posed by Day and Bamford (1998): how much time can students be expected to devote to reading per day or per week? And how long can students read pleasurably before starting to feel tired, bored or losing interest?

Setting reading targets (the amount of reading expected of students), whether expected or required, and tracking progress towards them are essential in ER, because students are more likely to do it when they are required, expected and are given credit for the reading (Day, 2013). These reading targets and expectations

ensure that students keep moving towards achieving their goal of becoming fluent readers or even other goals. Reading targets can be expressed in different ways: in terms of the material (number of books or pages read), time (how much time spent for reading per day or week for example) or a combination of both (Day, 2013). ER targets should be flexible, without too much pressure on the students' schedules, and can be modified to fit the reading abilities and schedules of the students.

Many EFL teachers and researchers have made different suggestions about the quantity of reading that should be read (e.g. 10 pages an hour). A book a week, if the books are short and simple, is Hill's (2008) rule of thumb. Needless to say, books for beginners are not the same as for intermediate or advanced students, and beginner-level students are different from intermediate-level students in their reading abilities. A graded reader at the lowest level (beginner, containing about 16 pages of a text) might be read by a beginning-level student in about 4 hours. An intermediate-level book (50-60 pages) can perhaps be read in about 5 hours, and an advanced-level book (80+ pages) can take about 6 hours. These numbers, for example, reveal how much to expect students to read, taking into account the time available to them as well as their schedule and circumstances (Nation, 2013). Students, in this study, were encouraged to read as much as possible; however, a reading minimum target (i.e. reading 15 graded readers during 12 weeks) was set for them (see 4.6).

However, reading should not be viewed as a matter of weighted pages per week or month, the appreciation of individual books being read is what should be focused on (Day et al., 2011). Teachers are usually the driving force for students to read, through the help they offer to their students. Setting personal targets is often a strong motivational factor. Teachers should advise their students to set a time for reading within their schedule (e.g., lunch break, on train while commuting to and from school, etc.). The teacher's role here is to facilitate for students the process of setting a reasonable target number of books to read within a time limit and to encourage them to meet their targets (Day, 2013). Last but not least, teachers could search for a feasible mechanism to monitor the students' progress (e.g. ER logs).

c- Where should reading take place?

Reading should be at the student's own pace, when and where the student chooses (Day & Bamford, 1998). This is one of the basic principles of ER, in

addition to reading a significant amount of easy and interesting material. However, if teachers do not show the importance of reading to their students by setting aside valuable class time to it, students will not be highly motivated to read outside the classroom (Harris & Sipay, 1990). When time is set aside for students to read in class, it demonstrates to students the value that is placed on reading and that reading is a worthwhile activity.

Since ER involves reading a lot, students will have to do most of the reading outside of class. The question that remains here is: how to involve students in reading? Huffman (2014) points out that reading involves choice on many levels, and an important aspect of choice is choosing the setting and conditions when the text is read. As Klapper (1992) notes, learners will be more likely to read and like reading books of their own choice at their own difficulty levels and speed, rather than be forced to conform to uniform programmes. Therefore, out-of-class reading plays a major role in building lifelong readers. It is then up to students to explore the best setting for when and where they like to read. Some students might like to read in their beds, in the school library, in the train, or in a coffee shop. Others might find their desks are the best place to concentrate and enjoy reading. The time and place picked for reading is a matter of individual choice and differs from one person to another. Reading in one's own time and terms "is the only way to begin to do this" (Day & Bamford, 1998, p.91).

d- Should dictionaries be used while reading extensively?

Building reading fluency is one of the main benefits that ER could offer to students. Part of fluent reading urges readers to ignore unknown words or phrases (unless they hinder the comprehension process completely), or predict their meanings. Stopping at every single unknown word and looking it up hinders fluent reading; the use of dictionaries by EFL students could double the time it takes to read a book (Waring, 2014). It is the student who decides the dictionary use, according to their needs. However, ER is a different method of dealing with a language text from the methods that most EFL students have learned. This creates fear being able to understand a text without using a dictionary, since they are not trained to do so. Therefore, students, with their teachers' help, must break the habit of using a dictionary all the time when encountering unfamiliar words (Day, 2013). Further, students must train themselves and get into the habit of fluent reading,

reading daily and out of the habit of looking up every unknown word.

Students must be aware of the techniques of fluent reading and learn them. They should know that using the dictionary constantly while reading is unnatural, and that it interrupts the joy of reading and reduces concentration. Students should know that if they have the will to become fluent readers, they must train themselves to get used to ambiguity and try to guess the unknown words instead of jumping to the dictionary to look them up (Day et al, 2011).

According to Day (2013) and Waring (2014), students who are familiar with the nature of ER can be given more freedom whether to use a dictionary. Giving students the freedom to use a dictionary allows students to get used to making decisions about when to use a dictionary, and to decide which words are essential and which ones can be ignored. Finally, the main point of ER is that students should read easy and interesting books to learn the language. If they are looking up in the dictionary often while reading a book, they might consider reading easier books.

These are essential curricular decisions that teachers and other people involved in ER programmes should take when considering setting up an ER program. There are also many other decisions and questions that are worth mentioning. However, for the purpose of this study I chose only the questions mentioned above. For more information about the most frequently asked questions about ER, visit Rob Waring's website as he discusses in detail about setting up ER programmes.

3.4.2. The ER materials and library

As mentioned earlier, reading materials “constitute an essential foundation of any ER programme” (Jacobs, 2014, p.115). The main idea of ER is that students learn to read by reading, and the more they read the better they become in terms of language proficiency. Reading a lot requires having materials readily available for students to read. This means creating a library of ER materials containing interesting books of different levels and tastes. One of the most important basics of any ER library is that it should contain interesting materials of different levels and genres, because students differ in their language proficiency levels and also in their tastes for reading. For example, some students are interested in reading history books, while others might be inclined to read mystery books.

3.4.2.1. The ER materials

Having already explained what kind of material and at what level of difficulty students should read, discussing the types of material displayed in the library comes next. In this context, a confusion about ER materials appears between *the cult of authenticity and the myth of simplification*, as Day and Bamford (1998) phrase it. The level of language written in language books, newspapers and magazines is usually higher than L2 students' proficiency level because of their limited linguistic abilities and background knowledge. Also, Schmitt (2008) maintains that unless learners are at an advanced level in their language development, the vocabulary loads of un-simplified reading texts (e.g., newspapers, novels) will probably be too high for the input to be comprehensible. Therefore, this issue could be solved by writing specific texts for those students, taking their lack of linguistic ability and background knowledge into consideration (Uden & Schmitt, 2014). However, this contradicts the widely held belief in the necessity of using authentic material in the classroom and for language education.

ER materials (language learner literature, graded readers, newspapers, short stories, audio books, etc.) are written to provide students with what they need in terms of entertainment and information. These books or texts, written at different language levels and on a wide variety of topics for different age groups, provide students with a rich environment for reading and help them to become hooked on books and reading. For these reasons- entertainment, learning to read, information, and becoming interested in reading- a variety of different reading materials should be made available to FL learners.

Nowadays, there are different ER materials, whether authentic or simplified, and publishers are more aware of the importance of ER as a relatively new way of teaching reading in the FL, especially in EFL. This awareness has pushed publishers and authors alike to write and publish more ER materials. Day and Bamford (1998) listed some of the most important ER materials. I will briefly mention them, and then fully explain about graded readers, because they were the only material used in this research study.

Language learner literature is the most useful and attractive material for ER (Fukaya, 2010). It has been defined as follows, "Language learner literature is ... varied, attractive material at different levels of difficulty. It includes books of all kinds, as well as magazines and newspapers produced especially for second

language learners” (Day & Bamford, 1998, p.97). The main reason for the popularity of language learner literature among other ER materials is that learners at any English proficiency level can find materials that best match their level. Graded readers are the most well-known materials as language learner literature since all the books are levelled for FL/L2 learners. This category contains some classic works of literature adapted from the originals for FL/L2 students, so they could read them with pleasure not with pain. These adaptations serve a purpose, and that is to give language learners the opportunity to read world masterpieces for pleasure, as their language level does not help them to read the original (Fukaya, 2010). The main question, when judging these adaptations, should be: does this book communicate to and give pleasure to language learners while they reading it? If yes, it means the book has served its purpose.

Children’s books are also valuable ER materials that can add variety to any ER library. Children’s books are created and designed to teach children to read in their L1. These books range from picture books with no words at all to simple storybooks with many illustrations (Claridge, 2012). Children’s books have some qualities that are appealing to language learners: easy language, attractive layout and pictures, big print, short to be finished in about 15 minutes and also with different levels. Adults do not feel offended to be offered children’s books to read. On the contrary, some enjoy reading these books as they help them revive their childhood memories. Others appreciate children’s books as works of art and windows on different cultures (Claridge, 2012).

Newspapers and magazines also offer a valuable source of ER materials. Widely available newspapers can serve as interesting reading materials for learners outside the classroom, especially for intermediate and advanced students (Day et al., 2011). The brevity and shortness of newspaper articles help students to get a sense of accomplishment after finishing them quickly, and are also beneficial for weak FL readers who tire from reading quickly. Another advantage of using newspapers as ER material is that the content written in the FL/L2 newspaper is up to date, which may already be familiar to learners if they have read about the same news in their L1 (Day & Bamford, 1998). The variety of topics in a newspaper provides an excellent reading practice for different purposes, as different sections in a newspaper also encourage reading in different ways (e.g., skimming an article or scanning a caption in a newspaper).

Magazines and children's magazines are also counted as ER materials. These materials are usually attractive and colourful, where their visual illustrations help the reader to understand the content (Day & Bamford, 1998). Also, children's magazines have some enjoyable sections, including activities and language games, which can assist FL learners in their learning process.

Also, short stories and their narration, as audio books, are great assets to extensive readers and listeners. The aim of these short stories, as ER material, is to engage learners in pleasure reading. This engagement results in language gains such as vocabulary growth and pronunciation development. Through the stimulating and interacting input of short stories, learners' attention and interest are attracted and engaged, their motivation is boosted, their interaction with the text is maximised and consequently their language skills are developed (Cirocki & Calvo, 2015).

3.4.2.1.1. Graded readers

Having briefly discussed some ER material in the previous section, this section explains in more detail about graded readers since they are the main source of reading material for students in this research. Many definitions and descriptions have been given to graded readers. Graded readers have been defined as narrative texts written for a community of FL/L2 readers (Day et al., 2011). Another definition for graded readers is that they are fiction and nonfiction books written especially for language learners to develop their reading speed and fluency and to provide them with opportunities to experience reading for pleasure (The Extensive Reading Foundation's Guide to Extensive Reading, 2011).

A more recent description of graded readers has been delivered by Uden, Diane Schmitt and Norbert Schmitt (2014, p.2), as follows:

Graded readers are complete books that have been prepared within a strictly controlled vocabulary and grammar, and are typically divided into several levels. The lowest levels contain only a few hundred headwords, most go up to around 3,000 headwords, and the very highest levels from Cambridge and Oxford go up to around 4,000–5,000 headwords.

By controlling the number of words and grammar structures suitably for each level, graded readers grant comfort and confidence for readers reading FL/L2 (Yi Lien, 2010).

Graded readers play a significant role in ER, as they constitute the main source

of ER materials. The primary purpose of graded readers is to provide FL/L2 learners with enjoyment and pleasure while reading. This, in turn, will promote and increase learners' language proficiency through ER (Furutaka, 2015). The use of graded readers is widely accepted as a means of increasing vocabulary knowledge and improving reading proficiency. A growing number of studies have asserted the importance and necessity of using graded readers in ER, and maintained that simplified texts are as useful as authentic materials in language education (Yie-Lien, 2010; Sandom, 2013). Different and varied gains could be obtained from incorporating graded readers in an ER classroom. Furutaka (2015) notes that graded readers make FL/L2 literature accessible, increase comprehensible input, promote learner autonomy, accommodate all levels of language proficiency and foster good reading habits.

According to Hill (2009), there are two types of graded readers: re-writes and simple originals. Re-writes are adaptations of existing original texts (e.g., novels or short stories) written for native readers which have been modified to suit the level of a different community of readers (FL/L2 readers). Originals, on the other hand, are texts specially written for FL/L2 learners and they are also levelled. Most current series of graded readers include both types (e.g., Cambridge English Readers, Heinemann Graded Readers, Oxford Bookworms Library, and Penguin Graded Readers) (Sandom, 2013).

There are some criteria that are used to grade graded readers. Hill (2009) lists three main criteria: linguistic features, physical appearance, and content. Linguistic features include lexis, syntax and style. The language in each level is controlled so that there are a specific number of headwords for each level, and there is also a certain syntax and structure that needs to be delivered according to the level. Physical appearance is concerned with font size, page size, line length, layout, artwork, margins and other features that are essential to attract readers. The last criterion deals with the subject matter and its exposition. The amount of "information carried in the story must be proportionate to the length, subject to the principle of information control" (Hill, 2009, p.120).

In spite of the usefulness and importance of graded readers in language learning, they are still not very popular among ELT settings and professionals. This could be ascribed to their cost, the claim that they lack authenticity, the decline of reading as a *leisure-time occupation* and the emphasis of teaching spoken rather

than written language (Hill, 2008).

Whatever materials are used for any ER programme, they need to be organised. The size of the library, making a budget, purchasing the reading materials, cataloguing them, setting up a check-in and checkout system are all actions and decisions to be made when establishing a library of ER materials, and are discussed below.

3.4.2.2. The ER library

Most FL/L2 education programmes usually involve specific textbooks on which the teaching process is based. However, the case is different with ER, which requires a library with a sufficient amount of appropriate reading materials. Establishing a library is not an easy task.

The first task to start with is deciding the size of the programme. As with any first-time experience of establishing something new, it is wise to start with a small ER programme. This completely depends on the number of students that the teacher can manage; the available funds to cover the reading materials; and the time that can be devoted to make the materials ready. In time, and after ups and downs in the first year, the programme can be expanded to include more students and planned accordingly (Jacobs & Farrell, 2012).

The second task is to find materials and make a budget. The school library usually has materials that are not appropriate for ER programmes. It may include some stories, books, magazines, newspapers, and other materials that could be used for ER, but it is unlikely to include the quantity, type, and range of materials that are necessary to get an ER programme started. Therefore, deciding the number of books that are necessary to start the programme and the available money to buy these materials are fundamental decisions. The minimum number of books to start any ER programme is one book at a suitable level for each student (Jacobs, 2014). However, the more books the better as this gives the student the choice and freedom to choose rather than to be forced to read that book. It is ideal to have four different books or more for each student in a class.

Jacobs (2014) lists 16 ideas for finding ER materials if the school budget is insufficient. Online materials, students becoming key-pals, former students donating materials, teaching staff and students' families donating materials, civic organisations and foundations are eager to help in education, second-hand

bookshops can be *treasure troves* of materials, students and teachers as writers of ER materials, are all some brilliant ideas for finding materials when schools run short of money to buy reading materials.

Thirdly, the students' level and their interests have to be discovered for a later stage, which is purchasing the books. Students differ in their proficiency level even if they have studied the FL for the same amount of time (Claridge, 2012). Teachers should know the suitable level for their students. One common international standard for describing learners' language abilities and levels is the one created and developed by the Common European Framework of reference for Languages (CEFR). It is used around the world to describe language learners' skills, where the levels range from A1 (basic user) and ladder up to C2 (proficient user). Teachers should obtain materials of all different levels, unless their students are advanced.

As for students' interests, teachers could distribute a checklist or questionnaire to students asking about their favourite books, genres, topics, hobbies and interests to draw a clear picture of the students' interests. Having decided what topics and books might interest the students, selecting and ordering the books comes next.

Having purchased the books, they should be organised and catalogued. This will add systemisation and allow the teacher to check the books regularly for any loss or damage (Day, 2013). Publishers have made the job as easy as possible by assigning a difficulty level for each book. Usually the scale of difficulty ranges from 1-6 or beginner to advanced, for graded readers. However, if teachers are using different materials, teachers have to make a different levels system. They might want to categorise the materials as easy, average, or hard with an appropriate mark. Attaching a colourful sticker on the cover of each book to identify its level can also be helpful (Waring, 2010). Organising and shelving the books should be according to their level.

The next task is to decide where to put the materials and how to display them. A main goal of ER is to encourage students to read more and more, which requires having materials accessible to students. Yet, these accessible materials need to be secured. Therefore, teachers have to establish the balance between security and access, and decide where to shelve the materials. The school library, a classroom library, and a delivery system are three choices of where to place the materials (Day & Bamford, 1998). Students are attracted to materials that are organised and well displayed. Thus, teachers should think about an eye-catching and attractive display

of materials for their students. There are many different ways of displaying materials suggested by Nuttall (1996) and also by Waring (2010) (e.g., front covers facing forward, front covers are visible, hammer, nails, wood). Teachers should look for displays that are appealing to their students, and also changing the displays every few months could be an effective method of attracting students to take a look and read different books.

The final task is to create a checkout system to guarantee that no books are lost or stolen. At the beginning, teachers need to set some rules about the number of books a student can borrow at one time, the length of time a book can be borrowed and any penalty for late returns. Some students in the class could be used as librarians with the teacher's guidance and some training. Nuttall (1996) notes that students are more aware of who has borrowed a missing book and can bring it back more easily than the teacher, as they respond to peer pressure more than their teacher's call. Waring, (2010), points out that the simplest checkout system is one where all students borrow and return the books at the same time. Books are only returned to the shelves when all books are returned by the students. Another way is to place a library card, with the title of the book written on, in the inside back cover of each book. The card should also contain spaces for the student's name, their school number and when the book was borrowed. When the book is returned, the card is removed and a new one is put after keeping the removed one in an index box.

Establishing an ER library is a difficult undertaking. It cannot be done overnight. However, this section has summarised how an ER library could be created. Starting small, making a budget, determining the students' levels and interests, organising and dividing the materials, how to display them, and creating a checkout system are all necessary and inevitable steps for starting ER libraries. It is worth mentioning that all these previously mentioned steps were followed while setting up an ER library for this study.

3.4.3. Transforming the reading classroom into a reading community

After explaining about the ER materials and library, it is worth discovering how to bring these reading materials into practice. Different feelings and reactions are aroused in learners while reading. The relaxing atmosphere of ER does not mean that students should be left without any guidance. Therefore, responsibility falls on

EFL teachers to provide learners with ongoing guidance and counselling which should be explicit and extensive (Cirocki, 2012). Without encouragement and support, students may lose interest and enthusiasm, which could result in the failure of a reading programme. Building a community of readers requires teachers' support and counselling, the creation of various classroom activities to help create an encouraging environment for those readers, and shedding the light on teachers as role models.

3.4.3.1. Ongoing teacher guidance

The main purpose of ongoing teacher guidance and counselling is to build a community of lifelong readers who are able to bring their schema to their reading for building more sense and more text comprehension. Therefore, guidance should not stop at the orientation session for ER at the beginning of the programme, but needs to be continuous and extensive. Teachers should provide learners with a full account of different reading strategies (e.g., skimming, scanning, activating background knowledge, etc.). Learners must also understand and realise that to become a lifelong reader means to read a lot, and not to translate every single word into their mother-tongue language (Cirocki, 2012).

ER helps to break some negative reading habits such as translating every sentence. Teachers, therefore, must observe their learners' reading habits closely and offer guidance accordingly. Also, learners should be aware that readers read for different purposes; they sometimes choose and synthesise information from different sources; they read and reread till they obtain what they want; and sometimes they even decide not to read at all because the text is not of their interest or irrelevant (Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2006). Thus, guidance and counselling must aim at promoting purposeful reading, which greatly increases learners' motivation and enthusiasm.

Counselling could be approached in two ways: informally, by teacher's spoken or written response to students' book reports and formally, by allocating time to meet with each student individually (Day & Bamford, 1998). The time spent with students individually will provide teachers with invaluable information about students' reading experiences and problems they might be facing while reading. It might also be a good opportunity to deal with these problems and make recommendations for some suitable books.

Teachers should also serve as role models. Being role models means teachers participating in the ER programme with their students. It is obligatory for teachers to read books if they expect their students to read. Teachers who do not read and enjoy reading can hardly inspire their students to do so. Students usually follow the example of their teacher. If students notice that their teacher reads with concentration, enjoys reading, shares ideas and discussions about different topics in books, the students are more likely to take reading more seriously, and follow their teacher's guidance when they urge them to read.

3.4.3.2. Activities for building lifelong readers

In addition to teachers counselling and guidance, various reading activities can help students to value reading more and see it as a precious, exciting and worthwhile activity. Some of these activities are: sustained silent reading, reading aloud, class readers, arranging reading partnerships and other activities (also see 4.5.2).

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is one of the most used and useful activities in ER classrooms. Both students and teacher silently read books of their own choice, where everyone might be reading something different. Allocating time for silent reading in the classroom highlights the importance and value of reading and helps to build a reading community. Teachers can set aside 15-20 minutes of the whole class period for SSR. Teachers have different options of how to spend the time while students are reading silently. The best, most useful way for teachers to spend this time is to read. In a TESOL workshop, Dupuy, Cook and Tse (1995, p.3) pointed out, "It is ... important that students who are not accustomed to pleasure reading see other people enjoying it, especially an authority figure like the teacher." SSR also gives teachers an opportunity to observe students and gather invaluable information about their students which could help them in guiding and counselling their students to overcome their problems in reading. Unlike academic reading which prevails in the EFL classroom, silent reading is highly motivational and appealing to students (Krashen, 1993a).

Teachers reading aloud to students, is another activity that can be used in the EFL classroom. Students of all ages, not only children, enjoy listening to stories. Listening to the text while reading it at the same time, helps to build sound/symbol correspondence and puts students in a more comfortable environment. Reading aloud activities develop a love of books and an awareness of the value of being a

reader; in addition, they increase overall language proficiency (Cirocki, 2012). The length of the activity should depend on the age of the students, their level and, of course, the interest in the material. If it is decided that a whole book will be read aloud in instalments, it is wise to choose books with built-in suspense at the end of each section or chapter, a romance, or a thriller for example (Day & Bamford, 1998). Such books engage students in the story and the book itself, and make them eager to know what will happen next.

Another activity that could be implemented in the EFL classroom to build a community of readers is class readers. A class reader is a book that all students in the class read at the same time. Class readers have some drawbacks to their use such as: the high financial cost as all students must have a copy of the same book, and they can only be used for classes with students of the same linguistic and reading ability (Day et al., 2011). However, class readers allow teachers to guide reading, to teach culture, and to combine reading with other skills such as speaking and writing through various activities (e.g., oral presentations, book reports). A class reader should be chosen carefully, as it should include issues that could be discussed and written about. More importantly, class readers should be interesting and appealing to students and of their own choice.

As for struggling students, many activities could be integrated in the EFL classroom to help these students. In almost every FL/L2 classroom, there are some students who are not as able as others in terms of language reading fluency. Because ER is individualised, it allows these students to choose books or other materials that are at a more appropriate level for them. However, more help and support should be offered to these students. Cirocki (2012, p.53) notes that “arranging partnerships in the classroom is a brilliant idea as partner-readers have many opportunities not only to be actively social, but also to avoid embarrassment in front of their peers.” Pairing a struggling student with a more fluent and skilful student can be helpful. Antonio and Guthrie (2008) propose three ways for doing this activity: (1) oral partner reading with retell, (2) paragraph shrinking and (3) prediction relay. In the first activity, fluent readers are followed by struggling readers, who, having already read some parts of the text, retell the sequence of events. In the second activity, readers create some questions to identify main ideas and summarise texts, to develop reading comprehension. In the last activity, readers make predictions about texts, and then check if the text confirms their predictions.

In addition, listening to audiotapes of graded readers and short stories while reading silently can help struggling students develop their reading fluency and increase their motivation (Cirocki, 2016). Audiotapes could be used not only in the classroom, but also at home, exposing learners to different types of texts and literature. Having professional narrators in addition to sound effects can add excitement to listening and reading as well. Parminter and Bowler in Day et al. (2011) highlighted that audiotapes made by native speaker actors provide a good pronunciation model, introduce students to books that are higher than their current reading level, teach critical listening, and help to bring the story alive for students who do not enjoy silent reading (Cirocki & Calvo, 2015). The majority of the ER activities mentioned were used in the current study (e.g., SSR, class readers, pairing students and listening to text by the teacher)

3.5. Conclusion

ER, which implies reading large quantities of easy materials for pleasure, has proven its efficiency in enhancing language learning through its wide range of benefits. For example, language learners could increase their vocabulary knowledge and reading speed, enhance general language competence, develop both receptive and productive skills, increase reading strategies and foster positive motivation and attitudes towards reading and language learning. Although different studies revealed the ER effectiveness, these studies have limitations and gaps. Thus, the current study attempts to fill in these gaps.

Given the importance of ER, implementing ER in the classroom becomes a positive and desired step. There are different ways to integrate ER in the FL/L2 curriculum: as a separate course, as part of an existing course, as a non-credit addition to an existing reading course or as an extracurricular activity. Like any programme, ER programmes should be carefully designed to produce the desired results. Goals of the programme should be set, and decisions (e.g., curricular decisions) to meet these goals should be taken. To put all this into practice, an ER library should be established. The main idea of ER is that students learn to read by reading. Thus, a wide range of different materials with different levels, genres, tastes and lengths should be made available to students. With appropriate materials, teachers' counselling and various class activities, reading classrooms can be transformed into reading communities with fluent readers.

Therefore, the current study attempts to establish a reading culture in the Jordanian EFL classroom. The following chapter looks at the methodology of this study as well as other related aspects, such as instrument development, instructional procedures and setting up an ER programme in Jordan.

Chapter 4

Research Methodology: Instruments, Procedures and Ethical Considerations

The previous chapters have had a theoretical focus and have considered the various psycholinguistic and pedagogical issues related to the concept in question. They have discussed both the mechanism of reading and ER as a proposed approach to addressing the problem of the study. They have established the context by explaining the topic of the research study and setting out a rationale for it. This chapter discusses the empirical and methodological aspects of the current study, and explores how an ER programme was carried out in a Jordanian EFL classroom.

The purpose of setting up any educational programme related to language teaching and learning is mostly to develop the educational process. Most scholars, language educators and teachers seek innovation and professionalism in attempts to enhance learning. Hence, innovation in learning comes through researching better ways of teaching different aspects of a language. Teachers or teacher-researchers encounter a variety of learners' behavioural (e.g., disruption) or learning (e.g., FL speaking difficulty) issues in the classroom. As humans, those teachers and researchers not only approach the problem differently, but also act differently. Some might use a previous experience, or solution proposed by a colleague, or follow the teacher's guide, to solve the issue at hand, while others might go further to probe how that problem emerged, why, and what practices or actions could be applied to resolve it (Burns, 2010). When discussing language problems, how teachers observe them and investigating the most effective ways to exclude them from the classroom, there must be a detailed description of language research to get a precise and deep understanding of the potential problems that teachers may face in the classroom, and the appropriate action to take.

According to Ellis (2012), two reasons drive researchers to carry out research in language education. The first reason lies in the fact that some researchers collect data from the classroom in order to "test hypotheses based on some theory of language learning" (p.3). Whereas, the second reason for conducting research in the classroom is to collect data "relating to specific instructional practices and the impact of these practices on language learning" (p.3).

Over the past 20 years, teachers were not actively involved in education research. However, recent literature (Burns, 2010; Ellis, 2012; Cirocki, 2013a; Cirocki & Farrelly, 2016) embraces the active and collaborative engagement of

teachers in research, rather than being outside viewers of the research frame. This recent and general attitude towards involving teachers in research has pushed language educators and academics to produce more publications pertaining to delivering an extensive account of what research is, why it is carried out, what methods teacher-researchers use to elicit data and so on and so forth. Since this chapter is the research methodology chapter, a detailed explanation about research in language education, its goals, methods, and tools is required, while linking it to the current study.

This chapter explores how an ER programme was carried out in a Jordanian EFL classroom. First, it looks at the purpose and importance of this study. Next, the research questions are presented. The following section explores the study design and the rationale for using a mixed methods action research. Then, the research setting and population of this study are provided. The subsequent sections describe the instructional procedures, instruments and procedures used for data collection and data analysis. The final section discusses the research ethics for this study.

4.1. Purpose of the study

As previously mentioned in Chapter 1, Jordanian EFL students face difficulties in reading English materials. In addition, they have very low levels in English proficiency, especially in reading fluency (IELTS, 2014; Education First English Proficiency Index, 2015). After investigating these issues to understand more about them, I learned that a lack of reading culture and poor attitudes towards reading in Jordan and the Arab world are claimed to be common issues. Looking for reasons behind these issues, it turned out that the reading instruction in the Jordanian EFL classroom focuses only on analysing the language of texts, through following the traditional IR method. The sole use of IR-only instruction is not sufficient to improve overall reading abilities, especially fluency. It demotivates students to read and fosters negative attitudes towards reading in English; consequently, it affects the other language skills and hinders the language learning process. Therefore, effective changes for improving Jordanian EFL students' reading abilities as well as other English language skills needed to be proposed and made. Having stated the problems of the study, an ER programme in a Jordanian EFL classroom was proposed and carried out as a solution for the problems stated.

Although there has been a large number of studies confirming the positive effects of ER on language learners in FL/L2 settings, it has not been widely practised either in the Jordanian EFL classroom, or in the Arab EFL classroom, as very little research has been conducted on ER in that region. Moreover, the existing literature and research on ER, in general, has some limitations and gaps that need to be addressed (see 3.3.3). Some of these gaps include a lack of studies focusing on the ER effect on more than one or two language areas (e.g., reading comprehension, writing, motivation) and a lack of studies examining the ER impact on reading strategies and what reading strategies students use before, while and after reading. Also, the majority of studies on ER have used a very limited number of measures and data collection tools, as there are some concerns relating to the measurements used to investigate the effectiveness of ER on vocabulary knowledge.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the feasibility of and effectiveness of ER in the Jordanian EFL classroom; to investigate the ER impact on the Jordanian EFL students' reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies, productive skills, motivation for and attitudes towards reading. It also aims to contribute to the field of knowledge in ER, through filling the gaps, by providing insight into ER in the Jordanian EFL setting.

4.2. Research questions

To recap, the following research questions are posed and addressed in the present research project:

- 1- To what extent does ER improve Jordanian students' EFL reading speed?
- 2- To what extent does ER increase Jordanian students' EFL vocabulary knowledge?
- 3- Does ER expand Jordanian students' EFL reading strategies? And what reading strategies do Jordanian students use while reading English extensively, before, while and after reading?
- 4- In which ways does ER develop Jordanian students' productive skills?
- 5- To what extent does ER change Jordanian students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in the target language?

4.3. Study design

This study used a classroom-based, action research design, and employed different methods for data collection to answer the research questions posed above (see 4.2). In addition, the study used a pre-and post-tests design. It used a stand-alone separate ER programme to investigate the ER effectiveness on ten Jordanian EFL students. Choosing the sample for the study was not random. Random sampling is not necessary for a mixed methods study, especially since many scholars consider action research to be a qualitative research (Burns, 2010; McNiff, 2014). Rather, a “purposeful selection of participants” (Merriam, 2002, p.12) provides an ample source of rich data. To increase the systematicity and reliability, the current study used a mixed methods research (MMR) design (i.e., both quantitative and qualitative data) (see 4.6). To understand the rationale for using a mixed methods action research, for this study, action research must be discussed first.

4.3.1. What is action research?

Action research is one of the most popular methods used by teachers in their teaching practice. It is of great value to teachers in enabling them to better understand and observe the educational process and settings in and out of the classroom, and consequently develop them. Action research in education has contributed greatly to the enhancement of the educational process (McNiff, 2014; Cirocki & Farrelly, 2016). Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014) stress the difficulty of defining action research due to the multiple labels used to identify action research; however, they state that all these variable definitions agree that action research is an integration of theory and action with the aim of addressing different issues together with those who are involved. More particularly, and in connection with this study, action research was applied for three months to create some useful changes to the problematic situation in the Jordanian EFL classroom. Action research is defined as “a self-reflective systematic and critical approach to enquiry by participant... The aim is to identify problematic situations in order to bring about critically informed changes in practice” (Burns, 1999, p.5).

Action research is not done randomly; it should go through systematic stages. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1998), action research involves four main stages. The first phase or stage is planning, where the researcher identifies a problem and develops a plan in order to find solutions and improve the problematic area.

Having developed a carefully designed plan, action comes next. The action phase involves deliberate interventions into the teaching practice for a specific period of time. Observation is the third phase, where the researcher starts observing the effects of the action and collecting all the data possible using systematic tools. Reflecting and evaluating the action and its effects is the last phase. The researcher, in this phase, describes what has happened to understand the issue thoroughly. These phases were followed as a strategy to conduct the proposed study (see 4.3.2).

Some researchers view action research as using primarily qualitative methods, as there are strong similarities between qualitative and action research. However, it is good to use both qualitative and quantitative methods (i.e., triangulation) in the action research in order to obtain a more valid and reliable research, and that is one of the main reasons for conducting action research using mixed methods for this study.

4.3.2. Rationale for using mixed methods inquiry in action research

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the overarching goal of this study is to probe the ER effect in improving Jordanian EFL students' cognitive skills and increasing motivation for and positive attitudes towards FL reading. EFL teachers in Jordan usually follow the IR approach when teaching reading; this, in turn, leads students to become slow readers, bored and demotivated as a result. This problem is the main focus of this research. Facing a problem in the classroom is best approached through an action research to bring about necessary changes in an attempt to solve the problems posed (Burns, 2010). Therefore, the best way to approach problems in the classroom and try to find a solution is through conducting an action research (McNiff, 2014; Mertler, 2014). Given that the problem for this study is classroom-based, I decided to conduct an action research.

The four systematic phases (stages) for carrying out an action research, proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998), were followed (see 4.3.1). After identifying the problem, I developed a plan in order to solve the problem at hand and improve the learning process; that is, setting up an ER programme in the Jordanian EFL classroom (i.e., deliberate intervention as a proposed solution to the problem). I put the action into practice using mixed methods tools to collect the data for later evaluation and research analysis. Mertler (2014) mentions some of the beneficial aspects of action research use. Action research is contextualised, localised, and

aimed at discovering, monitoring, and leading change to practice. This study is contextualised and aims to discover, monitor and lead change in the Jordanian EFL classroom. This summarises and justifies my choice for applying action research, as it best suits the research inquiry posed.

The data collection and analytical tools used in this study rely on mixed methods techniques. For a study with such goals, the selection of the MMR has ample support in the literature. MMR has been defined as “research in which, the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or programme of inquiry” (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p.4). Both qualitative and quantitative methods and different research tools were used to collect data for this research. Quantitative research is referred to as a research involving data collection actions that mainly provide numerical data, and analysing it by statistical based tools (Gries, 2009; Muijs, 2011). Involving objectivity, quantitative researchers do not focus on individual cases; rather, they apply a meaning in the general strategy (Muijs, 2011). Quantitative research usually involves a large amount of data, because a small amount of data might lead to defective and inconsistent results, which would not be valid or significant (Rasinger, 2013).

On the other hand, qualitative research is defined as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.3). Having said that, my research was a “situated activity” in the classroom where I was not only an observer but also a participant taking part in that situated activity by being a teacher-researcher. Qualitative researchers try to investigate issues through an interpretive and naturalistic approach. They attempt to investigate actions and situations in their natural settings and explain them through the meanings that people or participants bring to them (Cirocki, 2013a; Cirocki, 2016). The ultimate purpose of qualitative research is to contextualise and interpret; the researcher observes and generates questions. Unlike the large number of participants in quantitative research, qualitative research samples usually include a small number of participants who are chosen purposefully not randomly (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

MMR is mainly characterised by triangulation. Triangulation means “the combinations and comparisons of multiple data sources, data collection and analysis procedures, research methods, investigators, and inferences that occur at the end of a

study” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p.27). Triangulation is a clear feature of this study where multiple tools for collecting data were used, both qualitative (e.g., interviews, book reports, and diaries) and quantitative (e.g., tests and reading strategies checklist) methods (see 4.6).

Applying multiple methods to study a single phenomenon is referred to as methodological triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Riazi & Candlin, 2014). By multiple methods, researchers mean the application of both qualitative and quantitative methods to study the same problem (Hashemi & Babaii, 2013). For example, in this study, both checklists (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative) were used in an attempt to answer the research question regarding the ER effectiveness on reading strategies used by Jordanian students while reading for pleasure. These two tools are triangulated to provide a comprehensive understanding for that research question.

This study investigates a situated phenomenon; that is, how ER contributes to EFL development for Jordanian students and that is best studied through qualitative research. Qualitative research is interested in the participants’ feelings, experiences and opinions and thus the essential target of research is to discover the participants’ views of the phenomenon being investigated (Holliday, 2004). That is why qualitative tools were used for studying the ER impact on the individual students’ motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English. Also, their productive skills development was investigated through using interviews and book journals to collect data.

However, another goal of this study, as mentioned above, is to know the effect of ER on Jordanian EFL reading speed, vocabulary knowledge and reading strategies. These goals are best studied through using quantitative tools, because that would add more systematicity and reliability for the research through the existence of objectivity in collecting and analysing data (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Since this study investigated the vocabulary growth and reading speed as well as the reading strategies, it included dealing with increase or decrease in numbers, and it is very established in literature that numerical data are the quantitative research interest, during the data collection and analysis process (Gries, 2009; Muijs, 2011; Rasinger, 2013). Therefore, quantitative tools (vocabulary tests, reading speed tests, and reading strategies checklists) were used for investigating these questions. Finally, for a study with those goals, the selection of action research using mixed

methods approach has ample support in the literature (Burns, 2010; Creswell & Clark, 2011).

4.4. Study setting and participants

By the beginning of 2014, I had identified some potential English language teaching centres in Amman, Jordan, to conduct my study at. With a colleague's help, some of these centres were contacted. After having three options, I decided to conduct my research in a language centre called Palestine Modern Centre, in Amman. This decision came about as a result of two factors: they generously offered to fund the reading materials used in this research (i.e., graded readers) and they had a good academic reputation, which was important for choosing students of the same proficiency level more precisely.

In May, 2014, the centre (Palestine Modern Centre) was contacted to obtain approval for doing my research at their centre. They asked me to send them an email explaining what my research was about, how many students I needed and how many lessons a week. Luckily, they welcomed the idea and agreed to have the study conducted in their centre. The centre was in partnership and collaboration with the German-Jordanian University in Jordan and the research lessons were all conducted in the German-Jordanian University building in Amman.

After obtaining permission to conduct the research at the Palestine Modern Centre in Amman, I asked the administration of the centre to contact 40 of their former EFL low-intermediate students. The sampling technique used in this study was convenience sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are selected based upon their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This sampling technique poses fewer logistical challenges, is less expensive and more efficient than the probability sampling technique. The same sampling technique was employed at all stages of this research study.

The reason for having former and not current EFL students, for the study, was to minimise the effect of some external factors affecting the results of the study (i.e., exposure to the target language apart from the treatment). Since the centre was in partnership with the German-Jordanian University, they sent half of the students (20 students) from the centre, and the other half (20 students) were students or employees from the university, mostly recent graduates working for the university. I

applied the placement test used by the centre for all students and in addition, I had a one-to-one meeting with each student.

After meeting the students and grading their placement test papers, I chose ten low-intermediate students who had very similar results and showed passion in the meeting for volunteering in an ER programme. The main reason for choosing this specific level (i.e., low-intermediate) was because of its commonality among Jordanian EFL students. Choosing EFL students with the same English language proficiency level was the main criterion to be considered for taking participants in this study. Having students with different proficiency levels, on the other hand, would require more than one action research because each level would need different research tools and procedures. Combining different levels in the same ER programme would also require a much bigger library and more funding. Another criterion was age; participants with the same age produced more communicative discussions in the classroom, and that played an important role in choosing books at the beginning of the programme as they had interests in common.

The participants in the study were ten Jordanian students, seven females and three males. Five of them were ex-EFL learners at Palestine Modern Centre, and the other five were students/employees at the German-Jordanian University. All students shared three common things: they belonged to the same age group (21-27), they were of the same English language proficiency level (low-intermediate), and they did not participate in any English language course during the ER programme apart from the programme itself, in order to guarantee valid and reliable research results. Per individual, the group had an average of 12 years' English language learning. The greatest number of learning years was 16, whereas the smallest was 10.

Participation in the study was voluntary for the students; however, earning a certificate of programme completion served to motivate them. Having interviewed the participants on the first day of the programme, data were obtained about their age, profession, years of learning English and the reason for participation. The resulting information is given in Table 4.1. It is worth mentioning that to protect the participants' privacy and confidentiality, their names will not be disclosed at their request. Thus, their names are coded as: S1, S2, etc. as an abbreviation for (student).

Table 4.1. Research participants' general information

Student ID	Age	Profession	Years of learning English	Reason of participation
S1	26	Lab supervisor at university	15	She likes reading
S2	24	University tutor	13	She wants to improve English for her job
S3	21	University student	10	He wants to improve English for his studies
S4	25	University employee/student	13	She likes reading
S5	25	Civil engineer/master's student	16	She likes reading
S6	22	University student	11	She wants to improve English for future jobs
S7	24	Civil engineer	14	She wants to improve English for her job
S8	27	Lab supervisor at university	15	She wants to improve English for her job
S9	25	University tutor	15	He likes reading
S10	22	University student	12	He wants to improve English for future jobs

4.5. Designing an ER programme in Jordan

This action research was an ER programme, which was conducted over three months (12 weeks), from the beginning of September till the beginning of December 2014, in a language and training centre in Amman, the capital of Jordan (see 4.4). This section will be divided into two parts. The first part provides a step-by-step account of the ER library, how the EFL centre was approached, and how the students were

orientated to the ER programme. The second part explains in detail the tools employed for collecting data.

4.5.1. ER library and materials

All the reading materials in this study were graded readers (see 3.4.2.1.1). I chose graded readers as the reading materials used in this research because of the extensive literature on their benefits for language learners. Hill (1997a; 2008) greatly supports the use of graded readers in language learning because they provide a model of English language, and enable learners to improve their language proficiency and reading speed. Therefore, the research is credited as the reason for using graded readers as the main and only reading materials for the ER programme.

The reading materials provided for the programme were graded readers from three different publishers: Cambridge, Oxford and Penguin. All the graded readers used in the study were sponsored by the centre. Approximately 250 books, with 57 different titles, were made available as reading materials for the students. All graded readers used were level 3 and level 4 and of various genres. Most books were level 3 (low-intermediate), in accordance with the students' level, ranging from 1000 to 1300 headwords. However, some intermediate books (level 4) were also provided for the more effective students and for those who wanted some challenge in reading. One merit was that all three publishers used the same levelling system for their graded readers, ranging from level 1 to level 6. This, in turn, made it easier to organise the small library in this study and to avoid confusing the students with different levels.

Before the programme started, the students were provided with a full list of all level 3 book titles, from Cambridge, Oxford, and Penguin. Every student was asked individually to prepare a list of ten titles arranged from the most to least interesting. Since the students based their choice only on the title, I enriched their lists with a list of book proposals. Each book proposal was supplemented with a short summary of a book, to provide them with a chance to know what the books were about. Then, the students were divided into three groups; two groups of three and one of four, where each group was asked to create a list of 15 titles. A final list of all book titles (see Appendix B) was obtained chosen entirely by the students.

After gaining a final list of graded readers, another list of class readers was made. Class readers, for this programme, meant that all students were encouraged to

read the same three books each month apart from other books of their own individual choice (i.e., nine class readers in total for the whole programme). Firstly, class readers served as models of ER and language learning, as classroom activities, language and vocabulary exercises, oral and written presentations, and group/peer discussions about different issues raised by the class readers, were all based on class readers. Secondly, and for the purpose of data collection, all vocabulary tests and reading speed tests were made and selected from class readers. In addition, students were asked to write book reports (see 4.6.3) of class readers. All class readers, and the other books, were of low-intermediate level, which means level 3 for the publishers chosen for this study, in accordance with the participants' level. Table 4.2 lists the class readers used in the ER programme.

Table 4.2. List of class readers

Book title	Author	Genre	Publisher
<i>Chemical Secret</i>	Tim Vicary	Thriller & Adventure	Oxford
<i>How I Met Myself</i>	David Hill	Ghost Story	Cambridge
<i>Martin Luther King</i>	Alan McLean	Fact-files	Oxford
<i>Playing with Fire: stories from the Pacific Rim</i>	Jennifer Bassett	World Stories	Oxford
<i>Rabbit-proof Fence</i>	Doris Garimara	True Stories	Oxford
<i>Sense and Sensibility</i>	Jane Austen. Retold by Cherry Gilchrist	Romance	Penguin
<i>Stories of Survival</i>	Fiona Beddall	True Stories	Penguin
<i>The Last Sherlock Holmes Story</i>	Michael Dibdin	Crime & Mystery	Oxford
<i>Two Lives</i>	Helen Naylor	Romance	Cambridge

The centre also helped in the creation of a small library of the books. They offered a place and enough bookshelves. When the books were delivered to the

centre, I arranged them according to the publisher, genre, level and whether they were class readers or graded readers. The books were displayed systematically and attractively. Some of the books with different genres, publishers, and titles were placed on desks with their covers or title pages facing the ceiling. The reason for a display like this is that students would be more attracted to reach for a book whose cover is prominently displayed than they would for a book displayed vertically on a traditional bookshelf.

A check-in and checkout system (see Appendix C) was created at the beginning of the programme. This system created two opportunities: knowing who borrowed and returned the books, and identifying the total number of the books each participant read. The participants had to tick the book (s) they borrowed on a list including all the books available in the library, and then had to tick again when they returned the book (s). In this way, I had a full list of the books each participant read at the end of the programme, which helped me, along with book reports, to know precisely how many books each student read.

4.5.2. Orientating students to the ER programme and its procedures

After constructing a library, choosing graded readers, creating a check-in and checkout system, the ER programme started with two orientation lessons. The first two lessons were used to orientate students to ER by enlightening them about the benefits of ER and instructing them how to read extensively, choose books, write diaries and fill in book report forms. I wrote a diary and filled in a book report on the first lesson and showed them what was written in the second lesson as an example. I also explained the purpose of carrying out this research, conducting interviews, collecting book reports and sitting tests. In addition, they were accompanied to take a look at the ER library and see how the books were arranged. Moreover, the mechanism of the check-in and checkout system was explained.

Students had three lessons a week: on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays for three months; each lesson lasted for 90 minutes. Sometimes and for different reasons, students asked for some changes between days, and this happened after general agreement between the students and me. In each lesson, students did various language and vocabulary activities based on class readers, they gave oral and written presentations about books they had read, shared experiences and feelings in groups,

conducted peer/group discussions about different issues and topics relating to the books they had read, along with other in-class activities.

Students did scaffolded silent reading from self-selected graded readers (i.e., class readers) independently for 10-20 minutes. Scaffolded silent reading usually happened at the beginning or end of each lesson, very rarely in the middle. The idea of this activity was developed from Reutzel, Fawson and Smith (2008). During this activity, I monitored the students' reading and provided them with assistance when needed. The main purpose of this activity was to increase the students' reading time and develop their reading habits and abilities. After this silent reading, some students either volunteered to share what they read with the class, or were asked to discuss and share their reading experience with their peers.

Another interesting activity for the students was the book blurbs activity. The activity involved students in matching book blurbs, taken from the back covers of graded readers and typed on a worksheet. The idea of this activity was developed from Day and Bamford (2004). This activity was carried out to introduce students to interesting and different books and help them to self-select books that they wanted to read. The book blurb activity was integrated into classroom instruction twice during the study. For more challenge, the activity included more book titles than book blurbs to be matched the second time the activity was done. Students did this activity in groups of three. They were asked to find which displayed books matched the blurbs given on a worksheet and to predict what the books are about and whether they are interesting.

Also, PowerPoint presentations were given twice a week by two different students during the programme. Each participant was asked to deliver two individual presentations about books they had read during the programme, one at the beginning and one by the end. The main purpose of these presentations was to assess their speaking proficiency level in English, share reading experiences among the students, build confidence, improve their speaking and fluency abilities and bring more fun and action to the classroom.

In addition, students were asked to do out-of-class tasks. These tasks included: every day reading practice for 30 minutes at least, writing their own diaries about what they felt or experienced during the programme, preparing oral and written presentations and filling in book reports. As for dictionary use, students were encouraged to try to predict meaning from context rather than looking up words in

dictionaries. It was explained to the students how using a dictionary all the time could prevent them from pleasure reading, as the reading flow would be interrupted by constant use of dictionary (see 3.4.1). However, to use dictionaries or not was a decision left to the students themselves, taking into account that they had always used dictionaries in the past while learning new words. Most importantly, students were encouraged to read as much as possible in and out of class. However, they had a reading minimum target of five graded readers a month (i.e., 15 graded readers during the ER programme). Most of the students thought this was an unachievable task, but that feeling changed after reading one or two books (see 5.5).

4.6. Instruments and procedures for data collection

This study, as mentioned earlier, is a mixed methods one. The study data were gathered from ten Jordanian EFL students during the fall semester of 2014, from September to December. The main tools employed for data collection were vocabulary and reading speed tests, reading strategies checklists, students' written book reports, students' and my diaries, interviews and, last but not least, one video-taped focus-group session. It is worth mentioning that all the instruments used were piloted on two EFL learner friends who had the same English language proficiency level as the students, and peer reviewed (see 4.7).

4.6.1. Tests

The purpose of these tests was to investigate the influence of ER on vocabulary growth and reading speed for the Jordanian EFL students. These tests were applied as pre-tests and post-tests. The underlying aim for all pre-tests was to check and measure the initial knowledge of the students, whereas the post-tests were used to measure the individual students' growth, either in vocabulary development or reading speed after the ER programme.

4.6.1.1. Vocabulary tests

There is no doubt that reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge are interrelated. Hacquebord and Stellingwerf (2007, p.208) stress this fact saying that "vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to text comprehension". Based on this, and to answer the research question of to what extent ER increases students' vocabulary knowledge, multiple-choice vocabulary tests were used. Multiple choices

tests are the most commonly used format in reading comprehension evaluation (Koda, 2005; 2007). The simplicity of their scoring procedure makes them an effective tool for assessment (Grabe, 2009). Koda (2005, p.238) points out that “its mechanical nature not only ensures objectivity, but also permits machine-mediated mass scoring.” Three 15-minute vocabulary tests were conducted; all were multiple-choice with four responses for each question (see Appendix D). The tests were used to check the knowledge of the nine class readers’ most frequent words, that were targeted for learning (i.e., students at level 3 were expected to learn them from these graded readers). These words are usually included in glossaries at the end of graded readers. The main criterion for including words in the vocabulary test was frequency, so the most frequent words in the selected class readers were included.

Each test checked the students’ knowledge of 20 words. Therefore, each test included 20 items. There were three vocabulary tests conducted in the study: the first checked vocabulary knowledge of 20 words from the graded readers: *Rabbit-proof Fence*, *Sense and Sensibility* and *Two lives*; words in the second test came from: *Chemical Secret*, *Stories of Survival* and *The Last Sherlock Holmes Story*; while words in the last test came from: *How I Met Myself*, *Martin Luther King* and *Playing with Fire: Stories from the Pacific Rim* (see 4.5.1).

Each of these three tests was applied twice, as pre-tests and post-tests, without informing the students in advance. The pre-tests were conducted at the beginning of September, October, and November, whilst the post-tests were administered four weeks later, i.e. at the end of September, October and November. Every monthly test, pre or post, was used to check the students’ vocabulary knowledge of the three assigned class readers of that month. The total mark for each test was 20, where every correct answer was given (1) mark, while every wrong answer was given (0) mark. Clear and full instructions of the test and time limits were given to students before they started to individually work on the test.

4.6.1.2. Reading speed tests

Two one-minute reading speed tests were conducted at the beginning of the programme (September 2014), and then two more at the end of the programme (December 2014). The first two reading speed tests served as pre-tests, and were conducted over the same text but on separate days (two days separated the two tests). The reason for having two reading speed pre-tests was to be able to measure the

individual students' mean reading speeds, and to avoid any undesired effect of possible external factors (e.g., some of the students might be sick or fatigue). The other two reading speed tests at the end of the programme served as post-tests, and were conducted over the same text, different from the one used in the pre-tests though, and also on separate days (two days separated the two tests) for the same reasons mentioned above. Students were asked to mark the word they reached with a slash after one minute had passed, when I banged on the board. As for the texts applied, texts were chosen from the same book (*Playing with Fire: stories from the Pacific Rim* by Jennifer Bassett, 2009) (see Appendix E), as it is unfavourable to check the students' reading speeds over texts with different genres and styles. Thus, being written by the same author, the applied texts are created in the same style and at the same level of difficulty and structure.

4.6.2. Reading strategies checklists

Reading strategies are defined as “processes that are consciously controlled by readers to solve reading problems” (Grabe, 2009, p.221). Reading strategies could increase fluency, proficiency and automaticity for language learners and readers (Anderson, 2009). Thus, and for the purpose of this study, a reading strategy checklist was used to investigate what reading strategies Jordanian EFL students used before, while and after reading English for pleasure. Checklists served as reminders for learners of the strategies they might engage in while reading and as prompts for them to check those strategies. Moreover, teachers and teacher-researchers could use reading strategies checklists to monitor their learners' use of strategies.

Again, the overarching goal for employing reading strategies checklists as a research tool, in this study, was to check the reading strategies used by Jordanian students while reading for pleasure, and to probe any increase in reading strategies that Jordanian EFL students used, after completing the ER programme. The same checklist was distributed to the students twice, both before and after the programme (see Appendix F). The first one was administered at the end of August, while the second was given at the end of November. Students were told to tick the reading strategies they used. Each checklist consisted of three parts: reading strategies before reading, reading strategies while reading and reading strategies after reading. Also,

the name of the student and the date was provided on the top of the page in the reading checklist.

During the programme, no implicit training was given to the students on reading strategies. However, another copy of the checklist was given to each student to read whenever they wanted. This, in turn, might have helped them to think more about the reading strategies they might engage in their reading. Finally, due to the low proficiency level of the students in English, the checklists were translated into their mother tongue language, Arabic (see Appendix F for the Arabic version). Reading strategies were taken from Grabe's book (2009) and Bamford and Day's book (2004), where some modifications were applied to achieve the research aim (see 4.7).

4.6.3. Students' written book reports

Written book reports are not only a way to show how well learners have understood a book, but also to reflect their thoughts and feelings on that book. Bamford and Day (2004, p.137) note that book reports help "to give learners a chance to reflect on the books they read; to allow learners to review and use some of the language of the book in their output; to improve writing skills ..." They also add that such reports help teachers to monitor their learners' reading. The ultimate aim of this research tool was to probe how reading graded readers helped students improve their English vocabulary and writing. Furthermore, a large amount of data and benefits could be collected from students' written book reports, i.e. their feelings and attitudes towards reading, their vocabulary knowledge and their writing skill.

At the beginning of the course, during the first orientation class, I explained to the students in detail, what book reports were, how to use them and how to fill in the required information. In addition, a book report was filled as a sample to show how it could be completed. A uniform book report was also prepared (see Appendix G). Many copies of this book report were distributed among the students on the orientation day. Although all students were encouraged to submit their book reports every time they finished reading a book, only class reader book reports were analysed in this study. I encouraged them to submit book reports for all the books they had read in order to track their reading. Each book report contained four parts; in the first part, the students were required to provide their names and the date of reading as well as book details; the second part included a book summary; while the

third part dealt with students' feelings about and reaction to a book; and the last part was left for my feedback on the students' book reports. The book report form was taken from the Cambridge University Press book report form (2004), and some modifications were made to suit the research purpose.

4.6.4. Students' and teacher-researcher's diaries

Another source of data was a set of diaries that the students and I kept during the programme. A diary is "a first-person account of a language learning or teaching experience, documented through regular candid entries in a personal journal and then analysed for recurrent patterns and salient events" (Bailey, 1990, p.215). For the research participants, a diary is a way to record their feelings and reflect upon their learning experience. For the researcher, diaries serve as repositories of the learners' feelings towards language learning, feelings that are not easily attained by observation. Therefore, both the diarist and the researcher can focus on particular variables that enhance or hinder language learning (Schumann & Schumann, 1997). Moreover, diaries are a great source of information, because "they contribute to a better understanding of language learning and teaching, while encouraging critical reflection about both processes" (Cirocki, 2013b, p.65).

The main aim in using diaries as a research tool was to investigate the students' feelings and attitudes towards the ER programme and towards reading in English. In addition, they were used to check the students' writing skill. The students were encouraged to write their diaries in English every day. When writing entries into their diaries, the students described their feelings about reading in English, their thoughts about the benefits and limitations of ER, the books they were reading and what language skills they thought they were improving. Through diaries, students gave a full and detailed account of their thoughts, feelings, perceptions and beliefs about language learning. Also, a full explanation of how to make entries into their diaries, and what they were expected to write, with a sample of a diary, was provided at the beginning of the programme (i.e., orientation lessons). Based on the fact that diaries, as a research tool, depend on the students' willingness to write them (Cirocki, 2013b), students could freely choose any appropriate time for them to make daily entries.

Similarly, as a teacher-researcher (TR), I wrote daily entries in my diary in which I described all issues related to the ER programme and the learning/teaching

process. The entries in my diary were mainly made through classroom observations. Classroom observation is an effective research tool to collect in-depth data on incidents that take place in language classrooms, because it provides the researcher with a wide window to observe the classroom closely (Mackey & Gass, 2005). I collected all the students' diaries two weeks after the beginning of the programme to check if they were writing entries into the diaries as proposed. Then, I returned their diaries with feedback of how to make them better. By the end of the programme, I collected the diaries from all students for analysis.

4.6.5. Interviews

In-depth, semi-structured interviews with the students were conducted. Interviews are designed as a research tool for diverse purposes; those are, to discover more about learners' or TRs' background, opinions, and attitudes; to analyse events or phenomena that are difficult to be observed; or to obtain information that may be unattainable by other means (Dörnyei, 2007; Cirocki, 2013b). Semi-structured interviews are defined as "a set of pre-prepared guiding questions and prompts, the format is open-ended and the interviewee is encouraged to elaborate on the issues raised in an explanatory manner" (Dörnyei, 2007, p.136). The principal reason for choosing this type of interview (i.e., semi-structured) is because it provides the researcher with a great deal of flexibility to supplement the main questions with follow-up ones and to discover unexpected issues, while the interview is being conducted. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews are described as "insightful and exploratory" (Cirocki, 2013b, p.64). Moreover, the social interaction that happens during interviews between the interviewer and the interviewee provides in-depth discussion of the issue under consideration. This aspect is also linked to the philosophy which underpins this study, namely social constructivism, which was described in Chapter 1.

Two semi-structured, open-ended interviews with each participant were conducted: one at the beginning of the programme and one when the programme was over (see Appendix H). Both interviews were divided into sections to make them more convenient, organised and easier to administer. The sections of the first interview, at the beginning of the programme, were designed to explore the students' feelings and thoughts about reading, reading strategies, past reading experiences, and their thoughts about ER if they were already familiar with it; while the first few

questions of the interview were personal ones for an initial ice-breaking period. The second interview, at the end of the programme, aimed at discovering their thoughts about ER, their reading strategies, their motivation and attitudes to reading English books and the ER impact on their proficiency levels. Some questions between the first and second interviews were worded the same, to obtain precise data and measure the differences in either their language proficiency level or their attitudes, before and after the programme.

The interviews were conducted at a time and place convenient to the interviewees; interviews were administered either at the centre or by phone, each within two consecutive days. Most of the participants preferred to have the interview on the phone, because they did not have time to come to the centre separately from the lesson. Moreover, the interviews were piloted to check their validity and strength and to avoid any problems during the study (see 4.7). After piloting the interviews on two of my friends whose English proficiency level was the same as my participants (low-intermediate), I applied the necessary amendments and changed some questions to make the interviews shorter, clearer and straight to the point.

Each interview lasted between 14-19 minutes. All interviews were conducted in Arabic (see Appendix I for Arabic version), and all were done with the students' permission. Two students' interviews were not recorded for cultural sensitivity issues and at their request. All the other students' interviews were recorded. In addition, I took notes while interviewing the students with the help of using some short hand codes in order not to make them feel bored or neglected while I took time for writing the notes.

4.6.6. Focus group videotaped session

On the last day of the programme, a focus group session for 45 minutes was held and videotaped. Focus groups are viewed as a way of facilitating interaction between individuals who have common characteristics and who are brought together by a moderator; the moderator is able to collect data on a specific issue from the interaction which takes place in a non-threatening environment (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Since the basis of this tool is dependent on social interaction between individuals, it is also strongly linked to and immersed in social constructivism, which was explained in Chapter 1.

The main goal of this session was to further understand the students' views on the ER programme, know more about their perceptions and feelings towards ER, and enrich the knowledge about the correlation between ER and motivation, which is related to this study.

I started the session by asking the participants about their general thoughts and feelings about ER and individual responses were noted. Then, a group discussion about the materials used in the programme took place. Finally, I paraphrased most of the second interview questions to get on-the-spot responses especially with regard to their motivation to read after experiencing ER.

To sum up, I used seven tools to collect the data including: reading speed tests, vocabulary tests, reading strategies checklists, diaries, book reports, interviews and a focus group videotaped session. Table 4.3, presents an organised layout of the data collection methods used.

Table 4.3. Data collection methods

Data Collection Tool	Description
Reading Speed Tests	Two pre and two post tests for each student.
Vocabulary Tests	Three pre and three post tests for each student, by the beginning and end of each month.
Reading Strategies Checklist	One pre and one post for each student.
Diaries	Diaries were collected from each student, and from the teacher-researcher.
Book Reports	Nine book reports of class readers from each student for data analysis, and other book reports from each student for tracking what they read.
Interviews	One pre and one post interviews with each student. Notes were taken during and after each interview.
One Focus Group Videotaped Session	On the last day of the programme for 45 minutes. A general reflection on the ER programme was given from each student through different questions about the programme.

4.7. Piloting the instruments

Through piloting, the researcher can identify and avoid unexpected problems, judge the feasibility of the research plans and instruments, and then make modifications as necessary to have better results (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

The instruments (English version) used in this study were piloted with two EFL learner friends whose English language proficiency level was the same as the students in this study. The same instruments and procedures mentioned above (see 4.6) were applied in this piloting. Only diaries and the videotaped session were not provided in the piloting. First, the two EFL learners in this piloting were doing a low-intermediate EFL course, which was the main reason for approaching them for the piloting. Second, these two EFL learners were given a vocabulary test, reading speed test and a reading strategies checklist. In addition, they were interviewed using the first interview questions. Next, they were given one graded reader (*Two Lives*, level 3) to read in five days and a book report to complete. After reading the book, they were given a reading speed test, vocabulary test and a reading strategies checklist. The texts and vocabulary items used for reading speed tests and vocabulary tests were from the same graded reader provided. Using the second interview questions, they were also interviewed. After that, the two EFL learners provided me with valuable feedback, especially about ambiguous test items or interview questions. Therefore, amendments were made accordingly.

The pilot study revealed some shortcomings and as a result, amendments were made to address these shortcomings and develop the instruments for the final version of the study. The first issue was related to the formulation of two items in the interview questions. The first question was: *What gains/skills do you expect/did you improve?* This question was in both the first and second interviews. Different gains and skills (e.g., reading, listening, writing, speaking, reading speed, etc.) were provided in the final version to make the question more precise. Another question in the first interview was as follows: *Do you like reading but there are factors prohibiting you doing so?* Some factors were added to the question to make it less ambiguous. The final version of this question was as follows: *Do you like reading but there are factors prohibiting you doing so (e.g., materials availability, attractiveness, or linguistic level, the socio-cultural environment, e.g., home)? If yes, what are they?*

The second problem was related to some items in the reading strategies checklist. The two learners revealed that they could not understand the meaning of some strategies in English. Therefore, an Arabic version of the checklist was provided in the actual study itself. Also, the final version of the checklist provided students with an option of writing strategies that they use and which are not included in the checklist. This option was not available in the pilot study. Finally, a section for teacher's feedback was added to the final version of the book report, to enable me to comment and provide feedback to individual students.

Having revised the instruments based on the learners' feedback, I asked colleagues with experience in research and teaching to review the instruments and provide feedback. Peer review and debriefing, along with piloting, are crucial steps to establishing credibility in research (Creswell, 1998). After some discussions, some instruments, especially the reading strategies checklist, were revised. These revisions were mainly technical and included using a more reader-friendly layout for the reading strategies checklist and reorganising the order of some items in both the checklist and the interviews so that they were more logical and easier to use. Moreover, the data analysis procedures were also reviewed by a colleague (see 4.8).

The use of different data collection methods, both qualitative and quantitative (i.e., triangulation), having them piloted and reviewed not only adds credibility to this research, but also provides deeper insight into the research problem which is a major step that needs to be taken for research credibility (Creswell, 1998).

4.8. Data Analysis

As mentioned earlier, this study is a mixed methods one; triangulation is a main procedure followed. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative instruments were employed simultaneously to address the research questions. In the first three research questions (i.e., the ER impact on 1) reading speed, 2) vocabulary knowledge and 3) reading strategies), the data sources were both quantitative (i.e., reading speed tests, vocabulary tests and reading strategies checklist) and qualitative (i.e., interviews, diaries, book reports and a videotaped session). In the last two questions (i.e., the ER impact on 1) productive skills and 2) motivation for and attitudes towards ER), the data sources were qualitative (i.e., interviews, diaries, book reports and a videotaped session). To analyse such data, thematic analysis was used.

Starting with qualitative data, qualitative data analysis were applied on all the study questions. The approach taken for data analysis was the thematic approach of the narrative analysis, which is derived from the social constructivism philosophy (i.e., the philosophy used in this study). Thematic analysis is a common technique that is used mainly in qualitative research, and can be used to identify the important themes, derived from data, to answer the research questions (Gries, 2009).

The first step in data analysis was a detailed and in-depth scrutiny of the data from interviews, diaries, book reports and a videotaped session. This detailed analysis provided me with a closer look at the data, to identify the main themes based on the research questions and the frequency of words repeated in the data obtained. For example, among the words which the students and I used most frequently were *reading materials*, *anxiety* and *fast reading*. Therefore, these words were labelled as categories.

After identifying different categories and labels from initial coding, similar categories or categories that served the same theme, were grouped together. As a result, 11 main categories were derived. These categories included: 1) reading speed, 2) vocabulary knowledge, 3) reading strategies, 4) speaking skill, 5) writing skill, 6) problems and challenges facing the students in the ER programme, 7) reading materials, 8) factors affecting motivation for and attitudes towards reading in the target language, 9) reading anxiety, 10) ER activities and 11) students' reading experiences before the ER programme. These main categories were divided further with some labels and subcategories under them from the initial coding. For example, in the initial coding, many aspects related to students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading were categorised as: confidence, autonomy, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. These categories were placed as the subcategories of factors affecting motivation for and attitudes towards reading.

Having had 11 categories, I asked a colleague to review them and their subcategories to provide me with feedback as to whether these categories serve the main goals of this study. This step was taken to obtain more credible data and to eliminate personal biases in the analysis (Creswell, 1998). Based on my colleague's feedback and my supervisors' recommendations, some changes to the categories were made by labelling some categories as subcategories to other main categories. The final grouping of categories included six themes, each with subcategories. These six themes, to characterise the findings, were: reading speed, vocabulary knowledge,

reading strategies, productive skills, motivation for and attitudes towards reading and the ER programme. These themes were mainly aimed at analysing data to answer the research questions and provide pedagogical implications.

As for quantitative data analysis, it included quantitative data sources (i.e. reading speed tests, vocabulary tests and reading strategies checklist). I used Excel Version 2011 for descriptive statistics and statistical analyses.

In order to find out the impact of ER on reading speed, vocabulary knowledge and reading strategies, students' pre-tests results (i.e. number of words read per minute, scores of vocabulary tests and reading strategies used) were recorded and compared with post-tests results. The mean scores of all tests and students' results, as well as the minimum and maximum scores, were provided in numbers and in percentage points.

Paired t-tests were used to determine whether the difference between pre-tests and post-tests is significant. Paired or dependent t-tests "compare two sets of data from the same group" (Rasinger, 2013, p.200). In other words, they examine whether scores from the same group under two different conditions (i.e., pre-and-post-tests) differ significantly. In this study, paired t-tests were applied to compare the students' results in reading speed test, vocabulary tests and reading strategies checklist, at the pre and post-test stages, and examine whether the difference is significant. Thus, statistical tools were used to check the ER impact on these three language aspects. If the p value was smaller than 0.05, the difference would be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

In addition, the correlation between the number of books read by each student (i.e., amount of reading), and the students' mean scores in reading speed tests, vocabulary tests and reading strategies checklist was checked by using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient is a measure used to examine type and degree of correlation between two variables measured on a ratio scale (Rasinger, 2013). Using such a procedure allows me to find whether the correlation between the amount of reading and other variables (i.e., reading speed, vocabulary knowledge and reading strategies) is positive or negative and the degree of that correlation.

4.9. Research Ethics

Research ethics address issues connected with moral behaviour in a research context (Wiles, 2012). More focus on and in-depth review of research ethics has been raised by academics, organisations and even some countries' legal systems (Dörnyei, 2007). Research ethics are a set of rules that draw sharp lines between what is good and right or bad and wrong (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). These rules guarantee the morality and the degree of research ethicality, as they are also known as ethical issues. Ethical principles should not be ignored or marginalised, for research ethics are an inevitable part of any educational research. Cirocki (2013a, p.79) explains that adhering to ethical principles in classroom research serves "to promote standard scientific practice ... to make teachers aware and understand their responsibilities as researchers, to promote scientific honesty and trustworthiness of findings, to prevent violation of research participant rights and to eliminate research participants harm."

Basic ethical principles were adhered to and met in this current study. With the help of the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*, set by British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011), informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, data storage and protection from harm greatly shaped those principles.

Informed consent is a key ethical principle for conducting research and is one of its requirements (Wiles, 2012). So, its design and preparation should be careful with clear information for the participants about what their participation involves, to ensure voluntary agreement whether or not to accept participation in the research. Therefore, in this study, a full account of what the students' participation in the research involves was provided through an informed consent form (see Appendix A). This consent includes: the purpose of the research, why it is being conducted, what are its procedures, what will happen to the results, what will happen if they agree to take part, what are the possible benefits or risks involved in their participation, how their data will be stored, and how their participation will be kept confidential. For clarity's sake, the consent form, along with participant information sheets were translated into Arabic. Both Arabic and English versions of the consent form were distributed among the research participants.

It is a vital ethical issue to respect the participants' right to privacy, and to ensure that participants are aware of their rights to refuse to answer questions or to withdraw from the research without providing any reason (Perry, 2011). On the participant information sheet in this study, therefore, it is clearly demonstrated to the

participants that they have the right to withdraw completely from the study at any time without offering any explanation.

Confidentiality and anonymity are similar ethical principles. However, confidentiality means that some information in the research is ordinary and is not necessarily to be kept secret while other information is highly personal and confidential and needs to be kept secret; anonymity, on the other hand, means that all participants' identities are kept anonymised (Wiles, 2012). Also, confidentiality, for others, may be related to who is permitted to use the data of the research participants, while anonymity means concealing all participants' identities in all research documents (Cirocki, 2013a). Thus, the students' identities and participation will always be kept anonymised and confidential in this study. This also included: informing the students, through the participant information sheet, that their names and personal details will be kept confidential and anonymous, and information will be available only to those involved in the research.

In connection with confidentiality, the storage of data might pose a potential threat (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). Therefore, any information, data, or samples that were collected from the students have been stored on my personal computer and secured by password. These data have been analysed and their participation will be confidential and anonymous.

Finally, protecting the research participants from any physical or psychological harm is also an important ethical issue (Dörneyi, 2007). This study only dealt with the participants from an educational perspective, which caused neither physical nor psychological harm. Cultural sensitivity is also an important aspect to be discussed as far as ethics is concerned. Fortunately, I share the same background as the participants, and this made me fully aware of what was acceptable and appropriate for them or not during the programme. Therefore, interview questions were carefully and thoroughly prepared to avoid emotional harm and be culturally respectful.

4.10. Conclusion

In summary, this study addressed the issues proposed earlier to seek answers for the research questions through carrying out an action research in a Jordanian EFL classroom. It situated ten EFL students into a rich reading environment, experiencing the ER approach for three months. A full account of ER was given to the participants on the first day of the programme, in-and-out of classroom reading was encouraged,

and ethical issues were addressed including consent forms and participation information sheets. Data were collected using multiple tools: reading speed tests, vocabulary tests, reading strategies checklists, diaries, book reports, interviews and a focus group videotaped session. Then, an in-depth and thorough analysis was followed using both statistical and thematic analysis. The following chapter presents the data analysis and discussion in addition to the research findings.

Chapter 5

The Impact of ER in a Jordanian EFL Classroom

The aim of this study was to probe whether students who read extensively in English over a 12-week programme would show improvement in reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies and language productive skills i.e., speaking and writing. It also aimed at ascertaining any changes in the students' motivation and attitudes towards reading in the target language. A mixed-methods action research design was used to investigate these purposes. The results from both quantitative and qualitative analyses confirmed evidence for the effectiveness of ER on FL learning.

This chapter presents the results and discussions of the study according to the research questions stated in Chapter 4. A great deal of research data has been obtained from the different sources employed in this study i.e., reading speed tests, vocabulary tests, reading strategies checklist, diaries, book reports, interview responses and a video-taped session.

Each section will attempt to answer one of the research questions. The first section of the chapter presents the findings and discussions that relate to the effect of ER in improving the students' reading speed. The second section deals with the second research question; that was, the ER effect in increasing the students' vocabulary knowledge. The third section explores whether ER increased the students' reading strategies, and which strategies they used. The fourth section investigates and discusses the impact of ER on the students' productive skills, namely speaking and writing. Finally, the last section discovers how ER changed the students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English.

The findings will be presented first, followed by the discussion in each section. In each section, the quantitative data analysis comes first, followed by the qualitative data analysis and concludes with the discussion for each research question addressed. Moreover, to minimise the occurrence of any misinterpretation, to clarify the students' intended meaning and to refer to my words while there was a simultaneous speech between students and I, brackets [] were added to the quotes for further explanation. The brackets include my explanation or interventions rather than the students' words.

5.1. ER in increasing Jordanian EFL students' reading speed

The present section discusses the impact of ER on the students' reading speed from pre-to-post participation in the ER programme. It seeks to answer and discuss the research question that is related to whether ER would improve the students' reading speed/fluency. In order to investigate whether or not the ER approach increased the students' reading speed, I asked the students to take two one-minute reading speed tests at the beginning of the programme, and then two one-minute reading speed tests at the end of the programme (see 4.6.1.2). The first two reading speed tests served as pre-tests, the scores of which are presented in Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1.

Table 5.1. Students' reading speed: pre-tests

Student ID	RS pre-test 1 1 min	RS pre-test 2 1 min	Mean Pre-test 1+2	SD
S1	152	159	155.5	4.9
S2	171	168	169.5	2.1
S3	130	140	135	7.0
S4	118	132	125	9.8
S5	183	177	180	4.2
S6	150	141	145.5	6.3
S7	143	153	148	7.0
S8	165	159	162	4.2
S9	167	162	164.5	3.5
S10	142	150	146	5.6
Mean	152.1	154.1	153.1	5.5
Min/Max	118/183	132/177	125/180	2.1/9.8

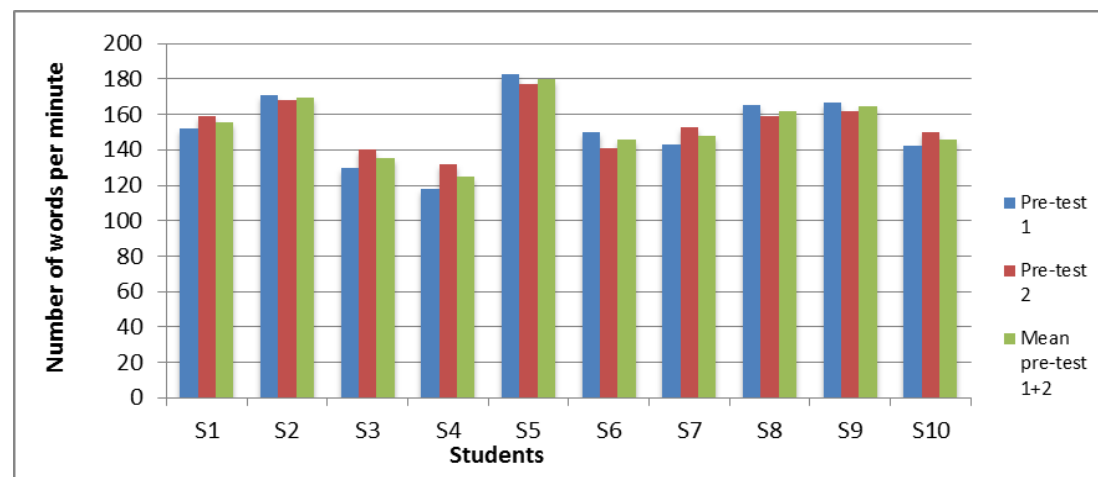


Figure 5.1. Students' reading speed: pre-tests

Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1 show the Jordanian students' reading speed results before the ER programme. Two reading speed pre-tests were administered to estimate how many words students managed to read within one minute. The table clearly shows that students read at different speeds, ranging from 125 words per minute (125 wpm) to 180 words per minute (180 wpm). The results also demonstrate that some of the students gained better scores in pre-test 1 than in pre-test 2 (marked in bold). Similarly, the rest of the students read faster in pre-test 2 (marked in cursive). However, after applying a paired t-test to investigate whether the results of pre-test 1 and pre-test 2 were statistically significant, it showed that the results of both tests were not statistically significant ($t = 0.47$, $p > .05$), so there is no meaningful difference between the two pre-test scores.

As can be seen from the results in Table 5.1, the fastest two readers were S5 (180 wpm) and S2 (169.5 wpm), whereas the slowest ones were S4 (125 wpm) and S3 (135 wpm). The students in the ER programme were selected based on their same proficiency level in English (see 4.4); thus, the gap between the fastest and slowest readers was not large. What is more, S5, who scored the highest, revealed that she read for pleasure before the ER programme, unlike her colleagues. This suggests that her reading experience has improved her reading speed throughout the years of learning English.

The table above displays the mean number of words per minute, as well as standard deviation (SD) between the two pre-tests for each student individually. As for the mean number of words read per minute and the SD between the fastest two readers and the slowest ones, reached to 152.3 and 26.5 respectively. Finally, the mean number of words read per student within one minute and the SD in both pre-tests amounted to 153.1 and 5.5.

Having analysed the results of pre-tests, the students' reading speed post-tests results are displayed in Table 5.2 and Figure 5.2.

Table 5.2. Students' reading speed: post-tests

Student ID	RS post-test 1 1 min	RS post-test 2 1 min	Mean Post-test 1+2	SD
<i>S1</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>180.5</i>	<i>2.1</i>
S2	185	187	186	1.4
S3	149	153	151	2.8
S4	145	156	150.5	7.7
S5	197	190	193.5	4.9
S6	162	158	160	2.8
S7	162	162	162	0
S8	179	181	180	1.4
<i>S9</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>179.5</i>	<i>2.1</i>
<i>S10</i>	<i>166</i>	<i>174</i>	<i>170</i>	<i>5.6</i>
Mean	170.2	172.4	171.3	3.1
Min/Max	145/197	153/190	150.5/193.5	0/7.7

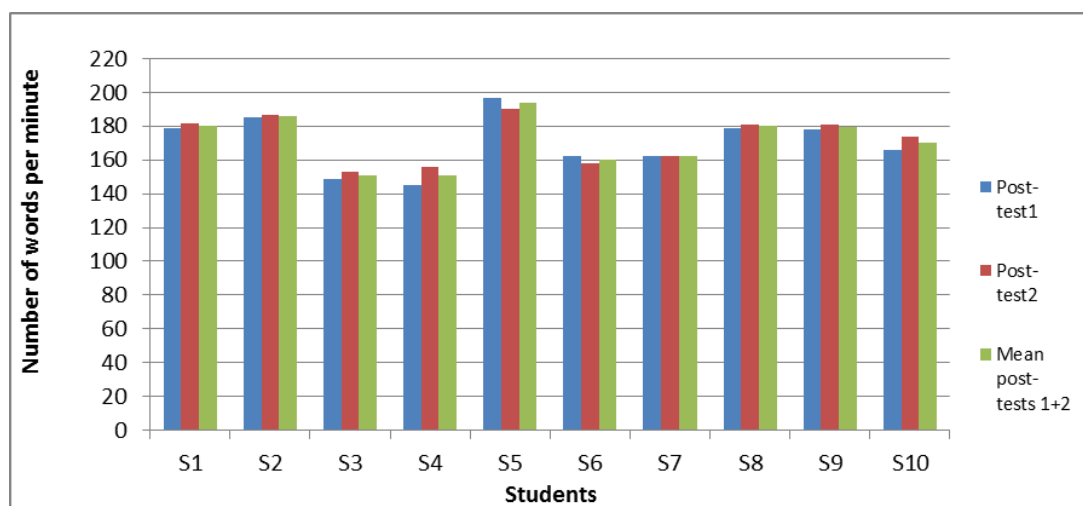
**Figure 5.2.** Students' reading speed: post-tests

Table 5.2 lists the individual students' reading speed after the ER programme. As Table 5.2 and Figure 5.2 display, the two fastest readers were S5 (193.5 wpm) and S2 (186 wpm), whereas the slowest ones were S4 (150.5 wpm) and S3 (151 wpm). The analysis of these results also shows that the fastest and slowest readers in the pre-tests and the post-tests were the same students in the same order. As with the reading speed pre-tests, the results of the post-tests also indicate that the students read at different speeds, ranging from 150.5 wpm to 193.5 wpm. However, t-test showed that the results of post-test 1 and post-test 2 were not statistically significant

($t = 0.10$, $p > .05$), so there was no meaningful difference between the two post-test scores.

The mean number of words read per minute and the SD between the fastest two readers and the slowest ones, amounted to 170.2 and 22.7 respectively. Finally, the mean number of words read per student in a period of one minute in both post-tests equalled 171.3, compared to 153.1 in pre-tests.

The mean differences between pre- and post- tests, are shown in Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3.

Table 5.3. Students' reading speed: difference between pre-tests and post-tests

Student ID	Mean pre-test 1+2	Mean post-test 1+2	$\Delta = (\text{post-test 1+2}) - (\text{pre-test 1+2})$
S1	155.5	180.5	+25
S2	169.5	186	+16.5
S3	135	151	+16
S4	125	150.5	+25.5
S5	180	193.5	+13.5
S6	145.5	160	+14.5
S7	148	162	+14
S8	162	180	+18
S9	164.5	179.5	+15
S10	146	170	+24
Mean	153.1	171.3	18.2
Min/Max	125/180	150.5/193.5	+13.5/+25.5

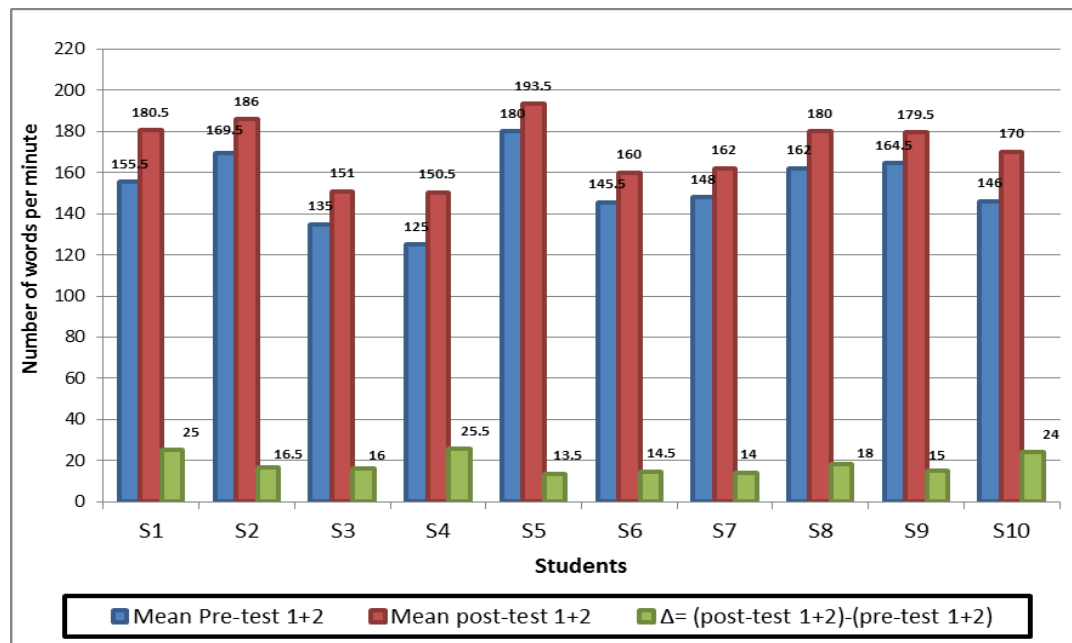


Figure 5.3. Students' reading speed: difference between pre-tests and post-tests

As can be seen from the above table and figure, the reading speed increased in all cases, ranging from +13.5 wpm to +25.5 wpm. The results of the post-tests clearly indicate an increase in the students' reading speed compared to the results of the reading speed pre-tests, as shown in Table 5.1. Having applied a paired t-test on the results of pre- and post-tests, the results were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), so there was a meaningful difference between the scores of reading speed pre-tests and of post-tests. Consequently, the students' reading speed was statistically significant. This improvement concerns all the students with no exception.

The biggest increase was achieved by S4 (+ 25.5 wpm), while the smallest one was by S5 (+13.5 wpm). The mean number of words read per student in pre-tests totalled 153.1, compared to 171.3 in post-tests. This means that the mean increase in reading speed per student from pre-ER to post-ER amounted to 18.2 wpm. Therefore, it can be seen that the reading speed of all the students, who participated in this study, increased with no exception.

Statistical data from the pre- and post-tests indicate that being exposed to ER and surrounded by varied, interesting and easy materials may have helped the students to improve their reading speed. Along with the statistical data, the qualitative findings encountered in some of the students' diary entries and interviews, support the conclusion that ER helped students' reading fluency.

The students' and my diaries were also rich in qualitative data, including how ER helped students to improve their reading fluency. I wrote an entry into the diary commenting on the students' progress:

We have almost passed half of the ER programme ... I am really impressed by the progress students are making in reading. They now read more. I am glad that I am receiving more book reports from my students, and that indicates they are reading more and faster. What is surprising is that less skilled readers are almost reading as much as the most skilled ones. They always keep telling me that this is a life-changing experience for them. Having the appropriate and attractive materials at hand and enjoying reading, I think they want to prove to themselves and to others that they can be fluent readers...

This comment shows satisfaction with students, increasing their reading speed. After almost six weeks of the programme, an obvious improvement was observed in the students' reading fluency.

Students' comments in their diaries were varied, and many were linked to their reading speed. One of the students commented:

The best thing in this extensive reading programme is that I am reading faster and faster. Not only I am reading faster, but also I comprehend what I am reading. This makes me enjoy reading and become engaged with the books. (S8)

This comment shows that this student did not improve his reading speed at the expense of less comprehension. In addition, reading faster with comprehension made the reading experience more enjoyable and attractive to the student. In the same vein, another student said:

Today was my first day in the new English course. I was very excited as the idea of extensive reading is completely new and different. I expect to improve many skills in English especially my reading speed. I am looking forward to it. (S10)

Students also started to realise the essentiality of consistent reading to obtain fluent reading. For example, one of the students commented:

The more I read the faster I become in reading. I noticed that similar words and sentences are repeated in the same book and this is very helpful to memorise the word and read faster, because the words will be automatically saved when I see them more. (S5)

The qualitative data in this study indicate the significant role ER played in increasing the students' reading speed. To obtain a detailed analysis on the issue at hand and investigate the reasons for this increase, the correlation between the number of books read and the students' reading speeds must be explored. Table 5.4 displays the number of books read by each student and their mean reading speed after the ER programme.

Table 5.4. Number of books read and their mean reading speeds after the ER programme

Student ID	Number of books	Mean reading speed after the ER programme
S1	20	180.5
S2	26	186
S3	16	151
S4	15	150.5
S5	32	193.5
S6	19	160
S7	22	162
S8	18	180
S9	23	179.5
S10	19	170

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the correlation between the number of books read by each student (i.e., amount of reading) and the students' mean reading speed after the ER programme. The result of the test, $r=0.79$, showed a strong positive correlation between the number of the books read and the students' reading speed. The scatterplot (see Figure 5.4) illustrates the correlation between the amount of reading and reading speed.

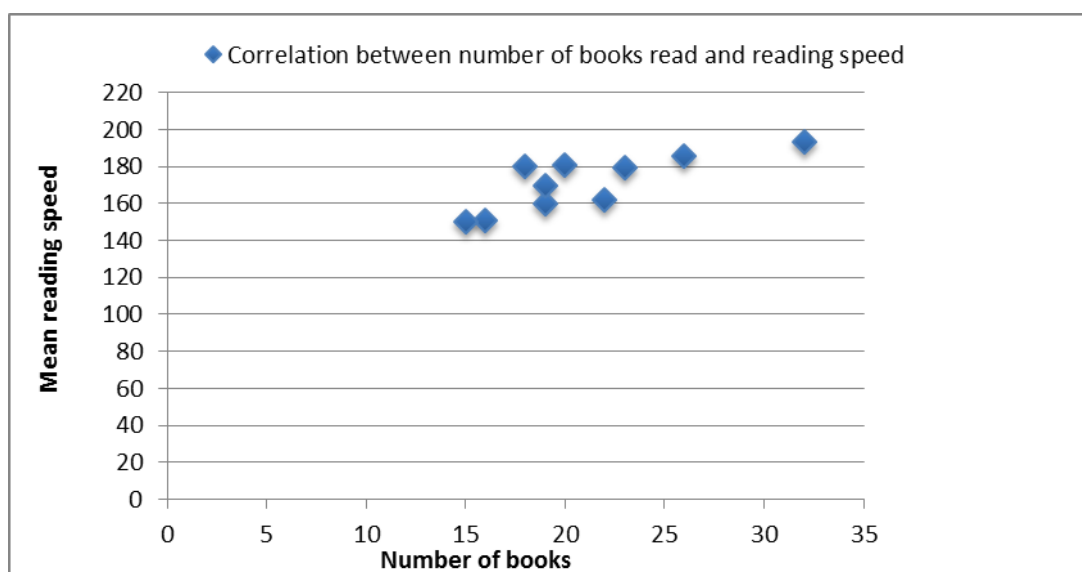


Figure 5.4. Correlation between number of books read and reading speed

Also, as can be seen from Table 5.4 and Figure 5.4, there is a positive and significant correlation between the amount of reading and the students' reading speed in most cases. S5 and S2, who read the most among their colleagues, 32 and 26 books, were the fastest readers amounting to 193.5 and 186 words read per minute. Moreover, S4 and S3, who read the least among their colleagues equalling 15 and 16 books, were the slowest readers with a mean reading speed of 150.5 and 151 words per minute. On the other hand, only some students' results did not conform to the linear correlation. For example, S1 read 20 books with a mean reading speed of 180.5 words per minute, while S9 read 23 books but the mean reading speed was 179.5 words per minute. However, the correlation between the number of books read and the students' mean reading speeds was positive in general, which suggests that the more the students read, the faster their reading became.

Before discussing the effect of ER on increasing the students' reading speed in more detail, an interesting observation made in the current study, which is worth investigating, is why the participating students suffered from slow reading before the ER programme. As previously mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the main research motives was to address a problem which was spotted among EFL Jordanian students (see 4.1); that is, their slow reading, which deprives them of the pleasure of reading, and prevents them from achieving high scores in reading examinations.

Anderson (1999), in his study, states that EFL college students (international standards) should read at a speed of 280 words per minute. All the students in this study were either college students or recent graduates, yet their reading speed was much lower than the average (i.e., 280 words per minute) (see Table 5.1.) Most of the students replied that they did not read much in either Arabic or English, when they were asked whether they read in their free time. For example, S6 said, "*I rarely read in Arabic or English even when I have free time; it's not my favourite exercise*". Only two students answered that they read some books for pleasure in their entire life, while the rest had never experienced reading for pleasure. Their poor reading experience has made them slow and unmotivated readers. This, in turn, may have affected their reading skill and general proficiency level in English.

Although the participants had an average of 12 years of English language learning, their reading speed was slow, taking into account all these years of English

language learning. The students' slow and poor reading could be attributed to three factors: a) the socio-cultural environment, b) language teachers and teaching methods used and c) libraries and reading materials.

Firstly, the socio-cultural environment that surrounded the students was not encouraging for reading in general, and the reading habit among the students' family members was weak. This is a common issue in Jordanian and Arab societies (Almahrooqi & Denman, 2016). Parents model reading habits and behaviours (see 2.1). Readers who grow up in a place where reading is rarely seen view reading differently from those who grow up in a place where print is all around them, whether that print is books, newspapers, stories, or any other type (Perfetti, 2013). Three students out of ten said that their parents used to read books or stories in Arabic for them when they were children. Also, only one of them (S5) answered that their parents used to read some stories in English. Families and communities have a great role to play in building lifelong readers. However, the students' responses in the interviews conducted indicate that their families and communities did not value reading, and that might have shaped their children's poor reading skills.

Secondly, the students' language teachers did not promote building reading habits among students, and the teaching methods used focused only on reading for exams. All students with only two exceptions pointed out that their teachers, whether at school or university level, did not encourage them to read out of the classroom or to read for pleasure. Rather, their main focus was reading for exams. i.e., classrooms were exam-oriented. Moreover, all students viewed reading as a boring activity. For example, students showed their dissatisfaction with the methods followed for teaching reading in their schools; here are some of the students' comments:

No, teachers made reading for us like pain, as something compulsory and only for exams, but never for fun or enjoyment. It was really boring especially when we had to read something very boring but important for the exam. (S5)

We used to study the reading passage line by line, analyse the language, translate the unknown words, and the teacher used to mention the word exam as a threatening word if some students get bored or distracted, so they might focus. At times, my head was sinking toward the table in the classroom when we used to have reading lessons. (S1)

It is clear from the students' responses that the method of teaching reading used in the EFL Jordanian classroom is IR in an exam-oriented classroom environment. This environment does not facilitate or pave the way for building fluent readers. Cirocki (2012) notes that without teachers' encouragement and support, students may lose interest and enthusiasm. This could lead to undesired results such as demotivation to read, and slow reading as a consequence owing to the lack of reading experience, such as is the case with the students in this study.

Thirdly, the lack of materials prohibited many students from practising reading. Most students showed enthusiasm and motivation to read in the target language; however, the lack of materials, in terms of appropriateness or interest, was a main obstacle stopping them from reading. Also, the students mentioned that their school libraries were small and most of the books were on topics such as: religion, science, and Arabic literature, with only a very small section of English books. Even the English books in the libraries were either written for native speakers or for children. This issue is demonstrated in the following discussion excerpt.

I am highly motivated to read in English, but there is no motivation from the surrounding environment or people. Also, the books available are not really interesting; they are either very difficult, usually for native speakers, or written for kids. (S4)

The library in our school was as small as a room in our house. The section with English books was only one shelf. Most of the books in the library were religion and Arabic poetry books and also some history books. (S7)

Thus, it can be summed up that there are three main factors that might explain the participants' reading skill weakness and their slow reading: the socio-cultural environment; language teachers using demotivating teaching methods and the lack of interesting materials. Like any skill, students could become fluent readers with sufficient practice. As a result of the factors set out above, students did not have the opportunity to become skilled or fluent readers.

Having commented on the reasons behind the students' slow reading, the significance of fluent reading as an essential contributing factor to improving students' reading comprehension was highlighted earlier (see 3.3.1.1). It has also been clarified that slow reading, on the other hand, may prevent information

processing (Grabe, 2009). There is a close and strong link between reading speed, enjoyment and reading comprehension. Nuttal (1996, p.127) describes the vicious circle of the weak reader as follows: “Reads slowly; Doesn’t enjoy reading; Doesn’t read much; Doesn’t understand; Reads slowly”. ER can help readers enter instead the cycle of growth. The virtuous circle of the good reader is as follows: “Reads faster; Reads more; Understands better; Enjoys reading; Reads faster”. The ultimate purpose of ER, reading as much as possible, could be obtained through reading faster, reading more, comprehending and consequently enjoying reading.

Research shows how ER increases reading speed which, in turn, improves reading comprehension. For example, Nakanishi (2011) conducted a research study for one academic year to investigate whether ER can improve Japanese university students’ reading comprehension. The researcher employed two experimental groups and two control groups, using one pre-test and two post-tests to examine the relationship. The results indicated a substantial improvement in the experimental groups’ reading comprehension as a result of ER. Moreover, the researcher attributed the improvement in the students’ reading comprehension to the increased amount of reading during the programme. When students read more and faster, their reading comprehension improved.

Although there are not many studies that have looked at the impact of ER on reading speed, growing evidence confirms the positive effect of ER on reading speed. The results of these studies have largely indicated the positive role of ER in increasing reading speed (Bell, 2001; Day & Hitosugi, 2004; Cirocki, 2009; Tamrackitkun, 2010; Beglar & Hunt, 2014; Huffman, 2014; Suk, 2015). This study also supports the positive findings of previous studies. The increase in the students’ reading speed in the current study can be attributed to five factors.

Firstly, consistent exposure to large amounts of texts and reading input throughout the three-month ER programme built more fluent readers. In their study, Belgar, Hunt and Katie (2012) concluded that large amounts of pleasure reading resulted in positive reading speed gains. Also, Grabe (2009) noted that the ability to read for a long period of time leads to fluency in reading; the students in this study seemed to have increased their ability to read for longer periods of time as the ER programme progressed, which led to increasing their reading fluency. Also, the students’ repeated exposure to the same words and structures in the same book

(headwords) or different books assisted the eye movement to become faster while reading, and consequently their reading became rapid.

All the students in this current study perceived the positive role of ER in increasing their reading fluency, and they revealed that reading all the graded readers helped them to become fluent readers. For example, S3 commented in his diary, *“Regular reading is making me a fluent reader. I can clearly see the difference between the beginning of the programme and now. It is very promising.”* Also, S10 wrote in his diary, *“I was really slow [reader] but after reading more books, my reading speed is getting much better and I think this is because of the good and easy books we are reading.”*

Similarly, in a recent EFL study, carried out by He (2014) to probe any increases in Chinese senior high school students’ reading fluency as a result of ER, and after having two groups (i.e., control group and treatment group), the results of the study showed a positive relationship between ER and students’ progress in reading speed.

Secondly, and in the same vein as the first reason mentioned above, automaticity occurs with practice and repetition (i.e., in texts and environments in which repetition occurs more frequently). When the exposure to the texts, letter combinations, structures and same lexical items is consistent and more frequent, the probability for automaticity in reading to occur becomes higher. The proficiency level at which the students read is important in this context; repetition is less frequent as the proficiency level is higher (Belgar & Hunt, 2014). This signifies that automaticity occurs faster in lower-level processing. The large amount of repeated structures, words and letter combinations that exist in lower-level graded readers might be of great benefit to students with lower proficiency levels, such as those in this current study, because this might have provided them with greater opportunities to have control over linguistic forms. The students in this study read lower-intermediate graded readers (i.e., level 3 and few level 4 graded readers), in which words were encountered more frequently. One student (S6) commented in her diary that *“many words in the books we are reading are repeated and that makes it easier to memorise the words and read them fast the next time we read the same words.”* Proof for this possible reason could be obtained from Hort’s (2009) study, which concluded that even small amounts of lower-level ER (3 graded readers), with

words encountered 15 times or more in a text, could result in reading speed gains and automaticity.

Thirdly, the freedom to choose graded readers or any other reading materials is one of the biggest differences that lie between ER and IR. Having provided the students in this study with a large display of different graded readers with various titles and genres (see 4.5.1), and having offered them the freedom to choose the books that interested them to read was a contributing factor in developing their reading speed. Graded readers can play an important role in increasing FL/L2 learners' reading speed (Tamrackitkun, 2010; Jacobs, 2014). Reading appropriate graded readers, whether in terms of language level or attraction, consistently for three months made their reading fluent without constant stops. The graded readers, chosen by the students based on their interests and proficiency level, also equipped the students with a reading fluency practice for a long time. To support this conclusion, one of the students commented:

I used to read slowly because the books were always either difficult or boring, I am so glad that these graded readers are easy with different genres; this gives me more options to choose the books that suit my interests and tastes for reading. This made my reading faster. (S1)

This typical response indicates the student's realisation of the importance of graded readers in her reading speed gains.

Fourthly, another possible reason is that the students' decreased anxiety and increased motivation about reading in the target language, after experiencing ER for three months, may have contributed to more reading fluency (see 5.5). When the students joined the ER programme, they reported positive feelings, in their diaries, about the new experience. Then, they were provided with appropriate and easy materials, which had a significant effect in lowering their anxiety (see 5.5.2). This, in turn, may have helped to increase the students' reading speed. For example, one student (S9) commented in his diary, *"This course cleared all the fear to read in English. I feel more confident and that makes me read more without stopping."* This shows that it is possible that the students' decreased anxiety about reading in English may have facilitated their reading speed improvement. Anxiety hinders language learning and reduces students' reading speed (Ro, 2013). Thus, the students' lowered anxiety, in this study, may have increased their reading fluency.

Fifthly, the students' reading speed could also have been affected by the increased reading strategies used by the students in this study (see 5.3). Students, throughout the programme, read a large number of graded readers, which led them to develop their reading strategies, the more they read. Reading fluency increases when students acquire more reading strategies; in a way they know how to negotiate the best way for reading that suits their goals (Grabe, 2009). In this study, students started to use the dictionary less and less; some students abandoned the dictionary completely. They also started to read for pleasure, with less care about the details in the books. In addition, they relied on predicting the meanings of unfamiliar words, along with employing different reading strategies. Students started to use these reading strategies repeatedly and unconsciously; this has helped to create strategic readers (Suk, 2015). Students developed different reading strategies, through the ER programme, which appeared to have increased their reading fluency. This result could be interpreted in a complementary, parallel way: when students started to read faster, their reading strategies increased (see 5.3).

In his study, Cirocki (2009) applied ER for five months in a secondary school classroom. Twenty students participated in the study and they all used graded readers. He administered reading speed pre- and post-tests to examine the effect of ER on the participants' reading speed. The results of the study indicated a substantial improvement in the students' reading speed. In the same vein, Belgar and Hunt (2014) investigated the effect of pleasure reading (i.e., ER) on the amount of reading and the types of texts read by 14 Japanese university students. The findings of the study showed that the most successful participants read more than their peers, in addition to gains in their reading rate. Another interesting finding was that simplified graded readers provided significantly better results than unsimplified texts. These results from both studies support the findings in this study that ER helped students to improve their reading speed; the more the students read the faster they became. Also, Belgar and Hunt's (2014) study supports the claim in this study that graded readers play a significant role in increasing the students' reading speed.

In summary, after experiencing ER for 12 weeks, all the participating students increased their reading speed. The increase happened coincidentally when ER was applied, which suggests that the students' reading fluency increase happened as a result of ER. Reading scholars stress that development and increase in reading

fluency comes after reading large amounts of easy and interesting reading input (Day et al., 2011). Both qualitative and quantitative results, in this study, indicate that ER helped all students to increase their reading fluency through reading abundant and interesting reading input. This finding supports the findings from previous research about ER effectiveness in increasing students' reading speed (Bell, 2001; Day & Hitosugi, 2004; Cirocki, 2009; Beglar & Hunt, 2014; Huffman, 2014).

With this in mind, the impact of ER also goes further to improve students' vocabulary knowledge, as will be explored next.

5.2. ER in expanding Jordanian EFL students' vocabulary knowledge

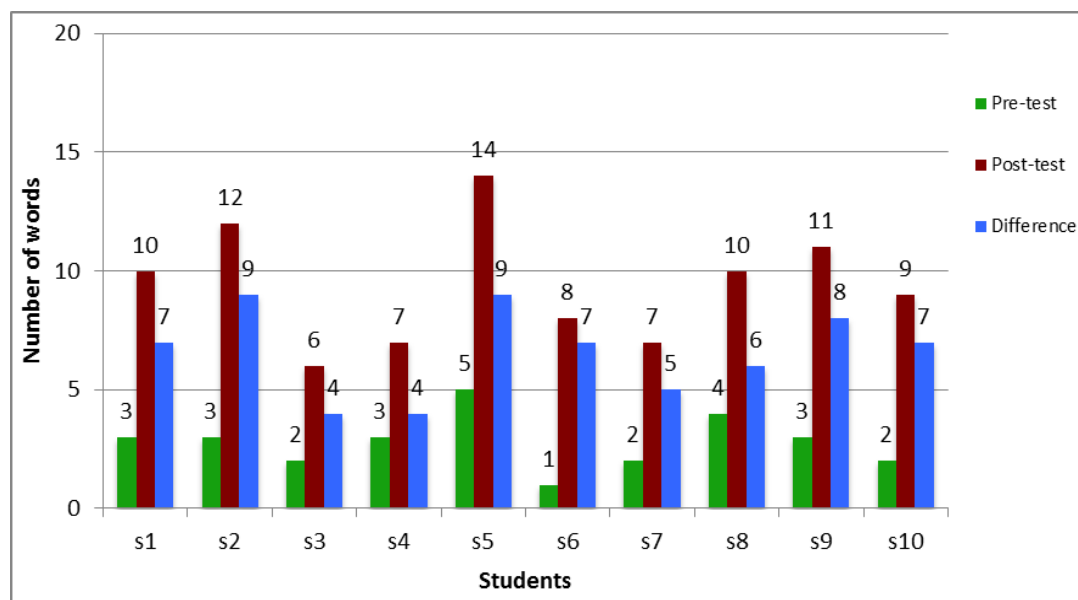
As discussed before, ER played a major role in increasing the Jordanian EFL students' reading speed. After running the reading speed tests, supplemented by other means such as the interviews and diaries, the results showed a reading speed increase in all cases with no exception.

To further investigate the impact of ER on other skills, this section presents the findings and discussions related to the extent to which ER would increase the Jordanian EFL students' vocabulary knowledge. To answer this research question, three vocabulary tests (see 4.6.1.1) were administered; each of which checked the students' knowledge of 20 words from the class readers assigned to them each month for three subsequent months. Since it is a mixed methods research, qualitative tools were also employed to supplement the results of the tests and provide a better understanding of the issue. This section also presents the qualitative findings extracted from the students' book reports, interviews and diaries. Then, discussing the findings to check if they answered the research question and what they entail, comes next.

To start with, the results of the first vocabulary test are shown below in Table 5.5 and Figure 5.5.

Table 5.5. Results of vocabulary test 1

Student ID	Vocabulary Test 1 (Total number of words/20)		Δ	Percentage points $\Delta \%$
	PRE	POST		
S1	3	10	7	35
S2	3	12	9	45
S3	2	6	4	20
S4	3	7	4	20
S5	5	14	9	45
S6	1	8	7	35
S7	2	7	5	25
S8	4	10	6	30
S9	3	11	8	40
S10	2	9	7	35
Mean	2.8	9.4	6.6	33
Σ			66	
SD			1.83	

**Figure 5.5.** Results of vocabulary test 1

The above table and graph display the results of the first vocabulary test achieved by the students at the pre and post-test stages, in addition to the individual gains.

Having applied a paired t-test on the results of pre- and post-tests, the results were

statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), so there was a meaningful difference. Clearly, all students acquired new words after having experienced ER for one month. The number of newly acquired words in this test ranged from four (S3 and S4) to nine words (S2 and S5). The total sum of the newly acquired words for all students amounted to 66, which makes the mean number of newly acquired words by students as 6.6, whereas the SD equalled 1.83. In terms of percentage points, the mean percentage of the newly acquired words reached 33, ranging from 20% (S3 and S4) to 45% (S2 and S5).

Table 5.6 and Figure 5.6 illustrate the results of the second vocabulary test achieved by all learners at the pre- and post-test stages, which was conducted in the middle of the programme.

Table 5.6. Results of vocabulary test 2

Student ID	Vocabulary Test 2 (Total number of words/20)		Δ	Percentage points Δ %
	PRE	POST		
S1	3	9	6	30
S2	4	13	9	45
S3	2	10	8	40
S4	1	9	8	40
S5	5	15	10	50
S6	4	12	8	40
S7	4	14	10	50
S8	4	11	7	35
S9	3	11	8	40
S10	2	9	7	35
Mean	3.2	11.3	8.1	40.5
		Σ	81	
		SD	1.28	

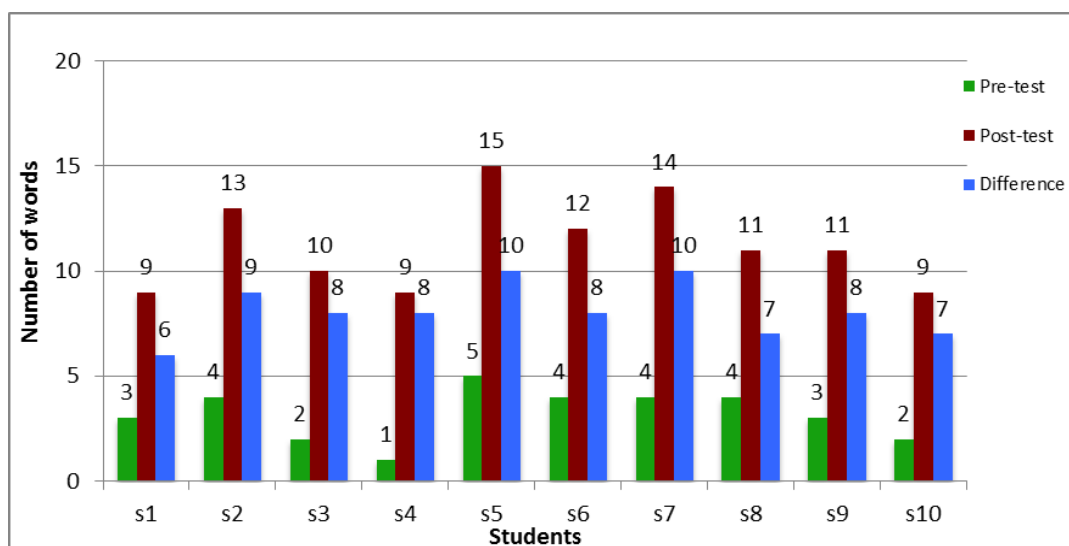


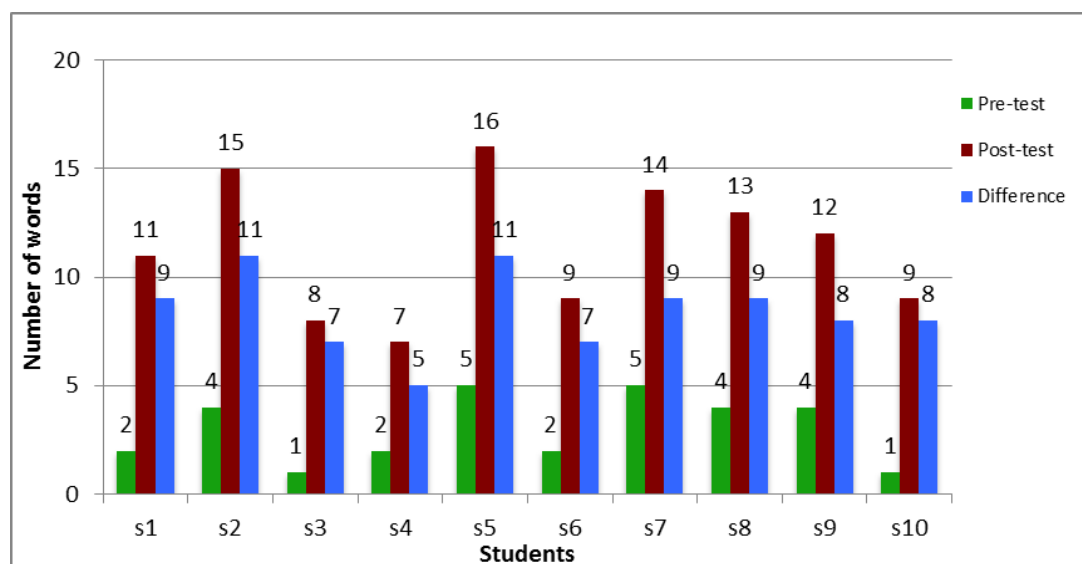
Figure 5.6. Results of vocabulary test 2

According to the results shown in the above table and figure, all students without exception increased their vocabulary knowledge in the second test, and the t-test result showed a statistically significant increase in vocabulary knowledge from pre-to- post-tests ($p < 0.05$). The number of new words gained in vocabulary test 2 ranged from six (S1) to ten (S5 and S7). The mean vocabulary growth in the second vocabulary test totalled 8.1, with a total sum of 81 newly acquired words for all students, whereas the SD amounted to 1.28. The mean vocabulary growth, in percentage points, equalled 40.5%, ranging from 30% (S1) to 50% (S5 and S7). Comparing the difference in vocabulary growth between this test and the first vocabulary test, it is noted that the vocabulary gains in this test (i.e., vocabulary test 2) increased by 7.5%, whilst the SD decreased by 0.55, respectively.

The results of the last vocabulary test are displayed in Table 5.7 and Figure 5.7.

Table 5.7. Results of vocabulary test 3

Student ID	Vocabulary Test 3 (Total number of words/20)		Δ	Percentage points Δ %
	PRE	POST		
S1	2	11	9	45
S2	4	15	11	55
S3	1	8	7	35
S4	2	7	5	25
S5	5	16	11	55
S6	2	9	7	35
S7	5	14	9	45
S8	4	13	9	45
S9	4	12	8	40
S10	1	9	8	40
Mean	3	11.4	8.4	42
Σ			84	
SD			1.83	

**Figure 5.7.** Results of vocabulary test 3

Both the table and the figure above illustrate that all the students gained new words again and enhanced their vocabulary knowledge. The paired t-test result also showed that the results of vocabulary test 3 (pre- and post-tests) were statistically

significant ($p < 0.05$); thus, the difference was meaningful. The number of newly acquired words ranged from five (S4) to eleven (S2 and S5). The results shown in Table 5.7 and Figure 5.7 also reveal that the mean vocabulary growth in the last test equalled 8.4, with a total sum of 84 newly acquired words for all students, whereas the standard deviation amounted to 1.83. The difference in vocabulary growth compared to the first and second tests increased by 9% and 1.5%, respectively. What is more, the SD in vocabulary test 3 was the same as in vocabulary test 1, but it decreased by 0.55 in vocabulary test 2. These statistics show that students in this test received the highest scores of all the other tests, varying from 25 % to 55 %.

To have a detailed overview of the students' vocabulary growth after experiencing ER for three months, Table 5.8 and Figure 5.8 provide the average scores in all tests for each individual.

Table 5.8. Average results of all vocabulary tests

Student ID	All Vocabulary Tests (Total number of words/20)		Δ	Percentage points Δ %
	PRE	POST		
S1	2.66	10	7.33	36.66
S2	3.66	13.33	9.66	48.31
S3	1.66	8	6.33	31.66
S4	2	7.66	5.66	28.3
S5	5	15	10	50
S6	2.33	9.66	7.32	36.63
S7	3.66	11.66	7.99	39.96
S8	4	11.33	7.33	36.65
S9	3.33	11.33	7.99	39.98
S10	1.66	9	7.33	36.66
Mean	3	10.69	7.69	38.48
SD			1.32	

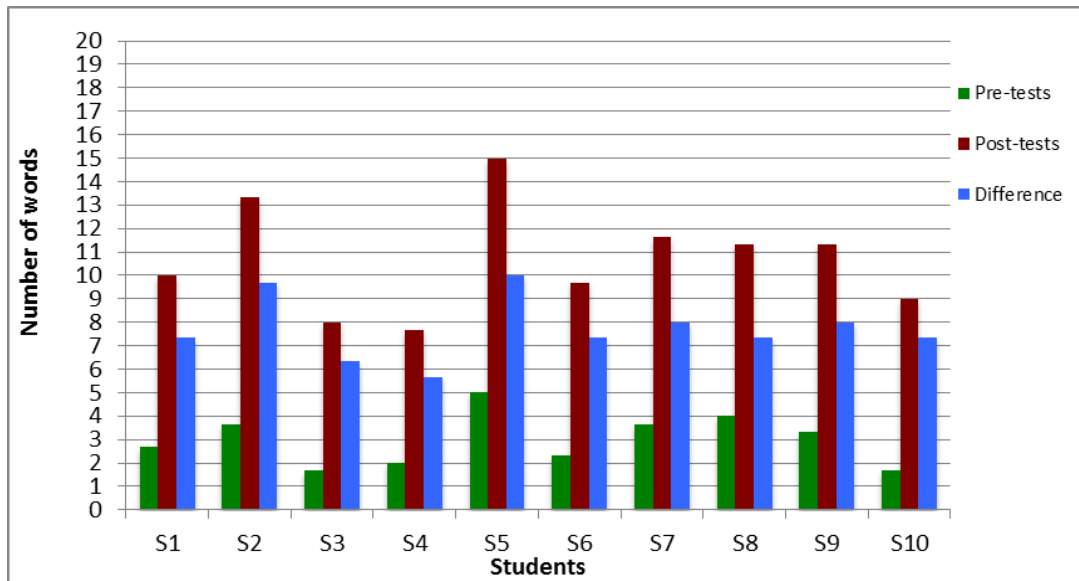


Figure 5.8. Average results of all vocabulary tests

The results displayed in Table 5.8 and Figure 5.8 demonstrate that vocabulary knowledge increased in all cases. The statistical results also showed that there was a significant increase in the students' vocabulary knowledge after experiencing the ER programme for three months ($p < 0.05$). The best result was achieved by S5 with an average increase of ten newly acquired words per month, and the poorest one was achieved by S4 with an average increase of 5.66 newly acquired words per month. The students' mean growth of vocabulary amounted to 7.69 newly gained words per month (38.48%), whereas the SD equalled 1.32.

The results so far represent the students' achievements in each vocabulary test and the average of all tests. However, to interrogate the data more, Figure 5.9 tracks the individual students' vocabulary knowledge improvement (in percentage points) over the three tests.

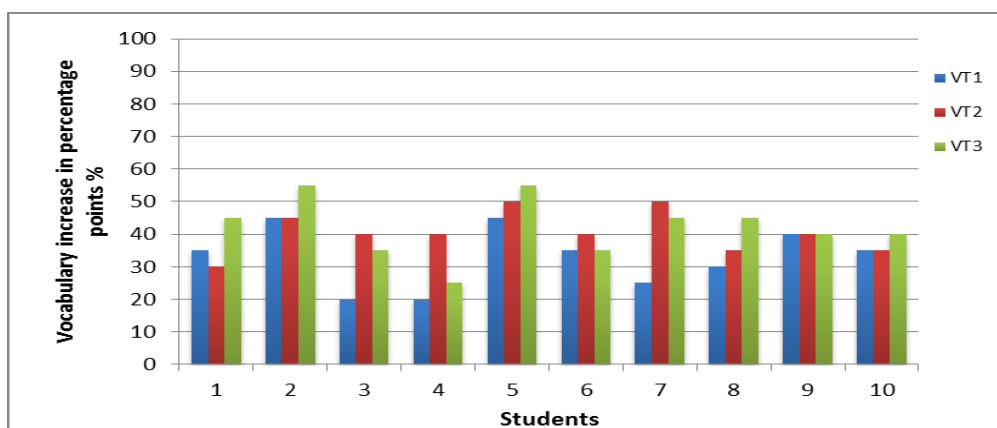


Figure 5.9. Students' vocabulary increase in percentage points over the three tests

The above figure illustrates that all the students gained new words and expanded their vocabulary knowledge over the three tests. The exact numbers, in detail, for the students' mean vocabulary increase over the three tests have already been displayed and explained earlier in this section. Figure 5.9 shows that there is a positive correlation between the students' vocabulary increase and the progress of the ER programme. For example, the correlation between the first and second tests was positive but not very significant ($r= 0.15$), while the correlation between the second and third tests showed more positivity ($r= 0.35$). As for the correlation between the first test and the third test, the results showed that there was a significantly positive correlation between the two tests ($r= 0.74$). The results of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient clearly showed that the more the students progressed in the programme, the better vocabulary improvement they obtained.

To have a closer look at the statistics, the mean percentage points for students' vocabulary increase over the three tests are shown in the figure below.

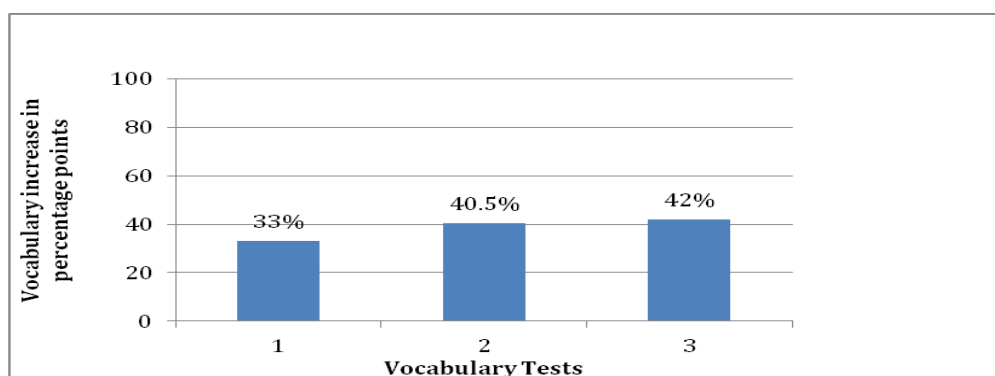


Figure 5.10. All students' vocabulary increase over the three tests

Figure 5.10 indicates that the mean vocabulary increases (from pre- to post-ER), in terms of percentage points, in the three tests were as follows, in order: 33%, 40.5% and 42%. This shows that the increase was steady as students progressed in the programme. Consequently, this suggests that ER needs more time to be more effective, and that the vocabulary knowledge improvement will become more visible over time. In other words, the longer an ER programme is, the more the students' improvements are noticed.

It is noteworthy that the results in Table 5.8 do not reflect the exact number of all new words gained either monthly or in the whole ER programme. In other words,

every test checked the knowledge of 20 lexical items chosen from the three class readers students read during each month. In terms of quantity of reading and the number of new words acquired, two issues must be clarified here. The first is that all students read three class readers every month, and choosing 20 items from these class readers to check, does not represent the whole number of new lexical items acquired, as there might be many other new words acquired from these class readers, which it is not possible to check. The second point is that students did not only read class readers. Aside from class readers, they had the freedom to grab whatever books they fancied reading. That also leaves the number of new words acquired from these graded readers unknown. To make the best effort in discovering the approximate number of new words acquired during the whole study, students were asked to write in their book reports the new words acquired after each book they read. The number of books read (i.e., class readers and graded readers), in addition to the number of newly gained words for each student are shown below in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9. The number of books read and the newly acquired words for each participant

Student ID	Number of books	Number of newly acquired words
S1	20	118
S2	26	151
S3	16	94
S4	15	90
S5	32	106
S6	19	102
S7	22	126
S8	18	97
S9	23	117
S10	19	108
Min/Max	15/32	90/151
Mean	21	110.9

According to the above table, S4 and S3 were the ones who read the least, 15 and 16 books, whilst S5 and S2 were the ones who read the most, 32 and 26 books. Taking into account that books here mean graded readers, level 3 mostly, with a few

level 4 graded readers were provided as well. The headword count for these two levels varies between 801 and 1,250 headwords, according to the Extensive Reading Foundation Grading Scale (2011). Table 5.9 supports the conclusion that reading enhances students' vocabulary knowledge and develops it. In this study, the table above shows that the more the students read, the more words they gained. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was calculated to assess the relationship between the amount of reading and acquiring new words. There was a positive correlation between the amount of reading and acquiring new words ($r=0.53$). However, as for the case of S5, the number of new words acquired was not on a parallel line with the amount of reading. It could be that she had a bigger vocabulary repertoire than the other students, as she scored the highest in the vocabulary pre-tests; thus, the number of new words encountered was less, compared with the number of books she read.

Evidence from qualitative data supports this positive correlation (i.e., between the amount of reading and the new words gained). The majority of the students felt a sense of achievement regarding their vocabulary knowledge because of reading. For example, one student, in the middle of the programme, wrote in his diary:

After reading many books, I think now that I have an insight about the importance of extensive reading in improving my vocabulary. If we read more, our vocabulary will eventually improve without realising that. (S9)

This student was aware of the essentiality of reading in expanding his vocabulary knowledge. Another student (S7) commented in her diary, "*Reading helped me a lot in knowing new words without making effort to memorise. It is like [an] automatic process. When I read more, I increase my words more.*" This student's comment refers to an important aspect that the students admired about ER; that was the automaticity of learning new words as they read (see 2.2), without using the traditional way of memorising words, mainly out of context.

The statistical data of all the vocabulary tests in this research suggest that ER enhances and increases EFL students' vocabulary acquisition. This conclusion is also supported by qualitative data collected from interviews, diaries, book reports, and the videotaped session.

To investigate whether ER met the students' expectations in increasing their vocabulary knowledge, I asked them if this was so in the second interview after the

ER programme finished. S2 and S5, whose scores were the highest in vocabulary tests, recounted:

I am really thankful to ER, because my vocabulary increased in a remarkable way. I was writing all the new unknown words, I encountered, on the book reports and also on a notebook I bought for this. The good thing about these books we read is that they insert these words more than once in the book, so when we see the word regularly and in different places [contexts] we memorize it. (S2)

As for my vocabulary, I can simply say that there is a big difference in my vocabulary knowledge between now and three months ago. It definitely increased. I also never tried to memorise words like before, even with that my vocabulary increased. (S5)

The above two comments illustrate the satisfactory role ER played in increasing the students' lexical knowledge. Their answers support the conclusion that ER could enhance EFL students' vocabulary knowledge. Similarly, S8 also commented:

I gained vocabulary in different fields since I read different books with different genres and topics, such as: insect, raft, sting, dissolve, absorb, chemical reaction, segregation and many others.

This also demonstrates the importance of having various reading materials available to students, so they increase their vocabulary knowledge in different fields and topics and this, in turn, would lead to enhancing their fluency in all other skills.

The students were given the freedom to choose the way they wanted to practise the new words from reading extensively. However, I suggested that they could do so through writing down any unfamiliar words either on their book reports, which were supposed to be submitted after each book they read (see 4.6.3), or through taking notes and keeping them in an external notebook. These two ways would enhance their lexical knowledge even further. This point was clarified in the diary of S1, saying:

I finished "Sense and Sensibility" and I learned many new words such as: greedy, anxiously, priest, handkerchief, amusing, pills, and sensible... I found it very helpful that I

went through these words many times while I was reading the novel, and to make more practice, the teacher asked us to fill in the book reports after we finish reading any book. So, I also wrote these words in the book report because there is a section to fill for new words we learn. (S1)

The above comment demonstrates two points: the first is that the student realised the effectiveness of graded readers as a tool for learning new and unfamiliar words as the target words were encountered many times in different contexts and so the chances for gaining new words were high (Hill, 2008); the second point is that the student viewed book reports as exercises, which made them more interesting, rather than as obligatory assignments.

In a more practical approach to observe any development, it is logical to ask whether ER helped the students to perform better on vocabulary tests. To obtain a deeper view on the correlation between the amount of ER reported and the performance on vocabulary tests in this study, Table 5.10 and Figure 5.11 display the number of books read by each student and their mean results in all vocabulary tests, in addition to the correlation between the two variables.

Table 5.10. Number of books read and vocabulary results

Student ID	Number of books	Average results of all vocabulary tests
S1	20	7.33
S2	26	9.66
S3	16	6.33
S4	15	5.66
S5	32	10
S6	19	7.32
S7	22	7.99
S8	18	7.33
S9	23	7.99
S10	19	7.33

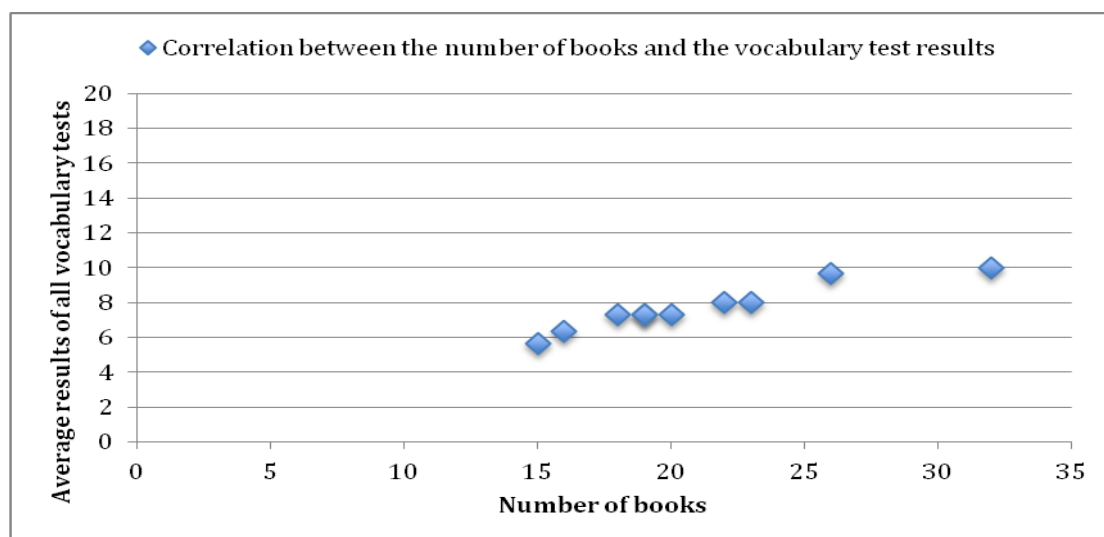


Figure 5.11. Correlation between the number of books read and vocabulary tests results

To analyse the above table and figure, knowing the reading target for each student is necessary here. Students were encouraged to read as much as possible right from the beginning of the programme, and the encouragement continued until the end. Encouraging students to like reading was a priority for me, believing in that as an essential step to the success of any ER programme (Jacobs, 2014). Therefore, students were encouraged to read two books a month, in addition to their class readers (three books a month). This makes five books a month as a minimum target of reading per individual, which means 15 books for the whole programme as a minimum target of reading for each student (see 4.5).

As can be seen in Table 5.10 and Figure 5.11, there was a highly positive and significant correlation between the amount of reading and the students' performance in vocabulary tests; the result of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was positively high and almost in a perfect linear fashion ($r= 0.95$): the more the students read, the better they achieved in vocabulary tests. S5 and S2, who read the most among their colleagues equalling 32 and 26 books, achieved the highest scores in vocabulary tests amounting to 10 and 9.66 newly acquired words per month, as mean results of all their vocabulary tests. Moreover, S4 and S3, who read the least among their colleagues equalling 15 and 16 books, scored the lowest in vocabulary tests with 5.66 and 6.33 newly acquired words.

The data in Table 5.10 show that the lowest vocabulary gains were achieved by students who read the least (S4, S3), whilst the highest gains were achieved by students who read the most (S5, S2). Medium-proficiency readers achieved

medium gains. In this respect, this study demonstrates that the more the students read, the better they perform in vocabulary tests (Koda, 2005; Suk, 2015). Krashen (1989) notes that children and adults who score better in vocabulary tests report more free leisure reading. An interesting observation was noted about the correlation between the students' vocabulary results and the ER programme, in this study. The students performed better in their vocabulary results when they spent more time reading extensively. Their vocabulary results gradually improved and the results of the third month were better than those of the first and second months. This observation is similar to those in Cirocki (2009) and Soltani's (2011) studies, where both studies report similar findings, in regard to the correlation between the reading quantity and the achievement on vocabulary tests. Similar results were also reported in Pereyra's (2015) study. Pereyra did an action research to investigate the effect of ER on the acquisition of lexical chunks and vocabulary in seven EFL Spanish students. After employing a quantitative method, using pre-and-post tests, the results showed that ER could improve the students' lexical knowledge. Moreover, the study concluded that the more the students spent time reading, the better their results in the vocabulary and lexical chunks test.

Reading a lot is the main characteristic of ER, which contributes to the development of learners' sight vocabulary and expanding vocabulary knowledge through repeated encountering of individual words over and over again (Horst, 2005; Grabe, 2011; Senoo & Yonemoto, 2014). Students, in this study, reported a significant improvement in their vocabulary knowledge; different factors could explain this improvement.

The consistent exposure to large amounts of reading materials could be a possible effective factor that contributed to improving the students' incidental vocabulary knowledge. Graded readers offered a great help to the students by exposing the students to easy and interesting written input that could facilitate the vocabulary learning process (Nation, 2013). Through reading many graded readers, the students encountered repeatedly many of the same or similar English words; these multiple encounters may also have facilitated acquiring new English words or aided in retaining knowledge of already forgotten words. Graded readers were useful for learning new and unfamiliar words as the target words were encountered many times in different contexts and so the chances for gaining the

unfamiliar words were high (Hill, 2008). Evidence from the students' diaries and the videotaped session supports this conclusion. For instance, S4 wrote in her diary, "*Sometimes I see the same word many times in the same book, so I automatically learn the word, and this is the best thing about graded readers.*"

Another student commented the following in the videotaped session:

I am learning words more quickly with less effort ... For example, I learnt new words from the book King Lear, such as: devil, bow, knight, villain, ... without trying to write them many times in order to memorise them. I just read the book and the interesting thing was that these words and others were repeated many times in the book, so you easily learn the words just by reading. (S6)

The students' comments above, whether in their diaries, interviews or the videotaped session, support the claim that ER increases incidental vocabulary knowledge through multiple encounters with the same words over a long period of time, which facilitate incidental vocabulary acquisition (Horst, 2005; Grabe, 2009; Krashen, 2011; Nation, 2013).

The second reason for the major role of ER in increasing the students' vocabulary knowledge, in the current study, may be attributed to the different measurement used. The students, in this study, were assessed using vocabulary tests, in which their items were taken directly from the graded readers; this provides fairness in the sense that students might have encountered these items while reading their graded readers. Few studies have focused on assessing the words that students might have encountered while reading extensively (e.g., Horst, 2005; Cirocki, 2009). By contrast, the majority of studies that have investigated the effects of ER on vocabulary increase used general vocabulary tests, in which their items might not have been encountered by the student who read extensively (e.g., Al-Homoud & Schmitt, 2009; Yamamoto, 2011).). Those tests, in turn, might not have reflected the real effect of ER on vocabulary acquisition, or the words the students gained, because they used a large number of words that the student might not have encountered through ER. Thus, their results might not have shown the effects of ER on vocabulary knowledge accurately. As for this study, the words used in the vocabulary tests were all taken from the most frequent words included in the graded readers the students had. This could imply

that the vocabulary tests used in this study might have been more effective than other measurements used in different studies.

Another possible factor that led to the students' enhanced vocabulary knowledge could be their reading strategies development. This cause and effect relationship could also be the other way round; when students used more reading strategies, their vocabulary knowledge improved. Students increased their reading strategies over time, probably as the ER programme progressed; some of them even invented and developed reading strategies that suited their reading and learning styles (see 5.3). Guessing the meanings of words and consulting glossaries were among the reading strategies that were developed and used by the students while reading extensively. The students also employed other strategies, such as writing down or highlighting new words. These strategies might have assisted the students to acquire new words or retain knowledge of partially known words (Nishino, 2007). Students' gains in vocabulary knowledge could also be attributed to other factors, such as the students' lowered anxiety and increased motivation, as explained above (see 5.1).

This study reveals that ER could help the learners to expand their vocabulary knowledge, since the learners were exposed and surrounded by "a large amount of comprehensible input" (Cirocki, 2009, p.541). It was also noted that learning vocabulary through ER could be an efficient approach, because vocabulary acquisition and reading happen at the same time. Consequently, this facilitates learning new lexical items in their context of use and develops sight vocabulary. The results of this study support this conclusion and the findings of other studies (e.g., Thornbury, 2002; Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Judge, 2011; Senoo & Yonemoto, 2014). The findings, in this study, are also in line with a previous research study by Pazhakh and Soltani (2010), in which they carried out a study on 80 EFL students (i.e., a control group and an experimental group) to examine if ER enhances vocabulary learning. The results of their study showed that the ER approach could result in substantial vocabulary improvement and learners' development in vocabulary knowledge, because of the consistent and adequate exposure to easy and comprehensible input.

In summary, the results of the vocabulary tests used in this study, to investigate the ER impact on vocabulary knowledge, showed an increase in all students' vocabulary knowledge. The increase happened coincidentally when ER

was applied, which suggests that the students' vocabulary knowledge increase happened as a result of ER and being exposed to an abundant, interesting reading input.

5.3. ER in developing Jordanian EFL students' reading strategies

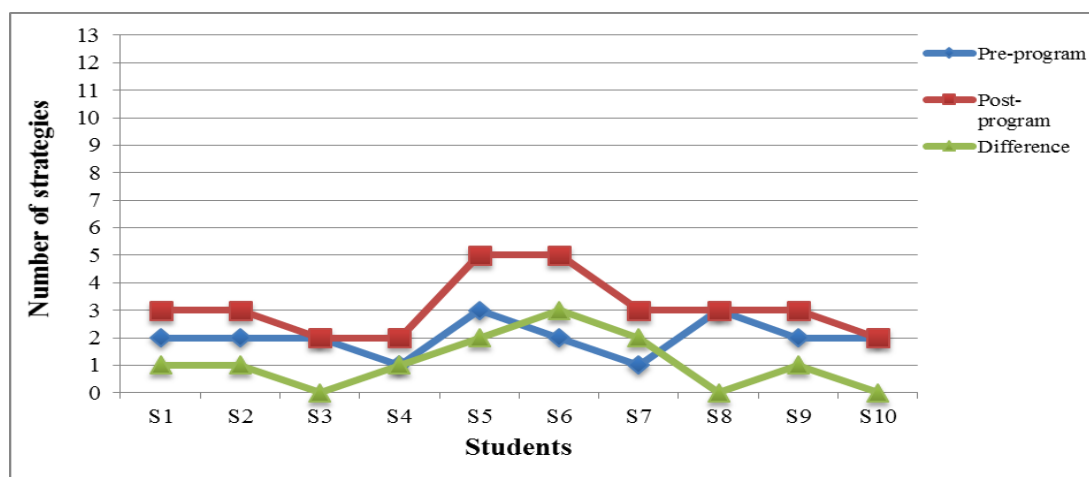
Having explained the significant role ER played in improving Jordanian EFL students' reading speed and vocabulary knowledge, this section seeks to investigate the number of and which reading strategies were used by EFL students while reading extensively, and whether ER increased their reading strategies. To achieve the goal of this investigation, a reading strategies checklist was used, which included three parts: reading strategies before reading, while reading and after reading (see 4.6.2 and Appendix F).

The total number of the reading strategies given to the students in the checklist was 50. To be precise, they were distributed in the checklist as 13 strategies before reading, 25 while reading and 12 after reading. In addition, they were asked to write any reading strategies they used, which were not included in the checklist.

First, the difference in the reading strategies used by the students before reading, at both the pre- and post-programme stages, is presented below (see Table 5.11 and Figure 5.12).

Table 5.11. Reading strategies before reading

RSs before reading	Student ID	Reading strategies (RS) before reading		Δ	Δ % Percentage points
		PRE	POST		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think about the book cover ___1___, title ___2___ and topic ___3___ to predict and support predictions. I use brainstorming to activate my prior knowledge and experiences about topics ___4___ and vocabulary ___5___ to improve comprehension. I use pictures ___6___, title ___7___, topic ___8___ and chapter or section headings ___9___ to generate meaningful questions. I think about what I know about the topic ___10___. I create mental pictures of words and concepts ___11___. I identify important text features and text genre ___12___, and use this information to predict and set purposes ___13___. 	S1	2 (RS: 1,10)	3 (RS: 1,10,11)	1	7.69
	S2	2 (RS: 2,13)	3 (RS: 2,4,13)	1	7.69
	S3	2 (RS: 1,2)	2 (RS: 1,2)	0	0
	S4	1 (RS: 2)	2 (RS: 2,10)	1	7.69
	S5	3 (RS: 1,2,10)	5 (RS: 1,2,4,6,10)	2	15.38
	S6	2 (RS: 2,8)	5 (RS: 2,4,5,8,11)	3	23.07
	S7	1 (RS: 1)	3 (RS: 1,4,11)	2	15.38
	S8	3 (RS: 2,3,9)	3 (RS: 2,3,9)	0	0
	S9	2 (RS: 2,10)	3 (RS: 2,4,10)	1	7.69
	S10	2 (RS: 1,11)	2 (RS: 1,11)	0	0
	Mean	2	3.1	1.1	8.46
		Σ		11	
		SD		0.73	

**Figure 5.12.** Reading strategies before reading

Both Table 5.11 and Figure 5.12 present the number of reading strategies before reading, used by the students at the pre- and post-programme stages, as well as the individual gains. In the columns at the pre- and post-stages for each student, the numbers represent the number of reading strategies used by each student, and the numbers between brackets represent what reading strategies exactly were used by each student, which are presented in the first column. As observed from the results shown in the table and figure above, the number of the students' reading strategies before reading was modest since the largest number of reading strategies used at the pre-stage was only three reading strategies (S5, S8) and the smallest number was one reading strategy (S4, S7), while the largest number of reading strategies, at the post-stage, was five (S5, S6) and the smallest was two (S3, S4, S10). The most reading strategies used before reading at the pre-stage were strategy number 1 (five students) and strategy number 2 (seven students); the same strategies were also used the most at the post-stage, in addition to a new and more sophisticated strategy, which was strategy number 4 (five students).

The increase in the reading strategies before reading was statistically significant, as t-test was applied on the results of pre-programme and post-programme and showed a meaningful difference ($p < 0.05$); however, it was a zero % increase in three cases (S3, S8 and S10). The number of newly acquired reading strategies before reading ranged from zero (S3, S8 and 10) to three (S6). The mean reading strategies growth in the checklist equalled 1.1, with a total sum of 11 newly acquired reading strategies before reading for all students, whereas the SD amounted to 0.73. The mean reading strategies increase equalled 8.46%, ranging from 0 to 23.07 %.

The second section of the reading strategies checklist was 'reading strategies while reading', which included the highest number of strategies among the other sections (25 reading strategies). The results of the second section are illustrated in Table 5.12 and Figure 5.13.

Table 5.12. Reading strategies while reading

RSs while reading	Student ID	Reading strategies while reading		Δ	Δ % Percentage points
		PRE	POST		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I check to see if I understand what I am reading ____1____. I change purposes for reading a text, such as rereading, reading for pleasure or reading to collect information ____2____. I use text to support predictions and to confirm and adjust them ____3____. I guess the meanings of unfamiliar words from context ____4____. I link what I know in my first language with words in English ____5____. I take notes to help me recall important ideas ____6____. I connect to text using personal experience and background knowledge ____7____. I use dictionaries when a new word appears ____8____. I make mental pictures ____9____. I identify confusing parts ____10____. I identify unfamiliar words ____11____. I reread to understand confusing parts ____12____ and unfamiliar words ____13____. I use pictures ____14____, graphs ____15____, and charts ____16____ to help me understand confusing parts. I retell to check what I remember ____17____. I read the captions under and above photographs, charts, and graphs ____18____. I raise questions and read for answers ____19____. I break down long or confusing parts into small chunks to close read ____20____. I picture characters ____21____, places ____22____ and ideas ____23____. I consult glossaries ____24____. I summarise while I read ____25____. 	S1	5 (RS: 1,5,6,8,21)	12 (RS: 1,2,4,5,6,7,8,14,17,18,21,24)	7	28
	S2	8 (RS: 1,2,4,6,8,14,18,24)	17 (RS: 1,2,3,4,6,7,9,12,14,17,18,19,20,21,22,24,25)	9	36
	S3	5 (RS: 5,6,8,10,12)	11 (RS: 2,4,5,6,7,8,10,12,20,24,25)	6	24
	S4	4 (RS: 1,8,11,13)	9 (RS: 1,4,7,8,9,14,15,17,24)	5	20
	S5	9 (RS: 1,2,4,6,7,8,12,13,25)	19 (RS: 1,2,3,4,6,7,9,12,13,14,17,18,19,20,21,22,24,25, an external)	10	40
	S6	7 (RS: 1,4,5,8,20,22,24)	14 (RS: 2,4,5,6,7,9,12,13,16,20,21,22,24,25)	7	28
	S7	6 (RS: 3,8,9,17,19,21)	13 (RS: 1,2,3,4,6,9,10,12,14,17,19,21,24)	7	28
	S8	7 (RS: 1,2,7,8,17,19,24)	15 (RS: 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9,12,17,18,19,21,24, an external)	8	32
	S9	6 (RS: 2,8,12,13,17,24)	12 (RS: 2,3,4,7,9,12,13,17,18,20,21,24)	6	24
	S10	5 (RS: 1,8,13,18,21)	13 (RS: 1,2,4,6,7,8,17,18,19,20,21,24,25)	8	32
	Mean	6.2	13.5	7.3	29.2
Σ				73	
SD				1.49	

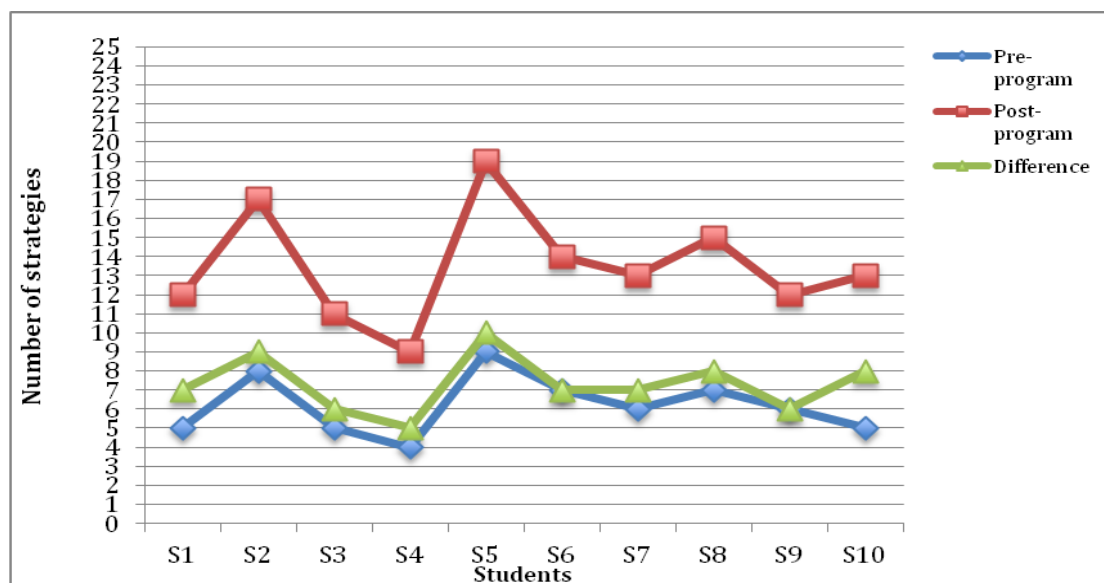


Figure 5.13 Reading strategies while reading

According to the statistics displayed in Table 5.12 and Figure 5.13, we can observe that all the students gained new reading strategies while reading. After running t-test on the results of the reading strategies used while reading before and after the programme, the increase in reading strategies while reading was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), so there was a meaningful difference. The highest number of reading strategies used while reading, at the pre-stage, was nine reading strategies (S5) and the smallest number was four reading strategies (S4), while the highest number of reading strategies, at the post-stage, was 19 (S5) and the smallest was 9 (S4). The most reading strategies used while reading at the pre-stage were strategies number 1 (seven students) and number 8 (ten students), while there was a shift in the reading strategies use while reading at the post-stage, as the students' most used strategies were strategies number 4, 24 (ten students) and 2, 7 (nine students). As for the word (an external), which was used in the above table twice, it refers to the use of reading strategies which were not included in the checklist and that were used by S5 and S8. These two reading strategies are explained later in this section.

Comparing the students' results at the pre- and post-programme stages, all students at least doubled their reading strategies. The number of newly acquired reading strategies in this section ranged from five (S4) to ten (S5) reading strategies while reading. The total sum of the newly gained reading strategies for all students equalled 73, which makes the mean number of newly acquired

reading strategies per student as 7.3, whereas the SD amounted to 1.49. The mean percentage of the newly acquired reading strategies reached 29.2, ranging from 20% (S4) to 40% (S5). Comparing the difference in reading strategies growth between this section i.e. reading strategies while reading and the previous one i.e. reading strategies before reading, it shows that the reading strategies gains in this section increased by 20.47% and the SD by 0.76, respectively.

The results of the last section, reading strategies after reading, are demonstrated in the table and figure below.

Table 5.13. Reading strategies after reading

RSs after reading	Student ID	Reading strategies after reading		Δ	Δ % Percentage points
		PRE	POST		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think about why I liked or did not like what I read ____1____. I return to the text to prove points during discussions and for written responses ____2____. I summarise what I read ____3____. I connect ideas and issues across texts ____4____. I make a story map ____5____. I make questions and answer them ____6____. I speak ____7____, draw ____8____, and/or write reactions ____9____. I reread favourite parts ____10____. I reread to find details ____11____. I predict what might happen to a character if the story continued ____12____. 	S1	2 (RS: 1,11)	3 (RS: 1,3,11)	1	8.33
	S2	4 (RS: 1,3,4,10)	8 (RS: 1,2,3,4,6,7,10,11,.)	4	33.33
	S3	1 (RS: 11)	3 (RS: 1,3,10)	2	16.66
	S4	1 (RS: 2)	2 (RS: 1,7)	1	8.33
	S5	3 (RS: 1,5,11)	6 (RS: 1,3,5,7,10,11)	3	25
	S6	1 (RS: 3)	4 (RS: 2,3,7,10)	3	25
	S7	2 (RS: 1,7)	4 (RS: 1,3,7,10)	2	16.16
	S8	4 (RS: 1,4,6,10)	7 (RS: 1,3,4,5,6,10,12)	3	25
	S9	3 (RS: 2,10,12)	6 (RS: 2,3,6,7,10,12)	3	25
	S10	1 (RS: 11)	4 (RS: 1,3,7,11)	3	25
	Mean	2.2	4.9	2.5	20.83
		Σ		25	
		SD		0.97	

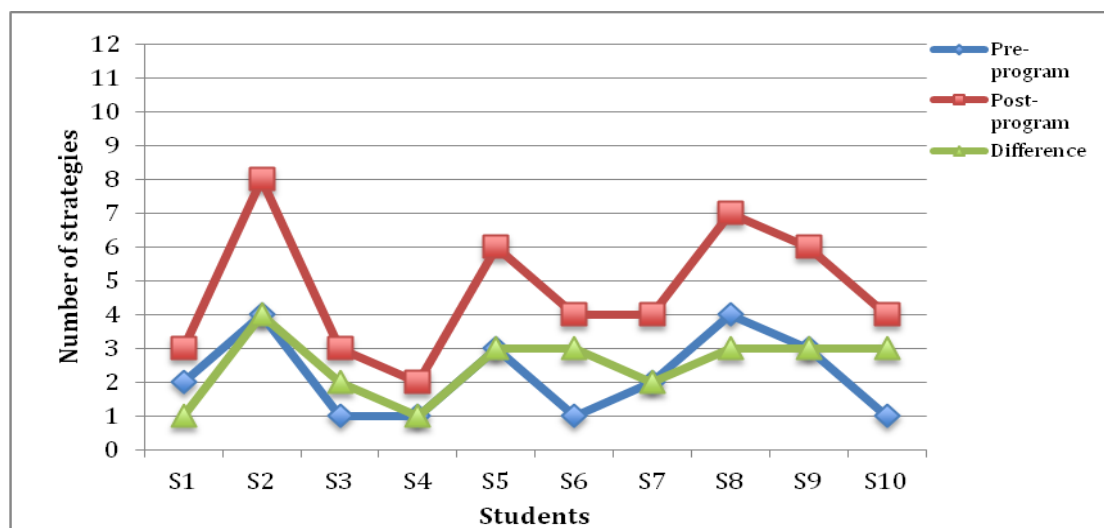


Figure 5.14. Reading strategies after reading

As can be seen from Table 5.13 and Figure 5.14, all the students with no exception enhanced their reading strategies after reading after the ER programme. After applying t-test on the results of the reading strategies used after reading before and after the programme, it showed that the increase in reading strategies after reading was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The largest number of reading strategies used after reading, at the pre-stage, was four reading strategies (S8) and the smallest number was one reading strategy (S3, S4, S6, S10), while the largest number of reading strategies, at the post-stage, was eight (S2) and the smallest was two (S4). The most reading strategies used after reading at the pre-stage were strategies number 1 (five students) and number 11 (four students), while there was a slight shift in the reading strategies used after reading at the post-stage, as the students' most used strategies were strategies number 1 (eight students) and number 10 (seven students).

The number of newly acquired strategies after reading ranged from one (S1 and S4) to four (S2) reading strategies. The mean reading strategies growth amounted to 2.5, with a mean percentage of 20.83% ranging from 8.33% to 33.33%, whereas the SD totalled 0.97. Comparing the strategies after reading increase with the first section, which is reading strategies before reading, the results reveal that both the mean strategies growth, as well as the SD increased by 12.37% in the former and 0.24 in the latter. However, comparing the reading strategies after reading growth with the reading strategies while reading growth,

we notice that both of the mean reading strategies growth and the SD decreased by 8.37% in the former and 0.52 in the latter.

From all the tables and figures presented above, we can summarise that students had the best achievements in increasing their reading strategies while reading, followed by reading strategies after reading and lastly reading strategies before reading. The SDs in all sections of reading strategies were not high, suggesting that the variations between students were small, with the lowest in reading strategies before reading amounting to 0.73, whilst the highest in reading strategies while reading equalled 1.49.

In order to have a more detailed overview of the students' reading strategies growth, Table 5.14 and Figure 5.15 display the total number of all the reading strategies used by students at the pre- and post-programme stages, in addition to their individual gains.

Table 5.14. All reading strategies before and after the ER programme

Student ID	All Reading strategies		Δ	$\Delta \%$
	PRE	POST		
S1	9	18	9	18
S2	14	28	14	28
S3	8	16	8	16
S4	6	13	7	14
S5	15	30	15	30
S6	10	23	13	26
S7	9	20	11	22
S8	14	27	13	26
S9	11	21	10	20
S10	8	19	11	22
Mean	10.4	21.5	11.1	22.2
		Σ	111	
		SD	2.64	

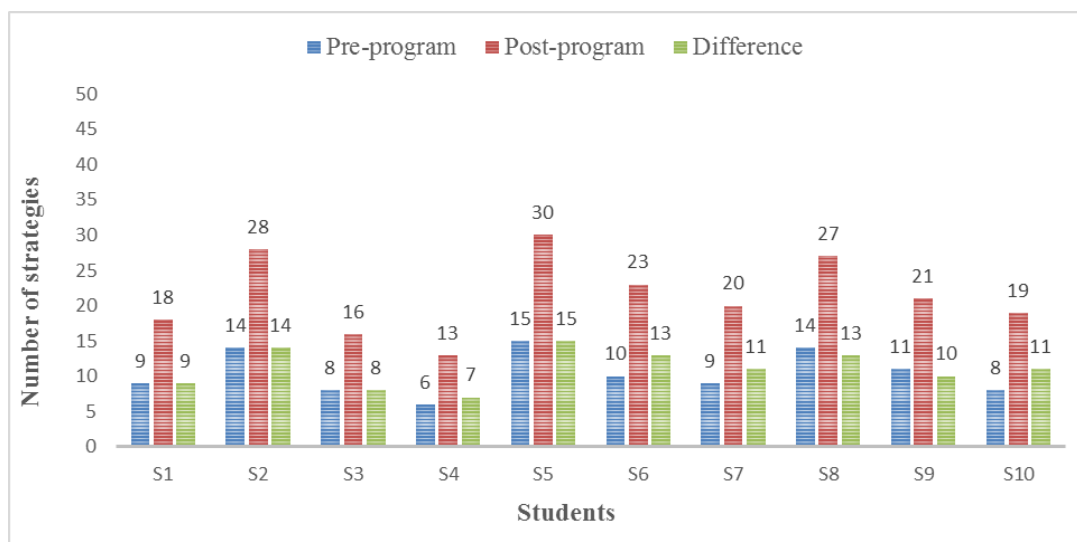


Figure 5.15. All reading strategies before and after the programme

As indicated in Table 5.14 and Figure 5.15, the reading strategies increased in all cases ranging from +7 (S4) to +15 (S5). A paired t-test was calculated and showed that the increase from pre- to post-programme was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), so the difference was meaningful. The total sum of all reading strategies growth was 111 increased reading strategies for all students. The mean reading strategies growth in the checklist as a whole equalled 11.1, with a mean percentage of 22.2% ranging from 14% to 30%, whereas the SD totalled 2.64, respectively. The best result was achieved by S5 and the least good by S4, with +15 and +7 newly acquired reading strategies, respectively. A full overview of which reading strategies these numbers represent was displayed in the previous tables and graphs in this section.

To obtain more reliable data on the issue under study, interviews and diaries were also employed to ascertain what reading strategies the participating students used while reading extensively, and to discover whether ER increased the number of reading strategies used. Starting from the beginning of the ER programme, students wrote very few entries in their diaries commenting on their reading strategies use. Some of their comments were as follows:

Also, when I come across a new word, I always either use Google translate or pick up a dictionary to translate the word, but I rarely use paper dictionary nowadays because I do not need it. I have my laptop and I also have my mobile phone, which has a dictionary application. (S6)

The first book I am reading now is Sense and Sensibility... I am trying to make mental pictures of all the characters in my head, so I can easily follow the incidents and the characters because there are many characters. (S10)

Although the entries related to reading strategies were very few, it appears everywhere, though, in the checklist, interviews and diaries that students used some cognitive strategies such as bottom-up processing (see 2.2.5.1), at the beginning of the programme. Bottom-up processing is data-driven strategies such as memorising new words, using dictionaries and translating into the first language.

Discussing the data collected during and at the end of the ER programme from the second interview and diaries, students showed an increase in their reading strategies use and also a slight change in the strategies used. When they were asked about the reading strategies they used, they showed an increase in the number of reading strategies used compared to the beginning of the programme, where they gained new strategies. These strategies include: consulting glossaries, guessing the meanings of unfamiliar words from context, using brainstorming to activate prior knowledge and experiences about topics, checking comprehension, summarising the story, connecting to text using personal experience and background knowledge and making mental pictures of characters, places and ideas. The most used reading strategies in the ER programme, as reported by the students, are listed in Table 5.15.

Table 5.15. The most reading strategies used by the students in the ER programme

Reading strategies before reading	Reading strategies while reading	Reading strategies after reading
<p>RS 1: I think about the book cover _____. (5 students);</p> <p>RS 2: and I think about the title _____ to predict and support predictions. (7 students)</p> <p>RS 4: I use brainstorming to activate my prior knowledge and experiences about topics to improve comprehension. (6 students)</p>	<p>RS 2: I change purposes for reading a text, such as rereading, reading for pleasure or reading to collect information. (9 students)</p> <p>RS 4: I guess the meanings of unfamiliar words from context. (10 students)</p> <p>RS 7: I connect to text using personal experience and background knowledge. (9 students)</p> <p>RS 24: I consult glossaries. (10 students)</p>	<p>RS 1: I think about why I liked or did not like what I read. (8 students)</p> <p>RS 3: I summarise what I read. (9 students)</p> <p>RS 10: I reread favourite parts. (7 students)</p> <p>RS 11: I reread to find details. (5 students)</p>

Students expressed their happiness in the achievements they made, because they gained new reading strategies after ER, and they started to use them. Here are some of their comments, also related to the table above:

I have never imagined myself reading English texts without having a dictionary of any kind next to me. I think the most valuable thing that extensive reading offered to me is that I can read English and try to guess the meaning of new words instead of jumping immediately to dictionaries. I still use dictionary but in a very limited way, and that makes me read without regular interruptions. (S4)

I felt very connected to Two Lives because of the love story in the book. I am also engaged now and I pictured myself and my fiancé there, although with different situations, and that made the reading experience easier and much more interesting. (S3)

These two comments show that the first student started to abandon using the dictionary, not fully though, and depended more on the context to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words. In other words, S4, after reading extensively, started to use more top-down strategies than bottom-up strategies. The second student also started to link his personal experiences with the text, which made the reading easier and more engaging as the student reported. Other students also commented on their reading strategies:

Writing book reports has made my summarisation skills much better than before. I have never summarised a book but I can do that now with a lot of confidence. (S5)

Martin Luther King has a lot of new words, but thanks God the glossaries at the end of the book helped me a lot to know the meanings of unfamiliar words... Before reading the book, I knew more about Ghandi so I thought a lot if there was any resemblance between the two characters and when I started reading the book I was comparing the two great men and thinking how much they have changed our lives. (S7)

The above comments and Table 5.15 refer to the students' use of more sophisticated strategies than they had used before. S5 showed her satisfaction in summarising her books, and S7 activated her prior knowledge about the topic to make reading more comprehensible and enjoyable; a strategy she started to employ while reading extensively.

One observation was that after ER students started to use more top-down strategies (see 2.2.5.2) that are conceptually driven such as: linking the text to personal experiences and background knowledge (see 2.2.4), guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words from context, picturing characters and places. At the pre-stage in reading strategies while reading, all the students without exception reported that they used dictionaries when they encountered unfamiliar words, and only three students (S2, S5 and S6) referred to the use of contextual guessing. However, the use of these two strategies changed dramatically while reading extensively (i.e., at the post-stage), as all the students without exception started to use contextual guessing when they encountered unfamiliar words, and unlike the pre-stage, only five students (S1, S3, S4, S8, S10) seemed to stick to their old ways of dealing with unfamiliar words (i.e., using dictionaries). They reported that they used dictionaries less than before but they still used them. Also, when they encountered unfamiliar words, they consulted either the glossary or the dictionary, and then translated the word into Arabic.

Depending less on dictionaries and more on contextual guessing, when encountering unknown words, might be ascribed to the easy materials used while reading extensively. The students, in this study, reported that they used to read intensively before the ER programme, where they encountered many unknown words while reading (see 3.1), so they had to use dictionaries at times. However, providing them with easy materials in this study made them encounter fewer unknown words, and these unknown words were mainly the target words that were repeated many times to facilitate contextual guessing; thus, the need for using dictionaries was less. In a study conducted by Sakurai (2015), the researcher examined the influence of a decrease in translation on 70 EFL Japanese university students' reading comprehension and reading speed in a 15-week ER programme. Results confirmed that a decrease in translation and grammar analyses affected reading comprehension and reading speed statistically significantly. The researcher concluded that a decrease in translation resulted in students' reading speed increase and the number of words read.

The most significant change in reading strategies, in this study, was the decrease of translation and increase of contextual guessing, referring to glossaries and activating background knowledge (see 2.2.4). It is worth noting that the graded readers used in the ER programme were Cambridge English Readers,

Oxford Bookworms Readers and Penguin Readers. However, only Oxford Bookworms Readers have glossaries in their books, which could be a main reason for their attraction to these readers.

Some students also reported difficulty in contextual guessing, as it was the first time for them not to be using dictionaries while reading in English. One student commented in his second interview:

I always used to use a dictionary to look up the meaning of new words, but some students, while classroom discussions, mentioned that they were not using dictionaries but trying to guess the meanings and that new words usually appear more than once in the book, which gives us the chance to make it meaningful in the context. It was really difficult at the beginning, but once I finished the first two books [graded readers] without having Arabic on the way, I felt I started to think in English and that made me confident. (S3)

The difficulty in abandoning dictionaries for some students might be ascribed to their learning styles. When S1, S3, S4, S8 and S10, who revealed that they were still using dictionaries, were asked why they used dictionaries, they all cared for passage details and literal meanings. These individual differences in learning styles support Carson and Longhini's (2002) claim that strategies are strongly influenced by learning styles.

Another possible reason could be that the participating students were also encouraged by their teachers, in the past, to use dictionaries when encountering unfamiliar words, which made it a rooted learning habit that was difficult to stop. However, this could be a partial explanation, because all the students are a product of the same educational system.

Another change in the use of reading strategies after reading was that only two students were rereading favourite parts, when they finished reading a book. However, at the post-stage, seven students reported that they reread their favourite parts. This could indicate that the students were enjoying their reading experiences, a main goal for ER. S7 commented on this strategy in her diary as the following:

Today, I finished How I Met Myself. This book was amazing. I was excited to read and read to know who the doppelgänger was... After dinner, I took the book How I Met Myself

and started to read some pages that I liked. I am really happy that I read this book and I think I will read the whole book again. (S7)

This comment demonstrates that students reread their favourite parts when they liked the book, and they started to view reading as an enjoyable experience not as a torture to pass exams.

Another interesting observation was that some students added new reading strategies that were not included in the checklist, referred to as an external in Table 5.12. These new strategies were only two, and by different individuals. S8 reported that while reading, she used lines under unfamiliar words, squares and numbers for chronological incidents in the stories and stars for characters. This method made it easier for her to follow the story plot, characters and unfamiliar words. While S5 revealed that when the story was complicated with different characters, she named her family members as the characters and even told them to adopt these names for a short time till she finished her book. She confirmed that this strategy was so beneficial for tracking the characters and events in the story and saved a lot of her time not having to go back every time and then to the beginning or the middle of the book.

As discussed in Chapter 2, reading is a social process of interaction between a reader and the text (see 2.2.6). It requires sufficient knowledge of language and background knowledge of the topic (see 2.2.4). When readers have these requirements, they may find or discover their own reading strategies to assist them in understanding the meaning of the text. This is exactly what happened with S8 and S5 in this study, after being exposed to a large quantity of comprehensible reading materials.

Good readers, who are believed to master many reading strategies and skills to allow comprehension to occur faster and more efficiently, can attain all of these strategies and skills by means of reading (Cirocki, 2009). Reading strategies are essential to reading comprehension, and also to distinguish good readers from poor ones (Lee, 2012). As illustrated in the above tables and figures related to reading strategies, mainly Table 5.14 and Figure 5.11, all students increased their reading strategies within a period of three months. The best reading strategies score equalled 30%, whereas the poorest one reached 14%. The results suggest that ER could be significantly beneficial to the growth of reading strategies.

These results support Ninsho's (2007) claim that ER helps learners gain reading strategies as they try different paths to comprehend more and make their reading easier and more interesting, since they are exposed to the language regularly.

Exposing students to a large amount of comprehensible input leaves them with one choice; that is, to look for ways and strategies for getting the most out of their reading experience. The majority of the students in this research revealed that they rarely read in both L1 and L2. On top of that, eight students out of ten commented that they never read for pleasure. In other words, they were poor readers who did not need to use various strategies because they did not read a lot, nor were they exposed to sufficient input in the target language. This, in turn, could explain why they did not master many reading strategies before. A reasonable explanation of why ER increased the students' reading strategies could be that they were exposed to a large quantity of easy and interesting reading material in this study. Consequently, they had to look for strategies to help them in their reading experience and aid them with their comprehension. Day and Bamford (1998, p.165) note that "a cognitive view of the reading process makes clear that reading depends on a large sight vocabulary and background knowledge, and that students acquire these through reading large amounts of easy and interesting material." These strategies appear to influence the reading flow and the comprehension process.

Hayashi (1999) claims that good readers find their own way, taking charge of their learning and using different reading strategies effectively. This study supports Hayashi's claim. As noted from the tables and discussions above, the best two readers (S2, S5), in terms of the number of books they read as well as their achievements in tests, gained the most in reading strategies amounting to a 28% and a 30% increase. The poorest two readers (S4, S3), however, gained the least in reading strategies equalling 14% and 16%, respectively. In this respect, there was a significant positive correlation between the amount of reading (i.e., the number of books read by each student) and the number of reading strategies gained, as the result of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was positively high ($r=0.74$). This suggests that the more the students read, the more they increased their reading strategies, and the more they increased their reading strategies, the more they comprehended and found it interesting to read.

It can be concluded that ER helped the Jordanian EFL students in increasing their reading strategies, as well as in discovering their own reading strategies. All students in this research, without exception, reported development in reading strategies use. The results of this study are compatible with the findings of other studies (Nishino, 2007; Lee, 2012) There was also a positive correlation between the amount of reading and reading strategies growth in both studies. The results in Nishino's longitudinal case study indicated that the two participants used more reading strategies while reading extensively. As in this study, the case study concluded that the two participants' reading strategies shared many commonalities while reading extensively (e.g., contextual guessing, activating background knowledge). Similarly, Lee's (2012) study concluded that various reading strategies were employed as the students read more, with a difference in strategies use among genders. Although ER may have proved to increase students' reading strategies, there was no mechanism applied in this study to prove whether these strategies were used efficiently.

5.4. ER in improving Jordanian EFL students' productive skills

The previous sections focused on the analysis and discussion of data related to the impact of ER on the Jordanian EFL students' reading speed, vocabulary knowledge and reading strategies. This section investigates the ER effect on the students' productive skills, namely speaking and writing. Analysing and discussing the findings related to the students' speaking skills comes first, and a similar style of data analysis and discussion of the students' writing skills follows.

5.4.1. Speaking skill

To start with speaking, and to reiterate again, every student was asked to give an oral presentation about the books they had read, twice during the programme, one in the first month and the other in the last month of the programme. The main goal was not only to share thoughts and exchange discussions about books, but also for their speaking to be assessed, comparing their speaking level in English between the beginning and end of the programme, and to probe whether any changes took place. Also, interviews (see 4.6.5), diaries (the students' and my diaries) (see 4.6.4) and my observation were used to discover more about the role ER played in the students' speaking skill.

Each student was asked to present a book and they were free to choose the way they preferred to do this, whether using cards or PowerPoint or any other means (see 4.5.2). Following the presentation, the other students and I were allowed five minutes for questions. During this entire process, I was writing down my feedback and field notes, assessing their speaking level, using fluency and accuracy in addition to many other syntactical, lexical and aesthetical characteristics of speech as indicators for assessment.

The impact of ER on the students' speaking proficiency level was assessed based on their oral presentations, as well as their speaking involvement and discussions in the classroom. The speaking indicators are various and varied. Students are usually assessed based on their fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range, accuracy and pronunciation. Harmer (2001) notes that from the communicative point of view, speaking has many different aspects including two major categories – accuracy, involving the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation practised through controlled and guided activities; and fluency, considered to be the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously. Fluency in speaking is associated with affective factors such as: self-confidence, anxiety and motivation.

There are three main areas, related to the speaking skill, where students in this study improved noticeably. The first one, related to fluency, is that students gained more confidence to speak in English. Through my observation and as evidenced in the diary, all students, including those who did not improve, showed a great deal of confidence (see 5.5.2) while speaking compared with the beginning of the programme. I reported the following in the diary:

It is now obvious more than before that students, with no exception, are more self-confident when they speak in English and that is very beneficial to make them maintain their flow of speech. Clearly, all the students boosted their self-confidence while speaking and that could be down to the flexibility of the topics they could choose from the graded readers they read or to the communicative element used in the ER programme, away from the exam-orientated environment. I also noticed that the students participated in classroom discussions more than before [than the beginning of the programme].

It is worth noting here that the above comment was written in the last week of the ER programme. Through observation, students were reported to show more self-

confidence, which could have helped them in participating orally in the classroom discussions and in their speaking skills as it lowered their anxiety. Not only I noticed gains in self-confidence while speaking, but also some students commented on the same matter:

When I presented today [the second time in the programme] How I Met Myself, I felt much better than the first time. I did not feel there were chains that stopped me from speaking. The words were coming easily to my mind and I was not terrified to speak in front of my teacher or colleagues. I was confident enough. (S4)

After today's presentation ... [S9's presentation], I am really impressed by how far we [the students] improved our speaking. Most of us were afraid and did a lot of mistakes when we presented the first time, but this changed a lot when we presented the second time, in terms of improved presentational skills and confidence. (S7)

The above comments show that students recognised an increase in their self-confidence. Their reflections, which were recorded in their diaries, prove that their increased self-confidence while speaking aided their fluency in English. The second comment also shows that students recognised not only their own self-confidence, but also their peers' increased self-confidence.

The second most improved area, which could be linked to vocabulary knowledge increase (see 5.2), was their use of a wider range of vocabulary more accurately. Students started to use words they read in their books in the programme, and they even used already-known words but were inhibited from using them because of their anxiety while they spoke in English. This was also explained in students' diaries. In one of the entries almost by the end of the programme, one student wrote:

I always feared to speak in English even though I studied in a private school, which was supposed to be enough to clear out this fear. I know that I have enough vocabulary knowledge to communicate in English but when it comes to speaking I felt all the words were lost in my mind. Now, it's different. I speak with my colleagues in the classroom very comfortably and even with my teacher without any fear. When I speak, I use words from the books I read and words I know from before and they are not lost anymore. (S 10)

Similarly, and on the impact of vocabulary knowledge increase on speaking skills, another student commented in her diary:

The more words we gain, the better speakers we become. We read a lot of books in this programme, and these books contained many new words that we could use in our speech. My speaking became much better than before because of the increased stock of my vocabulary in the English language. These words help me to speak fluently without many pauses that make me feel embarrassed. (S1)

The third most improved area was their fluency and coherence. Students started to be willing to speak at greater length and with fewer pauses than before. They started to produce simple speech fluently, but more complex communication caused some fluency problems when used. In a similar vein, students also managed to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics. However, when the topic was unfamiliar, their speech was less fluent than when the topic was familiar. On these issues, some students commented in their diaries as follows:

I used to speak very slowly with long stops sometimes and that had always made me feel bad and down about my English. To be honest, when the teacher at the beginning told us about extensive reading benefits, I didn't believe that it could improve our speaking. I thought it only improves reading and maybe vocabulary. I was wrong. My speaking is really better now; it's not perfect though. Now, I can speak non-stop for more than 5 minutes in English. I can communicate way better than before and that has absolutely lifted my spirit to go on speaking with no fear. (S8)

The discussions happening in our classroom on the books we are reading are amazing. We speak about different themes and topics in this book or that one. Since we already read the books, so we speak more fluently because we know the topic and this is a perfect practice for our speaking skill. (S1)

These comments above show the students' satisfaction about the progress they achieved in their speaking proficiency level. Their extensive reading made them familiar with more topics that they could encounter while speaking, which made speaking an easier process. On the issue of coherence, I wrote in my diary that “*the students made more sense and became clearer in their second presentations than their first ones.*”

Along with the three improved areas in their speech, two students only (S2, S5) improved their pronunciation clearly. Commenting on this, one of these two students wrote in her diary:

The teacher sometimes shares the reading experience with us and reads out loud from the book we are reading in the classroom and that really helped me a lot in trying to copy him. There were many words that I pronounced wrongly before, but corrected the way I pronounced after that. (S5).

A big part of the students' progress was related to their fluency in speaking. However, as far as accuracy in speaking was concerned, students failed to show any development in their grammatical structures use in speaking. Students used a very narrow range of structures, simple sentences and sometimes a misleading use of tenses. I wrote the following in the diary:

As much as I am satisfied that my students have become more fluent in speaking, I am concerned that their grammar is not improving. Accuracy may take more time than fluency to improve. However, students' fluency has already started to improve.

The analysis above includes the analysis of the assessment of students' speaking proficiency level, the ER effect on it and their perceptions through diaries. However, how students perceived improvement in speaking through ER was investigated in the second interview. Seven students mentioned that ER helped them a lot to improve their speaking proficiency. Here are two comments from these students:

My speaking improved a lot. I do not have hesitation anymore. I speak English now with much comfort and less anxiety. (S9)

Whenever I read, especially those storybooks which have conversations, I discover that I can talk for long and explain about the events, characters and plot of the story. I can even speak about different things now. (S3)

All of the students perceived improvements in their English language learning as a result of ER. As far as speaking is concerned, seven students out of ten stated that ER assisted them to develop their speaking skill in English. Noteworthy, most of these students focused on how ER helped them especially in overcoming their fear of and anxiety about speaking English with people. Some of their answers were as follows:

At the beginning of the programme we were very fearful to speak in English even if we knew what we wanted to talk about, but now we feel much more comfortable to speak in English and we do speak more and more. (S5)

Yes, and my speaking also is one of the best achievements I think I have made during this course. We were reading the books in groups in the classroom and discussing the different themes in the books. This offered us the perfect practice of our speaking. Another practice that I think developed my speaking a lot was the presentations we did during the course. Thanks God I now speak English more fluently than before and this is amazing. (S7)

The comments above show how students viewed ER and the ER activities used (i.e., classroom discussions on books) and how they helped them not only in their fluency in speaking, but also in lowering their anxiety about speaking. In her diary, S2 reflected on her second presentation and wrote the following:

Today, I presented A Puzzle for Logan. I think I have done a good job. I also felt that I improved in a noticed way. I had more self-confidence than before, and I was not afraid to speak. My pronunciation was also much better, and I used many words correctly. I did not stop many times while speaking. My pauses were natural, like when I pause also in Arabic [First language]. (S2)

This comment is ideal for it could summarise the students' areas of improvement in their speaking skills: self-confidence, vocabulary knowledge, fluency, pronunciation, less hesitation and lowered anxiety while speaking in English. Students were able to obtain some gains in speaking as a possible result of ER for 12 weeks. The qualitative data in this section clearly indicate students' improvement in speaking proficiency level. Several possible reasons could explain the students' development in speaking performance.

Constant exposure to a large quantity of easy material (i.e., graded readers) for 12 weeks seemed to play a crucial role in improving students' speaking levels. A large number of graded readers, used in the programme, contained a great deal of useful colloquial language that the students had missed during their formal English language learning before. In addition, these books were written in easy conversational English, suited to the students' level. Some books also included a lot of conversations between characters such as *Sense and Sensibility*. Cirocki (2009, p.538), in a similar study to this one, comments on the impact of authentic books on students' productive skills saying, "The (semi) authentic texts provide a strong

stimulus for speaking as almost all the learners are reported to have participated actively in their classes.” With time and reading more books, ER proved to improve students’ speaking skill in this study, which is supported by similar findings in other studies in the same vein (e.g., Krashen & Cho, 1994; Cirocki, 2009; Rahmany, Zarie & Gilak, 2013)

The students’ vocabulary knowledge, which is a vital element in speaking performance, seemed to enhance the students’ speaking skills (see 5.2). Akbar (2014, p.94) states that “vocabulary is always required in the formulating stage. In other words, no speech can be produced without vocabulary, and vocabulary is indispensable to speaking performance.” As mentioned earlier in one of the students’ comments (S1), the more vocabulary they gained, the better their speaking performance became. It was suggested earlier that students in this study increased their vocabulary knowledge after being exposed to a large amount of reading material, inside and outside the classroom (see 5.2). Students who read a lot outside the classroom reported better results at both grasping the context and building vocabulary knowledge, factors which are indispensable in enhancing speaking performance. The increased vocabulary knowledge seemed to have an essential role in improving the students’ speaking skills. The literature also reports a link between vocabulary knowledge and confidence in speaking. Rie (2005, p.53) suggests that “good vocabulary knowledge enhances learners’ confidence in speaking performance”, which also links to the increased self-confidence in speaking, reported in this study.

Students’ improved speaking skill may also be attributed to the classroom discussions about the books the students read. By providing the students with a large number of different types of book, they were exposed to new experiences and new ideas from the books that were later discussed in the classroom. Ma and Oxford (2014) note that classroom discussions are one of the most crucial activities to promote speaking in FL/L2 learning. Having read more books, students felt more confident to speak about different topics from these books with their teacher and colleagues. The majority of the students ascribed their progress in speaking to classroom discussions. One student, for example, stated:

The classroom discussions about the books we read are great. I had the chance to speak about different ideas and explain about the story or characters in the books with my colleagues in the classroom. (S9)

I was aware of setting the goal of discussions from the beginning of the course, directing students to speak about relevant topics from the books they were reading. This was very effective as students felt more confident to talk about familiar topics, and they did not feel intimidated or threatened when they were required to talk about unfamiliar topics.

In addition to the effect of graded readers and classroom discussions on improving students' speaking skill, students' presentations about books they had read may also have helped them to develop their speaking in English. Each student in this study presented twice about different books they had read. The difference between the first and second time, not only in their presenting skill but also in their speaking skill, was obvious, as they spoke more fluently, with more confidence and less hesitation in their second presentations. One student (S6) described presentations in the programme as *"amazing activities that helped us to overcome our fear to speak and to train more on speaking skill."* Nation and Newton (2008) note that presentations aid the development of self-confidence and avoid hesitation while speaking. This could explain why students' second presentations were far better than their first ones.

It was mentioned earlier that two students improved their pronunciation during the ER programme because of the teacher. Teachers in ER classrooms should serve as role models to their students to get the best results hoped for from their students (Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2006; Day et al., 2011). These two students commented that they paid attention to the teacher while he was speaking or reading and focused on the way he pronounced words. This sheds the light on the importance of the teacher in the ER classroom being well prepared and being a role model for their students (see 3.4.3.1).

Lastly, giving students the freedom to choose the books they liked to read and to leave the ones that did not interest them played an essential role in motivating students to speak and discuss these books. Students were also free to choose the topic they wanted to discuss in the classroom, as long as the topic was derived from the books they had read. Offering this freedom of choice assisted in lowering the

affective filter, and consequently building more self-confidence to speak in English (see 3.2).

With plenty of different books and texts and over a 12-week intensive ER course, an interesting observation was made. The more the students read, the better their speaking was. A clear improvement in the students' speaking skill took place in this study, and this leads us to conclude that ER could have facilitated speaking skill improvement through meaningful content in the books, for interaction to take place in the classroom. However, the study did not report any clear improvement in the grammatical use in the students' speech. In a similar study, Cirocki (2009) reported an increase in his students' self-confidence in speaking performance. Additionally, the findings of the current study are compatible with the results of other studies, for example, Krashen and Cho (1994) and Suk (2015).

5.4.2. Writing skill

The previous section tackled the effect of ER on the students' speaking skill; this section continues to investigate the impact of ER on the students' other productive skill, namely writing. Qualitative methods were used to explore the ER impact on the Jordanian EFL students' writing skill.

Firstly, students were asked to fill out a book report (see 4.6.3) after each book they had read (see 4.6.3). The main goal of this activity was not only to check their progress in reading, but also to monitor their progress in writing and compare their performance in writing between the beginning and end of the ER programme. However, going through all the book reports that students submitted, would have been very time consuming. Therefore, I decided to go through the book reports for all the class readers students submitted, which means nine book reports for each student (three book reports each month), in addition to six extra book reports for each student chosen randomly, so the total number of book reports monitored for assessing writing was 15 book reports for each student, to check whether any progress occurred in their writing performance. The process included a thorough assessment of the students' writing performance in these book reports. The focus in assessing the students' writing performance was on task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy.

Secondly, interviews (see 4.6.5), students' and my diaries (see 4.6.4) and observation were also used to help in investigating the issue at hand. The diaries helped to demonstrate the students' perceptions on ER and its effect on their writing performance, and my thoughts on the students' performance.

Students in the current study showed little improvement in some aspects of their writing skill in book reports. After a close examination of the students' book reports chosen for assessment, it was observed that four students in this study proved to have their summarising skill improved (i.e., S1, S2, S5 and S9). As students were asked to write a book report for each book they read, they obtained more experience in summarising books and stories. Students wrote few lines at the beginning of the programme to describe the books they read. They went into few details, failing to describe the main key points or themes of the books, which resulted in their failing to address the task achievement at the beginning. With the passage of time, they improved slightly in the second month of the study, where there were some successful attempts to describe the books generally, address the task and use a wider range of vocabulary and structures with few failures to do so.

In the last month of the study, a clear improvement in addressing the task more coherently was noticed in the four students' book reports. An example of the writing performance improvement, in general and not in summarising skill only, can be seen in two book reports written by S9, one in the beginning of the study and the other in the end (see Appendix J). In his first book report on *Stories of Survival*, in September 2014, S9 wrote 46 words to describe the book and 27 words to respond to the book (i.e., his reflections and thoughts). In the summary of the book, he mentioned the main idea, but he failed to address the main plot, which means that he fulfilled the task achievement partially. Also the time setting for the story was not mentioned in the summary. In terms of structure, S9 used simple sentences mainly, and some compound sentences. The grammar and lexical resources used were modest, with some grammar mistakes such as "... *by do not give up*", instead of using 'by not giving up'.

However, in his second book report on *Martin Luther King*, in November 2014, he wrote an 81-word book summary and a 51-word reflection on the book. In his summary of the book, he started with the setting of the story, the time and place and continued with the main ideas (e.g., segregation in the US back in that

time and calling for equality and freedom by Martin Luther King). The student successfully addressed the task of describing the book briefly, in a better way than in the first book report. In terms of structure, the student used not only simple and compound sentences, but also complex ones (e.g., *After reading this book, I admire Martin Luther King for several reasons. First, Second, ...*). He also used more sophisticated words and phrases such as: *troubled place*, *a man of peace* and *inspire*. As for grammar, he made some mistakes such as mixing the tenses and using the present tense instead of the past tense. No improvement in S9's grammar was recorded.

As far as lexical resource is concerned, the same students (S1, S2, S5 and S9), who showed improvement in their summarising skill, showed little improvement in using a wider range of vocabulary with time. They employed their vocabulary growth successfully, as a result of reading, to use an adequate range of vocabulary for the tasks approached. They attempted to use less common words, but sometimes with some inaccuracy and spelling mistakes. Commenting on the improvement of these four students (S1, S2, S5 and S9), I wrote the following in the diary:

The more these students read, the more they grew their vocabulary knowledge. The more vocabulary they had, the more they used it in their writing. The wider range of vocabulary they used, the better their writing became.

Some of these students' improvement in their lexical resource could be observed in their diaries and book reports. For example, S1 used only the word "big" at the beginning of the programme, but later he started to use "huge" and "significant" in the right context. Similarly, S5 was using the word "get" to refer to different actions, then she started to use different verbs that refer to the same meaning such as: "obtain", "earn" and "receive". However, the scale of improvement in using a variety of lexical items was limited, where not many examples like the ones mentioned above were recorded.

Speaking about grammatical range and accuracy, there was not any improvement recorded, except in S2's writing performance. S2 was the only participant in the study to show a little improvement in her grammar and use of simple and complex sentence forms. She made some errors in grammar and

punctuation, but these errors rarely reduced communication. Once again, and commenting on S2's performance in grammar and accuracy, I wrote:

A little improvement was observed in S2's grammar and use of complex sentence forms. An example of her improvement in grammar was that she used to misuse the third singular (s), the present simple and past simple tenses in her early book reports. However, while I was reading her last book reports, she clearly tried to overcome these grammatical issues and started to use them more correctly.

An example of S2's improvement in written grammar can be observed in her diaries (see Appendix K). The student in her first entry, at the beginning of the programme, mixed the tenses wrongly and used the present tense four times, in one page, when she was supposed to use the past tense (e.g., *enjoy, learn, have*). While in the second entry, she made only one mistake in this regard, where she used "*present*" instead of "*presented*". However, other mistakes in both entries, and the whole diary, occurred and there was no sign that they reduced. These mistakes included mixing parts of speech such as using nouns instead of adjectives or adjectives instead of adverbs.

Summarising the points mentioned above about the students' writing performance in their book reports, I observed that four students improved their skill in summarising the books they had read. Also, the same four students showed a visible but small improvement in their use of a wider range of vocabulary, with time and more reading. However, only one student (S2) who showed a little improvement in grammar. I observed that students, in general, did not show considerable progress in their writing skill, unlike other skills where greater progress was observed in their vocabulary growth, reading speed, reading strategies and slightly less in their speaking skill.

To recap again, the students' writing skill was assessed based on the following: task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy. Commenting on the students' performance, and as evidenced in my diary, I explained about the students' improved writing sub-skills students as follows:

After assessing the students' writing, there are some highlighted points. Firstly, students did not show a great deal of improvement. Four students improved some of their writing skills (S1, S2, S5 and S9). However, only S2 showed more progress in her writing. Regarding the most improved skills in their writing, those 4 students addressed the

requirements of the task in a better way, arranged their ideas more coherently than before and used a wider range of vocabulary in their writing. However, there was not any observable improvement in their grammar except in the case with S2.

Having analysed students' performance in writing, it is now time to explore how the students in this study perceived improvement in writing. In response to a question in this regard in the second interview, students' answers varied. However, as far as writing was concerned, the same four students (S1, S2, S5, S9), whose writing developed, and one more student (S10), whose writing skill was not recorded as having improved, believed that ER had helped them to improve their writing skill. The other students did not mention anything about developing their writing. In other words, students did not perceive gains in writing as much as in other skills. The students' responses were different, in relation to writing. Interestingly, they had a common view about the role of ER in improving their writing speed. Some of their comments were as follows:

My writing also improved, but not as much as reading or vocabulary or reading strategies. What I want to clarify is that I do not have difficulty in writing English as before. I feel I can write about different things now. (S10)

I think it [ER] also developed my writing skill. It helped me to increase using different vocabulary and structures while writing. More importantly, I can now write in English smoothly and easily. (S2)

Although limited in number, the above comments from students show that they perceived gains in writing as a result of ER. It is also obvious that students were not as satisfied with their writing gains as they were in those of other skills. However, after a close examination of their diaries, more students reacted to the role of ER in improving their writing skill. Most of the students' comments in the diaries were more related to their attitude towards and motivation for writing and written assignments than for the writing skill itself. Therefore, more details about what is related to their attitudes and motivation will be explained later in the chapter (see 5.5). As for the writing skill itself, one student wrote the following in her diary:

I really do not like writing diaries in general, and I still do not like writing diaries till now, but I write without much thinking like before. Writing was hard for me but it is easier now, and I see that I do not take much time like before when I write in my diaries. (S4)

ER seemed to have a potential impact on enhancing the students' skill in writing book reports. Starting with the progress students made in writing book reports and some written assignments as a result of ER, this could be attributed to five reasons.

First, reading different books with different genres and doing various reading and writing activities may have helped the students to develop their writing performance through consistent exposure to written input.

Second, writing book reports and doing other in- or-out-of classroom written assignments were all derived from the books the students were reading. Integrating reading and writing with relevant topics was a significant factor, as the students realised the relationship between reading and writing, which kept them engaged all the time (Al-Mansour& Al-Shorman, 2014). This also supports Grabe's (2009) claim that reading activities assist in promoting writing activities at different levels. He also stated that the product of a reading activity could be used as input for writing.

Third, students in the ER programme had good theoretical knowledge about the writing skill and its sub-skills. However, they lacked sufficient practice. Once they were provided with more written assignments and encouragement, some students were able to put their knowledge into practice, which eventually led to a better writing performance. Al-Mansour& Al-Shorman (2014) indicated that the teaching of reading and writing cannot be torn apart, and that the more writing activities based on reading exist, the better writing performance students get.

Fourth, exposing the students to a considerable number of different books and texts provided them with a large repository of vocabulary to be used in their writing. Moreover, these different texts offered the students the opportunity to see how a main idea is formed and how the supporting ideas and little details assist in building a good plot. Consequently, this helped the students to develop their summarising skill when they were asked to summarise the story of the book, in their book reports.

Finally, students were exposed to different genres and different styles of texts, which had a great impact on their style in writing. When students filled out their book reports, they reflected the author's style of writing, in many cases. Kirin (2010) stressed that reading influences the students' written output and their summary writing. Moreover, their summaries were influenced by the authors of the books they were summarising.

In light of the findings of the present study, the students slightly improved their writing skill as a possible result of ER. It has also been observed that the use of ER tended to make writing activities more pleasurable and interesting for students. Moreover, integrating reading and writing activities seemed to be a very effective learning instruction tool to promote students' writing performance. However, the students' gains in their writing skill were less visible than those in their speaking skill.

From all the data displayed above, it could be concluded that the ER project had a little impact on improving the students' writing skill in this current study. In general, students were able to write their book reports and diaries with ease. Even limited in number, students mainly improved their use of vocabulary, their summarising skill and task achievement. No considerable improvement in their grammar was recorded. In a recent study conducted by Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman (2014), to investigate the effect of ER on Saudi EFL university students' writing performance, the results showed that the treatment group (i.e., ER) outperformed the control group (i.e., IR) after running pre- and post-tests. Similarly, Zainal and Husin (2011) probed the effects of reading on writing performance among civil engineering students. The results indicated that reading had positive effects on students' writing. The results of this study are consistent with other studies conducted by Kirin (2010), Alkhawaldeh (2011), De Rycker and Ponnudurai (2011), Erhan (2011), Zainal and Husin (2011), Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman (2014). However, these studies reported more improvement in their participants' writing skill than this study.

5.5. ER in changing Jordanian EFL students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English

This section seeks to answer the last research question, which deals with Jordanian EFL students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English. Data from

the qualitative methods applied were coded and analysed for primary themes (see 4.8). Two main themes were derived from the gathered qualitative data. They include the students' (a) prior reading experiences and motivation before the ER programme, and (b) affecting aspects related to motivation for and attitudes towards ER during the ER programme. Findings are displayed in line with the two themes presented. Discussion of these findings is followed. Responses from interviews and quotes from diaries and the videotaped sessions are implemented to support each finding.

5.5.1. Students' prior reading experiences and motivation for reading before the ER programme

The first interview was largely related to eliciting information about the students' reading experiences and motivation for reading before the ER programme. The main focus was on their motivation for and attitudes towards reading in their L1 and FL, but the interview questions also focused on other aspects, such as family, school and socio-cultural environment that shape the reading experience and eventually affect motivation for and attitudes towards reading. As was previously mentioned in Chapter 2 (see 2.1), there are five different information sources which form the life experiences that readers bring to reading. These sources include family, community, socio-cultural environment, individual differences in motivation, aptitude and other personal characteristics (e.g., anxiety, self-confidence) (Aebbersold & Field, 1997; Bowery, 2005; Grabe, 2009). However, in line with the information coded and analysed from the interview questions and for the purpose of this study, some of these information sources are discussed but not all. It is worth mentioning that this information was partially discussed earlier (see 5.1). The findings about how family and school (teachers, teaching methods and reading materials) affected the students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading are reported in order, below.

Firstly, the reading practice among family members was rare, as reported in the first interview in response to the question: *Did your parents or other members of your family used to read books or stories to you when you were a child?* Only three students out of ten said that their parents used to read books or stories in Arabic for them when they were children. Also, only one of them answered that their parents used to read some stories in English. Families and communities have a great role to play in building lifelong readers. The students' responses in the interviews

conducted indicate that their families and communities did not value reading. Also, another question was employed to discover more about the factors that might have affected their reading habit negatively; that was: *Do you like reading but there are factors prohibiting you doing so (e.g., materials availability, attractiveness, or linguistic level, the socio-cultural environment, e.g., home)? If yes, what are they?* The two factors that students reported which discouraged them the most from reading in English were the socio-cultural environment and the unavailability of materials.

Regarding the role of family and socio-cultural environment, six students reported that the socio-cultural environment did not promote reading. Some of the students' responses were as follows:

Yes I have the motivation but all what you mentioned prevented me from this. For example, there is no incentive and encouragement from the environment and there aren't available interesting materials. (S7)

S3: I don't think I have a lot of encouragement. There are no people to encourage me to read, neither in school nor elsewhere. The sociocultural element really plays a big role in that.
Me: Is it demotivating to read?
S3: Yes, a lot!

I think the biggest problem is our society and the general atmosphere of how people view reading. Sometimes, I really wish to pick up a nice book and read on the bus, in a park or even in our sitting room. The problem is that people most likely will laugh at me as if I am showing off that I am a literate person. (S10)

As shown by the previous comments, the role of family, society and culture not only demotivated students from reading, but also viewed reading in public negatively making people fear to read where and when they wish to.

Secondly, the findings revealed that school, teachers, teaching methods and reading materials did not promote reading English, nor did they contribute to building lifelong readers. All students responded that they learned to read in English at school. Of the ten students, all but one recounted that reading in English at school was boring. Different responses were given when asked about the reason. For example, S1 commented that reading in English at school was

“instructional and depended more on memorisation than enjoyment”, while S6 provided different reasons that sum up most of the students’ responses:

S6: There was not enough time in the classroom for reading English books. Most of the topics in the reading curriculum were not interesting at all.

Me: like what?

S6: Hmm ... like outdated topics. Also, reading was taught just for exams and very instructional with lack of pleasure in reading. We also did not have any power or say to change the book we were required to read.

Other reasons for viewing reading in English at school as a boring activity included *“bad teaching methods”*, *“reading as a threat”*, *“tiring”* and *“just not interesting”*. The two most common reasons given were that reading in English was taught and learned only for exam purposes, and the topics in the reading materials were boring.

Eight students replied that their English teachers did not encourage them to read in English out of the classroom, and nine students responded that English teachers did not recommend any books or materials to them to read. S5 commented with sarcasm and a slight anger that *“they [teachers] were satisfied that we read only what was required for the exam. That was enough for them.”*

The students’ responses about their school libraries and reading materials showed that these were not motivating as well. Most of the students revealed that their school libraries were small. It was S9 who probably gave the most typical response that their school library was *“as small as a medium-sized room.”* Asking about the materials their libraries contained, the most common books in their libraries were books on religion, Arabic literature, science and history. As for English language materials, all students reported that their libraries contained a very small section for them. S8 gave an example of the English reading materials contained in her school library. She recalled that the English language reading materials in her library *“included books for children, very old, and books for native speakers.”* All students reported dissatisfaction about the lack of English language reading materials in their school libraries.

As reported above, the findings in this study revealed the negative role of the students’ family, school, teachers, reading materials and socio-cultural environment in enhancing the reading habit in their L1 and FL, and developing reading in

English i.e., FL. This, in turn, led to undesired results. Asked whether they read in their free time, seven students recounted that they did not read in their free time, two (S2, S5) confirmed they usually did and one (S8) said, *“I rarely read in my free time, because I do not know how to choose interesting books; otherwise, I think I love reading.”*

Moving to the second question about their reading habit, whether they have ever read merely for pleasure, only two students (S5, S9) revealed that they had in the past. S9 commented, *“To be honest, I read for pleasure but not quite often. Besides, it is hard for me to find books that attracts me a lot.”* The surrounding factors (i.e., family, school, socio-cultural environment) affected the students’ reading habit negatively, and did not contribute to the development of their English language reading and learning. They also influenced the students’ attitudes and motivation towards reading in English.

Having explained these factors, the connection between them and the students’ motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English, before ER, is relevant. The overarching view of the students’ motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English was not very negative, taking into account the demotivating factors mentioned earlier (i.e., family, school). Also, most of the students reported extrinsic motivation for reading English books and other materials. Students responded differently when they were asked: *How would you rate your motivation to read in English on a scale from 1 to 10? What motivates you to read in English? and Why do you read English books and other English materials?* Table 5.16 displays the students’ responses to these questions.

Table 5.16. Students' self-rated motivation to read in English before ER

Student ID	Motivation to read (From 1 to 10)	Type of reading motivation	Reasons for reading English books and materials
S1	4	Extrinsic	To get more knowledge in my speciality
S2	10	Extrinsic	To pass exams and improve my chances in life
S3	4	Extrinsic	To pass exams
S4	6	Extrinsic	To get knowledge and to pass exams
S5	9	Intrinsic & extrinsic	To pass exams and I personally enjoy reading
S6	3	Extrinsic	To pass exams and improve my English for future work
S7	2	Extrinsic	To pass exams in the past and now sometimes to find information
S8	10	Extrinsic	To learn about something but not for pleasure
S9	3	Intrinsic & extrinsic	To obtain knowledge and sometimes to relax and enjoy
S10	5	Extrinsic	To pass exams and find a good job in the future
Mean	5.6		
SD	3.02		

As shown in Table 5.16, the results indicate that students' motivation to read in English was medium. The mean score of all students' motivation on a scale from one to ten (i.e., 1 not motivated and 10 very motivated) reached 5.6 (56%), where the most motivated students were S2, S8 (ten) and S5 (nine), while the least motivated students were S6, S9 (three) and S7 (two). The standard deviation

equalled 3.02, showing the big differences between students' motivation for reading in English. Some students were highly motivated to read in English, yet they did not often read for different reasons. For example, S8 whose motivation was ten clarified in her interview that "*the unavailability of appropriate materials and lack of encouragement to read*" were the main reasons for her poor reading experience in English. Students' types of motivation for reading materials in English were also different.

A main difference in reading motivation is between intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic reading motivation includes reading for pleasure, positive experience of the activity of reading itself, the personal importance of reading and the interest in the topic covered in the reading material. On the other hand, sources of extrinsic reading motivation include factors external to the activity of reading itself such as reading to obtain external recognition, rewards and incentives, or to avoid punishment (Becker & McElvany, 2010). A clear observation in this study, as shown in Table 5.16, is that most students showed their extrinsic motivation for reading in English before the ER programme.

Varied reasons emerged when students were asked in the first interview about what motivated them to read English materials and why they read in English. All students, with no exception, were extrinsically motivated. Some students provided more than one reason for reading in English. The two most frequently reported reasons for reading English books were reading to pass exams (seven students) and reading to obtain knowledge or find information (five students). For example, S1 reasoned her reading in English for "*getting more knowledge in my speciality as a lot of resources for lab work at university are written in English language*", while S3 commented that he reads in English "*to pass my exams only, so I do not read in holidays or when there is not an exam coming soon.*" Some students also reported that they read in English to improve their language in order to find work and improve their opportunities, while only two students (S5, S9) were both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated. Both students showed their interest in reading English for pleasure and added that they sometimes read to enjoy, as S5 commented, "*I read [English books] because ... I personally enjoy reading where there are a lot of enjoyable books that attract me to read.*"

As students' motivation for reading English books was not high enough, regardless of whether it was intrinsic or extrinsic, their attitude towards reading in

English was generally positive. Six students reported that they like reading in English, but there were factors that prohibited them from doing so. Two comments on their attitudes towards reading in English were as follows, *“I like reading in English and I like to know more about other cultures. This is really important to me...”* (S3), and the other student said, *“Of course, I love learning English and reading in English”* (S10). On the other hand, other students viewed reading in English negatively. For example, S4 commented, *“I don’t like reading in English”*, and S6 said, *“No, because it makes me frustrated.”* However, the general attitude towards learning English language and even learning more about English culture was positive among students.

The last matter to tackle about students’ prior reading experience, in this section, is their English language reading anxiety before the ER programme. One finding that resulted from an analysis of the interview data was that all students had experienced English language reading anxiety before. Also, when they were asked about their feelings while reading English books, a typical response from S4 was, *“It [reading in English language] makes me feel anxious, especially when the content is very difficult to understand.”* Another student (S7) reported, *“When I read in English, I do not know why my hands sweat a lot and I feel that I am committing a lot of mistakes so I get worried”*, while S6 went far in her response saying, *“Seriously, I almost feel I will faint when I read English in Public”*. Other responses included different reasons why students felt anxious about reading English materials. The most reported reason was that they feared confronting unfamiliar words or incomprehensible texts (see Cirocki & Caparoso, 2016).

Having analysed the students’ responses and comments on issues related to their motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English before the ER programme, it is time to discuss the data presented above. Starting with the role of family and socio-cultural environment as factors affecting motivation for and attitudes towards reading, Day and Bamford’s (1998) expectancy value model stressed the significance of socio-cultural environment, including the influence of family and school, as one of four variables that affect the students’ decisions to read (see 3.3.2). The results indicated that the socio-cultural environment for the students in this study, including families and schools, did not contribute to the building of lifelong readers, and this could be a main reason behind the students’ poor reading experiences and lack of motivation for reading. Similarly, in her study, Yamashita

(2013b) refers to the importance of family encouragement in nurturing the love and motivation for reading whether in L1 or L2. Once again, and despite the wide literature on the importance of the socio-cultural environment as an affecting factor in the students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading, this environment did not have a positive role in the students' reading experiences before the ER programme.

Ultimately, the nature of reading is that of a creative and social process (see 2.2.6) in which readers construct new knowledge. This construction emerges from negotiation and social interaction. Therefore, and as social constructivism argues, if the social environment is not facilitating the process of meaning construction, the reading process will be flawed.

Another interesting observation was that the reading teaching methods and the teachers' role in motivating students to read in the Jordanian EFL classrooms did not encourage students to read. On the contrary, they made them feel anxious about reading. Cirocki (2012), notes that without a teacher's encouragement and support, students may lose interest and enthusiasm, which could result in the failure of a reading programme. Motivating students to read and providing them with ongoing support, including book recommendations for reading, could create an encouraging environment for reading. Similarly, Jordanian EFL teachers followed only IR to teach reading (see 4.1). This may have had a negative impact on students' motivation to read. Waring (2011) argues that the sole use of IR in the classroom causes boredom; thus, students might feel demotivated to read. The results show that students expressed their boredom and dissatisfaction with the teaching methods followed in their schools or universities. These results are allied with Warning's argument, which could be another reason for the students' demotivation to read.

Students, in this study, reported more extrinsic values than intrinsic ones as motivation for reading in the target language. However, their motivation was low regardless of the motivation type. With this in mind, it is believed that FL/L2 "reading motivation is complex and neither type of motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) is superior to the other" (Ro & Chen, 2014, p.62).

In a research study conducted by de Burgh- Hirabe and Feryok (2013), they investigated nine adolescent Japanese-as-a-foreign-language learners' motivation in reading in Japanese, and they listed ten influential factors for reading motivation that contained, with no hierarchy, both intrinsic and extrinsic values of motivation.

They also noted that “[motivation for ER] is complex because it was affected by multiple and different influences on the participants” (p.89). The point is that the motivation type does not matter as much as how motivated the students are to read.

One last point to discuss is that the results showed the students’ demotivation to read before the ER programme; however, their attitudes were generally positive. Students who “have positive attitudes towards reading would likely perceive its value and thus would be more likely to read” (Ro & Chen, 2014, p.62). This is in accordance with one of the four variables (positive attitudes) in Day and Bamford’s (1998) expectancy value model. Although six students, in this study, showed positive attitudes towards FL reading, their poor reading achievements prior to ER show that there was a weak linkage between the students’ attitudes towards reading and the reading achievements. This could be attributed to different reasons such as: lack of appropriate materials, lack of time, teaching methods or lack of socio-cultural encouragement to reading.

In a replication study done by Ro and Chen (2014), to investigate 60 advanced non-academic English-as-a-second-language learners’ L2 reading frequency and attitude, they concluded that learners with more positive attitudes towards reading may not necessarily make reading achievements. They also added that while positive attitudes provide a weak linkage, motivation provides an actual and stronger linkage to reading performance.

In conclusion, different factors affected the students’ motivation for and attitudes towards reading English materials before the ER programme, such as family, school and socio-cultural environment. These factors or sources of information shape the life experiences that readers bring to reading. The overall understanding of the students’ prior reading experiences and motivation for reading English books, before ER, is represented as the following: family, school (teachers, teaching methods and materials) and the socio-cultural environment did not encourage or promote the development of avid readers; students’ motivation for English language reading was medium and mainly extrinsic with two intrinsically-motivated students; students’ attitudes towards the English language and its culture were mainly positive; and finally students’ anxiety about reading English materials was high. The next section also deals with all these motivation-related issues, but during and after the ER programme.

5.5.2. Affecting aspects related to motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English during the ER programme

Students' ER practices in the programme were largely related to their feelings, motivation for and attitudes towards the new experience of reading extensively. The dominant view of the students' participation, motivation for and attitudes towards ER was positive. In comparison with their reading experiences before the ER programme, their motivation for reading English materials significantly increased, their anxiety reduced and their attitudes towards reading were positive. However, some problems and challenges faced the students during the programme, which are worth investigating.

The aspects that are related to and affected students' motivation for and attitudes towards ER are listed below:

- 1- Increasing motivation and slight shifts in motivation type
- 2- English language reading anxiety
- 3- ER in building autonomy and self-efficacy
- 4- 'Book strapped' and persistent readers
- 5- Students' perceptions of graded readers
- 6- Attitudes towards English language reading
- 7- Students' perceived challenges throughout the ER programme
- 8- Future plans for lifelong reading

These eight aspects and factors that affected the students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English were derived from coding the qualitative data obtained (i.e., diaries, interviews and videotaped session). Thematic analysis was followed to investigate the issue at hand (see 4.8). This section explores these aspects in more details, reporting findings allied with each factor.

1. Increasing motivation and slight shifts in motivation type

Data analysis from the interviews, diaries and videotaped session revealed that the students' motivation to read English materials increased after the ER programme. The comparison of the results of students' motivation for reading in English before and after the ER programme, when students were asked to evaluate their motivation on a scale from one to ten, is shown in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17. Students' self-rated motivation for reading in English before and after ER

Student ID	Students' motivation to read in English		Δ	Percentage points Δ %
	Pre-ER	Post-ER		
S1	4	8	4	40
S2	10	10	0	0
S3	4	7	3	30
S4	6	7	1	10
S5	9	9.5	0.5	5
S6	3	6	3	30
S7	2	4	2	20
S8	10	10	0	0
S9	3	6	3	30
S10	5	7	2	20
Mean	5.6	7.45	1.85	18.5
		SD	1.41	

The results displayed above in Table 5.17 evidently indicate that students' motivation to read in English increased in all cases after implementing ER for three months. The highest increase was achieved by S1 by four points from four to eight, and the lowest one was by S5 with an increase of 0.5, not taking the results of S2 and S8 into account since the scale was from one to ten and they evaluated their motivation as ten before and after ER. Interestingly, students who increased their motivation slightly were the most highly motivated students, but because their motivation was high even before ER, so the increase was less noticeable. The mean growth of motivation in this research amounted to 1.85 (18.5%), whereas the SD equalled 1.41, suggesting that the dispersion between students' increase in motivation was small.

Several factors influenced the students' motivation for reading in English, such as classroom activities, language improvement, graded readers, boredom with routine, lack of time and personal issues. For example, S1 noted in her diary:

It was our second lesson today and we started with classroom discussions about the book. We started to read Sense and Sensibility. It's the first time I have such discussions about books we are reading and I love it. I want to read the book after having these discussions. I will also read other books to share my views about what I am reading in the classroom.

Other classroom activities and assignments were used to motivate students to read and have them engaged in the process of reading as much as possible. Oral presentations about books students had read were also “*effective and very helpful in choosing the next book to read*”, as S9 commented in his diary.

Students' motivation in relation to ER fluctuated in the first month of the programme; it started to increase steadily and gradually in the second and third months of the programme. Six students reported in their diaries, at the beginning of the programme, that they did not have enough motivation to read and that their anxiety was high. For example, S3, two weeks after the start of the ER programme, wrote in his diary, “*I do not know if I really want to read. I am trying to but it is not tempting to me.*” Also, the students' boredom with routine after ten sessions of the course was noted, as they had been more motivated at the beginning of the programme. I commented in my diary as the following:

Last week in the classroom, it was obvious how bored some students seemed. I felt worried about the progress of the programme. Therefore, I decided to apply new practices and activities to get students more engaged. To make them more motivated, I told my students that the second month of the programme would be different and full of action. By the beginning of this week, I started with book blurbs activity, hangman and other activities and games that students really loved. Thanks to Day and Bamford's (2004) book that includes a lot of engaging ER activities in the classroom. The ER programme is back on the track now.

The students' comments in interviews or their diaries in the last month of the programme were generally more positive than in the first month. This is completely understandable. In the first month of the ER programme, students were experiencing a new method, had no idea about graded readers, did not have sufficient strategies to sustain them in reading and were not used to reading in large quantities before. All these fears and issues started to disappear largely after experiencing ER for a longer time. Graded readers were among the most effective

factors to increase and change students' motivation. However, lack of time was a big issue for students and prevented them from reading more (see below).

Moving to explore any shifts in the students' motivation type after ER, data analysis revealed that all students except one reported extrinsic motivation to read in English. However, along with their extrinsic motivation, students' intrinsic motivation was enhanced by time and the appropriate materials. Most of their reasons for reading extensively and even the continuity of reading English after the programme were very similar to those proposed before the ER programme. They included reasons related to *“reading to improve English language skills”, “reading to improve my grades in exams” and “future work or higher studies abroad.”* Reading to pass exams or for academic achievements, once again, was the most reported reason to read in English (six students). However, a noticeable change is that five students, instead of two before the programme, responded that they would read for pleasure (intrinsic motivation), along with other reasons (extrinsic), with only one student (S5) that she will read only *“for enjoyment”*, when they were asked whether they would continue reading after the ER programme. For example, S7 responded that he would continue reading English *“because I now enjoy reading and it will help me to improve my English language.”* Similarly, S9 stressed on English reading persistence after the ER programme saying, *“Of course, I will continue reading English books and graded readers. This programme was a chance to show what reading for pleasure means and I love reading now.”* In general, the students' motivation to read English materials increased after being exposed to ER, as their English language reading anxiety decreased.

2- English language reading anxiety

The students' English reading anxiety before the ER programme was high, as explained in the previous section (see 5.5.1). This section will investigate whether ER had any role in increasing or decreasing the students' anxiety about English reading. The data, from multiple resources, showed that all ten students revealed that their anxiety about English language and English reading decreased significantly after the ER programme.

One common feeling shared among the majority of students was that they had high anxiety about reading in English at the beginning of the programme, being surrounded by various graded English readers. However, after they started reading

some books, all the participants recounted, in their diaries and interviews, that their anxiety decreased. Giving students the platform to write down their perceptions and feelings about ER through diaries, some students commented on the issue at hand as follows:

Today was the last lesson for this month [The first month of the study]. I am now remembering about our first lesson. I was really afraid and worried to read in English and the worst part was when I saw all these stories and the teacher was encouraging us to read them all. I felt some regret I joined the programme, back at that time. I am so happy that my fear to read in English is gone and I am much more comfortable with the books now. So, no regrets. (S6)

Today was my first try to read a book The Secret Garden... I felt so comfortable as well as happy that I could read a book and understand the main idea without being anxious or threatened by difficult words, also without facing problems. (S8)

Through observations and asking the students, I noted that the majority of the students seemed to have become more comfortable and relaxed about reading in English as the ER programme progressed. After asking students about their feelings and if they were experiencing anxiety, I commented in the diary, “*Today [27 days from the beginning of the programme], my students showed me the effect of ER on reducing their anxiety.*” It was also noted that “*students are less anxious to read in English when they read more, but the reading materials have to be carefully chosen to make this happen.*” Not only the reading materials contributed to students’ anxiety reduction, other factors also significantly led to lowering their anxiety to read in English.

Confidence and enjoying the reading experience also contributed greatly in reducing the students’ anxiety about English language in general and reading in English in particular. Seven students reported in their second interviews that their confidence increased when more reading was done, when they were asked about their feelings to read in English. S1 noted that “*reading was a challenge for me at the beginning, but now it [reading] makes me feel more confident.*” Asking her about the reason for this feeling, she replied, “*I feel I have more vocabulary and can understand the content, so I enjoy it [reading].*” ER was observed to have lowered the students’ anxiety not only about English reading but also about other

skills. For example, S9 recounted in his interview, *“I am now used to reading in English. My stress is lower than before and my fear to read, speak or listen in English decreased.”* Reduced anxiety about speaking in English was very obvious among all students, as explained earlier.

In addition, enjoying the content of the books, their easy language, and the sense of achievement helped to reduce the students’ anxiety to read in English. For example, S4 commented in her interview that reading in English *“makes me feel proud because of the sense of achievement and thanks to these books [graded readers].”* Similarly, S2 noted that reading in English *“makes me happy because it is an achievement for me to read in English, so when I read I feel happy.”* More analysis and discussion about graded readers and their role will be discussed later in this section. In a more connected context to the role of confidence and sense of achievement, the next aspect to explore is autonomy and self-efficacy.

3- ER in building autonomy and self-efficacy

The positive role of autonomy and self-efficacy to enhance students’ language development is significant (Cirocki, 2016; Girocki & Caparoso, 2016). One finding that emerged from data analysis of the interviews, diaries and videotaped session is that all students developed their autonomy and self-efficacy for reading in English after their participation in the ER programme. Giving students freedom of choice to read what interests them and stop reading when the book fails to attract them, created a non-threatening environment for reading in English that may have contributed to increasing their motivation, lowering their anxiety and developing their autonomy and self-efficacy. S3, in the videotaped session, was very excited to share his perception on this commenting:

Also, one of the best things about the programme was the freedom to choose our books, inside and outside the classroom; we were not forced to read something we do not like. All books [to read] were our choice. This made us feel independent and that we had a responsibility to take. Also, we can read independently from the teacher, we can choose books of our choice and that will make us read more in the future.

S8 also commented on the same matter:

How amazing it was to read when we want, where we want and what we want. This was the first time I was offered this. It had been always reading books for exams, whether we liked them [the books] or not.

The ER programme provided the students with autonomy and independence in choosing not only their materials but also the time and place convenient for them to read. The majority of the participants indicated that making them engaged in making decisions and taking responsibility for their learning made them enjoy reading a lot. For example, S4 showed no interest in reading before the ER programme. During the orientation lesson about the ER programme, she asked, “*So will we choose what we want to read?*” to which I replied, “*Yes*”. Then, in an exclaiming tone, she asked again, “*Really?*” to which I also confirmed. She finally said, “*This is really amazing. I like the idea. We never had this before.*” Later by the end of the programme in the interview, the same student commented:

S4: You know what I liked most about this programme, teacher?

Me: What?

S4: I liked our independence in taking decisions about what to read, when and how. I think this made me change my view about reading and made me enjoy reading.

Providing the students with freedom of choice and appropriate materials not only improved their autonomy, but also developed their self-efficacy. Seven students reported that their sense of achievement after reading “*comprehensible and easy materials*” developed their confidence and reading self-efficacy. A very interesting conversation, which clarifies this point, occurred between me and S10 in the videotaped session. The conversation was as follows:

Me: What was very interesting about the ER programme to you?

S10: Many things!

Me: Can you try to think about one at least and tell me please?

S10: hmmm, I think I am more confident now about reading in English. I mean I feel like I am achieving something. The other day I went to my sister and told her how happy I am that I have finished reading many books. This feeling of confidence and achievement will keep me reading in English.

A clear observation in the ER programme was that giving the students the freedom of choice and independence in making many decisions developed their autonomy and reading self-efficacy. This also paved the way to create a reading-friendly environment that helped students to being more engaged and hooked on reading.

4- ‘Book strapped’ and persistent readers

With the majority of students feeling fearful and anxious about reading in English by the beginning of the programme, all of the ten participants revealed that they started to lose their fear and feel more confident after they had read the first or second graded reader. As explained in the previous subsection, the students’ sense of accomplishment drove them to be more engaged with the books, enjoy them and have a flow reading experience. However, this sense of accomplishment would not have been attained without providing students with easy and interesting materials. For example, S5 commented in her interview, “*You really get excited to read more and more when you have a large display of interesting books in front of you.*” As the programme progressed, some students started to develop and discover new strategies to make the reading process easier for them. As S2 pointed out in the videotaped session:

Once I discovered the books [graded readers] were easy and not big, I was happy. I was slow to finish reading books at the beginning, but I started to read faster with time. I did not look at the dictionary and I discovered new ways to make reading faster and comprehensible. I cannot believe that I read 26 books in 3 months.

Students started to enjoy reading when they discovered the easy language, which was within their reading comfort zone, in the graded readers. Also, students felt a greater enjoyment when the material was interesting to them. For instance, S4 noted the following in her diary:

I just finished reading The House by the Sea. It was really a very interesting book. I enjoyed it a lot. I could not turn my eye away from the book. I started and finished [reading] the book today. It was an amazing experience to read and feel that I want to read more and more.

On the other hand, some students expressed their boredom and frustration when the reading material was not attractive to them. For example, S7 read half of the book *Double Cross* and left it without reading it all. She wrote in her diary, *"I feel bored and angry I wasted my time on this book... I was waiting to see if it gets more interesting but I can't wait anymore."* Such uninteresting materials led some students to be less motivated and more anxious at times during the ER programme.

As noted, the students in this study felt more engaged in reading when appropriate materials were offered to them, and less motivated to read when the graded reader failed to interest them. Providing the students with appropriate, interesting materials, within their reading ability, and freedom of choice developed their confidence and sense of achievement. Consequently, this increased the students' motivation to read more and become 'book-strapped' readers (Day & Bamford, 1998).

5- Students' perceptions of graded readers

One interesting finding that is shared among the students and the data analysis is that graded readers were very effective, leading to students' increased motivation, reduced anxiety and enhanced confidence. All the students revealed that they had never read any graded reader in their life, as they had never heard of them. All of the students in the programme showed positive views and attitudes towards the graded readers used. However, some negative voices about some issues related to graded readers were articulated.

Having investigated the students' opinions about graded readers in the second interview, the students' positive comments could be summarised as follows: graded readers were *"easy to read and comprehend"*, *"varied"*, *"interesting and fun"*, *"short"* and *"smooth, in both language-wise as well as content-wise."* These comments came after finishing the ER programme. However, some students developed signs of anxiety when they were first surrounded by different graded English readers. For example, S7 recounted, *"At the beginning, I felt it is impossible to read all these books or understand because I knew nothing about ER. Then after reading two books all this fear disappeared."*

All students started to enjoy graded readers after having read a couple of books. Another student, S9, also noted, *"I felt nervous at the beginning since I had many books surrounding me. By time, it became better and easier."*

Seven students praised the ease of graded readers language and their shortness, as a motivating factor for them to keep on the practice of reading. One student, S6, stated that graded readers “*are short and easy so I can read a story [graded reader] now in one day.*” S1, in the same vein, described the language used in graded readers as “*very easy to read and comprehend*”. She also added, “*This ease created an encouraging atmosphere for reading and learning. In addition, being able to finish a book in few hours really made me proud.*”

In terms of the content of graded readers, all students commented that they experienced reading for pleasure and enjoyed reading, several times, throughout the ER programme. S8, for example, wrote in her diary, “*I enjoy reading these books [graded readers] now. I just finished The Secret Garden and it’s an amazing story. The plot, character and everything were great in this book.*” In contrast, all students stated that they went through some books that were “*boring*”, “*hard to follow the incidents and characters*”, “*naive*” or “*not of my interest*”. These bad experiences were not a common habit throughout the programme. Six students experienced this once and four students for twice. However, the students’ freedom to leave the book that failed to interest them helped to bring them back on the track of reading.

Students’ preferences for graded readers were affected by the following: publishers, well-known titles, students’ personal connection with the graded reader and students’ personal preferences. It was found that students liked Oxford Bookworms the most among other publishers because they “*included glossaries at the end*” and “*the book covers are attractive.*” Cambridge English Readers and Penguin Readers came next as students’ preference for the two was similar with a little more interest in Penguin readers because “*their books are short.*” Seven students revealed that they were attracted to read books with well-known titles they had heard of, either adapted from originals or films. For example, S2, commented, “*When I saw the books for the first time, I was thrilled to see books I heard of such as: Sherlock Holmes, Sense and sensibility and others. I decided to read them immediately.*” Similarly, I noted in my diary, “*It is clear how students are fond of reading books they heard of through movies they watched, Braveheart and Sherlock Holmes are examples of this.*” Commenting on this, I added that “*this attraction is probably because the familiarity with the what is inside the book, through watching the movie, makes reading easier for them; thus they become more engaged.*”

Another observation was that students were more inclined to read books with stories or events that related to their personal life or experience. When asked about the books the students liked most, one student, for example, answered the following:

S3: Two lives

Me: why?

S3: Because the author's style attracted me and the whole thing. Sense and sensibility and Love Story as well. It was amazing story with a sad ending, because I linked this with a personal experience. I have a fiancé' and it is interesting to read love stories.

Moving to explore the appropriateness of graded readers, all the students were more engaged and motivated to read when the material was interesting and appropriate for them. For the students to enjoy reading, a large display of different graded readers was available to them. This did not go unnoticed; all the students with no exception applauded the variety of materials provided. This variety offered the students the chance to read whatever genre they wished or whatever topic they were interested in. A typical response on this was articulated by S9, was as follows:

The variety of graded readers was interesting. The availability of different books with different genres was a big motivation for reading more. So if you don't like a book you can jump to the other. Also, I like that most of the books did not focus on finding information but for fun so I was interested to read since it was reading stories as if I was watching a series.

Another student, S5, stated that the reason that made her always interested in reading during the ER programme was that “*there were different books with different titles and genres available.*” All the students were found to be more motivated when the graded reader was interesting and appropriate, while less motivated when the graded reader was not appropriate. For instance, S2 noted, “*When I read a book [graded reader] that is not interesting or difficult, I feel demotivated, bored and anxious, while when the book is interesting and the language is easy I get excited to read.*”

As for the students' preference for reading genres, they chose thrillers, histories, autobiographies, romances and detectives as their favourite genres. When the students read their favourite genre, they became more motivated to read. The two most preferred genres for the students were thrillers and autobiographies. S10

reasoned his regular reading of thrillers for *“their attractive storylines and they keep me engaged in reading till the end of the story,”* while S4 liked to read autobiographies more because *“ they usually have great lessons for successful people or promote for great principles, like in Martin Luther King. ”* However, some students showed disappointment about the lack of availability of books in their preferred genre. For example, S1, showed her admiration in the variety of books first, and then she recounted, *“I hoped the library contained more history books and autobiographies.”* These issues will be explained later when talking about the problems and challenges that faced the students (see below).

6- Attitudes towards English language reading

All the students, instead of six before the ER programme, revealed that ER developed more positive attitudes towards reading in English and its culture. One finding that emerged from classroom observation, diaries and interviews was that ER increased liking for reading among the students. One student, S8, recounted, *“I think my attitude towards reading in English is more positive now. I like reading and enjoy it.”* Similar comments were articulated by different students that ER *“changed the way I look at reading,”* or *“I view reading as a very enjoyable exercise now”*.

When asked what had helped them to develop more positive attitudes towards reading in English, the students attributed this improvement mainly to the easy materials and the freedom to choose the books they wanted to read. For example, S7 commented that *“the feeling of independence to read whatever I like made me like reading in English.”* Another student, S9, said, *“Reading easy and interesting books, I think, was a big reason for me to have a positive attitude towards reading in general, not only in English.”* Thus, learner autonomy and the graded readers used were the main drivers for fostering positive attitudes.

On the same issue of attitudes but towards the culture instead of the language, all the students even before the ER programme did not have negative attitudes towards the culture. Asking whether they had any difficulty with reading books that were English-culture based, all the students stated that they did not have any difficulty, because *“through internet, media and globalisation, we are familiar with different cultures,”* as S4 commented. Another student, S8, replied, *“The English language and its culture is not strange to people here anymore, so I understood all*

the cultural matters raised in the books.” In general, the students’ attitudes towards the English language and its culture were more positive after experiencing ER for three months.

7- Students’ perceived challenges throughout the ER programme

Students were asked whether they faced any challenges or problems in the ER programme. Two challenges, that affected the students’ motivation for reading, rose from the students’ responses: lack of time and reading in large quantities.

The first reported challenge that affected the students’ motivation negatively was lack of time to read. All the students in this study were either full-time employees or full-time university students. Seven students reported that lack of time to read was their prime concern in the ER programme, especially when they had other duties such as exams, assignments or children to look after. For example, S4 recounted, *“The biggest challenge for me was lack of time, because I was busy in my work and the ER class times were sometimes problematic to me.”* Another student, S8, commented that *“... only time. I could not find enough time to read a lot because I work full-time and have two daughters.”* In the same context, S10 expressed his frustration with lack of time saying, *“The availability of time was the worst thing. You know I am a student and it is difficult to find a lot of time for reading despite I enjoy it.”* Students also noted that having many duties and not having enough time to read made them feel frustrated and stressed at times during the programme.

The second reported challenge was reading in large quantities. Three students reported that they were anxious at the beginning of the course when they learned that they would read many books, and that some books were more than 60 pages. For instance, S9 recounted:

I think the biggest challenge was at the beginning of the course. To read two books in English a week was something hard and a new experience. I remember I read only three pages from the first book, and then I put it away. I got bored. With time, I started to get used to reading and choose the books more wisely.

Even though this problem was a common issue at the beginning of the course, students seemed to have overcome it with time. For example, S7 noted, *“Having so*

many books and options to read is really good but depressing as well. It made me stressed that I can't read a lot and I didn't have time, but it was much better in the end".

These challenges that faced the students during the study affected their reading and their motivation to read, at times. These challenges put some stress on the students, especially lack of time, which consequently might have affected their reading flow.

8- Future plans for lifelong reading

All the students expressed their will and determination to continue reading in English in the future, but for different purposes. Although their drive for reading in the future was not solely for pleasure, five students recounted that they would read because they enjoy reading. Other reasons such as to improve their English language, to obtain information and to improve their grades in exams were already explained above. Putting reasons for reading in the future aside, the students perceived reading differently after the ER programme. They started to view reading as a source of joy rather than pain. In addition, they viewed reading for pleasure as an effective source to develop their language skills through enjoying reading. For example, S3 confirmed that *"ER helped me a lot not only to improve my English but also to enjoy reading."* Similarly, S2 commented, *"You [Addressing me] always told us how ER could contribute to building lifelong reading habits. I really think I will never ever quit reading in my life."*

As for the students' willingness to be enrolled again in an ER programme if they had the chance, nine students revealed that they would attend an ER programme. They set some conditions to attend an ER programme again; those were, if the reading materials were with a higher level, if the library contained more books, if there were only one or two sessions per week but not more and if classroom discussions continued to exist in the classroom. S5 stressed that she would agree to attend an ER programme *"if the level of the reading materials was higher and there were classroom discussions,"* while S3 said, *"I would be happy to attend another ER programme but if we were required to come only once a week."* However, one student, S7, stated that she would not attend because *"the idea of ER is clear to me now. I can read and choose books without much help."* Students' readiness to continue reading in the future shows their changed attitudes about

reading; however, no mechanism was used to check whether they continued to read after the ER programme.

Many changes related to the students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in the target language took place during the ER programme, whether in increased motivation and attitudes, lowered anxiety, increased confidence and autonomy or others. These changes could be attributed to different reasons.

First, the students' motivation for and perceptions of reading in English changed throughout the ER programme. This result is in line with different studies, which claim that ER promotes motivation for FL/L2 reading. After having a period of turbulence in their motivation to read graded readers in the first month of the study, students started to feel less anxious about reading in English. In addition, after reading some easy and interesting books in English, they realised their misconception that reading in English was a difficult task to do. Consequently, this realisation led to greater confidence and reading self-efficacy. In many studies and in Day and Bamford's ten principles of ER (see 3.2), reading materials are essential for the success of ER programmes and for motivating students to read in the target language (Nishino, 2007; Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Ro, 2013) (see 3.4.2). The results in this study indicate the essential role that reading materials played in motivating students to read in larger quantities, and in breaking the barrier of fear of reading in English. The students read different books, according to their different personal tastes. However, the commonality between all these graded readers was that they were varied, interesting and easy in order to match the students' linguistic competence, so the students read within their comfort zone. The reading materials, in this study, seem to have motivated the students to read more in English, and decreased their anxiety.

Second, the results indicated that the students increased their motivation and were driven by extrinsic motivation more than intrinsic motivation to read in English. This result does not correspond with the results of previous studies that refer to intrinsic motivation as the strongest predictor for reading in the target language (Takase, 2007; Komiyama, 2013). The main motivation source for the students in this study was reading for academic achievement or to pass exams, the same source of motivation before the ER programme, but with a slight change in that more students reported reading for pleasure as a source of reading motivation too. These extrinsic values for reading in English are reasonable in an EFL setting,

especially like the one in Jordan as most students study English to get better grades and obtain good jobs, for English is a main requirement for many jobs and essential for working in international work settings (Alhabahba, Pandian & Mahfoodh, 2016). These results, however, are in line with the results of Ro and Chen's (2014) replication study, which claimed that there is no superiority for one type of motivation over the other as L2 reading motivation is complex. This claim was also supported by de Burgh- Hirabe and Feryok (2013), who listed both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as affecting sources of reading motivation, but in no order.

Although the results of this study demonstrated that the main source of students' motivation to read in English was extrinsic motivation, the data revealed that students experienced reading for pleasure throughout the ER programme. Different reasons emerged for their enjoyment in reading such as: "*reading for pleasure*", "*amazing storyline*", "*easy language*" and "*liking reading*". Once again, the importance of choosing appropriate reading material for the students to increase their motivation to read is highlighted. The students were both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated to read in English. What matters more is that they increased their motivation, regardless of the type, after they had started to read extensively.

Third, giving the students the freedom to select the material they wanted to read, autonomy and access to interesting and appropriate materials seem to have had a big impact on motivating students to read more, increasing their confidence and reading self-efficacy, decreasing their anxiety and creating 'book-strapped' readers. In addition, exposing students to a new and positive experience (ER) may have enforced a feeling of achievement and reading self-efficacy. Consequently, the students expressed their belief in the effectiveness in ER on their reading abilities, and this could be a main reason for their plans for future reading. These findings are consistent with Judge's (2011) findings. In her long-term case study, examining the motivations of nine avid readers in an ER course, she concluded that the main sources of motivation include: love of literacy since early youth, appeal of autonomy, access to interesting reading materials and students' freedom to choose reading materials.

Fourth, even though the students' attitudes were generally positive before the ER programme, all the students with no exception reported positive attitudes towards reading in English after the ER programme. The reading materials and

learning autonomy are the main reasons for more positive attitudes. One student (S7) commented, *“These books [graded readers] made me think differently about reading. It was not interesting for me, but I really like it [reading] now.”* Having more positive attitudes, the students started to read more. This result is in accordance with one criterion of Day and Bamford’s (1998) expectancy value model. Along with the influence of materials, positive attitudes have a strong effect on learners’ decisions to read. According to Day and Bamford, students who have positive attitudes towards L2 reading would likely perceive its value, and consequently read more in the L2. Students, in this study, perceived the positive effectiveness of ER, which may have affected their decision to read more during the programme, and even their willingness to read after the programme. Moreover, and as discussed above, ER increased the students’ feeling of comfort and reduced anxiety. These feelings could have changed the students’ attitudes into more positivity towards reading in English. In Yamashita’s (2013b) study, examining the effect of ER on 61 Japanese EFL undergraduate students’ reading attitudes, she found a major ER effect on the students’ reading attitudes. The results also showed increase in comfort and decrease in anxiety.

Finally, lack of time was one of the major challenges that prevented the students, in this study, from more reading. This finding is in line with findings from previous studies (Camiciottoli, 2001; Ro & Chen, 2014). The students, by the beginning of the study, reported that they were not surrounded by many books before, and once they knew that they would read as much as possible, this might have caused them reading anxiety. This, in turn, might have made them overwhelmed, which consequently led to a perceived lack of time as an excuse for not reading much. Also, the students in this study were either full-time employees or full-time students, which might have made it difficult for them to find extra time for ER. Lastly, and as Crawford Camiciottoli notes, “It would seem that this is a question of low priority among [the] students who are apparently unable or unwilling to find sufficient time for [pleasure reading]” (p.147). Similarly, students in this study might not have perceived pleasure reading as a priority for them.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter has provided quantitative and qualitative research findings, answering each research question posed for the study. These findings were followed by a

thorough discussion on each research question. The results of this research study revealed that all the students in this study enhanced their reading speed after experiencing ER for three months. They also showed that ER expanded the students' vocabulary knowledge through consistent exposure to large amounts of text and reading input. As for the third research question, the results showed that ER aided the students not only in increasing their reading strategies, but also in developing some students' own reading strategies. The findings also showed that ER developed the students' speaking skills, but not as much as it did with the skills in the previous research questions. In addition, ER had little impact on improving the students' writing skills in this current study. Although limited in number, students mainly improved their use of vocabulary, their summarising skill and task achievement. No significant improvement in their grammar was recorded. The results of the last research question revealed that ER helped in motivating the students to read in the target language, having a more positive attitude to read and lowering their FL reading anxiety.

The findings of the study also showed a strong and positive correlation between the amount of reading and reading speed, vocabulary knowledge and reading strategies; the more the students read, the more they improved these skills. In summary, the study provided strong evidence for the effectiveness of ER on reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies, productive skills and students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in English. Having analysed and discussed all the data, the next chapter sets conclusions for this thesis, pedagogical implications, limitations and directions for future research.

Chapter 6

Conclusions, Pedagogical Implications, Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This chapter first presents a summary of and conclusions that may be drawn from this action research study. It, then, suggests pedagogical implications in relation to English language teaching and learning as well as reading curricula. Following this, an explanation of the limitations of the current study is included. Finally, the chapter concludes with possible suggestions for future research.

6.1. Conclusions of the study

This study builds on the existing literature and sheds insights into FL/L2 reading education, which has shown the importance of ER as an approach to teaching and learning EFL/ESL. Different studies have revealed various benefits that language learners can gain through ER. For example, learners could increase their reading speed (e.g., Belgar, Hunt & Kite, 2012; Beglar & Hunt, 2014; Huffman, 2014) and vocabulary knowledge (e.g., Al-Homoud & Schmitt, 2009; Grabe, 2011; Nation, 2013; Senoo & Yonemoto, 2014), enhance general language competence (e.g., Cirocki, 2009; Suk, 2015), develop both receptive and productive skills (e.g., Krashen & Cho, 1994; Zainal & Husin, 2011; Rahmany, Zarie & Gilak, 2013; Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman, 2014), increase reading strategies (e.g., Nishino, 2007; Lee, 2012) and foster positive motivation for and attitudes towards reading and language learning (e.g., Takase, 2007; Judge, 2011; Ro, 2013; Ro & Chen, 2014). The past three decades have witnessed a significant increase in publications on ER and a considerable attention was given to ER as an approach to language teaching and learning. In spite of the growing literature listing the benefits of ER in the L1, L2 and FL teaching contexts, ER seems to be a less travelled approach due to the different reasons listed in Chapter 3.

The main problem that faces Jordanian EFL learners and that gave this study urgency is their English language proficiency weakness in general and their reading skill weakness in particular. As discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5, IR is the main method for teaching reading in the Jordanian EFL classroom, which could make the learners less fluent readers and less motivated to read in the target language. Thus, ER was suggested as a solution to this problem, in this study. In spite of the

effectiveness of ER, it has not been widely employed in the Jordanian EFL classroom or in the Arab world, as an approach or even as a supplementary method for enhancing the learning process. As a teacher at an English language centre, I was interested in ascertaining what effect ER would have on Jordanian EFL learners' cognitive skills and motivation for reading.

This study addressed five research questions relating to the use and benefits of ER as a teaching and learning tool in the Jordanian EFL context. It focuses on what gains ER would bring to the Jordanian EFL learners, whether in reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies, productive skills and motivation for and attitudes towards reading in the target language. In an attempt to answer these research questions, a 12-week ER programme action research, following the social constructivism paradigm, on ten Jordanian EFL learners was conducted. Different data collection tools were employed to elicit data including: tests, checklists, diaries, book reports, interviews and a videotaped focus-group session.

The major findings obtained, related to the first research question, reveal that all the participating students increased their reading speed. The increase happened coincidentally when ER was applied, which suggests that the students' reading fluency increase may have happened as a result of ER. Reading experts and language educators stress that development and increase in reading fluency come after reading large amounts of easy and interesting reading input (Day et al., 2011). Data also showed that there was a positive correlation between the amount of reading and reading speed; the more the students read, the more fluent readers they became.

The results of the second research question show that ER expanded the students' vocabulary knowledge, since they were exposed and surrounded by "a large amount of comprehensible input" (Cirocki, 2009, p.541). It was also noted that learning vocabulary through ER could be an efficient approach, because vocabulary acquisition and reading happen at the same time. Consequently, this facilitated learning new lexical items in their context of use and developed the students' sight vocabulary. Also, data showed that there was a positive correlation between the amount of reading and the vocabulary test results; the more they read, the better they achieved in vocabulary tests.

The results of the third research question reveal that ER increased the students' reading strategies and helped them to discover the reading strategies,

which best suit their reading style for more fluent and comprehensible reading. All students in this research, with no exception, reported development in reading strategies use. There was also a positive correlation between the amount of reading and reading strategies growth. The increase in reading strategies, in this study, occurred most in reading strategies while reading, followed by reading strategies after reading and the least was in reading strategies before reading. It was noted that the most reading strategies used by the students were: guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words from context, consulting glossary, connecting to text using personal experience and background knowledge, using the title to predict the content and summarising what was read.

The results of the fourth research question show that a clear improvement in the students' speaking skill took place in this study, and this leads us to conclude that ER could have facilitated speaking skill improvement through meaningful content in the books, for interaction to take place in the classroom. However, the study did not report any clear improvement in the grammatical use in the students' speech. The results of this study reported an increase in the students' self-confidence in speaking performance. As for the other productive skill, writing, ER had a little impact on improving the students' writing skill in this current study. In general, students were able to write their book reports and diaries with ease. No considerable improvement in their grammar was recorded. In general, results showed that the students' gains in their writing skill were far less visible than those in their speaking skill.

Findings, related to the last research question, reveal that students' motivation for reading in English increased, their reading anxiety decreased and they fostered more positive attitudes towards reading in the target language. Results also showed that students were more extrinsically motivated to read in English. In addition, students reported more self-confidence and developed their reading self-efficacy. Different factors contributed to their positive gains; probably the availability of interesting reading materials and the freedom of choice were the most affecting factors. However, lack of time was a major demotivating challenge that faced the students in the ER programme.

With this in mind, the findings of the current study contribute to the field of knowledge in three main ways. First, this study adds to the growing literature on ER by providing empirical evidence on how ER could be beneficial to the

development of language education. It sheds light on the contribution of ER in increasing students' reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies and productive skills. Furthermore, it shows the ER impact on motivating students to read in the target language, lowering their reading anxiety and fostering more positive attitudes towards reading in English. Although the students were exposed to ER for only 12 weeks, ER proved to have facilitated and developed their cognitive skills and increased their motivation for and attitudes towards reading in the target language.

Second, little research has investigated the ER effect on increasing students' reading strategies and what strategies students use while reading for pleasure. To my knowledge, very little has been done, so far, to investigate the ER impact on reading strategies before, during and after reading. This contribution could assist teachers, curriculum designers and education experts to know more about the benefits of ER, and give one more reason for implementing ER in language courses. This will be discussed next in more detail (see 6.2).

Third, contributions to knowledge in this study are not limited to the study of ER, but extend to the geographic and educational context of the Middle East and the Arab world. ER is popular mainly in Asian countries such as Japan, with a majority of ER research having been conducted there (Takase, 2003; 2009). The Middle East and the Arab world, on the other hand, are slowly implementing ER in the classroom. Dubai, for example, held three consecutive congresses on ER to raise awareness amongst language educators, teachers and academics of its importance. However, there has not been wide research on ER in the region. As such, the necessity for carrying out more research on ER and its relationship with reading strategies, especially in that region, was urgent. Implementing ER in the EFL classroom could improve language education there and enhance the curriculum design as well. Being a Middle Easterner and an Arab, I know how little attention is paid to reading. Therefore, this study could contribute to building a community of lifelong readers in a place where reading is neglected.

This is not to say that ER alone should be used in teaching reading, and that there should be no accountability in learning, as reading for pleasure is viewed as a less important learning method or comes low down in the priorities list in the educational process. IR is essential in the EFL classroom. These pedagogical issues and others are discussed below.

6.2. Pedagogical Implications

This study yields insights into the use of ER in the Jordanian EFL context, and provides implications for instruction, reading curricula, teachers and material writers and publishers. Although ER has been more popular in some EFL/ESL contexts in the last decade, it is still unpopular in other contexts, especially in the context of this study (i.e., the Jordanian context), for several reasons (see 3.4). Results of the current study provided empirical evidence of the benefits that ER could bring to the EFL classroom in developing the students' cognitive and affective skills. Although most of the reading, in this study, was done out of the classroom and the ER programme lasted for only one semester, students had many language gains. This raises awareness of the effectiveness of ER in developing language skills; therefore, incorporating ER into English reading curricula in EFL settings would contribute significantly to developing students' language skills.

Data and results from this study suggest seven implications for the implementation of the ER approach within the Jordanian EFL education context. Below is a list of these implications, which may also be applicable to other EFL contexts:

1- Add ER to an existing reading course or as a stand-alone separate course

Most of the English reading classes in the Jordanian EFL context, where this study was conducted, whether on university-level, school-level or language centre-level, follow the IR approach with no focus on fluency or reading for pleasure. Therefore, the ER approach was new to all students at the beginning of the study. Although the governmental educational system in Jordan does not recognise ER as an approach to follow in teaching reading, (probably because of its unpopularity in Jordan or because of its cost), teachers have a degree of freedom to follow the appropriate approach that suits their students. More importantly, private universities, schools and language centres in Jordan can implement different courses and they have more freedom in choosing the curriculum than the governmental educational institutions. These facts create favourable conditions for incorporating ER into the English language curriculum. The problem however, especially for the governmental schools and universities,

lies in the lack of funding for the reading materials. Although most of these educational institutions have libraries, the materials in these libraries might be insufficient or might not be appropriate for ER. However, teachers and administrators could find different ways to set up small libraries. Jacobs (2014) lists 16 ideas for finding ER materials if the school budget is insufficient (see 3.4.2.2).

Regarding the format of implementing ER, it could be incorporated into already existing reading courses. ER could be implemented as part of the timetable in the Jordanian EFL classroom. It could occupy between 30-60% of the English reading classes, depending on students' preferences. As a start, the approach could take 30%, and when students feel more comfortable and start to perceive the benefits of ER, teachers or administrators could increase the ER time in the classroom. For instance, if a classroom has 120 minutes of reading lessons a week, a teacher could start with 30-40 minutes a week and then increase the ER time gradually as long as it is convenient to their students. Such a gradual implementation would help students to "learn and apply cognitive, affective, and social learning strategies before they finally take responsibility for and control of their own learning, completely independent of their language instructors" (Cirocki, 2009, p.543). Also, such a gradual implementation should be the right path, because if immediate action was taken, that might arouse some negative feelings about ER in students, parents, teachers or administrators.

Students, in this study, showed highly positive attitudes towards reading for pleasure and the ER approach in general, and some expressed their wish to have learned reading extensively earlier in their schools or universities. ER should not be incorporated as an independent approach, in a way that students do not realise its importance. It must be in the students' timetable and part of the curriculum or separate stand-alone course, for students to recognise its priority and importance. Only then can ER could make a difference in the English reading classes. As long as it is not perceived as a priority by teachers, administrators, curriculum designers or decision-makers, students will perceive neither its importance nor its benefits. Although the ER approach, in this study, was a stand-alone course, all students agreed that ER and IR work best when taught simultaneously. Therefore, it is recommended that ER should not be used alone in the English reading courses. However, ER should be an indispensable part of any reading course or

language programme, along with IR and whether as an addition to already existing curriculum or as a separate course.

2- Provide access to various, interesting graded readers

As can be seen from the positive impact of graded readers, the students' positive responses to and feedback about the materials used in this study (i.e., graded readers), creating a print-rich environment with varied and interesting materials is a stepping stone towards establishing a successful ER approach.

In this study, various graded readers with different genres and titles were provided; however, with limited levels (i.e., levels 3 and 4) because the students chosen were of the same proficiency level. An ER library should include varied and different reading graded readers with different levels, in an attractive display, to keep students motivated to read over time. In this study, graded readers have been shown to increase students' reading rates and motivation to read. Although graded readers seem to be appropriate for ER (Belgar, Hunt & Kite, 2012), students might, after some time, want to read different materials such as young-adult books or best sellers. Therefore, the class library should include different types of reading materials.

Also, an important point to be taken into account is that reading materials should be easily accessible to students to allow for more engagement in reading (Grabe, 2009). Moreover, a practical, clear and easy check-in and checkout system for the books should be made available. These elements are essential for any ER programme to be successful.

Another way of providing students with reading materials could be through setting up an online ER library, where students could be referred to digital texts. The materials in an online ER library could be obtained either through subscriptions to websites that provide reading materials such as graded readers, or referring students to websites, with free services, where they might have different reading materials with different genres and levelled materials. Websites with such content are abundant nowadays.

Using technology for educational purposes (i.e., blended learning) is important, as some students might be interested in technology and reading digital texts. This, in turn, could help them in their learning process.

3- Encourage students to read as much as possible and set a reading minimum target

One of Day and Bamford's (1998) ten principles of ER is that students should read as much as possible in and out of classroom. Students, in this study, were encouraged to read as much as possible, by providing them with a variety of appropriate materials and the freedom to choose books that interested them. By achieving this aim, the main purpose of ER, which is reading large quantities of reading material, could be achieved. However, setting reading goals or minimum targets for reading could guide students in their reading and facilitate their reading in and out of classroom. In addition, it could create a competing and motivating atmosphere for reading, among students. In this study, setting a minimum target of reading five graded readers a month (three class readers and two graded readers), 15 graded readers for the whole programme (approximately 180,000 words) motivated students to read and accomplish this task. Consequently, they had a sense of accomplishment that boosted their motivation and lowered their reading anxiety. At the beginning of the study, students felt overwhelmed with the target, especially since they did not have wide reading experience; however, they showed their satisfaction with the target after reading some graded readers and finding that the goal was reachable. As confirmation of this, only one student read 15 books, which was the minimum target, and all the other students read above the minimum target.

The minimum target set for the students in this study was not random. Based on my teaching experience and suggestions from the literature on ER (Day & Bamford, 1998; Nation, 2009), a minimum target for reading was set. Deciding the minimum target or setting a target for reading in general will vary depending on the students' reading proficiency levels and their reading experience. It is advisable to set the reading minimum target as the number of books rather than as the number of words, for the number of words might sound overwhelming to the students.

4- Include ER activities

Students, in this study, showed their support for ER in-classroom activities such as discussions, oral presentations, book blurbs and outside classroom activities such as book reports and keeping of a diary. Incorporating ER activities

into an ER programme increases students' motivation to read, as these activities bring fun and changes the routine of only silent reading.

Different activities were used in this study. At the beginning of the programme, students participated in the book blurbs activity in order to introduce them to the different graded readers in the library, so students learned how to self-select their books at a later stage. During the programme, students enjoyed group-and-peer discussions on the books they were reading, so they exchanged their thoughts and ideas about what they had read. In addition, students expressed their gratitude for oral presentations which boosted their self-confidence, and gave them the opportunity to find out more about the books, so they could decide whether they would be interested in reading the book presented or not. Silent reading was not perceived well by the students at the beginning, probably because it was a new experience to them; however, students started to perceive it as an interesting activity with time and when the silent reading was followed by discussion about what they were reading. Outside classroom activities such as book reports and writing diaries, which were mainly to monitor their reading, were less appealing to the students. Most of the reading activities used in this study were inspired by literature on ER activities (e.g., Bamford & Day, 2004; Day et al., 2011; Jacobs & Farrell, 2012).

One important issue is that teachers need to negotiate with their students about what activities are to be engaged in, in the classroom, as students' interests and preferences for these activities differ. Implementing appropriate ER activities can be a great contribution to fostering positive attitudes towards and motivation for ER.

5- Orientating teachers and administrators to ER

As discussed earlier, in the literature as well as in the results of this study, the success of any ER programme is strongly connected to the role teachers and administrators play in ER programmes. Therefore, teachers' education in ER is indispensable. Macalister (2010) confirms the importance of teacher education and raising administrator awareness as essential factors for ER to be applied properly and be more widely practised. An important step that needs to be taken before starting any ER programme is orientating teachers and administrators, because the way they perceive ER will most likely reflect on how students

perceive it as well. Therefore, this study, and these implications, offer an ER experience in an EFL classroom that could be useful for teachers who might be keen on educating themselves into ER. They also offer main guidelines for teachers who want to implement ER in their classes. The following implication sets the role and responsibilities for teachers in their classes.

6- Teacher's role and responsibilities in the ER classroom

The language teacher's role in an ER programme is not limited merely to that of a reader, but also extends to that of an organiser, encourager, guide, monitor and role model. Such responsibilities indicate that the role of the teacher is diversified and requires teachers to take an active part in promoting reading for pleasure.

In ER programmes, teachers have the important responsibility of organising the ER class library and selecting reading materials before the programme starts, by considering the students' reading levels and their different reading interests and by creating a reading-friendly environment that promotes reading for pleasure. Teachers also need to organise different activities designed to introduce the books to the students, to keep students enthusiastic about reading, to develop their learning autonomy (Cirocki, 2016) or to monitor their reading through follow-up activities. These activities not only motivate students to read, but also break the routine of silent reading that could provoke negative feelings if students are not yet extensive readers.

Another major responsibility that falls on teachers is that they need to guide and encourage their students, for an ER programme to be successful. If students are left alone without any guidance, the ER programme aiming to get students to read will be bound to fail. For example, Green (2005) explains the disappointing results of the implementation of the Hong Kong Extensive Reading Scheme in English, because the ER lessons were not teacher-led, so there was no chance to check the students' progress or help them select appropriate books. In order to motivate students to persist with their reading, teachers need to provide their students with ongoing support and counselling (Tamrackitkun, 2010; Cirocki, 2012). They need to be familiar with their students' reading interests, what they are reading, and what they think about the books they are reading in terms of difficulty and preference. Teachers also need to be familiar with the books in the

class library, so that they can offer guidance to students who struggle with choosing books to read, especially in settings where ER is a new experience.

Day and Bamford (1998) suggest that teachers need to provide their students with ongoing class support throughout the programme and engage in formal or informal teacher-student conferences on ER. In this study, I orientated the students on ER in the first lesson, offered guidance and help throughout the programme, checked the students' progress regularly and had formal and informal discussions about the programme, their problems and their reflections on ER. It is important for teachers to know more about their students' reading problems and so they should meet and work with their students, individually or as a whole class, to solve any issues raised.

Because ER can be done in and out of classroom, it is vital for teachers to check and monitor their students' reading progress. Monitoring individual students' reading progress increases the feeling of responsibility for students and could motivate them to read more, if monitoring is done in a non-threatening but encouraging way. In this study, the students' reading progress was checked regularly through the book reports submitted, after each book a student finished reading.

By getting involved in the reading community, teachers show students what it means to be a reader and the benefits of being a reader. Students are influenced by their teacher's practices in the class, so if their teacher reads with concentration, enjoys reading, discuss ideas and themes from books, students are more likely to take reading more seriously. Teachers need to be a role model of reading for their students. Therefore, it can be said that teachers, by guiding, encouraging, monitoring and being a role model of a reader, provide the short cuts for students to become lifelong readers and autonomous learners.

7- Implications for publishers and material writers

Finally, students in this study showed interest in graded readers. They experienced reading for pleasure and the state of flow while reading these graded readers. However, they found some graded readers tedious to read because of their boring storyline and their length. In addition, some students complained about graded readers without glossaries at the end, because glossaries helped them to rely less on dictionaries. Therefore, it is recommended that material

writers and publishers should include glossaries in their graded readers, and design course books that promote reading diaries with less focus on IR. Moreover, it is recommended for material writers to work on interesting storylines that promote emotional response to texts, thus promoting collaborative reading.

One more way in which publishers could promote ER is by introducing a series of graded readers with traditional course books, allowing for different language proficiency levels, genres and styles. This could be achieved by attaching a CD with digital texts to the course books, or producing course books with links to special websites containing graded readers or any other ER materials. These links could be at the end of every unit/chapter of the course book and the content of the ER materials in the website would be linked to the content of that unit/chapter in the course book.

6.3. Limitations of the Study

This study used a careful action research design to investigate the effectiveness of ER on the Jordanian EFL learning; in addition, the study employed a mixed methods research design, using both qualitative and quantitative data (i.e., triangulation) to cross-validate the findings. The study revealed significant results regarding the impact of ER on FL learning. However, this study has some limitations that must be taken into account and addressed in future studies.

First, the ER programme, in this study, was a stand-alone programme that was not incorporated into a curriculum or a language course. The results and the language gains that students achieved might have been different if ER had been implemented in a curriculum or language course. It would have been best if the ER research programme had been implemented as a part of an existing language course or reading course. The reason for not implementing ER into an already existing course was the lack of a control group in the study, as the validity of the results would be jeopardised in the absence of control group, because the students' language gains might result from different sources rather than from ER.

Second, the study focused on investigating the ER effectiveness on FL learning in its natural context, so the research aim was to contextualise and interpret the findings, focusing on individual cases. However, the small number of participants and the fact that they were of the same proficiency level limits the

generalisability of the study. Future research including a much larger pool of participants with different reading levels will provide a more broad understanding and evidence for the effects of ER. In addition, the study results will be more generalised and could be applicable in other contexts, rather than only in the context of the study.

Third, the study used only graded readers as reading material for the students. Although, the students' positive feedback on the materials used show their satisfaction, providing them with only one type of reading material might have prevented them from reading more. Also, some students wished they had more graded readers in their favourite genre. If they had been given more reading material choices such as young adult books or periodicals, they might have read more; thus, ER might have had a bigger impact on their language learning.

Fourth, the absence of a delayed post-test of vocabulary deprived me from checking whether the ER gains would have had a longer retention. It was impossible to administer such a test, in this study, as some students had to travel for a long time and I had to go back to the UK. Future studies can investigate the ER effect on long-term vocabulary retention by incorporating a delayed vocabulary post-test, two to three weeks after the end of the experiment.

Fifth, the study investigated the ER effect on the Jordanian EFL students' reading strategies and what reading strategies they used while reading extensively. However, there was no mechanism used in this study to prove whether these strategies were used efficiently.

Sixth, the study examined the ER impact on the students' reading speed. However, there was no mechanism used to check their comprehension while taking the reading speed tests. Although the findings in this study support the claim that reading fluency can be developed with ER, reading speed measures should be followed by comprehension measures to validate whether the students actually read the passages at their normal speed with good comprehension.

Finally, more research data collection tools could have been used to add more credibility and reliability to the research. Surveys and questionnaires would have added a more authentic and non-threatening environment if they had been used, especially for investigating the ER impact on the students' motivation for and attitudes towards reading in the target language.

6.4. Directions for future research

This study has revealed several recommendations and directions for future research on ER. Incorporating additional measures on reading strategies use while reading extensively could be one possible direction for future research. There is little research done on the ER impact on reading strategies. This study investigated whether students increased their reading strategies before, while and after reading, and what reading strategies they used. However, the study did not employ any measure to check if the students used these strategies efficiently. The students' use of these strategies could be partial or inefficient. Therefore, future studies could probe the effect of ER on the extent and scale of students' reading strategies use. This further study should comprise both qualitative (e.g., interviews, diaries and observation) and quantitative (e.g., questionnaires, tests and checklists) research.

Also, future studies could employ reading portfolios as a research tool to investigate the ER impact on different issues. The use of students' reading portfolios would allow the student to reflect on their learning process. Reading portfolios could serve as journals of learners' reading achievement, showing their reflections and attitudes towards reading or the reading programme, whether in- or out-of-class (Cirocki, 2013c). Reading portfolios give students the opportunity to share information about their reading experiences and learning styles, and also give teachers the opportunity not only to assess the students but also to develop the teaching process. Therefore, having this qualitative research tool and the resulting data, would enrich our understanding of ER from the students' point of view.

Another possible direction for future research is to examine the correlation between the amount of reading and the effects of ER on individual language skills. How much reading is needed to show the effects of ER on reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, motivation and attitudes towards reading or any other language component that could be investigated? In this study, students showed increase in some skills more than other skills, and they even failed to show considerable improvements in one skill (i.e., writing). Moreover, some visible improvements regarding lowered anxiety and increased motivation happened after reading only a few books. However, these are only observations, as there was no measure or systematic methodology used in this study to explore the

amount of reading to show the ER impact on individual language skills and whether it differs from one skill to another. Such a further study could deepen our understanding of ER.

Finally, the participants of the study were all Jordanian EFL students, small in number, with the same language proficiency level and background knowledge. To broaden the research base, future studies could investigate the ER impact on FL learning in different contexts, with a larger number of participants with different backgrounds and language proficiency levels. It would be relevant to see if the results of such further study would differ from the results of the current study.

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Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form



Cambridge & Chelmsford

Section A: The Research Project and Participant Information Sheet

1. Title of project

The impact and effectiveness of extensive reading in a Jordanian EFL classroom

2. Purpose and value of study

Extensive Reading is a new approach in Jordan which has proved to have many benefits, through research undertaken in different settings and participants, like: raising students' motivation for learning, enhancing English four skills for EFL students, increasing reading speed, and growing vocabulary knowledge. The current reading procedure for teaching reading in Jordan is 'intensive reading', where students face difficulty and boredom while English lessons. Therefore, this study aims at improving the reading skill through an ER programme.

3. Invitation to participate

On this occasion, I would like to invite you to take part of this research to help improving the English language learning process in Jordan using extensive reading.

4. Who is organising the research?

This research is organised by Mohammed Ateek (Anglia Ruskin University, PhD student), and supervised by: Dr. Andrzej Cirocki (first supervisor) and Dr. Sebastian Rasinger (second supervisor).

5. What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of this research will remain confidential. They will be collected to be analysed to either support or contradict the research hypotheses. Your participation will be confidential, and your personal information including your names will not be identified in any publications or presentations.

6. Contact for further information

Should you require more information, please do not hesitate to contact the following:

Mohammed Ateek: the researcher.

Mohammed.ateek@student.anglia.ac.uk

Your Participation in the Research Project

1. Why have you been invited to take part?

The reading skill in the Jordanian EFL classroom faces a big and unspoken problem, where most of the students have a lower ability in reading than in other skills. Therefore, this research aims at updating language education in Jordan through ER. For this, you have been invited to take part of this research for the sake of the learning process improvement in the Jordanian classroom.

2. Whether you can refuse to take part

Appendix A (continued)

You are fully free to accept or refuse taking part in the research study. In case of acceptance, you are also fully free to withdraw from the research at any time and without any restrictions.

3. What will happen if you agree to take part?

If you agree to take part in the research, an action research will be applied for three months. Both qualitative and quantitative methods will be used. Starting with quantitative tools, reading speed tests, vocabulary tests, and reading strategies checklists will be used. Firstly, two reading speed tests will be set; one will be at the beginning of the programme and one at the end, where the results will be compared to see if any improvements happens regarding your reading speed. Secondly, three different vocabulary tests will be used at the end of each month during the programme where your vocabulary growth will be assessed. The tests will contain vocabulary from the texts you have read in the past four weeks. Finally, checklists will be used to investigate what reading strategies you use while reading for pleasure.

Moving towards qualitative data, both interviews and students' book reports, and diaries will be used. You will be interviewed at the beginning, during and at the end of the ER programme to find answers to the research questions. For example, your motivation, attitudes and the use of L2 reading strategies in ER will be investigated. Book reports, in turn, will be implemented to probe how reading graded readers helps you improve your L2 proficiency. You are also expected to have diaries and make entries into these diaries, recording all your thoughts and feelings about language learning during the programme. (I will explain in Arabic, the common language between me and the learners, if they do not comprehend fully what I mean in English)

4. Whether there are any risks involved (e.g. side effects from taking part) and if so what will be done to ensure your wellbeing/safety?

Concerning the risks of the research, you might not read what you are expected to read, and get bored from the book reports. To minimise these risks, I will give you the choice to read what you like to read in harmony with your level. I will sit with you and discover the topics that you are into, and provide you with books at the same interests.

I will meet you every week to check your book reports. On this occasion, I will try to make you enthusiastic through rewards for the best book reports handed in.

5. Agreement to participate in this research should not compromise your legal rights should something go wrong

6. What will happen to any information/data/samples that are collected from you?

Any information/data/samples that are collected from you will be stored on my personal computer, where it will be secured by password and saved in a hidden file. These data will be analysed and your participation will be confidential and anonymous.

7. Whether there are any benefits from taking part

Appendix A (continued)

If you take part in this research, you will contribute to implementing a new method of learning English reading in Jordan. Furthermore, it is a big chance for you to learn a new method which might change your attitude towards learning English.

8. How your participation in the project will be kept confidential?

Your participation will be kept confidential and anonymous during and after the research. This will be signed on the consent form on agreement of confidentiality and anonymity. There are also many steps taken to prevent any disclosure of the data and names. No information will be made available to anyone who is not involved in the research.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP,
TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

Appendix A (continued)

Section B: Participant Consent Form

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:



Cambridge & Chelmsford

Title of the project: The impact and effectiveness of extensive reading in a Jordanian EFL classroom

Main investigator and contact details: Mohammed Ateek

Mohammed.ateek@student.anglia.ac.uk

Members of the research team: Dr. Andrzej Cirocki: first supervisor. Dr. Sebastian Rasinger: second supervisor.

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.
3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.
4. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.
5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection: I agree to the University¹ processing personal data which I have supplied.

I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me*

Name of participant (print).....Signed.....Date.....

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP

-

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.

Title of Project:

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Signed: _____ Date: _____

¹ "The University" includes Anglia Ruskin University and its partner college

Appendix B:
Graded Readers Included in the Study

No	Title	Author	Genre	Level
Cambridge University Press				
1	No Place to Hide	Alan Battersby	Adventure	3
2	A Puzzle for Logan	Richard MacAndrew	Murder Mystery	3
3	How I Met Myself	David Hill	Ghost Story	3
4	Double Cross	Philip Prowse	Thriller	3
5	The House by the Sea	Patricia Aspinall	Thriller	3
6	Just Good Friends	Penny Hancock	Romance	3
7	Two Lives	Helen Naylor	Romance	3
8	The Lathi File	Richard MacAndrew	Thriller	3
9	Strong Medicine	Richard MacAndrew	Murder Mystery	3
10	Tales of the Supernatural	Frank Brennan	Short Stories	3
11	Wild Country	Margaret Johnson	Romance	3
12	Not above the Law	Richard MacAndrew	Thriller	3
13	The Eye of the Storm	Mandy Loader	Thriller	3
14	The Beast	Carolyn Walker	Horror	3
15	The Ironing Man	Colin Campbell	Comedy	3
16	The Lady in White	Colin Campbell	Contemporary Fiction	4
17	Berlin Express	Michael Austin	Original Fiction	4
18	Staying Together	Judith Wilson	Romance	4
Penguin				
19	Braveheart	Randall Wallace	Contemporary	3
20	Sense and Sensibility	Jane Austen	Classic	3
21	Dracula	Bram Stoker	Classic	3
22	Noughts and Crosses	Malorie Blackman	Contemporary	3
23	Princess Diana	Cherry Gilchrist	Original	3
24	An Ideal Husband	Oscar Wilde	Classic	3
25	A Scandal in Bohemia	Arthur Conan Doyle	Classic	3
26	The Prince of Egypt- Brothers in Egypt	David Adler	Contemporary	3
27	Billy Elliot	Melvyn Burgess	Contemporary	3

28	The Darling Buds of May	H E Bates	Contemporary	3
29	The Incredible Journey	Burnford	Classic	3
30	Pirates of the Caribbean- World's End	Ted Elliot and Terry Rossio	Contemporary	3
31	The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	Mark Twain	Classic	3
32	New York	Vicky Shipton	Original	3
33	Ghost in the Guitar	Paul Shipton	Original	3
34	Psycho	Robert Bloch	Contemporary	3
35	Rain Man	Leonore Fleischer	Contemporary	3
36	Doctors Faustus	Christopher Marlowe	Classic	4
37	Detective Work	John Escott	Original	4
38	Seven	Bruno Anthony	Contemporary	4
Oxford University Press				
39	Chemical Secret	Tim Vicary	Thriller and Adventure	3
40	Dancing with Strangers: Stories from Africa	Clare West	World Stories	3
41	Frankenstein	Patrick Nobes	Fantasy and Horror	3
42	Kidnapped	Clare West	Thriller and Adventure	3
43	The Secret Garden	Clare West	Human Interest	3
44	The Last Sherlock Holmes Story	Rosalie Kerr	Crime and Mystery	3
45	Leaving No Footprint: Stories from Asia	Clare West	World Stories	3
46	Martin Luther King	Alan McLean	Fact-files	3
47	Playing with Fire: Stories from the Pacific Rim	Jennifer Bassett	World Stories	3
48	Rabbit-Proof Fence	Jennifer Bassett	True Stories	3
49	Justice	Tim Vicary	Thriller and Adventure	3
50	Information Technology	Paul Davies	Fact-files	3
51	Goldfish	Christine Lindop	Thriller and Adventure	3
52	Dinosaurs	Tim Vicary	Fact-files	3
53	The Crown of Violet	John Escott	Thriller and Adventure	3
54	The Railway Children	John Escott	Human Interest	3
55	Tales of Mystery and Imagination	Edgar Allan Poe	Fantasy and Horror	3
56	The African Queen	Clare West	Human Interest	4
57	Land of My Childhood: Stories from South Asia	Clare West	World Stories	4

Appendix C: Check-in and Checkout System

Check-in and Checkout Checklist

First Month

Student ID	Week 1		Week 2		Week 3		Week 4	
	Book Title	Checked Back	Book Title	Checked Back	Book Title	Checked Back	Book Name	Checked Back
S1								
S2								
S3								
S4								
S5								

S6								
S7								
S8								
S9								
S10								

Appendix D: Vocabulary Tests

Vocabulary test 1

Choose the best answer (a, b, c or d)

- 1- The word 'carriage' means?
 - a- a cruise
 - b- a horse-drawn wheeled vehicle for carrying passengers
 - c- a large car
 - d- a boat for carrying people, cars or goods across a river

- 2- We were frantic, and we had _____ days waiting for the results of the tests.
 - a- glamorous
 - b- angry
 - c- fantastic
 - d- worrying

- 3- A _____ is a person with religious duties.
 - a- rabbi
 - b- crook
 - c- campaigner
 - d- crosier

- 4- He _____ his hand- but to Elinor, not Marianne.
 - a- held over
 - b- held at
 - c- held out
 - d- held on

- 5- 'At once' means?
 - a- immediately
 - b- surprisingly
 - c- one day
 - d- happened just one time

- 6- Her voice shook and her face was _____.
 - a- blue
 - b- bright
 - c- dark
 - d- green

- 7- It was not a serious relationship for him; yet enjoyable, so he tried to _____ himself with her.
 - a- distract
 - b- adore
 - c- bore
 - d- amuse

Appendix D (continued)

8- A _____ is someone who works under the ground to remove or extract coal, gold, etc.

- a- dustman
- b- cosmetologist
- c- janitor
- d- miner

9- He had heard the bad news of his son's death, and he _____ cigarette after cigarette.

- a- lit
- b- fired
- c- chopped
- d- split

10- They were camping and the water was boiling in the _____ next to them to cook their dinner.

- a- cubicle
- b- billycan
- c- booth
- d- punnet

11- The word 'crouch' means?

- a- to bend the head forward slightly and raise it again quickly
- b- to move the head or body quickly downwards
- c- to lower the body close to the ground by bending the legs
- d- to stand firmly

12- The word 'dormitory' means?

- a- a big building with many rooms for people to sleep in
- b- a large-single room
- c- a small-single room
- d- a large building of offices

13- He lived with _____ for almost a year after his father's death, as he had loved him very much.

- a- grief
- b- relief
- c- respite
- d- ecstasy

14- The word 'spine' on a plant means?

- a- a flat pointed part
- b- a round pointed part like a ball
- c- a sharp pointed part like a needle
- d- a circular pointed part

15- _____ is an important governmental official.

- a- damper

Appendix D (continued)

- b- superintendent
- c- supernatural
- d- paediatrician

16- The word 'fence' means?

- a- the line that separates land from sea
- b- a structure made of wood, metal, etc. that surrounds a piece of land
- c- a metal pot
- d- a strong wooden table

17- He was eager to talk to Alex and _____ for him to return from lunch.

- a- patient
- b- angry
- c- worried
- d- impatient

18- It is better to avoid using words that might provoke people's racial or moral _____.

- a- responsibilities
- b- sensibilities
- c- duties
- d- beauties

19- The official stage before marriage is called _____.

- a- wedding
- b- costume
- c- engagement
- d- rings

20- 'Colonel' is a title for a rank in _____.

- a- courts
- b- industry
- c- agriculture
- d- army

Appendix D (continued)

Vocabulary test 2

Choose the best answer (a, b, c or d)

- 1- The word 'flora' means?
 - a- a garden full of flowers
 - b- plants considered as a group in a particular era or area
 - c- relating to hot damp parts of the world near the equator
 - d- sweltering
- 2- Myra lit another cigarette and _____ deeply.
 - a- inhaled
 - b- exhaled
 - c- swallowed
 - d- absorbed
- 3- He is suspected to be the _____ behind the bombing.
 - a- mastermind
 - b- auditor
 - c- inspector
 - d- illusionist
- 4- She broke into a house to rob it, and the police caught her _____.
 - a- suspicious
 - b- criminal
 - c- red-handed
 - d- witnessed
- 5- You'd better look after your clothes, so do not _____ your new pants!
 - a- chop
 - b- whack
 - c- clout
 - d- rip
- 6- The word 'snuff' means?
 - a- to suffocate in a liquid and especially in water
 - b- to take something, usually drugs as a powder, through the nose
 - c- to lessen the strength of flavour of a solution or mixture
 - d- to inject
- 7- The word 'collar' is related to?
 - a- clothes
 - b- shoes
 - c- technological devices
 - d- diseases
- 8- Sadly, many people _____ when the boat overturned.
 - a- exploited

Appendix D (continued)

- b- deflected
 - c- drowned
 - d- chopped
- 9- I saw a big _____ in the house, and it was really disgusting to see.
- a- rate
 - b- rot
 - c- rat
 - d- rut
- 10- The word 'upstream' means?
- a- in the opposite the direction from the way the water is flowing
 - b- in the direction that the water is flowing
 - c- the place where water stops flowing
 - d- none of the previous answers
- 11- The colour scarlet is a _____.
- a- bright red
 - b- bright yellow
 - c- bright green
 - d- bright grey
- 12- He was very hospitable and he _____ on hosting us for the night.
- a- refused
 - b- insisted
 - c- urged
 - d- necessitated
- 13- She spent the afternoon _____ on her back in the pool.
- a- sinking
 - b- drenching
 - c- floating
 - d- rolling
- 14- Bill wore _____ glasses to see the small print more clearly.
- a- magnifying
 - b- engaging
 - c- maintaining
 - d- none of the previous answers
- 15- 'Seal' is _____.
- a- an animal that lives in the sea
 - b- an animal that lives on land
 - c- an animal that lives both in the sea and on land
 - d- none of the previous answers.
- 16- The word 'nasty' means?
- a- to give pleasure or satisfaction to

Appendix D (continued)

- b- unfriendly or threatening
- c- bad or disgusting
- d- none of the previous answers

Match the following words (17-20) with their definitions (a-d).

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 17- shiver | a- to cause or allow a substance to run or flow out or over |
| 18- dilute | b- the waste that is carried off by drains |
| 19- sewage | c- to tremble without control |
| 20 spill | d- to lessen the strength or flavour of a solution or mixture |

Appendix D (continued)

Vocabulary test 3

Choose the best answer (a, b, c or d)

- 1- The word 'ethics' means?
 - a- morals
 - b- races
 - c- behaviours
 - d- misconduct

- 2- 'Carrycot' means?
 - a- clothes for babies
 - b- wheelchair for babies
 - c- a small bed used for carrying a baby
 - d- none of the previous answers

- 3- They were protesting for their rights; the police intervened; and some of the protesters were taken to _____.
 - a- strike
 - b- mass
 - c- detention
 - d- freedom

- 4- Martin Luther King spent years of his life _____ for equality.
 - a- handing
 - b- admiring
 - c- campaigning
 - d- refusing

- 5- There was a small wooden cross at the head of his _____.
 - a- cell
 - b- grave
 - c- belief
 - d- death

- 6- 'Hut' is related to _____.
 - a- buildings
 - b- marketing
 - c- medicine
 - d- law

- 7- _____ is a long line of rocks near the surface of the sea.
 - a- cliff
 - b- moor
 - c- fence
 - d- meadow

- 8- Her parents died, and she began _____ uncontrollably.

Appendix D (continued)

- a- calling
- b- giggling
- c- sobbing
- d- none of the previous answers

9- A _____ is a long rubber or plastic tube that can be moved or bent to put water onto fires, gardens, etc.

- a- hose
- b- robe
- c- line
- d- cable

10- The ceremonies connected with burial or cremation of the dead are called _____.

- a- tomb
- b- funeral
- c- cross
- d- vault

11- His murder triggered vicious race _____.

- a- riots
- b- cremation
- c- celebration
- d- none of the previous answers

12- Just because of her colour, he _____ on her face, knowing that there would be no consequences.

- a- protested
- b- gripped
- c- looked
- d- spat

13- 'Cellar' is a place for storing things or usually for selling _____.

- a- wine
- b- grocery
- c- food
- d- stationery

14- The word 'pint' is usually used with _____.

- a- food
- b- alcoholic drinks like beer
- c- water
- d- none of the previous answers

15- The college has recently been involved in a drugs _____.

- a- scandal
- b- celebration
- c- commemoration
- d- festivity

Appendix D (continued)

- 16- 'Wheelchair' is usually used by the _____.
a- disabled
b- young and healthy
c- poor
d- none of the previous answers
- 17- _____ is a piece of office furniture where papers and files are kept.
a- cabinet
b- filler
c- filling cabinet
d- cabinet filler
- 18- _____ is when people of different races, sexes or religions are kept apart.
a- integration
b- assimilation
c- incorporation
d- segregation
- 19- Americans wrote the _____ of Independence in 1776.
a- Claim
b- Clearance
c- Declaration
d- Entitlement
- 20- They had an amazing day, and later they _____ its memory.
a- lightened
b- cherished
c- alleviated
d- amused

Appendix E: Reading Speed Tests

Reading Speed: Pre-test

From *Playing with Fire: stories from the Pacific Rim*

Marina Salcedo, Senior Clerk, second grade, hurried to her desk to open her pay envelope. It was the fifteenth of July, and tomorrow she was leaving for Manila, to get the promotion that she had been promised for five years.

She had worked in the ministry for twenty years, and in the last five years the cost of living had risen greatly. Without the extra money from her promotion, her youngest son would not be able to go to college. Also, three years ago they had borrowed money on their house when her husband had had to go to hospital.

She checked her pay thankfully. Two hundred and sixty pesos; this is what she would take to Manila. She walked down to the far end of the hall to the Chief's office. The girls there were not talking. That meant the Chief was in. His secretary told her to go straight in.

The Chief was reading a dirty copy of a magazine... He did not put the magazine away, and Marina stood in front of him, waiting for him to look up. He was about fifty and going bald.

‘So you are leaving tomorrow, Marina,’ he said.

‘Yes, sir ...’

‘Well, you can have the afternoon off, to get ready. You will only have three working days in Manila. Do you think that will be enough?’

‘I would like to have three more days, sir, if possible.’

‘No problem, Marina,’ the Chief said. ‘Oh, and when you are there, will you please buy me the latest gabardine material for a pair of pants? I will pay when you get back.’

‘Yes, sir. Thank you.’

Last time, the Chief wanted a pair of Levi Jeans; they had cost a hundred and twenty pesos. When she returned, they had played this little game: he saying he must pay, she refusing to take the money. After all, he was not a bad boss- three days off with pay, for example. And he did not try to touch her in the way he did with other women clerks.

Appendix E (continued)

Reading Speed: Post-test

From *Playing with Fire: stories from the Pacific Rim*

The bus left at six in the morning, driving along the valley through the newly planted rice fields, the water shining in the early morning sun. The roads were good, with strong new bridges, making the journey to Manila only ten hours. It used to take a full day. This was progress, the kind that people see and enjoy. Marina knew there were problems in the mountain villages and other places, but in her province things were calm. Her own life was not so bad. She and her husband had finally built a house. Three children, one married and soon to leave for the United States; another soon to finish college; and the youngest nearly finished high school. But the cost of living had gone up. They had to cook on wood fires, and could not afford to buy toilet paper.

Five years ago she had asked for promotion. She had gone to Manila twice about it, and finally she had received a notice saying it would happen.

The bus arrived in Manila as it was getting dark. Marina walked to the street where her second cousin lived. They had been college students together. She would probably sleep on a hard sofa in their living room, but that was better than spending thirty pesos in a cheap, dirty room somewhere.

They were having dinner when she arrived and, like a good relation, she had brought meat, fish, and rice from her province. They seemed pleased to see her, but Marina noticed that her cousin soon asked, 'when will you leave?'

'I won't be here more than a week,' she said, 'and I won't eat here. I'll spend everyday at the ministry, following up my papers.'

She was up at six the next day. Her cousin's children, aged thirteen and fourteen, were getting ready for school. They had kept her awake playing rock music in the night.

When she arrived at the ministry, she went straight to Personnel. The people that she worked with years ago in that office had all left, and there was nobody she knew. She asked for the person who worked in the papers of staff promotion, and was sent to the other end of the office, to a fat woman in her early thirties, with bad teeth, thin hair and a uniform that was too small for her large body.

Appendix F: Reading Strategy Checklist

Name _____ Date _____

- Directions:** 1. Check those statements that reflect the reading strategies you use and tick them.
2. On the back of the paper, write any strategy that does not exist in the checklist and that you use.

Example: I set goal for my reading _____ ☐ ☒ _____

STRATEGIES I USE BEFORE READING:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1- I think about the book cover _____, title _____ and topic _____ to predict and support predictions.</p> <p>2- I use brainstorming to activate my prior knowledge and experiences about topics _____ and vocabulary _____ to improve comprehension.</p> <p>3- I use pictures _____, title _____, topic _____, chapter and section headings _____ to generate meaningful questions.</p> | <p>4- I think about what I know about the topic _____.</p> <p>5- I create mental pictures of words and concepts _____.</p> <p>6- I identify important text features and text genre _____, and use this information to predict and set purposes _____.</p> |
|---|---|

STRATEGIES I USE DURING READING:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1- I check to see if I understand what I am reading _____.</p> <p>2- I change purposes for reading a text, such as rereading, reading for pleasure, or reading to collect information _____.</p> <p>3- I use text to support predictions and to confirm and adjust them _____.</p> <p>4- I guess the meanings of unfamiliar words from context _____.</p> <p>5- I link what I know in my first language with words in English _____.</p> <p>6- I take notes to help me recall important ideas _____.</p> <p>7- I connect to text using personal experience and background knowledge _____.</p> <p>8- I use dictionaries when a new word appears _____.</p> <p>9- I make mental pictures _____.</p> <p>10- I identify confusing parts _____.</p> | <p>11- I identify unfamiliar words _____.</p> <p>12- I reread to understand confusing parts _____ and unfamiliar words _____.</p> <p>13- I use pictures _____, graphs _____, and charts _____ to help me understand confusing parts.</p> <p>14- I retell to check what I remember _____.</p> <p>15- I read the captions under and above photographs, charts, and graphs _____.</p> <p>16- I raise questions and read for answers _____.</p> <p>17- I break down long or confusing parts into small chunks to close read _____.</p> <p>18- I picture characters _____, places _____, and ideas _____.</p> <p>19- I consult glossaries _____.</p> <p>20- I summarise while I read _____.</p> |
|--|--|

STRATEGIES I USE AFTER READING:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1- I think about why I liked or did not like what I read _____.</p> <p>2- I return to the text to prove points during discussions and for written responses _____.</p> <p>3- I summarise what I read _____.</p> <p>4- I connect ideas and issues across texts _____.</p> <p>5- I make a story map _____.</p> | <p>6- I make questions and answer them _____.</p> <p>7- I speak _____, draw _____, and/or write reactions _____.</p> <p>8- I reread favourite parts _____.</p> <p>9- I reread to find details _____.</p> <p>10- I predict what might happen to a character if the story continued _____.</p> |
|---|--|

Appendix F (continued)

Reading Strategy Checklist (Arabic Version)

الاسم : _____

التاريخ: _____

استراتيجيات القراءة

تعليمات وإرشادات:

1. ضع علامة بجانب الجملة التي تعبر عن استراتيجيات القراءة التي تستخدمها .
2. في خلف الورقة، أكتب أي استراتيجيات تستخدمها ولكن غير موجودة في ورقة الاستطلاع التالية.
مثال: احدد اهدافي للقراءة —✓—

التحضير والتخطيط قبل القراءة:

- 1- أفكر بغلاف الكتاب _____ ، عنوانه _____ ، موضوع _____ حتى أنتبأ وأدعم توقعاتي.
- 2- استخدم معرفتي وخبراتي السابقة والمتعلقة بالموضوع- _____ - والمعاني _____ لاحسن فهمي.
- 3- استخدم الصور _____ ، العنوان _____ ، الموضوع _____ ،- عناوين الفصول والابواب _____ لأسئل الاسئلة ذات معنى.
- 4- دائما اسئل نفسي ماذا اعرف عن الموضوع _____ --.
- 5- أضع تصورا مسبقا للكلمات والمفاهيم _____ --.
- 6- أحدد مميزات النص الهامة ونوعه _____ -- واستخدم هذه المعلومات لاتنبئ واحدد الهدف _____ .-----.

استراتيجيات استخدامها خلال القراءة :

- 1- أتأكد باستمرار من فهمي لما أقرأ _____ .
- 2- أغير هدف القراءة من قراءة نص الى قراءة من أجل المتعة أو القراءة من أجل جمع المعلومات _____ .
- 3- استخدم النص لدعم وتأكيد التوقعات أو تعديلها _____ .
- 4- اتوقع المعاني الجديدة من السياق _____ .
- 5- اقوم بربط ما أعرفه بلغتي الام بكلمات اللغة الانجليزية _____ .
- 6- أقوم بوضع هدف لاساعد نفسي بتطوير المهارات المهمة لي - _____ .
- 7- اقوم بأخذ ملاحظاتلتساعدني بتذكر الافكار المهمة _____ .
- 8- أقوم بربط النص بخبراتي الشخصية و معرفتي السابقة _____ .
- 9- أكون تصور ذهني _____ .
- 10- اقوم بتحديد الاجزاء المربكة _____ .
- 11- اقوم بتحديد الكلمات الغير مألوفة _____ .
- 12- أقوم باعادة قراءة الاجزاء المربكة _____ والكلمات الغير مألوفة _____ .
- 13- استخدم الصور _____ ، الرسوم البيانية _____ والخرائط _____ -لمساعدتي في فهم الاجزاء المربكة .
- 14- أقوم باعادة الرواية لاتتحقق من تذكري _____ .
- 15- أقوم بقراءة التعليق اعلى واسفل الصور والرسومات البيانية _____ .
- 16- اضع الاسئلة واقراء من أجل الاجابة عليها _____ .
- 17- أقوم بنقطيع الجمل الطويلة والمربكة حتى اقراها عن كُتب _____ .
- 18- أتخيل الشخصيات _____ الاماكن _____ --والافكار _____ .

- 19- أرجع الى قائمة الكلمات في نهاية الكتاب .
20- ألخص بينما أقرأ .

استراتيجيات استخدامها بعد القراءة:

- 1- أتسائل عن الامور التي جعلتني أعجب بالكتاب أو العكس .
- 2- استخدم اجزاء من النص لاثبت وجهة نظري في أي نقاش ومن أجل كتابة الردود .
- 3- يمكنني تلخيص ما قرأت .
- 4- أقوم بربط الافكار و الاحداث عبر النص .
- 5- أرسم خريطة للقصة .
- 6- أكتب أسئلة وأجيب عليها .
- 7- أتحدث -، أرسم -واكتب عن ردود الفعل.
- 8- أعيد قراءة الاجزاء المفضلة .
- 9- أعيد القراءة للبحث عن أجابة .
- 10- أتخيل ما قد يحدث لشخصية اذا استمرت القصة .

Appendix G: Book Report Sample

1- Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____

- Title: _____
- Author: _____
- Publisher: _____

2-Briefly describe what the book is about. What happens?

3- Respond to the book (Did you like it? Why? Why not? What did it make you think about? What experiences or memories did it remind you of?).

4- Have you learned any new words/phrases? Provide examples.

5- Teacher's feedback.

Appendix H: Interview Questions

Section A: First Interview Questions (at the beginning of the programme)

<p>Personal information</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- What is your name? 2- What do you do? Are you a student or do you work? 3- How old are you? 4- How long have you been learning English as a foreign language?
<p>Reading experience</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Did your parents or other members of your family use to read books or stories to you when you were a child? 2- Do you read when you have free time? 3- Can you remember the last time you read a book? When was it? Was it in Arabic or English? And what was the book talking about? Did you enjoy it? 4- Did you learn reading in English at school, university, or other places? Did you find it interesting or boring? Why? 5- Did/Do your English teachers encourage you to read English out of the classroom? Did/Do they recommend any books to read? 6- Did/ Does your school/university/language centre have a library? If yes, how big was/is it? What materials did/ does it contain? 7- What do you think about the reading materials that were/are used while learning English? 8- Have you ever read English books for pleasure before? If you have, when and where did you read? What did you read? How did you enjoy it?

Reading strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- From the reading checklist, choose strategies that you use on a regular basis. Please justify your choice. 2- Choose strategies that you never use. Please justify your choice. 3- Which of the strategies on this list would you like to use more of in the future?
Motivation and attitudes to read English books	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How would you rate your motivation to read in English on a scale from 1 to 10? 2. How does reading English books/texts make you feel? 3. How often do you read? 4. What motivates you to read in English? 5. Why do you read English books or other English materials? 6. Do you like reading but there are factors prohibiting you doing so (e.g., materials availability, attractiveness, or linguistic level, the socio-cultural environment, e.g., home)? If yes, what are they? 7. Have you ever felt anxious or uncomfortable feelings when reading English books? If you have, when did you experience these feelings and how did you approach such uncomfortable feelings? And why do you think you had those feelings?
Predictions before	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Have you ever heard about the extensive reading approach before? If you have, when and where? 2- Do you think this programme will improve your English proficiency level? What gains do you expect in particular? Please choose from the following list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing• Speaking• Listening• Vocabulary• Grammar• Spelling• Reading speed• Reading strategies use <p>3- How do you feel about the extensive reading programme that you will be part of?</p>
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Appendix H (continued)

Section B: Second Interview Questions (at the end of the programme)

<p>Thought about extensive reading</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Since you experienced extensive reading for three months, I am curious to know your thought and experience to the approach (extensive reading). 2- What do you think about the reading materials that were used in the extensive reading programme? 3- Did you face problems or challenges when you were participating in the extensive reading programme? If yes, what were they? 4- You were also encouraged to read outside of the class. How did you enjoy in-class sustained reading and outside reading? Which reading situation did you feel more comfortable and why? 5- If you had a chance to attend an ER programme again, would you do it? Why? Why not?
<p>Motivation and attitudes to read English books</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- How did reading in English make you feel? 2- Which book/books did you enjoy mostly? Why? 3- What were your impressions and feelings when you were surrounded by many English books with different titles, topics, and genres? 4- Some of the books were English-culture based; did you encounter any difficulty or feel uncomfortable while reading them? How did you enjoy them? 5- After experiencing extensive reading, has it changed your attitude towards reading in English for better or worse? How? 6- Do you think you will continue reading English after the programme? Why? Why not? 7- What do you think about the various classroom discussions during the programme?

	<p>8- What do you think about the book reports during the programme?</p> <p>9- Has the diaries helped you during the programme? How?</p> <p>10- How would you rate your motivation to read in English on a scale from 1 to 10?</p>
Reading strategies	<p>1- From the reading checklist, choose strategies that you use on a regular basis. Please justify your choice.</p> <p>2- Choose strategies that you never use. Please justify your choice.</p> <p>3- Which of the strategies on this list would you like to use more of in the future?</p>
Extensive reading impact on English proficiency level	<p>1- Has the programme helped improving your English language proficiency level? If yes, which skill(s) or sub-skill(s) from the following list has/have most improved? How?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing • Speaking • Listening • Vocabulary • Grammar • Spelling • Reading speed • Reading strategies use • Other <p>Please describe any improvements and gains you have made from the programme.</p>

Appendix I: Interview Questions (Arabic Version)
Section A: First Interview Questions (Arabic Version)

اسئلة المقابلة الاولى (قبل البدء في البرنامج)

المعلومات الشخصية	<p>1. ما هو اسمك ؟</p> <p>2. ماذا تعمل؟ هل أنت طالب أم موظف ؟</p> <p>3. كم عمرك ؟</p> <p>4. كم مضى لك على تعلم الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية؟</p>
الخبرات المتعلقة بمهارات القراءة	<p>1. هل كان والديك أو احد من الاقرباء يقرأ لك كتباً أو قصص عندما كنت صغيراً ؟</p> <p>2. هل تقرأ في وقت الفراغ؟</p> <p>3. هل تتذكر متى آخر مرة قرأت فيها كتاب ؟ متى كان ذلك؟ هل كان الكتاب باللغة العربية ام باللغة الانجليزية؟ ما كان موضوع الكتاب؟ هل استمتعت بقرائته ؟</p> <p>4. هل تعلمت مهارة القراءة باللغة الانجليزية في المدرسة، الجامعة أو في اماكن أخرى ؟ هل كان تعلم مهارة القراءة ممتعا او مملا ؟ لماذا؟</p> <p>5. هل كان مدرسو اللغة الانجليزية يشجعونك على القراءة خارج الصف ؟ هل نصحك بأي كتب للقراءة ؟</p> <p>6. هل كان هناك في مدرستك مكتبة ؟ اذا كان نعم، كم كان حجمها ؟ ما نوع الكتب التي كانت متوفرة فيها ؟</p> <p>7. ما رايك بمادة القراءة المستخدمة خلال تعلم اللغة الانجليزية ؟</p> <p>8. هل قرأت كتاب باللغة الانجليزية فقط للمتعة سابقاً؟ اذا فعلت؟ متى واين قرأته ؟ ماذا قرأت؟ هل استمتعت به و كيف؟</p>
استراتيجيات القراءة	<p>1. من القائمة اختر استراتيجيات تستخدمهما بشكل منتظم للقراءة؟ علل؟</p> <p>2. اختر استراتيجيات لم تستخدمهم ابدا ؟ علل؟</p> <p>3. أي من الاستراتيجيات المذكورة ترغب باتباعها أكثر في المستقبل ؟</p>
الدافع ووجهة النظر من قراءة كتب باللغة الانجليزية	<p>1. كيف تقيم حماسك للقراءة بالانجليزية على مقياس من ١ الى ١٠ ؟</p> <p>2. كيف تشعر عند قراءة كتاب أو نص باللغة الانجليزية؟</p> <p>3. كم عدد الكتب التي تقرأها غالبا ؟</p>

	<p>4. ما مضمون الكتب الذي يجذبك للقراءة باللغة الانجليزية ؟ لماذا ؟</p> <p>5. في العادة لماذا تقرأ كتب أو مواد باللغة الانجليزية ؟</p> <p>6. هل تحب القراءة وتعلم مهارة القراءة باللغة الانجليزية الا هناك تمور منعتك من التعلم ؟ (على سبيل المثال : توفر المادة، المحفزات، مستوى اللغة، البيئة الاجتماعية والثقافية) اذا كان نعم.</p> <p>ما هي المعوقات ؟</p> <p>7. هل تشعر بعدم الارتياح عند قرائتك للكتب باللغة الانجليزية ؟ اذا كان نعم ، متى شعرت بهذا الشعور وكيف توصلت اليه؟ ولماذا تعتقد انك شعرت بذلك الشعور؟</p>
<p>التوقعات المسبقة</p>	<p>1. هل سمعت بأسلوب التعلم عن طريق القراءة الموسعة قبلاً؟ اذا كان نعم ، متى واين؟</p> <p>2. هل تعتقد ان هذا البرنامج سيطور مستوى اللغة الانجليزية لديك ام لا؟ من فضلك اختر من القائمة:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • القراءة. • الكتابة. • المحادثة. • الاستماع. • المفردات. • القواعد. • التهجئة. • سرعة القراءة. • استراتيجيات القراءة. <p>3. كيف تشعر حيال مشاركتك بهذا البرنامج ؟</p>

Appendix I (continued)

Section B: Second Interview Questions (Arabic Version)

اسئلة المقابلة الثانية (بعد الانتهاء من البرنامج)

<p>المعتقدات عن القراءة الموسعة</p>	<p>1- بعد تجربتك للبرنامج لمدة 3 اشهر ، هل من الممكن ان تحدثنا عن خبرتك في البرنامج والاسلوب؟</p> <p>2- ما رأيك بالمادة المقرؤة التي استخدمت خلال فترة البرنامج؟</p> <p>3- هل واجهت أي تحديات او مشاكل خلال مشاركتك في البرنامج ، اذا كان نعم ، ما هي المشاكل؟</p> <p>4- تم تشجيعك على القراءة خارج الحصة، هل استمتعت بالقراءة الموسعة داخل الصف وخارج الصف؟ أيهما جعلك تشعر بالراحة أكثر القراءة داخل الصف ام خارجه ؟</p> <p>5- اذا تكرر البرنامج مرة أخرى هل ترغب بالمشاركة مرة أخرى؟ لماذا ؟</p>
<p>الدافع ووجهة النظر من قراءة كتب باللغة الانجليزية</p>	<p>1. بماذا تجعلك القراءة بالانجليزية تشعر؟</p> <p>2. أي الكتب التي استمتعت بها كثيرا ؟ لماذا؟</p> <p>3. ما كان انطباعك وشعورك عندما كنت محاط بالعديد من الكتب باللغة الانجليزية ذات مواضيع المختلفة والانواع؟</p> <p>4. بعض الكتاب التي قرأتها كانت من الثقافة والادب الانجليزية ، هل كان هناك صعوبة بقرأتها؟ هل شعرت بعدم الراحة خلال القراءة ؟ هل استمتعت بقرائنها ؟</p> <p>5. هل التجربة التي مررت بها خلال البرنامج غيرت من وجهة نظرك عن القراءة باللغة الانجليزية ، هل أصبحت ايجابية ولا سلبية ؟ كيف؟</p> <p>6. هل تعتقد انك ستستمر بالقراءة باللغة الانجليزية بعد انتهاء البرنامج ؟ لماذا ؟ لماذا لا؟</p> <p>7. ما رأيك في المناقشات الصفية المتنوعة خلال البرنامج؟</p> <p>8. ما رأيك بكتابة التقارير خلال البرنامج ؟</p>

	<p>9. هل ساعدتك المذكرات خلال البرنامج؟ كيف؟</p> <p>10. كيف تقيم حماسك للقراءة بالانجليزية على مقياس من ١ الى ١٠؟</p>
استراتيجيات القراءة	<p>1. من القائمة اختر استراتيجيات تستخدمهما بشكل منتظم للقراءة؟ علل؟</p> <p>2. اختر استراتيجيات لم تستخدمهم ابدا ؟ علل؟</p> <p>3. أي من الاستراتيجيات المذكورة ترغب باتباعها أكثر في المستقبل ؟</p>
تأثير القراءة على مستوى إجادة اللغة الإنجليزية	<p>1- هل ساعد البرنامج على تطوير مستوى اللغة الانجليزية لديك؟ اذا كان نعم، أي مهارة بالتحديد تعتقد انها تطورت بشكل ملحوظ وكيف؟</p> <p>القراءة. الكتابة. المحادثة. الاستماع. المفردات. القواعد. التهجئة. سرعة القراءة. استراتيجيات القراءة.</p> <p>من فضلك اشرح وصف اي تطور حصل خلال البرنامج.</p>

Appendix J: S9's Book Reports
S9's First Book Report: Stories of Survival

Book Report

1- Your name: _____ Date: 4 / 9 / 2014

- Title: Stories of survival
- Author: Fiona Beddall
- Publisher: Penguin Readers

2- Briefly describe what the book is about. What happens?

This book includes eight of the world's greatest survivors. From the cold of Antarctica to the heat of the Sahara Desert, from the endless water of the Atlantic Ocean to the tight space of a Rwandan bathroom, these people have known terrible suffering, but have lived.

3- Respond to the book (Did you like it? Why? Why not? What did it make you think about? What experiences or memories did it remind you of?)

I liked it, because it tells true stories of survivors. Generally speaking, I can conclude that real survivors make their own luck by do not give up.

4- Have you learned any new words/phrases? Provide examples.

Yes I have. For example: insect, shellfish, ash, raft, murder, urine, and sting ray.

5- Teacher's feedback.

Appendix J (continued)

S9's Second Book Report: Martin Luther King

Book Report

1- Your name: _____ Date: 20 / 11 / _____

- Title: Martin Luther King
- Author: Alan C. McLean
- Publisher: Oxford Bookworms

2- Briefly describe what the book is about. What happens?

The United States in the 1950s and 60s was a troubled place. Black people were angry, because they didn't have the same rights as whites. It was a time of angry words, of marches, of protests, a time of bombs and killings. But above the angry noise came the voice of one man - a man of peace. 'I have a dream' said Martin Luther King, and it was a dream of blacks and whites living together in peace and freedom.

3- Respond to the book (Did you like it? Why? Why not? What did it make you think about? What experiences or memories did it remind you of?)

After reading this book, I admire Martin Luther King for several reasons. First, he is an excellent speaker, and his ideas inspire many people. Second, he spent many years in jail as a political prisoner. However, that experience didn't stop his dream. Third, he changed American history in his short life.

4- Have you learned any new words/phrases? Provide examples.

yes, I have. For example: boycott, poverty, racism, and riot.

5- Teacher's feedback.

Appendix K: S2's Diaries

S2's First Diary

2/9/2014
Tuesday

Unit Day 3:-

Today was our second class in the English course. It was so interesting and I really enjoy it as we learn new expressions (Blurbs & Genres).

We also have an exercise of matching different Blurbs (captions at the back cover of the book) with different books which have been arranged on the table by our instructor. It was really a nice exercise and our group have got only 1 mistake, which was an achievement.

My instructor was happy as I have read two books 'The Secret Garden' and 'Sense & Sensibility' but I have got no time to write reports for them. I will be more organized next time and I will arrange my duties in a good way so I can finish all of them on time with a good performance.

According to 'Sense & Sensibility' it was a bit boring and I think that this period of time (for the story) was out of my interest, and I think I will never read

Appendix K (continued)

such a kind of stories. It was not deep & the idea was boring. Even though some of the scenes were really interesting & one of the scenes ^{made} me surprised.

Appendix K (continued)

S2's Second Diary

1/12/2014
Saturday

→ Day 63:
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Today I presented 'A puzzle for Logan'. I think I have done a good job, also I ~~felt~~ <sup>felt</sup> myself had

improved in a noticed way. I had a self-confident more than before, also my speaking & ~~pronunciation~~ pronunciation was also better. All the classmates liked my idea of the cards, where Omar have got 'Mrs Logan' & Mr. Mohammed got 'Sergeant Grant'. They made a lot of fun in that and I think we had had a nice time. I am really so happy.

Before my presentation, we have taken and discussed a few pages from our new English book and it was about food in different regions & cultures. I liked it very much, Really I always appreciate group discussion. :)