Teacher Cognition and Extensive Reading at Tertiary Level in the Turkish Context

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1. Introduction

Extensive Reading (ER) is a major area of interest within the field of foreign language teaching and has been integrated into many ELT contexts as it serves the need to promote learning beyond the classroom. Accelerated with Krashen's (2004b) idea that comprehensible large amounts of input in L2 help learners better in the new language, ER involves learners reading easy-to-understand material that they choose without outside help (Susser & Robb, 1990). Consequently, it brings numerous cognitive and affective benefits including reading skills, speed, and comprehension as well as linguistic abilities, positive attitudes, and motivation (Beglar et al., 2012; de Burgh-Hirabe, 2011; Kajinga, 2006; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Nishizawa et al., 2010; Ro, 2013; Takase & Otsuki, 2012; Yamashita, 2007; Yamashita, 2008; Yamashita, 2013; Yılmaz & Hınız, 2022).

Despite such benefits, ER is not commonly practiced. Feasibility might be related to the prerequisites as well as qualities of the teacher and the teaching context (Byun, 2010; Macalister, 2010; Ucaçelik & Şahan, 2023). Thus, investigation of teachers' perceptions is fundamental to its effective implementation as they play a critical role in the process as practitioners of programs (Al Aghar et al., 2023; Macalister, 2010). Focusing mainly on the gains, most studies in the field, however, have failed to address obstacles in the path of ER.

Considering the results of studies conducted in different language teaching contexts leads us to the conclusion that different variables and dynamics may contribute to the integration and implementation of ER differently. As teachers are the actual practitioners of ER, it is important to explore their cognition and take their beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge into consideration. With this in mind, we wanted to find out what is actually happening with the language instructors at tertiary level in the Turkish context. We believe that it has become an important issue for the Turkish context because most of the Turkish universities have one-

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year intensive English programs and try to find ways to integrate some sort of ER through graded readers or online reading into their programs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. ER

As the pioneers of ER, Herold Palmer and Michael West regarded ER as an important contribution to foreign language teaching in general and to the teaching of foreign language reading in particular. ER aims for incidental learning (Grabe & Stroller, 2002) through exposure to new words and structures in large quantities of texts organized according to the level, type of the program and other variables (Susser & Robb, 1990). Besides, ER is supposed to be recreational reading (Krashen, 2004a). Thus, students should be free to choose their own books and free to stop reading if the book is not interesting to them. It is mostly done outside the classroom at students' own pace and level, and the books are not discussed in class. The more they read, the better they understand; the better they understand, the more they enjoy reading; the more they enjoy reading, the faster they read; the faster they read, the more they want to read. In this way, it turns into a virtuous circle (Nuttall, 1996). Day and Bamford's (1998) commonly cited ten characteristics of ER include

1. Students read as much as possible.
2. A variety of materials on a wide range of topics is available.
3. Students select what they want to read.
4. The purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding.
5. Reading is its own reward. There are few or no follow-up exercises after reading.
6. Reading materials are well within the linguistic competence of the students in terms of vocabulary and grammar.
7. Reading is individual and silent.
8. Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower.
9. Teachers orient students to the goals of the program, explain, keep track, and guide.
10. The teacher is a role model of a reader for the students (p. 7-8).

Although these principles are highly recommended in the field, Robb (2002) argues that some of them are not valid in Japan and in some non-Western countries. In Asian settings some distractions such as part-time jobs, social life or over learning may undermine the main aim of ER such as the principle of learners being responsible for their own learning, which is not extendable to many non-Western societies. He presents an alternative view from

the perspective of Asian setting and regards ER as a course requirement done outside the classroom.

In traditional EFL teaching, reading has mostly been carried out as a language study with a close look at the texts for semantic or lexical analysis, or for translation into L1. This kind of reading, namely intensive reading requires slow and careful reading of small amounts of material for complete understanding often with exercises. Getting detailed meaning of the text, developing reading skills, enhancing vocabulary and grammar knowledge are the main aims of intensive reading (Renandya, 2007). For Bamford and Day (1997), intensive reading is teaching reading for its component skills such as distinguishing the main idea, finding references, and guessing the meaning of unknown words from the context. However, in ER the quantity and the enjoyment students get are the main points. While students work with short texts through teacher's guidance in IR, ER is an individualized approach to reading.

2.2. Effects of ER

The effect of ER on learners' language improvement has received great attention, and a great amount of research questioning whether ER has beneficial results on general language competence has accumulated. Learners' general linguistic abilities, improvement in reading, listening, speaking and writing skills, and grammar, enrichment in vocabulary, correct spelling and many other points have been investigated through ER programs (Kajinga, 2006; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Nishizawa et al., 2010; Takase & Otsuki, 2012). Yamashita (2007) reports on the positive effect of ER on L2 reading attitude, and Yamashita (2008) also states that the effect of ER is seen more quickly in general reading skills than in L2 reading. Bell (2001), Beglar et al. (2012), Nakanishi and Ueda (2011), and Robb and Kano (2013) report contributions of ER to reading speed and comprehension. Besides these studies, which investigated the cognitive domain of ER, some other studies investigated the affective domain. In studies by Kajinga (2006), Takase and Otsuki (2012), Ro (2013), and Yamashita (2013), it was found that pleasure reading reduced anxiety and contributed to motivation. Furthermore, a positive change in foreign language students' attitudes towards ER is reported by de Burgh-Hirabe (2011) as well as Yılmaz and Hınız (2022).

2.3. How to conduct ER

It is not enough to provide books and let learners read to conduct an ER program (Renandya et al., 1999), so it needs to be integrated into the curriculum (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003; Macalister, 2010; Yu, 1993). A careful planning and systematic implementation are needed for the success of such a program. Since not all students have the reading habit, the best way to encourage them to read more is to make ER an essential component of the curriculum and devote adequate class time to it (Day & Bamford, 2002; Robb, 2002; Robb & Kano, 2013, Yamashita, 2004). Consequently, students will take it more seriously and gain the ability to read and work independently.

The material to be used in an ER program requires careful consideration. Day and Bamford (2002), Krashen (2004b), Susser and Robb (1990), Ujiie and Krashen (1996), and Yu (1993) support the idea that in order to conduct a successful ER program, having an ideal collection of various reading materials which give pleasure to the readers is one of the essentials. In numerous studies, graded readers were used as the reading material (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Hsueh-chao & Nation, 2000; Mason & Krashen, 1997). Beglar et al. (2012) reported that simplified texts provide more reading rate gains than unsimplified ones, and de Burgh-Hirabe (2011) found that learners of Japanese as a foreign language viewed graded readers as more suitable than the children's books. Reading authentic materials is considered as an essential part of ER by some researchers (Day & Bamford, 1998; Susser & Robb, 1990). Khedimou (2013) states that authentic texts help learners gain better reading comprehension, increase their motivation in reading and expose them to real English language use. According to Susser and Robb (1990), graded readers are not considered authentic since they are written for pedagogical purposes.

How to choose the reading material is another concern in ER. Jacobs (2014) provides criteria for teachers to take into consideration when selecting ER materials. He recommends that ER materials should be at learners' independent reading level so that they can read with little or no outside help. Another criterion stated for selection is interest level. As students' preferences vary in terms of interest, teachers and peers in an ER program should introduce new topics and text types. He lists old magazines and yearbooks, exchanged materials with other students and classes, subject files compiled with articles from newspapers and magazines, second-hand books, student- and teacher-written materials, and materials donated by former and graduating students, teaching and administrative staff, students' family members, organizations, and foundations among resources for ER. With advances in technology and prevalence of remote education, online ER programs are becoming more common (Bui & Macalister, 2021; Cote & Milliner, 2015; Pino-Silva, 2009). Reading online is highly beneficial because there is a vast amount of updated information (Pino-Silva, 2009). By reading through the Internet, the learners explore, evaluate, and make their own decisions on what to read and when to read. Nevertheless, there are some challenges related to online ER (Ucaçelik & Şahan, 2023).

Evaluation in ER programs is a controversial issue. Some experts argue that assessment may retard development of independent reading skills (Day & Bamford, 1998; Krashen, 2004a) and encourage students to view reading solely as a means to perform well on tests, rather than fostering a genuine love for reading (Waring, 1997). Besides, testing is believed to create stress (Davis, 1995) and to have a negative influence on students' attitude towards ER (Day & Bamford, 1998). On the other hand, others claim that evaluation is required in ER. They argue that since not many students read voluntarily, evaluation increases external motivation of students in reading (Logan & Johnston, 2009; Stoeckel et al., 2012). Similarly, Kitao et al. (1990) found that extra credit points motivate students to read in English. Moreover, Stoeckel et al. (2012) also reported that reading quizzes did not have a negative impact on the learners' reading attitude.

2.4. Obstacles for ER

Although ER has been commonly accepted and supported in language learning, there have been some problems in conducting an ER program. According to Day and Bamford (1998), limited class time, cost, variety of the teachers' roles, lack of support from their colleagues, their prejudice towards ER as a time-consuming work, lack of time for their own ER, and students' lack of reading proficiency are some of the major reasons for not implementing ER in schools. Following a pace, running an intensive teaching program, lack of administrative support, regarding ER as an exception rather than a rule, or not considering students' reading silently in the class as class learning are some other problems listed by Macalister (2010). Takase and Uozumi (2011) investigated probable problems in conducting an ER program among teachers in two groups: practitioners and non-practitioners. The study revealed that teachers' experience in ER contributes to its success.

What we need to do to develop institutional policies, integrate ER in the curriculum and implement it is to find out teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge as they have the key role in the possible outcomes of such attempts. The number of studies investigating teacher-related issues for ER is very limited. For example, Macalister (2010) shows the differences between teachers' beliefs about ER and their practice. He found out that while most of the teachers in the study knew about ER, had positive beliefs about its benefits on language learning and encouraged their students to read extensively, very few of them were familiar with research about ER, incorporated it into the class, or monitored students' reading for pleasure outside the class.

Similarly, Takase and Uozumi (2011) focused on the ER practitioners' attitudes, motivation, and perceptions on ER and English teaching comparing and contrasting novice practitioners with less than two years' experience and more experienced practitioners with two or more years' ER instruction. According to the results, the teachers practiced ER in class, outside class, as a club activity, or in the form of tutorial. For the teachers, ER contributed to their students' confidence and proficiency in English and reading quality and quantity. The teachers mentioned time, money, and support from colleagues as the problems they faced. For these teachers limited class time was not a big problem. According to Takase and Uozumi (2011), the teachers are motivated to continue ER when they use ER as an in-class activity and observe students' eagerness toward reading and their progress. For the researchers, teachers' motivation to continue ER also depends on their assurance of its effectiveness and their preparation by reading a great deal.

A similar study was conducted by Byun (2010), who first made sure that the teachers had a chance to experience ER firsthand and then asked them about their reactions, attitudes, and knowledge. The teachers had positive reactions to the ER program and acknowledged its benefits. However, they also mentioned the pre-dominance of a test-centered curriculum, the need to obtain approval from school administrators, the need to convince parents, students, and colleagues about the benefits of ER, the focus on the teacher's role and student priority on test-taking as problems in establishing ER in the curriculum of Korean schools.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The participants of the study were 79 English language instructors from various universities in Türkiye and volunteered to participate in the study. They all work in the intensive English programs of their universities where they teach English to students who study English for one year before they go to their departments. Even though we did not document their educational or experience backgrounds, the general profile included instructors who graduated from departments such as English Language Teaching, English/American Language and Literature, Linguistics, or Translation. They either studied language teaching methodology in their undergraduate programs or the teaching certificate program they attended while studying at the university or after they graduated. As part of these programs, it can be assumed that they were naturally trained to integrate ER into their teaching as well as to teach intensive reading or might have had in-service ER training at some point.

3.2. Data collection instrument

Based on the survey of relevant literature and informal interviews with language instructors, a questionnaire was developed and piloted with seven English language instructors. The survey included seven open-ended questions with unlimited time and space requirement to answers (See Appendix). The questions included language instructors' perception of ER, contributions of ER to language learning, essentials to conduct ER, how to conduct ER, how to monitor students in ER, problems and solutions when doing ER, and evaluation of ER.

3.3. Data analysis procedure

With a quantitative content analysis approach (Dörnyei, 2007), each response to every question in the survey was coded for content-based categories generated again through the content of the responses at two different levels. For example, first the content was categorized as 'text features', then it was categorized as 'long', 'authentic', 'chosen by students', etc… While doing this, rather than categorizing each response, each distinctive content within a response was coded for the relevant category. That is, in some responses we had more than one content category for coding. Thus, the numbers in the tables do not always correspond to the number of participants but frequency counts of categorized content. Cases of no response to a question were recorded as 'No idea'.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Teachers' understanding of ER

Teachers' answers to the first question of 'What do you understand from 'extensive reading'?' revealed that they look at ER from four major perspectives: text features, aims of reading, how to read, and reading environment. Table 1 shows how many times such perspectives were mentioned by teachers in their responses to this question.

Table 1. Teachers' understanding of ER

Definition of ER in Terms of	Frequency
Text Features	53
Aims of Reading	51
How to Read	36
Reading Environment	22
No Idea	2

The most commonly referred aspect was text features, and the teachers were mostly concerned about the number of pages students read and agreed that they should read in large amounts. This is strongly supported by researchers in the field, such as Susser and Robb (1990), who state that to call it 'extensive' we need large quantities of reading or a book flood. However, quantity and amount of time spent for reading extensively are relative and depend on student level and aims of a program. Similarly, the teachers believed that students should have the option to choose what they would like to read. Some previous studies (such as Ghrib, 2003; Lee, 2007; Nakanishi & Ueda, 2011) underscore the significance of allowing students to choose the books, aiming to maximize learner involvement and promote learner autonomy. In the same line, Day and Bamford (2002) state that as learners are free to choose books to read in their own language, they should naturally be free to select what to read in the target language as well. The teachers also think that as students read for different purposes and have different interests, variety of reading material encourages them to read more. This is also supported by leading researchers in the field (Day & Bamford, 2002; Susser & Robb, 1990).

The participants mostly think that ER material should be at students' level. Many studies (Asraf & Amad, 2003; Hsueh-chao & Nation, 2000; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Susser & Robb, 1990) agree on advisability of graded readers in an ER program since reading will be more effective and enjoyable if learners understand the reading material easily. In the participants' responses there was also the mention of authenticity as a text feature although none elaborated what they understand from authenticity. There are many arguments as to what authenticity means in ER, but a commonly cited definition comes from Susser and Robb (1990), who state that 'Reading is authentic when students read books for the purpose for which they were written rather than for language study' (p. 5).

Aims of reading was the next issue that the teachers brought up in their definitions of ER. Most of the teachers wrote that ER was for pleasure, general understanding, and information. Day and Bamford (2002) and Ghrib (2003) also advocate such aims for ER.

Some of the teachers also indicated that ER is done to practice grammar and/or vocabulary and to improve students' target language.

Most of the participants looked at ER from 'how to read' perspective and think that ER should be done daily, individually, with focus on meaning, and without stopping to look up unknown words. Some of the teachers also stated that students should read without evaluation. This is a controversial issue in literature related to ER. According to some researchers (such as Day & Bamford, 1998; Kitao et al., 1990; Logan & Johnston, 2009), grade-based evaluation should be part of ER while some others (such as Bell, 1998; Ghrib, 2003; Krashen, 2004a) hold the view that testing should be avoided in ER.

Reading environment was another category that we were able to identify in most teachers' definition of ER. For most ER was a reading activity that should be done outside the class while for some others it could be done either inside or outside the class. Where to read was also mentioned in some of the ER-related studies (Day & Bamford, 2002; Krashen, 2004b; Macalister, 2008). Among these, Day and Bamford (2002) note that students have the flexibility to engage in ER at any time, whether independently or as part of a structured lesson.

4.2. Benefits of ER

When asked about the benefits ER, most teachers agreed on its significant contributions to enhancing language skills and proficiency in various areas. Besides, Macalister (2010) reported similar beliefs regarding ER's role in improving language skills and proficiency. Table 2 outlines these skills and areas.

Table 2. Language areas and skills that benefit from ER

Language Area/Skill	Frequency
General	68
Reading	63
Vocabulary	36
Grammar	22
Writing	12
Speaking	7
Listening	4
No idea	2

The teachers think that ER improves various skills. The category which had the highest frequency was labeled as 'general'. Research findings support the role of ER in enhancing learners' general language competence (Kajinga 2006, Nishizawa et al., 2010; Takase & Otsuki, 2012;), giving fun/pleasure (Kajinga, 2006), motivating learners (Judge, 2011; Kajinga 2006; Takase & Otsuki, 2012), improving self-study skills (Judge, 2011), and changing attitude towards language (Takase & Otsuki, 2012). The responses included contributions of ER such as

- enhancing learners' general language competence
- increasing learners' exposure to the language

- giving fun/pleasure
- motivating learners
- teaching the target culture
- improving self-study skills
- providing comprehensible input
- changing attitude towards language
- developing fluency
- improving the learners' view about the text
- creating awareness and familiarity with the language
- helping to retain new information
- building background knowledge
- contributing to all skills
- encouraging dictionary use
- developing other languages learners know

According to the teachers, among the language skills, ER contributes to the improvement of reading the most. Even though there is mention of other skills (writing, speaking, listening), the participants only detailed in what ways reading benefits from ER as given in the following list:

- motivating learners to read
- increasing comprehension skills
- improving reading skills in general
- increasing reading speed
- improving reading fluency
- developing personal reading strategies
- improving critical reading
- helping to build confidence with extended texts
- helping learners understand all kinds of texts
- improving prediction skills
- improving reading proficiency
- improving creative thinking

The teachers affirm that ER increases students' motivation to read and improves their reading, comprehension skills, reading speed, reading fluency, personal reading strategies, critical reading, confidence with extended texts, understanding all kinds of texts, and prediction skills. These findings are similar to what Kajinga (2006), Nakanishi and Ueda (2011), and Nishizawa et al. (2010) reported.

Regarding language areas, the teachers mentioned ER's contribution to vocabulary and grammar. For them, ER

- increases knowledge of vocabulary
- helps learners practice previously learned vocabulary
- teaches guessing meaning of new vocabulary in context

Similar contributions are mentioned by the participants in Kajinga (2006) as well. As to contributions of ER to grammar the participants think that ER

- provides practice on grammar and sentence structures
- provides natural authentic language items such as collocations, phrases, idioms, sayings or proverbs
- teaches guessing the use of new grammatical structures

4.3. Essentials for an ER program

When the teachers were asked about what is needed for an ER program, they came up with four major variables that may affect an ER program. These variables are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Essential Needs for an ER Program

Variable	Frequency
Reading material-related issues	38
Teacher/administrator-related issues	35
Student -related issues	18
Facilities	12
No idea	5

For the teachers major sources of reading material include

- interesting and comprehensible texts at appropriate level in large quantities
- newspapers, magazines
- graded readers
- teachers' own adapted materials
- dictionaries
- no dictionaries
- popular texts
- vetted materials
- websites
- original novels

In line with what Day and Bamford (1998) and Susser and Robb (1990) state, authentic reading is an essential part of ER for the participants including original novels, websites, newspapers, magazines. At the same time graded readers are regarded necessary to conduct ER in a school as in previous studies (Asraf & Amad, 2003; Hsueh-chao & Nation, 2000; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Susser & Robb, 1990). There is also the mention of vetted materials, which involves texts carefully selected before they are offered to students. Whatever material is used, most of the participants attached great importance to selecting material that is interesting and large in quantity. Researchers such as Day and Bamford (2002), Gallagher (2009), Gardiner (2005), Krashen (2004b), Susser and Robb (1990), Ujiie and Krashen (1996), and Yu (1993) also emphasize the importance of having an ideal collection of various reading materials which give pleasure to the readers. Remarkably, some

participants favor and prefer dictionary use while some others think that selected material should not require any dictionary use while reading.

As for teacher/administrator-related issues, the following list of teacher/administrator roles and responsibilities were mentioned by the participants:

- explaining students what ER is
- providing an appropriate atmosphere
- being a model
- motivating students to read
- managing time
- monitoring
- keeping records
- evaluating
- helping students improve their comprehension skills
- having knowledge and ability to conduct ER
- integrating ER into the curriculum
- no pacing, no forcing

Both teachers and administrators are expected to take some responsibilities and play certain roles in conducting ER in language programs. Among all these, different aspects of teacher cognition seem to be the major concern for the participants of this study. This is in line with what has been reported by most researchers (Borg, 2003; Macalister, 2010; Tercanlıoğlu, 2001). The teacher should have the necessary qualifications, believe that ER helps students, and be ready to motivate students and conduct ER. The role of motivation in language classes has been widely researched and discussed in many studies (Day & Bamford, 2002; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997), and the participants emphasize the importance of motivating students as one of the teacher-related essentials.

Being a good model as a teacher is also considered to be important by the participants of the study. Most of the previous studies on ER also emphasize the importance of teachers' being good models for their students in reading and sharing what they read (Ghrib, 2003; Macalister, 2010; Susser & Robb, 1990; Yu, 1993). Another teacher-related issue was the evaluation of students' performance and keeping record of who does what. At this point there is not a consensus in literature and while some researchers (Day & Bamford, 1998; Kitao et al., 1990; Logan & Johnston, 2009) suggest using tests and keeping record of students' performance in ER, others suggest avoiding the use of tests. Based on our findings, the participants of the study also did not all agree on this issue. While some mentioned evaluating and keeping records, others mentioned 'no pacing, no forcing'.

Student-related issues that came up in the participants' responses for the essentials of an ER program include

- student motivation
- level of language students know
- students' background knowledge on what they read
- students' reading habit in L1

- students at the same level

Five topics we were able to identify for student-related issues all seem to be closely connected. They all seem to trigger each other in different directions. Among these five issues, student motivation seems to be the major concern for the teachers. If students do not have the right level and type of motivation, we cannot expect success from their ER activities (Day & Bamford, 1998; Logan & Johnston, 2009; Yamashita, 2007). Similarly, when students have the right level of language to read and know something about what they are reading and like to read in their L1 (Crawford Camiciottoli, 2001; Day & Bamford, 1998; Yamashita, 2004), they will be more motivated. The teachers also emphasized the importance of having students of the same level in ER groups.

Another aspect that was identified in the teachers' responses for essentials of an ER program was facilities. The components the participants mentioned as facilities for an ER program include

- library
- silent classroom
- reading room
- printer
- computer
- copy machine

Since ER means reading in large amounts, students should easily access the books they are going to read. Libraries are the most common and cheapest means to provide students with books (Krashen, 2004b; Macalister, 2010). Providing the right environment for ER is also important for teachers (Day & Bamford, 2002; Krashen, 2004b). In this survey it was mostly agreed that a silent place as a reading room is necessary.

4.4. Teachers' experience in conducting ER

The fourth question of the survey asked the teachers if they conducted any ER with their students and how they did it; if they have not, how they would do it. The answers to this question revealed that they mostly have not conducted ER in their teaching yet. Such a result may be attributed to the perception of ER as the icing on the cake rather than the cake itself. Yu (1993) notes that ER is regarded as an 'optional extra' or a 'luxury'.

Table 4. Experience in conducting ER

In terms of	Frequency
How to conduct ER	10
What material to use	5

As can be seen in Table 4, the teachers who conducted ER in their classes reported their experience in terms of how they conducted ER and the reading material they used. The details of how they conducted ER included

- reading aloud
- paraphrasing, summarizing and presenting

- in-class pleasure reading
- content and language-based testing
- doing critical analysis

The teachers who conducted ER reported that they frequently used 'reading aloud'. Even though it is not the most popular way to do ER, some researchers (such as Bell, 2001; Krashen, 2004b) advocate this technique and claim that when the teacher reads aloud to the class, the model of pronunciation motivates the learners, especially the weaker ones, to participate in classroom reading at earlier stages. A more popular approach is named as 'Sustained Silent Reading' (Krashen, 2004a), during which students read on their own silently.

Paraphrasing, summarizing, and presenting were the other techniques used by the teachers. These are follow-up tasks done after reading, and inserting them was supported by some researchers in the field such as Yu (1993) and Bell (2001). Such activities may give a direction and momentum to the learners, but they should be short and easy so that the learners are not distracted from their main job of reading (Yu, 1993). The teachers regarded ER as an in-class reading for pleasure. The research in the field also considers the reading environment (Day & Bamford, 2002; Macalister, 2008). The findings revealed that ER can either be integrated into the program and done as in-class reading or can be done outside the class at any time the learner wants. The teachers were for evaluating learners' performance in some ways in an ER program (Day & Bamford, 1998; Kitao et al., 1990; Logan & Johnston, 2009), but it is still a controversial issue for ER.

For the teachers who conducted ER in their classes, the reading materials used were chosen either by the teacher or the students themselves. They mostly used

- graded readers
- short stories
- authentic materials
- some web pages

Using graded readers has been one of the essentials in an ER program. In several studies (Asraf & Amad, 2003; Hsueh-chao & Nation, 2000; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Susser & Robb, 1990) graded readers were advisable since effective reading can be done when reading is enjoyable and when the reader can understand the text easily. In this study the teachers who conducted ER also used graded readers. Short stories were another kind of material used although the participants did not mention whether they were original stories or stories of 'language learner literature' (Day & Bamford, 1998). Authentic materials and some web pages were also used in their ER programs.

The teachers who have not conducted ER in their teaching yet described their ideal ER in terms of how they would conduct ER, the reading material, and the supplementary material they would use.

Table 5. Ideas of the Teachers without ER Experience

In terms of	Frequency
How to conduct ER	27
Reading materials to be used	16
Supplementary activities to be used	8

Table 5 shows that most of the teachers wrote about how they would conduct ER and the reading materials they would use. Different from those who conducted ER before, these teachers also wrote about the supplementary activities that they were going to do if they were doing ER. The following list includes the ideas that the teachers suggested in terms of how to conduct ER:

- text analysis
- class discussions
- summarizing
- record keeping
- setting time limitation
- activities in class or after class
- evaluating student performance
- no assignment

Analyzing the texts, class discussions, and summarizing are considered as supplementary activities by the teachers. They are used to make reading more comprehensible and interesting (Krashen, 2004a; Renandya, 2007). Bamford and Day (1997) state that post-reading work can be done based on the purpose of reading: for information or for fun but no post-reading work should be required and undermine the reading itself. As part of evaluation the teachers would keep record of what learners read, as Bamford and Day (1997) suggest, but the difference lies in who would keep the record: the teacher or the learner. Timed reading would be taken into consideration when the teachers conducted their reading program as an in-class activity. For the reading environment the teachers would consider either in-class or after-class, which are both commonly referred to by researchers (Day & Bamford, 2002; Macalister, 2008). The same teachers suggested using the following material for ER:

- student selected material
- at appropriate level
- graded readers
- teacher recommended material
- library books
- short stories

Some of the teachers who have not conducted an ER program yet would use reading materials which would be chosen by the learners. Several studies (Bell, 2001; Bamford & Day, 1997; Nakanishi & Ueda, 2011; Susser & Robb, 1990; Yu, 1993) support learners' choosing what they would read in some ways, mainly to maximize learner involvement in reading. Similar to what Day and Bamford (2002), Ghrib (2003), Krashen (2004a), and Yu (1993) mentioned, the teachers also regarded the language level of the material since higher

level books would cause lack of motivation or non-engagement in reading. Graded readers, teacher recommended materials, books from the library, and short stories are different options suggested by the teachers for an ER program, which are similar to material options suggested by researchers in the field (Macalister, 2010; Krashen, 2004b).

These teachers stated that they would also organize some supplementary activities in an ER program. Such activities are considered to make reading more comprehensible and interesting (Krashen, 2004a). For these teachers, the supplementary activities that might be used in an ER program would be

- comprehension check
- tests
- vocabulary exercises
- puzzles
- gap filling

4.5. Monitoring students' ER

The fifth question on the survey asked the teachers about how they monitored/would monitor student reading in an ER program. As Table 6 presents, we were able to categorize the answers as the kinds of activities that can be used to monitor student reading and how teachers should be involved in these activities.

Table 6. How to monitor student reading in ER

Category	Frequency
Follow-up activities	95
Teacher involvement	28

Based on the teachers' answers to this question we were able to identify three different kinds of follow-up activities that could supplement ER, and these include oral activities, written activities, and activities to evaluate student reading. Yu (1993) regards follow up activities as an ingredient of a successful ER program, and Krashen (2004a) also suggests supplementing reading with activities. Oral activities which were commonly listed by the teachers include

- questions about the text
- speaking about the text
- discussions
- presentations
- oral summary
- text-based interactive group work
- role-plays/rehearsals

Written activities the teachers commonly listed in their responses are written summaries, writing assignments, and projects. They also considered tests and quizzes as follow-up activities for ER, which can be considered as an overlap between follow-up

activities and evaluation because the teachers listed them as both follow-up activities and two different forms of evaluation.

Consistent with the claims of Susser and Robb (1990) and Yu (1993), the participants of the study mostly agree that teachers should have different roles in an ER environment than their traditional teaching roles. Unlike traditional teacher roles, according to Yu (1993), teachers monitor, facilitate, and administer students' ER. The following teacher roles listed by the participants for three different stages of ER reflect Yu's non-traditional teacher roles for ER:

Pre-reading

- keeping learners motivated
- giving class time for learners to choose their books
- pursuing whether learners borrow any books from the library
- encouraging learners to borrow books from the library
- guiding learners about what procedures to follow

While reading

- setting a time limit
- observing learners while they are reading
- helping learners with their reading when they have difficulties

After reading

- keeping a record of the learners having read the text
- giving feedback about learners' progress
- checking comprehension, vocabulary and grammar
- asking learners to talk about the process
- finding out how learners achieved their aim and how much they enjoyed ER
- observing learners' vocabulary use

4.6. Potential problems with conducting ER

The teachers' answers for the sixth question reveal that the teachers have/would have some serious problems conducting ER in their classes. These problems can be classified in terms of student-related problems, reading material-related problems, teacher-related problems, and administration-related problems. Table 7 shows how many times these problems were mentioned by the teachers in their responses to this question.

Table 7. Potential problems with conducting ER

Source of the problem	Frequency
Student	45
Reading material	25
Teacher	6
Administration	6

As can be seen in Table 7, most commonly mentioned problems were related to students, and these included

- reluctance to read
- poor reading habit in L1
- lacking necessary language competence
- boredom of reading
- lack of goal
- the belief that reading is unnecessary
- the belief that reading is difficult
- lack of reading strategies

Students' attitude towards reading has been a crucial point in a successful ER program. It is very important that students are ready to read on their own, which may be related to several background issues. When they do not have the habit of reading in their L1, it is not going to be easy to motivate them to read in the target language. Day and Bamford (1998) emphasize the effect of learners' general reading attitude in L1 on L2. In the same line, Yamashita (2004) contends that learners' attitudes to reading in both L1 and L2 are important in their involvement in ER. Students' reluctance towards reading with the belief that it is unnecessary and difficult, poor habit of reading in L1, and getting bored of reading are the common problems the teachers have/would have when conducting ER. Non-engagement in reading, as Krashen (2004a) mentions, would also be a problem for the teachers. Students' language competence and lack of reading strategies are the other reasons for the problems they would have. Material-related problems the teachers listed include

- variety of reading sources
- materials at inappropriate level for students
- uninteresting content
- cost

Readily accessible reading material is a prerequisite for ER. Yu (1993) states that supplying appropriate and varied materials is one of the ingredients of a successful ER program. Day and Bamford (2002) include 'a variety of available materials on a wide range of topics' as a characteristic of an ER approach. Other studies in the field (Lee, 2007; Macalister, 2010; Nakanishi & Ueda, 2011) mention the key role of the reading materials. Supplying a variety of reading sources of students' interest would be a key issue for the teachers to conduct ER in their schools since in most of the school libraries there are some books in English, but most of them are outdated, and level and topic variety are rare. The participants also came up with some problems which would arise from teachers' approach to ER. These are

- teachers' orientation
- monitoring
- record keeping

Among these three problems related to teachers, teacher orientation seems to be the major concern. Yu (1993) states that before the implementation of an ER program, teachers

should be well-informed and ready to do it. Similarly, Tercanlıoğlu (2001) and Macalister (2010) emphasize that teacher education is necessary to share an understanding of reading.

Another source of problems with ER may be the attitude of school administration due to the pace of the school program and evaluation. Macalister (2010) states that ER is a feature of a language learning program, but as a component of an English language program it remains as an exception rather than a rule. That may be because students' reading silently in the class is not considered as class learning. The crowd of the teaching program and the pace they have to follow made the teachers consider the lack of administrative support as a problem.

4.7. Evaluating ER

The last question was 'Do you think extensive reading should be evaluated? If so, how do you/would you do it?' We were able to identify 145 answers to this question and majority of the teachers were for having some kind of an evaluation when conducting ER.

Table 8. The teachers' preferences for evaluating ER

Preference	Frequency
Yes (with or without a suggestion or reason)	114
No (with or without a reason)	26
Not sure	3
No idea	2

Table 8 presents the results for the teachers' preferences regarding evaluation of ER. As stated above, most of the teachers who participated in this study are for evaluating ER in some ways. In the previous studies on ER, evaluation of students' reading has been a controversial point. In some studies (Day & Bamford, 1998; Kitao et al., 1990; Logan & Johnston, 2009), it is suggested to give a test in an ER program. On the contrary, Davis (1995) states that 'ER programs should be without the pressure of testing or marks' (p.329). Bell (2001) agrees with this and claims that tests create stress and destruct stress free conditions for reading for pleasure. In the same line, Day and Bamford (1998, 2002), Ghrib (2003), Krashen (2004a), and Waring (1997) suggest avoiding tests in running an ER program. Parallel to the first approach to evaluation mentioned above, most of the teachers who participated in this study consider giving tests and quizzes as part of an ER program. According to the survey results, evaluation can be done with

- exams (quizzes, tests)
- oral presentations, speaking activities
- summaries, writing exercises, open ended questions, essays, reports,
- overall evaluation of the reading process with a criterion without grades
- reading circles
- online pacing

Some of them also think that evaluation of ER is necessary to

- make students read in book floods
- make students take it seriously
- motivate students
- make it a part of Turkish educational system

A comparably small number of teachers rejected the idea of evaluation in an ER program. They believe that ER is a voluntary activity; good readers read in any way whereas bad readers do not even read for evaluation.

5. Conclusion

An overall view of the results shows that Question 2 received the most while Question 4 received the fewest number of responses from the teachers. This means that the participants are aware of the contributions of ER to language learning but rarely put it into practice. This contrast is another way to show the gap between expert opinion and current classroom practice (Stoeckel et al., 2012). When all the responses are compared, it can be seen that the one that received the highest frequency of responses was that ER should be evaluated. This attitude is also against expert opinion stated by Bell (2001), Davis (1995), Day and Bamford (1998, 2002), Ghrib (2003), Krashen (2004a), and Waring (1997).

The teachers' definitions of ER show that their perceptions of ER depend on text features and aims of reading. However, they tend to focus less on how to read and treading environment. As for benefits of ER, the teachers mostly acknowledge contributions of ER to general language skills and reading while they also accept students' gains in terms of other skills and language areas such as vocabulary, grammar, writing, speaking, and listening. When these participants were asked about essential needs for an ER program, the responses about reading material-related and teacher/administrator-related issues had higher frequency than student-related issues and facilities. Analysis of responses about the teachers' experience in conducting ER reveals that how to conduct ER and qualities of reading materials are mentioned by teachers with and without ER experience; however, supplementary activities are only mentioned by teachers without ER experience. Regarding monitoring students' ER, teacher responses tended to accumulate under follow-up activities rather than teacher involvement. For these participants, students and reading materials seem to be the major source of potential problems with conducting ER while teacher and administration-related problems seem to be minor issues. Most of the teachers are for evaluating ER by mentioning various ways and reasons of doing it while very few of them are against.

To conclude, the responses of the teachers who participated in this study indicate that they know what ER is and are aware of in what ways it helps language learning. For the teachers, ER materials seem to be an important issue since they shape these participants' perceptions of ER, essential needs for an ER program, ER experience, and potential problems. Supplementary activities are another indication of how they implement ER and monitor students. When it comes to Macalister's (2010) question, 'Why isn't everyone doing it?', they seem discouraged by issues related with students, materials, and evaluation. This

shows that there are challenges and obstacles faced during an ER program which should be investigated in order to find out the reasons behind the scarcity of ER in practice.

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APPENDIX

Dear Colleague,
This questionnaire aims to find out language professionals' perceptions of extensive reading in terms of meaning, application, monitoring, and evaluation. We thank you for your kind contribution. You may contact us for the results of the study at sevgi.erel@ydyo.erciyes.edu.tr

Please answer the following questions in the order they are given.

1. What do you understand from 'extensive reading'? Please explain it according to your own perception of it.
2. In what ways do you think 'extensive reading' contributes to students' language learning?
3. What do you need in order to be able to conduct 'extensive reading'?
4. If you have conducted any 'extensive reading' with your students, please explain how you have done it. If you haven't, please explain how you would do it.
5. How do you/would you monitor your students' extensive reading?
6. What kind of problems do you/would you have if you conduct/conducted extensive reading? How do you/would you solve them?
7. Do you think extensive reading should be evaluated? If so, how do you/would you do it?
