

The Implementation of Extensive Reading Principles in an Extensive Reading Class: Students' Perceptions

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Abstract. For running a successful extensive reading (ER) program, Day and Bamford's ten ER principles becomes "key ingredients" (Ng, Renandya, and Chong, 2019. P. 172). This study is aimed at revealing EFL students' perceptions toward the use of the ER principles in their ER class. To achieve the aim, a questionnaire was distributed to 39 students from English Language Education Program, Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana. Besides, an interview to 10 student-respondents was also conducted. The collected data was then analyzed by classifying them under several themes, creating descriptive statistics, and extracting transcripts of the interviews. The results revealed that EFL student-participants agree that the ER course has applied all ten ER principles. How the ER principles were employed in the course and how they could enhance both students' linguistic and nonlinguistic competences are also discussed in this paper.

Key words: extensive reading, extensive reading principles, reading.

INTRODUCTION

Extensive reading (ER) has been widely promoted as one way to reduce EFL students' problems in EFL reading. Furthermore, when asked about their reading habits, the majority of students stated that they do not make reading a habit yet (Nur Affini et al., 2019). Through ER, students can decide how many reading materials they want to read (Palmer, 1964 as cited in Day, 2015). Besides, they can choose some options of literature, e.g., in terms of genre or topic based on their English proficiency level and interest (Ng, Renandya, and Chong, 2019). More importantly, they can read the reading materials according to their own pace or without any pressure (Stoller, 2015). Learning English, like learning any other language, entails mastering four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Susanto & Widyaningsih, 2018).

With those characteristics, cognitively, ER is believed to increase students' language input in the EFL context (Ro, 2013). Along with the input proliferation, ER can develop reading fluency and reading comprehension (Renandya and Jacobs, 2016) and can increase students' vocabulary (Stoller, 2015). In short, ER contributes to learners' language development (Salfaeia and Bulca, 2013). In terms of affect in EFL learning, ER is believed to lead students

to enjoy the reading activities (Day & Bamford, 1998) and to decrease pressure in their academic learning (Salfaeia and Bulca (2013).

Due to those potential benefits offered by ER, many experts have conducted research on ER (Yamashita, 2013; Bahmani and Farvadin (2017), and Niazifar and Shakibaei (2019). Those studies were done quantitatively to see the ER implementation, to see it's correlation to motivation and the development of students' language abilities and reading comprehension. Differently, this study is done qualitatively to see the implementation of ER in the classroom in response to the ten ER principles proposed by Day and Bamford (2002). The principles were chosen as they are recognized as "key ingredients of a successful ER program" (Ng, Renandya, and Chong, 2019. P. 172). The ten principles of ER are as follows.

First, the reading material is easy. A reading material is considered easy if students know at least 98% of the words, the number of which suggests learners' ability for unassisted comprehension to the overall meaning of the literature. Second, a variety of reading materials on a wide range of topics must be available. In other words, learners should be provided with various types of topics and genres as well as levels of reading materials. Third, learners choose what they want to read. In relation to the second principle, learners have freedom to choose what topic, genre, level to read. In addition, they can choose what reading materials they expect to enjoy and to understand. More to that, they can choose when to read and to stop reading.

Fourth, learners read as much as possible. By reading as much as possible, students will be familiar with reading and find its pleasure. Furthermore, the more books students read, the more benefits they can get. Fifth, the purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and a general understanding. The goal of ER is not on comprehension achieved or knowledge gained, but more on the readers' personal experience. Sixth, reading is its own reward. ER class is designed to emphasize students' excitement of reading rather than reading for comprehension. Therefore, it is an experience complete in itself. Seventh, reading speed is usually faster rather than slower. When the reading materials are within their linguistic ability, interest, and for general, not academic, purposes, they likely become encouragement for reading fluency. Fluency leads learners to read fast, read more, and understand more.

Eighth, reading is individual and silent. Individual, silent ER provides opportunities for learners to have a personal interaction with the text and to have reading experience through their reading responsibility. Teachers play a critical role in the implementation of high-quality instruction (Anita & Susanto, 2017). Ninth, teachers orient and guide their students. The teacher orients the students about what and how to do in ER, and also the benefits of ER for their language learning. Besides orientation, teacher guidance is important in a way the teacher can share their reading experiences. Tenth, the teacher is a role model of a reader. The teacher needs to commit to read what the students may read. Being an English teacher necessitates a high level of proficiency in English teaching and learning (Susanto, Mujiyanto, et al., 2019). By so doing, an ER class can be a place for both teacher and student share their reading experience, the pleasure and value of the written materials.

This paper aims to reveal EFL students' perceptions toward the use of Day and Bamford's extensive reading principles in the extensive reading course. To meet the research objective, this study is guided with a question: "How do the EFL students perceive the ER course in response to the ten principles of ER?"

The findings can help EFL teachers run an extensive reading course based on the ten ER principles. In addition, the findings can help EFL teachers reflect on how the ten ER principles have been implemented in their ER course.

METHOD

The research design is crucial in the study since it was utilized to create the systematic research (Susanto, Bharati, et al., 2019). This study employed two data collection instruments. i.e., a close-ended questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The questionnaire contained ten statements representing Day and Bamford's ten ER principles (2002). It was designed in Google Form with a four-point Likert scale. The ten statements were used to see the student-participants' perceptions on the use of ER principles in their ER course. Meanwhile, a semi-structured interview was employed to ask in-depth information about participants' answers in the questionnaire. There were ten questions to be asked. They dealt with students' further thoughts of the ten ER principles employed in the ER course. The interview was then conducted online and recorded.

The data were analyzed through the following procedures. First, we read all of the participants' answers on the Google Form, transferred the data in statistical analysis software which is IBM SPSS, and then processed it in the tabular form. The result was in the form of a descriptive statistics. Second, we listened to all of the interviews' recordings and transcribed each of them. Third, we coded the data and categorised the coded data into ten themes (10 ER principles). The emerging themes have to do with how each principle of ER was implemented in the ER course. Fourth, we connected the descriptive statistic to the interviews' results. Finally, when the data was complete, the researcher concluded the study; how EFL students perceive the implementation of the ten ER principles in their ER course.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of EFL students' perceptions of ER course based on Day and Bamford's ten ER principles (2002).

Principle 1: the extensive reading's materials (graded readers) are easy

The ER material here is specified into the use of graded readers because it is the material used the most in the ER course. The students' perception on the implementation of the first ER principle is presented in table 1:

Table 1
The extensive Reading's Materials (Graded Readers) were Easy

Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	Disagree	6	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Agree	23	59.0	59.0	74.0
	Strongly Agree	10	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

As shown in Table 1, even though 15% of respondents disagree, most of the respondents agree (59%) and strongly agree (26%) that the ER materials were easy. In a nutshell, they perceive the first principle has been well implemented in their ER course. There are two reasons why they think that the ER materials were easy. The first reason is that the materials, in this case, graded readers, were easy to understand. Second, the materials have various levels of difficulty.

Excerpt 1:

I agree that ER-graded reader books were easy because I can understand 90% of the story included the vocabulary and the grammatical structure. Also, the graded reader books were different from other English reading materials. I did not have to open the dictionary again and again. Of course, easy-graded reader books increase my motivation to read. It was fun because it didn't make me overwhelmed. (Participant 4)

Participant 4 perceived the graded readers were easy because she could understand 90% of the story's content, grammar, and vocabulary. As a result, she/he gets motivated to read more. This statement seems to be consistent with Day and Bamford (2002). In order to build students' engagement and pleasure in reading, the participants must know at least 98% words of the books they read. More to that, the easy reading material can navigate participants to their reading comfort zone and reading motivation (Febriana, 2017). The second reason why the student-respondents perceive the ER material is easy because it has various difficulty levels.

Excerpt 2:

Because my English skills were very average, I started to read from the elementary level. I chose that level because I think it is the easiest level. It turned out to be my favorite level, and it motivated me to read more. It makes me want to upgrade my level to catch my friends. I think now I can read pre-intermediate level, and I can read longer, for about an hour or more. Also, I know some words and idioms. For example, the word "exploded" and the idiom "a piece of cake". I'm not nervous about reading English books anymore. (Participant 10)

Excerpt 2 above shows that the participants found that the various levels in graded readers can help them to measure their reading comprehension. Besides, the appropriate level of graded readers can then create a relaxing atmosphere and promote motivation to read the upper levels of books. As stated by Wang and Guthrie (2004), such easy graded readers could trigger some students' intrinsic motivation.

Principle 2: the extensive reading materials contained various types of topics

In response to the principle, the participants were asked in the questionnaire whether the ER materials were varied. Their answers to this part are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
The Extensive Reading Materials Contained Various Types of Topics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Agree	13	33.0	33.0	36.0
	Strongly Agree	25	64.0	64.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

In response to Statement 2, there is only 1 participant who chooses "strongly disagree". Then, 13 participants choose "agree", and 25 participants choose "strongly agree". It means that they found the second ER principle has been applied well in the ER course.

The interview data showed that there are various topics as well as genre of ER materials, in this case graded readers, such as horror, thriller, fact, romance, detective, biography, crime, music and economy (an interview with participant 8 and 10). The various topics as well as genre are believed to increase learners' knowledge, e.g. about culture and about language functions such as how to greet someone in English.

Excerpt 3:

There are so many choices of books. So, it can increase my knowledge and can be used to fill my spare time. If I read a book about people abroad, for example, people in Korea, I can really feel like I'm in Korea right now. After reading the book, I know their culture. For example, they will bow every time they greet someone. (Participant 2)

This situation corresponds to Renandya's idea, 2016, as cited in Ng, Renandya, and Chong (2019). The urged that besides linguistic values, students also develop broader and deeper knowledge about the world, which is pivotal in linking with the text and other people.

Principle 3: Learners choose what they want to read

Based on the principle above, the student-participants were asked in the questionnaire about the autonomy to choose graded readers.

Table 3
You were Allowed to Read What You Want to Read

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Agree	8	20.0	20.0	23.0
	Strongly Agree	30	77.0	77.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 shows that only 1 participant strongly disagrees with the statement, 8 participants agree, and the rest of the participants (30) strongly agree. Altogether, almost all of the students strongly agree that ER course provides learner autonomy in the case of choosing what to read. In brief, they agree that the ER course has met the principles.

Then, to draw a better picture, this study describes two conditions in the ER course in which learners are given autonomy. Firstly, students were free to choose what to read. Secondly, they could change their reading at any time.

Excerpt 5:

I started to have a sense of responsibility to finish the books I read. When the lecturer allowed me to read freely, the responsibility was there. --- The first time I heard about the ER class project, I was worried because my English was not good enough. After my lecturer explained that she didn't set any limitations on the genres or levels, I became more confident in doing the task. I could choose the suitable books that made the project became easy (Participant 3).

Excerpt 6:

I did it several times. The first time I changed the book because I didn't like the storyline. The story went around the bush. The second time, I've changed the book because it made me dizzy and overwhelmed. Actually, the storyline was interesting, but the vocabulary and the grammar are complicated. So, I changed it. (Participant 9)

Those activities are found to provide flexibility for them to choose what to read and improve their sense of responsibility and confidence in finishing their graded readers and assignments. As proposed by Ningsih (2018), she found the responsibility in the learning process will grow when students have autonomy in selecting graded readers. Similarly, So'n (2017) also proved that ER is regarded as an effective method to boost autonomous learning.

Principle 4: Learners read as much as possible.

In response to the principle, the participants were asked in the questionnaire whether the students were allowed to read as many graded readers as possible. Their answers are presented in table 4 below:

Table 4
You were Allowed to Read as Much as Possible

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Agree	6	15.0	15.0	18.0
	Strongly Agree	32	82.0	82.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

As we can see in Table 4, although 1 participant disagrees, the other 6 participants agree and 32 participants strongly agree with statement number four. It indicates that most of the student-participants confirmed that they were allowed to read as much as possible in the ER course. In this way, they perceive that the fourth principle has been applied in the ER course.

First, reading as many books as possible can increase their vocabulary knowledge. Then, reading many books enhance their writing skills. Last, reading many books develops a reading habit for them. The following parts present the details of the result.

Excerpt 7:

Honestly, the first time I joined this course, I didn't feel really confident with my bank words. I feel that it's still limited. However, after I read many times in this course, my vocabulary is increased. Now, I can differentiate the word "desert", which means *gurun*, and desert, which means *sepi* or *sunyi*. I still remember that word because I made a reading journal of the book that contains the word "desert". (Participant 7)

Excerpt 8:

I can develop my writing skill because I always make summaries or reading reports after I read books. In the past, when I write something, the language would be very wordy, I could not express my ideas clearly. It looked like my sentence had many meanings. But, as time goes by, I can express my ideas to-the-point and use simple structures properly. (Participant 4)

Excerpt 9:

In ER course, I had to read many books. Therefore, it forms a reading habit for me. If I don't read a book, it feels like something is missing. I want to read and read. Especially because reading makes me better in English, for example, now my vocabulary is improving. So, I want to continue this habit. (Participant 3)

Excerpt 7 confirms the studies from Alqahtani (2015) and Stoller (2015), who revealed that if students often read the exact words, they would be firmly placed in students' long-term memories. Thus, from reading many books, students can increase their vocabulary knowledge and make the words last a long time in their memory. Excerpt 8 is essentially the same as Salehi's, et al. (2015) study where exposed reading activities that are integrated with writing things can promote higher reading and writing skills. By having a reading-writing connection, Participant 4 could find many kinds of structures and writing styles. As for excerpt 9, it is in line with Tien's argument (2015) mentioning that ER is seen as a productive method of learning English, and it can help students develop a reading habit.

Principle 5: The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and a general understanding.

Based on the principle, the participants were asked whether they were allowed to read for pleasure, information, and a general understanding. Table 5 below reveals the participants' view.

Table 5
You were Allowed to Read for Pleasure, Information, and the General Understanding of the Story, not about the Details

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	3	8.0	8.0	8.0
	Agree	14	36.0	36.0	44.0
	Strongly Agree	22	56.0	56.0	100.0

Total	39	100.0	100.0
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The table above shows that most participants assume that ER course offered many reading purposes. Although a small minority of students disagree (8%), most of the participants strongly agree (56%) and agree (36%) with the statement. Here, the student-participants confirm that the fifth principle has applied in their ER course. The first purpose of ER applied is reading for pleasure.

Excerpt 10:

Overall, I read books in the ER course is for pleasure. The books I read in the ER course entertained me. It was such a good stress relief for me. Like, it reduced the dizziness in learning English, and it recharged my energy in learning English. The books in ER class were not difficult like other classes. Indeed, they enhanced my vocabulary and grammar. (Participant 8)

Participant 8 in excerpt 10 found that graded readers could entertain her, release her stress, and at the same time, can improve her vocabulary and grammar. This finding corresponds to Hedge's argument saying in ER, students are exposed to "an input-rich and enjoyable environment" from which their language knowledge and enthusiasm can develop naturally (Hedge, 1985, cited in Ferdila, 2014). The second purpose of ER applied is reading for information.

Excerpt 11:

My main goal in reading was to complete the assignments. Therefore, I read books in ER class mostly to find the information on it. After I read a book, of course, I would know about the story. Then, I would use the information to work on my assignments. --- The assignments were reading journals, creating a new ending, and making poster. In making reading journals, I have to read the books first to get the information, right? (Participant 6)

According to Participant 6 (see Excerpt 11), students were required to find information for accomplishing their academic assignments, like writing reading journals, creating a new ending of a story and making a poster film. The third purpose of ER applied in the ER course is reading for general understanding.

Excerpt 12:

When I read books in ER course, I knew the storyline of them. When I read Cinderella's story on English Readers, I remembered the plot and the story's flow. Also, I remember some detailed information, such as when Cinderella met the fairy godmother and Cinderella's pumpkin carriage. --- No, I wasn't paying attention to them. It just happened. (Participant 2)

Excerpt 12 shows that reading for general understanding of the story occurred when Participant 2 read a story about Cinderella. However, even though she could remember the storyline very well, she also remembered several detailed events of the story incidentally. Therefore, it cannot be denied that sometimes students can achieve both general and detailed information at the same time through ER.

Principle 6: reading is its own reward in the Extensive Reading course

In response to the principle, the participants were asked in the questionnaire whether they could experience reading as its own reward in the ER course. Further details of the students' answers are highlighted in the following table:

Table 6
You were Able to Experience Reading is its own reward in the ER Course

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	14	36.0	36.0	36.0
	Strongly Agree	25	64.0	64.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 shows that all of the participants could reflect what they read by themselves. Among 39 participants, 14 chose "agree", and the other 25 participants chose "strongly agree". The data point out that all participants agree that in ER course, they had experienced reading for its own reward.

Excerpt 13:

Yes, I could enjoy reading in the ER class through various activities like reading and writing, presentations, and theater. Also, there were not any quizzes in ER class either. The teacher only instructed us to reflect on what we have read before in reading journals, presentations, something like that. So, it made me enjoy reading graded readers because there was not any pressure in learning English from tests or quizzes. (Participant 10)

The reading activities done for reading journals, presentations, theatre and some other enjoyable activities are all for reading experiences. These experiences are aimed at facilitating students with learning excitement of texts they had read. After all, they are expected to naturally develop their linguistics and nonlinguistic ability and positive attitude toward reading.

Principle 7: Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower

Based on the principle, the participants were asked in the questionnaire whether they were trained to read graded readers fast.

Table 7
You were Trained to Read at a Fast Speed

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	14	36.0	36.0	39.0
	Agree	14	36.0	36.0	75.0
	Strongly Agree	10	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

As can be seen in Table 7, 1 respondent strongly disagrees, 14 respondents disagree, 14

respondents agree, and 10 respondents strongly agree with the statement. It points out that 61% of the participants still agree that they were trained to read at a fast speed as required by ER's ten principles. However, the rest of them (39%) seems to disagree with the statement.

Excerpt 14:

At first, I read books in English very slow. But, after I was introduced to read fast, it started to encourage me to read more. I become addicted to reading. Fast reading makes me fluent in reading English and make me like reading activities. It was hard at first, but after I got used to speedy reading, it became easy. --- Fluent because now I can understand a story faster and without read it many times. (Participant 3)

Participant 3 mentioned that fast reading makes the participants be addicted to reading, enhance reading fluency, and improve students' reading ability. It goes along with Westbrook, Sutherland, Oakhill, and Sullivan (2018). They found reading at a fast speed makes the texts coherent so that reading activity becomes collaborative and can involve students in reading actively. It is also is in line with McLean and Rouault (2017), who stated that a fast-reading rate that is conducted over several time can give a positive impact on students' reading ability.

Principle 8: Reading is individual and silent.

In response to the principle, the participants were asked whether they could read individually in silence.

Table 8
You were Allowed to Read Individually in Silence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	4	10.0	10.0	13.0
	Agree	12	31.0	31.0	44.0
	Strongly Agree	22	56.0	56.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

The descriptive analysis above (refer to Table 8) indicates that. 22 participants strongly agree, 12 participants agree, 4 participants disagree, and 1 participant strongly disagrees. The median of the data is "strongly agree". It means that most participants agree that their ER course applied the eighth principle.

Excerpt 15:

At first, it was a little bit challenging to read in silence. My mouth itched. Sometimes I just felt like I want to read aloud. But, evidently, it made me relax in reading English books just like when I read in Indonesian. Besides, after I can read in silence, I realized that it helped me understand the storyline. I mean, I know what the author or the writer wanted to say. For example, the message of the story. (Participant 8)

Participant 8 in Excerpt 25 stated that her experience of reading in silence gave her a comfortable atmosphere in reading the graded readers. Besides, it could help the participant to feel the L1 reading situation. This result substantiates Day and Bamford's (2002) argument that silent reading can influence students' learning of how foreign language reading suits their lives. Furthermore, the participant mentioned that reading in silence made her more focused on reading. This condition made her understand such messages conveyed through the stories.

Principle 9: Teachers orient and guide their students

The ninth principle of ER is teachers orient and guide their students. Based on the principle, the participants were asked whether the teacher guided them in working with the ER projects or assignments. The finding can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9
The Teacher Guided You in Working with the Extensive Reading Project/Assignment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	7	18.0	18.0	18.0
	Strongly Agree	32	82.0	82.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

As shown in the table, 18% of participants agree, and 82% of participants strongly agree. The data points out that all of the respondents agreed that the ER principled was implemented in the ER course. How the teacher helped the student-participants can be seen from the interview's result.

Excerpt 16:

I totally agree. So, we were given an explanation and instruction first before we started our project. Then, my teacher would follow up on our work. So, at every meeting, my lecturer would ask about our progress. Moreover, the guidance provided by my lecturer made the assignments became easier to do. Also, because the projects turned out to be easy, I became more enthusiastic and motivated to complete them. (Participant 4)

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the teacher gave prolonged engagement, explicit guidance, and periodic monitoring throughout the whole semester. First, the teacher's guiding could help students to understand the assignments. Second, it could make teaching-learning activities enjoyable. Third, it could motivate the students to complete their tasks. The outcome of this interview perfectly matches Yoshizawa, Takase, and Otsuki (2013) 's study, which stated the teacher's instructions play an essential role for EFL students in extensive reading practice fruitfulness.

Principle 10: The teacher is a role model of a reader.

In response to the principle, the participants were asked whether their teacher knew all the reading materials used and shared what they had read in the class. Their answers are presented in table 10:

Table 10

The Teacher Knew All the Reading Materials Used in this Extensive Reading Class and Linked Sharing What They Had Read in the Class or Blog

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	14	36.0	36.0	36.0
	Strongly Agree	25	64.0	64.0	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

The table shows that all of the respondents agree that their teacher knew all the reading materials in the ER course as well as shared what they had read. There are 36% of students agree, and 64% of students strongly agree with the statement. In brief, they agreed that this ER principle was applied in their ER class.

Excerpt 17:

During the Extensive Reading class, there were always be sharing sessions through Zoom meetings with the lecturer. When I saw that my lecturer was enthusiastic about reading, it motivated me to read as well. Without realizing it, I already have a habit of reading. --- The name of the moment we read together was DEAR. After we did it, we would share our graded readers in the main room and the break rooms. (Participant 4)

Usually, before the class continued the materials, the teacher invited the students to do an activity called DEAR (Drop Everything and Read). In this activity, after reading, they would share the books they had read and their ideas about the books. Not only students but also the teacher share their reading. It is in agreement with Hadiyanto's (2018) study. She mentioned that the teacher's reading role is believed to be a booster to foster students' reading motivation. Thus, Participant 4 admitted that the lecturer's role in the ER course could increase her reading motivation and create reading habits.

CONCLUSION

This research was intended to explore how EFL students perceive the ER course in response to the ten ER principles by Day and Bamford (2002). The findings suggest that the student-participants perceived the ER course to employ all ten ER principles. As for pedagogical implication, in teaching ER, teachers initially need to know students' reading proficiency and interest so they can provide suitable levels of graded readers and help students gain reading enjoyment. Furthermore, teachers need to provide a variety of enjoyable activities as media for them to read the ER materials and to develop linguistic competences. e.g., readers theatre, poster presentation.

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