

Building Reading Fluency with Mobile Assisted Extensive Reading

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Abstract—The study aims at investigating students' reading fluency through mobile assisted extensive reading in effect and responses. Forty-five students (14 males and 31 females) were involved in the study. The participants were asked to read the materials of graded reader in electronic books by using their mobile phone. To measure their reading fluency, reading rate was counted in word per minute. The results show that mobile assisted extensive reading outperformed the students' reading fluency. Some participants commented that mobile based extensive reading was likely to build their reading fluency. It indicated that mobile reading might have the potential way not only for reading comprehension but also for reading extensively.

Keywords—Extensive Reading, Reading Fluency, Mobile Assisted Extensive Reading

1 Introduction

In recent years, extensive reading (henceforth ER) has been discussed by many scholars, not merely in terms of the conceptual works but also the best practices and empirical studies [1] [2] [3] [4]. Many studies have demonstrated that the contribution of ER cannot be denied. ER has a pivotal impact on language input such as vocabulary, listening, writing, reading comprehension as well as translation [5] [6] [7] [8]. Moreover, the studies of ER investigate other aspects of students' background such as motivation, attitude, and perception [9].

There is much supporting evidence that ER fosters the cognitive domain and affective domain [10]. Unfortunately, few teachers and pre-service teachers applied this beneficial strategy in the classroom to engage their students in learning a language [3] [11]. Furthermore, Byun [12] asserted that teachers are not eager to apply this in their teaching practice due to the lack of ER knowledge and motivation.

For this reason, ER employs the language theories rather than a general education background. It seems that ER has a fundamental theory that it is easy for students to improve their reading fluency [13] [14] [15] [16]. Some studies have focused on developing fluency since fluency is an important aspect for language learners, but there has been little detailed investigation of reading fluency with mobile-aided extensive reading. Fluency has been an important issue in any second language studies. Waring

[17] proposes that reading fluency can be measured based on three aspects namely speed reading, comprehension, and automaticity [17] [18]. Those aspects should have been integrated, unless comprehension matches with speed reading, it cannot be defined as reading fluency. In sum, reading fluency requires the three indicators.

Mobile assisted language learning studies typically concern with all aspects of language learning including teaching reading. However, ER in mobile assisted language learning has not received adequate attention. Despite ER implication in the beneficial input, many teachers and educators are eager to utilize the principles of ER. Therefore, this study is aimed at addressing two research questions;

- Can mobile assisted extensive reading help students enhance their reading fluency?
- What are their responses toward mobile assisted extensive reading program?

2 Methods

2.1 Participants

This study involved 45 students for the one-semester program. They were fourteen males and thirty-one females. Their average age was 19 years. Mostly, they came from the same educational background, senior high school. The reason why these participants were invited to participate in the study was because since the first semester, the ER program of ER was available. Prior to entering the university class, the students were asked to complete the language proficiency test. The result showed that the participants had the same proficiency level.

2.2 Context

This study was conducted in a setting where all students had an android-based mobile phone. Students brought their mobile phone in the classroom both for lesson use and communication. The teachers also had a mobile phone for the learning management system (LMS) Schoology in teaching practice in the classroom.

2.3 Materials

Materials of the study were presented in an electronic book in PDF format. The materials of the graded reader comprised six levels in which the easiest reading materials were in level one and the most difficult ones were in level six. The sample titles of the book are as follows.

Table 1. The example of Reading Materials

No	Book Title	Level	Genre
1	A letter to Roberto	1	Narrative
2	The Ooze	1	Narrative
3	A Problem for Prince Percy	2	Narrative

4	Vera The Alien Hunter 3	2	Narrative
5	The Lift	3	Narrative
6	The Railway Children	3	Narrative
7	Sherlock Holmes: The Speckled Band	4	Narrative
8	Malala	4	Narrative
9	The Eight Sister	5	Narrative
10	A New Song for Nina	5	Narrative
11	Agnes Grey	6	Narrative
12	Battle for Big Tree Country	6	Narrative

2.4 Procedures

In the first meeting, the students were not provided with an overview of extensive reading program to acquire reliability of the study. The participants were asked to choose the book what they want in Schoology LMS account starting from level 1 to level 6. Participants were asked to read extensively for eight meetings in which one meeting consisted of ninety minutes.

In the next phase, the participants submitted the three requirements such as the book title they read, the length of pages they read, and what responses of reading materials they felt. Those were written in the Schoology LMS account. In the previous meeting, we counted the amount of their reading rate in one minute. Then, at the end of the program, we asked them again to read certain reading materials in one minute. This phase was aimed at measuring the differences of reading rate between pre and post ER program.

The participant chose a wide range of topics in Schoology LMS account and read extensively. Then, in each reading activity, they were invited to write a comment and reading log as can be seen in the figures below.

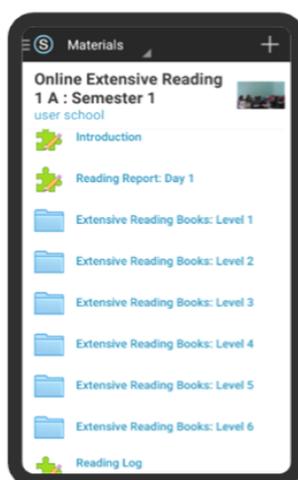


Fig. 1. A wide range of reading materials in mobile phone



Fig. 2. Reading materials in mobile phone

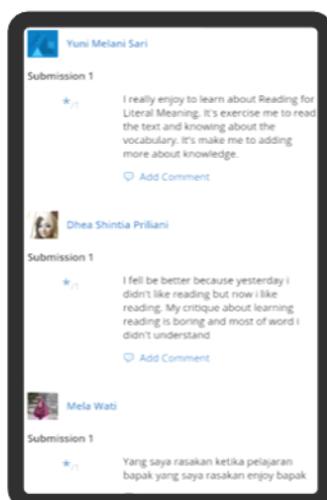


Fig. 3. Students' responses

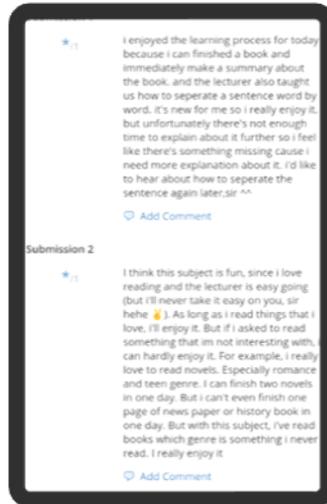


Fig. 4. Students' reading log

3 Result and Discussion

To answer the research questions, the results and discussion are explained with the two parts; data of reading rate word per minute and students' responses and interview results.

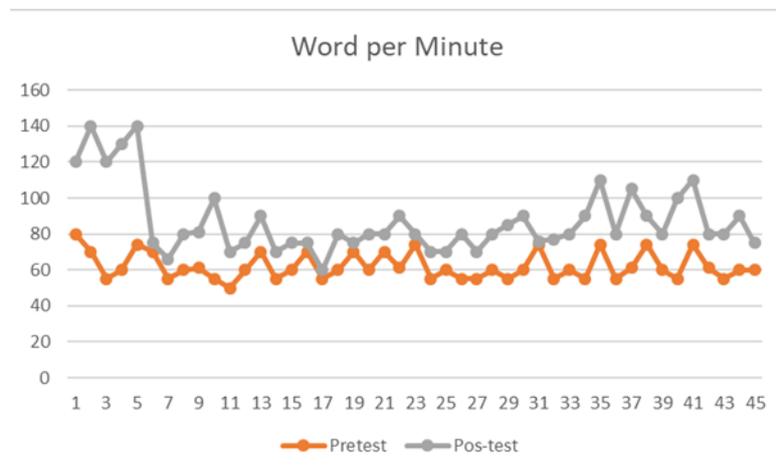


Fig. 5. The word per minute of participant

Figure 5 shows the numbers of different reading rates in pretest and posttest was obtained from 45 participants during the study. Overall, although participant 1 had the highest reading rate at first, it was replaced by participant 6 in post-test with 140

words per minute rate. In contrast, participant 45 had the lowest score in reading per minute compared to the other participants with 50 words only.

In the first treatment, the average reading speed was 65 words for each student. This figure illustrates a sudden decrease of four participants who had a reading amount of about 120 to 140 words per minutes. Following this, there were some fluctuations among the participants, after which it increased and decreased in each meeting.

The figure for reading rate in post-test after 8 meetings was initially almost as high as that for reading speed standard with 140 words per minutes. However, although not all the participants read with a big number of words, their number of words after the intervention of ER program increased as can be seen in the figure 5.

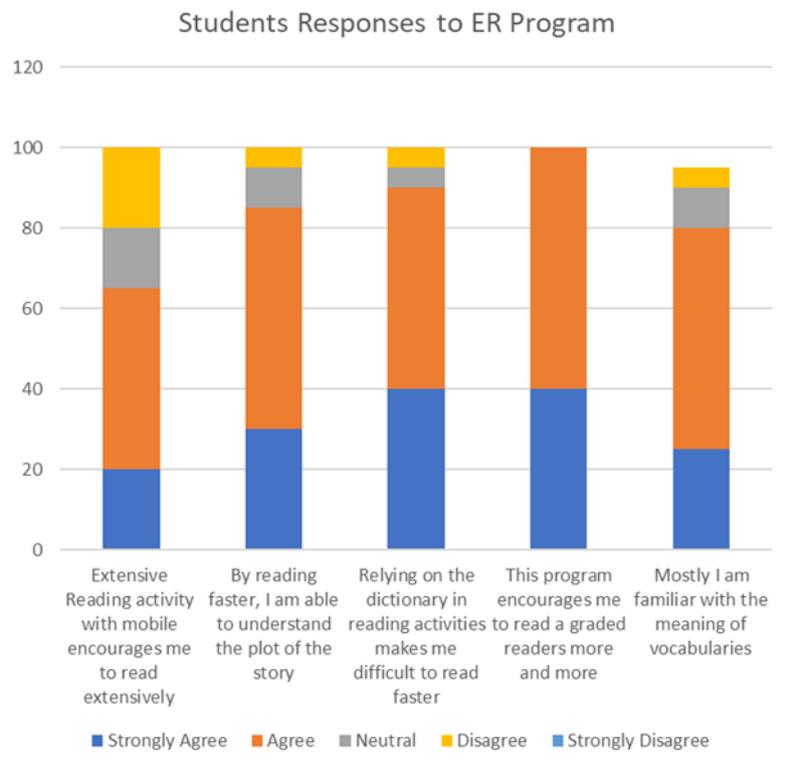


Fig. 6. Students' Response to Online Extensive Reading

The respondents perceived that the benefits of ER program based on their responses to the ER activities. The two highest responses with strongly agree choice were the learning fun in reading and reading. The reading response was slightly less strongly disagreed choice, although 60% of the respondents preferred to select disagree with the reading activities.

The neutral responses illustrate the students' perception of mobile assisted extensive reading. Being eager to read extensively for some students does not seem to be a strong motivation which engaged them in reading through mobile learning. Mobile assisted extensive reading was designed to provide flexibility for students to read anywhere and in any situation. Reading extensively integrated with comprehension engages students and improves their reading fluency.

The most well-defined principle of ER is that students have to read faster, not relying on the dictionary to acquire the automaticity of reading input. We found two essential reasons that students prefer not to open the dictionary; first, almost easily noticeable vocabulary and, second, to increase reading rate. Among our respondents, reading graded readers motivated them to read more and more. Our findings show that ER inspired them to be involved in the story they read and want to continue to the next level of reading materials.

To obtain the data of students' responses towards the ER program, interviews with the students were conducted. The results can be seen below;

For learning, today is very exciting, very conducive and not noisy. the lecturer is good, and his way of teaching makes me understand. I used to not like to read and I now like to read. **(Agus, anonymized)**

I enjoyed the learning process for today because I can finish a book and immediately make a summary about the book. and the lecturer also taught us how to separate a sentence word by word. it's new for me so I really enjoy it. but unfortunately, there's not enough time to explain about it further so I feel like there's something missing cause I need more explanation about it. I'd like to hear about how to separate the sentence again later, sir. **(Harlyn, anonymized)**

The participants seem very interested in employing mobile assisted extensive reading in which they engaged with the text. Prior to reading activities, the student said I used not to like to read (hate reading) and I now like to read. It can be concluded that the participant acquired a new motivation in reading. Furthermore, integrating the ability to read texts with comprehension and extensive reading may lead students to obtain new insights into how to read extensively.

4 Conclusion

The results of this study show that mobile assisted extensive reading improve the students' reading fluency. This study suggests that mobile assisted extensive reading has a potential not only for reading comprehension but also for reading extensively.

Limitations of mobile responsive support and poor connection may cause an issue in the implementation of online extensive reading. Therefore, further research is needed to investigate the combination of online and printout reading materials.

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