

# Investigating the Effect of Extensive Reading on EFL Learners' Reading Attitudes at Hail University in KSA

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## Abstract

Extensive reading approach (ER) has received conceptual support from views and theories that prioritize the importance of input in second language acquisition. ER is probably one of the easiest ways to implement an input-rich learning environment in a pedagogical setting. Accordingly, the current study is an attempt to investigate the effect of ER on EFL learners' reading attitudes. Three attitudinal values were measured which were Affective, Cognitive and Behavioral. They were measured by 20-item adopted questionnaire scored on a five- Likert scale. The sample of the study consisted of 70 undergraduate participants studying English as a foreign language at Hail University in KSA (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). A Pair-Sampled t-test was used to analyze data. The results indicated that even though the majority of the EFL learners didn't like reading in English at the beginning of the semester for it was their first experience, most of them responded positively towards extensive reading after fifteen weeks of extensive reading implementation inside and outside the class. Further studies and applications were recommended to examine how long the effect of ER continues taking into consideration the educational context and the learners' preferences. It is also recommended that ER should be implemented under careful observation of the learners by teachers to promote the best results of extensive reading.

**Keywords:** extensive reading, attitudinal values, EFL learning.

## 1. Introduction

One of the major theories underlying the initial development of the extensive reading approach in second and foreign language classrooms is Krashen's Input hypothesis (1985), which is based on the distinction between acquisition and learning. The term 'acquisition' refers to a subconscious process which is very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction in the target language and natural communication. The term 'learning' refers to a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about the language, for example knowledge of grammar rules. Krashen (1991) created a more specific part of the Input Hypothesis known as the Reading Hypothesis which states that comprehensible input in the form of reading can also stimulate language acquisition. Further, reading itself is the cause of reading ability.

Developing reading abilities requires establishing what is called reading autonomy. Reading autonomy is one of the major goals that college EFL reading courses are designed for. Such autonomy can be established through sufficient reading proficiency, sustained reading interest and adequate knowledge of reading resources (Tsai, 2007). It is thus important to empower EFL learners to make effective use of the potential language-learning materials that exist around them to help find out motivating resources which learners can prospectively use when the EFL courses end.

Extensive reading is an instructional option that has been steadily gaining support and recognition in the field of second language reading pedagogy. It is an approach to reading pedagogy that encourages students to engage in a large amount of reading (Grabe, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2011). Inadequate training for comprehensive reading in English indirectly influences students' habits and attitudes toward English reading in general. Additionally, although the importance and benefits of extensive reading have been highly recognized, it has been excluded from the English teaching syllabuses (Sheu, 2004).

Tien (2015) stated that in order to direct students away from reading merely for test purposes, the extensive reading will firstly proposed and then established to better develop students' habits towards reading extensively. It will further develop students' abilities to read fluently in English inside and outside the classroom.

Extensive reading (ER) has for many years been recognized as the most successful approach in second and foreign language education. It is defined as reading in relatively large amount of texts compared with what is called intensive reading, which usually involves a slower reading of a small amount of materials and often with translation exercises.

Richard and Schmidt (2002) reported that extensive reading will help develop good reading habits, build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, promote students' motivation in learning a foreign language, and increase reading speed. Moreover, extensive reading can help in the development of personal reading strategies, thus increasing reading speed, and engagement with the text. It has also been concluded that extensive reading has positive effects on the affective domains of reading, such as attitude and motivation (Day and Bamford, 1998; Grabe, 2009). Many researchers have appraised the joy and pleasure that they have

witnessed among L2 learners in extensive reading programs.

Based on the notion that ER presents an authentically valuable method of improving students' reading abilities and attitudes, the current study aimed at investigating EFL learners' reading attitudes toward extensive reading considering three attitudinal values: Affective, cognitive and behavioral.

## 2. Review of literature

A number of scholars have identified attitudes toward the target language as an important component of language learning motivation, and as such exerting a strong influence on learning behavior (Gardner, 1985; Dornyei, 1996). Dornyei stated that learners with more favorable attitudes toward the second language and its speakers are likely to be more successful in the language learning than otherwise. Therefore, it is crucial for language instructors to acknowledge students' preferences and attitudes towards the target language in order to better understand and provide for students' needs in the language learning.

Attitude is a complex psychological construct. It refers to a tendency that comes as a result of learning which is represented through the consistent responses of learners toward favorable and unfavorable given object (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). And so, reading attitude has been defined as a set of feelings toward reading which causes the learners to either approach reading or obviate it (Alexander and Filler, 1976) or as a set of feelings and emotions that is correlated with the state of mind which in turn makes reading likely or unlikely to take place (Smith, 1990).

Mathewson (1994) mentioned three components of attitude; affective, cognitive, and behavior. The affective component refers to feeling or emotion. It can be like favorable or unfavorable. The second component, cognitive, refers to belief, thought, or rational argument. That is to say, it is a set of thoughts or beliefs toward a thing such as particular person, idea, rational arguments, and situation. So, when people have certain thought, belief or argument toward a matter, such thoughts will affect their responses, either negatively or positively. The third component of attitude is behavioral response. This component refers to a real reaction or behavior that people reveal toward something when they have certain thoughts or beliefs (Yamashita, 2004). Visser, Krosnick, Simmons (2003) stated that if people are confident with their thoughts and beliefs toward certain matter, it will be expressed through their behavior.

Bamford and Day (1998) stated that when learners know how to choose appropriate reading materials based on their interests and language ability, they will have a positive attitude, confidence in their reading, motivation toward reading in Second Language or Foreign Language. Additionally, when students read, they will know the purpose of reading and thus doing it appropriately to match with the purpose.

Nishino (2007) reported that students' literacy level in English increased as a result of the positive attitudes that they developed toward reading. Besides, Bell (2001) added that extensive reading leads to increasing reading rate and general language proficiency. Writing proficiency is also considerably impacted by reading extensively. This includes both primary students and university students (Asraf and Ahmad, 2003).

Another survey by Powell (2005) of Japanese high school students, who studied twelve hours of English per week and majored in courses within the English program and extensive reading program, found that the number of books read increased from 153, in the first year to 261, in the second year. In addition, there were more students who thought that reading in English was more interesting and enjoyable. Furthermore "once students develop their reading habit, they voluntarily go on to engage in reading tasks of their own choice, according to their interests" (p.22)

Gao (2004) also conducted a research about whether extensive reading can increase motivation to learn English or not. The experiment had two groups, whose subjects were female senior high school students, all of which were from Taiwan. One was the experiment group, which practices extensive reading each week and the other was the control group. Both of the groups had the same English teachers and the same lessons of English courses. After one year, the results finally showed that the experiment group, with practice extensive reading, gained noticeably higher motivation in language learning, and greater confidence in their English.

Grundy (2004) carried out a study in New Zealand with two surveys about extensive reading. The purposes of these two surveys were to investigate students' attitudes toward reading and to evaluate the benefits of extensive reading programs. The reading programs consisted of ten weeks and encouraged students to read outside class. Students were encouraged to select their own reading materials from outside the classroom and to bring those materials to class to share them with classmates. The other materials for reading were available in the classroom, including learning media, newspapers, and other resources. The results of the surveys indicated that sixty five percent of students had positive attitudes toward reading and learning, and ninety percent of students revealed that they were more interested in reading English than before.

Yamashita (2013) investigated the effects of extensive reading on reading attitudes in foreign language after fifteen weeks of course implementation with extensive reading. The participants were sixty one undergraduates who were learning English as a foreign language at a Japanese university. The results indicated that extensive reading had a stronger effect on enhancing positive feelings than of reducing negative feelings;

and thus, extensive reading may help the learners to develop their language skills as well as to expand their general knowledge. The results also indicated that extensive reading may also serve to promote learner autonomy and reading enjoyment in a learning context.

Fujita and Noro (2009) argued that extensive reading enhanced both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. They examined the influence of ten-minute extensive reading (ten minutes of free voluntary reading in regular English class hours) on EFL high school students' reading motivation. Factor analysis of a thirty-item questionnaire was given before and after the extensive reading. One of the findings revealed that a new factor, which the researchers called integrative intellectual motivation emerged in the post-extensive reading responses; this suggests that reading motivation changes after the experience of extensive reading. However, the factor called exam-related extrinsic motivation explained a significantly larger amount of variance in post-extensive reading responses compared to pre-extensive reading responses. The second result may point to the possibility that the questionnaire was mainly based on capturing students' concern for exams as cultivated in their regular classes.

Lao and Krashen (2000) used a four-item questionnaire to explore the second language learner's motivation. The study consisted of two groups. One group consisted of the learners who were involved in literature-based pleasure reading and another group who received traditional academic instruction in the four skills. The former group, unsurprisingly, was far more positive about literary reading because this group was only had the opportunity to read novels for pleasure. However, one item also showed that the pleasure reading group felt far more strongly than the skills group that what they had learned in the course would help them in their university careers.

Johnson (2012) investigated Japanese engineering students' attitudes towards EFL learning. Data for this study was derived from two different sources, a questionnaire with open-ended items, and reading journals. The questionnaire asked students across proficiency levels about their preferences and attitudes in English learning, while the reading journals traced intermediate learners' weekly reactions to out-of-class extensive reading assignments. It was found that: the majority of students said they didn't like English at the beginning of the semester, but most of them responded positively towards extensive reading after twelve weeks of out-of-class extensive reading assignments.

Tsou (2007), Wu (2005) and Jou (2006) used extensive reading approach by using a novel as a supplementary material to the regular EFL textbook in three senior high school classes and studied the gains in the students' reading proficiency and attitudes. Their studies yielded positive results.

Robb and Kano (2013) conducted a study in regard to the implementation of extensive reading in a Japanese university which required students to read graded readers outside of classroom as part of their course requirements. The study compared students who did extensive reading as additional coursework needed to achieve better reading scores than the students who were not required to do so. Results proved that the presence of an extensive reading approach was the main factor for higher score improvement. Although this study is not closely related to the question of the current study, it indicates extensive reading positive effects on a range of second /foreign language skills and abilities.

In fact, there is a wealth of research reporting on positive effects which have been noticed in areas such as reading comprehension as Bell (2001) and Yamashita (2008), reading rate as in Beglar, Hunt and Kite (2012), Iwahori (2008) and Matsui and Noro (2010), vocabulary as in Horst (2005) and Poulshock (2010), grammar as in Yang (2001), writing as in Tsang (1996) and general L2 proficiency as in Iwahori, (2008).

However, Mikami (2016) examined the past and the current extensive reading (ER) practice among Japanese students of English as a foreign language (EFL) and their motivation toward it. The researcher conducted a questionnaire survey with 141 university students. Quantitative analysis showed that participants had little past or current practice of ER, but many more participants felt like reading more English books than those who did not. Qualitative analysis indicated that their reasons for reading or not reading more English books fell into three attitudinal categories: negative (reasons for not reading), positive (reasons for reading), and ambivalent. Eight distinct negative reasons and six positive reasons were identified. Ambivalent reasons were not grouped, because each one was complex and unique. These results implied that the participants' motivation was not fixed or stable and that it was difficult for them to maintain positive motivation.

Similarly, Van Schooten and de Gloppe (2002) argued that researchers should not adopt any one score as representative of reading attitude because not all the five reading attitude variables that they examined (cognition, affect, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and intentions) indicate the actual behavior of reading. And, different factors (e.g., gender, home environment, and literacy education) affect different aspects of reading attitudes (Van Schooten, de Gloppe, and Stoel, 2004).

Since there are a lot of benefits of extensive reading, the researchers never stop investigating its effects. Researchers found more and more findings about the benefits of extensive reading in language learning. On the basis of the above conceptual framework, we can ask some critical questions for the understanding of the

relationship between extensive reading and reading attitudes in second /foreign language: How does ER influence L2 reading attitudes? Does a positive L2 reading attitude enhance L2 learners' involvement in reading? If so, how do L2 reading attitudes influence the act of reading. Accordingly, this study is based on investigating the effect of extensive reading on learners' reading attitudes using three attitudinal variables: Affective, cognitive, and behavioral.

### **3. Statement of the Problem**

Saudi English majors' level in reading achievement has been reported to be of low quality. Lack of extensive reading materials at the secondary stage is assumed to be one reason behind this low level. In Saudi Arabia, teachers seldom use extensive reading strategies knowing that such methods positively stimulate students' motivation. Since teachers know that there will be a negative reaction to prescribed reading, from prospective learners, there has developed a process of mutual avoidance. Both students and teachers deserve equal blame for creating a learning environment where reading texts are given smaller part. Consequently, this leads to decrease in higher language skills.

However, in contrast to the abundance of research on the effect of extensive reading, there is a surprising lack of studies about the effects of extensive reading on learners' attitudes in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the current study aimed to find out the EFL learners' reading attitudes toward extensive reading at Hail University in KSA. Three attitudinal values were measured in the present study: affective, cognitive and behavioral.

### **4. Question of the study**

The research question that this study aims to answer is as follows:

How does extensive reading affect attitudes to reading in a foreign language? This question is rooted in the assumption that attitude is a complex construct consists of multiple components. Thus, the study is interested in identifying different effects of extensive reading on various components of reading attitude: Affective, Cognitive, and behavioral.

### **5. Methodology**

#### **5.1. Participants**

The participants were 70 third-year undergraduate students enrolled in compulsory EFL classes taught by the researcher at Hail University in KSA. Four of the participants were non Saudi students and the others were Saudi students. Therefore, the extensive reading provided in their classes was their major reading challenge in English.

#### **5.2. Instrument of the Study**

The instrument used in this study to collect data was adapted from the original attitude questionnaire from Davis, Gorrel, Kline, and Hsieh (1992) and Yamashita (2007). A slight adjustment was made, however, as described below, in order to obtain the most informative result. Responses on conversely worded items (4 and 5 to measure affective) were reversed, so that a higher score indicated a higher degree of feeling or belief in that variable.

The questionnaire included three attitudinal variables: affective, cognitive, and behavioral. Each variable included a number of statements. The questionnaire consisted of twenty statements: statements that represent the affective component (number one to six), statements that represent the cognitive component (number seven to sixteen) also statements that represent behavioral component (number seventeen to twenty). A five-point Likert Scale was used in the study. The response alternatives for each item are: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree.

The participants were expected to choose one option from the five given options to represent their opinion. The options "agree" and "strongly agree" (indicated by 4 and 5 respectively) represent positive responses, "neutral" (indicated by 3) represents neither positive nor negative response, while "strongly disagree" and "disagree" (indicated by 1 and 2 respectively) represent negative responses. Therefore, a higher score indicated a higher degree of feeling or belief in that variable. Paired samples t- test was used to calculate the mean scores and the standard deviations for each variable on pre and post- test.

#### **5.3. The Reliability and the Validity of the Instrument**

To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study of 30 students was carried out. These students were asked to fill in the questionnaire. After two weeks, they were asked again to fill in the questionnaire for the second time. And the scores from the pilot study on the questionnaire were collected; and a set of reliability tests were conducted to determine the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients. The result was found to be (0.88). The reliability coefficients for the instrument used in this study showed that the study instrument was satisfactorily reliable. To ensure the validity of the research instrument, the instrument of the study was given to a jury of three specialists at Hail University at in KSA. They suggested replacing, deleting and adding some statements on the

three attitudinal variables used in the questionnaire (Affective, Cognitive and Behavioral). Their suggestions and comments were highly considered; and the instruments of the study were modified accordingly.

#### 5.4. Procedures

A pretest–posttest design was used; the reading attitude questionnaire was administered in the first class (pretest) and the last class (posttest) of a fifteen week course based on the extensive reading approach. The class met twice a week for three hours. Each student was able to access approximately eight graded English readers and was encouraged to choose whichever books they wanted to read in or outside the class. Students were asked to write a simple descriptive report about each book including information about the title, the author, their thoughts, feelings and impressions in addition to how the books they read may affect their behaviors.

The three hours a week were divided into two parts; the first two hours were used to cover the course topics as recommended in the English syllabus of the English Department at Hail University and other various activities while the third hour was devoted to free, voluntary reading provided that the topics they select would be better related to EFL learning course objectives. Students were allowed to read books inside and outside the class. Students who found a book difficult or not interesting might stop reading and choose another book instead. Students who participated actively and provided the teacher with the book reports received two grades as a kind of reinforcement. The teacher received the students’ questions and comments, answered them individually, and gave advice and comments to facilitate and encourage reading

#### 6. The Findings of the Study

The research question of this study aimed at investigating the effect of extensive reading on EFL learner’s attitudes in English reading classes. To answer this question, the researcher used a questionnaire which included three attitudinal variables: affective, cognitive, and behavioral. Each variable includes a number of statements. The questionnaire was used as a pre-post test to control the differences of the EFL learners’ attitudes toward extensive reading in the three attitudinal values.

Paired-samples t-test was used to calculate the mean scores and standard deviations on the pre-test and post-test scores gained in the 20 Likert items. The means and standard deviations of the attitudinal values of the pre and post tests were taken and can be viewed in Table (1).

**Table (1): Paired Samples T-test of Students’ Attitudes toward Extensive Reading in the Three Attitudinal Variables (Affective, Cognitive, Behavioral)**

Attitudinal value	Pre Post	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Affective</b>	Pre	70	13.50	3.256	-13.840	69	.000
	Post	70	19.90	3.523			
<b>Cognitive</b>	Pre	70	19.56	3.973	-16.511	69	.000
	Post	70	32.01	5.807			
<b>Behavioral</b>	Pre	70	9.03	2.113	-14.645	69	.000
	Post	70	13.49	2.680			
<b>Total</b>	Pre	70	42.09	6.197	-20.937	69	.000
	Post	70	65.40	8.836			

In Table (1), the total mean score on the pretest was 42.09 which became 65.40 on the post test. Moreover, analysis of the 20- Likert items in the pre and post-test indicated that there were statistically significant differences in all variables between the pre and post- test in favor of the post-test. The results indicated positive changes in the learners’ overall attitudes toward extensive reading ( $t = 20.937, p = .05$ ) after a semester-long reading process. As shown in Table (1), the significant gains in post-test scores suggested that extensive reading experience had succeeded in causing positive changes in students’ reading attitudes in Affective ( $t = 13.840, p = .05$ ), in cognitive ( $t = 16.511, p = .05$ ), and in behavioral ( $t = 14.645, p = .05$ ). Descriptive statistics for the three attitudinal variables are summarized in Table 2.



**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Attitudinal Variables on the Pre-post Test.**

Item	Mean Pre	Std. Deviation Pre	Mean Post	Std. Deviation Post
<b><u>Affective</u></b>				
<b>Q1:</b>	2.60	1.356	3.26	1.390
<b>Q2:</b>	1.84	.792	3.04	1.439
<b>Q3:</b>	1.87	.779	3.11	1.346
<b>Q4:</b>	3.06	1.710	4.16	1.099
<b>Q5:</b>	2.73	1.623	3.84	1.099
<b>Q6:</b>	1.40	.600	2.49	1.452
<b>Total. Affective pre-post</b>	<b>13.50</b>	<b>3.256</b>	<b>19.90</b>	<b>3.523</b>
<b><u>Cognitive</u></b>				
<b>Q7:</b>	1.67	.631	2.81	1.333
<b>Q8:</b>	2.37	.802	3.46	1.282
<b>Q9:</b>	2.41	.940	3.43	1.292
<b>Q10:</b>	2.01	.893	3.31	1.336
<b>Q11:</b>	1.83	1.204	3.13	1.474
<b>Q12:</b>	2.23	1.342	3.20	1.420
<b>Q13:</b>	1.36	.566	2.86	1.487
<b>Q14:</b>	1.54	.736	3.34	1.443
<b>Q15:</b>	2.10	.515	3.41	1.198
<b>Q16:</b>	2.03	.816	3.06	1.250
<b>Total. Cognitive pre-post</b>	<b>19.56</b>	<b>3.973</b>	<b>32.01</b>	<b>5.807</b>
<b><u>Behavioral</u></b>				
<b>Q17:</b>	2.26	.530	3.49	1.176
<b>Q18:</b>	2.04	.751	3.31	1.257
<b>Q19:</b>	2.41	.602	3.44	1.125
<b>Q20:</b>	2.31	.753	3.24	1.148
<b>Total. Behavioral pre-post</b>	<b>9.03</b>	<b>2.113</b>	<b>13.49</b>	<b>2.680</b>
<b>Total (pre-post) Items (1-20)</b>	<b>42.09</b>	<b>6.197</b>	<b>65.40</b>	<b>8.836</b>

Table (2) showed the mean scores and the standard deviations of the three attitudinal variables (Affective, Cognitive, Behavioral) before and after the treatment. It is clear from Table (2) that the total mean score of the Affective variable (which represented the statement items 1-6) on the pre-test was (13.50 with  $SD=3.256$ ) and became (19.90 with  $SD=3.523$ ) on the post-test. This indicated that there were significant differences between the mean scores of the Affective value on the pre-post test in favor of the post test. In regard to the cognitive variable (which represented the statement items (7-16), the findings revealed that there were also significant differences between the mean scores on the pre-test (19.56 with  $SD=3.973$ ) and the post-test (32.01 with  $SD=5.807$ ) in favor of the post-test. The Behavioral variable which represented the statement items 17-20 witnessed increase in its mean scores after the treatment (13.49 with  $SD=2.680$ ) compared with the mean score on the pre-test which was (9.03 with  $SD=2.113$ ) to indicate the statistical significant differences in favor of the post-test and thus the positive changes in the overall EFL learners' reading attitudes.

## 7. Discussion

The present study investigated how a course of fifteen weeks based on extensive reading which was applied inside and outside class hours affected undergraduate EFL learners' reading attitudes at Saudi University. During the course which was implemented in the first semester of the academic year (2016-2017), the students read around 450 pages, which were approximately 8 books. The measurable impacts of extensive reading were identified on three variables: Affective, cognitive and behavioral.

In response to research question: How does extensive reading affect EFL learners' reading attitudes? The data which were collected from the attitudinal questionnaire showed that the total mean score of the learners' responses on the pre-test was (42.09) while the total mean score of their responses on the post-test became (65.40). The results indicated positive changes in the EFL learners' overall attitudes toward reading. Considering the variables of the study (Affective, Cognitive, and Behavioral), perceived changes in the mean scores were in favor of the post tests with some differences among the three variables.

As extensive reading increased students' feelings of confidence and decreased their anxiety towards EFL reading, it limitedly increased their practical value (behavioral variable) compared with the cognitive value which reflected the highest mean score in the EFL learners' attitudes. In spite of the fact that learners were informed of the amount of reading they read would be reflected in their class grade, EFL learners' responses on the behavioral variable indicated limited change. One of the reasons of this limited change might be related to the period of implementation. Fifteen weeks might not be necessarily sufficient to get the full benefits of extensive reading (Grabe and Stoller, 2011). Moreover, EFL learner's commitment concerning time they spent in reading might be another reason since time commitment makes reading more effective and rational.

Affectively, the data collected from the questionnaire at the end of the extensive reading program indicated that extensive reading had impacted EFL learners in different ways. It changed their attitudes toward reading as they started enjoying reading. It increased their feelings of confidence and decreased their feelings of anxiety. And because of its benefits, the EFL learners recommended that students of English Department should be strongly encouraged to take extensive reading class. Such results are consistent with the results that Grundy (2004) and Gao (2004) came up with; they found out that the participants who practiced extensive reading gained noticeably higher motivation in language learning, and greater confidence in their English. Fujita and Noro (2009) also argued that extensive reading enhanced both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

The data collected in this study also indicated that it helped them become more autonomous learners. This result agreed with Tsai (2007) and Yamashita (2013) who stated that developing reading abilities requires establishing what is called reading autonomy. Bamford and Day (1998) stated that when learners know how to choose appropriate reading materials based on their interests and language ability, they will have a positive attitude and confidence in their reading. Therefore, in this study, the learners were given adequate knowledge of reading resources and were also allowed to select the books of their interest. These books were related to the EFL course they were studying so as to cope up with the course objectives as recommended in the course plan of the English Department at Hail University-KSA.

In regard to learners' responses on the cognitive variable, the results indicated tangible changes as they responded positively on the statement items which were about reading speed, vocabulary acquisition, and writing abilities. These results were consistent with Richard and Schmidt (2002) who reported that extensive reading will help develop good reading habits such as building up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, promoting students' motivation in learning a foreign language and increasing their reading speed. Writing proficiency was also considerably impacted by reading extensively. Support for this contention was supplied in Yamashita (2004), Asraf and Ahmad (2003), and Tsang (1996).

EFL learners after 15 weeks of extensive reading realized that extensive reading helped them acquire broad knowledge in English and new ways of thinking (statement items 10 and 11). This result was consistent with Nishino (2007) who reported that students develop "very positive attitudes toward books as they raise their literacy level in English" (pp.83-102).

Visser et al (2003) stated that if people are confident with their thoughts and beliefs toward certain matter, it will be expressed through their behavior. In this study, learners' responses on the behavioral variable post-test questionnaire indicated some changes on their behaviors. In spite of the slight increase in EFL learners' responses on behavioral variable compared with the other two variables, it is still considered a positive indicator. EFL learners revealed positive behaviors such as, reading two books per week, writing reports regularly about each book they read, and participating more inside classroom.

Based on the results of the present study, the positive relationship between extensive reading and the EFL learners' positive responses on the three attitudinal variables (Affective, Cognitive, and Behavioral) indicated that, it seemingly remains true that reading programs that incorporate extensive reading are more likely, than those that do not, to foster a love for reading.

## 8. Conclusions

The present study had investigated the impact of extensive reading by documenting its positive effects on changes in different aspects of EFL reading attitudes. It was found out that:

1-learners would enjoy reading extensively in English when they had chosen the materials which were of particular interest to them.

2-extensive reading helped improve their vocabulary, reading, writing abilities, and literacy in English language.

3- reading autonomy was one of the important effects of extensive reading which will help learners to be self-

independent outside the educational setting.

## 9. Recommendations

Based upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered for further studies and applications:

- Although the study identified a positive effect of extensive reading, further studies needed to examine how long the effect of it continues.
- There are different ways of implementing extensive reading in educational settings (e.g., exclusively outside of class or using only a small portion of class time). Accordingly, the teachers are also recommended to select the appropriate ways of implementation considering the educational context and the learners' preferences.
- Careful observation of students by teachers is recommended to promote the best results of extensive reading.
- Generalizability of the findings to different educational circumstances may be limited, and therefore, more studies are necessary.

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