Extensive Reading Project using Graded Readers in a University Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Research into Extensive Reading (ER) has a long history as an effective method in facilitating language learning especially for ESL learners. It is believed that one of the approaches in using ER successfully is through the use of graded readers. This study explores the influence of ER within an existing 14-week university English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course with the use of graded readers by comparing the difference in student’s performance through experimental and control groups of 215 undergraduates. In addition to the ESP curriculum, the experimental group were encouraged to read graded readers outside of class time, while the control group in contrast, did not engage in any ER activities. Publishers of graded readers and tests were selected using Edinburgh Project in Extensive Reading (EPER). Results indicated that there were no significant difference in the student’s performances between experimental and control groups for pre-tests, post-tests and extensive reading tests. Based on the findings, ER has no positive impact on reading proficiency. These results carry important implications on pedagogical and methodological aspects of language teaching and learning, which are further discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Extensive Reading; Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading; English for Specific Purposes; university students; graded readers.