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“Investigating the effect of an extensive reading project
on improving intensive reading in the ELT classroom:
A field study in a middle school in Upper Austria”

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Lea Kaiserseder BEd

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Mag. Dr. Helen Heaney, BA

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List of abbreviations

CEFR.....	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
EFL.....	English as a foreign language
ELT.....	English language teaching
ER.....	Extensive reading
IR.....	Intensive reading
L1.....	First language
L2.....	Second language
SLA.....	Second language acquisition

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1. Introduction

Reading books – regardless of the language – might represent an uninteresting activity for some lower secondary students and, following that supposition, they might perceive reading comprehensions in the foreign language English to be even more boring. However, as can be deduced from the Companion Volume (2018: 32), receptive reading skills occupy one of the crucial roles in the process of learning and mastering a foreign language. Those areas include reception (listening and reading), production (writing and speaking monolingually), interaction and mediation. Furthermore, the curriculum declares the ability to read and understand texts in the second language (L2) English as one of the objectives of foreign language learning (BMBWF 2023a: 46).

Integrating extensive reading (ER) in English language teaching (ELT) courses does not only enhance the authenticity level of the lessons, but it also improves the students' reading skills. The curriculum for Austrian middle schools supports this assumption by declaring that practical elements with a special focus on authenticity are some of the main criteria for successful second language acquisition (BMBWF 2023a: 47). Therefore, it is of utmost importance to be able to motivate EFL students to read books in the target language and to prove to them that this activity can indeed be beneficial for their language improvement. As Goodman (2012: 12) observes, "reading is a receptive language process" and in order to actively engage the students in this process, teachers need to have a fundamental knowledge on how to embed literature in their lessons. Despite already existing literature on the positive impact of extensive reading on foreign language skills (see Ateek 2021, Al-Nafisah 2015, Elley & Mangubhai 1983), there has been limited uptake of this impact of ER on Austrian lower secondary middle school students. Thus, the following research project was developed in order to contribute to the research field of extensive reading and to close the research gap concerning Austrian middle school settings. The research project was undertaken in three classes of a middle school located in Upper Austria. In order to investigate the actual effectiveness of ER on the students' reading skills and their motivation towards this receptive skill, two research questions were developed:

RQ1: "To what extent can reading language-level appropriate books (graded readers from the school library) extensively and individually boost the students' intrinsic motivation to read in English?"

RQ2: “To what extent can reading language-level appropriate books (graded readers from the school library) extensively and individually improve the students’ reading skills in intensive reading tasks from regular exams?”

The first research question aims at investigating whether an extensive reading project can positively influence the students’ motivation towards reading in English. This alleged change in attitude was analyzed through two questionnaires about the students’ reading habits, which were filled in before and after the intervention. The investigation is based on previous research by Kirchhoff (2009) and Tegmark et al. (2022), who were already able to confirm that extensive reading positively affects the students’ motivation. However, their investigations included different school settings. If the answers in the post-reading questionnaire are more positive about reading in general and especially concerning motivation to read in English, the hypothesis that extensive reading boosts the students’ motivation for reading in the foreign language English can be confirmed for the three middle school classes, which contributes to a close in the research gap.

The aspired improvement in reading skills, as stated in RQ2, was analyzed with the aid of two reading comprehensions from regular English exams: one before the extensive reading phase and the other one from an exam afterwards. If the results of the students improve, the hypothesis that extensive reading increases L2 reading skills in intensive reading tasks can be confirmed for the three classes, which, again, contributes to closing the research gap. It is thereby essential to keep in mind that researchers raise awareness of the importance to conduct such a project over a longer time frame in order to have a measurable impact on the students’ L2 skills (Brown 2008: 239). However, the hypothesis in RQ2 is supported by literature from Al-Nafisah (2015), Ateek (2021) and Elley and Mangubhai (1983), who have already found evidence for such a language improvement within less than a year, in different school and university settings. Their findings suggest that this investigation can also be successful.

The significance of the study for closing a research gap is manifold: To begin with, the paper represents an essential contribution to the research area of extensive reading in that it takes up existing literature as well as ER projects, comparing and contrasting them to the current project in order to expand knowledge on ER focusing on Austrian middle schools. Moreover, the outcome of the study can have an influence on future teaching in the middle school under investigation. For example, if the results show a remarkable improvement in the

students' receptive skill reading, teachers can adapt their teaching accordingly by integrating extensive reading on a more regular basis. Furthermore, the thesis serves as a basis for teachers to familiarize themselves better with the behavior of students, especially regarding reading habits and working individually.

The thesis begins with a literature review: First, reading in a foreign language is discussed. Then, the approach of intensive reading is explained and related to its counterpart extensive reading. Second, a review is provided of earlier studies on the effectiveness of extensive reading and its consequences for the students. The subsequent section provides information on the usefulness of including graded readers when doing extensive reading in ELT classrooms, followed by a discussion on motivation and its connection with foreign language learning. The last two sections of the theoretical part elaborate on the project's relation to the Companion Volume (2018) as well as the curriculum for Austrian middle schools (BMBWF 2023a). The literature review is followed by a description of the reading project, a presentation of the data and a discussion, before closing with a conclusion.

Chapter 3 about the reading project discusses the setting and instruments, considers what a successful reading project theoretically looks like and reviews the delimitations of the study. What follows are a presentation and an analysis of the most salient results of the research project in order to answer the two research questions. First, the questionnaire data is discussed, followed by the data from the reading comprehensions. Concerning the first set of data, it is essential to mention that only those questionnaire items directly referring to the two research questions were presented and considered in the analysis. To ascertain the significance of the results, t-tests were undertaken and included in the thesis in section 5.3. Finally, the paper discusses the results and provides an outlook on possible further research in this field, before ending with the conclusion which briefly summarizes the thesis. All of the questionnaire items as well as the reading comprehensions can be retrieved from the Appendix in chapter 9.

2. Literature Review

Chapter two provides theoretical background information for the thesis' project. It starts with an explanation of the two concepts of reading – extensive and intensive reading – and compares and contrasts them. What follows are descriptions of earlier extensive reading projects undertaken in various school settings and different locations. The advantages of the utilization of graded readers for such an ER project will then be outlined. Since one of the research questions focuses on the students' motivation in relation to reading in English, a section is dedicated to this topic. The last two sections of the literature review offer insights into the curriculum of Austrian middle schools (BMBWF 2023a) as well as the Companion Volume (2018). These sections are included because it is essential to know what the students should already know and what they should still learn when conducting a foreign language project at school.

2.1. Reading in a foreign language

Reading is a concept where an author writes down words and a reader reads them and constructs meaning. Goodman (2012: 12) describes the process of reading in a cycle: He states that the process starts with a thought which is written down and becomes language, before it is decoded by the reader into a thought again.

Grabe and Yamashita (2022: 8) claim that literacy in the L1 and also in an L2, which is English in most cases, represents a necessity for people living in the 21st century who want to succeed economically. They also state that every person needs to have the chance “[...] to become a skilled reader, and in many cases this means becoming a skilled L2 reader.” (Grabe & Yamashita 2022: 8). Sometimes students perform poorly in L2 reading comprehensions due to a lack of knowledge about the goal of the task, which is why the teachers need to explain these goals so that they are clear to everyone (Grabe & Yamashita 2022:21). Giving clear reading instructions is imperative as the two authors state that “[...] goals and purposes for reading play a major role in reading development” (Grabe & Yamashita 2022:22). The 2001 version of the CEFR (2001: 54-55) proposes several purposes of (school-related) reading: reading for general orientation, for information, for pleasure and reading to understand instructions. The updated Companion Volume extended this list with the following purposes: reading for overall comprehension, for correspondence and reading as a leisure activity (Companion Volume 2018: 53-55). Reading engages the learners in an active process where they need to engage with the text and make use of their language repertoire and cultural

knowledge in order to understand the text properly (Al-Nafisah 2015: 99). Nonetheless, the literature suggests that the act of reading neither indicates recognizing nor comprehending every single word in a text; it is much more a process in which different strategies are used in order to gain understanding of a certain text (Hedge 1985: 32). According to Hedge (1985:32), such strategies include, for instance, predicting what might come next from textual clues, reading in chunks of words and reading between the lines as well as guessing the meaning of new words with the aid of the context. While (literate) learners reading in their first and native language (L1) already make use of such strategies subconsciously, L2 readers might face problems in doing so. In other words, even though reading strategies are already known in the students' L1, it might be difficult to transfer them into a foreign language. Nevertheless, this transfer is the goal which needs to be aimed at in EFL learning (Elley & Mangubhai 1983: 54). The transfer of those L1 strategies is exactly the point where the teachers step in, as it is their task to teach the students how to transfer the L1 reading strategies and actively use them in the L2. They can do so by helping develop the students' vocabulary, work on comprehension activities or teach specific skills like predicting, previewing or using a dictionary (Hedge 1985: 34; Nation 2009: 7). While the use of manual dictionaries was common in the past, it is advisable to teach students from the 21st century how to purposefully deal with online dictionaries. The ability to read in the L1 gradually develops over time as the readers are perpetually exposed to written L1 language, while an exposure to L2 written language is more seldom (Grabe & Yamashita 2022: 13). Another difference between L1 and L2 reading that needs to be considered is that the students' knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and syntax is much higher in the L1; In addition to this lack of knowledge, L2 students do not only have to read a text and construct meaning out of it, but they first need to understand the foreign language and be able to translate it (Grabe & Yamashita 2022: 171). Despite the many considerable differences between L1 and L2 reading, Grabe and Yamashita (2022: 180) also talk about similarities like the comprehension process or the significance of background knowledge.

In order to gain the most valuable learning experience through reading, students need to be exposed to a huge variety of text types as this exposure promotes language development (Hedge 1985: 25). Hedge (1985: 25) thereby states that "ER gives students a chance to follow-up more intensive classroom work on understanding syntax and to see examples of how devices such as co-ordination and subordination are used to combine ideas". To illustrate this

claim further, as books use authentic and natural language, students can gradually expand their language knowledge by reading extensively as they learn about sentence structure and encounter linking words and connectives. Thereby the students subconsciously learn about the correct syntax and how to use linking words and connectives in different contexts. Grabe and Yamashita (2022: 194) add that learning to read in the L2 partly depends “on the development of L2 linguistic knowledge as well as extensive exposure to L2 texts and experiences and practice with L2 reading.”

As mentioned beforehand, the competence reading is split into two main approaches: intensive and extensive reading. In the following subsections, these two strategies are explained and compared to each other. As ER was used as the main approach of the thesis’ project, IR will be explained briefly, but the focus will be on ER.

2.1.1. Intensive reading

According to Nation (2009: 25), intensive reading (IR) has two main objectives: comprehending a text and learning new language features. At school, typical IR tasks include, for instance, open questions or questions with multiple choice or true or false tasks which require reading strategies like skimming, scanning, reading for gist and reading for detail (Companion Volume 2018: 53). Such exercises mostly focus on developing reading strategies as well as specifically teaching new vocabulary or grammar features. Nation (2009: 26), however, warns about these specific language teaching exercises in IR tasks as they sometimes take grammar items out of context, which might hinder learners from learning authentic language.

As already mentioned, Elley and Mangubhai (1983: 54) state that it might be difficult for students to transfer the reading strategies of the L1 into an L2 as these L1 strategies are mostly known subconsciously. Therefore, the students acquire a pool of reading strategies guided by their teachers which can then be applied in IR tasks before reading larger amounts of text in extensive reading which is the second approach to reading which will subsequently be elaborated on.

2.1.2. Extensive reading

Based on the “principle that we learn to read by reading”, extensive reading can be defined as reading “large quantities of easy material in the foreign language” (Day 2013: 10). The idea behind this approach is that reading large amounts of text provokes incidental language learning (Nation 2009: 50). The website *The ER foundation* states that such an

approach at school should be driven by the goal to encourage the students to read large amounts of texts which they ideally choose themselves (The ER foundation 2023). At school, the traditional way of learning to read is that the students familiarize themselves with the alphabet first and gradually expand their vocabulary. Then, they do intensive reading exercises, before they are capable of reading longer texts and books, which indicates that extensive reading is one of the last steps in the process of learning to read. What differentiates extensive from intensive reading is that the latter focuses on specific features or tasks in order to develop language skills, while ER is mainly driven by intrinsic or autonomous motivation as well as a focus on the content and the amount and time spent on reading. This definition indicates that the meaning of a text as well as the act of reading itself are in the foreground of ER. Grabe and Yamashita (2022: 12) also state that the most common purpose for reading larger amounts of texts like articles and books is “reading for general comprehension”.

Husna (2019:213) proposes the benefit of ER that it fosters critical thinking, which seems especially important for future life. In a list of ten principles, the above-mentioned benefit and criteria of extensive reading are listed and combined with others (Day & Bamford 1998: 2): (1) The reading material is easy, (2) A variety of reading material on wide range of topics is available, (3) Learners choose what they want to read, (4) Learners read as much as possible, (5) Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower, (6) The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding, (7) Reading is individual and silent, (8) Reading is its own reward, (9) The teacher orients and guides the students, (10) The teacher is a role model of a reader. These principles are all essential criteria for the current ER project, which is why their implementation will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3 which is about the reading project.

Ultimately, extensive reading in school settings should not only encourage the students to read more at school but also to practise it at home as a leisure activity. In 2018, the CEFR Companion Volume (2018: 58) complemented the existing list of reading purposes with exactly this topic: reading as a leisure activity. While A1 level students are only able to read simple and short texts, students at B1 level are already capable of understanding simple poems and novels, for example (Companion Volume 2018: 59). Nevertheless, in her book about graded readers and their use in language teaching, Hedge (1985: 40) views the purposes of extensive reading as linguistic ones, for instance, namely to extend existing vocabulary as well as to improve reading fluency. She adds that these goals can only be achieved if the books

correspond to the students' needs and interests in their L1. Nation (2009: 6) lists even more purposes of ER, for instance, "reading to search for information [...], reading to learn, reading for fun, reading to integrate information, reading to critique texts, and reading to write". He also argues that the reading material in a course needs to fit the language level of the students. However, this does not indicate that the language from a text or book should entirely correspond to the students' language level. In fact, a certain challenge is crucial for language development and learning. While about 98% of the vocabulary in a text need to be familiar in order to ensure comprehension, the other 2% of unknown words are essential for language development (Nation 2009: 51). The idea of authentic texts such as fiction might subconsciously come up when considering ER. However, teachers need to be aware of the fact that students at low proficiency levels only know a limited vocabulary and grammar, which is why it is essential to read books that have been specifically designed for L2 learners and are targeted at their proficiency levels (Nation 2009: 51). Such books are known as *graded readers* and are discussed in section 2.3. Nevertheless, ER is not only about suitable material but also about how the readers are prepared for this activity. According to Hedge (1985: 63), teachers should prepare their students for extensive reading. This preparation consists of two different methods: a psychological and a methodological one, the latter concerning reading strategies. On the other hand, preparing the students psychologically means that there is an information exchange about the students' reading habits, which can be held in the L1 or in the foreign language and can be done orally in the form of an informal discussion or with the help of a questionnaire. In the case of the current thesis, the author decided for a digital questionnaire format due to its practicality. A questionnaire is targeted at each student, which means that everyone needs to contribute their answers, which would not be possible in an oral discussion in a balanced way. Furthermore, an online questionnaire immediately saves and records the data, and it is also possible to create charts online which facilitates the process of analyzing the data afterwards. Nevertheless, Hedge (1985: 64) also points to the fact that the students might not be entirely reliable in such psychological information exchanges – be that orally or digitally – as it could be that they want to impress their colleagues or the teacher. In terms of the methodological preparation, it is not only important to provide such preparation beforehand but also to provide scaffolds during the reading process. Nation (1984: 7) therefore advises involving different activities in the field of listening, speaking and writing.

When taking all of the above-mentioned information about the extensive reading approach into account, it goes without saying that it indeed offers several advantages for foreign language learning and development, leaving aside potential disadvantages. The positive impact ER can have on language development and particularly on the learners' reading competence (Al-Nafisah 2015: 100) can be retrieved in various studies in section 2.2. However, for successful EFL learning it is essentially important to balance the two approaches, ER and IR. In her book, Hedge (1985: 68) argues that "[...] in the development of fluent reading in a foreign language, intensive and extensive reading are mutually dependent." She further elaborates on that argument by saying that IR lessons in school can be seen as training lessons for the strategies and skills the students need to master individually in ER settings. Such IR lessons happen on a regular basis in English lessons as the curriculum and, hence, the course book as well are based on five competences out of which reading is one (BMBWF 2023: 35). Further details on the CEFR Companion Volume (2018) and the curriculum (BMBWF 2023a) can be found in sections 2.3. and 2.4. The German researcher Kirchhoff supports Hedge's argument about the balance of ER and IR by stating:

Unbedingte Voraussetzung für gelingenden Literaturunterricht ist es, das extensive Lesen mit dem intensiven Lesen so zu verbinden, dass sich beide Rezeptionsformen ergänzen und gegenseitig befruchten, um das Interesse und die Fähigkeiten der Schüler auf unterschiedlichen Verarbeitungsniveaus ständig zu erweitern. (Kirchhoff 2009: 119)

[An imperative prerequisite of successful literacy education is to combine extensive with intensive reading in a way that both reading approaches complement each other and cross-fertilize so that the interest and skills of the students constantly evolve on different levels.]

Hedge (1985: 33) promotes the fact that fluent reading is mainly built upon intensive practice beforehand. She refers to such practice as building vocabulary and doing a variety of comprehension work. The author supports an argument made by Wilkins in 1972 by saying that ER promotes vocabulary learning in a naturalistic way. She even claims that "a student can *best* come to understand which words are appropriate in which contexts" through ER (Hedge 1985: 23; my emphasis). Nation (2009: 54) agrees with the fact that ER is a main contributor to the development of vocabulary proficiency. Although he remarks that the goal of ER – reading for pleasure – should not be neglected, teachers can create activities which support more deliberate and less incidental vocabulary learning.

2.2. ER in EFL settings: A review of earlier studies

As mentioned in the preceding section, various research on extensive reading and its effects on foreign language development has already been collected in the last decades. Al-Nafisah (2015: 106) and Kirchhoff (2009: 106) report on several studies that all conclude that ER positively impacts foreign language learning. Improvement was specifically visible in reading skills in reading comprehensions (c.f. Elley & Mangubhai 1983; Day & Bamford 1998; Leather & Uden 2021: 101) as well as in a growth in vocabulary knowledge (c.f. Nagy & Herman 1987, cited in Al-Nafisah 2015: 100). Nevertheless, research also provides contradicting results claiming that there is no special relation between ER and language improvement or reading performance (c.f. Lai 1993; Robb & Susser 1989, cited in Al-Nafisah 2015: 100). Moreover, it is argued that ER has not yet been integrated sufficiently into teaching in EFL contexts (Nuttall 1996, cited in Iwata 2020: n.p.). Brown (2008: 239) summarizes that language improvement through reading extensively happens but that it takes a long period of time. Similarly, Leather and Uden (2021: 106) also highlight that these proficiency gains can only remain through an engagement with reading over a long time span and on a regular basis. It is thus of paramount importance to further investigate literature on this under-researched relationship between ER and foreign language development. Therefore, several studies about ER projects will subsequently be reviewed in order to find more evidence about a relationship between ER and an improvement in reading competence as well as an increase in motivation. In total, five different studies on extensive reading are therefore described and discussed below.

To begin with, Kirchhoff (2009) conducted an ER project in a European context with lower secondary students in order to investigate whether extensive reading improves reading competence and has an impact on motivation. In her article, Kirchhoff describes a three-month long ER project with an actual extensive reading time of eight weeks which she conducted in a lower secondary school in Bavaria with a first grade of EFL learners (Kirchhoff 2009: 105). Hence, their level of English was A1 with reference to the curriculum of Bavarian lower secondary AHS (ISB 2004: Englisch (1. Fremdsprache)). The idea for her project stems from the miserable results German students achieved in the PISA study in reading in 2000 (Kirchhoff 2009: 106). In her experiment, Kirchhoff therefore elaborated on the impact of extensive reading on first-year EFL learners' reading competence, coming to the conclusion that reading from the beginning of learning a foreign language and onwards is essentially important for the development of reading competence in the L2. However, she also notes that

it can be very difficult for those learners who are not very good at reading in their L1, which is why she suggests intensive guidance by the teachers (Kirchhoff 2009: 114). The researcher also tried to implement Day and Bamford's (1998) above-mentioned principles of extensive reading in her project. She even added an incentive to the eighth principle "reading is its own reward" by announcing that the best three students would receive a prize. This incentive can therefore be regarded as extrinsic motivation complementing the already existing intrinsic motivation of the project.

The author agrees with Day and Bamford (1998) that the reading material should be language appropriate in order to evoke a sense of achievement within the students, which is why Kirchhoff also used graded readers for her project (Kirchhoff 2009: 107). The students were allowed to choose the reading material themselves, as the author believes that this mostly correlates with the out-of-class reading experience. Concerning the choice of reading material, Kirchhoff relied on four different criteria: the level of difficulty, the variety of genres and topics, supplementary material for the teacher which may serve for testing purposes and, Lastly, an appealing book cover to raise the students' awareness and interest (Kirchhoff 2009: 111). The author presented her reading project with the aid of a timeline in a neatly arranged grid (Kirchhoff 2009: 112). The task was to read four graded readers, to do activities concerning the content as well as the language and the students themselves were responsible for borrowing the books from the *Oxford Bookworms Library*. Before actually starting the ER phase, the researcher informed the parents as well as the students about the project, its organization and main aims. Then, the students were provided with information about the procedure and what should be achieved. However, what differentiates Kirchhoff's project from the present study is that the Bavarian students did not only have their regular English lessons but they also enjoyed so-called "Intensivierungsstunden". These lessons were implemented in Bavarian eight-year AHS settings in order to intensify already learnt material. Consequently, these lessons perfectly suited to Kirchhoff's ER project because her learners were challenged to read outside of class most of the time but they were allowed to use the available "Intensivierungsstunden" for reading in school if they wanted to (Kirchhoff 2009: 114). A benefit of using these lessons was that the students could then rely on the teacher's guidance, which is why she specifically advised low-proficiency students to actively use those lessons (Kirchhoff 2009: 118).

Even though there were activities concerning the content of the books, no real reading tests pre- or post-intervention were included in Kirchhoff's study. On the one hand, having no reading tests might increase the students' motivation and foster their interest; however, on the other hand, as such tests were purposefully and successfully included in other studies (c.f. Ateek 2021, Elley & Mangubhai 1983), it seems useful to do reading comprehensions pre- and post-intervention which are not related to the books at all, since such reading comprehensions can be helpful in investigating if language improvement has taken place. The focus of Kirchhoff's study was to investigate the level of language improvement and ER's impact on it. With regards to the motivational level, Kirchhoff provided the students with one questionnaire post-intervention where she asked the students questions about the reading project. Two questions asked if the students liked the reading project and if they wanted to do it again. The results show that, generally, the learners liked the project, nobody disliked it and 50% even claimed that they especially liked it. Moreover, none of the students refused to have another reading project the following year and more than 90% definitely wanted to have one (Kirchhoff 2009: 116). The questionnaire also included open questions asking about the students' perceptions of their learning outcome due to the project. The students mentioned several different areas of perceived improvement like grammar, vocabulary or spelling; nonetheless, they didn't view reading as part of one of the most improved areas. Furthermore, Kirchhoff asked the follow-up open question why the learners liked the project. The answers to that question were related to these areas: improvement of language knowledge, graded readers as supporter for language development, topics of the readers, the variety of teaching method as well as differentiation in language level (Kirchhoff 2009: 117). While none of the students reported an improvement in reading performance, the majority of the answers reported on an increase in motivation, which was the second aim of the project. Positively connotated words dominated in the answers: "verbessert, besser, gut gefallen, gut lernt, richtiges Englisch, spannend, interessant, sehr gut, Spaß, lustig, lockerer [improved, better, liked, learnt well, correct English, exciting, interesting, very good, fun, funny, more casual]" (Kirchhoff 2009: 117-118). As opposed to the current ER project, Kirchhoff's students neither complained about the idea of the project itself, nor about the workload. In fact, it turned out that the repeaters who struggled with English in their preceding year and one student with dyslexia were the ones who read the most. The author thereby claims that the prize mentioned at the beginning of the project evoked competitiveness among the students. Yet,

it is obvious from the results of the reading charts that the students at lower proficiency levels did not invest as much time and effort into the project as the better ones. Thereby, it is essentially important to note that the author herself claims that her study is not representative (Kirchhoff 2009: 119) due to the limited number of participants as well as the limited time frame. She elaborates on the positive effects of her reading project as factors for developing reading habits and interests as well as a condition for familiarizing the students with English books, which is a crucial criterion embedded in the EFL curriculum in terms of cultural knowledge (BMBWF 2023a: 46; ISB 2004: Englisch (1. Fremdsprache)). Nevertheless, the prerequisites for achieving these positive effects are reading skills in the L1 and the ability to transfer them to English, whereby Kirchhoff references to the connection and balancing of intensive and extensive reading approaches in the EFL lessons, which lies within the responsibility of the teacher. The researcher summarizes the benefits of extensive reading, as investigated in her study, as the following: possibilities for individualization and differentiation are provided; the students learn how to organize themselves; particular interests and talents can emerge and develop; the literary canon in EFL is extended; motivation for reading is increased and reading skills are developed (Kirchhoff 2009: 119). To conclude, the outcomes of Kirchhoff's study show that ER did not only have a positive influence on the students' attitude to reading in that they display an increase in motivation as investigated by the questionnaire, but that their language skills as well as their organizational skills improved as well.

A study from Sweden serves as the basis for the investigation into the relation between reading and motivation (Tegmark, Alatalo, Vinterek & Winberg 2022). In their study, Tegmark et al. (2022: 100) focus on how Swedish middle schoolers as well as students in lower secondary perceive themselves as readers – regardless of the language and topic – and what they think of the reading practices of their schools in general. The study consisted of interviews and one large-scale survey measuring the total amount of 3,308 students' reading time at school and how it relates to motivation. Before launching the project, the researchers provided the school authorities, the responsible municipalities as well as the students and their legal guardians with an informed consent form. After exploring the answers to the survey, 259 students were purposefully selected to take part in follow-up interviews, which were conducted in 2018. The selection of interviewees included an equal number of students who recorded high amounts of reading time on the one hand, and those who reported on

little reading time on the other hand. For the analysis and interpretation of their large-scale survey and structured interviews, the researchers mainly drew on the Self-Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2000); with that knowledge, the commonly-known terms extrinsic and intrinsic motivation were replaced by *controlled* and *autonomous* (or self-determined) motivation (Tegmark et al. 2022: 102). According to Ryan and Deci, this replacement was made since the new terms offer a more nuanced and precise differentiation on the continuum of motivation depending on a special focus of “the perceived locus of causality and level of autonomy of human behaviour” (Tegmark et al. 2022: 102). Ryan and Deci (2000: 76) argue for the importance of appropriate social contexts in order to provide a healthy environment to increase motivation.

The idea behind Tegmark et al.’s (2022) investigation evolved partly from the negatively developing attitudes to reading in Western societies in general, also in Sweden, which highlight “the need for schools to find new ways of engaging students in reading practices” (Tegmark et al. 2022: 101). In relation to ER practices in EFL school settings, the researchers also criticized that there is too much controlled instead of autonomous motivation. Furthermore, a lack of time dedicated to reading, too few interesting reading materials as well as the absence of free choice in these materials on the part of the students are named as reasons for the gradually decreasing level in school reading. In fact, Tegmark et al. (2022: 101) recently investigated that primary and lower-secondary students in Sweden only read a maximum of one page of running text on a regular school day, which is an approach definitely contradicting ER. In order to counteract the decreasing interest in reading in general as well as in ER at school, Tegmark and his colleagues (2022) conducted a study focusing on the motivational factors for reading, according to the learners’ perceptions. As proposed by the literature, learners’ perceptions about their reading skills mostly depend on reading performance and achievement (Tegmark et al. 2022: 103). The main outcomes of the investigation were that students want to read but that the motivation behind this desire is usually controlled, rather than autonomous, and that this motivation can differ due to text type and time allocated to reading during class time, but also with regards to age and gender (Tegmark et al. 2022: 101, 104). To be more precise, the older the children become, the less the autonomous motivation behind reading as observed in their study (Tegmark et al. 2022: 105). This shift towards controlled motivation already appears after two or three years of EFL exposure. According to the Swedish students, their motivation at the end of lower secondary

decreased to a very low level (Tegmark et al. 2022: 105). What also becomes visible is the positive correlation between intrinsic motivation and the degree of text comprehension (Tegmark et al. 2022: 105), which represents a benefit of extensive reading. Yet, it needs to be noted that autonomous motivation dominates more in reading as a leisure activity, whereas the degree of this motivation decreases when it comes to school-related reading and it is substituted by controlled motivation. To illustrate this argument with figures, the majority of the students in Tegmark et al.'s study (60% in grade 6 and 91% in grade 9) reported on controlled motivation when asked about the motivation behind their school-related reading (Tegmark et al. 2022: 110). When talking about controlled motivation, the students either have the teacher's educational assignment or an aspired improvement in grades in their minds. However, when the students were asked about how to become a good reader, one of the main answers was to read more, which contradicts their actual reading intentions as this answer indicates that the students seem to be aware of the fact that reading (extensively) is indeed a main contributor to language development and reading proficiency, as proven in other investigations (c.f. Al-Nafisah 2015, Ateek 2021, Elley & Mangubhai 1983). The students also provided possible solutions to the problem of lacking reading interest: having interesting reading material at their disposal, being provided with more time as well as with the teacher's guidance (Tegmark et al. 2022: 111). Tegmark et al. (2022: 114) describe this finding as the *dormant potential* of the students' actual interest in reading more, which needs to be initiated by the teacher, according to the learners. Brown (2008: 242) hereby suggests that students could get a "taste of extensive reading" from schoolbooks, which should optimally either include tips for graded readers fitting to the different unit topics, or they should actually integrate "short excerpts from the readers" to awake their dormant ER potential.

Potential differences to the present study are that Tegmark et al.'s (2022) intention was to identify motivational factors for reading in Swedish school-related contexts in general. Thus, their study neither investigated motivation in relation to ER nor English as a foreign language. Consequently, relating the above-mentioned findings to the present ER project remains questionable as ER and EFL are the main focus of this study. However, what might be helpful criteria for the present study are the findings that male and female students perceive themselves differently in terms of reading and also that a potential difference can occur due to increasing age (Tegmark et al. 2022: 108). In fact, the majority of the participants who said they wanted to be good readers and who liked reading in general were girls. This outcome

could predict that the results of the current questionnaires on reading habits could display significant differences between the two sexes. Furthermore, reading as a hobby could also decrease in popularity with increasing age as suggested by the researchers. Consequently, a possible outcome of the study could be that the 1d class is more engaged with and in favor of reading than the 2d and the 3b classes. To conclude, Tegmark et al.'s (2022) study provides evidence that extensive reading has positive impacts on Swedish lower secondary students' autonomous motivation for school-related reading if they are allowed to choose their reading material themselves.

In 2021, Ateek investigated the effects of ER on ten Jordanian EFL learners aged between 21 and 27 years at a lower-intermediate language proficiency level, coming to the conclusion that engaging with this reading approach indeed improves their EFL reading skills; especially fluency and vocabulary knowledge improved measurably (Ateek 2021: 109). Although various studies concerning this matter already exist, Ateek (2021: 110) identifies it as a necessity to complement existing data with studies on ER which specifically focus on the Arab context. He reasons this perception with the fact that the Arab world commonly lacks a reading culture in the L1. Hence, the learners show reading competences below average, which is why he aspires to investigate extensive reading and its presumable positive impact on the students' language proficiency in order to build up a reading culture in the Arab world.

His three-month long action research project consisted of three one-and-a-half-hour group sessions per week with the aim to investigate an increase in language proficiency among the participating Jordanian Arabic EFL learners. Before initiating the project, the students were required to sign a consent form. The ten participants who already had twelve years of EFL learning experience were not exposed to the target language during the ER program apart from the project itself (Ateek 2021: 114). As also suggested by Brown (2008: 241), the tasks for the learners were to read the self-selected graded readers, to do the ER activities in and outside of class and to take the assessment tests with regards to reading fluency and vocabulary knowledge pre-, while- and post-intervention. In addition to these tasks, the students were also asked to keep diaries in which they should journal their experiences and feelings during the project. The participants were required to read at least five books per week, which makes a total of about 60 books for the whole project. As far as the ER activities are concerned, they included book reports and vocabulary quizzes. Before and after the project, the researcher collected additional data about the students' perceptions of extensive

reading through semi-structured open-ended interviews in Arabic that lasted about 15 minutes each (Ateek 2021: 118). The first interviews focused more on ER in general, whereas the second round concentrated more on the participants' personal experience during the project. The reading fluency tests as well as the vocabulary tests were identical in the pre- and post-test setting and were analyzed with the aid of paired t-tests in SPSS. It can be concluded from the two sets of data that reading extensively positively affected the students' reading fluency and contributed to vocabulary growth (Ateek 2021: 123). In the interviews and diary entries, the students supported the results of this quantitative data by reporting about improved reading fluency as well as an increase in vocabulary knowledge. However, there are also delimitations to Ateek's study: Since the study investigated students at a language center who already had an average EFL exposure of twelve years (Ateek 2021: 6), this outcome cannot be taken for granted in a typical school setting of learners with no or little language knowledge. Another potential drawback concerns the lack of a control group, which could indicate that the results of the participants could be due to regular proficiency gains that happen through language exposure and not specifically because of the ER project. The author himself mentions a lack of a control group as well as the limited number of participants as a potential restriction of the study (Ateek 2021: 127). Furthermore, no follow-up study was conducted after the project in order to investigate whether the positive effects on language proficiency are indeed of long-term nature.

The main outcome of the study, however, highlights the fact that reading self-selected books that are language appropriate and comprehensible for adult Jordanian EFL learners fosters motivation and promotes language development in terms of reading fluency and vocabulary growth.

Similar to the study by Ateek, Al-Nafisah (2015: 98) conducted one in 2013 and 2014 in Saudi Arabia with EFL university students coming to comparable positive results concerning the relation between ER and reading performance in EFL. He conducted a three-month long extensive reading program that was split into four units and included 36 English lessons in total. After this ER phase, he identified that the experimental group outperformed the control group in terms of their reading comprehension skills. Those results were identified with the aid of a multiple choice test that had previously been developed by the researcher and was given to the students pre- and post-intervention. The data was analyzed with SPSS where t-tests were used to investigate significant changes. The outperformance of the experimental

group in the MC test indicates that the students who participated in the extensive reading project achieved better results in the reading comprehensions in the post-test than their colleagues from the control group. Al-Nafisah (2015: 98) consequently concludes that extensive reading positively impacted the experimental group's reading performance; and he supposes that, due to various other studies with similar results, this finding is generalizable (Al-Nafisah 2015: 106). Nevertheless, he expresses the concern that the positive results could also partly depend on the ER program's novelty, which could have led the students to more engagement (2015: 106). However, Elley and Mangubhai (1983: 65) state that such an enthusiasm due to novelty typically vanishes within weeks and could also depend on an actual interest in the books themselves, which devalues Al-Nafisah's argument. In total, the researcher perceives his project to have had extremely positive effects on the students. Not only did his ER project contribute to an L2 proficiency gain, but it also helped the learners in this setting to develop reading attitudes through a constant exposure to different text types and genres, it enabled them to make use of their reading strategies and also boosted their motivation towards reading (Al-Nafisah 2015: 106).

In a study about Fijian and Indian nine- to eleven-year-old students conducted in the 1980s, Elley and Mangubhai (1983) found out that extensive reading indeed leads to a proficiency gain; however, such progress depends on time and effort. In their extensive reading program, the researchers divided the participating classes into three groups with different tasks and methods: Shared Book, Silent Reading and the Control group (Elley & Mangubhai 1983: 58f). In the Shared Book method the teacher shares information about a book with the class, which should encourage them to engage in content-based discussions and, ultimately, motivate them to read on their own. The Silent Reading approach, on the other hand, requires the students to engage in reading on their own and individually. Both of these approaches involve the participants reading for about half an hour each day. The participants in the Control group had to follow their normal English curriculum, which certainly also included reading practice. One of the main aims of Elley and Mangubhai's (1983: 57) study was to demonstrate that being exposed to a large number of books has an impact on foreign language proficiency. The researchers called this goal the "Book Flood hypothesis", in which they compared the Shared Book and the Silent Reading groups to the Control group. As proposed by the traditional pre-test post-test design (Little et al. 2020: 175), the students in this study had to take a pre-test in order to measure their reading performances as well as

some post-tests to see if changes happened due to the ER project. Thanks to the 30 minutes that were dedicated to reading in English every school day over the course of eight months, the participants in the Shared Book and Silent Reading groups were able to show remarkable improvement concerning their foreign language competence. Elley and Mangubhai (1983: 61) concluded that the Book Flood groups outperformed the control group in terms of the reading performance in that they acquired reading skills of 15 months within eight, which is more than twice as fast as the usual acquisition process. The Book Flood group also performed significantly better in terms of language structures as well as in the field of vocabulary growth. What is extremely valuable about Elley and Mangubhai's study is that they also conducted a follow-up study one year after the actual project in order to examine whether long-term effects of ER on language proficiency and reading competence are measurable (Elley & Mangubhai 1983: 63-64). In fact, similar results were identified in the follow-up study: The Book Flood group again showed significantly better results than the control group. The Silent Reading group, however, was slightly surpassed by the Shared Book group. The authors therefore proposed that reading extensively is not only a relaxing part of class time, but that it also has to be viewed as educationally beneficial since it positively impacts language proficiency (Elley & Mangubhai 1983: 66). Nevertheless, their project also bears drawbacks: Such an extensive reading program as conducted by Elley and Mangubhai cannot be integrated into the daily EFL learning settings at Austrian schools. To further elaborate on this argument, it is neither the case that the English lessons take place every school day nor is there time to dedicate 30 minutes to extensive reading, as this would mean that more than half of the regular English lesson would be about reading. The teacher has a certain educational assignment and needs to meet the requirements of the curriculum (BMBWF 2023a) and the Companion Volume (2018). Extensive reading certainly is part of the EFL teaching mission (Companion Volume 2018: 58), however, theoretically, it only makes up a small part, which is why there is typically not enough time for putting a lot of time and effort into it, as suggested by Elley and Mangubhai. However, as already investigated in section 2.1., ER should be viewed as a supporting constituent of the language course; it is necessary that the normal lessons with IR tasks are complemented with ER phases and vice versa (Nation 2009: 54). The results of Elley and Mangubhai's study from 1981 show that reading individually on a frequent basis indeed not only leads to a gain in language proficiency but also to an improvement in reading competence. In addition to that, the study suggests that the little

time in English lessons available at Austrian lower secondary schools has to be complemented with reading time spent at home in the students' free time in order to show long-term effects.

2.3. The usefulness of graded readers in the EFL classroom

As already stated in the above sections, it is highly recommended for beginner EFL learners to use graded readers when reading in the foreign language. The benefits of including graded readers in the EFL classroom will be discussed below.

An extremely valuable aspect of graded readers is that elementary and intermediate learners of English might develop independence and build confidence in reading them extensively and individually (Hedge 1985: 34). Kirchhoff supports this argument by saying that suitable reading material can indeed provoke an increase in self-confidence in the learners' language competences (Kirchhoff 2009: 108) as it is specifically targeted at the language level of the readers. Although some teachers and researchers might criticize graded readers because of a lack of authenticity due to their simplification, Nation proves that reading graded readers in EFL contexts bears convincing advantages (Nation 2009: 57). Hedge (1985: 22) suggests integrating graded readers in EFL learning due to four major reasons. Reading graded readers helps to (1) develop knowledge of the language as well as (2) knowledge of language use. Furthermore, it helps to (3) develop reading skills and strategies and (4) positive attitudes to reading.

These four advantages will now be explained in more detail. Developing knowledge of the language concerns vocabulary, structures and textual organization, which are all essential components of language learning in general. First and foremost, reading extensively promotes vocabulary learning through gradually gaining more and more control of appropriate vocabulary (Hedge 1985: 23). Since graded readers are intentionally created for foreign language learners who only possess a limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, they mostly consist of high frequency words and simple language structures (Nation 2009: 57). Nation points out that low frequency words which are tendentially unfamiliar ones for the learners only make up about two percent of such a book (Nation 2009: 57). By repetitively encountering such low-frequency vocabulary in different textual structures and contexts, students grasp a deeper understanding of the meaning(s) of those words (Hedge 1985: 23). Elley and Mangubhai (1983: 66), however, support the idea that, "[c]hildren can learn new structures from relatively uncontrolled materials, provided there is the support of cues from pictures, absorbing context and teacher guidance". It becomes clear from the context that the

authors do not refer to graded readers by using the terms “uncontrolled material”. They follow the idea that students learn to read by reading. The ER foundation (2023) reinforces this fact by stating that “[i]t is through repeated exposure to the vocabulary and syntax of the target language that the learner can eventually internalize how the words of the language are actually used”.

In terms of structural knowledge, Hedge (1985: 24) points to the fact that graded readers make use of simplified language, which means that they do not promote a fully natural language learning process. This is why she proposes that it is up to the teacher whether the approach of ER is already introduced at a lower proficiency level with graded readers that simplify language or whether it is a better idea to wait until the students possess proper language knowledge and can master a higher number of structures (Hedge 1985: 24).

Developing knowledge of language use is about how the grammar and vocabulary are actually used in written documents in order to express an idea, opinions and information (Hedge 1985: 27). According to Hedge (1985: 27), L2 learners are aware of the discrepancy between oral and written English but they first need to learn to understand it through developing reading strategies. Reading extensively provides the students with opportunities to get to know phrases and structures in different contexts and with different functions by simultaneously reinforcing their existing structural and vocabulary knowledge (Hedge 1985: 31).

Developing reading skills and strategies is of utmost importance for being able to read authentic material (fluently). Nation (1984: 7) mentions several reading strategies, like previewing, setting a purpose or guessing words from context. Hedge (1985: 32). views working with semantic clues, chunking words together, capturing the meaning by reading between the lines and identifying the main points and thereby getting access to the meaning of whole paragraphs as important reading strategies. These reception strategies are also mentioned in the CEFR Companion Volume (2018: 59). However, EFL students first need to develop such strategies in order to apply them properly in reading in the L2. While they already make use of such strategies when reading in the L1, the students still need to transfer that pool of strategies to the L2. To illustrate this point of view, vocabulary acquisition in an L1 can happen incidentally through context guessing, which is an essential reading strategy for L2 reading as well (Elley & Mangubhai 1983: 55). Through intensive reading practice, the

teacher helps the students exactly in taking those familiar strategies from the L1 and putting them to use in the L2.

The fourth reason, developing attitudes to reading, not only represents an essential aspect of (foreign) language learning at school, but it is simultaneously also crucial for students' future personal lives (Hedge 1985: 35). On the one hand, an educational goal of EFL is to teach students how to contrive meaning and information from books, which is allegedly achieved through intensive reading tasks in school. The teaching in turn contributes to being able to apply these reading skills later in life, for example when the students start studying or enter the job market. On the other hand, and what is equally important, the students also read for pleasure and learn to develop their own reading habits, which was one of the main driving forces of the current reading project. These days, it seems as if books have lost the battle to YouTube, Instagram and TikTok among the generation of the young adults. Therefore, through the current ER project, the author wanted to inspire the students to read books and to discover the benefits of reading for themselves, which is an aspect manifested in research question 1.

2.4. Motivation in connection with ER in EFL

To begin this section, it is necessary to define the term motivation and to relate it to learning, especially to foreign language learning. There are two different types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Alderson (1984: 88) explains the terms like this: These two types of motivation cause different kinds of learning experiences. While students driven by extrinsic motivation only study to achieve good results, to fulfil certain requirements or to please a teacher, to name some reasons, intrinsically motivated students enjoy the act of learning as they are interested in the content, not so much in the outcome (Alderson 1984: 88). As already outlined in section 2.2, Ryan and Deci (2000, cited in Tegmark et al. 2022: 102), however, prefer the terms "autonomous" and "controlled" motivation since these allow for more differentiation and, consequently, for more precise meanings. In other words, while some students do tasks because they are interested in the topic and autonomously decide to do it, others just do them to impress the teacher and fulfill the requirements demanded from school that are controlled.

Motivation and enjoyment are main contributors to the students' performances in reading comprehensions. These findings stem from an investigation by Guthrie and other researchers (2004: 405), which had the main aim of determining whether "instructional

practices that combine motivation and cognitive support would increase reading comprehension as well as motivational and cognitive aspects of reading engagement” at school. In other words, they aspired to identify if a relationship between motivation and cognitive support by the teacher leads to increasing reading engagement and, ultimately, to a growth in reading competence. According to research, motivated students read more intensely as well as larger amounts and thereby gain a deeper understanding of the content (Guthrie et al. 2004: 403). The frequent and voluntary engagement in reading thereby fosters IR skills.

The researchers designed a new teaching approach called “Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI)” in order to provide teachers with instructional practices that can be useful for successful student motivation (Guthrie et al. 2004: 403). Their study was conducted with third-grade students at four different schools from a mid-Atlantic state. Eight classes were instructed following the CORI approach and eleven were taught with Strategy instruction (SI). As previously mentioned, the CORI approach pursues the idea that “reading comprehension is facilitated by reading engagement” and that the teacher needs to provide the students with cognitive comprehension strategies and motivational support so that the students can achieve that goal (Guthrie et al. 2004: 406). On the contrary, participants in SI classes were encouraged to work individually in order to increase their self-efficacy and no specific motivational support was provided.

Before the project was launched, the parents gave their informed consent. While CORI students were exposed to 90 minutes of teaching on a daily basis over the course of twelve weeks, SI students experienced 13 weeks of traditional instruction. Concerning motivational support, the teacher specifically supported the CORI students with the aid of five different practices: (1) using content goals for reading instruction, (2) affording choices and control to students, (3) providing hands-on activities, (4) using interesting texts for instruction, and (5) organizing collaboration for learning from text.

The second and fourth practice often go hand in hand with each other, since students would most probably only select texts which they find interesting, provided that they are given this choice. Research supports this argument by finding that learners tend to practice cognitive reading strategies like summarizing more effectively when they read self-selected material (Guthrie et al. 2004: 416). In fact, the readers are able to, “process the material more deeply, gain richer conceptual understandings, and engage more fully with the text” if they

show interest in the book. Hedge (1985: 39) agrees with that statement by saying that it is highly probable that the students who find their reading material interesting tend to understand it better than the ones who show no interest at all in the content of their texts. Consequently, Hedge (1985: 39) advises teachers against discouraging students from reading books which are more difficult than their actual language proficiency level if they show no interest in the content. She thus argues that free choice should be the most important factor when picking a text, followed by an accurate language level. Nation (2009: 53) elaborates on this argument by stating that an extensive reading program can only be successful if the students show interest in the books. Although it is necessary to keep in mind that the teacher's taste in books might not complement that of the students, teachers should still make recommendations and guide their students towards appropriate reading material. If the students have the possibility to choose for themselves, even if all of the books seem uninteresting, they would still be able to find the most interesting and suitable one according to their personal taste. Because of that free choice, the students can act autonomously, which further sparks autonomous motivation.

Point 5, collaboration, is another essential CORI practice. It is advised to use collaborative activities in class as these tend to encourage the students to use more complex comprehension strategies. Such strategies are used more frequently in collaborative settings as they provide a context where the students can share questions and work together on possible solutions (Guthrie et al. 2004: 407).

The instruments used in the study are numerous; several reading comprehensions as well as a questionnaire on reading motivation are the most relevant ones for this study. To gain an overview of possible changes that emerged specifically due to the project, the students were measured pre- and post-intervention. The questionnaire was designed in a Likert-scale format. Sample statements of the questionnaire include "I am a good reader" or "I enjoy a long involved story or book"; The answer possibilities varied from "very different to me" to "a lot like me" (Guthrie et al. 2004: 409). One of the main outcomes of their study is that CORI instructed students experienced a higher degree of motivation, which was also noticed by their teachers. Moreover, they were able to efficiently utilize background knowledge while reading.

Guthrie et al. (2004: 415) describe CORI students as highly motivated strategic readers by proving that explicitly combining motivational practices with strategic teacher instruction

raises reading comprehension skills. The study has therefore shown that motivating and supporting the students while reading plays a crucial role in reading comprehension and self-depiction. Thus, it is highly advisable to integrate CORI related practices into the current project in order to increase the students' motivational level, which ultimately helps them to understand the reading material better. An integration in the current project means that the instructions are easily comprehensible, that the teacher is always available for support and that collaborative activities are included. Furthermore, CORI principles two and four are integrated since the students in the current ER project will be allowed to self-select their readers from the school library.

In his book *Engaging adolescents in reading*, where the focus is on school-related reading in general, Guthrie (2008) again highlights the most essential criteria for motivating students to read: meaning, content, control and choice, collaboration, social-encounters and self-efficacy as well as relevance and interest. It is claimed that the students who are driven by intrinsic motivation perform better than the ones who read for external reasons only. Extrinsically motivated students are depicted as "struggling readers" (Guthrie 2008: 115). Having no interest in the act of reading or in a book's content certainly hinders the comprehension process. It can thus be concluded that "[r]eading engagement and reading achievement interact in a spiral" (Guthrie 2008: 3). Guthrie (2008: 5) claims that the students' motivation partly depends on the teachers and the classroom atmosphere. If the students perceive the teacher's investment in designing a setting for engaged reading, it is highly probable that the students also show investment through autonomous motivation (Guthrie 2008: 7). In reality, however, EFL teachers tend to create reading settings in order to prepare the students for upcoming exams, which is the exact opposite and probably triggers controlled motivation. However, what needs to be achieved is autonomous motivation by giving the students a voice. Similar to other researchers, Guthrie (2008: 7) considers it highly efficient to enable the students to control their reading as well. This form of control signifies the choice of interesting reading material. By letting the students pick their reading material themselves, extrinsically motivated students can also find interesting content (Guthrie 2008: 13). However, not only the ability to select the books is important but also the fact that this material is relevant (Guthrie 2008: 11). For instance, if the selection of books only consists of old English literature which has probably no relation to the students' personal interest, their motivation will most probably vanish. In fact, the students require reading material which they can relate

to their lives and where they can apply their knowledge and experience in order to develop autonomous motivation.

Another aspect sparking autonomous motivation is social interaction and collaboration (Guthrie 2008: 8). First, the students view a good teacher-student relationship as valuable. It is claimed that students are more motivated if they perceive their teacher as a person who they can rely on and who supports them when they need help (Guthrie 2008: 8). Additionally, reading inside the classroom means reading with classmates or preferably with friends. Being able to exchange opinions and share specific questions with each other seems to improve reading skills (Guthrie 2008: 9). On the website “Reading Rockets”, McRae and Guthrie (2023) define a shared reading setting as a social experience where the students can feel “a sense of belonging within the classroom community”. In that way, if the students can share the experience of individual reading with their classmates, this experience can also enhance motivation. The students are allowed to sit next to whoever they like and wherever they want to, which develops an autonomous and social classroom atmosphere.

Self-confidence is an equally important criterion for building autonomous motivation within the students. If they read texts which are far above their language level and they are thus not capable of understanding enough of the text, this discrepancy certainly hinders them from becoming self-confident readers, unless they are extremely motivated. Consequently, their motivation decreases. Therefore, language-level appropriate reading material plays a crucial role in building self-confident students who read autonomously. Guthrie (2008: 10) advocates for “high-interest, low-difficulty books”, which again directly points at graded readers. When all of the above-mentioned aspects are implemented, it is highly probable that the students find autonomous motivation for reading which subsequently evokes “self-initiated reading behaviors” (Guthrie 2008: 14).

2.5. Insights into the Companion Volume (2018)

The CEFR (2001) as well as its updated version the Companion Volume, released in 2018, build the foundation of the competence model for teaching foreign languages from lower secondary onwards (BMBWF 2024a: 53). The CEFR, as highlighted by its name, is targeted at and utilized by European schools, teachers and students. For this thesis, the Companion Volume version of 2018 was consulted, as it is the extended and updated version of the one from 2001. The name CEFR is an abbreviation commonly used in foreign language teaching which stands for “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning,

Teaching, Assessment” (CEFR 2001). The latest version added the words “Companion Volume with new descriptors” to the title (Companion Volume 2018).

The framework can be used by teachers as “[...] a tool to assist the planning of curricula, courses and examinations by working backwards from what the users/learners need to be able to do in the language” (Companion Volume 2018: 28). Its main aims are to facilitate the quality in language education as well as to contribute to the development of students who are open-minded and plurilingual (Companion Volume 2018: 27). It aspires to focus on the students’ needs combined with authentic input and consists of the widely-known *can do* descriptors for each of the competences on the different learning levels. These competence descriptors highlight in a positive way what the students should already be capable of at a certain reference level and in a specific competence area, instead of pointing at the deficits and what still needs to be learnt.

The most important descriptions for the current thesis are the ones about reading; especially those focusing on “reading as a leisure activity” (Companion Volume 2018: 60-65). This aspect of reading is particularly interesting for the current project, as one of the main goals of the study is to promote reading and to motivate the students to read in out-of-class settings. However, the Companion Volume (2018: 104) also refers to literature in the competence “mediation” since the students should be able to respond to literature in different ways. Since the descriptors for the different reading areas can easily be read up in the Companion Volume (2018: 60-65), only the information about “reading as a leisure activity” was selected and portrayed in Table 1.

Reference level	Description (Companion Volume 2018: 65)
A1	“Can understand short, illustrated narratives about everyday activities that are written in simple words.” “Can understand in outline short texts in illustrated stories, provided that the images help him/her to guess a lot of the content.”
A2	“Can understand enough to read short, simple stories and comic strips involving familiar, concrete situations written in high frequency everyday language.” “Can understand the main points made in short magazine reports or guide entries that deal with concrete everyday topics (e.g. hobbies, sports, leisure activities, animals).” “Can understand short narratives and descriptions of someone’s life that are written in simple words.” “Can understand what is happening in a photo story (e.g. in a lifestyle magazine) and form an impression of what the characters are like.”

	"Can understand much of the information provided in a short description of a person (e.g. a celebrity)." "Can understand the main point of a short article reporting an event that follows a predictable pattern (e.g. the Oscars), provided it is clearly written in simple language."
B1	"Can read newspaper / magazine accounts of films, books, concerts etc. written for a wider audience and understand the main points." "Can understand simple poems and song lyrics written in straightforward language and style." "Can understand the description of places, events, explicitly expressed feelings and perspectives in narratives, guides and magazine articles that are written in high frequency, everyday language." "Can understand a travel diary mainly describing the events of a journey and the experiences and discoveries the person made." "Can follow the plot of stories, simple novels and comics with a clear linear storyline and high frequency everyday language, given regular use of a dictionary."

Table 1: "Can do" descriptors of "reading as a leisure activity" (Companion Volume 2018: 60-65)

On reference level A1, the students can read and understand short illustrated texts with the aid of pictures which facilitate guessing words from the content. Graded readers, for instance, at this language level include many pictures and also provide translations for some low-frequency words. For level A2, illustrations are not of huge importance anymore and the learners are already able to understand the main points in short magazine reports and articles as well as short stories, given that the topic is familiar. Yet, the usage of simple and everyday language in written documents is still necessary for proper comprehension. The students on level B1 are already able to follow entire story, novel or comic plots and can understand simple poems and song lyrics. Nonetheless, the Companion Volume (2018: 65) still recommends narratives with "high-frequency, everyday language". Considering all of these descriptions, it goes without saying that the level of comprehension of a text, regardless of the reference level, depends on appropriate reading material. While B1 (or higher) level students might already understand short novels, A1 and A2 students might only be able to understand them up to a certain and limited extent. Therefore, it is essential to use graded readers, graphic novels or cartoons in EFL settings. Since the current project used graded readers for the ER project, section 3.3 already focused and elaborated on their usefulness in EFL settings.

An aspect that needs to be criticized in relation to the Companion Volume's (2018: 60-65) descriptions for the different reading competences is the absence of extensive reading in general and as a supporter for language learning in particular. ER represents an approach to reading that provides methodological variety for EFL lessons, fosters reading competence and

supports the students in developing good reading habits. Thus, it would be highly advisable for the Companion Volume to address this approach directly and not only to state that teachers should not “stop” teaching literature (Companion Volume 2018: 27). In that way, the “quality in language education” could be addressed (Companion Volume 2018: 28) as extensive reading contributes to a holistic learning environment. Moreover, since the learners are required to actively engage in reading, ER would also address the stipulated agency in the learning process which is demanded from the students by the Companion Volume (2018: 28).

2.6. Insights into the curriculum of Austrian lower secondary middle schools (BMBWF 2023a)

The curriculum for Austrian middle schools was downloaded from the internet on August 18, 2023 (BMBWF 2023a). The latest version is from 2024, which is considered as well (BMBWF 2024a). Since the curriculum is written in German, the citations will be translated into English by the author.

The section “erste lebende Fremdsprache” elaborates on English as a school subject for the first four years of learning (BMBWF 2023a: 35). Concerning the current project focusing on the 1d, 2d and 3b, only the first three years of EFL learning are important. The curriculum proposes that the main aim of learning a foreign language is to equally develop the five competences: listening, reading, participating in discussions, speaking individually and writing, with the additional requirement of developing social competences and addressing intercultural topics (BMBWF 2024a: 47). This development happens through the acquisition of knowledge, which can be acquired with the aid of learning strategies. These learning strategies are taught by the teacher and need to be adopted and tried out by the students themselves in order to find the strategies that work best for them.

When it comes to reading, the curriculum points at simple, age-appropriate, yet also at authentic texts. Simple and age-appropriate books indicate the usage of graded readers; however, their authenticity level is not as high as the one from real fiction.

Das Erfassen von Informationen aus geschriebenen Texten bildet die Grundlage für lebenslanges Lernen. Dabei steht die Hinführung zur Lektüre von einfachen, authentischen altersadäquaten Texten im Fokus. Für das Textverständnis sind sowohl das globale Verständnis, das Verstehen von spezifischen Informationen wie auch die Fähigkeit, einfache Schlussfolgerungen aus dem Geschriebenen zu ziehen, erforderlich.

[The capture of information from written texts forms the basis for lifelong learning. The focus is on introducing the reading of simple, authentic, age-appropriate texts. For text comprehension, global understanding, the comprehension of specific information, and the ability to draw simple conclusions from the written content are required.]

Another essential criterion for successful teaching in general is differentiation (BMBWF 2024a: 6-7). It is of utmost importance to organize lessons that are methodologically varied in order to cater for the individual needs and interests of the students. Such needs and interests are, for instance, the students' different learning strategies, their learner type (audio, visual, haptic, ...), the tempo in which they process newly acquired input, their personal interests, social competences as well as their individual strengths and weaknesses (BMBWF 2023a: 37). While some students might understand a new grammar topic immediately after an oral explanation from the teacher, others probably learn in a more efficient way when watching a video. As an extensive reading project represents an open learning arrangement where the students can work independently such a project offers a valuable opportunity to cater for the students' individual interests and needs as required by the curriculum (BMBWF 2023a: 37).

Another goal of the curriculum which can be achieved through an ER project concerns the preference of using the target language in EFL lessons (BMBWF 2024a: 46). This objective is also highlighted in the Companion Volume (2018: 27) and it can be achieved as the graded readers used in the ER project are written in the target language and are specifically designed for the students' language level. Extensive reading also requires the students to work with the (reading) material individually and independently, which fosters holistic and independent learning (BMBWF 2023a: 38).

In order to cater for the thematic areas mentioned in the Companion Volume, utilizing graded readers with different topics and language levels also supports achieving this aim. Moreover, they simultaneously also promote authenticity in the EFL lessons, which is another essential component of successful foreign language learning.

The Companion Volume (2018: 37) divides foreign language learning into six different "Common Reference Levels", ranging from A1 to C2, whereby A1 is the most elementary one and C2 indicates mastery of the foreign language (BMBWF 2023a: 47). The different levels are categorized accordingly: A1-A2 are basic users of the language, B1-B2 are independent users and C1-C2 are proficient users. At a lower-secondary school level, the highest levels which can be achieved are A2 in general and B1 in specific areas, but only after the third and fourth grade (BMBWF 2023a: 50). Although providing reference levels, the Companion Volume (2018: 38) suggests referring to a language learning continuum, rather than speaking of strict categorizations. In line with this suggestion, the possibility to include sub-categories is

proposed, if required. This proposition might be very helpful when referring to the participating classes' reading skills. In order to provide an overview of the different levels and what the students should be able to know and do when reading, the descriptions of the project-relevant reference levels (A1-B1) are compared and contrasted in Table 2, which was created by the author. The levels in German were taken from the curriculum (BMBWF 2023a: 40) and are compared with those from the English version of the Companion Volume (2018: 54). Differences in the two versions were highlighted in red.

Reference Level	Curriculum (2023a)	Companion Volume (2018)
A1	Die Schülerinnen und Schüler können einzelne vertraute Namen, Wörter und ganz einfache Sätze verstehen, z. B. auf Schildern, Plakaten oder in Katalogen.	Can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required.
A2	Die Schülerinnen und Schüler können ganz kurze, einfache Texte lesen. Sie können in einfachen Alltagstexten (z. B. Anzeigen, Prospekten, Speisekarten oder Fahrplänen) konkrete, vorhersehbare Informationen auffinden. Sie können kurze, einfache persönliche Briefe verstehen.	Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language. Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary , including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.
B1	Die Schülerinnen und Schüler können Texte verstehen, in denen vor allem sehr gebräuchliche Alltags- oder Berufssprache vorkommt. Sie können private Briefe verstehen, in denen von Ereignissen, Gefühlen und Wünschen berichtet wird.	Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to their field of interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.

Table 2: Comparison of the curriculum's (BMBWF 2023a) and the Companion Volume's (2018) "can do" statements on reference levels A1-B1

As can be deduced from the number of words and phrases highlighted in red, the curriculum (BMBWF 2023a) and Companion Volume (2018) show discrepancies in terms of the "can do" statements of the reference levels, even though the Companion Volume (2018) is the basis of the curriculum (BMBWF 2023a), which would only need a proper translation. One of the most outstanding differences concerns job-related vocabulary. This type of vocabulary is mentioned as an A2 can do statement in the Companion Volume (2018), despite it being listed among B1 in the curriculum (BMBWF 2023a). A possible reason for this discrepancy could be that the curriculum for Austrian middle schools (BMBWF 2023a) is

specifically designed for younger students, and the Companion Volume (2018) is designed for language use in personal, occupational, educational as well as public domains pointing at a larger target group.

After the first year of learning English, the students should achieve A1 in all of the competence areas. When considering the reference level description, it becomes evident that the reading competence of A1 students is extremely basic. According to the curriculum, the students are only able to comprehend particularly easy sentences as can be read on signs, posters or in catalogues. This description does not mention books, not even graded readers at all, which raised doubts about the participation of the 1d class in the ER project. On the contrary, since the school library also offers graded readers specifically targeted at A1 level, this class took part in the project anyway.

While the language level increases to A2 in the receptive competences listening and reading as well as in writing, oral productive competences remain at A1 level, even after the second grade. Even though the A2 description does not specifically include books or graded readers, their usage can be assumed from the description's meaning. This assumption comes from the statement that the students are able to read short and easily comprehensible texts, which can be viewed as a definition of graded readers. Hence, the students of 2d class should already be able to understand easy – which means language level appropriate – reading material.

All of the competence levels develop further in third and fourth grade, which indicates that the lowest level is then A2 and the highest possible one which can be achieved in listening, reading and writing is B1, but only concerning a specific area. For the competence reading after the third and fourth year of learning, the standard level is A2, but the students should also be able to understand texts, “[...]in denen vor allem sehr gebräuchliche Alltags- oder Berufssprache vorkommt [in which very typically used everyday language or jargon occurs]” which is part of level B1 (BMBWF 2023a: 40). In accordance with this description, it can be concluded that third and fourth grade learners, (which includes the 3b class), should therefore be able to read longer texts which are more authentic.

3. The reading project

In this chapter, the extensive reading project is introduced, which is the basis of the present Master's Thesis. The different steps of the project will be discussed before elaborating on the two main instruments, namely the questionnaires and the reading comprehensions.

Participation in the reading project was obligatory as it was part of the English lessons and contributed to the *Mitarbeitsnote* (participation grade). Before initiating the project, the headmistress was asked for allowance. After her agreement, the parents as well as the students had to fill in a consent form (see Appendix 9.1.) which confirms that the students' data can be used anonymously in this project. Then, the students filled in the pre-reading questionnaire (see Appendix 9.2.), which required demographic data and asked about their reading habits. This questionnaire was created in German, as the English skills of the students differ between levels A1 and A2+ according to the curriculum (BMBWF 2024a: 48-50).

The project itself lasted from the beginning of March until the middle of June. Similar to an outcomes-based approach, at the beginning, the teacher handed out a schedule of the reading project with a short description of the project as well as exercises (see Appendix 9.5.) that needed to be finished within the given time frame. In this sense, the students were able to prepare themselves for the individual lessons because they always knew beforehand what they had to do, namely to prepare their books for the ten minutes of reading time at the beginning of each English lesson and start reading or doing the exercises. Moreover, since they were also informed about the end of the project, the students should also be capable of splitting up their time and organizing their progress. The workplan is divided into three categories: exercises before, while and after extensive reading phases. The students were required to read or work on the exercises for ten minutes at the beginning of each English lesson in order to get used to a routine and to facilitate adapting to English. In addition to these ten minutes of time dedicated to reading at school, most of the workload was intended to be done at home. At the end of the project, all of the exercises should be completed, and it was the students' responsibility to organize the tasks and time with the guidance and support of their teachers.

After the actual ER intervention, a post-reading questionnaire (see Appendix 9.3.) was filled in, with the intention to investigate whether the reading habits and motivation of the students had changed. Although research suggests that identical measures should be included when using the traditional pre- and post-intervention method (Little et al. 2020: 175), some

questions in the post-reading questionnaire were adapted or added. The reason for these slight changes and additions lies within the progress of the whole ER project. To further illustrate this reason, in this questionnaire, 17 questions were changed or added like POST Q13 “Da ich mich 3 Monate lang intensiv mit dem Lesen englischer Bücher beschäftigt habe, hat sich mein Leseverständnis (Reading) in Englisch verbessert. [Since I engaged intensely with reading English books over the course of three months, my reading skills in English have improved.], which corresponds more to the retrospective pretest-posttest design (Little et al. 2020: 176). Additionally, the item PRE Q15 “Ich freue mich auf das Leseprojekt. [I am looking forward to the reading project.]” was changed into POST Q15 “Das Leseprojekt hat mir gefallen. [I liked the reading project.]”. These kinds of questions only make sense (before or) after the extensive reading phase.

In addition to the two questionnaires that analyzed the reading habits and level of motivation, another component of the project aimed at analyzing the development of the students’ reading skills. In order to investigate whether the students’ receptive skill reading had improved due to extensive reading, the results of two English exams before and after the ER intervention were collected and compared to each other. The analyses can be found in chapter 5. When considering the reading comprehensions, Little et al.’s (2020: 175) suggestion of using identical measures is followed partly. Since the level of difficulty in the exams rises with increasing language experience, it is natural that the reading comprehensions after the project became more difficult. Nevertheless, the students’ language knowledge also grew accordingly, which indicates that the level of difficulty and language knowledge are directly proportional. However, in order to also have identical measures, the 1d class as well as seven students from the 2d were provided with the reading comprehension of the first exam after the ER project.

3.1. Setting: The school and the participants

The project was undertaken in a middle school situated in Upper Austria. The reason for choosing this school as the setting of the investigation is because the researcher is also a teacher there, teaching English in three classes: 1d, 2d and 3b. Consequently, these were also the three classes under investigation. To provide precise information about the participating classes, Table 3 was created with the data from the answers of the pre-reading questionnaires which were filled in in March.

Class	Participants	Sex	Age	Languages spoken at home
1d	21	14 boys (66.7%) 7 girls (33.3%)	10 -13 years	14: German 4: Bilingual (German & other) 2: Turkish 1: Romanian
2d	16	12 boys (75%) 4 girls (25%)	11-13 years	11: German 2: Bilingual (German & other) 1: Italian and Hungarian 1: Bosnian 1: Turkish
3b	21	13 boys (61.9%) 8 girls (38.1%)	12-14 years	16: German 1: Bilingual (German & other) 1: Albanian 1: Bosnian 1: Bulgarian 1: Turkish

Table 3: Demographic information about the project's participants (data from pre-reading questionnaires)

As can be derived from Table 3, the participants in this study vary in language level, sex and age as well as in their language(s) spoken at home. The students' language level can be determined with the aid of the curriculum, although individual differences need to be considered: The first-graders should be at level A1 in all competences; the second- and third-graders should already achieve A2 in reading (BMBWF 2023a: 40).

The male students dominate in all of the three classes (66.7% in the 1d, 75% in the 2d, 61.9% in the 3b). Concerning the age, while traditionally viewed, students in the first grade are between 10 and 11 years old, between 11 and 12 in the second grade and between 12 and 13 in the third grade, the age of the participating students varied due to the fact that some of them repeated a class. The age of the 21 participants in the 1d ranged from 10 to 13 years. There are two 13 years-old students who repeated a school year, and the majority of the students (61.9%) is 11 years old. The 16 students in the 2d are between 11 and 13 years old. The majority (56.3%) is 12 years old. The age of the 21 students in the 3b ranged from 12 to 14 years. One student is already 14 years old because he repeated one year; but the majority of the students (57.1%) is 13 years old. Consequently, it can be noted that the average in each of the classes corresponds to the typical class age as previously mentioned.

Concerning their known languages, 18 out of the 21 students in the 1d have German as their L1 (85.71%) and four were raised bilingually with Croatian, Turkish or Hungarian (19.05%). Three students do not have German as their L1; two of them speak Turkish at home and one Romanian. Similar to the first graders, most of the 2d students' L1 is German. In fact,

11 students out of 16 have German as their sole L1 (68.75%) and two were raised bilingually with either Bosnian or Romanian (12.5%). One student was also raised bilingually, but with Italian and Hungarian, which indicates that German was his third language and English his fourth. Two students do not have German as their L1; one speaks Bosnian at home and the other one speaks Turkish. In the 3b, 17 out of the 21 students reported on German as their L1 (76.19%) and one was raised bilingually with Serbian (4.76%). Four students do not have German as their L1 but rather Albanian, Bulgarian, Bosnian or Turkish.

When comparing the participants in all of the classes, the majority were boys (always more than 60%), the average age rose per year and that the standard L1 was German. Moreover, none of the students listed English amongst their L1s, which indicates that it was a foreign language for all of the students.

For the analysis of the two questionnaires as well as the reading comprehensions, it has to be mentioned that the number of participants in each class varied due to illness. Although the 3b has got 21 students, only 16 of them answered the post-reading questionnaire since the others were ill. Furthermore, when comparing and analyzing the results of the reading comprehensions, it happened that one student who wrote the first exam was sick in the last one, which means that the results of this student cannot be taken into consideration either. In both cases, the percentages were adapted accordingly.

3.2. Instruments

The aim of this study was to assess whether extensive reading has an impact on the students' motivation (RQ1) and their intensive reading skills (RQ2). In order to investigate these topics, the study employed a mostly quantitative design, collecting data from two different types of sources: online questionnaires and reading comprehensions from regular exams. Since the questionnaires also included open questions, the design of the study could also be described as mixed-method. The data from the questionnaire and the reading comprehension were collected pre- and post-intervention and compared and contrasted to each other. The next two subsections (3.2.1., 3.2.2.) provide explanations of the two different instruments.

3.2.1. Questionnaires

To begin with, the format of the questionnaires will be discussed. All of the three participating classes are equipped with Chromebooks, which indicates easy access to their Email accounts as well as to the internet. Moreover, as proposed by Dörnyei and Dewaele

(2023: 119), the target group is used to working with the platform Google and all of its related applications such as Google Formulare, which implies proper and effortless handling. In addition to the students' previous knowledge, storing, processing and analyzing online data is easier than working with analogue questionnaires. Despite the consumption of a lot of energy, Dörnyei and Dewaele (2023: 126) suggest another advantage of the online format, namely that it does not cost any money and is eco-friendly. Due to these practicalities, the designer of the questionnaire opted for an online format for the present ER project.

The purpose of a questionnaire in general is to yield three types of data: factual, behavioral and attitudinal (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 6). The current project used a pre- and post-test method to explore anticipated changes. The questionnaires yielded all of the three types of data by investigating the students' reading habits and their motivation towards it. The main goal of the questionnaires was thus to prove that more students enjoy reading after exposure to extensive and individual reading for a longer time span and that their motivation towards reading increases. The factual data opted for in this questionnaire concerns age, sex and L1, in order to monitor any possible relation between reading comprehension, reading habits and those three aspects. The most important questions for the current investigation concern the students' behavior and their attitudes to reading. For instance, the questionnaire covered how often they read and what language they prefer, which are questions about the behavior. Furthermore, the students' opinion about their favorite competence and the one where they think they are best at were required. In the post-reading questionnaire, their attitude to the reading project as such was also demanded, which yielded attitudinal data. Dörnyei and Dewaele (2023: 43-46) even provide a checklist which can be followed when creating questionnaire items. Amongst others, they recommend the following five criteria: "aim for short and simple items, use simple and natural language, avoid ambiguous or loaded words and sentences, avoid negative constructions" (Dörnyei and Dewaele 2023: 43-46), which were used when designing the questionnaires.

Dörnyei and Dewaele (2023: 17) warn that the duration as well as the perceived difficulty of the questions can have a negative impact on how the students understand and master the questionnaire. If answering the questionnaire takes too long, the students could drop out of it after some time (Dörnyei and Dewaele 2023: 17). To cope with the difficulty, the language of the questionnaire was German since this is the L1 of the majority of the participants and all of them are able to understand it. The researchers also warn that students

can perceive some questions as face threatening if they are asked by their own teacher since they do not want to share everything with them and want to position themselves in a positive light (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 18). Consequently, the researcher has to deal with “overreporting” with questions relating to good topics and “underreporting” with negative ones (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 18). Especially with the question “Ich freue mich auf das Leseprojekt [I am looking forward to the reading project]”, a lot of positive answers were expected. Moreover, due to the varying age and sex as well as the socio-cultural and ethnic backgrounds, the designer of the questionnaire needed to be aware of the fact that different topics might be perceived differently by the students (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 19). For example, for some students, talking about their reading behavior could be face threatening since they could suffer from financial instability which would indicate that they cannot afford books; hence, a student could not be able to read in their free time, even though he/she would like to do so.

In order to avoid under- and overreporting as well as face threatening topics, the questionnaire was set to be anonymous. Nevertheless, it is crucial for the current project to be able to properly match the responses of the questionnaires with the students’ results in the reading comprehensions in order to investigate specific changes. Thus, to have some kind of identity marker, Dörnyei and Dewaele (2023: 21) suggest using an “identity code that [the students] are unlikely to forget, combining, for example, their initials, or those of a parent and year of birth”. Although Dörnyei and Dewaele (2023: 113) claim that feeling threatened and giving untrustworthy responses might be less of an issue with online questionnaires since the students would feel more anonymous and “invisible to the teacher/researcher”, this claim does not hold truth for the actual investigation since the researcher of this project is also the teacher of the three participating classes. Consequently, those aspects of under- and overreporting and face-threatening issues cannot be excluded. To be more precise, the teacher-researcher was the one who provided the students with all of the information on the project in advance, handed out the consent form, sent them the link for the questionnaires and guided them through the whole ER project.

Hence, the students were totally aware of the fact that their own teacher was investigating them in terms of their motivation towards reading (see questionnaires) and their actual reading skills (see reading comprehensions from exams). Furthermore, since participation in the reading project was a mandatory component of the school grade in

relation to classwork, and the online questionnaires were also obligatory items, dropping out of the project or exiting the questionnaire in advance could be excluded (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 113). A beneficial side effect of the mandatory participation was thus that the researcher did not actively have to call for participation as recommended by Dörnyei and Dewaele (2023: 123). Although the questionnaires were filled in at the same time in the English lessons, not all of the students participated in both of them since they did not fill them in if they were sick. While the participation in the 1d (21) and 2d (16) was equal in the two questionnaires, it decreased in the 3b from 21 to 16. However, since the results are analyzed in percent, this difference in participants does not present a problem for the analysis.

Turning now to the question format, two different types were included: closed-ended questions in the form of Likert scales and open questions. The main benefit of closed-ended questions is that their coding is easy and there is no possibility for rater subjectivity (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 29). Thus, these questions are designed for quantitative, statistical analyses. Since the participants of the study were children, it has to be assumed that they neither understand jargon nor abbreviations; consequently, any term which might be part of basic knowledge from the perspective of a teacher-researcher needed to be explained properly in order to obtain reliable results. Due to its practicality in terms of filling in and analyzing the responses, the format of the majority of the questions from the two questionnaires was closed-ended questions. In order to create questionnaire items, it is not necessary to only have questions with question marks, but it is also possible to have statements (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 5). These statements were designed according to Likert's 1932 invented Likert scale (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 30). A Likert scale questionnaire item is defined by a statement such as "I consider reading a hobby" and offers answer possibilities ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These answers can have different numbers of possibilities. The Likert scale questions in this questionnaire always have five options, ranging from either strongly agree to agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree, or from always to often, sometimes, rarely and never. This question format is commonly known and widely used due to its simplicity, versatility and reliability (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023:30).

In addition to closed questions, some open questions were also integrated to gather qualitative data. These questions are PRE Q5 and POST Q18 and Q22. Despite the disadvantage of difficult coding, open-ended questions can lead to unpredictable (in a positive sense), reasonable and important responses (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 39). Especially when

it comes to the topic of motivation, incorporating open questions might lead to valuable responses, since the researcher can never be able to list all of the different reasons for the participant's motivation in a certain area. Dörnyei and Dewaele (2023:39) further suggest not exceeding the number of three open questions and putting these at the end of the questionnaire. With this strategy, the participants already had time to familiarize themselves with the topic and to reflect on their opinion about it. Furthermore, if the respondents are aware of the fact that they have come close to the end, it is more likely that they put more effort into such open-ended questions, as they know that this will be the last part (Dörnyei & Dewaele 2023: 39). Despite the suggestion of putting the open questions at the end, the designer of the current questionnaires intentionally integrated them in the middle of the post-reading questionnaire. The reason for that decision is that the two open questions POST Q18 and Q22 both require the students to reason their choice from their response to the previous question, which only makes sense if they are placed immediately afterwards.

3.2.2. Reading comprehensions

The second instrument collecting data for the reading project was the reading comprehensions (RC) the students did in the course of their English exams. In that way, they did not have any additional assessment tasks for the reading project, which took away the pressure and probably motivated them more for reading. To provide an explanation for the term reading comprehension, any form of test measures how well someone can do something. In the case of reading comprehensions, they measure how well the students can read. As previously mentioned, the reading comprehensions differed in terms of text length, question format and also the level of difficulty of language, which is due to the natural language acquisition process and because different teachers put them together, based on the three different test builders¹. Although all of the results of the different reading comprehensions were collected, only the data from the second and the last one were compared and contrasted with each other, which makes a total of two reading comprehensions per class, namely RC2 and RC4. Furthermore, the students from the first grade and some of the second did the same reading comprehension they had already completed before the ER phase (RC2). In that way, any difference in text length, question

¹ At the investigated school, the English exams are put together by different English teachers, but they are based on the test builders from Helbling languages.

format or language difficulty was excepted. The results of the comparison and contrast can be found in chapter 5.

3.3. A guideline to a successful reading project

In order to create a successful and appealing extensive reading program for the learners, the current project was designed according to Day and Bamford's (1998: 2) ten principles (c.f. subsection 2.1.2.). They are discussed below and related to the project one by one.

"The reading material is easy". Although the term easy is also subject to personal opinion, in this sense, it indicates that the books are at a language level which is appropriate for the students in order to ensure comprehension. This principle is adhered to with the use of graded readers, which are specifically created for and targeted at EFL learners. The graded readers in the school library are color-coded relating to three levels: The books with no color are the very easy ones targeted at first graders and students at the beginning of second grade. Such books include *Professor Boffin's umbrella* (Alexander 1986) or Dr. Seuss' famous *The cat in the hat* (2016). The green books are for second graders and students at the beginning of third grade and include *Fireball's heart* (Puchta 2009) or *The lost smile* (Holzmann 2018). Lastly, the more difficult ones, which mostly correspond to fourth grade EFL skills and to students at the end of third grade, are the blue books. *The African mask* (Gerngross 2013) or *Life of Pi* (Martel 2014) are examples for that section. Those books are certainly only a small sample of the books used in the ER project. The color scheme is only a suggestion from the school library, following the publishers' recommendations. When reading material in class size is needed, this color scheme is also adhered to. However, the students are welcome to pick any book they want to and feel capable of reading if they visit the library themselves. In addition to the color-coded class size reading material, there are also some English books with only one copy which are not color-coded. The language level of those books also varies from elementary level A1 to B1. As usual for graded readers, the students can find out about the exact language level on the back of the book. In that sense, it can be argued that easy material is provided for each of the classes and language levels.

"A variety of reading material on wide range of topics is available". The school library provides 20 different graded readers in class size and 20 individual ones. The graded readers in class size range from classical tales like *Rapunzel* (Swan 1987) or funny classics like *The cat in the hat* (Seuss Geisel 2016) to more recent books like *Life of Pi* (Martel 2014). Moreover, a small number of books are informative ones explaining American or British culture, which are

also essential constituents of the EFL curriculum. Graded readers where only one copy is available are for instance *Mr. Bean's holiday* (Bloese 2013) or *The boy who could fly* (Hill 2017). Considering the huge amount of reading material available, it can be argued that principle two can also be accounted for in the present ER project.

“Learners choose what they want to read”. The reading material should not only correspond to the students’ language level, but, more importantly, it should also cater to their interests (Al-Nafisah 2015: 100). If readers are interested in the material, it is more likely that they will also read large quantities, which is the ultimate goal of ER. As advised by previous researchers, letting the students self-select their reading material represents an essential component in increasing their motivation. In that way, the students do not only perceive agency, but they also feel responsible for their choices, which fosters autonomy and independence. The second and third graders were allowed to choose their books themselves from the library, although struggling low-proficiency students were provided book recommendations. For the first graders, however, a complete pre-selection of books was undertaken by the teacher. This pre-selection was due to several reasons: First, the students were not really familiar with the library habits and might be overwhelmed by the huge availability. Second, the teacher wanted to protect them from failure by only picking books specifically targeted at A1 and A1+. This selection also comprised five different books from which the students could choose. All things considered, all of the learners experienced some kind of autonomy in the selection process. While the choice of the first graders was limited to five appropriate books, the other classes were able to choose material from the whole English section at the library. In that sense, it could be ensured that the students were (more or less) interested in what they read, which also promotes motivation.

“Learners read as much as possible”. The main criterion for an extensive reading program is reading. Therefore, the students were required to dedicate the first ten minutes of each English lesson to reading for the reading project. However, since there are only three or four weekly English lessons per class, this would only account for thirty to forty minutes of reading each week. This is why the students also had the assignment to read at home. Since the teacher already knew that the regular English lessons are needed for curriculum-based input or different types of assessment, the reading project was intentionally planned so that most of the reading time would happen outside class. A potential drawback of this criterion, however, is that the teacher was not able to check if the students actually read at home. Some

tasks could have also been elaborated on without actually reading the whole book. To conclude, one of the main principles of an extensive reading project can only be implemented in the current project to a certain degree. Due to regular teaching material which needs to be addressed in the English lessons, only a small amount of time could be dedicated to reading in class. Consequently, the students were responsible for their reading progress at home and this out-of-class reading was subject to the students' agency and motivation and out of the teacher's control.

"Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower". The fifth principle is the one which is entirely out of the teacher's hands. Since the students were required to read individually and silently, the teacher could not check whether the students read faster or slower. However, in order to gain a little insight into the students' reading speed, one task on the assignment sheet specifically required the students to record how many pages they can read within ten minutes. The number of pages needed to be recorded on a regular basis for the purpose of investigating whether the reading speed was also affected by extensive reading. Almost all of the students left out this activity or only recorded it once, which means that no development was measurable in this project.

"The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding". The reading purposes in the reading project were also the same: The main aim was to increase the students' motivation to read, which is related to reading for pleasure. The fact that the project was not assessed, but only counted as part of the participation grade, contributes to the aspect of reading for pleasure. Additionally, some tasks of the project sheet required the students to read for specific information; others required a general understanding of the book.

By definition, extensive reading is mainly about reading for pleasure, which was also the goal of this project. However, the students might have a different opinion on that matter. In fact, while the teacher may view the purpose of the project as encouraging the students to read, the students themselves might view the reading project as solely another boring activity which needs to be done because the teacher says so. In that sense, the students' driving force behind reading would not be reading for pleasure but reading to please the teacher, for instance, which indicates controlled motivation. However, the goal of the project was to spark autonomous motivation for reading within the students, which is why the project was not related to any assessment at all. It did not even contribute to the final grade but only to the

cooperation part, which only makes up a small part. The tasks of the project sheet were also only targeted at general understanding and they were not designed as typical intensive reading tasks. Nation (2009: 53) even supposes that post-reading activities such as short book reports can be regarded as some kind of motivational factor for the students. All in all, although, according to the teacher, the purposes of reading are for enjoyment, information and general understanding, the students might view it differently.

“Reading is individual and silent”. Since the students were allowed to choose their reading material themselves, it is obvious that they had to read silently on their own, as probably no other student was reading the same book at the same time. Reading aloud would disturb their classmates and it is obvious that reading as a group in class with one person reading at a time cannot foster individual reading skills either. Consequently, this principle goes hand in hand with and depends on the third one, but also on the fifth principle about reading speed. Since the students have different reading speeds, reading together in class would prevent them from reading actively and purposefully. In addition to the aforementioned benefits of reading individually and silently, the teacher views another advantage of this reading manner: working efficiently. The students were aware of the organization of the project, namely that the first ten minutes of every English lesson were dedicated to reading and the associated tasks. Therefore, as soon as an English lesson started, the students already knew what to do, namely to take out their books and read, even if the teacher might not have been present on time. Starting the lesson with ten minutes of silent reading also positively affects the students’ mindsets as they have the opportunity to calm down individually after a loud break. In that way, the students as well as the teachers could start the lesson with a calm and focused mindset.

“Reading is its own reward”. The students should not be driven by the incentive of any reward, be that a materialistic one like some chocolates or a personal one such as good grades. In the reading project the pure act of reading should be the reward itself. This anticipated reward directly corresponds to the concept of autonomous motivation. Only if the students enjoy reading can they view it as a reward. The ones who are not so keen on reading, however, might perceive it as punishment or extra burden to read. It is thus the same issue as discussed with principle six, the purpose of reading. Nonetheless, the ten minutes of silence where the students work individually and have the opportunity to calm down can represent a kind of

reward for some students which is the first step in the direction of perceiving reading as a reward in itself.

“The teacher orients and guides the students”. In order to conduct a successful reading project, teachers play an important role: they are the supervisors of the students’ progress (Nation 2009: 57). In fact, they need to monitor the learners’ exercises and keep track of how far they have come and observe them while reading in class. Moreover, it is also their responsibility to be aware of the students’ needs, problems, progress and goals by talking to them individually from time to time. Although one of the main ideas behind the project was to foster autonomy and independence within the students, it is obvious that the teacher guides them through the whole project. Whenever the students had content-related questions, they could ask the teacher. Whenever they needed new books, they came to the teacher and went to the library together, or the teacher provided them with a new book. Whenever they did not know a word, they could ask the teacher. Whenever they were unsure about which book to read next, the teacher made suggestions. There are many more opportunities like these, but the bottom line is that the teacher was always available for the learners and provided help whenever needed. Observing the students while reading is not only helpful for the teachers to keep an overview of the project’s progress, but the act of being observed can also be viewed as incentive to perform from the point of view of the students (Nation 2009: 57). This seems especially important and useful for students who are not eager to read or show lower proficiency levels.

“The teacher is a role model of a reader”. The last principle advises the teachers to be a role model and read themselves during the reading time in class. Although it might be beneficial for the students’ involvement in the project if they saw their teacher reading as well, this principle could not be implemented in the current reading project. Especially in the first grade, the teacher had to use the ten minutes of reading for loaning and taking back the books, walking through the class to provide help and to remind students with suspicious behavior of their actual task in order to maintain silence. In grades two and three, these undertakings were similar, and were sometimes complemented by accompanying the students to the library to fetch new books. Although the students of second and third grade should get new books on their own out of class time, sometimes it was necessary to go with them, for example because they had been ill. Moreover, since the teacher had to deal with a certain time pressure because educational material needs to be taught, the teacher

sometimes used the reading time for checking the students' attendance as well as their homework in order to save time.

Considering the elaborations on all of the 10 principles it can be concluded that the current reading project adhered to most of the ten principles and should therefore be a successful reading project, according to Day and Bamford (1998: 2). Thanks to the huge number of graded readers available at the school library, principles 1, 2 and 3 could be adhered to. Principles four and five were only implemented to a certain extent, since the teacher could neither check how much the students read at home (principle 4), nor was she able to check the reading speed in silent reading (principle 5). The teacher's intended reading purposes were reading for pleasure, information as well as for general understanding (principle 6); although the students might perceive it differently. The act of reading the books was individual and silent, since the students were reading different books at the same time (principle 7). Similar to principles 4 and 5, having reading as its own reward was intended by the teacher by only counting the exercises as part of the collaboration, but it cannot be ensured that the students shared this opinion (principle 8). The ninth principle was again adhered to by the teacher who helped the students and guided them through the project. The last principle was the only one which the teacher did not implement at all, since she did not only work as a guide, but she also had to maintain silence or go to the library to get new books.

From the article *Creating a successful extensive reading program*, teachers can also retrieve essential scaffolding information on what to consider when planning an ER project (Day 2013: 10). Day structures his guidelines relating to five questions teachers should ask themselves concerning the reading material, the amount, the locality, the assessment and the implementation of the project itself. Some of the topics like the material or the implementation are already familiar from Day and Bamford's (1998: 2) list of 10 principles. In addition to them, this article offers input on other aspects which need to be considered by the teacher before launching such a project.

Day once more reinforces the necessity of using language-level appropriate books and thereby proposes graded readers as suitable reading material. Concerning the amount, he states that the required amount of reading can be expressed by the number of pages, whole books or hours and notes that these targets can be changed relating to the students' needs (Day 2013: 13). For this project, the teacher decided on setting the target by the number of books that needed to be read by the deadline of the end of the semester. This indicates that

there was no weekly or daily achievement goal, but the students knew how many books they should read within the time frame of three and a half months. Since the students in Austrian middle schools are divided into two proficiency levels, this division was also taken into consideration when setting the targets. While AHS students in third grade were required to read at least four books, Standard students needed to read at least three. Thus, the students in this project were not required to monitor their reading on a daily basis. However, this freedom simultaneously presented an obstacle for many students. The ones who are not good at organizing themselves as well as low-proficiency students faced problems with such an open learning setting.

Concerning the location of reading, Day (2013: 14) advises that most of the reading happens at home since extensive reading is optimally related to a huge amount of reading, which regular EFL lessons do not allow for. However, he also claims that it can positively impact the students' opinion about the project if class time is dedicated to reading as the students know how valuable the few English lessons are. Thus, as proposed by Day (2013: 14) the majority of the reading time happened outside of the classroom, but ten minutes at the beginning of each valuable English lesson were dedicated to reading. This is a way of proving the project's relevance to the students and simultaneously also having the opportunity to check their progress.

Since the current project was not assessed in a particular way but only contributed to the participation grade, Day's (2013: 10) fourth guideline will not be discussed.

When implementing an ER project, it is essential that the benefits of it are put into the spotlight as this might encourage the students to cooperate. In other words, if the students are aware of the possible effects reading can have on their language skills, it is more likely that they engage voluntarily in this project. Furthermore, the teacher should explain the structure of the program so that the students know how it works and what awaits them. Additionally, it is essential that the teacher instructs the students so that they pick language-level appropriate books because too difficult ones might lead to feelings of failure and discouragement. Lastly and most importantly, the teacher should make the students aware of the fact that the project is not about assessment but that its main purpose is to develop reading habits and to motivate them for reading (Day 2013: 16). As suggested by Nation (2009: 53), reading should take up the main part of the course in an extensive reading program, which is why he suggests that such a project is not accompanied by exercises. This suggestion

criticizes the approach in the current ER project as the students had to complete different exercises. Day, however, suggests that it is important to check not only if the reading material is appropriate for the students but also if they understand it. He thereby proposes the integration of ER activities. This proposition is implemented in the project with one page of exercises. In the “Reading project sheet” which can be found in the Appendix (9.5.), exercises are divided into the categories before, while and after reading. Before reading exercises include making a guess about the content of a book by only reading its title. In that way, students are required to use their imagination and creativity. While reading exercises, for instance, involve stopping in the middle of the book and writing a short prediction of the ending. This activity fosters creativity on the one hand but also requires that the students understand what they have previously read. Hence, this task is directly related to Day’s (2013: 17) proposition of monitoring the students’ comprehension. After reading exercises were more targeted at vocabulary exercises as the students had to make lists of ten adjectives which were either new, interesting or funny in their opinion. The tasks were always accompanied by a short explanation; for the first graders, the language was also German in order to ensure full comprehension. Moreover, the students had some space where they could tick off each exercise after completion, which should help them keep an overview of their progress.

As advised by Day (2013: 17), the teachers in this project support the students in any possible way. Especially when it comes to the selection of books, the teachers are always available for the students as they might not know what books are appropriate for their skills or if they like the topics. This is why it is essential that the teachers know the reading material, what level they opt for and what topic they address. In that way they are capable of matching language-level appropriate and interesting topics with their students.

3.4. Delimitations of the reading project

Delimitations are areas which are out of the control of the researcher. Such delimitations can also be found in this study, which is why the generalizability of the results will be discussed in the section below. The limitations of the current study concern the following areas: participants, time, reading materials and method (reading comprehensions).

First, the project is restricted to only three EFL classes in one middle school in Upper Austria, which does not provide representative results for Austrian EFL settings in general. Second, another limiting factor was time. Despite having the regularity of reading for ten

minutes each English lesson, which meant 40 minutes per week for the first and second grades and 30 for the third grade, the teacher-researcher could not ensure that reading happened regularly out of class as well. Although the students were required to read regularly at home, it was their responsibility if they actually did it or not and that could not be monitored by the teacher. Moreover, in a few English lessons it also happened that classes were on excursions or that there was an exam, which took away other important possibilities to read. Additionally, Brown (2008: 239) suggests that, in order to show long-term effects on language proficiency, such reading programs need to happen over a longer period of time. The current project, however, only took place from March to June, which is one semester.

The third limitation concerns the material. Although the school has a school library with EFL books, these books only represent a limited variety. Moreover, there are only a small number of books which are targeted at A1 level and at B1 level. Very easy books would be needed for low-proficient first graders and B1 books for proficient third graders. Thus, it can be concluded that this limitation in variety and language level could represent an obstacle for the students to engage fully in reading and feel motivated.

When it comes to the method, which is the fourth delimitation, the author planned on not handing out additional reading comprehensions but to take the existing results from the regular exams. In that way, the students did not have additional work and it could be ensured that the students took the reading comprehension seriously, as they want to achieve good results in exams. However, those reading comprehensions were different each time and it cannot be fully guaranteed that the language level increased proportionally. To be more precise, although there needs to be a certain increase in difficulty (e.g. more vocabulary, new grammatical structures) according to the natural language acquisition process, the level of difficulty of the topics as well as the questions format depends on the students' individual skills. If there was only one reading text and the students did not understand it for any reason, they could not perform well. On the other hand, if the test consisted of two reading texts, the chances were higher that the students understand one of the topics. Since the tests in this middle school are always designed by a different team of teachers, the author could not design the reading comprehensions so that they follow the same principle; The type and amount of text as well as the question format deviated. While some students might prefer open questions, the less proficient ones might be better at true/false exercises since no sentence formulation is required and it is easier to guess the correct answer.

Taking all of these criteria into account, it becomes evident that comparing the students in two different, unrelated reading comprehensions might be unfair and produce insignificant results. Consequently, in order to avoid that issue, some students took the same RC from the beginning of the project again. In that way, the researcher wanted to identify whether the students had gained more knowledge and improved their reading competence through the course of the ER project. Unfortunately, this possible insignificance in the reading comprehensions was only noticed two weeks before the summer break, which is why the teacher was not able to collect data from all of the classes. Only the 1d as well as seven students from the 2d retook RC2. These results will be discussed in section 5.2.

To conclude, numerous guidelines exist on how to set up a successful extensive reading program at school. The current ER project was designed considering most of Day and Bamford's (1998) principles (except for the tenth – the teacher as a role model) as well as Day's (2013) more recent suggestions. According to the literature, an implementation according to these guidelines would indicate that this ER project was a successful one. However, it is essential to note that the term successful is subjective and it depends on the aim of the project itself. In the case of this research, the project was successful if the students performed better in the last reading comprehension as this would indicate that the ER project had actually improved their intensive reading skills. In addition to that, this project was successful if the students' motivation to read increased because of it.

4. Presentation of questionnaire data

As mentioned beforehand, the project consisted of two questionnaires: The “pre-reading questionnaire” (see Appendix 9.2.) was handed out before the reading phase and the “post-reading questionnaire” (see Appendix 9.3.) afterwards. For the analysis, the main items from the two questionnaires were categorized into different clusters in order to provide the reader with a better overview of the data. The clusters are named as follows: *Hobby or obligation?* (pre-reading and post-reading Q1 and Q3); *Preferred language: English or German* (pre-reading Q7, Q6; post-reading Q6, Q5); *Students’ views: best competence* (pre-reading Q9; post-reading Q9, Q10), *most favorite competence* (pre-reading Q10; post-reading Q11, Q12); *Attitudes to impact on language improvement* (pre-reading Q11-Q14; post-reading Q13); *(Importance of) reading in the English lessons* (pre-reading Q15, Q16; post-reading Q14). In addition to these five clusters, the post-reading questionnaire also asked specific questions about the reading project, which are also dealt with in one cluster (Q15-Q27).

When creating the bar charts for the results of the clustered items, the answers from strongly agree and agree as well as from strongly disagree and disagree were combined and counted together, as suggested by Green (2013: 60) as both terms in each of the categories are either positively or negatively phrased. Therefore, most of the bar charts only consist of three different bars, namely agree, disagree and undecided, which facilitates comprehension. For some charts, however, the three bars do not represent such answer possibilities but the three participating classes. For a legible overview of the results, the answers of the three classes were combined to be viewed in one chart. In most cases, two charts result from the two questionnaires: The one on the left displaying the pre-reading answers, and the chart on the right the post-reading ones. In the subsequent sections, the charts will be described, before analyzing and interpreting them with regards to the literature.

4.1. Q1 Hobby or obligation?

When evaluating the answers in Q1, the answer possibilities strongly agree and agree were counted in a way that reading was a hobby while disagree and strongly disagree were counted that it was seen as an obligation. Q3 worked in the opposite direction: When strongly agree and agree were chosen, this means that the students perceive reading as an obligation whereas they believe it to be a hobby when they have chosen disagree or strongly disagree. In both questions, when undecided was chosen, this indicates that the students have no opinion on the topic.

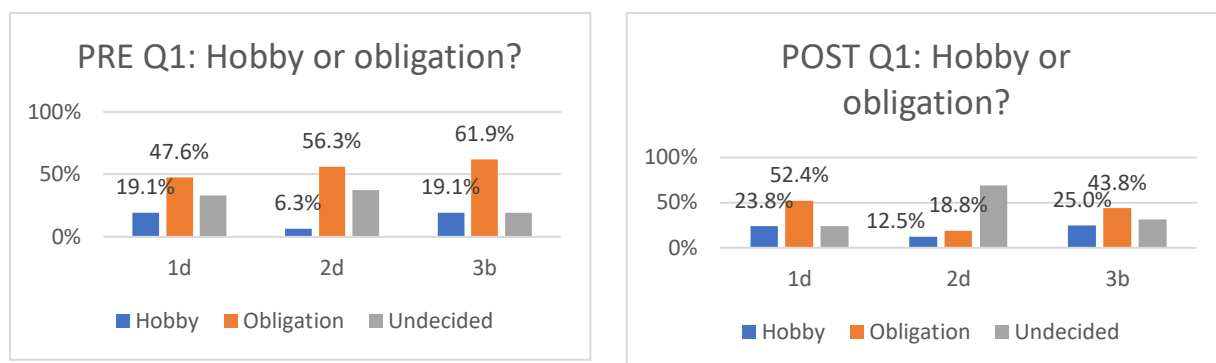


Figure 1: Comparison of PRE and POST Q1: Hobby or obligation

In Figure 1², the ratio of students in the 1d perceiving reading as a hobby increased by 4.7% and the percentage for obligation increased even a little bit more (+4.8%). Yet, these two percentages are nearly the same and both at a low level. After the reading project, however, more than the majority of the 1d generally considers reading an obligation. Contrarily, the results of the 2d and 3b comparisons are totally different to the ones from the 1d. The percentage of 2d students viewing reading as their hobby almost doubled (from 6.3% to 12.5%) and the one for obligation decreased by 37.5%. However, after the project more students were generally uncertain about how they perceive reading. Similar changes happened in the 3b class: The percentage for *hobby* increased by 5.9% and the one for *obligation* decreased by 27.9%.

To conclude, in all of the classes, more students consider reading their hobby after the project. Nonetheless, the highest percentage measured for *hobby* in the post-reading questionnaire also only comprises 25% of the 3b students; the results of the other classes are lower (23.8% and 12.5%). While the percentages for *obligation* still fluctuate around 50% for the 1d (52.4%) and the 3b (43.8%), the one for the 2d decreased to 18.8%, which signifies an extreme change.

² The author was not able to change the settings of the Excel spread sheet to include decimal points in the bar charts, but they were used in the running text.

4.2. Q6, Q7 Preferred language (English or German)

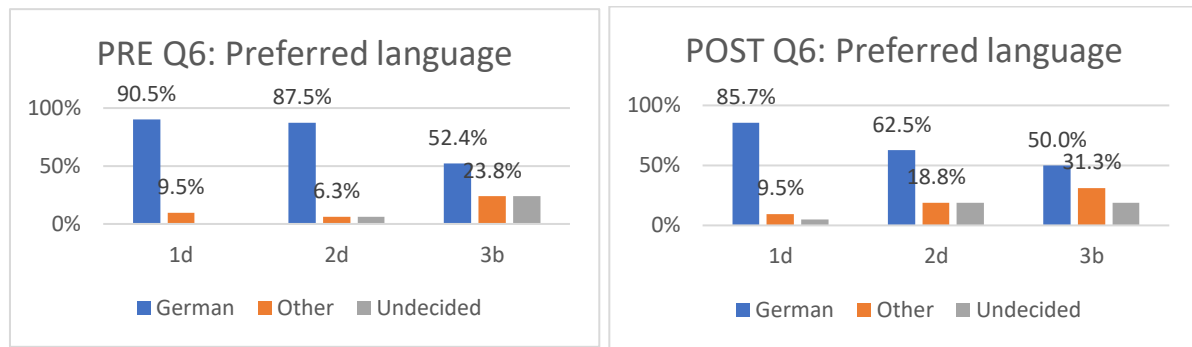


Figure 2: Comparison of PRE and POST Q6: Preferred language

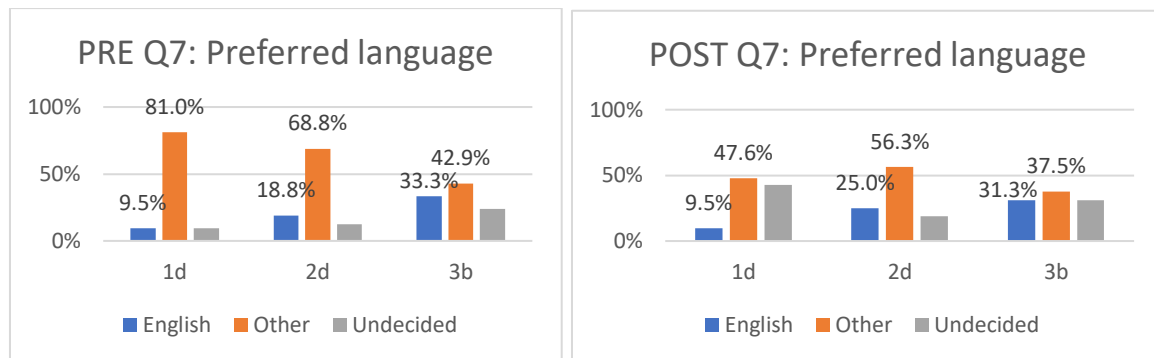


Figure 3: Comparison of PRE and POST Q7: Preferred language

When evaluating the answers in Q6 and Q7 pre- and post-intervention, strongly agree and agree were counted in a way that the favorite language for reading books was either German (Q6) or English (Q7); disagree and strongly disagree, on the other hand, could not be counted towards one or the other language, as the students could have any other language in mind. As a consequence, the category other was added to the charts. Undecided still stays the same. Therefore, the charts still consist of three bars: German (Q6) or English (Q7), other and undecided.

With Q6, it becomes immediately obvious that the preferred language for reading of most of the first-grade students is German. The high percentage only decreased slightly from 90.5% to 85.7% after the ER project. In Q7 of the pre- and post-reading questionnaires, only 9.5% of the students chose English before and after the project, which perfectly matches with the results from Q6. To conclude, almost all of the 1d students prefer German to English when reading books, even after the reading program. The 2d students had similar perceptions on Q6 before the reading project (87.5%); however, this percentage decreased to 62.5% after the project and the number of students preferring English increased (from 18.8% to 25%). This means that more students enjoy reading books in English after the project. The Q6 results of the 3b are nearly equal before (52.4%) and after (50%) the project, implying that almost half

of the class likes reading in German. The percentages for English decreased from 33.3% to 31.3%.

In total, the two sets of questions (Q6 and Q7) suggest that the majority in all of the classes prefers reading books in German. While the percentage for German (Q6 post-reading) is 85.7% in the 1d, it decreased to 62.5% in the 2d and to 50% in the 3b. The results for Q7 (post-reading) show a similar pattern: While only 9.5% in the 1d prefer English books, this percentage increased to 25% in the 2d and to 31.3% in the 3b. From this data it can be concluded that the more proficient the foreign language skills are, the more interest the students show in reading books in another language, although this interest is still rather low.

4.3. Students' views: best competence (Q9), most favorite competence (Q10)

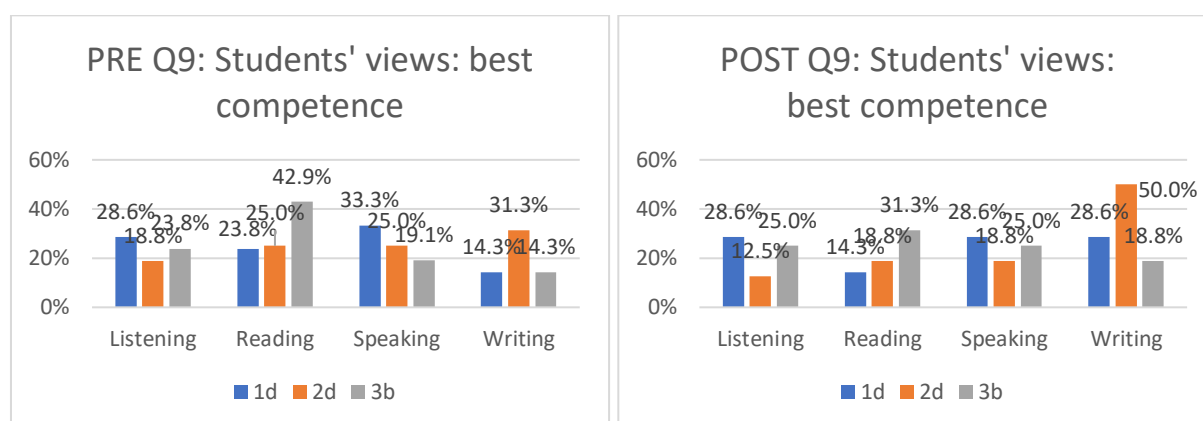


Figure 4: Comparison of PRE and POST Q9: Students' views: best competence

With regards to the competence that the students perceive themselves to be especially good at (Q9), reading was only ranked first by the 3b, namely before and after the project. Despite a decrease (-11.4%), the 3b students still perceive reading as their best competence after the project. When looking at the individual classes' results in relation to the competence reading (Q9), it becomes evident that the percentages decreased in all of the classes: from 23.8% to 14.3% in the 1d, from 25% to 18.8% in the 2d and from 42.9% to 31.3% in the 3b. However, as with Q6 and Q7, the percentages generally increased with rising age and language skills.

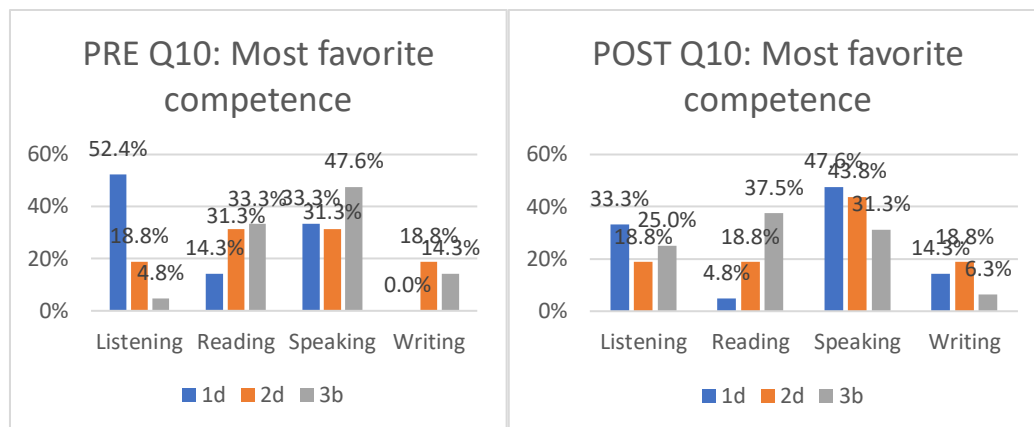


Figure 5: Comparison of PRE and POST Q10: Students' views: most favorite competence

Similar to the ranking in Q9 are the results of Q10 concerning the students' most favorite competence. While the 1d students viewed listening (52.4%) as their favorite competence before the reading project, it was speaking afterwards (47.6%). Reading was their second least favorite competence before (14.3%) and their least favorite after (4.8%) the project. The 2d students ranked reading and speaking (31.1% each) as their favorite competence in the pre-reading questionnaire. This ranking changed after the project: While speaking was still number one (31.1%), the percentage for reading decreased to 18.8%, ranking it equally with the other three competences. The 3b, however, was the only class which had reading as their favorite competence after the project (37.5%), even though it was speaking with 47.6% at first. Thus, an increase from 33.3% to 37.5% in reading can be detected in the 3b. And again, as investigated with the previous questions, the percentages for reading increased with rising age and language skills.

In general, it can be noted that reading was only viewed as the best competence (Q9) and perceived as the most favorite one (Q10) in the 3b after the ER project.

4.4. Q12, Q13 Attitudes to impact on language improvement

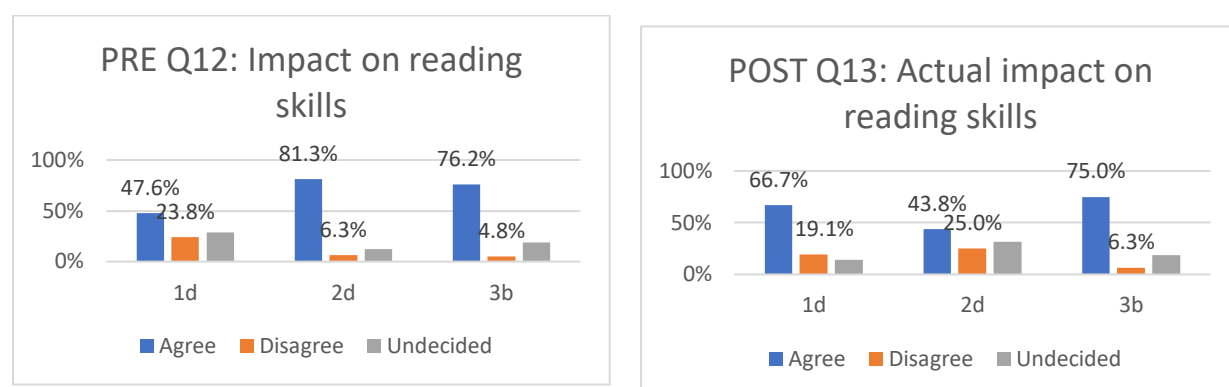


Figure 6: Comparison of PRE Q12 and POST Q13: Impact of ER on reading skills

PRE Q12 asked if the students believed that reading has an impact on language improvement; POST Q13 asked about a perceived impact specifically due to the ER project. When it comes to the students' beliefs on the impact of their exposure to reading (in their free time) on language improvement, the majority in all of the classes pre- and post-intervention thinks that reading has a positive impact on it. Nevertheless, the 1d is the only class where the percentage increased after the ER intervention. In fact, the percentage of students considering reading extensively as having a positive impact on reading skills increased from 47.6% to 66.7%. For the 3b, the results look nearly the same: 76.2% before and 75% after. The largest change, however, happened in the 2d. First, the majority of the students (81.3%) thought that ER has a positive impact, but it almost decreased by half to 43.8% after the project. Since the majority of the students in the 1d (66.7%) and the 3b (75%) agree with the statement in POST Q13, it can be concluded that the project had a positive influence on their perception of their reading skills. Nevertheless, the project apparently had a negative impact on the 2d's attitudes to the impact on their reading skills due to the extreme decrease.

4.5. Q16, Q14 Importance of reading books in the English lesson

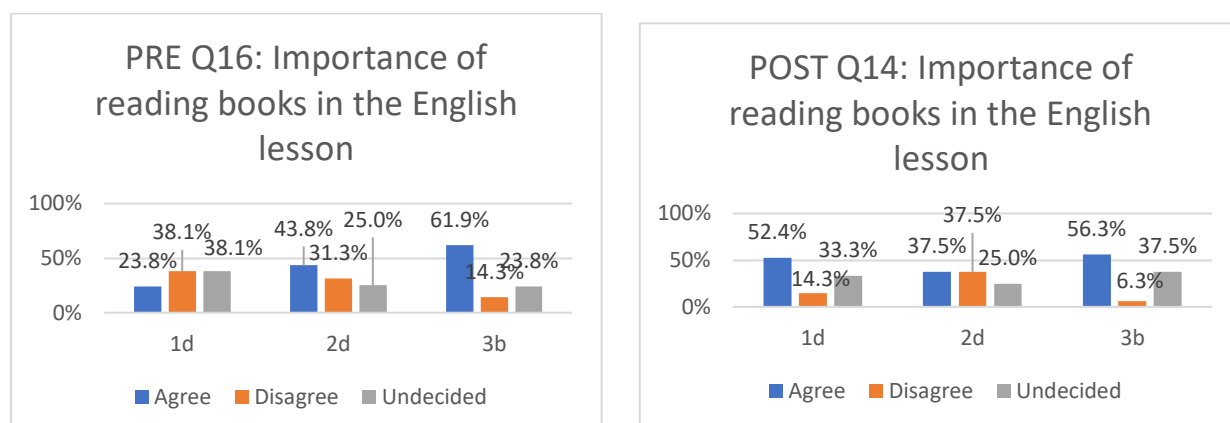


Figure 7: Comparison of PRE Q16 and POST Q14: Importance of reading books in the English lesson

For the cluster “Importance of reading books in the English lesson”, PRE Q16 and POST Q14 questionnaire were compared and contrasted with each other. While the majority of the 1d class said that reading extensively is unnecessary in the EFL education or that they do not have an opinion about that topic (38.1% each), these percentages changed in the post-reading questionnaire so that more than half of the class (52.4%) viewed ER as a necessity after the project. The results of the 2d show that after the project more students did not perceive (from 31.3% to 37.5%) reading books as an essential criterion for English lessons. However, the percentage of the people agreeing and disagreeing to the statement is equal, which implies that the students are not sure about the necessity of integrating books in EFL classrooms. Although the percentage of the students agreeing in the 3b also decreased in the post-reading questionnaire (from 61.9% to 56.3%), these percentages were dominating in both of the questionnaires, which means that the 3b students thought and still thinks that integrating books is important.

4.6. Q8 Increasing motivation due to the ER project

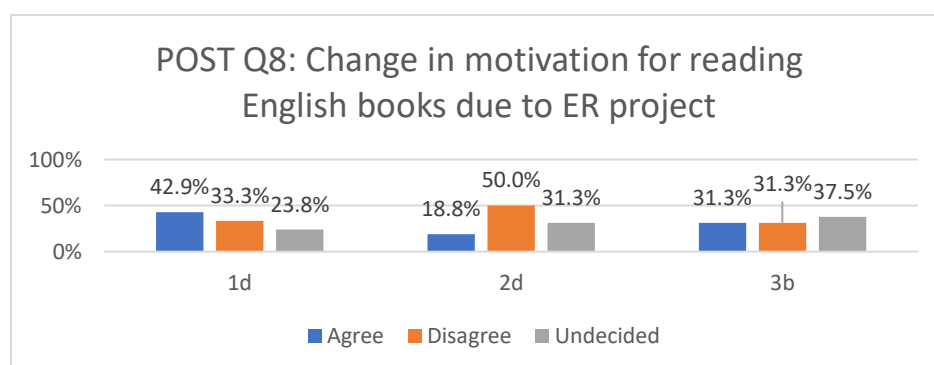


Figure 8: POST Q8: Change in motivation for reading English books due to the ER project

POST Q8 specifically asked the students about a perceived change in motivation for reading English books due to the ER project. This item was thus exactly targeted at answering

research question 1. With the aid of Figure 8, it can be investigated that the 1d students were the only ones where most of the students reported on a boost in motivation (42.9%). In the 2d, on the other hand, half of the class rejected the statement that the project provoked an increase in motivation and only 18.8% answered with agree. The results of the 3b resemble the ones from the first graders; nevertheless, the 3b students have equal percentages for agree and disagree (31.3% each) and the amount who did not have an opinion was the highest (37.5%). It can thus be concluded that only the first graders' motivation to read English books increased due to the ER project. The 3b students are not sure and the 2d students did not perceive a motivation boost.

4.7. Presentation of different items from the post-reading questionnaire (Q21, Q22, Q15, Q17, Q18)

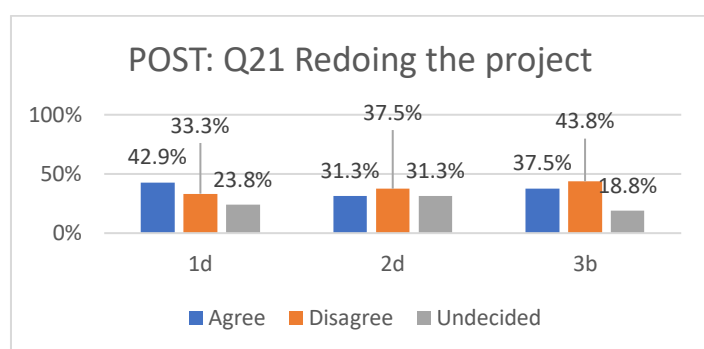


Figure 9: POST Q21: Participating in another ER project the following year

The percentages in Q21 about another ER project are similarly high in all of the classes. Although the 1d is the only class where more students want to repeat it (42.9%), this percentage is followed by the one of disagree with 33.3%. In the other two classes, the number of the students who do not want to repeat the ER project exceeded the one which wants to: 37.5% in the 2d and 43.8% in the 3b.

When discussing the results of Q21, the answers of Q22 also need to be taken into consideration since this question was a follow-up to Q21 requiring the students to justify their choice why they wanted or did not want to do another ER project: “Warum (nicht)? Gib hier eine Begründung für deine Antwort bei der letzten Frage an. [Why (not)? Give a reason for your answer in the last question]”. All of the reasons which stated something positive about the reading project were categorized under the section positive while criticism was categorized under negative. When the students wrote nothing or something which did not have to do with the question like “X” or “nichts [nothing]” (examples from 1d POST Q22), this answer counted towards undecided. The data can be found in Table 4.

Class	Positive	Negative	Undecided
1d	47.6%	33.3%	19.1%
2d	37.5%	37.5%	25%
3b	56.3%	37.5%	6.3%

Table 4: POST Q22 Justifications why the students (did not) like the ER project

The majority of the 1d (47.6%) and the 3b (56.3%) named positive reasons why they wanted to have another reading project, while an equal percentage of the 2d students (37.5% each) provided positive and negative ones, contradicting the findings of Q21. Although the 3b stated the desire to end the project in Q21, the majority of these students (56.3%) wrote positive statements why they would want to participate in another reading project next year. Such positive justifications included, “Es hilft vielen Schüler besseres Leseverständnis zu erlangen [sic] [It helps a lot of students to acquire better reading skills]” or “Weil mir das selbständig arbeiten gut gefällt [because I like working individually]”. This shift in opinion was the most extreme over the three classes. For the 2d, their initial rejection of another ER project in Q21 changed into uncertainty in Q22. Some of their positive reasons included, “Es ist cool solche Sachen auf englisch zu machen [sic] [It is cool to do such things in English]”; negative examples were the following, “Ich würde lieber Stoff machen [I would rather do educational material]”. Finally, regarding the 1d, the answers to the open question in Q22 related to the ones from Q21: Most of the students (42.9%) wanted to repeat the project (POST Q21) and a similar and even higher percentage (47.6%) provided reasons why they wanted it (POST Q22). Justifications for their choice included, “Weil es trotzdem Spaß gemacht hat die Aufgaben zu bearbeiten [sic] [Because it was fun to work on the exercises anyway]” or “Weil mir das Leseprojekt sehr viel Spaß bereitet hat [sic] [Because the reading project was a lot of fun]”. Generally speaking, an often-named factor influencing the students’ perception on the ER project was enjoyment. Some students said that they liked the variation within the lessons, others claimed that their reading skills improved, which is why they wanted to repeat it.

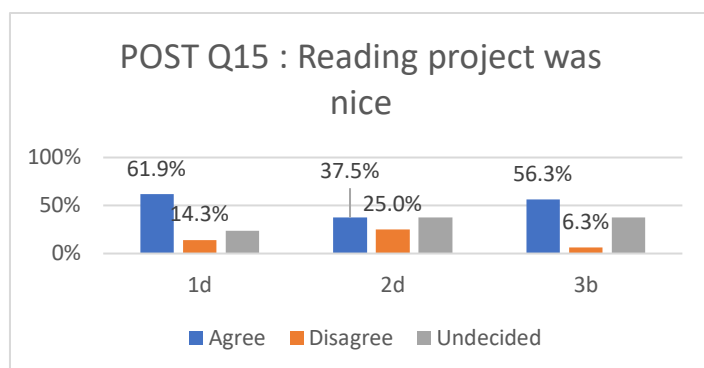


Figure 10: POST Q15: The reading project was nice

POST Q15 asked if the students liked the project. While the results of two classes are obvious since the majority of the students agreed with the statement, the result of the other class is not distinct. In the 1d (61.9%) and the 3b (56.3%), even more than half of the class agreed with the statement, which means that they liked the project. The students in the 2d, however, were not entirely sure about it. While more students agreed (37.5%) than disagreed (25%), 37.5% were also undecided. Since the percentages for all of the three options are rather balanced, it can be concluded that the 2d students were neither totally in favor, nor against another ER project. Since a possible reason for their indecisiveness could be that the students did not like the ten minutes of reading at the beginning of each English lesson but not the entire ER project, the results of POST Q17 and POST Q18 are presented below.

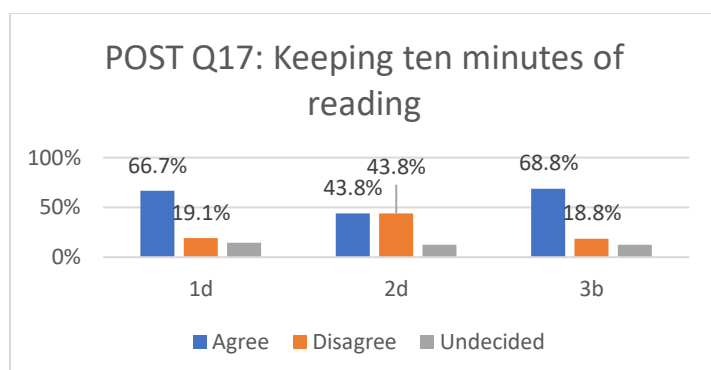


Figure 11: POST Q17: Keeping 10 minutes of reading at the beginning of each English lesson

From the 1d's as well as the 3b's results in Q17, it becomes evident that these classes want to keep the procedure of reading for ten minutes at the beginning of each English lesson. Around two thirds in both of the classes (66.7% in the 1d and 68.8% in the 3b) were in favor of this introductory procedure. On the contrary, the students of the 2d were uncertain about this idea, with the same proportion choosing agree and disagree (43.8%). The open question POST 18 asked about the justifications for the choices in POST Q17, which is why its results are important for discussion.

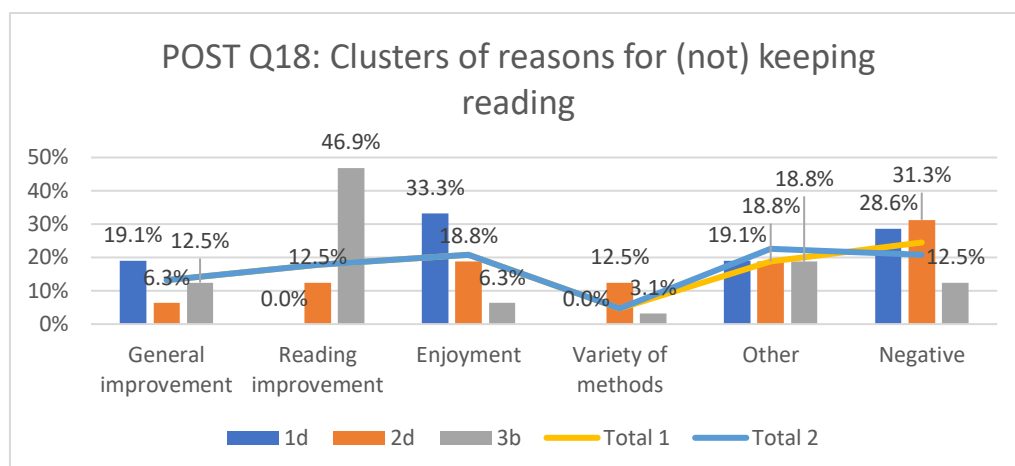


Figure 12: POST Q18: Clusters for (not) keeping reading as introductory procedure

Figure 12 displays the individual class results for the six clusters as well as two different totals. In the totals, the justifications of all of the classes were counted together. Total 1 in yellow displays the results with 13 negative reasons; Total 2 in blue follows the fact that two students who wrote negative responses actually liked the introductory procedure, but that they even want more, which implies a positive justification for POST Q18.

About half of the students and more in all of the classes positively reasoned their decision in POST Q17. In fact, 52.4% in the 1d, 50% in the 2d and even 87.5% in the 3b provided reasons why they wanted to keep reading. In that regard, different reasons were mentioned, which were clustered into categories and can be found in Figure 12. The following categories emerged when looking at all three class results: improvement in English in general (7), improvement in reading skills (9.5), enjoyment (11), variety of methods (2.5) and other (10). Thereby, the numbers in brackets indicate the number of students from all three participating classes. Since one 3b student provided two reasons, this was categorized under the two sections with half a vote each (“Weil es abwechslungs ist und hilft ein paar Leute besser in lesen zu lernen [sic] [Because it is variation and helps some people to become better at reading]”). Additionally, 13 students gave reasons against keeping an introductory reading procedure like “Weil ich schon gut englisch [sic] lesen kann [Because I am goot at reading in English already]” from the 1d, “Weil es sehr anstrengent [sic] ist [Because it is very exhausting]” from the 2d or “weil es keinen Spaß macht [because it is not funny]” from the 3b. However, two of these votes from 1d students only criticized that the amount of time was too little (*Ich möchte lieber 15 min lesen [sic] [I would rather read for 15 minutes]. Weil es für mich ein bisschen 10min lesen wenig ist [sic] [Because it is a bit too little, reading for 10 minutes]*). When considering the two criticisms from the 1d as positive justifications, it could be concluded that only 11 out

of all of the 53 students did not wish to read as an introductory procedure, which cumulates in 20.8% in total.

In general, although the students were uncertain about realizing another ER project (see POST Q21), the students of the 1d and 3b perceived the ten minutes of reading at the beginning of each English lesson as something extremely positive (see POST Q17). Considering the individual answers in POST Q18, it can be assumed that the students mostly perceived reading positively and considered it as something joyful which can even improve their reading skills, but only if there are no further requirements for them like the exercises from the reading project.

5. Presentation of reading comprehension data

In order to investigate the extent to which extensive reading might improve the students' reading skills in IR tasks (see RQ2), the results of the reading comprehensions from previous exams were taken into consideration, analyzed and interpreted.³ Since the intention of this research project was to prove that extensive reading improves intensive reading skills, results from exams before and after the ER project were compared and contrasted with each other. In that way, the author aspired to identify changes resulting directly from the ER project. An aspect that needs to be considered when analyzing the reading comprehensions is the difference in the students' proficiency levels, namely Standard and Standard AHS. Keeping these two proficiency levels in mind, the assessment of the reading comprehensions is adapted accordingly. The tasks are created as follows: Tests in middle schools have three different types of tasks, scoring either one, two or three points. The easy ones, which allow for one point, are specifically targeted at Standard students. The more difficult three-point tasks are the ones where the students have to engage critically with the question and include their own opinion, which is why they are specifically created for AHS students. While Standard students only need to score half of the one-point tasks in order to perform positively, the Standard AHS assessment only starts with the points of a "Befriedigend" of the Standard assessment. Consequently, while the reading text and the tasks are equal, the assessment balances out the difference in the students' proficiency levels.

Although the students have three or four exams per year, only the grades of reading comprehensions two and four were compared and analyzed in order to answer RQ2. This choice has several reasons: To begin with, the first RC could not be chosen since the 1d did not have one at the beginning of the first semester as their English proficiency level was too low. Second, the third RC could not be taken either since the students had already started with the ER project which could influence their results. Thus, in Figure 13, reading comprehension 2 (RC2) was compared and contrasted to reading comprehension 4 (RC4), which the students did at the end of the ER project. Additionally, Figure 14 compares RC2 and the retake of the same one from the whole 1d class and seven students from the 2d who did RC2 again at the end of the semester. Here, differences in the level of difficulty within the

³ The school's grading system in ELT provides grades for the individual competences as well as one overall grade, which is why the specific ones for the reading competence were considered for the analysis in the investigation.

different reading comprehensions, which could also lead to significantly different results, were eliminated. Sections 5.1. and 5.2. serve to provide an overview of the change in results of the three participating classes, comparing the individual results of the two reading comprehensions. If the grade in RC4 or in the retake of RC2 was better, this counted towards “improvement” and if it was worse it was categorized under “decrease”. It certainly also happened that the students had the same grade in both of the reading comprehensions, which is why the category “stagnation” was added. When students were ill and were therefore not able to take one or the other RC, their results were not included in the comparison.

5.1. Comparing RC2 with RC4

Because of illness in one or the other exam, 19 students each in the 1d and 3b as well as 12 in the 2d contributed to the results displayed in Figure 13.

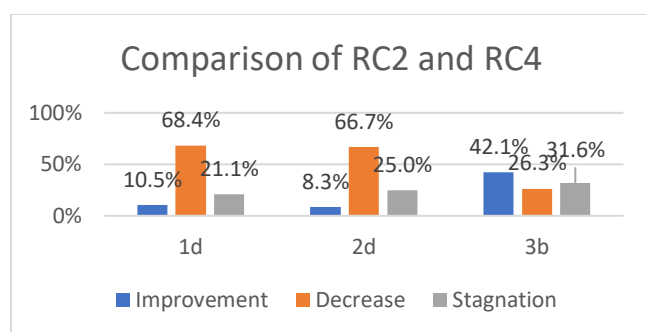


Figure 13: Comparison of reading comprehension 2 and 4

As can be seen in Figure 13, classes 1d and 2d have nearly the same results: More than 66% of the students performed worse in the RC after the ER project, while only 10.5% in the 1d and 8.3% in the 2d were able to improve their results. About one fourth in the 2d and one fifth in the 1d scored the same grade. Contrarily to these unexpected results are the ones from the 3b. The students in this class (42.1%) showed an improvement in their results after the ER project. This is followed by the students who performed equally well (31.6%) and the ones who scored worse (26.3%). To conclude, contrarily to what literature suggested (c.f. Ateek 2021) the students’ reading performances in the 1d and 2d both decreased post-intervention; nevertheless, the ones from the older and more proficient students of the 3b improved. Possible reasons for these results can be found in the discussion (chapter 6).

5.2. Comparing RC2 with its retake

As already mentioned in section 3.4., the researcher only noticed the possible differences in the level of difficulty of the text or the question format shortly before the end of the semester, which is why there was only time to collect data from one entire class (1d)

and seven students from the 2d. With regards to the comparison of RC2 and its retake, better results are measurable than the ones from comparing RC2 with RC4 (see section 5.1.).

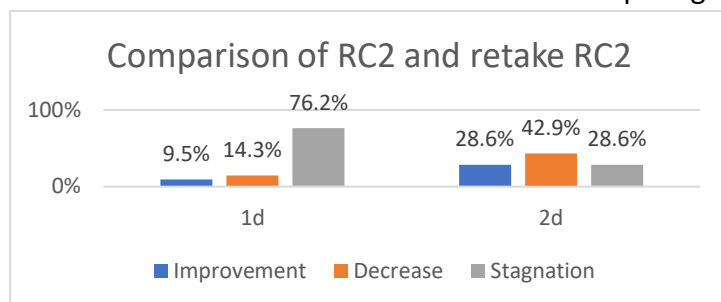


Figure 14: Comparison of reading comprehension 2 and its retake

While 68.4% in the 1d and 66.7% in the 2d scored worse when comparing RC2 and RC4, this percentage shrunk by 54.1% in the 1d and by 23.8% in the 2d when RC2 was done again. Although more students performed worse (14.3%) than improved (9.5%), three quarters of the 1d show equal results. In the 2d, the highest percentage of students still performed worse (42.9%) and an equal percentage (28.6%) either improved or scored the same grade.

Since the grades did not distinctly improve when doing the same reading comprehension which the students already did before the ER project, it can be concluded that the ER project did not seem to have the aspired positive influence on their reading skills. In order to investigate the significance of the results, t-tests were undertaken and are discussed below (5.3.).

5.3. T-tests

By means of a t-test, it can be determined whether a change did not only happen by chance by checking for statistical significance (Green 2013: 89). In the case of this research, the t-test should serve to prove if the changes in grades from RC2 to RC4 as well as from RC2 to its retake in the 1d and 2d are significant. Since the 3b was the only class where an improvement was dominating in the grades after the ER project (42.1%), their results are the only ones which can support the initial hypothesis that extensive reading improves reading skills in IR tasks (see RQ2). It is natural that the level of difficulty rises with each exam, but the students' language skills improve accordingly through the course of the semester. Consequently, it can be assumed that the level of difficulty was the same in all of the reading comprehensions, provided that the students' language level improved as well. Therefore, RC2 and RC4 also provide essential input for a t-test.

When undertaking t-tests, it is essential to know what type is needed. In this case, the t-tests are paired: The grades of the same set of participants before (RC2) and after (RC4 or retake of RC2) the ER project were investigated for significance, which makes it a repeated measures design (Grange 2011). A paired t-test implies that it is a type 1 as the same set of participants was investigated. In addition to the type, it is necessary to know the so-called "tails" (Grange 2011). In a one-tailed test, the researcher predicts a certain difference from the first set of data to the second; On the contrary, two-tailed tests are expected to display no significance or the researcher is unsure about it. Since the author of this paper predicted that the results of the reading comprehensions would improve after the ER project, these t-tests are one-tailed. Thus, the t-tests investigating the significance of the results of the reading comprehensions are paired (type) and one-tailed (tails). In the case of this thesis, the test takers belong to three different classes (1d, 2d, 3b), which obviously splits the participants into three separate groups.

The t-tests were measured with Excel. The results provide unsatisfying outcomes for the sake of this research paper. While the changing grades from RC2 to RC4 in the classes 1d and 2d are significant with p-values less than 0.05, the ones in the 3b are not. The p-value in the 3b is around 0.09, which indicates that their results are not significant; Hence, the improvement of the 8 people (42.10%) is neither and could have happened by chance. The t-tests for the other two classes, on the other hand, are significant: The p-values in the 1d and 2d are both around 0.01. Interestingly, when taking into account the results of RC2 and its

retake in the 1d and 2d, the t-tests also measure that these results are not significant. The outcomes of the t-tests present that only the results of the comparison of RC2 and RC4 in the 1d and 2d are significant; All the other results can be ignored due to their insignificance.

6. Discussion

In this chapter, the outcomes of the questionnaires and comparisons of the reading comprehensions and possible reasons are discussed in relation to the two research questions. Then, the project's impact on future teaching and further research is provided.

To begin with, the current ER project aspired to increase the students' motivation to read English books (see RQ1). This aspired motivation was measured by two online questionnaires pre- and post-intervention in order to identify a certain change in attitude to reading because of the ER project. In relation to the questionnaires, Hedge (1985: 64) points to the fact that the students might not be entirely reliable in such psychological information exchanges – be that orally or digitally – as it could be the case that they want to impress their classmates or teachers. Since the psychological preparation of the current reading project happened through an online questionnaire, it was excluded that the students wanted to make an impression on their classmates, but it could have happened that they wanted to impress their teachers by providing information for the sole purpose of pleasing them. Such dishonest answers could have been provided in questions like POST Q16, which required the students to rank the statement “Ich habe auch zuhause regelmäßig gelesen und mich mit den Aufgaben beschäftigt. [I regularly read at home and engaged with the exercises.]”. Nevertheless, it can never be proved whether the students provided honest or dishonest answers.

Discussing now the relation of reading and motivation, while Tegmark et al.'s (2022: 105) study proposes that the motivation decreases with rising age, this study neglects it by proving that the third graders are most interested in reading. Since the motivation of the Swedish students in Tegmark et al.'s study (2022: 105) decreased to a low level at the end of lower secondary this would indicate for the students of the present study that the motivation in the 1d is the highest and the one of the 3b the lowest, when comparing the three classes. However, as opposed to literature (Tegmark et al. 2022: 105), it was not the case that the older students showed less motivation. In fact, according to the collected data in the post-reading questionnaires, the 3b shows the most interest when compared to the other two classes: After the ER project (POST Q1), the 3b has the highest percentage (25%) of students perceiving reading as a hobby. The number of students preferring English books to others is also the highest (31.3%) (POST Q7). Furthermore, the 3b is the only class where most of the students (37.5%) view reading as their favorite competence at school (POST Q10); this percentage is almost eight times higher than the one of the 1d (4.8%). Moreover, three

quarters of the 3b students believe that reading actually has an impact on reading skills (POST Q13). With 56.3%, the 3b also displays the highest percentage of students who think that reading English books is important in the English lessons (POST Q14). Although the percentage of students who want to keep reading as an introductory procedure is only slightly lower in the 1d (66.7%), the one of the 3b is still the highest (68.8%). Nevertheless, the percentage of students who perceived a change in motivation specifically due to the ER project is not the highest in the 3b (see POST Q8). In fact, the 1d presents the highest percentage with 42.9%, which is followed by the one of the 3b (31.3%). Yet, when considering the results of the above-mentioned questionnaire items, it can still be concluded that the motivation of the older students is not the lowest but the highest, which contradicts the findings of Tegmark et al. (2022).

Interestingly, the motivation decreased enormously in the 2d, when comparing the results of their pre- and post-reading questionnaire. This decrease in interest becomes especially visible in Figures 5, 8 and 12. Despite the nearly doubling number of students perceiving reading as a hobby (from 6.3% PRE Q1 to 12.5% POST Q1), the level of popularity from one of the two most favorite competences decreased from 31.3% (PRE Q10) to 18.8% (POST Q10). Moreover, when comparing all of the classes, the 2d was the one which provided the highest number of negative justifications why they did not want to participate in another ER project (31.3%, POST Q18). Furthermore, the majority of the students rejects the statement that the reading project provoked an increase in motivation (see POST Q8). To be more precise, half of the class disagrees, a third is undecided and only 18% perceive a boost in motivation. Thus, it can be concluded that the 2d is the only class which specifically neglects an increase in motivation due to extensive reading. The reason for the 2d's decision could be that they experienced the reading project differently since their two English teachers are also their form teachers. This means that the relationship between teachers and students differs from the ones in the other two classes by being more intense. Furthermore, sometimes the teachers needed time to talk about organizational matters, which also took away essential English time. Consequently, the ten minutes of reading could not always be integrated into the English lessons, as either the teacher had to announce an organizational topic or a social problem needed to be discussed, for example.

In addition to the possible disadvantage relating to the teacher-student relationship the 2d experienced, another potential drawback could be a problem with the organization of the

project that affected all of the participating classes. The decrease in interest as referred to in POSTQ1 could be owed to the workload which the younger students perceived as too much according to the answers in the open questions. To illustrate this hypothesis further, some students agreed with the statement in POSTQ26 that being entirely responsible for the time-management was difficult for them. Some others agreed that intermediate deadlines for exercises or amounts of books would have been useful (see POSTQ27). On the other hand, as derived from the responses to POSTQ19, the claim can partly be devalued since some students reported on a development of their organizational skills owing to the responsibility which was needed for the completion of the project. From those answers in the post-reading questionnaire, it can be concluded that the students liked the project, but that they would have enjoyed it more, if it had been organized differently. Moreover, it could also be assumed that more students would have perceived an increase in motivation if the project had been longer. Although, according to critics (Brown 2008: 239), it could be argued that the duration of the project was too short in order to make a difference, Al-Nafisah (2015: 106) devalues this argument by already monitoring a boost in motivation after his three-month long ER project. Regarding his results, it needs to be considered that the participants in his study attended university which means that they were older and probably on a more proficient language level. Considering the results of POST Q21, Q22, Q17 and Q18, a take-away-point of this study is that another ER project will only be beneficial for the students' motivation and ensure engagement, if the project is based on a certain voluntariness. This voluntariness means that the students are required to read, but that there are no follow-up exercises. Nevertheless, with such an open reading arrangement it cannot be assured that the students' reading skills thereby also improve which relates to the section discussed below.

The results of the 1d, especially concerning another ER project next year (see POST Q21), can be compared with the ones from Kirchhoff's (2009) study, as the participants were all first-grade EFL learners in a lower secondary school. In addition to the equal learning conditions, the two studies show a similarity in the length of the project, since the students were engaged in extensive reading for about three months in both of the studies. However, the results of the 1d are different than expected with regards to Kirchhoff's study (2009: 116). None of her students declared themselves against another project, only 9% were unsure and 91% said yes. In the 1d, on the other hand, only 42.9% of the students wanted to participate in another project, 23.8% were undecided and one third of the class (33.3%) stated that they did not

want to repeat it, which signifies totally different outcomes than the ones from Kirchhoff (2009: 116). While almost all of Kirchhoff's students (91%) wanted to repeat the project, less than half of the 1d class (42.9%) shared this wish. Nevertheless, the most different results are visible within the category of students rejecting another ER project: While there were 0% in Kirchhoff's study, 33.3% students in the 1d rejected it. A possible reason for this huge difference could be the school setting. Although both of the classes are in lower secondary, Kirchhoff's (2009) school is a "Gymnasium" and the one from the current research is a middle school.

The difference could also be answered with the aid of answers from different questions in the post-reading questionnaire: 61.9% of the 1d thinks that the project was nice (POST Q15); 66.7% perceived an improvement in their reading skills (POST Q13) and 52.4% confirmed that reading is important for EFL learning (POST Q14). The answers to those questions are all in favor of repeating the reading project, but the answers in Q21 are not. Therefore, the follow-up question POST Q22 also needs to be taken into account in order to find possible reasons why so many 1d students pronounced against it.

In the open question POST Q22, only two students expressed something negative ("weil es mir nicht so gefelt [sic]. [Because I did not really like it]". "Weil ich finde das [sic] es ein bisschen zuviel [sic]. [Because I think it is a bit too much]"); All the others either provided reasons why they aspired to redo it (47.6%), or they did not share their opinion (19.1%). Some of the students' answers were the following: "Weil es war sehr interessant [Because it was very interesting]". "Es ist sehr wichtig gut zu. Lesen in englisch [sic] [It is very important to be good at reading in English]". "Weil es trotzdem spaß [sic] gemacht hat die Aufgaben zu bearbeiten [Because it was fun to work on the exercises anyway]". Considering these results, it can be argued that the students of the 1d proved in multiple questions (POST Q8, Q13, Q14, Q15) that they want to repeat the reading project next year, despite their unexpected answer in POST Q21. All aspects considered, it can be concluded that RQ1 can partly be confirmed.

The second main aim of this thesis was to investigate a potential relation between extensive reading and reading skills in intensive reading tasks (see RQ2). Considering the two comparisons of RC2 with RC4 as well as RC2 with its retake, it can be concluded that the extensive reading project did not have a positive impact on the 1d's and 2d's actual reading skills. The grades of the reading comprehensions of 68.4% of the 1d students and 66.7% of the 2d students decreased in RC4 after the ER project (see Figure 13), which is the exact opposite

of the project's aspired goal. While the results of the 3b improved (42.1%), t-tests proved that they happened by chance.

In addition to these unsatisfactory results, the 1d and seven students of the 2d were not even able to improve their grades when RC2 was retaken, although any possible difference in the level of difficulty was thereby eliminated (see Figure 14). While about three quarters of the 1d scored the same grade, more students had a worse (14.3%) than better (9.5%) one. Similar results were measured in the 2d where most of the seven students had a worse (42.9%) grade when doing RC2 again.

When discussing the answer to RQ2, POST Q13 also needs to be considered as it asked whether the students perceived an impact on their reading skills specifically because of the ER project. Szumski and Karwowski (2019: 1) state that "interpersonal expectations create reality", which means that if the students perceive themselves to be better, it is more likely that they will actually become better. In the case of this research, this "Pygmalion effect" (Szumski & Karwowski 2019: 1) indicates that the students who think that their reading skills improved because of the ER project, as investigated by POST Q13, actually perform better in RC4 and the retake. Although the majority in all of the classes believes that the reading project had an impact on their reading skills in IR tasks (66.7% in the 1d, 43.8% in the 2d, 75% in the 3b), the actual data of the comparisons does not show an improvement in the 1d or 2d (see Figures 13 and 14). Only the students of the 3b were able to improve (42.1%) their grades after the ER project. Yet, this was also the only class which already ranked reading as their best competence before the project (see PRE Q9) and therefore no specific changes were expected according to the Pygmalion effect.

Generally speaking, it can be concluded that the project has had a positive influence on the students' perception of their reading skills since most of the students in all of the classes (66.7% in the 1d, 43.8% in the 2d, 75% in the 3b) agreed with the statement in POST Q13. However, unlike suggested by the Pygmalion effect (Szumski & Karwowski 2019: 1), this positive perception of allegedly improved reading skills did not affect their reading skills in reality. While the results of the 3b seemed promising as the majority of the students improved (42.1%) their grades, they turned out to be insignificant according to the t-test. Hence, improving the students' reading skills in IR tasks was another unattained objective of the current project, which is why the hypothesis of RQ2 cannot be confirmed.

These conclusions are totally different from the ones predicted by Elley and Mangubhai (1983) and Al-Nafisah (2015). In their study from the 1980s, Elley and Mangubhai (1983: 61) proved that the students who engaged in extensive reading outperformed the others in reading comprehensions and that the acquisition of these competences happened twice as fast as usual. After doing a follow-up study a year post-intervention, the ER students still showed significantly better results in terms of their reading skills in reading comprehensions (Elley & Mangubhai 1983: 63-64). It can therefore be argued that an intense exposure over the course of eight months like in their study was enough to provoke a lasting improvement in reading skills. Since the present study only lasted for three months and the results of the 1d and 2d did not improve, it could either be concluded that the project was not intense enough (only ten minutes of reading three or four times a week and engagement at home cannot provoke a change) or that the project itself was too short. However, the results of Al-Nafisah's (2015) study reject this criticism about the project's length. Although the ER phase in his study also lasted for three months only, the author was able to prove significant progress in the students' reading performances. He even supported his results with t-tests to prove that they did not happen by chance.

All aspects considered, it can therefore be concluded that although most of Day and Bamford's (1998: 2) ten principles for successful extensive reading projects were adhered to within this ER project, the desired outcome of an improvement in reading skills in IR tasks could not be achieved in this study. Since the t-tests proved that the results of the improved reading comprehensions in the 3b after the ER phase are not significant, it can be argued that the ER project did not have a positive effect on the students' reading skills in IR tasks. While other researchers were already able to monitor improvements in reading skills after a three-month long project (see Al-Nafisah 2015), this study showed that a three-month long project in those particular classes of an Austrian middle school does not enhance receptive reading skills in IR tasks.

The teacher-researcher's personal observation of the ER project is that the students mostly profited from the ten minutes of reading at the beginning of each lesson as a positive and calm atmosphere was created and the students were able to adapt to the English lesson from subjects of the lesson before. These advantages from the students' perspective are similar to the ones for the teachers: Not only is it beneficial for the teachers if the students start the lesson quietly and read in English for ten minutes, but, in that way, the teachers are

also able to use this valuable time for checking the attendance and homework. Another crucial outcome of the project is that the motivation for reading was boosted in some way and that certain students perceived an improvement in their reading skills. This introductory procedure of extensive reading can therefore be described as a tool which has the possibility to enhance a calm atmosphere in the ELT classroom and which helps the teachers to save time. Most importantly, it also contributes to the students' motivation to read English books.

To plan successful future teaching, it was imperative for the teacher-researcher to know whether the students liked the reading project per se or only the mere act of reading at the beginning of each English lesson. Even though not all of the students in the current investigation want to participate in another ER project with similar requirements, most of them wish to keep reading as an introductory procedure (see POST Q17). As can be deduced from previous literature (Ateek 2021, Al-Nafisah 2015, Elley & Mangubhai 1983, Kirchhoff 2009, Tegmark et al. 2022), ER can improve receptive skills and it is a motivating factor for reading. Due to the unsatisfactory results in this study, further research in this field is recommended. In order to confirm those research questions, possible future ER projects in the field of Austrian middle schools could for instance last longer or provide a more structured time-frame so that the students do not have to organize the project entirely themselves.

7. Conclusion

This study aimed at providing useful insights for EFL teachers into the effectiveness and the impact of extensive reading on Austrian middle school students' motivation towards reading English books and their reading skills in IR tasks. Thereby, RQ1 investigated the relation between an ER project and motivation to read books in the foreign language and RQ2 focused on a possible positive impact of ER on the students reading performance in reading comprehensions. The language proficiency level of the students under investigation ranged from A1 to A2 (or B1 in certain areas) with reference to the Companion Volume (2018) and the curriculum (BMBWF 2024a). The students filled out one questionnaire about their reading habits before and one after the ER intervention. In that way, changes in their reading habits and interests could be detected that developed because of the project. However, the answers from the questionnaires did not provide the anticipated results to prove RQ1. While some students perceived a boost in motivation for reading in English, it is not a distinct outcome that can be generalized.

Furthermore, with the analysis of two reading comprehensions from English exams before and after the ER phase, the influence of extensive reading on the students' reading skills was measured. After the three-month long extensive reading project, the results of the reading comprehensions did not show any significant improvement in reading skills, not even when the same reading comprehension from the beginning of the project was given to them again after the ER intervention. While the results from the 3b were the only ones which improved when comparing RC2 to RC4, it turned out that those results were insignificant according to a t-test (see 5.3.). Hence, the analyses of the reading comprehensions cannot confirm the hypothesis in RQ2.

To conclude, while RQ1 about the motivation could only partly be confirmed and RQ2 about the reading skills was entirely rejected due to the decreasing results in the reading comprehensions, the project still contributed to a good working atmosphere in the classes and taught the students that reading is an important constituent of EFL learning.

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9. Appendix

9.1. Abstract

Intensive reading (IR) tasks represent the typical schoolbook exercise: short texts, not longer than a page, where the students have to answer questions, tick the correct answer or correct wrong statements. Extensive reading (ER), on the other hand, refers to reading large quantities of books, mostly for pleasure. The present thesis investigates the effect of an extensive reading project in the English lessons on the students' motivation to read English books as well as on their reading skills in intensive reading tasks. The goal of this thesis is to prove that reading extensively does not only boost the students' motivation (see RQ1) for reading English books, but that it simultaneously also has a positive impact on the students' receptive skill reading (see RQ2), which is especially useful in IR tasks.

The project was undertaken as a field study in the summer semester 2023, working with three classes in a middle school in Upper Austria. It lasted for three months and within this timespan, the students read several graded readers from the school library and completed different exercises individually. Ten minutes at the beginning of each English lesson were dedicated to the project. Other than that, the students needed to read and engage with the project at home on a regular basis. The students' ages ranged from 10 to 14 years; their language levels according to the Companion Volume (2018: 36) and the curriculum for Austrian middle schools (BMBWF 2023a: 47) ranged from A1, basic user, to B1, independent user, in certain areas.

Online questionnaires before and after the ER intervention aimed at examining if the students' motivation towards reading increases through extensive reading. The aspired improvement of reading skills in IR tasks was measured by comparing the results of reading comprehensions from regular English exams before and after the ER intervention. In addition to that, one class as well as seven students from another one did the same reading comprehension from the beginning of the project again at the end of it in order to eliminate possible differences in the level of difficulty.

The results of this study show that no effect on the students' reading skills is measurable but that the ER project led to a positive impact on the students' motivation towards reading in English.

German version:

Intensive Leseaufgaben repräsentieren das typische Schulbuchübungsformat: kurze Texte, nicht länger als eine Seite, bei denen die Schüler Fragen beantworten, die richtige Antwort ankreuzen oder falsche Aussagen korrigieren müssen. Extensives Lesen, hingegen, bezieht sich auf das Lesen großer Mengen an Büchern, meistens zum Vergnügen. Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht die Auswirkungen eines extensiven Leseprojekts im Englischunterricht auf die Motivation der SchülerInnen zum Lesen englischer Bücher sowie auf ihre Lesefähigkeiten in Leseaufgaben. Das Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es zu beweisen, dass extensives Lesen nicht nur die Motivation der Schüler (siehe Hypothese 1) steigert, englische Bücher zu lesen, sondern dass es gleichzeitig auch einen positiven Einfluss auf die rezeptiven Lesefähigkeiten der SchülerInnen hat (siehe Hypothese 2), was besonders bei Leseaufgaben nützlich ist.

Das Projekt wurde als Feldstudie im Sommersemester 2023 durchgeführt und umfasste die Zusammenarbeit mit drei Klassen an einer Mittelschule in Oberösterreich. Es dauerte drei Monate und in diesem Zeitraum lasen die SchülerInnen mehrere graded readers aus der Schulbibliothek und arbeiteten individuell an verschiedene Aufgaben. Zehn Minuten zu Beginn jeder Englischstunde waren dem Projekt gewidmet. Abgesehen davon mussten die SchülerInnen regelmäßig zu Hause lesen und sich mit den Aufgaben beschäftigen. Das Alter der SchülerInnen lag zwischen 10 und 14 Jahren; ihre Sprachniveaus gemäß dem Companion Volume (2018: 36) und dem Lehrplan für österreichische Mittelschulen (BMBWF 2023a: 47) reichten von A1, grundlegender Benutzer, bis B1, unabhängiger Benutzer, in bestimmten Bereichen.

Online-Fragebögen vor und nach der Intervention hatten zum Ziel zu untersuchen, ob die Motivation der SchülerInnen zum Lesen durch extensives Lesen gesteigert wird. Die angestrebte Verbesserung der Lesefähigkeit in Schulbuchaufgaben wurde durch den Vergleich der Ergebnisse von Leseverständnissen aus regulären Englischschularbeiten vor und nach der Intervention gemessen. Darüber hinaus machten eine gesamte Klasse sowie sieben Schüler aus einer anderen das gleiche Leseverständnis vom Anfang des Projekts noch einmal am Ende, um mögliche Unterschiede der Schwierigkeitsgrade zu eliminieren.

Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie zeigen, dass keine messbaren Auswirkungen auf die Lesefähigkeiten der SchülerInnen feststellbar sind, jedoch das Leseprojekt zu einem positiven Einfluss auf die Motivation der SchülerInnen zum Lesen in Englisch führte.

9.2. Consent form

Universität Wien
Department of English and American Studies
In Kooperation mit einer
oberösterreichischen Mittelschule



universität
wien

Lea Kaiserseder, BEd
Studentin zur Erlangung des Titels Master of Education (MEd)
a01636817@unet.univie.ac.at

Einwilligung zur Teilnahme an einer Masterarbeitsstudie

Liebe SchülerInnen, liebe Eltern!

Für meine Masterarbeit habe ich das Thema extensives Lesen im Englischunterricht gewählt. Genauer gesagt möchte ich erforschen, inwiefern sich extensives Lesen auf die Motivation der SchülerInnen auswirkt und inwiefern es positive Auswirkungen auf die Lesekompetenz im Allgemeinen hat.

Der Ablauf des Projekts ist wie folgt: Die SchülerInnen füllen Fragebögen zu ihren Lesegewohnheiten aus. Anschließend erfolgt eine extensive Lesephase, welche sich über das gesamte Sommersemester erstreckt. Wichtig ist jedoch zu bemerken, dass jegliche Antworten der Fragebögen keine Auswirkungen auf die Note haben und alle Daten anonymisiert werden. Jeweils zehn Minuten extensives Lesen wird in den regulären Englischstunden zur Verfügung stehen; die SchülerInnen werden aber auch außerhalb der Schule lesen. Dieses Projekt stellt daher auch einen wichtigen Teil der Mitarbeitsnote dar.

Zum Schluss wird ein zweiter ähnlicher Fragebogen ausgefüllt, um zu evaluieren, ob sich die Lesegewohnheiten geändert haben. Um die Entwicklung der Lesekompetenz zu erforschen, werden die Resultate der "reading comprehensions" von den Schularbeiten vom Schuljahr 2022/23 analysiert und verglichen, um ein möglichst präzises und verlässliches Ergebnis zu erzielen.

Die Daten werden mithilfe von Google Formulare gesammelt, gespeichert und analysiert. Der Zugriff zu den Daten wird nur den Englischlehrerinnen des Kollegiums, der Direktorin, sowie der Masterarbeitsbetreuerin Dr. Helen Heaney gewährt. Die analysierten Daten werden selbstverständlich nur nach Anonymisierung in die Masterarbeit eingearbeitet und veröffentlicht. Nach Fertigstellung der Masterarbeit werden die Daten gelöscht.

Ich bedanke mich bereits im Voraus für die Mitarbeit zur Erlangung meines Studienabschlusses und freue mich auf das Leseprojekt!

Herzliche Grüße
Lea Kaiserseder, BEd

Abschnitt zum Abgeben

Mit meiner Unterschrift bestätige ich
_____ (SCHÜLERIN, Klasse), dass ich über
das Projekt aufgeklärt bin und ehrlich und gewissenhaft mitarbeiten werde.

Mit meiner Unterschrift bestätige ich
_____ (ELTERNTEIL), dass ich über die
Studie aufgeklärt bin, an der mein Sohn / meine Tochter teilnimmt.

Name des/r TeilnehmerIn

Datum

Unterschrift

Name des Elternteils

Datum

Unterschrift

9.3. Pre-reading questionnaire

A brief introduction as well as the purpose of the investigation were provided at the beginning of the pre-reading questionnaires, which is stated in the paragraph below.

In dieser Umfrage geht es um dein Leseverhalten außerhalb des Klassenzimmers und im Englischunterricht. Alle deine Antworten werden online gespeichert, aber nur deine Englischlehrerinnen haben Zugriff darauf. Die Antworten sind anonym und beeinflussen deine Englischnote in keinsten Weise. Die Teilnahme ist jedoch verpflichtend und zählt zur Mitarbeit. Mit deiner Teilnahme trägst du einen wichtigen Teil zu der Masterarbeit von Frau Kaiserseder bei. Danke für deine Mitarbeit und Ehrlichkeit! [This survey is about your reading behavior outside the classroom as well as in the English lessons. All of your answers are stored online, but only your English teachers have access to them. The answers are anonymous and do not affect your English grade in any way. However, participation is mandatory and counts as cooperation. By participating, you are making an important contribution to Ms. Kaiserseder's Master's Thesis. Thank you for your cooperation and honesty!]

In order to provide a structured overview of the different questionnaire items, the items and answer possibilities were put together in Table 5. Since the language of the questionnaire is German, the English translations were added.

Question number	Question item	Answer possibilities
Q1	Bücher zu lesen ist ein Hobby von mir. [Reading books is a hobby of mine.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q2	Ich lese auch Zeitungen, Zeitschriften, Artikel, Blogs, ... (online oder gedruckt). [I also read newspapers, magazines, articles, blogs, ... (online or printed out).]	Always – never
Q3	Ich lese nur, wenn ich muss. [I only read if I have to.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q4	Wie oft liest du Bücher in deiner Freizeit? [How often do you read books in your freetime?]	Always – never
Q5	Ich lese am liebsten (schreibe das Genre hin: z.B. Action, Roman, ...) [I prefer reading (write down the genre e.g. action, romance, ...)]	/
Q6	Ich lese Bücher am liebsten auf Deutsch. [I prefer reading books in German.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree

Q7	Ich lese Bücher am liebsten auf Englisch. [I prefer reading books in English.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q8	Ich lese einfache Bücher auch auf Englisch in meiner Freizeit. [I also read easy English books in my free time.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q9	Meiner Meinung nach bin ich in Englisch in dieser Kompetenz am besten: [In my opinion, my best competence in English is:]	Hören (Listening); Lesen (Reading); Sprechen (Speaking); Schreiben (Writing)
Q10	Diese Kompetenz mag ich im Englischunterricht am liebsten: [This is my favorite competence in English:]	Hören (Listening); Lesen (Reading); Sprechen (Speaking); Schreiben (Writing)
Q11	Ich glaube, wenn ich viele englische Videos und Serien ansehe, werde ich besser in der Kompetenz Hören (Listening). [I believe that I become better at listening if I watch/ listen to a lot of English videos and series.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q12	Ich glaube, wenn ich viel auf Englisch lese, werde ich besser in der Kompetenz Lesen (Reading). [I believe that I become better at reading if I read a lot in English.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q13	Ich glaube, wenn ich viel auf Englisch spreche (z.B. im Unterricht oder auf Urlaub), werde ich besser in der Kompetenz Sprechen (Speaking). [I believe that I become better at speaking if I speak English a lot (e.g. in the lessons or on holiday)]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q14	Ich glaube, wenn ich viel auf Englisch schreibe (z.B. auf Social Media oder mit Freunden/Verwandten im Ausland), werde ich besser in der Kompetenz Schreiben (Writing). [I believe that I become better at writing if I write in English a lot (e.g. on social media or with friends/ relatives in foreign countries)]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree

Q15	Ich würde gerne im Englischunterricht englische Bücher lesen. [I would like to read English books in the English lessons.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q16	Ich finde es wichtig, im Englischunterricht Bücher auf Englisch zu lesen. [I think it is important to read English books in the English lessons.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q17	Wenn wir im Englischunterricht Bücher lesen, lese ich diese am Liebsten gemeinsam mit der Lehrerin. [When we read English books in the English lessons, I prefer reading them together with the teacher.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q18	Ich freue mich auf das Leseprojekt. [I am looking forward to the reading project.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree

Table 5: Questionnaire items of pre-reading questionnaire

9.4. Post-reading questionnaire

A brief introduction as well as the purpose of the investigation were provided at the beginning of the post-reading questionnaires, which is stated in the paragraph below.

In dieser Umfrage wollen wir herausfinden, ob sich dein Leseverhalten und deine Fähigkeiten aufgrund des Leseprojekts verändert haben.

Alle deine Antworten werden online gespeichert, aber nur deine Englischlehrerinnen haben Zugriff darauf. Die Antworten sind anonym und beeinflussen deine Englischnote in keinsten Weise. Mit deiner Teilnahme trägst du einen wichtigen Teil zu der Masterarbeit von Frau Kaiserseder bei. Danke für deine Mitarbeit und Ehrlichkeit!! [In this survey, we want to find out whether your reading behavior and skills have changed as a result of the reading project.

All of your answers are stored online, but only your English teachers have access to them. The answers are anonymous and do not affect your English grade in any way. By participating, you are making an important contribution to Ms. Kaiserseder's Master's Thesis. Thank you for your cooperation and honesty!]

In order to provide a structured overview of the different questionnaire items, the items and answer possibilities were put together in Table 6. Since the language of the questionnaire is German, the English translations were added. Moreover, when an item was changed or added, its question number was highlighted in red.

Question number	Question item	Answer possibilities
Q1	Bücher zu lesen ist ein Hobby von mir. [Reading books is a hobby of mine.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q2	Ich lese auch Zeitungen, Zeitschriften, Artikel, Blogs, ... (online oder gedruckt). [I also read newspapers, magazines, articles, blogs, ... (online or printed out).]	Always – never
Q3	Ich lese nur, wenn ich muss. [I only read if I have to.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q4	Wie oft liest du Bücher in deiner Freizeit? [How often do you read books in your freetime?]	Always – never
Q5	Ich lese Bücher am liebsten auf Deutsch. [I prefer reading books in German.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q6	Ich lese Bücher am liebsten auf Englisch. [I prefer reading books in English.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree

Q7	Ich lese einfache Bücher auch auf Englisch in meiner Freizeit. [I also read easy English books in my free time.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q8	Da ich mich 3 Monate lang intensiv mit dem Lesen englischer Bücher beschäftigt habe, habe ich mehr Motivation englische Bücher zu lesen. [Since I engaged intensely with reading English books over the course of three months, I have more motivation to English books]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q9	Meiner Meinung nach bin ich in Englisch in dieser Kompetenz am besten: [In my opinion, my best competence in English is:]	Hören (Listening); Lesen (Reading); Sprechen (Speaking); Schreiben (Writing)
Q10	Ich glaube, dass sich meine Englischkenntnisse in dieser Kompetenz durch das Leseprojekt verbessert haben. [I believe that my English skills have changed in this competence because of the reading project]	Hören (Listening); Lesen (Reading); Sprechen (Speaking); Schreiben (Writing)
Q11	Diese Kompetenz mag ich im Englischunterricht am liebsten: [This is my favorite competence in English:]	Hören (Listening); Lesen (Reading); Sprechen (Speaking); Schreiben (Writing)
Q12	Ich glaube, dass sich meine Vorliebe zu dieser Kompetenz durch das Leseprojekt verändert haben. [I believe that my preference has changed due to the reading project.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q13	Da ich mich 3 Monate lang intensiv mit dem Lesen englischer Bücher beschäftigt habe, hat sich mein Leseverständnis (Reading) in Englisch verbessert. [Since I engaged intensely with reading English books over the course of three months, my reading skills in English have improved.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree

Q14	Ich finde es wichtig, im Englischunterricht Bücher auf Englisch zu lesen. [I think it is important to read English books in the English lessons.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q15	Das Leseprojekt hat mir gefallen. [I liked the reading project.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q16	Ich habe auch zuhause regelmäßig gelesen und mich mit den Aufgaben beschäftigt. [I also regularly read at home and engaged with the exercises.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q17	Ich würde es gerne beibehalten, dass wir am Anfang jeder Englischstunde selbständig 10 Minuten lang englische Bücher lesen. [I would like to keep reading English books individually ten minutes long at the beginning of each English lesson.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q18	Warum (nicht)? Gib hier eine Begründung für deine Antwort bei der letzten Frage an. [Why (not)? Give a reason for your answer in the last question.]	/
Q19	Ich finde es gut, dass wir die Bücher alleine lesen mussten, weil ich dadurch gelernt habe, mir alles selbständig einzuteilen. [I think it was good that we had to read the books individually because I was able to learn to organize myself.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q20	Alles selbständig einzuteilen war eine Herausforderung für mich. [Organizing everything myself was a challenge form e.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q21	Ich würde das Leseprojekt gerne nächstes Jahr wiederholen. [I would like to repeat the reading project again next year.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q22	Warum (nicht)? Gib hier eine Begründung für deine Antwort bei der letzten Frage an. [Why (not)? Give a reason for your answer in the last question.]	/
Q23	Die Aufgaben des Projekts waren interessant. [The tasks of the project were interesting.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree

Q24	Die Anzahl an Aufgaben war passend für den Zeitraum. [The number of exercises was suitable for the amount of time.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q25	Wie viele Aufgaben hast du erledigt? (Nummer 1 mit dem Bücherholen aus der Bibliothek zählt nicht dazu.) [How many exercises did you do? (Number 1 about getting the books from the library does not count.)]	1-10
Q26	Für mich war es schwierig, meine Zeit selbständig einzuteilen. [For me, it was difficult to organize my time myself.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree
Q27	Es wäre für mich besser und einfacher gewesen, wenn es verschiedene Deadlines für ein paar Aufgaben gegeben hätte. [It would have been better and easier for me if we had had different deadlines for some exercises.]	Strongly agree – strongly disagree

Table 6: Questionnaire items of post-reading questionnaire

9.5. Reading Comprehensions

9.5.1. RC 2 1d

READING 1 Read the text. - Lies den Text.

Bayswater Zoo

The new Bayswater Zoo is open. It's in Oxford, next to the school. There are green crocodiles from Africa in a pool. They eat crabs. There's a brown hippo called Harry and a beautiful tiger from Asia. His name is Gordon. The fantastic pets corner has hamsters, ponies and rabbits. The pets corner is in front of the playground. And there's a cage with spiders. There are pony rides, a swimming pool and three playgrounds at the zoo. The café has cakes (=Kuchen) and ice cream. The zoo is free for children under seven and it's £ 8 for adults.

Circle the correct word. Kreise das richtige Wort ein.

1. The zoo is in *Oxford* / *Bayswater Beach* / *London*.
2. The crocodiles come from *Asia* / *Oxford* / *Africa*.
3. There are ponies in the *playground* / *pets corner* / *cage*.

Then complete the sentences with a maximum of four words.

Vervollständige die Sätze mit maximal vier Wörtern.

4. The zoo has got pony _____.
5. There are three _____.
6. You can buy (=kaufen) ice cream in the _____.
7. The zoo is not free for _____.
8. The playground is _____ the pets corner.

Tick "True" or "False".

Correct the sentence, if it's false. Verbessere den Satz, wenn er falsch ist.

		T	F	Correction
9	The name of one hippo is Marshall			
10	The spiders live in the swimming pool.			

READING 2

Meet Philip

Hello! My name's Philip and I'm from Brighton in England. I'm twelve. My favourite food is ice cream. I also eat a lot of apples and bananas. My favourite animals are tigers – that's why I've got a cat called Tiger. She's beautiful!

Emily is my best friend. She's great! She's twelve and from Brighton, too. We are both (= beide) in class 7C. There are twenty-seven children in our class but there are only four girls.

		T	F	Correction
1	Philip's favourite food is apples.			

2	Philip's favourite animals are dogs.			
3	Emily is Philip's best friend			

4. Where are Philip and Emily from? _____

5. How many boys are there in the class? _____

Adapted from: Puchta, Herbert; Gerngross, Günter; Holzmann, Christian; Lewis-Jones, Peter.
Version 2.0.00. *MORE! 1. Test builder Audios Englisch für die Sekundarstufe 1.* Helbling
Languages.

9.5.2. RC 4 1d

Reading 1: Read the text about unusual pets.

There are four sentences that do not belong in it.

→ Welche vier Sätze passen nicht in den Text.

→ Unterstreiche sie mit Lineal und schreibe die Nummer dieser Sätze auf die Linien.

- 1 Two of my friends have got unusual pets.
- 2 This is Steve's pet:
- 3 It's small and black and it's very clever.
- 4 I don't want to do that.
- 5 It lives in the garden but Steve's mum lets it come into the house every day.
- 6 The pig's name is Bernie.
- 7 It eats fish and a lot of the things Steve and his family don't eat.
- 8 I often eat fish for breakfast, too.
- 9 Sometimes Steve and Bernie play football in the garden.
- 10 The pig often plays with them.
- 11 Then there's my other friend, Becky.
- 12 She's got a pet spider.
- 13 His house is next to the school.
- 14 It's a big black spider and I don't like it very much.
- 15 The spider's name is Boris. Becky thinks he's great.
- 16 She sometimes gets Boris out of his cage and puts him on her hand.
- 17 I don't know what Becky gives him to eat.
- 18 I think he eats insects.
- 19 I haven't got a black cat.
- 20 I don't want a spider as a pet and I don't want a pig as a pet.

Sentences that do not belong in the text:

Reading 2:

Cheetahs are very large wild cats. They can run very fast. In fact, they're the fastest land animal on Earth! But Cheetahs can only run fast for about a minute, then they sleep and rest. Cheetahs live in Africa. They are yellow and have got black dots. These spots help them so other animals can't see them. Their legs are very strong. Cheetahs are thin, with small heads. Cheetahs sometimes eat rabbits and birds but they also eat big animals like antelopes.

Monkeys are interesting animals. They have a face like you and me. Many monkeys are vegetarian so they like fruits and vegetables.

They like bananas very much. But they often eat insects, too.

The **camel** can live without water for one week. It can do this because it has three stomachs (= *Magen*) that hold water. And the camel can live without food for a long time, too.

Do you know that the **kangaroo** can't walk – it can only jump. In fact, this animal is very good at jumping. It can jump 10 metres and more.

		TRUE	FALSE	Correction → nur NOT dazuschreiben ist zu wenig
1	Cheetahs are pets.			

2	Cheetahs live in Africa.			
3	A cheetah can run very fast for an hour.			
4	Cheetahs always eat big animals.			
5	Cheetahs eat vegetables and fruit.			
6	A camel has got 1 stomach.			
7	The camel can live without and for a week and longer.			
8	Where can you see the animals from the text in Austria?			

		TRUE	FALSE	Correction
9	The kangaroo is unusual because it can jump.			
10	Kangaroos can jump ten metres.			
11	Which (= <i>welches</i>) of the animals is not really unusual . Why?			

Adapted from: Puchta, Herbert; Gerngross, Günter; Holzmann, Christian; Lewis-Jones, Peter.
Version 2.0.00. *MORE! 1. Test builder Audios Englisch für die Sekundarstufe 1.* Helbling
Languages.

9.5.3. RC 2 2d

Look at the **READING 1**

Read and then do the tasks below.

Last year we went to Spain for our summer holidays. My mum, my dad, my brother and I flew to Madrid. We stayed there for fourteen days. We arrived at 9:00 a.m. at the airport in Madrid. When we arrived at the airport we called a taxi. We had to wait for fifteen minutes. While we were waiting for the taxi we ate some bagels.

Then the taxi arrived. We entered the taxi and dad said to the driver, "Good morning! Hilton Hotel please! You have to drive straight ahead to the crossing. Then at the traffic lights take the second left after the cinema and right after the hospital you turn right into Belton Street. Belton street is a really wide street with a lot of trees on the right side. The hotel is also on the right side. It is a big green building."

The ride took only five minutes. Then we arrived at the hotel. We checked in at the reception and asked for the way to the hotel room. A very old lady told us, "Your room number is 5. Take the first elevator and go to the second floor. When you leave the elevator turn right. The third door is room number five."

So we went to our room. When we entered the room. We immediately noticed that we had a problem. There was one single bed on the left side, one single bed at the right side and one single bed under the window. We could not believe our eyes. We looked at each other and started laughing. Then dad said, "OK. It's going to be me! This is going to be the worst holiday ever." He slowly put down his blue suitcase and sat down on the floor. Everybody laughed and thanked dad. "You are our hero!", the kids shouted.

**elevator - Lift*

no	TASK1: Read carefully! Tick TRUE or FALSE + CORRECT !	T	F	correction
1	The hotel room was on the second floor.			
2	They stayed in Spain for two weeks.			
3	It was a very long drive from the airport to the hotel.			
4	A very old receptionist told them where they had to go.			
no	TASK2: Answer the questions!	ANSWERS		
5	What did they do after they arrived at the hotel?			
6	How did family Miller go to Spain?			
7	What time did the taxi arrive at the airport?			
8	What was the name of the hotel?			
9	Which room number did they have.			
10	Which colour did dad's suitcase have?			
11	What was their problem in the end? Explain exactly!			
12	Why would it be the worst holiday ever for dad?			
13	In which street is the hotel?			

14	Which door on the second floor was their hotel room?	
15	In which city did they spend their summer holidays?	

Adapted from: Puchta, Herbert; Gerngross, Günter; Holzmann, Christian; Lewis-Jones, Peter.
Version 2.0.00. *MORE! 2. Test builder Software Schullizenz. Englisch für die Sekundarstufe 1.*
Helbling Languages.

READING: Read the text and do the tasks.**How the Sphinx lost its nose**

Every year, thousands of tourists visit the great pyramids in Giza outside Cairo in Egypt. Next to the pyramids sits the big Sphinx watching everything. One of the greatest mysteries of ancient Egypt is what happened to the Sphinx's nose. Look at the end of the nose – it's broken.

Well, I can now tell you what happened. I bought a piece of old papyrus in an antique shop. It tells the whole story in hieroglyphics. Luckily, I can translate. So here it is:

Many, many years ago there was a very greedy* pharaoh who ruled over ancient Egypt. Let's call him Mamaduke. Mamaduke wanted everything and he wanted everything bigger. "Build me the biggest temple in the land," he told his slaves. He wasn't happy. "Build me the biggest pyramid," he ordered the slaves. He still wasn't happy. Then he had the idea of building the Sphinx. He wanted it so tall that from the top, he could see all his land. The slaves worked hard, day and night. One day, when it was nearly ready Mamaduke visited the building. He wanted to go to the top and check the view. "It isn't ready," they said but he didn't care. He climbed up to the Sphinx's neck. Then, he wanted to climb higher. He climbed onto the mouth and then onto the nose. Now he thought, "Soon I'll be the greatest pharaoh!" He liked food. As he pulled his body onto the nose, the rocks started to fall. Suddenly, the nose and Mamaduke fell to the ground. And that was the end of the pharaoh. The slaves weren't very sad and they never built the Sphinx another nose. There was no one to order them to do it and they were also very tired.

*greedy= gierig

TASK 1: Tick off the correct answer!

1	The Sphinx is ... the pyramids.	☐	opposite	☐	next to	☐	behind
2	The Sphinx's ... is broken.	☐	nose	☐	mouth	☐	ear
3	The man found the papyrus...	☐	under a rock.	☐	in a pyramid.	☐	in an antique shop.
4	The man is in...	☐	ancient Egypt.	☐	Cairo.	☐	Not in the text.

TASK 2: Tick off true or false. Underline false word(s) and correct false statements.

		TRUE	FALSE	CORRECTION ('NOT' is not enough!)
5	Mamaduke was a generous pharaoh.	☐	☐	
6	Mamaduke wanted to see the sea from the top of the Sphinx.	☐	☐	
7	The pharaoh came to the building when it was nearly finished.	☐	☐	

TASK 3: Complete the sentences with 3–6 words.

8 Mamaduke wanted to climb the Sphinx, but the slaves said, "_____"

9 When Mamaduke climbed onto the nose, _____ .

10 After the death of Mamaduke, nobody told the slaves _____

TASKS 4: Answer the questions.

11	Explain the word "temple".
12	What happened to the pharaoh in the end?
13	Was Mamaduke the real pharaoh's name? Why (not)? Give reasons.
14	Find the sentence that doesn't belong to the text.

Adapted from: Puchta, Herbert; Gerngross, Günter; Holzmann, Christian; Lewis-Jones, Peter.
Version 2.0.00. *MORE! 2. Test builder Software Schullizenz. Englisch für die Sekundarstufe 1.*
Helbling Languages.

READING**Around the world in 80 days**

The Victorian age was a time of great adventures and discovery*. People were fascinated by foreign lands and loved to read about adventures in exotic countries. Perhaps the most famous traveller in a book was Phileas Fogg.

Phileas Fogg wasn't a real person. He is the central character in a novel written in 1873. The novel was called *Around the World in 80 Days* and the writer was Jules Verne. Jules Verne also wrote two other books called *Journey to the Center of the Earth* and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. However, *Around the World in 80 Days* was his most famous book.

Phileas Fogg is a rich English gentleman. One day, he has a discussion with a friend about an article in a newspaper. The article talks about a new railway line across India. It says that this new railway means it will now be possible to journey around the world in 80 days. Fogg agrees with the article but his friend doesn't. So they decide to have a bet*. Fogg will set off on a journey around the world. If he is back before 80 days have passed, he'll win £20,000. If not, he must pay that sum. At 8.45 p.m. on Wednesday, 2nd of October 1872, Fogg leaves London by train with his servant called Passepartout.

Over the next two and a half months, they have incredible adventures as they make their way around the world. In India, Phileas Fogg saves the life of a woman. Her name is Aouda and he falls in love with her. They decide that when they get back to the UK, they will marry. But when they arrive in England, Fogg believes he has come back a day too late. He thinks he has lost, so he tells Aouda that he is too poor now to marry her. Luckily, Passepartout finds out that they have got the dates wrong and are not too late. So Fogg wins the bet and marries Aouda.

VOCABULARY: *discovery – Entdeckung; bet – Wette; wealthy – wohlhabend

Choose the correct answer.

1. The text says that people in the Victorian age loved to read about

☐	railway adventures.
☐	new inventions.
☐	adventures in foreign lands.

2. Phil Fogg was

☐	invented by an author.
☐	a real famous explorer.
☐	a railway engineer.

3. Jules Verne

☐	wrote one book.
☐	wrote books about adventures.
☐	was a character in a novel.

4. One of the novels Jules Verne wrote was called

☐	Invasion of the Sea.
☐	Around the moon.
☐	20.000 leagues under the Sea.

Tick true or false and correct the false statement.

	T	F	Correction
5. Phileas Fogg is a wealthy* man			
6. Phileas Fogg reads a newspaper article about a new train line in London.			
7. Fogg doesn't think it's possible to travel around the world in 80 days.			
8. Fogg takes his dog Passepartout with him on the journey			
9. Phileas Fogg isn't a real man.			
10. Around the world in 80 days was Jules Vernes most famous book.			

11. What does Phileas Fogg do in India? _____.

12. Fogg arrived back in England. What was his first thought?

_____.

13. Mr. Fogg said: "Aouda I can't marry you". Why did he say that? Explain exactly!

_____.

14. What happens to Fogg and Aouda? _____.

15. Would you travel the world in 80 days if you got money today? Why or why not?

_____.

Adapted from: Gerngross, Günter; Puchta, Herbert; Holzmann, Christian; Stranks, Jeff; Lewis-Jones, Peter. Version 2.0.00. *MORE! 3. General course. Test builder Software Schullizenz.*
Englisch für die Sekundarstufe 1. Helbling Languages.

READING

A near-death experience

A few years ago, I was walking with two friends, Paul and Andy, in the mountains in Wales. When we set off, the sun was shining. It looked like we would get good weather and I soon took off my sweater. The first clouds appeared half an hour before midday. We were about three quarters of our way up the mountain. Although the sky was getting quite dark, we decided to carry on. We knew there was a small shop at the top and even a mountain train that could take us back down if the conditions were too bad.

Half an hour later, we knew it was the wrong decision. The rain started suddenly and came pouring down*. We put on our raincoats, but they didn't help much. We were soaked* and freezing. The conditions were too bad to continue to the top, so we turned back. The rocks had become really slippery* and we had to go slowly. About half way down the mountain, I slipped and fell about four metres down a rocky slope*. When I looked at my leg, I knew I couldn't carry on. I had a large cut and it was bleeding badly. We all checked our phones although we knew we had no signal. Luckily, the rain was getting lighter, but we were still freezing. We needed to make a plan quickly. We decided that Paul should continue to go down and try to get help. Andy stayed with me.

Paul was away for about four hours. They were the longest four hours of my life. I thought I was going to die. Luckily, Andy was there to help me. Eventually*, we heard the noise of a helicopter. Andy stood up and waved to get their attention. The helicopter couldn't land, so they put me into a stretcher* and lifted me into the helicopter. Andy was lifted up after that. I spent three weeks in hospital. The doctors told me I was lucky to be alive.

VOCABULARY: *It comes pouring down. – Es gießt in Strömen.; soaked – klitschnass; slippery – rutschig; slope – Abhang; eventually – schließlich; stretcher – Trage

Choose the correct answer.

1. Several years ago three friends were walking in **British / American / Austrian** mountains
2. When the three men set off it was **sunny / cloudy**.
3. They decided to carry on up the mountain because **there was a shop at the top / it was getting dark**.
4. They realised it was the wrong decision **two hours / 30 minutes** later.
- 5 The rain **started slowly / poured down**.

		TRUE	FALSE	Correction ➔ 'not' is not enough
6	They were a little wet and quite cold.			
7	They couldn't continue to the top because they were lost.			
8	Jim slipped on the rocks and he fell and cut his leg.			
9	They decided that Paul should go and find help.			

Answer the questions.

What did Jim think was going to happen to him?

.....

What was the first sign that help was coming?

.....

What did the doctors tell Jim?

.....

What should you have in mind when you climb a mountain? (write down 2 facts at least)

.....

Adapted from: Gerngross, Günter; Puchta, Herbert; Holzmann, Christian; Stranks, Jeff; Lewis-Jones, Peter. Version 2.0.00. *MORE! 3. General course. Test builder Software Schullizenz. Englisch für die Sekundarstufe 1.* Helbling Languages.

9.6. Reading project sheets

Name: _____

Reading project

Class: 1d

From **March 6 until June 16**, we have a reading project.

Every English lesson starts with **10 minutes of reading** or doing tasks for the project.

→ For each of the tasks, choose **one** book. (Jede Aufgabe muss nur für 1 Buch gemacht werden.)

Type	Task	Explanation	Check
Before	B	1. Go through the library and pick books that fit your English skills. Read the first page of the books and decide. (Geh durch die Bibliothek und suche dir Bücher aus, die zu deinen Englischkenntnissen passen. Lese die erste Seite, dann entscheide.) 2. Make a guess about the content from the title. Write down your thoughts about what the book will be about. ±50 words into Ex2. (Rate, worum es in dem Buch geht. Schreibe ca. 50 Wörter ins Ex2)	
While	W	1. Once a week, note down how many pages you can read in 10 minutes. Can you beat your highscore? Into Ex.2. (Wie viele Seiten liest du in 10 Min.?) 2. Make a list with 10 words that are new to you. Look them up in a dictionary. Write an English explanation, find synonyms or write the German translation. Use your Chromebook. (Mache eine Liste mit 10 neuen Wörtern, verwende ein Wörterbuch dazu.) 3. Make a mindmap with 10 adjectives that you like. Into Ex.2. 4. Make a mindmap with 10 verbs that you like. Into Ex.2. 5. Stop reading in the middle of the book. Now imagine what the ending will be. Finish the story how you want it to end. ± 80 words into Ex.2. (Bei der Hälfte des Buches hörst du auf zu lesen. Denke dir ein Ende für die Geschichte aus.)	
After	A	1. Prepare 1 paragraph that is worth listening to for your classmates. Copy the paragraph into your Ex.2. Present / read it to your classmates. (Bereite einen Absatz vor, den du deinen Kollegen fehlerfrei präsentierst/ vorliest. Schreibe den Absatz in dein Ex2) 2. Draw a picture of 1 chapter (Kapitel) into your Ex.book. 3. Pick your favourite book and prepare a book report with the Worksheet "Book Report". Use your Ex2 or your Chromebook. 4. Write a short summary (Zusammenfassung). ± 80 words into Ex.2	

Name: _____

Reading project

Class: 2d

From **March 6 until June 16**, we will have our reading project.

Each English lesson starts with 10 minutes of reading or doing assignments for the project.

→ For each of the tasks, choose **one** book.

Type	Task	Explanation	Check
Before	B	- Go through the library and pick books that fit your English skills. Read the first page of the books and decide. - Make a guess about the content from the title. Write down your thoughts about what the book will be about. AHS: 70 words, ST: 40 words	
While	W	- Once a week, note down how many pages you can read in 10 minutes. Can you beat your highscore? Into Ex.book. - Make a list with 10 words that are new to you. Look them up in a dictionary. Write an English explanation, find synonyms or the German translation. Use your Chromebook. (Can be a list of words from several books!!) - Make a list with 10 adjectives and find the comparison forms. Use your Chromebook. (Can be a list of words from several books!!) - Make a list with 10 verbs and find the Past Tense forms. Use your Chromebook. (Can be a list of words from several books!!) - Stop reading in the middle of the book. Now imagine what the ending will be. Finish the story how you want it to end. AHS: 100 words, ST: 80 words	
After	A	- What "gift" would you give the main character and why? Write a short text. AHS: 70 words, ST: 40 words - Prepare 1 paragraph/ page that is worth listening to for your classmates. Copy the paragraph into your Ex.book. Be prepared to present / read it to your classmates. - Draw a picture of 1 chapter into your Ex.book. - Pick your favourite book and prepare a book report with the help of the Worksheet "Book Report". Use a sheet of paper or your Chromebook. - Write a short summary. AHS: 80 words, ST: 50 words	

Name: _____

Reading project

Class: 3b

From **March 6 until June 16**, we will have our reading project.

Each English lesson starts with 10 minutes of reading or doing assignments for the project.

→ For each of the tasks, choose **one** book.

Type	Task	Explanation	Check
Before	B	1. Go through the library and pick books that fit your English skills. Read the first page of the books and decide. 2. Make a guess about the content from the title. Write down your thoughts about what the book will be about. AHS: 70 words, ST: 40 words	
While	W	1. Once a week, note down how many pages you can read in 10 minutes. Can you beat your highscore? Into Ex.book. 2. Make a list with 10 words that are new to you. Look them up in a dictionary. Write an English explanation, find synonyms or the German translation. Use your Chromebook. (Can be a list of words from several books!!) 3. Make a list with 10 adjectives and find the comparison forms. Use your Chromebook. (Can be a list of words from several books!!) 4. Make a list with 10 verbs and put them in all the tenses you know (Present, Past, Present Perfect, Will, Going to). Use your Chromebook to make a neat grid. (Can be a list of words from several books!!) 5. Stop reading in the middle of the book. Now imagine what the ending will be. Finish the story how you want it to end. AHS: 100 words, ST: 80 words	
After	A	1. What "gift" would you give the main character and why? Write a short text. AHS: 70 words, ST: 40 words 2. Prepare 1 paragraph/ page that is worth listening to for your classmates. Copy the paragraph into your Ex.book. Be prepared to present / read it to your classmates. 3. Draw a picture of 1 chapter into your Ex.book. 4. Pick your favourite book and prepare a book report with the help of the Worksheet "Book Report". Use a sheet of paper or your Chromebook. 5. Write a short summary. AHS: 80 words, ST: 50 words	