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# **A CASE STUDY OF THE CONSTRUCT OF EXTENSIVE READING TESTS AND THE ROLE OF READING COMPREHENSION IN A CONTEXT OF EFL TEACHING**

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## **Abstract**

The following investigation explores and analyses the assessment construct of extensive reading tests and the place of reading comprehension within that construct in a particular educational setting of English as a Foreign Language. We also explored possible reasons behind the diversity of formats in that program. We collected and carried out a thematic analysis of data drawn from interviews of teachers involved with Extensive Reading, tests and rubrics to represent possible constructs. The findings of this study revealed that 1) the construct of Extensive Reading tests consists mainly of linguistic abilities and competencies, as well as the development of the target language, 2) that reading comprehension is not a central part of the construct, and 3) that the diversity of formats of the ERT is mainly driven by teachers' considerations of the environment and the needs of the students in the context of the assessment process. These results are interesting as they suggest that reading comprehension, as a process/ skill that is intrinsically associated with extensive reading activities, is not part of the formal assessment focus of Extensive Reading tests, and other types of language abilities and ways of processing information are more relevant when assessing this activity. These findings are relevant therefore to the longstanding debate on the purposes and construct of Extensive Reading as a beneficial activity for programmes of teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language.

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## 1. Introduction

A construct is an element that is fundamental for an effective assessment procedure since it helps teachers know what they are evaluating when they are designing tests and rubrics. Defined as “any theory, hypothesis, or model that attempts to explain observed phenomena in our universe of perceptions. Constructs may or may not be directly or empirically measured—their verification often requires inferential data” (Brown, 2004), or as an “artifice” or “construction” that works as it “is realised through the tasks requiring test takers to respond to.” (Loevinger, 1957, as cited in Kong, 2019), constructs can also help students prepare for a test and also know what they are being assessed on, and thus enhance self-confidence and trust, and avoid novelty when being assessed.

Extensive reading (henceforth ER) is a term coined by Palmer (1917), who refers to the activity of reading many books without much more than superficial attention to the lexical elements there. This term continued to be used over the years, although its definition changed over time, only maintaining the activity of reading as a keystone. Susser and Robb (1990), for example, defined ER as being a tool for second language acquisition indicating that it was “a language teaching/learning procedure that is reading large quantities of material or long texts for global or general understanding, to obtain pleasure from the text, because reading is individualised with students choosing the books they want to read” (p. 69).

Some of the elements which are present throughout the varied configurations of the concept of ER include the quantity and quality of the reading material, the exercise of assessing the vocabulary or linguistic competence of the students or acquiring motivation to a free voluntary reading outside of the activity (Palmer, 1917; West, 1926/1927); Susser and Robb, 1990; EPER, 1992; Day and Bamford, 1997); Extensive Reading Foundation, 2011).

In the context of our study, there is a variety of formats for extensive reading tests (ERTs henceforth) to assess extensive reading activities along the duration of the programme. Since these tests are given in a variety of contexts and at different levels of language proficiency, the different ERT formats become an interesting object of study, especially regarding the core assessment construct they share. The tests in general require the students to read a book and take a test to assess a set of skills, processes, or strategies usually explained in associated rubrics. The variety of ERT formats in this context includes a range of tasks such as multiple-choice questions, open questions, dissertations and essays, as well as focus on both the reading of selected texts and the content units seen in the English course

of each term. In this context of heterogeneity, it seems reasonable to assume that different formats may be assessing a core set of skills, strategies and/or processes and, at the same time, some of those which are specific to the particular test formats. The study we conducted aimed at establishing whether the ERT different formats assessed a common, unified construct and to what extent different formats also assessed constructs specific to those formats.

Since the ER activity is inextricably connected to the activity of reading, the question of reading comprehension being part of the set of aspects assessed when evaluating ER arises. Grabe (2009) defined reading comprehension as a process, skill or strategy used to acquire meaning; Afflerbach (2007), as an act of constructing text. As such, an aspect like reading comprehension can well be a part of the set of skills, processes or strategies needed to carry out ER activities when learning a second language. However, when ER is being formally assessed through the use of a test, reading comprehension may not necessarily be part of the group of concepts that are included in the assessment construct (as reflected, for example, in the associated rubrics). Due to this possibility, the necessity of establishing whether reading comprehension is formally evaluated when ER is assessed becomes an interesting focus for research. Therefore, the motivation for our investigation was, first, to explore and analyse what the construct of the ERT is in this educational context and, secondly, if reading comprehension was indeed part of the ERT assessment construct, i.e. what the test assesses. Additionally, we inquired about the possible reasons behind the diversity of ERT formats, as a way to understand the assessment and pedagogical implications of having diverse methods to assess ER activities.

With all this in mind, three research questions were posed with an emphasis on commonalities and differences between formats. The three questions, and corresponding sub questions, were established as follows:

- RQ1: What is the construct of the ERT?
- RQ1.1: What are the aspects of the construct that are common to the ERT formats?
- RQ1.2: What are the aspects of the construct that are specific to the ERT formats?
- RQ2: What is the role of reading comprehension within the ERT construct?
- RQ2.1: What are the common aspects of the ERT format that relate to reading comprehension?

- RQ2.2: What are the specific aspects of the ERT format that relate to reading comprehension?
- RQ3: Why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?

This report will be organised with a theoretical framework explaining and discussing the corresponding literature and defining the main concepts relevant to the study, such as extensive reading, construct, and reading comprehension. This will be followed by a methodology section explaining the tools and steps to collect and analyse the data. The next section includes a presentation of the results of the study and a discussion of them, and in the final section, we conclude the report by summarising the findings of the study, discussing its limitations and making suggestions for further research.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

As explained by Grabe (2009), reading is an inherent part of life, so much so that not being able to read is detrimental as one would be unable to take part in a social activity. He argues that reading is important because it helps people to organise their ideas and thus further develop their thought process, which has changed the world in the sense that more complex topics have been sophisticated. He also explains that reading in a second language, and specifically, in English, allows us to take part in a bigger world of opportunities and also personal growth since English is a lingua franca. On the other hand, Extensive Reading is a pedagogically oriented activity aimed originally at improving aspects of language competence (Grabe, 2009).

The study of reading comprehension, and extensive reading, as well as their assessment in an educational context, requires for the concept of language to be understood as a skill that can be acquired and developed with practice. The following section begins with a brief discussion of the concept of learning, along with an account specific to the Extensive Reading (ER) activity.

### **2.1 What is reading?**

As one of the main components involved in extensive reading activities, reading comprehension, as well as reading skills, strategies, and processes that are associated with it, are crucial considerations when designing and applying extensive reading activities in a second language programme.

Grabe (2009) also explains that there is no single notion of reading comprehension, as it can be considered both a skill and a process. On the one hand, reading comprehension is a skill that entails understanding a text by implementing a series of sub-skills, such as skimming and scanning. At the same time, reading comprehension is a process where multiple cognitive processes come together to combine the reader's background knowledge with information in a text.

Grabe defines reading as a process with ten main characteristics that characterise fluent readers and which are the objectives at which any learner of reading in a second language should aim. According to Grabe, reading is a rapid, efficient, comprehending, interactive, strategic, flexible, purposeful, evaluative, and learning linguistic process. Reading

in a second language is, furthermore, an instance where a learner develops her/his capacity to transfer the skills they have acquired in their first language.

Since English is currently a lingua franca, reading in that language is relevant for at least three types of learners: first, learners that *have to learn* the language indispensably for survival, such as immigrants; learners that *need to read*, which are usually workers or students in an area that uses language as the main tool to develop themselves, such as in academia; and learners that *want to read* in English for personal reasons related to their aspirations in life or entertainment, but that are not imposed by anyone.

According to Grabe (2009), there are three main models of higher-order processing for reading comprehension: the *text model* of reader comprehension, the *situation model* of reader interpretation, and the model that considers reading as a set of *general skills*. The text model of comprehension is a model of reading comprehension that most commonly describes texts of a descriptive nature, such as technical books, in which information is meant to be understood rather than interpreted. For the text model of comprehension to take place, five operations to occur, namely:

- 1) Linkages into a network of previous and new knowledge, which consists of the act of remembering previous readings or information and connecting it to the current reading, generating reflective thinking.
- 2) An overlap between old and new information, which is the operation of linking what we read with past information. Even if similar to the previous operation, this one focuses on only remembrance and not reflection.
- 3) Suppression of peripheral information, which is simply focusing on the main ideas and not on minor details that do not add to the main ideas.
- 4) Simple inference, which refers to not relying on an explanation for certain information and thus not stopping the reading to search for information.
- 5) Summary restructuration, which is the identification of the key sentences that refer to previous events and serve as a tool to guide a reader.

The situation model of interpretation is a model of reading comprehension most commonly employed for texts of a narrative nature with information that is meant to be inferred and interpreted. Exceptionally, when a reader is well-versed in a given topic, then that reader may employ a situational model, which is a mental representation of what he is

reading and helps to accelerate comprehension, provided they have extensive knowledge of the topic. On the other hand, when a reader faces a descriptive text that is hard to understand, then they might resort inaccurately to the situation model of interpretation to comprehend the text. Additionally, an inability to interpret a text reflects poor background knowledge or an inability to focus on information beyond details.

Reading can also be seen as a general set of skills, which are different processes, objectives to be reached or awareness of what we are doing as readers. The skills are reading comprehension including executive control, which are some top-down mental processes that are used for non-automatic comprehension and attentional processes of conscious processing, explained as defining what one is doing to further comprehend it or explain it to others, and these are the processes. After them we have objectives like goal setting, simply being a goal to be completed to generate an objective in the long run. Finally, there is awareness of strategy use, which is to be conscious of the many strategies that work for different ends and be able to use them; metacognitive awareness helps to be self-aware of what we can do, for what ends or how; metalinguistic awareness helps to be aware that language is more than just words and texts, that it is more than a channel for communication; and comprehension monitoring, an exercise of the teacher to monitor the students and check for the confusion and the solutions to them.

Reading comprehension, in turn, is defined by Kong (2019) as the process of simultaneous extraction, construction, and transformation of a text into thought or meaning. The definition of reading comprehension is a matter of current debate, especially regarding the dimensions it includes, with perspectives that fluctuate between a multi-componentality view of it (i.e. as encompassing more than one dimension) and a uni-componentality view (i.e. as a single dimension). Adhering to a rather multi-component perspective, Kong (2019) addresses two primary dimensions of reading comprehension, namely, a) the forms of information processing and b) the factors involved in reading comprehension.

Regarding forms of information processing, Kong (2019) presents two perspectives. The first is of a psycholinguistic nature and was proposed by Goodman (1967; 1998, as cited in Kong, 2019) and Smith (1978, as cited in Kong, 2019). According to this perspective, the nature behind reading comprehension is either a 'guessing game' where the process starts with a writer creating a linguistic representation that finishes with the meaning that the reader constructs (Goodman, 1967; Goodman, 1998, as cited in Kong, 2019), or a process of

‘getting questions answered’ by making predictions, using pre-stored topical or rhetorical knowledge to achieve comprehension of a text (Smith, 1978, as cited in Kong, 2019).

The other perspective highlights the cognitive nature of reading comprehension and includes different types of cognitive processing. Kong (2019) introduces the process of reading comprehension as a sequence of transformations, going from a lower level to a higher level of sensory information encodings, and three major cognitive processing patterns can be observed: bottom-up, top-down, and interactive processing. Bottom-up processing follows a linear sequential order that is hierarchical and goes from the smallest to the largest units in the text for complete comprehension. In contrast, top-down processing, despite also being linear and sequential, initiates from the largest element found and finishes with the smallest ones, working on a data confirmation basis on the reader’s hypotheses, similar to Goodman (1967; 1998, as cited in Kong, 2019) and Smith’s (1978, as cited in Kong, 2019) ‘psycholinguistic guessing game’ and ‘getting questions answered’ respective definitions. Finally, interactive processing integrates insights from both previous processing patterns, where basic information is provided through bottom-up processing, and the reader’s knowledge interplays through top-down processing.

Kong (2019) also considers the factors that affect the reading comprehension process, mainly associated with the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text. Factors involving the reader include those attributes or characteristics specific to the agent that influence the reading comprehension process. Bachman & Palmer (1996, as cited in Kong, 2019) identified some of these features, which include: personal characteristics (i.e. the personal attributes of the individual that do not relate to language ability), topical knowledge or background knowledge possessed by the reader (which affects how the information is being understood, recognized and stored through the interaction between old and new data); affective schemata (i.e. the reader’s affective or emotional correlation with the topical knowledge, such as his motivation or attitude towards the text); and language knowledge and strategic competence (which belong directly to the core components of the language comprehension ability).

Factors related to the text, according to Alderson (2000, as cited in Kong, 2019), include content, genre, organisation and readability of a text, which influence reading comprehension. Therefore, an abstract text is harder to understand than a concrete one; certain genres are harder to process than others, as expository texts compared to narrative ones; the rhetorical composition and cohesion of a text affect the reader’s comprehension

depending on their background knowledge; and that a text will be readable depending on the difficulty adjustment to the intended readership.

Factors involved in the actual interaction between the reader and the text are explained to be three, namely: purpose, skills, and strategies. Purpose relates to the reader's idea of reading for a reason, influencing the reader's type of engagement with the text and resulting in different types of reading. Skills refer to the reader's automatic and internalised abilities to use language knowledge, the information stored in the brain specific to language use, which facilitates the reading comprehension process. Strategies, also including metacognitive strategies, mean the deliberate, conscious and effortful acts that the reader uses to comprehend, and monitor his performance in the activity of reading comprehension.

Afflerbach (2007) defines reading as:

The act of constructing from text. We use skills, strategies, and prior knowledge, all of which are developmental in nature, to understand what we read. The act of reading is supported by reader motivation and positive reader affect. We read to help us achieve our goals, within and outside of school.

In this sense, reading is to be able to construct meaning as readers according to our proficiency and reading as an activity relies on motivation to create positive effects within the activity and beyond.

Afflerbach (2007) defines reading based on understanding and usage posing three questions: Why do we assess reading? What do we assess when we assess reading? and How, when and where do we assess reading?

He explains that why we assess reading comes from the strengths and needs of students. This is important because keeping in mind the different proficiencies is key to designing an activity that is both relevant and beneficial to the context. On the question of what we assess when assessing reading, he explains that when evaluating reading proficiency, the focus tends to be primarily on assessing cognitive skills and strategies. While these are essential to successful reading, Afflerbach (2007) notes that an overly narrow focus on such narrow areas may neglect other critical aspects that are key to reading development. The author emphasises that what we choose to assess when evaluating reading ability is crucial, as it highlights the limitations of assessments and the areas that may be being neglected.

Regarding how, when and where we assess reading, the answer refers to the programmes of reading in language programmes and the importance of leaving that

information public since it helps to enhance questioning of the meaning behind practices and the credibility of the programme.

Reading and reading comprehension constitute complex phenomena with several ways and perspectives that can be used to define and characterise them, several of which are not yet agreed upon in the literature. As such, the assessment of reading and reading comprehension activities requires that test developers choose from a range of theoretical approaches to define the constructs they intend to assess.

## **2.2 What is a construct**

As with any instance of second language assessment, defining the construct of an extensive reading test is a fundamental part of test design. According to Kong (2019), this is so because the assessment construct can influence not only the design of a test, but also the interpretation of test scores, validation procedures, and the justification of validation results.

Construct, according to Brown (2004), “is any theory, hypothesis, or model that attempts to explain observed phenomena in our universe of perceptions. Constructs may or may not be directly or empirically measured—their verification often requires inferential data” (p. 25). In this sense, constructs are a crucial resource which researchers use to explain phenomena and play a significant role in the development of theories and frameworks within fields.

Kong (2019) also explains that the concept of construct is often confused with that of trait: “[The idea of a] Construct comes from a theory of a trait and is realised through the tasks requiring test takers to respond to. However, a trait may be tested differently with different response format requirements and the inferences made based on test scores may differ accordingly” (p. 51). In contrast, some researchers argue that there is a distinction between these two concepts. Construct is an “artifice” or “construction” that serves a useful role in theory but lacks independent causal existence. A trait, instead, is a psychologically real entity (Loevinger, 1957, as cited in Kong, 2019). Despite this difference, it is universally acknowledged that a trait is the core entity of a construct if not the same phenomenon. Kong further explains that three views explain the concept of construct, a trait theorist view, a behaviourist view, and an internationalist view.

According to a trait-theory view, a trait perspective attributes test performances to the test taker’s underlying characteristics and fundamental processes. As such, the construct of

reading comprehension is defined as a “relatively stable characteristic of a person - an attribute, enduring process, or disposition - which is consistently manifested to some degree when relevant, despite considerable variation in the range of settings and circumstances” (p. 32). In this sense, various testing methods can be employed to ensure the accurate measurement of a targeted trait.

In contrast, a behaviourist perspective does not consider it possible to establish context-free tests since different underlying characteristics interact with each other differently in different contexts, resulting in different test performances. A construct, according to a behaviourist view, test scores obtained from tests are “derived from responses made to defined stimuli to predict responses made to similar naturally occurring stimuli in vocational, academic and other settings” (Tryon, 1979, as cited in Kong, 2019). A behaviourist does not assume that performances can be generalised across a wide range of contexts, but only to those contexts resembling the test settings.

The concept of construct according to an interactionist view, represents a synthesis of elements from both the trait view, which focuses on language knowledge and fundamental processes, and the behaviourist view, which focuses on the role of the context. An interactionist researcher thus attributes some of the test performance to the person’s inherent trait, some to the context, and some to the interaction between trait and context. A construct according to an interactionist view can be defined as communicative language competence, which consists of both knowledge or competence and the capacity for implementing or executing that competence in language use context.

In the context of our study, since no construct is explicitly established for ERTs, it remains unclear which of these alternative views of the construct is being adopted. This is an important point, as such a definition would allow us to determine whether ERTs are fulfilling their assessment objectives and purposes.

### **2.2.1 What is validity?**

Even if validity is not a dimension this report aims to examine directly, the concept is relevant as the definition of an assessment construct is the basis to determine the validity of an assessment procedure and test design.

In the exploration of validity, Kong (2019) explains that delving into the validity debate requires not only a well-defined conception of validity but also an awareness of its

evolutionary path, in particular towards the concept of construct validity. Messick (1989) contributed by presenting a widely cited definition of validity, stating that it is “an integrated evaluative judgement of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores or other models of assessment” (Messick, 1989, as cited in Kong, 2019).

According to validation practices, generating and gathering evidence of validity based on an existing criterion through test-criterion correlation was generally straightforward, often without delving into an examination of the underlying rationale for the criterion. However, the reality was that, in numerous instances, a clearly defined criterion was not readily accessible, or the criterion in use required validation itself, often relying on the support of additional criteria. Therefore, the conclusion derived from the criterion validity model might not inherently be deemed scientific, as it revolves around the assumption of the premise’s truth and reliability, without exhaustive empirical evidence.

To address the limitations inherent in the criterion validity model, an alternative was introduced through the content validity model. This content validity model prioritised domain relevance and the representativeness of the test instrument. “However, it did not provide direct evidence in support of the inferences to be made from test scores” (Kong, 2019, p.35). In other words, this means that in the content validity model, significance is given to the knowledge and skills that a test aims to assess. On the other hand, it is emphasised that the instrument, in this case the test, is crucial and must be representative of the specific knowledge to be assessed.

Recognising the drawbacks in both the criterion and content validity models, researchers advocated for a shift to a priori thinking, leading to the emergence of the construct validity model.

### **2.2.2 The construct of validity**

Cronbach and Meehl were the first to introduce the concept of construct validity in 1955 as a substitute for the criterion and content validity models, because of the limited role they play in validation. In this context, the criterion validity model focussed on assessing whether a test correlated with an external measure or standard. On the other hand, the content validity model focused on evaluating whether a test covered the content it was meant to assess. Likewise, Loevinger argued that “the construct validity model was from a scientific

point of view” (1957, as cited in Kong, 2019). “In construct validity model, the construct and the theories in which it has been defined constitute hypotheses or conjectures to be used to explain the observed phenomena” (Popper, 1965; Lakatos, 1970, as cited in Kong, 2019).

The construct validity model surpasses a mere inductive summary and tries to validate “the relationship between the effect (observable attributes) and the cause (construct defined by a theory)” (Kong, p. 36). This model shifts its emphasis from the test itself or test scores to the interpretation of those scores, making a significant advancement in the evolution of the concept of validity.

In contemporary perspectives, construct validity takes precedence as the paramount consideration in the realm of assessment validity. However, it is crucial to understand that construct validity remains inherently abstract and challenging to implement. The main challenge facing construct validity models lies in the definition of what constitutes a construct.

From this perspective, in the context of the study we conducted the absence of an explicit assessment construct also reduces the possibilities of determining the validity of the ERTs, which is again essential to the process of test development. In the next section, we present and discuss Extensive Reading as a pedagogical activity and how a test on extensive reading may define its corresponding construct.

## **2.3 What is extensive reading (ER)?**

Defining and characterising Extensive Reading is crucial as there are multiple definitions over time and it is not apparent which one is more adequate or unifies all the definitions. Furthermore, the assessment of ER and ERT formats and contents are quite heterogeneous in real practice.

### **2.3.1 Definitions of ER**

Extensive reading is a term that has multiple meanings. Palmer (1917) coined the term to refer to the activity of reading many books without giving more than a superficial and passing attention to the lexicological units of which it was written. West (1926) referred to extensive reading as “supplementary reading”, defined as an exercise to use the vocabulary obtained from the teaching. Susser and Robb (1990) describe extensive reading as “a language teaching/learning procedure that is reading large quantities of material or long texts

for global or general understanding, with the intention of obtaining pleasure from the text, because reading is individualised with students choosing the books they want to read” (p. 69).

The Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading (EPER) (1992) understands it as reading in quantity, quickly, with interest and at the language level of the student. For Day and Bamford (1997), extensive reading “is an approach to the teaching and learning in the second language reading in which learners read large quantities of books and other materials that are within their linguistic competence”. The guide of The Extensive Reading Foundation (ERF) (2011) is defined as “read quickly and enjoyable with adequate comprehension so they don’t need a dictionary”.

These different definitions illustrate how extensive reading is not universally understood as the same activity, which means in turn that extensive reading goals may change depending on the approach adopted in a particular context. The main differences relate to the approach of language instruction, which can be oriented to expose students to a foreign language and acquire vocabulary or to read pleasurably and to encourage reading extensively. Despite variations, definitions tend to agree in understanding extensive reading as a pedagogically relevant activity in second language education.

### **2.3.2 Origin & background of ER**

Extensive reading is a term that was first mentioned by Palmer (1917). Palmer reviewed the factors and problems connected with the learning and teaching of modern languages with an analysis of various methods which may be adopted to attain satisfactory results. To this purpose, Palmer draws up a working programme intended for school children learning French as a second language.

This programme was divided into three stages. The first consisted of easy exercises to develop good pronunciation, the second consisted of exercises to polish students’ fluency, and the third consisted of students becoming acquainted with and being able to use the vast mass of the vocabulary they were taught. To this effect, Palmer (1917) proposed that the student must read books and listen to speech to enrich the vocabulary and must speak and write to use the material so acquired. The first texts to be studied and the first conversations should be relatively simple; avoiding the charm and quaintness of old-fashioned or unusual expressions that are not current in everyday speech, to appreciate the natural idiom. For this

reason, the student's first textbooks must contain the plainest and least artistic expressions of the language.

Within this context of reading activity, Palmer (1917) laid the basis for *intensive* and *extensive* reading. In intensive reading, "each sentence is subjected to careful scrutiny, and the more interesting may be paraphrased, translated, or learnt by heart. In extensive reading, "book after book will be read through without giving more than a superficial and passing attention to the lexicological units of which it was composed" (p. 205). Therefore, the purpose behind both extensive and intensive reading was originally that students developed enough vocabulary to become fluent, so they were promoted to a more complex teaching such as the literature of the language.

Mermelstein (2014) describes that one of the major theories underlying the initial development of the extensive reading approach in second-language classrooms is Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis, which is based on the distinction between acquisition and learning. The term *acquisition* is referred to as an intuitive process or subconscious process of "picking up" a language, meanwhile *learning* is used to refer to a conscious active effort to understand information. The input hypothesis began to change through time and was then named as *reading hypothesis*, which stated that comprehensible input in the form of reading can also stimulate language acquisition subconsciously.

Further on, extensive reading became also known as *supplementary reading*. West (1926) used this term to refer to the supplementary language that was used in texts for teaching purposes, which was additional to the mother tongue of students. He invented a new method to teach children how to read in Bengal. In this study, like Palmer (1917), *supplementary reading* was also integrated to develop vocabulary, with the difference that here it served more like a tool to facilitate reading so the student would not need to use a dictionary in the future.

To make it possible to apply this method, West (1927) proposed the existence of three kinds of readers. The first one begins with reading stories that with time are increasing in length and vocabulary complexity. The second reader begins to read more beautiful stories with the level of vocabulary they developed in the previous stage. Finally, in the third reader, a few new words are introduced.

Susser and Robb (1990) surveyed the literature on extensive reading and established a working definition of it as a language/teaching procedure. There, they explored the main

issues in extensive reading, including the role of graded readers and the transfer of L1 reading ability. They explain that, since reading has been the most emphasised skill in traditional foreign language (FL henceforth) teaching, it is not surprising that even today it continues to be the mainstay of English as a Foreign Language (EFL henceforth) instruction in many countries. In countries like Japan, for example, intensive reading procedures are usually instructed as a close study of short passages, including syntactic, semantic, and lexical analyses and translation. About this practice, Alderson and Urquhart (1984, as cited in Susser and Robb, 1990) have argued that:

“Such a pedagogic practice-of focusing on the language of a text- may be justified as a language lesson, but it may very well be counterproductive as a reading lesson. Often what is known as “intensive reading” (as traditionally opposed to “extensive reading”) is actually not reading at all: the lesson consists of a series of language points, using texts as points of departure. Reading texts, in other words, are sources of language exercises, rather than reading exercises” (Susser and Robb, 1990, pp. 246-247).

This view, as explained by Susser and Robb (1990), has also been supported by other authors (for example, Brumfit, 1984; Hyland, 1990; John and Davies, 1983; Yorio, 1985). Susser and Robb (1990) support that even if language training is essential for the FL curriculum, this kind of lesson is not a reading lesson in the strict sense.

Together with this debate regarding the purpose ER has had over time, little is known about its pedagogical characteristics and effectiveness. Susser and Robb (1990) explain that there is a large body of research on L1 extensive reading, which is called “pleasure reading”, “sustained silent reading”, or “uninterrupted sustained silent reading”. Unfortunately, literature on extensive reading in foreign language education is of limited value as it mostly consists of general works on foreign language reading that discuss book selection and course administration. There are only a few articles and reports about the pedagogical aspects of this activity (see for example, Boys (1987), Hamrick (1989), Kalb (1986), Lipp (1988), as cited in Susser and Robb, 1990).

Susser and Robb (1990) also indicate that there is no agreement on how much “extensive” reading needs to be considered extensive. For some authors, like Hill and Thomas (1988, as cited in Susser and Robb, 1990) it is thirty pages an hour, Matsumura (1987, as cited in Susser and Robb, 1990) three pages an hour, Krashen (1981, as cited in

Susser and Robb, 1990) an hour per evening, for Japanese high school students, one page per day and three pages per day during summer vacation, and so on, is enough.

This variety of opinions about what is considered “extensive”, suggests that the quantity of reading is not an absolute number of hours or pages but depends on teacher and student perceptions of how extensive reading differs from other reading classes. In turn, this estimation will vary according to the type of programme, level, and other variables in the teaching context. By aiming at general comprehension, this procedure reduces both teacher and students' demands on the text to attain the objectives of fluency and speed as well as comprehension. They cite Broughton et al.'s (1979, as cited in Susser and Robb, 1990) comment that extensive reading must imply a “relatively low degree of understanding” since we want students to achieve a degree of understanding sufficient for pleasure reading. If a book is boring, or difficult to enjoy, the extensive reading procedure requires that the book must be changed.

This aspect of pleasure when reading is also a matter of debate in the literature because, according to Susser and Robb (1990), reading is an assignment, and most learners do not take pleasure in assignments. Pleasure, like quantity, is thus a relative characteristic of extensive reading. Nell (1988, as cited in Susser and Robb, 1990) explains that in his study about the psychology of pleasure reading, one cannot read for pleasure in a foreign language if the language is not mastered beforehand. This is important because, even though pleasure and enjoyment are considered part of the characteristics of extensive reading, it is not a goal always achieved by students.

Also, writers such as Field (1985, as cited in Susser and Robb, 1997) and Munby (1979, as cited in Susser and Robb, 1997) see extensive reading as a sub-skill of reading, such as skimming and scanning, merging the definition of what is usually understood as extensive reading with the exercise of reading itself. However, Susser and Robb (1990) indicate, instead, that extensive reading is mostly seen as a teaching/learning procedure, not a reading subskill. They conclude that the implication that many works choose to define extensive reading as the reading of graded readers has no basis in theory nor practice since there is no reason extensive reading should be confined to graded materials.

According to the guide of the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading (EPER) (1992), extensive reading was a major component of the English syllabus in East African secondary schools in the 1960s. It was modified in the 1970s to suit the very different

conditions of residential secondary schools in Peninsular Malaysia. The success of both programmes led to the establishment of the EPER in 1981. The guide aimed to provide practical help for teachers who are running programmes of extensive reading. There, in contrast with other types of reading, such as intensive reading, scanning and skimming, and the study of literature, extensive reading is the type of reading most often practised by people who read. It draws on the knowledge of the language acquired in intensive reading, it may also use skimming and scanning to find references or starting places in their extensive reading, and also draw on the insights into language obtained through a study of literature. However, extensive reading constitutes a different activity from these.

The guide explains that readers who practise extensive reading, read at a comfortable speed and without the recourse of a dictionary, with enjoyment, but usually as a leisure time activity, in conjunction with a wide variety of materials. Literature is included together with other materials such as popular fiction and current affairs, travel, history, sport, science and religion found in books, journals, magazines or newspapers.

The guide admits that extensive reading is not a type of reading practised in all countries and that in some culture's enjoyment is not even considered as a valuable leisure time pursuit. It also admits that even if there are countries that have a tradition of extensive reading, some people never get to acquire the reading habit and rarely read a book after they leave school. However, the activity of extensive reading is widely accepted in Western educational thought.

Day and Bamford (1997) have also been changing the focus that extensive reading has been carrying through the teaching area for a more pedagogical one. The authors explain that, unlike Palmer (1997), whose conception of extensive reading was clearly on the content and not the language teaching, it is not surprising that with time this language teaching real-world reading began to change its focus to a more pedagogical purpose. Their approach aims to provide a theoretical and pedagogical foundation about why extensive reading should be an integral part of reading instruction in the second language classroom since the benefits of its application are wide-ranging.

Their approach does not assume that the students have any level of ability in the target language, as extensive reading is appropriate at all stages of language *learning*. At the same time, the approach has nothing to offer in the pre-reading *learning* to read, since they assume

that their students are already literate in the first language and know how to write in the second one.

According to Day and Bamford (1997), extensive reading, when carried out appropriately, can lead to students enjoying the reading and continuing reading long after the formal study in the second language. In addition, extensive reading also consolidates students' *learning* of the second language, and in the best case, increases their proficiency.

- 1) *Students read as much as possible*, perhaps in and definitely out of the classroom.
- 2) *A variety of materials on a wide range of topics is available* to encourage reading for different reasons and in different ways.
- 3) *Students select what they want to read* and have the freedom to stop reading material that fails to interest them.
- 4) *The purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding*. These purposes are determined by the nature of the material and the interests of the student.
- 5) *Reading is its own reward*. There are few or no follow-up exercises after reading.
- 6) *Reading materials are well within the linguistic competence of the students* in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Dictionaries are rarely used while reading because the constant stopping to look up words makes fluent reading difficult.
- 7) *Reading is individual and silent*, at the student's own pace, and, outside class, done when and where the student chooses.
- 8) *Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower* as students read books and other material, they find easily understandable.
- 9) *Teachers orient students to the goals of the program, explain the methodology, keep track* of what each student reads, and *guide* students in getting the most out of the program.
- 10) *The teacher is a role model of reader for students* - an active member of the classroom reading community, demonstrating what it means to be a reader and the rewards of being a reader".

(Day and Bamford, 1997).

The Extensive Reading Foundation (ERF) is an organisation founded in 2004 by Day and Bamford, to support and promote extensive reading as a tool. Their guide, published in 2011, is under the same approach of the methodology Day and Bamford taught in 1997. In the guide, they make a difference between extensive reading and intensive reading. Extensive reading is the form of reading “to learn to read” while intensive reading is understood as a form of “reading to learn”. In the case of extensive reading, students are practising the skill of reading by reading for information. For example, when learners read a storybook to enjoy the reading without consciously knowing they are learning. This type of reading aims to build reading fluency, which is not necessarily to learn new things and to deepen their knowledge of already met language items and to get a better sense of how these fit together communicatively. In the case of intensive reading, students “learn to read” by building their set of reading skills and strategies and by doing speed reading activities designed to improve comprehension speed and overall fluency.

The guide also explains that both extensive and intensive reading are complementary. Intensive reading introduces new language items to the students, while extensive reading helps the students practise and get deeper knowledge of them. It also explains that extensive reading can be compared to doing driving lessons at a school, while intensive reading is driving on the road.

### **2.3.3 Benefits of ER**

The application of extensive reading has been claimed to be very beneficial in the foreign language classroom. According to the EPER (1992), extensive reading brings many benefits to EFL students, as well as in cases of disadvantageous circumstances. In the former case, the primal benefits are the increased exposure to English, the enhanced quality of exposure to English, the added motivation for *learning* English, the evidence of progress that will encourage to keep *learning*, and the opportunity for individuals to work in mixed level classes.

In the case of disadvantageous circumstances, the benefits from extensive reading can work as compensation for the lack of teaching resources, since books can be used without the electricity required to run audio and video cassette players; compensation for the lack of trained teachers, since some teachers may be in the unfortunate position of having to teach English without themselves having a good command of the language; and compensation for large classes, since access to books can be arranged for very large numbers of students and

this can compensate the lack of interaction between individual students and their teacher. The guide mentions also the general educational value of extensive reading, such as the leisure pursuit, the increasing of general knowledge, and the development of reading skills.

According to Day and Bamford (1997), some of the benefits that extensive reading can bring to students are the development of *large sight vocabulary*, which is a broad area of vocabulary associated with the topics seen in the readings helping in the development of knowledge of that topic; a wide general vocabulary knowledge, second language students must read from context through multiple encounters so incidental vocabulary learning becomes easier; and the development of target language, the world, and text types.

They also indicate that an extensive reading approach may influence the second language culture and people if “the students, through their reading, come to view the second language culture and people in a favourable light” (p. 26). Successful extensive reading programmes constitute a positive experience due to the experiences gained from reading and the autonomy validation raised from students appreciating reading after the programmes.

Having identified the benefits, Day and Bamford (1997) also analysed the results of the benefits of extensive reading in ER programmes. They presented an overview of investigations of extensive reading in both a second language and a foreign language. They were able to identify that a series of benefits were obtained through extensive reading, including improvement in reading skills in the target language, development of positive attitudes towards reading, an increase in motivation to read, and, of course, gains in aspects of competence in the target language, including vocabulary and writing.

One of the most thorough explorations of extensive reading was conducted by Warwick Elley and Francis Mangubhai (1981), where gains in reading and competence were reported, including listening and writing. Years later, Janopoulos (1986, as cited in Day and Bamford, 1997) reported that reading resulted in improvements in writing proficiency in students of English as a second language. Studies conducted by Hafiz and Tudor (1989, as cited in Day and Bamford, 1997) demonstrated gains in reading proficiency, positive affect, and general linguistic competence. Similarly, they reported a slight and not significantly meaningful increase in vocabulary base. Concerning vocabulary three of the five investigations that specifically investigated vocabulary reported gains. Hafiz and Tudor (1990, as cited in Day and Bamford, 1997) indicated improvements in vocabulary base and writing, while Lai (1993, as cited in Day and Bamford, 1997) demonstrated gains in reading

proficiency and vocabulary. Similarly, Cho and Krashen (1994, as cited in Day and Bamford, 1997) found not only gains in vocabulary but also in reading proficiency, positive affect, and oral skills. Rodrigo (1995, as cited in Day and Bamford, 1997) reported gains in positive affect but found no significant increase in vocabulary. Finally, Mason and Krashen (1997, as cited in Day and Bamford, 1997) demonstrated gains in reading proficiency, positive affect and writing.

Something similar occurs with motivation, where they explain that the chosen reading materials can also influence the positivity regarding the second language, which increases reading ability. This impact of extensive reading on both attitudes and motivation is what Day and Bamford (1997) call *bookstrap*, a derivation name from *bootstrap*, which refers to the result of an action to achieve better results quickly with the least effort. The aim of *bookstrapping* is that, eventually, the activity may lead to students becoming hooked to books.

According to the ERF (2011), since extensive reading is usually carried out with graded readers, some of the benefits that extensive reading brings to them is that it allows students to meet lots of comprehensible language, to ‘step up’ their reading ability gradually level by level, to provide motivating interesting reading materials, and to work as a bridge to the eventual reading of native-level reading materials.

The literature suggests that extensive reading is a pedagogically relevant activity in language teaching and *learning* processes. However, there seems to be a wide variety of perspectives and attributes of how the activity is viewed, especially regarding its purposes and benefits. This means that the construct of extensive reading tests is not readily apparent unless identified and expressed explicitly.

#### **2.3.4 Characteristics of ER**

According to Palmer (1917), “the best type of text will consist of short anecdotes, humorous stories, and interesting items of general information selected from current periodicals and carefully edited and simplified. The easiest and most natural texts are those which constitute the most faithful reflection of the language as it is truly spoken by all sorts and conditions of native speakers without the intervention of the descriptive or explanatory styles” (p. 205). This is what Palmer (1917) described as *simplicity* and *fidelity* to real speech, and it aimed to have an intrinsic interest in the reader. Both intensive and extensive reading

were texts to have these kinds of characteristics, so they were easy to read and appropriately graded according to students' proficiency levels.

West (1926; 1927) added to the characteristics of extensive reading that *supplementary reading* must be read quickly, with simple vocabulary that would increase its difficulty with time. Grading is not contemplated since extensive reading is a type of learning to read. For Susser and Robb (1990), the characteristics of extensive reading were explained basically in their definition, by presenting it as reading large quantities of material, obtaining pleasure from the text, carried out individually, and where students choose what to read and books chosen are not discussed in class.

For the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading (EPER) (1992), the characteristic of extensive reading is reading in quantity, at least one book a week, or maybe 50 books a year; reading faster (200 words a minute may be an average rate); with interest, where in this case the books are chosen by the instructors, not the students; and finally, graded. Also, according to Day and Bamford (1997), some of the characteristics that can be attributed to extensive reading from its ten principles are that extensive reading must be read in quantity, with a wide range of variety, texts are chosen by students, the reading must be enjoyable, with information and with general understanding, and it is graded.

For The Extensive Reading Foundation (ERF) (2011), the characteristics of extensive reading are to read quickly, with enjoyment, and adequate comprehension so no dictionary is needed. It is also graded. The table below summarises the set of features attributed to extensive reading in the literature surveyed for this report.

**Table 1***Characteristics of ERTs per author*

| <b>Author</b>          | <b>Characteristics of ERT</b>   |
|------------------------|---|
| Day and Bamford (1997) | It is enjoyable. Texts are variable in quantity, graded, and chosen by students.  |
| EPER (1992)            | It is enjoyable, fast to read, variable in quantity, and graded. Books are chosen by the instructors, to expose you to a foreign language.                              |
| ERF (2011)             | It is enjoyable, fast, and graded. No dictionary is required.   |
| Ewert (2017)           | It is easy, self-selected reading, fitting the need for large amounts of data for language acquisition.   |
| Palmer (1917)          | It is simple, faithful to real speech, and enjoyable. Texts are variable and graded in order to acquire vocabulary.   |
| Susser and Robb (1990) | It is enjoyable, variable in quantity, and reading is individual. Books are chosen by students, and readings are not discussed in class.                                |
| West (1926; 1927)      | It is simple, enjoyable, and variability is on the level. Fast to read, its difficulty increases over time, no dictionary is required, and develops reading as a skill. |

As we can observe, the characteristic of extensive reading that is present in the majority of literature of the field is enjoyment. The most common characteristics are simplicity, reading fast, variation of texts, gradation of texts, reading in quantity, books being chosen by students, but there are some modifications where variations are on the level of students and not in texts, gradation is replaced by difficulty increasing over time, and books being chosen by teachers. Purposes are also different, extensive reading may be instructed to acquire vocabulary, to simply expose learners to a foreign language, to learn to read in the foreign language, and even promote extensive reading. There exist some exclusions, as when programmes do not include qualities such as fidelity. As a result, extensive reading may have many similarities in its concept, but many differences at the same time.

## **2.4 Assessment of ER**

The assessment of extensive reading and its associated constructs requires an understanding of the different forms extensive reading can be assessed, how ERTs are designed, what are ERTs characteristics, and their effectiveness when put into practice.

In a quantitative study that examined the effects of ER on learners' reading levels, Mermelstein (2014) suggested that utilising ER and a student-centred teaching approach can provide a successful alternative to the traditional teacher-centred or curriculum-centred approaches currently being used towards improving [Asian] learners' reading levels.

Mermelstein (2014) states that in 1995, Krashen argued that reading can be the primary cause of vocabulary development, competence in spelling and writing, and the ability to understand and produce sophisticated grammatical structures. He points out that *free voluntary reading* (FVR) is responsible for literacy development, in both first and second language, and is defined as the reading that is selected by the reader, whether it is for its own sake or simply because the reader wants it.

Mermelstein (2014) also discusses the dispute around ER about how much reading is considered extensive. He refers to EPER (1992) that at least one book per week or 50 books per year could grant the benefits of the ER. Overall, if the learner is reading material within their ability level and that is interesting to them, it promotes motivation. Mermelstein refers to the benefits of the ER, like the *learning* of several encounters with unknown words and expands learners' interaction with the language by placing different words in different contexts and receiving a more complete understanding of their meaning and use (Simensen, 1987, as cited in Mermelstein, 2014). Mermelstein (2014) argues that the pedagogical value of ER stems from the assumption that having students interact with large amounts of interesting, meaningful, and comprehensible language material will produce positive effects on the learner's ability to use a second language.

#### **2.4.1 Elaboration of ER programmes**

There are many options for programmes to instruct extensive reading depending on the approach. Extensive reading may be part exclusively of ER programmes or be part of an activity in programmes to teach a foreign language. In the case of Palmer (1917), extensive reading is part of an ideal programme to expose students to a foreign language, where its purpose is only as an activity in the third stage to acquire vocabulary.

Unlike ER programmes, in the study carried out by Palmer (1917), extensive reading is not part from the beginning of the instruction, but rather at the end of the *learning* process of the foreign language. In the advanced stage, vocabulary will be acquired from books, and it will be used to make conversations, stimulate composition, and exercise imitative faculties. The student will read aloud, listen to the reading of the teacher, and summarise the content of

a chapter. The student will integrate exercises learned in previous stages, such as phonetic and orthographic dictation, where the student will convert passages, and in that form, text will become richer and richer in new material. When proficiency has been attained in the comprehension of foreign texts, the end of the stage will be achieved.

Similar to Palmer (1917), in West (1927), extensive reading was also integrated into a programme to learn a foreign language and not exclusively as an ER programme. Unlike the programme of Palmer (1917), West (1927) in this case did make use of extensive reading since the beginning of the *learning* process to teach children how to read, and read rapidly, so that in the future, they don't need a dictionary. Extensive reading, under the idea of *supplementary reading* (West, 1927), is designed to be part of the three levels of supplementary readers, wherein the third stage should be 10 to 11 years old. Therefore, even if West's (1927) programme isn't officially described as an ER programme, it did build the foundations to implement exclusively ER programmes.

In the guide of the EPER (1992), another way to elaborate an extensive reading programme is described. In the guide, it is declared that the objectives of the programme are to raise the proficiency in English of particular years, to improve grades in public examinations, to raise the standards of particular groups of students, to extend the use of English outside class, to improve students' attitude to English, and, in teacher training colleges, to give teachers experience of an extensive reading programme. When choosing personnel involved to instruct extensive reading, the guide highlights that it is important teachers must be enthusiastic about extensive reading, have administrative skills, and teach Grade 1.

In terms of students, the EPER (1992) explains there are different groups of students, which are called *graders* and are divided among several classes. Students must be chosen according to their level of English, the pressure of the rest of the curriculum, and the quality of teachers available. It is also important to decide the length of the extensive programme. According to the EPER (1992), the minimum time for any benefit to accrue (in schools 2 years and on intensive courses 6 months), and the maximum time before boredom set in is about 3 years.

#### **2.4.2 Practices**

According to Day (2015), there are three forms of practice of Extensive Reading. The first one was called supervised (or instructed) ER, which does not necessarily have to take

place in a school or university. In this practice, the instructor will sit close by reading its books, and respond to the student's questions about the storyline, word or phrase meaning, and grammatical structures. Additionally, the student can help select the reading material thus having participation in the ER. The second one was called independent ER, which involves an individual or individuals engaging in ER with no supervision. In this case, there is no report of direction, and the reader is self-taught. The third type of practice is blended extensive and intensive reading, which focuses on teaching reading strategies and extensive reading. Here the assessment is supported by the internet and the benefits of pages that gather quizzes for graded readers. This secures in practice that the students will read constantly and gain proficiency and free voluntary reading.

Regarding the development of practices in general regarding extensive reading, Day (2015) made a discussion review about the different developments in the practice and research concerning ER since 1998. In his research, he referred to the ten principles of extensive reading originally proposed by Day and Banford (1997), which are about the reading material digestibility, choosing options of students and the role of teachers as explained in the section on the origin and background of extensive reading.

Finally, he proceeded to compare those principles with articles that had extensive reading as their title. His findings were that several articles discussed principle number 3, learners choose what they want to read, but it was not implemented, as well as principle number 6, reading is its own reward. Some programs did not implement any of the ten principles, which raised the question about the actual nature of extensive reading. One obvious answer for him was that there is no single approach to the practice of extensive reading.

In the context of the study reported here, extensive reading is designed as an activity carried out and tested once each term (two terms a year) and involves a mixture of instructive and independent ER, where teachers may answer questions about the storyline or general contents of readings, but the students will also self-assessment in the process of reading. When describing the ER tests of the programme selected to be analysed in this research, independent ER, as defined by Day (2015), seems to be the predominant characteristic present in most formats, as readings are instructed to be carried out within a period but without any sort of supervision, though reports of progress in the reading process are absent altogether.

### 2.4.3 Assessment of ER

Extensive reading has been assessed in multiple ways according to the literature. According to the EPER (1992), evaluation must be per the goals of the programme. In the case of the guide, the first three goals are to raise proficiency in particular years, to improve grades in public examinations, and to raise the standards of particular groups of students. To assess the first goal, the teacher must have two sets of students who have an identical experience of English except that one will be exposed to the reading programme and the other will not.

In the case of the second goal, the teacher must compare the exam results of previous Grades with those of their successors who follow the reading program so it can be shown that standards have improved by comparing the results of public examinations or standardised internal tests. It is stated that one advantage of using the results of past students is that teachers must keep them from any part of their syllabus.

For the third goal, a way to assess extensive reading is by setting up a variation of control groups which pursue a different activity in addition to extensive reading, so the effects of extensive reading are then isolated and the halo is eliminated in a way each group will have the opportunity of engaging in a new activity. For the rest of the goals of the programme, such as to extend the use of English outside class and improve students' attitude toward English, one of the ways is to establish a link between the number of books read and an increase in proficiency, and find pairs that match in cleverness but differ in the amount they read and in the scores they achieve in the tests.

When suggesting that a particular instance in which ER is being applied should be assessed in terms of the necessities of its environment, the purposes of such a decision can vary. Day and Bamford (1997) list three main reasons for evaluating extensive reading in a second language *learning* environment, namely “to see whether a program has achieved its goals”, “to see what other results a program might have had, apart from the intended ones”, and “to identify aspects of a program that might need change or improvement”. These purposes lean into the idea of assessment being used as a tool to check the effectiveness and usefulness of ER in the particular context in which it is being implemented. However, the specific information that one could attempt to retrieve from assessing the instrument also varies, for example, if the focus is on the student’s ability to read in a second language. In this case, a pretest and a post-test could work to measure if the ability to read has been

improved before and after the reading process due to the use of ER (Day and Bamford, 1997). In the case of an assessment activity that wants to focus on the attitudes and behaviour of the people involved (students, teachers, administrators, etc.) in ER rather than the improvement of a specific ability, a questionnaire is a more fitting approach, with open-ended questions to “ask the students to write what they think are the best points of the program, the worst points, and what they think they gained by participating in it.” (Day and Bamford, 1997).

According to Ewert (2017), assessing learners in an ER programme is critical for getting support from stakeholders. Because ER *learning* is implicit, it is difficult to detect advances in reading comprehension or vocabulary expansion immediately. Nevertheless, practitioners should employ alternate methods of assessment. Some instructors opt for short quizzes for each book read, while others prefer a pass/fail system instead of letter grades. This system may include criteria such as time spent, words, pages, or books read, as well as journals or reflections submitted. Additionally, students' reading logs can be monitored regularly, and students may contribute to their final grades through self-assessment. Ewert (2017) also emphasises the value of qualitative evidence, such as student reading journals and logs, as well as pre-and post-motivation/reading experience questionnaires, which are easy to collect, evaluate, and share with others.

Ewert also highlights the importance of using qualitative evidence to assess students' progress in ER. This includes encouraging students to maintain reading journals and logs, which can provide valuable insights into their reading experiences, challenges, and progress. Additionally, pre- and post-motivation/reading experience questionnaires can gather qualitative data on students' attitudes, motivation, and reading experiences. These tools are easy to collect, evaluate, and share with others, providing a comprehensive understanding of students' engagement with ER.

Furthermore, Day (2015) emphasises the need for a balanced approach to assessment in ER programs. While quantitative measures such as quizzes and reading logs are valuable, qualitative evidence is equally important. By combining both types of assessment, educators can gain a holistic understanding of students' progress and engagement with ER. This multifaceted approach to assessment ensures that students' diverse *learning* experiences and achievements are recognized and valued within the ER program.

## 2.5 Does ER assess reading comprehension?

According to the literature, extensive reading has been presented as a complex and diverse language-learning activity. In terms of the elaboration of programmes, practices, and assessment, what extensive reading seems to evaluate is linguistic abilities or *vocabulary acquisition* through reading as the two main definitions. It is important to question whether Extensive Reading assesses reading comprehension or not because the multiple definitions and characteristics do not seem to agree explicitly on this point, focusing mostly on other dimensions of language *learning*. There is an inextricable but unclear connection between extensive reading and reading comprehension, since achieving the competencies that the activity looks for through extensive reading requires a well-developed and unified comprehension of a text. However, reading comprehension is not specifically listed as one of the targeted talents or skills to acquire and test in the overall goals of ER as articulated by its main proponents.

In the context of this study, the elaboration of multiple tests with different formats but no explicit common construct could mean a compromise of the validity of the test, as it shows that the test assesses what it intends to assess becomes impossible. This is relevant, as it has been shown that in extensive reading activities, dimensions such as pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary-related abilities seem to be more prominent than the reading itself.

In the following sections, we report on a case study where we analysed several formats of ERTs applied in our context of EFL learning to find out what the construct of those ERTs is which aspects of it are general across formats and which may be specific to each format. We also look specifically at those aspects of the construct (shared and specific) that may be related directly to reading comprehension skills and processes and inquire as to why the programme has to have different formats for these tests.

### **3. Methodology**

The study was designed as a qualitative case study at an exploratory level where five test formats of an Extensive Reading activity were analysed qualitatively in search of aspects associated to their construct. In each case, we applied a thematic analysis to a set of interviews with teachers involved in the design, application and/or scoring of the test, the test itself and its associated rubric (if available).

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- RQ1: What is the construct of the ERT?
- RQ1.1: What are the aspects of the construct that are common to the ERT formats?
- RQ1.2: What are the aspects of the construct that are specific to the ERT formats?
- RQ2: What is the role of reading comprehension within the ERT construct?
- RQ2.1: What are the aspects of the ERT that are related to reading comprehension?
- RQ2.2: What are the aspects of the reading comprehension construct that are common to ERT formats?
- RQ3: Why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?

In this section, we report on the data collection and data analysis tools, procedures and criteria used for the study.

#### **3.1 Data collection**

The data for the study consisted of transcripts of interviews applied to ERT teachers, the extensive reading tests they were involved with, and their corresponding rubrics (when available). The aforementioned tests and rubrics were allocated, according to the similarities they shared, to categories called formats, and each one was used later in the interviews of the study (see 3.1.2 Data Collection Tools). Therefore, out of the seven different materials gathered between tests and rubrics, five test formats were created, as the table below shows.

The formats and their names were designed taking into consideration the nature of the evaluation instruments, the tasks that the students were asked to do, and the context in which the corresponding tests were conducted.

**Table 2**

*Tests and rubrics categorised into formats according to their similarities*

| <b>Format</b> | <b>Materials</b>   | <b>Similarities</b>  |
|---------------|--------------------|--|
| 1             | Test 1, Test 2     | Written test, multiple choice, open questions, offline             |
| 2             | Rubric 3, Rubric 4 | Oral test, presentation about a topic, in video, offline           |
| 3             | Rubric 5           | Oral test, conversation in pairs about a topic, in video, offline  |
| 4             | Rubric 8           | Written test, essay on a book, open questions, on site             |
| 5             | Rubric 7           | Oral test, presentation in pairs on a topic from the book, on site |

### 3.1.1 Participants

Participants of the study were nine teachers of an undergraduate programme in Chile with intensive training in the English language (approximately a third of the activities along the four-year duration of the programme). Participant teachers included in the study had participated in the design, application, and/or scoring of at least one instance of ERT applied for a particular generation of the program. The table below summarises the number of participants in the study and the roles they played regarding the ERTs about which they were interviewed.

**Table 3**

*Role of the participants in the different ERT formats*

| <b>Format</b> | <b>Participants</b> |         |         |         |         |         |   |         |         |
|---------------|---------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|---------|---------|
|               | 1                   | 2       | 3       | 4       | 5       | 6       | 7 | 8       | 9       |
| 1             |                     | D, A, S |         | D, A, S | D, A, S | D, A, S | S |         | D, A, S |
| 2             | D, A, S             |         |         | D, A, S |         | D, A, S |   | D, A, S | D, A, S |
| 3             |                     |         |         |         |         |         |   |         | D, A, S |
| 4             | D, A, S             | D, A, S | D, A, S |         |         |         | S |         | D, A, S |
| 5             |                     |         |         | D, A, S |         |         |   | D, A, S | D, A, S |

*Note.* The different roles possible for the participants are designer (D), applicant (A), and scorer (S).

As can be seen, participants in general had been involved with more than one format of the ERTs examined for the study, with the exception of Participant 3, who was only involved in one test format. And for every format at least five participants were involved, except for formats 3 and 5, which had only one and three participants involved respectively. Also, participants were fully involved in the design, application and scoring of the ERTs they were interviewed about, except Participant seven, who had only played the role of the scorer of two ERTs. Overall, the sample of participants was enough to provide reliable and experience-based responses to the ERT.

### **3.1.2 Data collection tools**

A semi-structured interview was designed in agreement with the research questions of the study. Accordingly, the interview consisted of three parts. For each test that the participants were involved in, the first questions of the interview asked explicitly what the construct of the test format was (RQ1) and what aspects of the construct were related to reading comprehension (RQ2). Finally, the interview included a question about the reason(s) behind the use of multiple formats of the test (RQ3).

The interview was piloted by two teachers of the program. The pilot allowed us to confirm that the estimated timing, clarity of language, and modality of the interview were adequate. One change we did, however, under the suggestions of one of the pilot participants, was to print the questions to keep order and a guide to the interviewees to not let interviewees lose ideas by forgetting what the answers were. As questions did not change after this procedure, we used the data provided in the pilot by one of the participants who had been involved with the test.

Tests and rubrics were asked from participants to be used at the moment of the interview. In some cases, we retrieved that material from the course-management platform.

### **3.2 Data analysis**

Five test formats constituted the cases for the case study. These formats were made from the eight tests and rubrics from the cohort we selected for this research taking into account the similarities in terms of tools and types of questions used. For each case, a thematic analysis was applied to a set of interviews with participants (teachers involved with

the design, application and/or scoring of the corresponding test format), tests and rubrics (where available).

### 3.2.1 Data analysis procedure

A thematic analysis was carried out on the data collected from interviews, tests and rubrics. First, we defined a coding scheme that would reflect the features of the construct of extensive reading (RQ1) and reading comprehension (RQ2) drawn from the literature on both domains. For example, we used codes reflecting some extensive reading characteristics like *enjoyment* and *gradation* (Mermelstein, 2014) and *simplicity* and *fidelity* (Palmer, 1917). When such codes were applied to the data, it meant that the data indicated that such an aspect of the construct of ERT or Reading Comprehension was present in the test. The coding procedure was carried out using the Qual Coder software.

The table below shows the coding scheme we used and a short definition for each code that guided the coding process. Codes marked with (ER) are specific to Extensive Reading constructs.

**Table 4**  
*Definitions of code concepts used in the analysis*

| Code                                    | Definition   | Author                                |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Acquisition (ER)                        | It is used to refer to an intuitive process or subconscious process of “picking up” a language.  | Kraschen (1985, in Mermelstein, 2014) |
| Background knowledge                    | Knowledge that the reader has previously acquired to the current text reading process; this information is used by the reader to identify the type of text, set expectations, and fill gaps in information presented in a text.      | Grabe (2009)                          |
| Blended intensive and extensive reading | It focuses on teaching reading strategies (intensively) to encourage students to engage in extensive reading.  | Day (2015)                            |
| Bottom-up processing                    | It implies the processing of stimuli beginning from the lower levels of processing, such as word recognition or grammatical analysis, and gradually build up the whole comprehension of a text by beginning from simpler components. | Kong (2019)                           |
| Breadth and width of material           | It refers to the length of books, the number of books or words to read, or the amount of time spent while reading that is considered when designing an ER programme.   | Ewert (2017)                          |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Choosing reading over other options                             | It is the idea that students should choose reading the book over other activities such as watching the film adaptation of the same text.   | Afflerbach (2017)                           |
| Cognition / Cognitive skills                                    | Focuses on the strategies and skills used by students as they develop as readers. The ability to obtain a definite idea about the intended message of a text by making use of a series of patterns that begins on the visual system and involve different other pattern recognition devices. | Afflerbach (2017), Kong (2019)              |
| Collaborative task*   | When an academic task needs at least two students to work co-ordinately in order to develop skills related to teamwork or cooperation.   | New codes drawn from the data               |
| Constructing meaning  | It is how the readers decode the information that the writer encodes and transforms it into thought.   | Kong (2019)                                 |
| Critical and reflective thinking*                               | The ability of the student to make a judgement of the information they have been provided to analyse. The student is self-aware of the thought process that goes through when choosing how to use their linguistic abilities   | New codes drawn from the data               |
| Delivery*   | The way in which information is delivered, considering the clarity to explain, the organisation of ideas, coherence, among others.   | New codes drawn from the data               |
| Development of target language (ER) / Vocabulary Acquisition    | Wide reading not only increases word meaning knowledge but can also produce gains in topical and world knowledge that can further facilitate reading comprehension   | Day and Bamford (1997), Ewert (2017)        |
| Enjoyment (ER)  | The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding, and it is usually related to students choosing reading out of pleasure rather than because it is mandatory.   | Day and Bamford (2002, in Mermelstein 2014) |
| Expected response or response format_Productive response format | Tasks that require the test takers to generate their own answers or responses. Usually expressed through open-ended questions.   | Kong (2019)                                 |
| Expected response or response format_Selective response format  | Tasks that require the test takers to select an answer from a set of given possibilities. Multiple choice questions, true or false, matching formats.  | Kong (2019)                                 |
| Explicit learning (ER)  | It is the process of reading whilst consciously thinking about recognising lexico-grammatical and general knowledge to be acquired. This happens   | Ewert (2017)                                |

|                                    |   |   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
|                                    | through an intensive reading process.   |   |
| Extensive reading (ER)             | Book after book will be read through without giving more than a superficial and passing attention to the lexicological units of which it is composed. Knowledge is acquired unconsciously.                            | Palmer (1917)   |
| Extracting meaning                 | It is how readers extract information directly from the text and build up its meaning by combining this information with their background knowledge and context.  | Kong (2019)   |
| Fidelity (ER)                      | Texts must be easy and natural to reflect faithful reflection of the language as it is truly spoken by all sorts and conditions of native speakers without the intervention of the descriptive or explanatory styles. | Palmer (1917)   |
| Fluency (ER)                       | It refers to the ability of the student to read in a fluid, fast manner without taking too much time analysing certain words or trying to understand the main points.   | Nation (2001, in Ewert, 2017)   |
| For basic comprehension            | One of the purposes of reading comprehension is to understand the main ideas or the main points of a text or to form an overall understanding of the main theme of a text.  | Enright et al. (2000, in Kong 2019)   |
| Free voluntary reading (ER)        | Reading material and the activity itself that is selected by the reader for its own sake, or simply because the reader wants to read, not because it is mandatory or required by the format                           | Ewert (2017), (Krashen, 1995, in Mermelstein, 2014) (Day and Bamford, 2002, in Mermelstein, 2014) |
| Gradation (ER)                     | As the student of the foreign language is not in the same position as the native, texts must be adequate to its language level.   | Palmer (1917)   |
| Implicit learning (ER)             | It is the process of reading unaware of the knowledge that is being acquired. This happens through an extensive reading process.  | Ewert (2017)  |
| Independent ER                     | This involves an individual or individuals engaging in ER with no supervision. There is no report of direction. The reader is self-taught.  | Day (2015)  |
| Individual and silent reading (ER) | Reading is carried out in an individual and silent manner.  | Day and Bamford (2002, in Mermelstein,  |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|   |  | 2014)   |
| Inference                                 | It is the processing of information based on the stimuli; it reflects our attitudes about and expectations of what the text is conveying.  | Grabe (2009)  |
| Information storage                       | A synthesising mechanism where information from a text is received and accepted by the reader.   | Kong (2019)   |
| Intensive reading                         | Each sentence is subjected to scrutiny, and the more interesting may be paraphrased, translated, or learnt by heart. Specific details are  | Palmer (1917)   |
| Interactive processing                    | Refers to a processing reading comprehension pattern that integrates the basic information provided by the bottom-up processing pattern, and the reader's knowledge present in the top-down processing pattern,  | Kong (2019)   |
| Interpretation                            | It is the process where inference and prior knowledge meet to create a new idea based on the text being read. The reader brings a level of interpretation to the information being processed. It is the reader's representation of the circumstances to which a discourse refers, being an integration of prior knowledge with the information explicitly presented in the text. | Afflerbach (2017), Grabe (2009)   |
| Interviews                                | A meeting between people, be it physically face-to-face, or virtually.   | Kong (2019)   |
| Large sight vocabulary (ER)               | Reading a great deal is the best and easiest way to develop large sight vocabulary.  | Day and Bamford (1997)  |
| Learning (in the ER) / To learn           | It is used to refer to a conscious active effort to understand information. It is the purpose of reading to find information, develop a basic comprehension, and integrate and connect the information of a text.  | Kraschen (1985, in Mermelstein, 2014), Enright et al. (2000, in Kong, 2019) |
| Linguistic abilities and competence       | Linguistic abilities that a reader has, such as fluency, vocabulary, grammar, word recognition, grammatical and syntactic awareness, as well as the linguistic level of the reader in the second language.   | Kong (2019), Day and Bamford (2002, in Mermelstein, 2014)                   |
| Metacognitive skills / Reading Strategies | In the context of reading comprehension, it refers to the ability of a reader to use different reading strategies and levels of processing that can be activated. To complete a comprehension task more effectively,   | Kong (2019), Grabe (2009)   |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | strategy use arises from reading problems to achieve reading goals.   |   |
| Monitoring (in the ER) / Supervised ER            | It is the observation of the student's reading, which facilitates the recognition of the students that are struggling to focus on the task, which in turn can allow the teacher to make suggestions for reading material and reading practices.   | Ewert (2017), Day (2015)                    |
| Motivation  | It is the involvement that the teacher has in the reading process of the students, as well as pushing them into reading extensively.  | Afflerbach (2017)                           |
| Topics*   | The topics, issues or themes concerning a test are relevant to the reading assessment. Includes specific vocabulary from a topic, and the argumentative development of a point of view, among others.   | New codes drawn from the data               |
| Multiple types of text to read / Type of text     | The readings should be multiple and varied in topic. The best type of text will consist of short anecdotes, humorous stories, and interesting items of general information selected from current periodicals and carefully edited and simplified. The colloquial and simple explanatory styles should be used; both slang and archaism should be avoided. | Afflerbach (2017), Palmer (1917)            |
| Oral test*  | A form of assessment in which individuals must express their knowledge, understanding and skills orally.  | New codes drawn from the data               |
| Originality*                                      | The test's answer is original.  | New codes drawn from the data               |
| Programme goals (ER)                              | The instructor will guide the students to follow along and comply with the programme's guidelines, which dictate the expectations and goals of competence.  | Day and Bamford (2002, in Mermelstein 2014) |
| Purpose / Generalisation of test response formats | Refers to the application or extension of test performance across various contexts or formats.  | Kong (2019)                                 |
| Questionnaires                                    | A survey instrument used to collect information or data from individuals for research, assessment or evaluation purposes.   | Kong (2019)                                 |
| Reading comprehension                             | An activity that involves transforming a text into thought or meaning.  | Grabe (2009)                                |

|                                 |  |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Reading instructions            | It is the set of instructions that an instructor gives to their students to follow along with their reading process.   | Afflerbach (2017)                            |
| Reward (ER)                     | Reading is its own reward; the reward is to further gain knowledge and language usage.   | Day and Bamford (2002, in Mermelstein, 2014) |
| Scanning                        | It involves a selective type of reading that intends to find specific words, figures or phrases inside a text.   | Kong (2019)                                  |
| Self-assessment (in the ER)     | Self-assessment comes after monitoring, which is an instance for students to self-regulate their reading process for optimal comprehension. It includes incorporating new strategies, tools and methods to read efficiently. | Ewert (2017)                                 |
| Sequential processing           | A form of reading comprehension processing that consists of a series of stages, each of which is completed before the next stage begins.   | Kong (2019)                                  |
| Simplicity (ER)                 | First texts to be studied and first conversations should be relatively simple, avoiding old-fashioned or unusual forms of expression and preferring current everyday speech.   | Palmer (1917)                                |
| Skimming                        | A type of reading comprehension purpose that consists of reading quickly to understand the general impressions or superordinate idea of a text.  | Kong (2019)                                  |
| Social usage                    | It is the knowledge acquired through reading that can be used beyond the test.   | Afflerbach (2017)                            |
| Speed (ER)                      | It refers to the speed that students should develop when reading extensively. Reading should be faster than slower.  | Day and Bamford (2002, in Mermelstein, 2014) |
| Standard of coherence           | The reader's expectation of understanding what the author has presented to them and their willingness to put up the effort necessary to understand what the author has presented   | Grabe (2009)                                 |
| Strengths and needs of students | The different capacities and valencies of the students and how the test models can change to them.   | Afflerbach (2017)                            |
| Technology-based test*          | It considers the type of test format that requires the use of a technological tool.  | New codes drawn from the data                |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Test method / Variables                      | Test method variables consist of the characteristics of the environment, rubric, input, expected response and the relationship between input and expected response.                                      | Bachman and Palmer (1996, in Kong, 2019) |
| Text structure                               | The organisation, composition and cohesion of a text   | Kong (2019)                              |
| Time management*                             | The student is capable of managing their time efficiently by organising their ideas under pressure, answering a question in a given period or submitting a project within a due date.                    | New codes drawn from the data            |
| To evaluate and use information              | It is the purpose of reading comprehension in which the reader goes beyond simply comprehending the text.  | Enright et al. (2000, in Kong, 2019)     |
| To find information                          | A reading purpose that consists of searching the text for specific information to find answers to questions that have been posed.  | Enright et al. (2000, in Kong, 2019)     |
| To integrate information from multiple texts | This type of reading purpose consists of a reader that integrates the information from more than one source.   | Enright et al. (2000, in Kong, 2019)     |
| Top-down                                     | It implies the processing of stimuli from the higher levels of processing, from a rather general understanding and background knowledge that guides the understanding of the specific details of a text. | Kong (2019)                              |
| Vocabulary complexity                        | The level of syntactic and lexical density affects a text's readability and adjusts the difficulty to the intended readership.   | Kong (2019)                              |
| Wide general vocabulary knowledge (ER)       | Second language students must read from context through multiple encounters so incidental vocabulary learning becomes easier.  | Day and Bamford (1997)                   |
| Written tests                                | A form of assessment in which individuals must express their knowledge, understanding and skills through written answers.  | Kong (2019)                              |

*Notes.* The codes with a \* symbol are original codes created along the coding process by the researchers due to the absence of concepts from the revised literature that could represent such constructs.

The content of the interviews, tests, and rubrics collected was coded according to this coding scheme. Each text was coded by two groups of three researchers independently in individual sessions. To ensure consistency we had meetings to enhance agreement in the interpretation and application of codes. After coding was finished, both groups met to

compare results. Agreement between the coding of both groups was 62%, which was considered unsatisfactory. Therefore, we adopted an alternative criterion to validate common coding between the two groups. Therefore, common coding was considered valid for the analysis and dissimilar coding were discarded for further analysis. This meant in the end that 100% of the codes that entered the analysis had been identified by the two groups in independent analyses.

The criterion for the analysis was applied as follows. If a code appeared at least once in a test or rubric of a format and also an interview of a teacher who worked with it, it was interpreted as part of the construct for that test format. ERT construct codes appearing in all five tests were interpreted as elements of the general construct of the ERTs (RQ1.1.). ERT construct codes that appeared only in one test were considered as part of the specific construct for that test (RQ1.2). Reading comprehension construct codes appearing in all five tests were interpreted as elements of the general construct of reading comprehension in the ERTs (RQ2.1.). Construct codes that appeared only in one test were considered as part of the specific reading comprehension construct for that test (RQ2.2)

In the next section, we will present and discuss the results of the study.

## 4. Data Results and Discussion

In this section, results will be presented and briefly discussed following the order of the research questions for the study. Under Research Question one (RQ1 henceforth), we searched for common and specific aspects of the construct of the Extensive Reading tests (ERTs). Under Research Question two (RQ2 henceforth), we searched more closely for common and specific aspects of the construct directly related to reading comprehension in the context of ERT. Finally, under Research Question three (RQ3 henceforth), we looked into reasons why the programme under study applied different formats for the ERTs. The section ends with a discussion of the results regarding the reasons for the different formats of the ERTs in the context under examination.

### 4.1 What is the construct of the ERT?

For RQ1, the general construct of ERTs was identified by analysing the codes applied to each test format rubric and interviews of participants involved in its design, application and/or scoring. Only when a code was present in all the data sets associated with a test format, it was considered to be part of the general construct of that test format.

As the code of *linguistics abilities and competence* was present in all five test formats, this aspect of the ERTs construct was considered to be common to the five test formats. This suggests that the ERT assessment construct refers fundamentally to the development and acquisition of second language competence. This feature agrees with the programme designed by Palmer (1917), where extensive reading is used to develop more fluency in the second language in terms of the vocabulary acquired by the readings (see section 2.4.1). The idea here is that programme students will put into practice the new vocabulary acquired in ER by speaking, translating, writing, etcetera. This also goes in accordance with the design of the programme, since in the context of this study, extensive reading is an activity within a language practice course. In the same way, the use and development of *linguistic abilities and competence*, is in agreement with the benefits that extensive reading may bring to students in the foreign language classroom according to Day and Bamford (1997).

Participant eight argued that “the extensive reading test would be a natural closure to the extensive reading activity to see whether the students have been able to discuss the issues with the vocabulary and grammar learned in class” (see Appendix A8). This views the assessed activity of ERT as a type of test that is used to give closure to the previous reading

process. Similarly, participant five said that “another global purpose would be the assessment of the capacity to think about language. There are specific objectives that are specific to the cohort that the students belong to, for example, a first-year student should be evaluated regarding their skills associated with B1 level, then B2, etcetera” (see Appendix A5). These opinions go beyond the definitions of extensive reading that the literature uses (see section 1) and state that this ERT can be the next step of ER as a format to be included in programs to evaluate the assessment of language according to the linguistic contents seen in class as the student progresses together with the level such as B1, B2, etcetera (Council of Europe, 2020).

It is worth mentioning other codes that were close to occurring in all data for each case, such as the *development of target language and vocabulary acquisition*. These codes were found in all formats but one. However, the interviews related to that format indicated its presence. This case is noteworthy when answering the construct of the ERTs since the participants and all the other formats confirm the assessment of *development of target language* but that aspect is not included in the test clearly and visibly, making it so the code is not part of the construct even if every other information says the contrary. This is confirmed by participant three, who stated, “Basically ERTs are designed to assess reading comprehension in general and for the acquisition of vocabulary” (see Appendix A3).

Our findings thus indicate an orientation of the programme, which is a second language acquisition program that aims towards the view of ER as an activity oriented towards language *acquisition* since the multiple linguistic competences are the centre of the course that assesses ERT. In turn, this can be explained as consistent with the ideas of Day (2015) that state that a program which uses ER as an activity will breach from the literature to adapt to the objectives of the program. So, the findings of this chapter indicate that the ERT of this program is unique and takes its foundations in ER but adapts them to the aim of the English courses. This information will be surprising if only the definitions of what ER is are present but with a deeper knowledge the realisation that this construct is to be expected becomes evident.

#### **4.1.1 What are the aspects of the construct that are common to the ERT formats?**

Table 5 below summarises the results obtained in the study. The table shows the codes that were found to characterise each test, showing the detail of the data sets where they were found.

**Table 5**

*Codes that are part of the construct of each format according to what the participants argued during the interview process*

| Code  | Format |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Expected response or response format_Productive response format | ✓      |   |   |   |   |
| Linguistic abilities and competence                             | ✓      | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Collaborative task  |        |   | ✓ |   |   |
| Delivery  |        |   | ✓ |   |   |
| Technology based test   |        |   | ✓ |   |   |
| Topics  |        |   | ✓ |   |   |

Results show that the aspects of the construct that are specific to each format of the ERT are as follows:

For format one, only linguistics abilities and competence is found as a code. In this regard, it is crucial to mention that all participants emphasised linguistic abilities and competence as a specific aspect of the ERT construct in all formats.

For format two, linguistic abilities and competence and development of target language / vocabulary acquisition were found. Regarding this last aspect, only four out of the six participants interviewed in this format indicated that these aspects were part of the test constructs, suggesting that they are ERTs key components for assessing linguistic performance in extensive reading.

For format three, emphasis was also given to the aspect of linguistic abilities and competence as part of the test construct.

For format four, linguistic abilities and competence and development of target language / vocabulary acquisition were found. Linguistic abilities and competence were present in all the interviews related to this format. Although development of target language / vocabulary acquisition was found in four out of the five interviews, it will not be considered part of the construct of this format since it is not present in all instances of analysis.

For format five, linguistic abilities and competence, development of target language / vocabulary acquisition and monitoring were found to be part of the construct. Development of target language / vocabulary acquisition was found in two out of the three interviews related to this format, while monitoring was present only once out of the three interviews.

Results thus show that the aspect of the construct that is common amongst the ERT formats is *linguistic abilities and competence*. This dimension covers everything dealing with the usage of language in terms of “fluidity, word recognition, grammatical and syntactic awareness, as well as the linguistic level of the reader in the second language” (Kong, 2019); Day and Bamford, 2002, as cited in Mermelstein, 2014). According to most participants, therefore, what is generally assessed in the ERTs are aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, and the ability to construct a coherent paragraph.

For example, participant three indicated that “Another thing that is tested, because of the format, is some formal aspects of writing, such as punctuation, use of grammar, use of vocabulary, and the use of paragraphs, with topic sentences and summarising sentences” (see Appendix A3). Here the participant is highlighting the degree of comprehensiveness of the assessment approach, which addresses not only content but also the formal linguistic abilities.

This aspect of the construct is present clearly in the oral test formats. For example, in format three (see Table 2), we can find an item presented as follows, “your conversation should flow smoothly, with no evident script. You should respect each other’s speaking turns and make your own contributions without repeating each other’s ideas. Also, you may ask questions, make comments, and react to your partner’s ideas in your discussion” (see Appendix B5). In this sense, it is expected that students showcase their linguistic abilities in terms of proficiency in language use, communication skills and the ability to develop discussions. The rubric of format three (see Table 2) also reflects this construct in the following indicators: “Complex grammatical structures are used to contribute to the points presented. Only minor mistakes are made, and the student is able to self-correct most of them or all of them. No evident mistakes regarding syntax.”, “The student expresses clear, well-developed ideas at all times. The student uses a wide range of cohesive devices and discourse markers”, and “The student used many sophisticated and new expressions that provide richness to their discourse making it appear natural.” (see Appendix B5). These indicators describe a high level of linguistic abilities and competence according to the level of English of students, with a focus on language proficiency and fluency.

In terms of linguistic competence, ERTs also tend to evaluate if students are able to employ advanced vocabulary, sophisticated grammar structures, and acceptable pronunciation at an advanced level. For example, participant six explained: “In the oral version of the ERT we need to include the linguistic criterion, in which we had to assess or evaluate pronunciation, grammar, the way you deliver your ideas, [...], because in the oral test you have to explain an important theme in the book” (see Appendix A6).

Other formal aspects are evaluated such as being able to talk within a time limit or delivering your conversation or monologue in a natural manner, which can also be considered as part of the construct dimension of linguistic abilities and competence in the foreign language. For example, the prompts in format five read: “The Extensive Reading Test will take the form of a 6-to-7-minute presentation in pairs.” (see Appendix B5). In this sense, *linguistic abilities and competence* are also demonstrated by the level of fluency the student has in the foreign language, thus demonstrating her/his language proficiency level.

Evidence thus suggests that *linguistic abilities and competence* are aspects that teachers consider important when assessing extensive reading, which is in line with one of the original perspectives of the ER activity. It is also in line with the approach of the programme to EFL learning and the importance it gives to linguistic competence (see section 4.1).

#### **4.1.2 What are the aspects of the construct that are specific to the ERT formats?**

Results show that the aspects of the construct that are specific to each format of the ERT are as follows:

Only formats one and three showed aspects of the construct unique to them. For format 1, the specific code that appeared in the analysis was *Expected response or response format\_Productive response format*. For format three, the specific codes were *Collaborative task, Delivery, Technology based tests* and *Topics*.

Format one thus seems to have a distinctive focus on *Expected response or response format\_Productive response format*, which can be observed in the nature of format. Format one is a written test, multiple choice, open questions, offline (see Table 2). That information suggests a response format, defined as “Tasks that require the test takers to generate their own answers or responses. Usually expressed through open-ended questions.” (Kong, 2019) is present due to the nature of the format.

Regarding format one, participant four reflected the focus on the productive response of learners by specifying that the test required “in first year [of the programme], a maximum of five written lines, which is where they think of connections, provide connections between characters and go beyond the words read in the text.” (see Appendix A4). The indication of *going beyond the words read in the text, also agrees with* the description of Kong (2019) about the *Expected response or response format\_productive response format* code.

It is also relevant to note the general importance of *Expected response or response format\_Productive response* format in all test formats. Indeed, this aspect was highlighted by six participants as being part of the tests they participated in. This is relevant because the production of responses is an element not only in format 1 but also in format 44 since an open question is part of the descriptors of both of them. Even with the similarities, Format 4/Format 4 does not have *Expected response or response format\_Productive response* as construct due to the interviews not agreeing on this aspect. The frequent apparition of the code is due to the difference between a test and a rubric, since a test explicitly states the task that the student is being required to do in contrast with a rubric, which states general competences and abilities to develop. This may also be an effect of the uneven data sets for the formats in the study, as Format 1 was supported by two tests while Format 3 data only consisted of one rubric (see Table 2).

When taking into account that only two of the formats, more specifically formats one and three, had specific codes that differed from the general construct, this particular instance of a specific code needs to be critically analysed. The presence of this particular code can be interpreted as being due to the nature of Format one encompassing open questions in both tests (see Appendix B1)

Specific aspects of the construct of Format three, can also be connected to the actual format of the test. The presence of *technology based test* reflects the fact that the test consisted of producing a digital video recording in pairs. Another code present in the format analysis, *collaborative task*, can be interpreted to be influential in the way the format requires argumentative work in a group consisting of more than one member (see Appendix B3), and as described by the definition of this code made by us, these tasks are instructed in order to develop skills related to teamwork or cooperation (see Table 4). *Delivery* is also mentioned in all instances of analysis in format three, and it is defined as including clarity to explain, organisation of ideas and coherence (see Table 4). Participant nine develops both codes as being present in the construct a bit further, as it states that since “[the test] involves

organisation, it involves a fair division of the work; Exchanging information and interacting is important, cooperation is important.” (see Appendix A9).

So, the aspects of the construct which are specific to formats one and three seem to be closely related to the particular configuration of the tasks constituting the tests (an individual written test and a video recording in pairs, respectively).

Format three is different to the other formats in how the construct was created since only participant nine was part of this format. Then any code that was a match from the codifications needed to be found in the answers of one participant to become a construct.

#### 4.2 What is the role of reading comprehension within the ERT construct?

For RQ2, two main questions were formulated to identify the common and specific aspects of the construct of reading comprehension, and the data used to answer them is from the ERTs analysis and the interview questions that were designed specifically for the reading comprehension aspect (see Appendix A0).

The general result is that none of the construct aspects identified was part of the coding scheme related to reading comprehension. Instead, codes referring to reading comprehension construct were only observed in the data consisting of tests and rubrics’ and not in the interviews:

**Table 6**

*Codes that are part of the construct of each format and are related to reading comprehension*

| Code   | Format |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Critical and reflective thinking             | ✓      | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| For basic comprehension                      | ✓      |   |   |   |   |
| Interpretation                               | ✓      |   |   |   |   |
| Reading comprehension                        | ✓      |   |   |   |   |
| To evaluate and use information              |        |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| To integrate information from multiple texts | ✓      | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |

When participants were asked about reading comprehension for each test format (see Table 5), they did not seem to agree as to the extent to which reading comprehension was part

of the ERTs under examination, and instead, the only codes that achieved coincidence were related to *linguistic abilities and competences*.

Results here seem to also be in line with the literature on ER (see section 2.3.2), which establishes that, although reading is part of the tasks intended to happen during an ERT (Susser and Robb, 1990), this assessment is mostly seen as a teaching/learning procedure and not a reading subskill. Therefore, despite the many abilities, strategies, and information processing skills that are used while in the activity of reading comprehension, it is not the ultimate purpose of the assessment to measure reading comprehension per se.

Results of our study confirm these ideas, indeed, the construct aspects identified can be characterised as different varieties of abilities and types of information processing related to, for example, lexical acquisition, grammatical knowledge and such, rather than to reading comprehension particular subskills and processes.

Results are also in line with the pedagogical orientation of the programme in which the ERTs are being used as its courses focus explicitly on teaching proficiency in English as a second language. In this context, the ERT seems to function as a natural instance to assess the performance of students as an indicator of their linguistic competence and level of language proficiency in English.

#### **4.2.1 What are the aspects of the ERT that are related to reading comprehension?**

We then asked the teachers if they thought that reading comprehension was part of the assessment construct of the formats they knew. The results of the interviews showed that, although the majority of participants believed reading comprehension was part of the construct (seven out of nine), agreement was not total, as two of them did not believe so.

As participant two argued, “I don’t think so, because reading comprehension probably goes deeper into difficult-to-understand aspects of a certain text, and we don’t do that. It’s basically about “do you remember the book contents” (see Appendix A2), “show me that you’ve read the book” (see Appendix A2). Participants’ position in this case agrees with one of the two main opinions about what is assessed in the ER according to the literature. In particular, this is consistent with the idea that reading in an ER context only allows one to grasp the surface of the content of a book or text and does not allow one to go deeper into *critical thinking*, *reflective thinking*, and other processes involving comprehension of contents.

In contrast, participant four indicated that reading comprehension was indeed part of ERT said construct. The participant argued that “If we go back to critical thinking, yes, as students need to make connections between what they’ve read and something else that we are asking from them” (see Appendix A4). This idea contradicts that of participant two above as it values *critical thinking* as part of the activity and considers it an indicator of good comprehension.

The different opinions about the inclusion of reading comprehension as part of the construct of ERTs can be interpreted against the way that the different formats of the ERTs in the programme work. This is so because every format makes use of different instruments and methods so reading comprehension is more present in some formats than in others. For instance, in the case of written test formats, themes related to reading comprehension were significantly mentioned more frequently than it was for oral test formats, for which sometimes there was no mention at all. The reason behind this could be the fact that a number of themes referred to reading comprehension, whereas only one referred to linguistic abilities. This might have caused that, in the process of coding, fewer coincidences were found in both groups for reading comprehension, and more for linguistic abilities. This meant that there were more probabilities of using a code for reading comprehension than for linguistic abilities. In conclusion, the inclusion or omission of reading as a part of the construct by the participants could be due to either the requirements of each format (oral or written), or to the number of codes allocated to refer to it.

#### **4.2.2 What are the common aspects of the ERT format that relate to reading comprehension?**

Under RQ2.1, we found no code common to all test formats, although *critical and reflective thinking* appeared in four out of the five formats.

This result is in line with the idea found in the literature that reading comprehension is not part of the ERT construct and that ERTs assess linguistic competences and lexicological units from a superficial reading (see section 2.3).

#### **4.2.3 What are the specific aspects of the ERT formats that relate to reading comprehension?**

There are no reading comprehension construct aspects that are specific to one test format either. Some aspects were identified in the rubrics and tests but they do not seem to be key elements of the construct, such as *critical and reflective thinking* or *to evaluate integrate*

*and use information from multiple texts*, as participants did not agree on the centrality of those reading comprehension codes as part of what the test assessed. The aspects found in some formats but not all are explained from the characteristics of them since format one has the test which only expresses the explicit tasks to be done by the students and *critical and reflective thinking* was not found as it is present in the rubrics that have general competences and abilities to be developed.

This result seems to indicate the marginal participation that reading comprehension has on the ERTs construct and confirms the definitions on what ER is, which is an activity that uses superficial reading as a tool to assess linguistic competences. (see section 2.3.1).

From the definitions of ER, the one from West (1926) is the closest to what happened in the program of this study as he referred to extensive reading as “supplementary reading”, defined as an exercise to use the vocabulary obtained from the teaching. In that definition there is no mention of large amounts of reading which is a central element of the definitions not present in this program. The definition still lacks other elements of the ERT such as other linguistic competences but even so creates a connection between the program and the literature.

#### **4.3 Why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?**

RQ3 was expressed in the last question of the interview, asking for the reason behind the different formats of extensive reading tests in the programme. The answers that the participants gave to this question were analysed differently than the others as they did not focus on assessment constructs. Thematic analysis was nonetheless used to guide the possible interpretations of the participants' answers on constructs as part of the reason for the different formats. The codes that were used to define an answer for each format were extracted specifically from the answers to the last question of the interview, on why there are different formats for the ERT in the programme? (see Appendix A0)

The table below summarises the codes identified in the responses to the question of why multiple ERT formats were used in the programme under study.

**Table 7**

*Codes found for interview question for RQ3 (on why multiple formats were used for ERTs)*

| Format Codes                         | Participants |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|                                      | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| Collaborative task                   |              |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Critical and reflective thinking     |              |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |
| Development of target language       |              |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Linguistic abilities and competences |              |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Metacognitive skills                 |              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |
| Monitoring                           |              |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |
| Oral tests                           | ✓            |   | ✓ |   |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Program goals                        | ✓            |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Strengths and needs of students      | ✓            |   |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Technology based tests               |              |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Test method_Variables                | ✓            | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Written tests                        |              |   | ✓ |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |

The first noticeable concept present in all interviews is represented by the code *Test method\_Variables*. This suggests that, when deciding on a particular format or method to assess ER, participants take into consideration the contextual variables that may affect the use of a test. As stated by all of the participants, one of the main factors that affected the decision of which format to use was the COVID-19 pandemic.

For example, participant three indicated in relation to oral test formats that “After the lockdown, we needed to change the format to assess reading comprehension, and one of the ideas that came up specifically from the team was to make this kind of oral format of the ERT” (see Appendix A3). The idea of using oral tests via technological means as a response to the effects of the pandemic shows how the context and environment shaped how assessment took place in terms of tools and methods.

Due to this, the health crisis caused an increase in the use of oral test methods due to the need to remotely assess reading comprehension and *linguistic abilities and competence* in the context of lockdown, where *written tests* could not be performed efficiently. Although oral tests were used before the pandemic as an assessment tool for ER, such as *pecha-kucha*, they became a mainstay in the programme after the contingency, hence why *oral tests* as a code appeared in six out of nine answers of the participants. Nevertheless, even if the code *written test* was not as present among the participants, it is still the most used method of assessing ER in the programme, because it is, as stated by one of the participants, “such as the typical written test that is evaluated in Practice, or even in Grammar” (see Appendix A3), or the most traditional way of assessing reading comprehension and *linguistic abilities and competence*.

Another factor that was mentioned several times when asked about the reasons for the different formats was the personal factors of the students, expressed by the code *strengths and needs of the students*. This code was used when the participants referred to the abilities, knowledge, interests and needs of the students being taken into account when designing the test and its format.

Participant five also indicated that, at one point “there are no very innovative formats because we need to build confidence in the student, so we use formats that the students already know” (see Appendix A5). also indicated that it “also helps to build confidence in the student during the time the person is taking the test and lowers the anxiety, so it’s also a psychological thing” (see Appendix). Thus the usage of a more traditional format is explained by the need to build confidence in the student and avoid anxiety. This may be indicative of a link between the format chosen to assess ER and the particular psychological factors that lead the student to be either more or less prepared.

Following the same idea of *strengths and needs of the students* being relevant to the design of a test, the need for students to be interested and engaged in the assessment process also plays an important role. As participant five stated, “some of the students may end up being teachers, so you have to have the experience of being tested with different formats” (see Appendix A5). This means that, at least for some students, their future goals will influence their intrinsic motivation for ER. Also, participant five added that they “try to have different formats so that students can have the chance to experience different test formats.” (see Appendix A5). This mention of *experiencing different formats* makes sense when taking

into account that part of the *programme goals* is defined, in some part, by the future needs of the students.

Participant four, for example, mentions how “It also has to do with the competencies that we want students to develop; different evaluation instruments are aligned with different competencies throughout the different levels of the programme.” (see Appendix A4). In other words, programme goals, which depend on the level of linguistic competence expected by teachers, are relevant when designing specific tools, methods and formats that the teacher will use to assess ER in particular.

In summary, evidence does not show a clear agreement among participants on why there are varied formats of the ERTs in the context of study. Such diversity coincides with the variety of opinions found in the specialised literature on ER regarding test formats and justifications for those formats (see section 2.4.2). Participants do seem to agree in general on how a variety of formats serves to cater the different needs of the students and delimitations of the context for the assessment of ER. On the one hand, the different formats for assessing ER respond to the current linguistic strengths and future needs of the students. On the other hand, multiple formats are employed to answer to the changing nature of language *learning* in terms of the environment and particular contexts (for example, the need to apply tests remotely). Furthermore, the specific needs of a local course programme also play an important role when assessing ER.

## 5. Conclusion

Extensive reading, as defined by Palmer in 1917, is the activity of reading extensively to acquire knowledge and abilities of a second language. This can be accomplished through a variety of methods depending on the specific needs of a given context. This activity, expressed through a diverse array of tools, can be assessed in the context of a formally evaluated language learning programme. However, because of the variety of alternatives available to implement ERTs, there is a need for an explicit agreement on the assessment construct for this kind of tests, so that learners and teachers have a common understanding of what the test assesses.

Additionally, the relationship between extensive reading and reading comprehension is one of inseparable but undefined nature. This is so because reading extensively needs a well-developed and cohesive comprehension of a test to achieve the competencies that the activity looks for. However, the general goals of ER as defined by its main proponents do not explicitly include reading comprehension as one of its intended abilities or skills to develop and assess.

The study reported here explored the construct of a set of extensive reading tests in an EFL course programme. A set of interviews was conducted to ask course teachers involved in the process of assessing ER their views on the construct of ERT in general, the role of reading comprehension as part of that construct, and the reasons why these formats exist in the first place. We also collected actual tests and rubrics that they used to enrich the view of the diversity of ways ER is assessed in the context under study. We conducted a thematic analysis of the interview transcripts, tests and rubrics, by the application of codes representing possible components of the construct of ERTs and of reading comprehension in particular.

The study found that the common construct dimension of the ERTs analysed was *linguistic abilities and competence*. This places the construct of these ERTs clearly within a context of second language *acquisition*, since the abilities considered as linguistic, such as vocabulary and grammar, are part of the main expected competencies of the language learning context of the study. This evidence agrees with the results from other ER programmes analysed by Day and Bamford (1997), validating language abilities as part of the construct of the ERT in this programme.

The study also confirms that reading comprehension is not assessed explicitly in the various ERTs examined in the study and it is quite clearly not a central part of the construct of these tests. Still, some concepts that are related to reading comprehension could be identified in the data, including aspects such as critical *and reflective thinking* and *to integrate information from multiple tests*. This suggests that, despite reading comprehension not playing a central role in the construct of ERTs, there is some interest or awareness of teachers as to elements of reading comprehension in the tests.

Finally, the diversity of formats of ERT present in the same course has no clear explanation, since there is no agreement among participants of the study. However, some interesting indications were observed in most interviews when asked about this issue. For example, the influence of the *strengths and needs of students*, the *variables* that play a role when defining a method or tool to use in tests and the *programme goals* that dictate the expected levels of competence for the students. This shows a significant level of awareness regarding the relationship between test formats and their contexts and purposes.

These findings, although interesting and consistent with the literature, should be considered against a set of limitations. The most important one is the fact that some data may have been not considered as part of the final results due to the application of the criteria to only use codes that were observed by the two independent groups of coders. This criterion was applied because the agreement percentage between coding teams was unsatisfactory (less than 80%). In future attempts, it would be important to spend more time enhancing the calibration among coders, so that the analysis can be more consistent, and a more varied set of codes can be aptly considered to be part of the general and specific construct of the ERT and its formats.

Also, data for the cases (five cases of test formats) were uneven. None of the formats of the study included both tests and rubrics in document form as access to such documents was not always available. Furthermore, due mostly to time constraints and schedule issues, interview data was different from one case to another. Test formats one and two, for example, were supported by data from up to six interviews, while data for test format three consisted of one interview only. Some formats had more participants with whom the interviews could be conducted and data about possible constructs could be acquired. This means that, although construct dimensions may have been correctly coded, the overall description of constructs may lack precision for the cases where less data was available. In future research, steps

should be taken to collect all the required data and to consider if disparity of data may have an influence in the results of analyses.

The study can lead to further explorations of ERTs in language assessment contexts, especially concerning more traditional ways of looking at this activity. For example, the different formats of ERT that were analysed could be further explored as to the details of those aspects of linguistic abilities and competencies that the tests assess. This line of research is relevant, as there is little literature on ERTs construct.

Future research on ERT constructs should also have a focus on the relationship between reading comprehension and extensive reading in terms of the necessity of achieving the former to be successful in the latter. This study focused purely on reading comprehension as part of the ERT construct but did not observe, for example, how reading comprehension affects performance in ERTs. Also, evidence in this study makes it interesting to observe longitudinally if there is an effect of ER on language learners' linguistic competence.

Overall, the study was successful in identifying some aspects of the cases of extensive reading tests explored and characterising the role of reading comprehension and test format in the configuration of such construct. In this way, the evidence obtained in the study contributes to current debates in the area of extensive reading, its nature, characteristics, uses and purposes. Additionally, it provides empirical evidence that may help test designers and learners to better understand the extensive reading activity and its benefits for language learning.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A: Interviews

#### A0

##### RQ1: On ERT construct

- What is the purpose of the ERTs?
- What is assessed in the ERT in general?

[For each format known by participants]

- What is assessed in the ERT format that you marked/mentioned?
- In which part of the test is that assessed?
- In which part of the rubric is that assessed?
- Is there anything assessed in this test format that is different from the other ERT formats you know? What?
- Is there anything assessed in this test format that is common to the other ERT formats you know? What?

##### RQ2: On Reading Comprehension construct:

- Is Reading Comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

[If yes]

- Why is reading comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

[For each format known by participants]

- In which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?
- In which part of the rubric is reading comprehension assessed?
- Is there anything assessed in this test format that is different from the other ERT formats you know in relation to reading comprehension specifically? What?
- Is there anything assessed in this test format that is common to the other ERT formats you know in relation to reading comprehension specifically? What?

##### RQ3: On the different ERT formats:

- Why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?

*AI*

**Student:** The first question is “what is the purpose of the ERT?”

**Participant 1:** According to Grabe, who’s one of the biggest authors that discusses the importance of extensive reading tests, and extensive reading in general, it is a kind of support in the learning of a second language-you usually have two (right?). So, extensive reading tests have been a part of language teaching for a long time. Now, research on that has also been done for a while, and at some point, people thought they were not important, but they are, and new research supported that. So, in this case we have a combination of elements. So, one of them is, which is natural for extensive reading, which is vocabulary *acquisition*, the other one is related to the exposure to certain topics that hopefully will relate to what you are doing in Practice-that was always my intention when I thought of ERTs. So, there would be a bigger context for the understanding of what was presented in the extensive reading. In general, grammar is not that big in terms of extensive reading, because lexical acquisition is more important, and support for that is also something that will help you achieve an understanding of a different culture, because there is a bigger context in the text, and if you are helped enough you are going to be able to get-to grasp-some elements; it doesn’t matter if it is old or new, either way there would be some kind of cultural context, and it allows you to, if properly guided, to develop some strategies. So, reading strategies, vocabulary learning strategies. Nation talks about how through extensive reading you will be able to acquire vocabulary because of the repetition, how many encounters you will have with the same words, keywords in that sense. You will also, or you are supposed to, to develop some metacognitive strategies, because this text is going to be part of your lives for a little while, and you’re going to try to find, or you’re going to see how you are able to acquire some new concepts, new ideas, how you’re going to study for the test, etcetera. And you get some guides: a questionnaire, some questions in advance, and that also allows you to focus on what you want or on what the teachers are intending to evaluate.

**Student:** What is assessed in the ERTs in general?

**Participant 1:** Reading comprehension, because it is extensive, so it's a broad comprehension of this novel, biography, whatever. You are not supposed to answer questions that go to a minute detail. [censored]. You’re supposed to have a broad understanding of the interactions of the characters, what the main motivations are, etcetera, and, so that’s one thing, and

because of your expertise, you're supposed to also have a general understanding and use of certain elements, because if we the teachers want you to learn vocabulary, we want you to use the vocabulary; if you're exposed to a certain discursive aspects the idea is that you can use them as well, because you're not only being evaluated about the book, you're supposed to display all your linguistic resources when you're answering.

**Student:** What is assessed in the ERT formats that you personally were involved in the process of either formulating or assessing?

**Participant 1:** So, broad understanding, the evaluation of the key aspects that may turn the novel around-the construction or how a story is told- depends on several aspects, so the idea is to see if students understood the broad elements, and these key elements that make things go around the conflict.

**Student:** In which part of this test is all of what you've said assessed?

**Participant 1:** In all of it. So, if there are smaller questions, the questions are related to these specific aspects that are key in the text, and then when you have, for instance, a longer question or an essay-like question, you're also testing that.

**Student:** In which part of the rubric that you designed is all of that assessed?

**Participant 1:** So, as I said before, there are two things that are evaluated: one is the understanding, and the other one is mechanics. The rubric has the mechanics part very well laid out, which is vocabulary-uses appropriate vocabulary, grammar, etcetera-, and there's another section that says, "has understood or presents the topic".

**Student:** Is there anything that these test formats assessed that is different from other ERT formats that you know of? And if so, what is it?

**Participant 1:** Well, if it's written it's not going to assess spoken English, and if it's written it is not going to assess spoken English. If it's offline, it's going to be impromptu, if it's spoken, that means that it might be harder to organise your ideas, so one has to be more flexible in that sense. When you're writing, even if it is impromptu, you have the possibility of writing a few ideas or something, so yes, there's a difference.

**Student:** is there anything this format assesses that is common to other ERT formats that you know of? And if so, what is it?

**Participant 1:** The general understanding of the text, and mechanics.

**Student:** Now we will go over the second part of this interview which is on reading comprehension and its relationship with the ERT. Is reading comprehension in the ERT?

**Participant 1:** Yes, of course.

**Student:** Why is reading comprehension in the ERTs?

**Participant 1:** Because it's one of the key aspects that you're supposed to develop, that anybody who is going through a programme like this is supposed to develop. Reading comprehension has different stages, different contexts, because at the very beginning you're reading just general things, and later you talk about more complex topics and you read about more complex topics, so that reflects your level of competence in the language. This is a good way of evaluating something which is not going to demand your full attention in ninety minutes, so when you develop your comprehension of a text, you will not only have an hour to read a short text and answer, you will be encountering papers and novels that will require more time, so you will have to be able to allocate time for that, see how you take notes, learn vocabulary on your own, etcetera, so this is also you autonomous learning, so, development of metacognition, and that's another reason why we to ERTs.

**Student:** Why are there different formats for the ERT in this programme?

**Participant 1:** Because you can evaluate in different ways. Evaluation settles to understand what the different contexts are, how different people learn, and it should adjust to the different needs that we have, or the different objectives that we have, so that's why not very long ago people started doing these oral versions of this testing. At some point we did pecha-kucha, which in seven minutes you had to pick three questions and you would discuss those three questions based on the topic. At some other points we would do presentations that focused on something that was of interest for the reader, and they had to support it. That means that, at that point, we understood that the students needed something different, and we would adjust. The main element is to continue working with the competences that we have and that we have in our programme: those competences can be evaluated in many different ways.

**Student:** For each format known by you, you will answer these questions separately. For format two, which is an oral test presentation about a topic in video offline, in which part of this test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 1:** When they pick a topic, or when they answer questions, of course they're going to be talking about the main theme of the text they read. In general, these are

argumentative presentations, so they have to have a very good grasp of the main theme and the smaller elements that are going to support whatever they're saying, because they pick a claim and support their arguments with the canon events in the text.

**Student:** Regarding the second format, which is an oral test presentation about a topic in video offline, in which part of the rubric of this test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 1:** The rubric has two sections, the first one focuses on the argument, which has to do with whether you understood or not the text.

**Student:** Is there anything that this particular test format assesses that is different from other ERT formats that you know of, in relation to reading comprehension specifically?

**Participant 1:** I think all of them deal with argumentation-[censored]-I think that the oral one is more focused on argumentation.

**Student:** Is there anything that this test format (which is an oral test presentation about a topic in video offline) assesses that is common to other ERT formats that you know of, in relation to reading comprehension?

**Participant 1:** General comprehension and local comprehension of the text; scanning, skimming, all of those abilities.

**Student:** and for format number four, which is a written test on a book on sight, in which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 1:** In general, an essay will be either argumentative or expository, and in either of those you're going to present your knowledge of the text that you've read.

**Student:** In which part of the rubric of test format number four, which is a written test on a book on sight, is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 1:** In the rubric you're going to find a section on general comprehension and argumentation or exposition.

**Student:** Is there anything that format number four, which is a written test on a book on sight, assessed that is different from the other formats that you know of, in relation to reading comprehension?

**Participant 1:** I think it goes along the same lines. As I said, this is only about fourth year in this programme, general comprehension, specific/local comprehension.

**Student:** Is there anything that format number four, which is a written test on a book on sight, assesses that is common to other ERT formats that you know of, in relation to reading comprehension?

**Participant 1:** Reading comprehension, local/specific, general comprehension.

**Student:** What is the purpose of the ERT?

**Participant 2:** The purpose of the ERT has been debated [censored] and I think it needs further debating, because the main purpose is to basically comply with the different percentages that we are allocated. This is, in a way, because it has been passed down on us since the beginning of time. Back then, when we didn't have access to a lot of written English, before the Internet, the main purpose of the ERT was to allow students to become familiar with written English texts. After that, it has been passed down to us as something that we are expected to do because it's actually not a bad idea for students to read lengthier texts. In terms of the programme, the purpose of extensive reading, synchronically, it's not well delimited, not well defined. In the case of the written extensive reading, it is related to, mainly, grammatical accuracy, lexical accuracy, and book contents.

**Student:** What is assessed in the ERT in general?

**Participant 2:** In general, I wouldn't know, [censored]. In the written test, at the beginning you have the explanation of the kind of penalisation you're going to receive. The way we assess this is that we start from maximum score points, and we are penalising according to the mistakes that you're actually making. So, we have, let's say, in a test of thirty points we discount points per grammar mistake, per punctuation mistake, per lexical mistake, and local things. Additionally, we have more prominent penalisations when coherence and book contents are affected. On the one hand, you have minor penalisations per each mistake, this is not holistic, it is about each mistake, and on the other hand we have coherence and contents, where penalisations can be major, and depending on the type of problem, but never less than one whole point. So, in terms of assessing, local, minor; and then global, major. That would be in a nutshell.

**Student:** So, for the written test format, what is assessed in this specific ERT format?

**Participant 2:** It is mainly local problems, emphasising that you start with thirty out of thirty points, and from that we start penalising. There are minor penalisations regarding grammatical and lexical problems regarding syntactic operators, very formal things, and then coherence, not necessarily paragraph structure, and then book contents, or "precision" as we call it. And why not paragraph structure? Because there is a written discourse module, and so the idea is to separate dimensions of analysis, so in written discourse it is expected paragraph

structure, topic sentences, theme and rheme adequate and transparent, but in the case of ERTs, specially given in a face-to-face situation, we care more about English language rather than written discourse; book contents. We make a distinction because we know we're practising some other things simultaneously in the same course, but in another module.

**Student:** In which part of the rubric is this assessed? Or in this case, in which part of the test instructions is this assessed?

**Participant 2:** It's explained at the beginning of the test. It is assessed throughout the test- [censored].

**Student:** Is there anything that the written test format assesses that is different from the other ERT formats that you know of?

**Participant 2:** Yes. Sometimes there are alternative questions, for example, or questions rather than essay-like questions. Even in the same written format, teachers set answers in different ways.

**Student:** Is there anything that the written test format assesses that is common to the other ERT formats?

**Participant 2:** The very basic things are the same. We all assess grammar, lexical accuracy or precision, book contents, coherence.

**Student:** Is reading comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

**Participant 2:** I don't think so, because reading comprehension probably goes deeper into difficult-to-understand aspects of a certain text, and we don't do that. It's basically about "do you remember the book contents", "show me that you've read the book". It is not a lot more than that. Reading comprehension is taken for granted.

**Student:** Why is reading comprehension assessed, or in this case, not assessed in the ERT?

**Participant 2:** Because you get to assume that scaffolding has been working. You get to assume that in all of your classes reading comprehension has been evaluated and you take that for granted, although it might be really wrong.

**Student:** And so why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?

**Participant 2:** Why wouldn't there be? How is reading comprehension related to the different formats? [censored]. However, due to the pandemic, we experimented with different formats in an exceptional way.

**Student:** For the format of written test, in which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 2:** Reading comprehension is rather taken for granted, but when we check a book's contents it's a hidden way to make sure that you did comprehend what you read because you're able to report on it with precision. So, in a way, we assess the product of comprehension and not the process of comprehension.

**Student:** In which part of this part of the description of the penalisations, the rubric, is reading comprehension being assessed?

**Participant 2:** Not so much. Hidden, by means of book content precision, but it is not called "reading comprehension", but provided that you showed me that you get to explain book contents, we get to assume that you did understand what you read. Questions are not tricky in that way, they are mainly oriented towards "do you know about this or don't you?", but it is not that they address the most complex parts of the book- we don't go there.

**Student:** Is there anything that this test format, the written test format, assesses that is different from the other ERT formats that you know of, in relation to reading comprehension?

**Participant 2:** I wouldn't know, since I'm only familiarised with the written test format.

**Student:** Is there anything that this test format, the written test format, assesses that is common to the other ERT formats you know of, in relation to reading comprehension?

**Participant 2:** I know that one way or another, we all check book content precision, and that we are checking that you a) did read the book, and then b) you understood it. But it is really basic, oriented that you demonstrate that you read the book and that you understood the basics, well, not necessarily the basic, but not the most complex aspects of the text, be it fiction or nonfiction. It is not the same to check reading comprehension on nonfiction than on fiction texts.

**Student:** What is the purpose of the ERT?

**Participant 3:** Basically, ERTs are designed to assess reading comprehension in general and for the acquisition of vocabulary.

**Student:** What is assessed in the ERTs in general?

**Participant 3:** Reading comprehension in general, like general details and specific details. That's basically it, because it is a general objective.

**Student:** You answered that you participated in only format number four. What is assessed in this ERT format?

**Participant 3:** The general objective is to assess reading comprehension in the English language. In the case of nonfiction books, the students need to remember general facts about the different chapters of the book, different characters mentioned in the book, and general concepts mentioned in the book. Another thing that is tested, because of the format, is some formal aspects of writing, such as punctuation, use of grammar, use of vocabulary, and the use of paragraphs, with topic sentences and summarising sentences.

**Student:** In the case of format number four, in which part of the test is what you just mentioned assessed?

**Participant 3:** Basically, through all the test, because we give a number of words, for example it's between four hundred and six hundred words, and you have to develop the answer for a specific question in an essay-like manner, so you have to organise the first paragraph for the introduction, the next paragraph as a development, and the last paragraph as a conclusion. So, throughout the essay we need to see that the information that is asked is there, factually speaking, and also the use of good punctuation, the variety of vocabulary used, good grammar, mainly good grammar, the way it is organised micro structurally and macro structurally.

**Student:** Regarding format number four, in which part of the rubric is what you just mentioned assessed?

**Participant 3:** What do you mean by the rubric? The one that we use for this specific test?

**Student:** Yes

**Participant 3:** Basically, we have a kind of general rubric in which we assign a specific number of points, and we start to discount points for any specific mistake, grammatically, vocabulary, punctuation, etcetera. For example, for a punctuation mistake we can discount zero point twenty-five points, as it is a grammatical mistake, but that's basically it. We don't have a specific kind of rubric.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in this test format, format number four, that is different from other ERT formats that you know of?

**Participant 3:** My specific format is written test, and the other ones, especially those which are oral, may evaluate other aspects such as phonetic aspects, the right use of certain sounds, besides the grammar and some other aspects. That's what I can infer because I don't know the exact rubrics that they use, but I can see the difference because of the format.

**Student:** Is there anything in test format number four that is common to other ERT formats that you know of?

**Participant 3:** Language, English language, the correct use of grammar depending on the level (pre intermediate, intermediate, post intermediate), you need to use certain structures according to the level. Basically, it's the development of the English language that is assessed in all of the ERTs throughout the years.

**Student:** Is reading comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

**Participant 3:** Of course, it is, that's why it's called ERT. The idea is that you can understand not only literally, but also you can infer some information from the text, make conclusions, refer different passages and events of the book and arrive to your own conclusions, to critically read the books based on the study guides provided previous to reading for the ERT so that you can have a guidance on how to read the specific book. One of the elements that is common in all of the study guides is the context of the book: who's the author or authors, what are their backgrounds socially or geographically, the background of the book, when and where it was published. Reading comprehension is not only the comprehension of the English language, but also the context, the background in which these works are framed.

**Student:** Why is reading comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

**Participant 3:** Because we need an instance to assess reading comprehension. Sometimes it's difficult to include it in some other types of evaluation, such as the typical written test that is

evaluated in Practice, or even in Grammar. We don't have the space or time to add a reading comprehension section, so that's why we need a specific instance to assess this particular domain, and ERT is a good way to do it. [censored].

**Student:** Why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?

**Participant 3:** This has to do with contingency. Most of the ERTs before COVID-19 were in a written format, be it in an essay-like format or alternatives, etcetera. After the lockdown, we needed to change the format to assess reading comprehension, and one of the ideas that came up specifically from the Practice team was to make this kind of oral format of the ERT. I don't know exactly if we have any other academic reason to do that. Even before COVID-19, because we had a social breakdown in 2019, when we needed to be creative.

**Student:** Regarding format four, in which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 3:** Basically, we tried to design the question of the test so that we can see if you actually read the book, and if you could understand it. In terms of reading comprehension, it is assessed throughout the whole test, because you have to develop an answer in an expository essay type. All of the elements assessed would be throughout the essay from the very beginning, because you need to explain certain concepts in the development paragraph. Basically, it's mainly in the very beginning of the essay, in the introduction, and in the development paragraph, because there we will find the main information that we're asking about, specifically.

**Student:** In which part of the rubric is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 3:** Focused mainly on the formal aspects of the assessment, the linguistic aspects, mainly the reading comprehension aspects, although we don't have the rubric very explicit.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in this test format that is different from other ERT formats that you know of, in relation to reading comprehension?

**Participant 3:** I don't think that there is any difference between this format and other formats of ERT, because one thing is that you can understand, infer, and conclude, and another thing is the format in which you show that you have already understood the book. This aspect is the one that is present in any kind of ERT form.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in test format number four that is common to other ERT formats you know of, regarding reading comprehension?

**Participant 3:** What they have in common is that they all assess reading comprehension in the English language. What's different is the way in which the information is delivered, the way that you can show that you've understood; one is in an oral presentation or recording, and the other is in a written form. Of course both are very different because there are some psychological variables that are involved, so that you're more anxious when you speak, anxiety is involved in the difference between written and spoken format, in the delivery form; when you're writing you have more time to answer, you can edit, you can check; what is common is that you need to understand a specific piece of written text in the English language, and the difference is basically the delivery.

**Student:** What is the purpose of the ERT?

**Participant 4:** This has been discussed in the groups of English language courses across the different levels in the programme. [censored]. There are various objectives when dealing with ERTs, one of them being to assign a task where the students will be reading something that is much longer than the kind of texts in Practice, Grammar, or in any of the other components of the English course. The purpose of exposing the students to this reading activity is for students to acquire more vocabulary, and it also becomes a kind of excuse, the topic of the book and everything that goes on in that reading task, to help students become better at talking about certain topics as they have acquired more vocabulary, improved their grammar, because there's a lot of literature that says that reading can help you become a more proficient language speaker, or second language speaker. So, the initial purposes of ERTs are to read and talk about the book, show that you have understood what the book is about, but, alongside with that, there are many other objectives that teachers have in mind when asking students to read these books, books which are also aligned with topics we're dealing with, so they correlate to different topic objectives that we have for the term.

**Student:** What is assessed in the ERT in general?

**Participant 4:** In general, we're measuring critical thinking through what the students have read, whatever topics they have read about. [censored] this is a bit straightforward the way in which we assess reading comprehension, as there's a bit of straightforward questions, but there are also questions where the students need to relate to the topics in the book. [censored] the main objectives are to measure how the students relate to topics in the book, how students understand them, and how the kind of connections that the students make to different aspects about society. Through the presentation that students have to do, teachers measure the links that students make if they think about the book, so, critical thinking.

**Student:** Regarding format one, which is an offline multiple choice and open questions test, what is assessed in this ERT format [unintelligible]?

**Participant 4:** These are straightforward reading comprehension questions. [censored], when the level of language is not that high, we use these multiple choice questions in one of the sections of the test.

**Student:** Regarding format one, which is an offline multiple choice and open questions test, in which part of the test is critical thinking assessed?

**Participant 4:** [Critical thinking is evaluated] in open-ended questions, which require, in first year [of the programme], a maximum of five written lines, which is where they think of connections, provide connections between characters and go beyond the words read in the text. Some of the multiple choice questions in the test are also designed in a way where students need to think further about what happened in the book.

**Student:** Regarding format one, which is an offline multiple choice and open questions test, in which part of the rubric is what you just mentioned assessed?

**Participant 4:** Well, if it is in the multiple choice format, the answers are A, B, or C, but if we think of the open-ended questions, it is specified “one point for X, one point for relevance”.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in test format one, which is an offline multiple choice and open questions test, that is different from other ERT formats that you know of?

**Participant 4:** There is a difference between formats, and it has to do with the amount of language that students can deal with. People [censored] have to show a much wider use of vocabulary, and the kind of tasks they have to do are different.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in test format one, which is an offline multiple choice and open questions test, that is common to other ERT formats you know of?

**Participant 4:** What is shared is the first objective mentioned. We’re not evaluating straightforward reading comprehension, although [censored] there’s a part where we are, but in the other parts of the test we’re measuring the student’s ability to take several or some of the topics discussed in the book and be able to refer to them while making connections with their own experiences or what we can see in society.

**Student:** Regarding format two, which is an oral presentation about a topic in video offline, what is assessed in the ERT?

**Participant 4:** The same is assessed for format number one and two.

**Student:** In which part of format two, which is an oral presentation about a topic in video offline, is what you’ve just mentioned assessed?

**Participant 4:** In format two students have to develop a topic; aspects of critical thinking are assessed through their exposure; students usually get a topic that is one of the themes of the book and they need to develop that topic, finding some more support material from different kinds of sources, and prove how the themes develop in the book, how can the topics be backed up by the information that comes from research, like an argumentative presentation were students need to articulate an argumentative presentation showing if what is developed in the book is actually a good representation of reality or not, or who it relates to in our society. Students must have the ability to look for information and make connections amongst all those pieces of information that they have done research on, connected to the book, connected to the characters, and provide an overall conclusion about that.

**Student:** Regarding format two, which is an oral presentation about a topic in video offline, in which part of the rubric is what you've just mentioned assessed?

**Participant 4:** We have a big rubric. The first two descriptors have to do with the ability to develop a topic and correlate it with information they have investigated, with relevance of information and substance, the content, and within the "substance" section there is a specification that the student has fully researched the topic, which meant that the student really went into that topic and investigated about it before the student presents.

**Student:** Regarding format two, which is an oral presentation about a topic in video offline, is there anything assessed in this format that is different from other ERT formats?

**Participant 4:** We're not doing format two anymore because it was a measure taken during the COVID-19 pandemic. [censored]. So, if the students have a wider vocabulary, their ability to articulate more complex structures or abstract ideas is the biggest difference when compared to a written, five lines long answer [censored].

**Student:** Is reading comprehension assessed in the ERT?

**Participant 4:** Yes. If we go back to critical thinking, yes, as students need to make connections between what they've read and something else that we are asking from them; that's where we're measuring how well did students understand the book, or whether they really grasp the essence of the characters, or whether they really able to understand the scope of the problem that is presented, etcetera.

**Student:** Why is reading comprehension assessed in the ERT?

**Participant 4:** Assessing reading comprehension is one of the objectives when dealing with the ERTs. One of our objectives is to measure reading comprehension, but the extensive reading books also become an excuse to have topics to talk about that are related to the themes of the term. There are classes where we talk about these books before the assessment. The reading guides that we have to accompany these books are structures in a way that the students have to identify vocabulary, make descriptions of characters, so reading comprehension *per se* is in the reading guide to help students see what the teachers wanted them to approach a book, so it's not just "reading a sequence of events and that's it", we want students to go in deeper into the book. There is a part in the reading guide that says "these are some of the themes that are developed in the book"; we identify themes in the book, provide a framework for how to refer to these themes in the book, so that students need to look for examples and also think about other themes, and there is also a list of the characters and how are characters related and their descriptions, which further implies the use of vocabulary. The reading guides are focused on reading comprehension, but also thinking about the connections in the book through the themes that we have, or the development of characters.

**Student:** Why are there different formats for the ERT in this programme?

**Participant 4:** Do you mean different evaluation instruments?

**Student:** Yes.

**Participant 4:** There are various answers for the difference in formats in the ERT. The first one has to do with what students are able to do with their linguistic competence. We also try to provide some variety in the way in which the extensive reading activity can be approached, so it's not always the same. It also has to do with the competences that we want students to develop; different evaluation instruments are aligned with different competences throughout the different levels of the programme.

**Student:** What is the purpose of ERTs?

**Participant 5:** There are multiple purposes. The first one is “how does this assess or evaluate the competency that is in a graduate's profile?” So, for example, if the student has the capacity to reflect about the topics in the ERT, because the ERTs are not only about a narrative but also about values and beliefs about society that are presented in the book. One global purpose will be to assess how we encourage reflection on the students, and another global purpose would be the assessment of the capacity to think about language. There are specific objectives that are specific to the cohort that the students belong to [censored]. Also, there are several dimensions. The reflection dimension is for everyone, in the sense that reflection should be encouraged amongst all the students. There are dimensions that are linguistic, related to vocabulary learning and also capacity or ability to build a cohesive and coherent text. There are also intercultural objectives, which are related to the reflection objectives somehow, so how do the cultural elements of the book relate to cultural elements of our own. Additionally, to all this, it is also evaluated the ability to write. And by reflective I mean reflective thinking, which has many dimensions, such as metacognition, which is how does the student understand the way they are learning, and also reflecting on how the topics in the book are related to their own personal experiences or experiences they have witnessed. Reflection has several dimensions, so understanding what you need to study is also reflective thinking and making connections with culture, which is intercultural awareness.

**Student:** What is assessed in ERTs in general?

**Participant 5:** There are different degrees of what we expect, [censored] following the Bloom taxonomy, which has several dimensions in degrees, so the first one is to identify and the last one is to create something, that is the highest level of cognition, so we take in consideration when evaluating what is expected from first, second, third, and fourth year students. One thing we do is to assess a person in terms of the same person, that is called normative assessment, so for example, we cannot assess a person who entered university with a high level of English with the same instrument as the person who came with no English. Each person receives feedback on what they are not doing well. Although, when we assess a test we evaluate the test and we don't look at the name, but by just looking at the text we know the level of English of the student, we don't need to see the faces. [censored] if you

think of the construct and you say “okay this is [censored] level”, we understand that, but the test is also an opportunity for the student to learn, and it’s unfair for the lower level students to get a lower grade than a person whose level of English is very high [censored], so the test should be an instance for everyone to learn. So, what else is assessed? Well, language is assessed, which implies vocabulary, grammar, and the ability to build a paragraph that is coherent, and also if a student has actually paid attention to details, not little irrelevant details, but how do we know that a person actually read the book is only known through details, [censored]; that’s one way to assess whether the student has read the book or not. Now, why are we actually assessing whether the person has read the book or not? Because the process of reading is a very important process for a person, and it is also unfair that someone who has not read the book gets a maximum grade just because they have a high level of English, and that someone who has read the book but has a lower level of English gets a lower grade.

**Student:** What is assessed in the ERT format that you participated in?

**Participant 5:** Before the day that the students take the test, the students have been provided with a handout or study guide, and since we have implemented that the students have improved their performance during the test. In the past we had a lot of red marks, but so far, we have no red marks, and that’s probably because of the impact of the study guide; if the students work on the study guide, they know what to expect from the test as they know what is assessed. Also, the idea of the study guide is to guide students through the reading process. So, what is assessed in this ERT format? There is an item, a multiple choice item, that is meant to give the students confidence that they know that they can do it, because it is easy. And then it gets a bit more complex in the open questions section, which is a combination of skimming and scanning some general information about the topic and also some specific details, so both of the comprehension aspects are assessed, which is also called global and local comprehension. Another thing that guides this part [open question item] is the possibility of choice, that the student is not forced to answer all of the questions, but the student was given a choice to decide which questions the student wants to write about, which also helps to build confidence in the student during the time the person is taking the test, and lowers the anxiety, so it’s also a psychological thing. And the last part is the reflection part of the test, which involves reflection, vocabulary, knowledge, writing skills, and also grammar.

**Student:** Is there anything that this test format assesses that is different from other ERT formats that you know of?

**Participant 5:** Probably there are differences in comparison to traditional ERT tests from the past in which there were no chance for choice and all of the questions had to be answered, on the one hand, and the tests also asked for very specific details, such as the name of a specific name mentioned in the book, or dates, whereas in nowadays tests such details are given. Students in this programme come across different ERT formats, in which the focus is not on the remembrance of details, but on how the student develops an argument on a topic in the book. We try to have different formats so that students can have the chance to experience different test formats.

**Student:** Is there anything that this test format assesses that is common from other ERT formats that you know of?

**Participant 5:** The design of the test might be similar to others, as the items of multiple choice, the study guide, open questions. In the first year there are no very innovative formats because we need to build confidence in the student, so we use formats that the students already know. Also, it's part of the format of the study guide, so there is coherence between the study guide and the format. What is common is the approach to reading more than the design of the test format.

**Student:** Is reading comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

**Participant 5:** Yes. How would it be not assessed? We can tell when a student watched the movie instead of reading the book, because the details that the student provides are cinematographic details. Now, we cannot assume that the student did not read the book, but the purpose is to assess reading comprehension, and if the student found a way to not read the book and read some summary, there's still comprehension. For example, the vocabulary is different, because if the student does not read the book, they do not recollect the specific words that are present in the book. Comprehension is not only remembering details of the book's plot, it's also how the student digested the book, so if the student is connecting the topics of the book to, for example, personal experiences, that is comprehension. What we want, more than reading a book and then reporting back to us, is for the students to connect the topics to their experiences.

**Student:** Why is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 5:** It's necessary to assess reading comprehension because the reading of the book is not only just trying to remember details but is also a cognitive experience in the sense that the student is establishing a dialog with the author. There is something that happens in

the reader's mind cognitively, that we cannot control, that is only happening because the student is given the task of reading in silence, at home. We want to encourage that, to have a dialogue with the book's author. In the long run, the experience of reading a long text also develops future skills in writing. The objectives of ERTs are multiple and go beyond the here and now; we are helping the students develop skills that in the future they might need.

**Student:** Why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?

**Participant 5:** Because it depends on the cohort, and also, we want the students to have different experiences. It's boring when we implement the same format over and over. Plus, some of the students may end up being teachers, so you have to have the experience of being tested with different formats. In higher cohorts the objectives are more complex, and that only makes the format change.

**Student:** What is the purpose of ERTs?

**Participant 6:** Overall, the purpose of the ERT is to provide students with an opportunity to read more extensively, or to have more time by themselves with a text, so that later student can apply the vocabulary, structures, grammar that they can pick up from reading, and also it's related to the idea of the graduate's profile. More concretely, the purpose of the ERT is to give students this chance to develop some skills in autonomous reading that students can alter apply in the future, to discuss topics that are present or intertwined in the text, because the texts in general, at least in recent years, have been modern and accessible and even more debatable, because in the past the texts use to be more classical books where they didn't discuss much topics such as racism, feminism, etcetera. Now we are trying to introduce those topics so that students can have a more critical view of the books, and maybe later discuss them. That was at a macro level. At a micro level, the purpose of ERTs would be to develop vocabulary skill, grammar, to get the structures of English, reading more systematically, and checking comprehension, global and local, of a text.

**Student:** What is assessed in ERTs in general?

**Participant 6:** In general, by assessing we are trying this idea that students must engage in systematic reading in a reading that is not only *in situ* or on site, like having the pressure of reading for a short period of time, in this case the student has more chances to get more engaged and familiar with a text, and we are trying to make that a general practice of the student. And then what is evaluated and or graded is whether students have read the book or not, that they understood it, got the main ideas, understand some specific vocabulary that can be later applied in a different context, and to discuss some overarching topics or themes that are in the text, maybe the roles of specific characters, but also the themes discussed that are not as explicit. So, we're trying to assess different perspectives or different layers of the reading text in general.

**Student:** for format number one, written test with multiple choice and open questions, offline, what is assessed in this particular ERT format?

**Participant 6:** In multiple choice questions we're trying to have students distinguish main ideas from specific details, or maybe choose the right character that did something; the questions are very specific, like quotes for example, or perhaps the main idea that you can

extract from the text, so then we provide a series of options to see if the student understood the book. Then, there can be a vocabulary related question in the multiple choice item. In open questions, the most typical types of questions are related to summarising specific situations in the text or discussing a particular theme.

**Student:** In which part of the rubric is what you just mentioned assessed?

**Participant 6:** We do use rubrics, but not for written tests. The rubric has been mostly used for oral ERT formats, which have been an exception to the rule due to the pandemic. In the rubric we had to devise some criteria that were consistent with the idea of evaluating general knowledge, general comprehension of the text, and comprehension of specific sections, but that was related to the part of the text itself, because we also have the linguistic section of the rubric.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in this test format that is different from other ERT formats?

**Participant 6:** In the oral version of the ERT we need to include the linguistic criterion, in which we had to assess or evaluate pronunciation, grammar, the way you deliver your ideas, which could be quite different from the written test format, because in the oral test you have to explain an important theme in the book. The most striking difference is including the evaluation of oral performance. It was very difficult for teachers to strike the balance of what is more important: is it the linguistic, the performance, the delivery, or is it the knowledge of the book? Or whether the person demonstrated understanding main points, discussing an issue from the text, which was more different from the traditional formats of the ERT.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in this test format that is common from other ERT formats?

**Participant 6:** The core assessment, which is checking whether the students read the book, in this case by knowing specific details, not only getting the gist of the book, but getting very specific details of the book or situations.

**Student:** Is reading comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

**Participant 6:** Yes. We are trying to work on rounds of local and global comprehension. By local comprehension we ask students to demonstrate that they have scanned the text to find specific data. On the other hand, we have global comprehension, in which we are trying to devise questions that can demonstrate that the students have understood the main idea of the

whole book, or maybe some specific, general ideas. We are also trying to incorporate the author's purpose, which is an essential component of skimming. When you skim a text, you should not only understand the main point, but also what the author is trying to do with the text: inform you, entertain you, put forward a problem, or convince the reader of something.

**Student:** Why is reading comprehension assessed in ERTs?

**Participant 6:** Reading comprehension must be assessed in the ERT because it's not only checking that the students are able to read a text and to understand it, but we need to detect that students are comprehending what they read, that they understand the difference between skimming and scanning, that they provide evidence that they have understood that they are able to follow an idea in English. It's not only about knowing specific details or checking whether the student just read the book, but whether the student understood that there was a topic there, that there was a theme, or that the conflicts were shown in a way that would be important to understand.

**Student:** Why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?

**Participant 6:** We have tried to come to an agreement on the type or format that we should require or that we should present to students of all levels, however, it's been very difficult for many reasons. Firstly, for instance, we had the pandemic, but before that we had more traditional ERT formats, or easier formats, including multiple choice questions or true or false questions. Then we came to the realisation that that wasn't giving enough evidence of anything because many of those questions could be answered randomly by taking chances. Then we realised it was important to hear the students' voices on what they had to say about the text, how they could write about the text, how they could critically and linguistically respond to the text. That's why we've had different formats. Before that, we discussed having a study guide to help and guide students to identify characters, themes, quotes, and discuss them. Thus, we created a study guide to cater for the different books to guide students and even give them a little background about the author to contextualise the book and help students understand the motives behind an author. However, we haven't been able to formalise this, and we still have different beliefs, and that's why we sometimes differ in format. We have been able to come to agreements, for instance, when we had the health crisis, but then now we still have differences amongst the team of professors; whereas some teachers use multiple choice, true or false questions, other teachers believe that writing a critical or mini essay on the book would be more rewarding or more significant for you.

Maybe, we should include the student's perception, do a survey to ask students how they would feel more identified or more comfortable with a test of this kind, because, so far, this has been mostly on the hands of teachers/professors. We have tried for years to have something much more articulate, but we might still be falling behind on that.

**Student:** What is the purpose of the ERT?

**Participant 7:** There are different purposes. One is to motivate the students to read beyond what is compulsory in Literature; then also to expand the student's knowledge on certain topics. Lately we have been trying to connect our ERTs current topics, which we have been dealing with in class, such as feminism, natural resources, destruction of our habitat, etcetera. Also, to expand the student's vocabulary, knowledge on cultural issues as well. We also try to choose books which are not the classical ones, but rather of recent publication, to help students increase their language practice: grammar, vocabulary, syntax.

**Student:** What is assessed in the ERT in general?

**Participant 7:** Reading comprehension, which has to do with whatever it's expressed by the author in the text. Depending on the book, depending on the context, we also try to include the ability of the students to think for themselves, reflective thinking, the ability that students have to expand their knowledge, and express original ideas based on what they've read. Depending on the level, language content is also evaluated, but it usually does not receive the same amount of evaluation, the same amount of points, as the comprehension part, because in order for students to express themselves they have to use language.

**Student:** What is assessed in the written test type of format?

**Participant 7:** Not much different from the previous answer. General comprehension, understanding what the author says, sometimes specific vocabulary expressions.

**Student:** In which part of the test are these aspects evaluated?

**Participant 7:** Comprehension questions are evaluated in different ways. Sometimes multiple choice, or open ended questions. Vocabulary is evaluated in different ways. For example, we pick a word and then ask "how has the author used this specific word in the text?", or "are there any words in the text that are synonyms or associated with this particular concept?", this way students would relate other words to this specific topic or word. And reflective thinking is usually evaluated in a little paragraph that students have to provide. We usually present a topic or a question, and then we ask the students to write a short paragraph to express their opinion on whatever idea it is present in the text.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in this test format, written test, that is different from other ERT formats that you know of?

**Participant 7:** In the written format there are some things that are different from the onsite oral format. For example, in the oral presentations we've had in the past, usually, when you have an oral presentation the teacher must have the ability to ask students questions about what they have said, so if you have any doubts about reflective thinking, you may ask the student questions to elicit an answer, so that they can give you the information, so students have the opportunity to show and express what they think about or what they can associate the topic with so that they can express their own opinion. In the written test that is limited because if a student writes something the teacher cannot later on ask "what do you mean by this?". The oral test gives you the chance to go deeper into some of the answers that the student provides.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in this test format, written test, that is common from other ERT formats that you know of?

**Participant 7:** Reading comprehension goes across all of the formats of the test. Also, language use, but reading comprehension has more relevance than language use, although the language use is necessary to express opinion, reflective thinking.

**Student:** Is reading comprehension assessed in the ERT?

**Participant 7:** Yes.

**Student:** Why is reading comprehension assessed in the ERT?

**Participant 7:** Because when you understand a text what one does is to integrate a set of abilities; reading implies not just understanding the language, vocabulary, grammar that is used, but it also means that one is understanding or communicating with the person that created the text, and by that you're also reflecting on whatever issues the author is trying to propose the reader. So, be it feminism, nature conservation, political issues, etcetera, one is also taking a look at issues and culture, different aspects of language and communication that are expressed in the reading comprehension test. It is not just about the story that is told, it is also the language that is used, and through the language that is used, it is the issues involved in each book.

**Student:** In the written test format, in which of the items is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 7:** In the multiple choice item, through open questions, vocabulary questions; it depends on how the vocabulary item is designed, where the students may provide a dictionary definition, or a definition based on how the author defines the specific word, a meaning very specific to the text and to that author, that could also be reading comprehension.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in the ERT format of written test that is common to other ERT formats that you know of, specifically in relation to reading comprehension?

**Participant 7:** The comprehension of the text itself, whether you do it in multiple choice format or whether you present a pecha-kucha presentation, questions would be common in the reading comprehension part. We usually give students, across different formats, topics which are in the book for them to develop.

**Student:** Is there anything assessed in the ERT format of written test that is different to other ERT formats that you know of, specifically in relation to reading comprehension?

**Participant 7:** The most important difference is that when you have a written test format versus an oral format, in the oral format you do not have multiple choices. One may use multiple choice questions as a practical, easier than other type of questions, as a way to give some balance between some items that are more demanding and others that are not as much which would request different levels of knowledge, or as Bloom would say, different intellectual knowledge. When you ask a reading comprehension question, in, for example, a multiple choice format, that is not used in the oral format. Oral tests require different skills than written tests; in that sense, students need higher abilities to answer an oral test than a multiple choice set of questions, that's why when we do a written test, we do not do only a multiple choice item, hence why there are different types of items.

**Student:** Why are there different ERT formats?

**Participant 7:** Because we have tried over the years different formats, considering different results, trends in evaluation. We try to test what works best for the purposes that we have. So, for example, if we are testing comprehension, what is the best format in which we can do that? That's one thing. There are practical matters as well. For example, if we use written format, that takes one class, whereas an oral test, depending on the size of the class, would take about three classes, so sometimes it is a practical matter as well. There are practicalities to take into account besides whatever theory we have behind on evaluation.

**Student:** What is the purpose of the ERT in general?

**Participant 8:** First, we need to think of what is the purpose of extensive reading in general. [censored] the purpose of extensive reading as an activity is expanding the horizons of students, being able to analyse the issues that are presented in the book in a more in-depth way, developing critical thinking skills, looking at things from a different angle in a book that is usually fun to read that is different from the books that you read in your Literature classes, it's something a little bit more modern, and being able to connect these issues, or discuss issues that are presented in the book with the issues that have been discussed in class. [censored] We connect the books to the units that we have talked about in class, so that we give students extra motivation, extra material, extra input on the issues that we've discussed in class. Then, the extensive reading test would be a natural closure to the extensive reading activity to see whether the students have been able to discuss the issues with the vocabulary and grammar learned in class, so that would be the purpose of the test. we see it [extensive reading] as an activity which closes with a test, rather than a test for the purpose of a test, or for the purpose of a mark.

**Student:** What is assessed in ERTs in general?

**Participant 8:** The assessment is divided into two parts, the content, and the form. In terms of content, we want to evaluate whether students understood the issues and were able to connect them to other sources of information such as songs and books and news articles and so on. And regarding form, we check whether students were able to use advanced vocabulary, sophisticated grammar structures, and whether your pronunciation was acceptable at an advanced level. And we also evaluate some other formal things such as being able to talk within a time limit or delivering your conversation or monologue in a natural manner.

**Student:** Regarding format two, oral test of a topic in a video, what is assessed in this ERT format?

**Participant 8:** It's the same thing as the other formats that I mentioned. The questions that are asked are regarding issues in the book, being able to connect the topics to the student's knowledge about the world, or to extract sources of information, and then also use vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, discourse, and being able to organise their speech.

**Student:** In which part of the test is the aforementioned assessed?

**Participant 8:** Throughout the test, everything is assessed at the same time.

**Student:** Focusing on format number two, which is oral presentation about a topic in a video, is there anything assessed in this test format that is different from other test formats that you know of?

**Participant 8:** There are forms of ERTs where you answer true or false questions, or multiple choice questions, or small opinion paragraphs, that's quite different from oral tests. There are also long opinion essays about one question regarding the book. Usually in the other formats we do not usually assess the quality of questions the students ask about the books because there are different types of abilities to not only interpret a book, but also discuss the issues and ask in-depth questions about it, which is another way of evaluating critical thinking.

**Student:** Focusing on format number two, which is oral presentation about a topic in a video, is there anything assessed in this test format that is common to other test formats that you know of?

**Participant 8:** Pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, discourse markers; we're looking for the same thing in terms of form.

**Student:** Is reading comprehension assessed in the ERT?

**Participant 8:** Not as we understand reading comprehension, if we understand reading comprehension by understanding what is written and the facts in a book, then no, we do not assess that, because at the level that we are teaching, which is advanced English, we do take it for granted that students comprehend what the book says from what they've read; this is not something we intend to assess because we do think that students understand/comprehend the text, and for this reason we also choose the books that are easy to read, they don't have particularly difficult vocabulary, grammar, language, because that's not the purpose of it. If we wanted to check reading comprehension, we would've chosen shorter texts but much more sophisticated in terms of language, but the books are easy to read, because it is not the main purpose of it. So, we do focus more on the critical thinking part, and in order to be able to critically analyse the book you have to comprehend what is written in the book.

**Student:** Why are there different formats for the ERT?

**Participant 8:** Because there are different courses, first year, second year, third year, fourth year, there is a different expectation from the proficiency of the students, to speak at different

levels, and also there are different objectives of extensive reading at different levels as an activity. [censored]. It also depends on the realities that we are experiencing, as, for example, during the pandemic, we the teachers were thinking about a way in which we could address the issue of the necessity of evaluating extensive reading and not knowing how to do it, so we thought that a video presentation would be okay. Then with the paired conversations/presentations, again, we were thinking about, [censored], you were expected to not just speak in a monologue, but rather being able to also listen to each other, and being able to react to what your classmate said and being able to negotiate ideas with another person, we were thinking about how to make these activities more collaborative, how to make students connect to each other and be on the same page as far as understanding the book is concerned. We're also thinking of not doing the same thing over and over again, because it gets repetitive and not fun to the students.

**Student:** What is the purpose of the ERTs?

**Participant 9:** The purpose of ERTs is manifold. There's a linguistic aspect, there's a cultural aspect to consider in relation to language. Generally, this type of test examines, for example, contents, grammar, vocabulary, and integrates everything into the discourse. In relation to culture, we want to understand other cultures and also to grow as a person, and to integrate not only the academic aspect, but also the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic areas.

**Student:** What is assessed in the ERT in general?

**Participant 9:** First, the use of English, also understanding English. And then understanding other cultures, because the objective is not only to be academically accurate but also to grow from the [unintelligible] side.

**Student:** In the case of format one, which is a written test, multiple choice and open questions, offline, what is assessed in this format?

**Participant 9:** Firstly, we try to give a variety of instruments so that the students don't get tired. Secondly, multiple choice questions give a number of possibilities as they are not that detailed, some general ideas are measured. The second part was writing a short paragraph regarding a topic. Some of these questions tend to be slightly detailed, but not too detailed either, and sometimes questions tend to be around general understanding, cultural understanding, psychological understanding.

**Student:** For format two, oral test, presentation about a topic in video, what is assessed in this format?

**Participant 9:** Here is the ability to communicate orally, because the discourse is different when you write from when you speak; the discourse has a different structure, and also there are other areas, for example, pronunciation.

**Student:** For format three, oral test, conversation in pairs about a topic in video, offline, what is assessed in this format?

**Participant 9:** There are different strategies involved here; there's more organisation, there's a technical side, and also working with modern instruments, like creating videos, all of which give another type of motivation for the student, because students usually participate in social

networks, which gives them the possibility to work with other materials. Again, it involves organisation, it involves a fair division of the work; Exchanging information and interacting is important, cooperation is important.

**Student:** For format four, written test, essay on a book, on site, what is assessed in this format?

**Participant 9:** In this case, first, from a linguistic point of view, the student has to prepare the vocabulary, the structures, and the student also has to show their understanding of the main ideas transmitted by the book.

**Student:** For format five, oral test, presentation in pairs on a topic from a book, on site, what is assessed in this format?

**Participant 9:** [unintelligible] most of these strategies occur in the various formats you mentioned, and again here students have to learn turn taking, completing the other's answer, being alert to what the other person is saying, paying attention to oral production.

**Student:** In the case of format one, which is a written test, multiple choice and open questions, offline, in which part of the test is the aforementioned assessed?

**Participant 9:** There is a section which uses multiple choice questions. Although, some teachers prefer not to use that because they say it's mainly related to memory. Also, creating multiple choice questions is an art. Now, evaluation and assessment are, at the moment, a very important topic. Some teachers avoid this because it is time consuming.

**Student:** For format two, oral test, presentation about a topic in video, in which part of the test is the aforementioned assessed?

**Participant 9:** The rubric includes use of English, and that includes oral discourse, use of language, and also the content.

**Student:** For format three, oral test, conversation in pairs about a topic in video, offline, in which part of the test is the aforementioned assessed?

**Participant 9:** There's an individual evaluation here, although they're talking, but in one part of the rubric it says "interaction", and also the amount of participation of a student, and again, each student is evaluated in terms of content, grammar, vocabulary, and discourse.

**Student:** For format four, written test, essay on a book, on site, in which part of the test is the aforementioned assessed?

**Participant 9:** The rubric is very clear about that. There are different sections, one is about content, one is about grammar, about vocabulary, and discourse.

**Student:** For format one, which is a written test, multiple choice and open questions, offline, is there anything assessed in this test format that's different from other ERT formats?

**Participant 9:** In this part, generally, the focus is on knowledge about the book, but language itself is not assessed here. Also, there are other strategies the student needs to put into action as the student is focused on evaluating the information and comparing and extracting information.

**Student:** For format two, oral test, presentation about a topic in video, is there anything assessed in this test format that's different from other ERT formats?

**Participant 9:** First thing here is the oral performance. Secondly, there are some psychological aspects that the student needs to pay attention to because usually the students would get nervous and will forget the answers, confuse the answers. There are other skills, other strategies that the student needs to make use of. The main focus here is oral production.

**Student:** For format one, which is a written test, multiple choice and open questions, offline, is there anything assessed in this test format that's similar from other ERT formats?

**Participant 9:** Generally, the use of English. Secondly, understanding the main topics covered in the book.

**Student:** For format two, oral test, presentation about a topic in video, is there anything assessed in this test format that's similar from other ERT formats?

**Participant 9:** Firstly, oral production, and also being able to keep that poise, and being able to integrate information.

**Student:** Is reading comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

**Participant 9:** Certainly, it's one of the key points.

**Student:** Why is reading comprehension assessed in the ERTs?

**Teacher:** Reading doesn't mean understanding sentences only, there are pragmatic aspects considered here, also being able to extract what the book is trying to convey; there are psychological topics, social topics, cultural topics. So, the student has to show that they can

extract information, process information, analyse it, summarise it, so all of those strategies mentioned by Bloom, for example.

**Student:** For format one, which is a written test, multiple choice and open questions, offline, in which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 9:** There are some questions which are related to inferencing information, and that's the way the student will show that there's real reading comprehension.

**Student:** For format two, oral test, presentation about a topic in video, in which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 9:** Generally, the students will receive a number of questions, we would focus on a given number of ideas and questions.

**Student:** For format three, oral test, conversation in pairs about a topic in video, offline, in which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 9:** Again, students need to prepare for questions and answers, focusing on key points.

**Student:** For format four, written test, essay on a book, on site, in which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 9:** There's a rubric for that, which includes contents of the answers, and the student would receive a number of questions which are thought provoking and, again, students need to integrate their ideas together with the questions they're being asked about.

**Student:** For format five, oral test, presentation in pairs on a topic from a book, on site, in which part of the test is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 9:** We would give students some questions to discuss in class, so, generally, there would have been some time to discuss these questions at home, and during the class we would have given the students a question to discuss either between them and also integrating the whole class.

**Student:** For format one, which is a written test, multiple choice and open questions, offline, in which part of the rubric is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 9:** In both format one and two we have two ideas, implicit information and explicit information. Both can be assessed as multiple choice questions and also as open questions, but the key point here is integrating the information and making use of inference

based on analysing, on using analogies. Again, there are multiple processes occurring at the same time.

**Student:** For format two, oral test, presentation about a topic in video, in which part of the rubric is reading comprehension assessed?

**Participant 9:** Again, we can give students questions to prepare before the test, and they have to give solid information, solid reasons that show that their inferences are correct.

**Student:** For format one, which is a written test, multiple choice and open questions, offline, is there anything assessed in this test format that is different from other ERT formats, in relation to reading comprehension specifically?

**Participant 9:** The depth of the questions that are asked, because the student will receive a number of options, and the students will need to discuss and cross out the options which are not correct and that involves a lot of analysis of understanding what is true and what is not, so that means that the student should have read the book and not a summary.

**Student:** For format two, oral test, presentation about a topic in video, is there anything assessed in this test format that is different from other ERT formats, in relation to reading comprehension specifically?

**Participant 9:** I think it is very similar at the moment when you need to write an essay, the problem here is that the student has to deal with other strategies, oral strategies, such as remembering, and also being in front of the teacher and the class, so it is related to context, nerves, and even to poise.

**Student:** Why are there different formats for the ERT in the programme?

**Participant 9:** All of these exercises, or different items, they have a different structure, different objectives; some of them emphasise different strategies, especially if it's an oral presentation or if it's an essay, again, there are linguistic strategies, oral strategies, and even psychological strategies working at the same time, that's why we try and cater for variety, to make the presentation of the questions more motivating.

*Appendix B: Tests & Rubrics*

**B1**

**Extensive Reading Test**

**The Hound of the Baskervilles by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.**

Name:.....Section:..... Score:...../30  
Mark:.....

**I. Highlight the best alternative A, B, C, or D to answer the following questions. (Grading criteria: 1 point each = 12 points)**

1. When Holmes first heard the story of Sir Hugo and the hound, he thinks that it...
  - a. shows that God punishes the wicked and forgives the innocent.
  - b. shows how Sir Charles died.
  - c. is a true story.
  - d. is a good story to frighten children.
2. The newspaper article says that Sir Charles died because...
  - a. he was attacked by a huge hound.
  - b. he had a weak heart.
  - c. he was killed by Mr Stapleton.
  - d. he was punished for his wicked actions.
3. \_\_\_\_\_sent Sir Henry a letter made of words cut from the newspaper as a warning.
  - a. Laura Lyons
  - b. Barrymore
  - c. Stapleton
  - d. Miss Stapleton
4. When Miss Stapleton first met Watson she told him to go back to London because...
  - a. She didn't want him to discover MrStapleton's plans.
  - b. She thought he was Sir Henry and she knew Mr Stapleton planned to kill him.
  - c. She was afraid that Mr Stapleton wanted to hurt him.
  - d. She thought he was Sir Henry and she did not want him to fall in love with her.
5. Stapleton took Sir Henry's shoes because...
  - a. he wanted to frighten Sir Henry.
  - b. he wanted to confuse Sherlock Holmes.
  - c. he needed something with Sir Henry's scent for the hound.

- d. he thought they belonged to Sir Charles.
6. Who was the man with the black beard who followed Sir Henry in London?
- a. Stapleton
  - b. Sherlock Holmes
  - c. Barrymore
  - d. Mr Frankland
7. Laura Lyons wanted to talk to Sir Charles to...
- a. ask his advice about her father, Mr Frankland.
  - b. ask him for money.
  - c. ask him to protect her.
  - d. ask his advice about getting a divorce.
8. The hound ran after Selden because...
- a. Selden was alone on the moors.
  - b. Selden had the scent of food on his clothing.
  - c. Selden was wearing Sir Henry`s old clothes and smelled like him.
  - d. Selden was wearing Sir Henry`s old clothes and looked like him.
9. Holmes was interested in the painting of Sir Hugo because...
- a. Sir Hugo was the first Baskerville to see the hound.
  - b. Sir Hugo looked like a criminal.
  - c. Sir Henry looked just like Sir Hugo.
  - d. Stapleton looked just like Sir Hugo.
10. Laura Lyons did not tell anybody that she was going to meet Sir Charles on the night of his death because...
- a. she was afraid of Mr Stapleton.
  - b. she was afraid of becoming a suspect.
  - c. Mr Stapleton said that he wanted to get her the money for her divorce.
  - d. she did not think it was important.
11. Who found Sir Charles`s body?
- a. Dr Mortimer
  - b. Laura Lyons
  - c. Mr Barrymore

d. Sherlock Holmes

12. Who killed the hound of the Baskerville?

- a. Sherlock Holmes
- b. Mr Stapleton
- c. Dr Watson
- d. Sir Henry

**II. Answer THREE of the following questions in about 40-50 words each. Elaborate on your answers. (Grading criteria: 4 points each (2 for content; 1 for grammar; 1 for vocabulary) = 12 points)**

1. When was the Hound of the Baskervilles first seen? Describe the creature they saw.
2. Why was Sir Charles at the gate the night he passed away?
3. What did Mr Frankland see through his telescope?
4. Why did Stapleton want to murder Sir Charles and Sir Henry?
5. What did Stapleton do when he learned that Sir Charles believed the supernatural stories of the hell-hound and that he had a weak heart?

**III. Describe TWO of the following characters and state how he/she is relevant to the development of the story. Use between 30-40 words, (Grading criteria: 3 points each (1 for content; 1 for grammar; 1 for vocabulary) = 6 points)**

*Barrymore; Dr. Mortimer; Sir Henry Baskerville; Sir Charles Baskerville; Sir Hugo Baskerville; Stapleton.*

**Extensive Reading Test: “Animal Farm”**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ /32 points

**Section:**

**I. Highlight the answer (a, b, c, or d) which you think fits best according to the story. (10 points)**

**1. How does Napoleon express his contempt for Snowball’s windmill’s plans?**

- a) By spitting on them
- b) By giving a scathing speech
- c) By urinating on them
- d) By writing Snowball a letter

**2. Who reduces the idea of Animalism to the phrase “Four legs good, two legs bad”?**

- a) Snowball
- b) Squealer
- c) Napoleon
- d) Boxer

**3. What is Sugarcandy Mountain?**

- a) The name of the lullaby that Napoleon forces the pigeons to sing for his thirty-one piglets
- b) The setting for the story that Molly tells to the lambs
- c) The mountain visible on animal farm’s horizon
- d) The idea of animal heaven spread by Moses the raven

**4. What does Napoleon rename Animal Farm in his toast at the end of the novel?**

- a) Napoleon Farm
- b) Pig Farm
- c) Freedonia
- d) The Manor Farm

**5. What are Boxer's maxims?**

- a) "Snowball is always right" and "For the glory of Animal Farm"
- b) "I will work harder" and "Napoleon is always right"
- c) "I will work harder" and "For the glory of Animal Farm"
- d) "Snowball is always right" and "I will work harder"

**6. What is Mr. Jones's main vice?**

- a) Lust
- b) Gambling
- c) Alcohol
- d) Cigars

**7. What is the reason for the windmill's initial collapse?**

- a) Snowball sabotages it.
- b) It falls in a storm.
- c) The farmers blow it up with dynamite.
- d) Napoleon sabotages it and frames Snowball.

**8. What Russian institution does the raven Moses evoke?**

- a) The Secret Police
- b) The Congress
- c) The education system
- d) The Russian Orthodox Church

**9. What title does Napoleon eventually assume for himself?**

- a) King of the Animals
- b) President of the Republic
- c) Lord of Manor Farm
- d) God of Beasts

**10. What is Boxer's ultimate fate?**

- a) He dies of old age.
- b) Napoleon sells him to a glue factory.
- c) The windmill falls on him.
- d) Mr. Whymper shoots him.

**II. Match the animal's name with their description. (10 points)**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ Muriel
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Boxer
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Benjamin
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Mollie
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ Snowball
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_ Squealer
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_ Napoleon
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_ Old Major
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_ Moses
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ Napoleon's dogs

- 1. loves ribbons and sugar
- 2. pig who becomes a dictator
- 3. says "Donkeys live a long time"
- 4. kill the animals who spy for Snowball
- 5. pig known as a brilliant talker
- 6. motto is "I will work harder"
- 7. is run off the farm by the dogs
- 8. tells tales of Sugarcandy Mountain
- 9. tells of his dream of a world in which animals live without the tyranny of men
- 10. the goat that reads the commandments

**III. Answer in about 40-50 words ONLY FOUR of the following questions. (Grading criteria: 3 points each: 1.5 for content; 1.5 for grammar = 12 points)**

- 1. What causes the animals to finally rebel against Mr. Jones and his four farmhands?

2. How do the animals react to Napoleon's decision to engage in trade with neighboring farms?
3. Why does Napoleon order the animals to stop singing "Beasts of England?"
4. How is Napoleon becoming more and more like a typical dictator?
5. Why does Napoleon allow Moses to return and to tell his stories about Sugarcandy Mountain?
6. Describe the whisky incident. Why would Orwell make this scene somewhat humorous?

## Oral Extensive Reading Test

Name:

Final Mark:

Part 1 organization: 40% of final mark

Points: /16 Part 1 mark: 40%:

| Descriptor   | Not Achieved 0 | Partially Achieved<br>1- 1.5 | Achieved<br>2- 2.5 | Good<br>3 |
|--|----------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| <p><b>Organization</b></p> <p>Objectives of the presentation are stated clearly and presentation flows smoothly and it is easy to follow. The structure includes introduction, main body, and conclusion. Information and ideas are skillfully organized through a range of cohesive devices, which are used to good effect.</p>   |                |                              |                    |           |
| <p><b>Topic Mastery</b></p> <p>The student does not seem to be reading or to have memorized the text. The presentation has minor lapses that do not interfere with its flow. The student is able to recover from lapses showing control of the topic.</p>  |                |                              |                    |           |
| <p><b>Knowledge &amp; Content</b></p> <p>The content is relevant. The topic is fully developed and the presentation is argumentative in nature. Claims are supported by strong arguments and examples from different sources, class discussions, as well as information that is common knowledge. It is apparent that the student has a global and accurate understanding of the topic he/she is presenting.</p> |                |                              |                    |           |
| <p><b>Reflective Thinking</b></p> <p>The presentation evidences reflective thinking as the student is able to connect the content of</p>   |                |                              |                    |           |

|  |  |                          |  |  |
|--|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| the book with other current topics and present a clear point of view.                      |  |                          |  |  |
| <b>Time</b><br>Presentation is carried out within the stated period of time (talking time) | Less than 3 and more than 4 minutes talking.<br>0 points | 3 to 4 minutes talking.  |  |  |
| <b>Video</b><br>The video was done in one take   | Video is done in 2 or more takes.<br>0 points            | Video is done in 1 take. |  |  |

**Part 2: Language. 60% of final mark . Points: /15 Part 2 Mark: 60%:**

| <b>Descriptor</b> | <b>Feature is absent 0-1</b>  | <b>Poor 1.5-2</b>  | <b>Satisfactory 2.5-3</b>  | <b>Good 3.5-4</b>  | <b>Very Good 4.5-5</b>   |
|-------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Grammar</b>    | Completely inconsistent in the use of even the simplest verb tenses. Completely Inconsistent in the use of Syntactic structures. Completely inconsistent use of determiners relative clauses, adjectives, adverbs, etc. | Some attempts at using verb tenses correctly and consistently but most cases are incorrect. Some attempts are made at using correct syntax and other grammatical features but a large number of mistakes remain. | Frequently uses verb tenses correctly. Frequently uses correct sentence syntax and other grammatical features but several mistakes remain. Enough for the level but needs improvement. | Most verb tenses are correctly used but a few mistakes remain. A few mistakes still remain in syntax and other grammatical features. | Consistent use of a variety verb tenses as needed by the topic. Sentences are syntactically well structured, non-systematic errors. SV concord is observed throughout discourse. Consistent use of other grammatical features such as determiners, adjectives (comparative/superlative), adverbs, nouns, relative clauses and prepositional phrases to modify/complement the head in the noun phrase. Non-systematic errors. |

|                             |  |   |   |  |   |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p><b>Vocabulary</b></p>    | <p>Completely inadequate use of vocabulary in terms of topic, meaning and collocation. Frequent mother tongue interference. Wrong register/frequent shift. No variety of vocabulary or linking words at all.</p> | <p>A few attempts are made at using the appropriate words for the context. Meaning and collocation of words often incorrect. Frequent register shifts. Very few synonyms, no variety in the use of linking words.</p> | <p>Some use of appropriate vocabulary in the context of the topic presented. Frequent use of correct words with the right collocation. Some register shifts. Some use of synonyms and different linking words. Enough for the level but needs improvement</p> | <p>Correct word meaning and collocation most of the time. A few mistakes remain. Only few register shifts. Uses different linking words and synonyms but some repetition is still noticeable</p> | <p>Appropriate use of vocabulary in the context of the topic presented. Appropriate use of vocabulary in terms of meaning and collocation. Non systematic errors. Adequate register, only one or two shifts.. Variety in the use of synonyms and linking words.</p> |
| <p><b>Pronunciation</b></p> | <p>Completely inconsistent production of sounds in the English phonological system. Strong mother tongue interference. Spanish intonation at all times.</p>  | <p>Most sounds are interfered but some attempts are made at producing English sounds. Mother tongue interference is noticeable. Spanish intonation is often noticeable.</p>   | <p>Some sounds remain interfered or are produced incorrectly. Mother tongue interference is still noticeable, though the student seems to be aware of it. Spanish intonation is often noticeable, though the student seems to be aware of it.</p>             | <p>Most sounds are correctly pronounced. Specific sounds are interfered at times. A few errors remain. Various attempts at avoiding Spanish intonation.</p>                                      | <p>Consistent production of all sounds in the phonological system of English (vowels and consonants) in most cases. No remarkable mother tongue interference. Clear and consistent attempt at avoiding Spanish intonation. Non systematic errors</p>                |

## ORAL EXTENSIVE READING TEST

NAME:

FINAL MARK:

**Part 1 ORGANIZATION: 40%mark****Points: /22****Part1mark: 40%:**

| Descriptor  | Not<br>Achieved<br><br>0.5 -1 | Partially<br>Achieved<br>1.5 -2 | Achieved<br><br>2.5 -3 | Good<br><br>3.5 -4 | Very<br>Good<br><br>4.5 -5 |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <p><b>Organization: The presentation has a clear thesis and/or point of view on the topic.</b> The presentation flows smoothly, and it is easy to follow. The structure includes introduction, main body, and conclusion. Information and ideas are skillfully organized through a range of cohesive devices, which are used to good effect.</p>  |                               |                                 |                        |                    |                            |
| <p><b>Delivery:</b> The student does not seem to be reading or to have memorized the text. <b>General pace and intonation help to get the message across and is engaging.</b> The presentation has minor lapses that do not interfere with its flow. The student is able to recover from lapses showing control of the topic.</p>   |                               |                                 |                        |                    |                            |
| <p><b>Knowledge &amp; Content:</b> The content is relevant. The topic is fully developed, and the <b>presentation is argumentative</b> in nature. Claims are supported by strong arguments and examples from <b>different sources besides the book</b>, class discussions, as well as information that is common knowledge. This is mentioned in the presentation. It is apparent that the student has a global and accurate understanding of the topic he/she is presenting.</p> |                               |                                 |                        |                    |                            |
| <p><b>Reflective Thinking:</b> The presentation evidences reflective thinking as the student is <b>able to connect the topic with other current topics and present a clear point of view.</b> The student shows evidence of having looked for information in different sources, which enriches the ideas presented.</p>   |                               |                                 |                        |                    |                            |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Time</b></p> <p>Presentation is carried out within the stated period of time.</p> | <p>Less than 3 or more than 4 minutes talking.</p> <p><b>0 points</b></p> | <p>3 to 4 minutes talking.</p> <p><b>1 point</b></p> |
| <p><b>Video</b></p> <p>The video was done in one take.</p>                              | <p>Two or more takes.</p> <p><b>0 points</b></p>                          | <p>1 take.</p> <p><b>1 point</b></p>                 |

**Part2: LANGUAGE 60% mark**

**Points: /15**

**Part 2 Mark: 60%:**

| <b>Descriptor</b> | <b>Feature is absent<br/>0-1</b>   | <b>Poor<br/>1.5-2</b>  | <b>Satisfactory<br/>2.5-3</b>   | <b>Good<br/>3.5-4</b>   | <b>Very Good<br/>4.5-5</b>   |
|-------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Grammar</b>    | <p>Completely inconsistent in the use of even the simplest verb tenses.</p> <p>Completely inconsistent in the use of Syntactic structures.</p> <p>Completely inconsistent use of determiners relative clauses, adjectives, adverbs, etc.</p> | <p>Some attempts at using verb tenses correctly and consistently but most cases are incorrect.</p> <p>Some attempts are made at using correct syntax and other grammatical features but a large number of mistakes remain.</p> | <p>Frequently uses verb tenses correctly.</p> <p>Frequently uses correct sentence syntax and other grammatical features but several mistakes remain.</p> <p>Enough for the level but needs improvement.</p> | <p>Most verb tenses are correctly used but a few mistakes remain.</p> <p>A few mistakes still remain</p> <p>In syntax and other grammatical features.</p> | <p>Consistent use of a variety of verb tenses as needed by the topic.</p> <p>Sentences are syntactically well structured, non-systematic errors.</p> <p>SV concord is observed throughout discourse.</p> <p>Consistent use of other grammatical features such as determiners, adjectives (comparative/ superlative), adverbs, nouns, relative clauses and prepositional phrases to modify/complement the head in the noun phrase. Non-systematic errors.</p> |

|                   |   |   |   |  |   |
|-------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Vocabulary</b> | <p>Completely inadequate use of vocabulary in terms of topic, meaning and collocation.</p> <p>Frequent mother tongue interference.</p> <p>Wrong register/frequent shift.</p> <p>No variety of vocabulary or linking words at all.</p> | <p>A few attempts are made at using the appropriate words for the context. Meaning and collocation of words often incorrect.</p> <p>Frequent register shifts.</p> <p>Very few synonyms, no variety in the use of linking words.</p> | <p>Some use of appropriate vocabulary in the context of the topic presented.</p> <p>Frequent use of correct words with the right collocation.</p> <p>Some register shifts.</p> <p>Some use of synonyms and different linking words.</p> <p>Enough for the level but 3 needs improvement</p> | <p>Correct word meaning and collocation most of the time. A few mistakes remain.</p> <p>Only few register shifts.</p> <p>Uses different linking words and synonyms but some repetition is still noticeable</p> | <p>Appropriate use of vocabulary in the context of the topic presented.</p> <p>Appropriate use of vocabulary in terms of meaning and collocation. Non-systematic errors.</p> <p>Adequate register, only one or two shifts.</p> <p>Variety in the use of synonyms and linking words.</p> |
|-------------------|---|---|---|--|---|

|                      |   |   |   |   |  |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Pronunciation</b> | <p>Completely inconsistent production of sounds in the English phonological system.</p> <p>Strong mother tongue interference.</p> <p>Spanish intonation at all times.</p> | <p>Most sounds are interfered but some attempts are made at producing English sounds.</p> <p>Mother tongue interference is noticeable.</p> <p>Spanish intonation is often noticeable.</p> | <p>Some sounds remain interfered or are produced incorrectly.</p> <p>Mother tongue interference is still noticeable, though the student seems to be aware of it.</p> <p>Spanish intonation is often noticeable, though the student seems to be aware of it.</p> | <p>Most sounds are correctly pronounced.</p> <p>Specific sounds are interfered at times. A few errors remain.</p> <p>Various attempts at avoiding Spanish intonation.</p> | <p>Consistent production of all sounds in the Phonological system of English (vowels and consonants) in most cases.</p> <p>No remarkable mother tongue interference</p> <p>Clear and consistent attempt at avoiding Spanish intonation.</p> <p>Non-systematic errors</p> |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|--|

### Oral Extensive Reading Test Guidelines

This assignment has the purpose of discussing the issues raised in the book *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo in depth. For this, the students will work in pairs and will shoot a **6-to-7-minute video in one take**.

In the video, you will hold a conversation with a classmate about the book in a general way, as if your audience hadn't read the book. **This overview should last no more than one minute** and should include the main characters presented. Then, you will discuss one topic from the list below or a new one that caught your attention while reading.

Possible topics:

- religion in family dynamics
- friendship in the diaspora (e.g. Dominicans living in the US)
- what can't be said out loud
- gender roles in society growing pains
- balancing your heritage and the culture you live in
- immigrant parents and their view of the host culture

It is possible for two groups to choose the same topic, but they should approach it from a different perspective. If two discussions are too similar, both groups will be penalized. As you should use reflective thinking, **you are expected to mention your own ideas and elaborate on them**.

Your conversation should flow smoothly, with no evident script. You should respect each other's speaking turns and make your own contributions without repeating each other's ideas. Also, you may ask questions, make comments, and react to your partner's ideas in your discussion. We have included a file with useful phrases for conversation in academic contexts that may help you with the task. Keep in mind that **both students should have a somewhat equal amount of speaking time**. Alternatively, you may take inspiration from videos on Youtube about book discussions.

Your claims should be supported by strong arguments and examples from the book, showing that you read the book and have reflected on it.

You will be expected to know your topic and provide a clear development of ideas **without reading from a piece of paper or the screen**. You can have written material with you in case you forget something, but you are expected to address the camera when talking.

**The submission period starts on [censored]. Late submissions of the videos will not be accepted** unless there is a valid justification (a medical certificate or a note from the programme coordination).

The videos will have to be uploaded to a Drive folder whose link will be available on U-cursos.

**IMPORTANT: You have to make sure that your instructor can access the submitted video after the deadline is over. The videos must not be deleted until you receive your grade.**

**Rubric**

|                      | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4  |
|----------------------|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Substance</b>     | The student expresses ideas based on limited knowledge and understanding of the topic. Arguments are not supported by examples and events from the book. Ideas are underdeveloped. Cohesive devices and discourse markers are repetitive and basic. | Research on the topic was incomplete. Arguments are supported by examples and events from the book but in a general way. Ideas are expressed with some lack of clarity. Cohesive devices and discourse markers are not varied. | The student researched the topic. Arguments are supported by examples and events from the book but they are rather vague at times. The student expresses clear, well-developed ideas but this is not a constant feature. There is a fair use of cohesive devices and discourse markers. | The student researched the topic extensively. Arguments are supported by examples and events from the book. The student expresses clear, well-developed ideas at all times. The student uses a wide range of cohesive devices and discourse markers. |
| <b>Vocabulary</b>    | Very basic use of vocabulary. Use of true and false cognates. There is obvious interference with the L1.  | Some of the expressions used show some degree of complexity, but this is not a constant behavior.  | The student used several sophisticated and new expressions that provided richness to his/her discourse, but at times it appeared contrived.   | The student used many sophisticated and new expressions that provide richness to their discourse making it appear natural.   |
| <b>Grammar</b>       | The student only produces simple grammatical structures and struggles with them. Major mistakes are made and none or only a few are self-corrected. There are some evident mistakes regarding syntax.   | The student produces one or two complex grammatical structures and struggles with simple structures. Some major mistakes are produced, and some are self-corrected. There are some evident mistakes regarding syntax.          | Some complex grammatical structures are used but the student shows some difficulty to produce them. Some mistakes are made and the student only sometimes is able to self correct. One or two evident mistakes regarding syntax.  | Complex grammatical structures are used to contribute to the points presented. Only minor mistakes are made and the student is able to self correct most of them or all of them. No evident mistakes regarding syntax.                               |
| <b>Pronunciation</b> | Intelligibility is hindered by pronunciation and intonation highly interferes with the L1.  | Intelligibility is achieved, but there are several sounds from the L2 that have not been acquired. Intonation can be improved.   | Intelligibility is fully achieved and only on a few occasions sounds are not produced following the patterns of the L2. Intonation is definitely closer to the L2.  |  |

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| <b>Pace and delivery</b>                     | Highly hesitant. Pauses and hesitations interfere with communication. Student reads from notes more than half of the time.         | Natural hesitations and pauses filled with English sounds and expressions. No interference with communication. There is no dependency on the notes. |
| <b>Presentation length and student turns</b> | Presentation is not carried out within the stated period of time (+/- 1 min). Student turns are not balanced.                      | Presentation is carried out within the stated period of time (+/- 30 seconds). Student turns are balanced.  |
| <b>Interaction with classmate</b>            | Student interacts with classmate in a choppy way. There is constant overlap as student does not respect classmate's speaking turn. | Student interacts with classmate in a smooth way. Little or no overlap can be heard.  |

### Extensive Reading Test

The Extensive Reading Test will take the form of a **6-to-7 minute presentation in pairs**. The topic of your presentation **must be inspired by Sayaka Murata’s book “Convenience Store Woman”** and discussed from **an intercultural perspective**.

As a pair, you must address **three argumentative questions** that will help to understand the topic. You are expected to **use at least four quotes from different parts of the book** and information from **at least two additional sources** of information (one additional source of information per student).

**The structure** of your presentation must be as follows:

- **Introduction:** the title of your presentation and the three argumentative questions the presentation will address, e.g.:

Title: The satire in “Convenience Store Woman”

- Question1: In what way is *Convenience Store Woman* a satire on the genre of “chick lit”?
  - Question2: What in Japanese society does satire in *Convenience Store Woman* aim at?
  - Question3: Is the satire relevant to our own Chilean culture?
- **Development:** addressing each of the three argumentative questions with the use of quotes from different parts of the book, supporting arguments and warrants, and showing intercultural awareness;
  - **Conclusion:** wrapping up the presentation by answering the original questions briefly.

The presentation **does not need to** include any **visual aids** (e.g. a PPT presentation).

However, you must **prepare a PDF handout** that includes:

- Your names and the title of your presentation;
- The three argumentative questions you will address;

- The quotes with page numbers (make sure the quotes you choose are not too long and that they are taken from different parts of the book);
- Useful and sophisticated vocabulary and grammar you'll use in your presentation;
- References in APA format (including the book);
- You may also include relevant pictures, tables and graphs, links, and other helpful information.

The handout should be **uploaded to Tareas on U-cursos by** [censored]. Failing to send the handout will result in **subtracting 1.0 point** from your Extensive Reading grade (that is, if you get "5.8" as per the rubric, your grade will be "4.8").

You can find an example of an acceptable handout (designed for another book by one of your classmates last year) at the end of this document.

The following is the **rubric** that will be used to evaluate your presentations.

Even though you will present in pairs, each of you will have an individual grade and feedback.

|                        |                                     | (4) Exemplary   | (3) Accomplished   | (2) Developing  | (0-1) To be improved  |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Task Completion</b> | <b>Quality of guiding questions</b> | Clear questions help to understand the topic and focus. Questions are argumentative.  | 1 of the questions can be improved / made clearer / is not argumentative. It does not help to understand the topic and focus.  | 2 of the questions to address can be improved. They do not help to understand the topic and focus.  | Questions do not help to understand the topic and focus. They are not argumentative.  |
|                        | <b>Quotes from the book</b>         | 4 or more relevant quotes from different parts of the book  | 3 relevant quotes from different parts of the book   | 2 relevant quotes   | 1 relevant quote or less  |
|                        | <b>Content</b>                      | Full understanding of issues presented in the book and clear link to topics in the presentation.  | The understanding of issues presented in the book and a clear link to topics in the presentation is not evident at all times.<br><br>One or two confusing points in either of the aspects.   | The understanding of issues presented in the book and a clear link to topics in the presentation is not evident at all times.<br><br>Three confusing points in either of the aspects. | No evidence of full understanding of issues in the book and no clear connection to the topics in the presentation.<br><br>Four or more confusing points in either of the aspects. |
|                        | <b>Cross-cultural awareness</b>     | Cultural differences are presented from a critical point of view.   | Cultural differences are only presented at the comparative level and generalizations are still made.   | Cultural differences are only at the informative level.   | There is no mention of any intercultural aspect.  |
| <b>Language</b>        | <b>Pronunciation</b>                | Sounds are systematically produced following the patterns of the L2.<br><br>Sentence and word Stress are accurately placed.<br><br>Intonation is used Correctly and Effectively to convey meaning.<br><br>All the key words are pronounced correctly. | Only on a few occasions sounds are not produced following the patterns of the L2, but this is not systematic.<br><br>Sentence and word stress are accurately placed.<br><br>Intonation is used correctly.<br><br>All the key words are pronounced correctly. | Many English sounds are produced incorrectly.<br><br>Some mistakes in sentence and word stress.<br><br>Intonation can be improved.<br><br>Some key words are mispronounced.           | Systematic mispronunciation of many English sounds.<br><br>Intonation and stress need to be improved.<br><br>Many keywords are mispronounced.                                     |

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|  | <b>Vocabulary complexity and variety</b> | The student uses many sophisticated expressions and at least Two idioms/proverbs studied in class.<br><br>Vocabulary is rarely repeated. | The student uses some of the sophisticated expressions and only one idiom/proverb studied in class.<br><br>Vocabulary is repeated on a few occasions. | The student uses few of the sophisticated expressions and no Idioms studied in class.<br><br>There is some repetition of vocabulary that can be substituted by synonyms. | The student uses few to none of the sophisticated expressions and no idioms studied in class.<br><br>There is frequent repetition of vocabulary that can be substituted by synonyms. |
|  | <b>Vocabulary correctness</b>            | No false cognates.<br><br>All expressions (collocations, idioms,   | No false cognates.<br><br>Most expressions are pertinent and precise.   | Use of one or two false cognates.<br><br>Some of the expressions   | Use of more than two false cognates.   |

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|  |                            | prepositions, etc.) are pertinent and precise.  |   | are not pertinent and/or precise.   | Many of the expressions are not pertinent and/or precise.   |
|  | <b>Grammar complexity</b>  | Complex grammatical structures (perfect Tenses, if clauses, etc.) are used to contribute to the points presented. | Some complex grammatical structures are used but the student shows some difficulty to produce them. | The student produces one or two complex grammatical structures and struggles with simple structures. Some major mistakes are produced, and some are self-corrected. | The student only produces simple grammatical structures and struggles with them. Major mistakes are made and none or only a few are self-corrected. |
|  | <b>Grammar correctness</b> | Only one or two mistakes are made when using a complex form.<br><br>No elementary mistakes.                       | A few mistakes are made when using a complex form.<br><br>One or two elementary mistakes.           | Several mistakes are made when using simple and complex forms.  | Mistakes are systematically made when using simple and complex forms.   |

**(2) Exemplary**

**(0-1) To be improved**

|                     |                 |  |   |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|---|
| <b>Presentation</b> | <b>Delivery</b> | Natural hesitations and pauses filled with English sounds and expressions. No interference with communication. | Highly hesitant. Pauses and hesitations interfere with communication. |
|                     | <b>Duration</b> | Presentation is carried out within the stated period of time (+/- 30 seconds).                                 | Presentation is not carried within the stated period of time.         |

## The importance of humor in Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime*

Student's name:

Questions:

1. Is humor an effective coping mechanism to get through the adversities of life?
2. Does humor allow you to find a place in the world?
3. Can stand up comedy be used to raise awareness about different issues?

Important Quotes:

1. "Whenever the principal would hit me, it was like he was afraid to do it too hard. One day I was getting a hiding and I thought, *Man, if only my mom hit me like this*, and I started laughing. I couldn't help it." (p. 64)
2. "The whole courtroom started laughing, so then I started laughing, too. But now I was even more petrified because I didn't want the judge to think I wasn't taking him seriously because I was laughing." (p. 170)
3. "I was bawling my eyes out and laughing hysterically at the same time. We sat there and she squeezed my hand and we cracked each other up the way we always did, mother and son, laughing together through the pain in an intensive-care recovery room on a bright and sunny and beautiful day." (p. 199)

Useful and sophisticated vocabulary and grammar

Idiomatic expressions:

- Follow his mother's steps;
- Root and branch;
- To look at the bright side;

Phrasal verbs:

- Hang out with people;
- Look down upon;
- Given up

Combinations of adjectives/adverbs with intensifiers:

- incredibly optimistic and charismatic,
- extremely stressful,
- really hard time,
- really meaningful,
- most important,
- great impact,
- too black/white.

Perfect tenses:

- Science has demonstrated [the positive effect of humor];
- After Patricia had been shot;

- It has been widely known among scientists that laughter can improve your overall health;

- He has toured all over the world.

If Clauses:

- If people see negative imagery and make jokes afterwards, the negative emotions associated to it would decrease.

- Black people would be considered less savage if they believed in Jesus.

Verb patterns with gerund/infinitive:

- dedicated to improving

Modal+past participle:

- These ideas might have helped

Modal + gerund:

- May not be speaking at all

Helpful links and information

- How Comedians Learn to Use Humor to Raise Awareness and Consciousness about Social and Political Issues: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED534487>

- Laughing About It: Comedy as a Way to Raise Awareness for Safe Migration:

<https://rodakar.iom.int/news/laughing-about-it-comedy-way-raise-awareness-safe-migration>

- Stand-up comedians raise awareness about mental health:

[www.kswo.com/story/37542253/stand-up-comedians-raise-awareness-about-mental-health/](http://www.kswo.com/story/37542253/stand-up-comedians-raise-awareness-about-mental-health/)

- Trevor Noah Foundation: <https://trevornoahfoundation.org/>

- TEDxTalk How Humor can save your life | Goran Asaad | TEDxNorrköping

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=meHO-tIDITs&ab\\_channel=TEDxTalks](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=meHO-tIDITs&ab_channel=TEDxTalks)

References

- CBSThisMorning.(2018, Jun 12). Trevor Noah on taking "Born a Crime" from the page to students' ears [Video]. Youtube.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2x1kmOqoNo&ab\\_channel=CBSThisMorning](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2x1kmOqoNo&ab_channel=CBSThisMorning)

- McClure,M.(2011,August 01). Stanford psychologists find that jokes help us cope with horrifying images. Stanford news. [Video].

<https://news.stanford.edu/news/2011/august/humor-coping-horror-080111.html>

- Noah, T. (2016). Bornacrime: Stories from a SouthAfricanChildhood. New York: Spiegel & Grau.

**GRADING RUBRIC FOR QUESTION 4 – ERT**

|  | <b>Outstanding (4)</b>  | <b>Strong (3)</b>  | <b>Competent (2)</b>   | <b>Developing (1)</b>  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Content</b>                           | Clear, relevant and accurate; includes appropriate examples; appropriate links between ideas; makes an interesting argumentation using information from the novel                             | Mostly clear, relevant and accurate; includes some examples; appropriate links between ideas; makes a somewhat interesting argumentation using information from the novel  | Somewhat unclear with some irrelevant information (not necessarily from the novel); some detail to support views but links between ideas may be weak; argumentation is average | Unclear with irrelevant and/or confusing information; presents some details to support views but link between ideas weak; presentation is weak. Ideas from the novel are scarce. |
| <b>Grammar</b>                           | Target level structures are highly accurate and varied. It shows syntactic complexity and there are no elementary mistakes (E.g. Embedded structures, if clauses, complex verb phrases, etc.) | Target level structures mostly accurate and varied. It shows syntactic complexity (E.g. Embedded structures, if clauses, complex verb phrases, etc.). A few elementary mistakes are made, but they are not errors. | Target level structures somewhat accurate and not very varied. (A few complex structures are used; both elementary and minor mistakes are made consistently)                   | Target level structures are not accurate and are highly repetitive; meaning obscured. Elementary mistakes and minor mistakes are common.   |
| <b>Vocabulary/ Idioms/ Phrasal verbs</b> | Appropriately incorporates vocabulary and pertinent expressions learned so far; varies the vocabulary used within the limits of what has been learned and beyond.                             | Incorporates vocabulary and pertinent expressions learned so far with minor errors; some varied vocabulary.  | Incorporates vocabulary and pertinent expressions learned so far with some errors; uses some high frequency and low frequency words. Very little varies vocabulary.            | Does not incorporate vocabulary and pertinent expressions learned so far; only uses high frequency vocabulary; vocabulary repetitive and basic.                                  |

|                         |  |   |   |  |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Discourse</b></p> | <p>The organization of the text as well as the discourse structure clearly show sophistication according to the level.</p> <p>Claim(s) is (are) supported by strong arguments. (Examples come from specific moments in the text)</p> | <p>The organization of the text mostly contributes to comprehensibility. There is evident intent to achieve sophistication, but it is not completely reached.</p> <p>Claim(s) is (are) supported by several arguments and some warrants. Examples come from specific moments in the text.</p> | <p>The organization of the text sometimes contribute to comprehensibility; errors sometimes distract from reading.</p> <p>Claim(s) is (are) somewhat supported by arguments and/or warrants.</p> <p>Examples are general, but still linked directly to the novel.</p> | <p>The organization of the text does not contribute to comprehensibility; errors often detract from meaning. Very simple paragraphs and presentation of ideas,</p> <p>Claim is not supported by arguments or warrants, they are just opinions.</p> <p>Ideas from the novel are quite general. There's not enough information from the novel.</p> |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|--|