THE USE OF 'SMART READS' TO MOTIVATE LEP STUDENTS TO READ ENGLISH MATERIALS

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ABSTRACT

By differentiating content, low English proficiency learners (LEP) can be motivated to read materials in English. To many LEP students, primary readers are boring and purposeless while the conventional secondary reading tasks are challenging by long uninteresting texts crowded with too many unfamiliar words. Such reading tasks take time and LEP students frequently lose interest and give up before their reading goals are met. This action research, therefore aims to find out whether the use of illustrated authentic materials and skimming and scanning skills as a reading strategy can improve students' reading comprehension and thus increase their motivation to read materials in English. This action research is designed to get a group of LEP students to experience a high level of achievement by reading simple short illustrated authentic materials within specific short time spans and using skimming and scanning skills as a reading strategy supported by the 'SMART' attributes for students reading goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and are carried out within controlled Time frame). The students are provided with immediate Self Access Feedback and scores at the end of each cycle, enabling teachers and students to track their progress. The samples were purposively selected. A total of 20 low English proficiency students (13 female and 6 male) of Form 4, from a sub-urban school in Sandakan were chosen for the purpose of this research. The participants were selected based on their Form 3 Assessment 2015 (a standardized school-based assessment). This study utilizes a quantitative method in which data is descriptively analyzed. The data obtained are from the pre and post-test questionnaire on students' reading habits, attitude and motivation towards reading English materials, pre and post-test scores on reading skills before and after intervention strategy, pre and post interview as well as pre and post observation of the number of English materials read. The results of this intervention method has shown positive changes among the targeted group in terms of the number of materials read in English per week; increased sense of achievement and motivation to read in English and the number of new vocabulary learnt. Nevertheless, it is recommended that teachers use authentic materials in accordance with students' ability as well as with the suitable tasks being given.

Keywords: illustrated authentic materials, skimming and scanning skills, motivation

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Reading is known as one of the most important aspects of any language and it becomes a tool for lifelong learning for learners (Noorizah, 2011). In the Malaysian English as a Second Language (ESL) context, reading in English would undoubtedly help a learner to be proficient in the language (Fatimah, H., & Vishalache, B. 2006). To face the 21st century, education has to prepare learners to adapt to social and technological changes that are taking place at an unprecedented rate. Education under these circumstances depends largely on language competency. In this context, reading especially is a resource for continued education, for the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, for gaining information through media, especially newspapers, books, radio, television, and the computers.

Many studies have been conducted to identify the nature of reading habits of individuals. Among them are studies on reading that have been done on teenagers or young people (Wicks, 1995; Machet, 2004), on college students and adults (Gallik, 1999; Kirsch & Guthrie, 1984), and on specific cultures and society such as Malaysia (Long, 1984; Small et. Al., 1998; Abidin et. Al., 2011). Although research strongly suggests that extensive reading can boost second language acquisition, few second language learners engage in voluntary reading at their own initiative.

Despite its numerous benefits, it was reported that many learners, particularly in ESL and EFL classrooms spend relatively little time on reading (Lee, 2013). This view is supported by various studies on the habits of reading in Malaysia which showed that

tertiary level students spent less time reading than they used to before joining the university (Sarjit, K., & Rosy, T. 1999). In a study conducted by Annamalai and Muniandy (2013) on the reading habits and attitude among Malaysian Polytechnic students indicated that only about two third of the subjects did spend time on reading English materials outside class hours and of this almost half of them spent only less than one hour a week on English reading. Similarly, in a study conducted by Pandian, (2000) on the reading habits of Malaysian students showed that 80.1% of university students are "reluctant" readers in English-language materials. In other words, 80.1% university students read because they have to. The study by Mohd Yasin et al., (2010) also supports and justifies the findings by Pandian (2000). The findings of their study reveal that the civil engineering students in the Malaysian Polytechnic indicate low frequency or ability of using the English language among the students irrespective of their type of workplace or level of study.

This phenomenon is prevalent among many primary and secondary school students in Malaysia specifically, among the low English proficiency students. There has been many complains made by Malaysian educators of the poor reading habits of their students and this is supported by the findings of a study conducted by Kaur and Thiyagarajah (1999) which revealed that Malaysian students read very little. The Ministry of Education in its effort to promote reading among students has introduced an extensive reading programme known as '*Projek Nilam*'. It was officially implemented among first year students of the primary school on 22 May 1998 and form 1 and Remove students in 1999 in its effort to inculcate the reading habit among students (Surat Pekeliling Ikhtisas Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia Bil.13/1998). Despite having special reading programmes, the lack of interest and motivation to read among students persists particularly among low English proficiency (LEP) learners.

1.2   Statement Of The Problem

It is a general believe that one way to develop language proficiency is through extensive reading where learners engage in reading voluntarily and for their own pleasure, at a difficulty level which they can read smoothly and quickly without looking up words or translating to English. (Nuttal, 1982, Grellet, 1981) further define it as reading a large quantity of text where reading confidence and reading fluency are prioritized. However, to many of our low English proficiency (LEP) students in secondary schools, reading materials in English is one of their least preferred choice. Students often do not take any initiative to engage in reading extensively besides what is required for them to learn through the textbooks in class.   LEP students do not realize the relevance of reading and are poorly motivated to read particularly in the English language. Studies have revealed that LEP students find primary readers boring and purposeless, while the conventional secondary reading tasks are challenging, crowded by long uninteresting texts, and unfamiliar words. Therefore, reading tasks take time and so they lose interest and give up even before their reading goals are met (Hutchinson & Waters, 1991).

General observation of a group of LEP students made during their library periods in a sub-urban secondary school in Sandakan demonstrated that English books or materials were the least preferred choice of reading. The same observation was made during their NILAM periods (a special reading programme which requires students to read books of their choice and write synopsis of the book they have read). Compelling these students to read English materials resulted in reading without comprehension and literally sleeping through their books. Thus, they become passive, reluctant and demotivated readers. What has caused this reaction among the students towards reading materials in English? This research aims to find out why students react negatively towards reading English materials and to find a way to motivate and engage LEP students to read more materials in English.

A simple questionnaire was distributed to a group of LEP students to determine their reasons for not preferring to read English materials. The reasons cited by them were the difficulty of the texts which contained too many difficult words, long and wordy texts, lack of reading skills to process information, lack of self-esteem or confidence and lastly lack of motivation. The results also showed that these students hardly read one material in English per week. Guthrie and Wigfield (2004), pointed out that active and long-term readers are those who are intrinsically motivated. Specifically, intrinsically motivated readers are those who read for pleasure, excitement, and interest. Intrinsically motivated learners usually read because they love reading, spend more time in reading, and show more interests in understanding what they read (Kamil, Manning, & Walberg, 2002). It was also indicated that motivation whether it is intrinsic or extrinsic is an essential prerequisite for developing learners' interest and love of reading (Higgins et al., 1995; Watkins & Coffey, 2004; Wigfield et al., 2006). This assumption was supported by a considerable number of researchers (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Schaffner & Schiefele, 2007). This view is further supported by Duffy (2009) who claims that readers who experience frequent errors and barriers in reading are often apt to continuing failures, hence stop and avoid reading habits (Duffy, 2009). Another factor for students lack of motivation and failure to become ardent readers is lack of proper reading instruction in the classroom. Many teachers do not focus on building students' reading abilities, basic mechanics of reading, and reading interest and motivation when they teach reading (Lesaux, 2012). Therefore, the lack of quality reading instruction contributed significantly to the increasing decline of the students' interests in reading (Fredericks, 1998).

In order to develop a reading culture among students, it is important to create students who are independent and confident readers. Therefore, it is essential that students are exposed to the right reading strategies and skills to enable them to process and comprehend the information contained in different types of texts. By raising students' awareness of reading as a skill that requires active engagement and by explicitly teaching reading strategies, teachers can help their students to develop both the ability and confidence to handle communication situations they may encounter beyond the classroom (G.S. Burkart,1998). Among the strategies that can help students read more quickly and effectively include previewing, predicting, skimming and scanning, guessing from context and paraphrasing. When learners use reading strategies, they find they can control the reading experience and they gain confidence in their ability to read the language. (G.S. Burkart,1998)

Besides, employing the right reading strategies, for students to develop communicative competence in reading, classroom and homework reading activities must resemble real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication. Therefore, the

reading materials, reading purpose and the reading approach must be authentic. (G.S. Burkhart, 1998). In order to develop independent readers, it is also vital that self-access learning strategy is exposed to students so that they will develop a positive culture of reading, responding and checking for answers independently and thus gain confidence in the language. One of the principles of self-access materials development is to make sure that the language learners are exposed to authentic materials in the sense that it represents how the language is typically used (Tomlinson, 2010a, p. 87). Through the differentiated instruction approach, teachers can differentiate content, simply long and difficult texts by adapting and adopting to match with their LEP students' needs and interests. Thus, the effort to inculcate the habit of reading extensively among all types of learners can be achieved.

Therefore, in this study, a carefully planned intervention strategy is employed to motivate and encourage a group of form 4 LEP students, aged between 15 to 16 years, to read materials in English. The researcher selects short unintimidating illustrated authentic materials as reading tasks. Skimming and scanning skills are taught explicitly to enable LEP learners to read with a purpose and to be able to identify language markers to enhance comprehension skills. The reading task also masquerades as a game and self-access learning is introduced to create independent and autonomous learners.

1.3 Purpose Of The Study

This action research study is designed to get a group of LEP students to experience a high level of achievement by reading simple short illustrated authentic materials within specific short time spans and using skimming and scanning skills as a reading strategy. This intervention method is supported by the 'SMART' attributes for students reading goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and are carried out within controlled Time frame), as stipulated in the Malaysian Educational Blueprint, MEB, (2013-2025).

1.4 Research Objective

To investigate the effect of short illustrated authentic materials and the use of skimming and scanning skills as a reading strategy on students' motivation, reading habits and attitude towards reading materials in English.

1.5 Research Question

How does the use of short illustrated authentic materials and skimming and scanning skills as a reading strategy affect students' motivation, reading habits and attitude towards reading materials in English?

2.0 Literature Review

Current literature points to the importance and benefits of reading extensively. (Krashen,1982), advocates that extensive reading provides contextualized clues for better reading comprehension and substantial linguistic input needed for language proficiency. However, it appears that Malaysian students largely are facing the problem of comprehending English texts. This has been pointed out by Nair, (2003) in her study that students performed poorly in reading comprehension examinations. One of the factors that contribute to the less encouraging performance is the poor selection of materials which did not cater to the interests of the students.

Aries (2007) claimed that no matter how difficult or easy the text material might be, it will still be problematic for students if it is not of their interest nor relevant to them. Besides comprehending a text, motivation plays an important role in determining learners' choice for reading. Cohen and Dornyei (2002) contended that motivation is the key learner variable that determines the degree of effort learners put into learning the language. According to Wachob (2006) teaching materials undergird the construct of motivation while Seven and Engin (2007) stress that language teaching materials have a very important effect and role in language learning and teaching activities. Thus, it is recommended that teachers should choose materials and texts which are of interests to students' level of proficiency and comprehension ability.

Researchers such as Day and Bamford (2008) and Hunter (2009) as cited by Guo (2012), believe that reading can empower students with extensive vocabulary, syntax and other language expertise that will enrich their use in the target language. However, previous studies reflect that lack of effective reading skills to process information deter learners from reading materials in English. This means that, the lack of reading skills among LEP students can deter their ability and motivation to read English materials. Bernhardt (2000:701) claims that effective reading skills can empower a learner to employ effective reading strategies, that allows them to be able to read accurately the information from print and beyond. Literature already incorporates much simplified reading material that would encourage even beginners to engage in extensive reading. Findings of previous study has proven that extensive reading using simplified graded materials enhances students' reading habits, reading speed and vocabulary knowledge (Guo, 2012). However, there has been insufficient research to explore the effects of extensive reading that utilizes authentic materials. Krashen (2011) specifies a crucial need for continuous research in this area in support of the inclusion of extensive reading in the curriculum. Will exposure to different source of text and teaching of reading strategies also generate a positive effect on learners' motivation and proficiency to read more English materials? The researcher intends to investigate the relationship between the teaching of reading strategies using illustrated authentic materials and its effects on learners' motivation towards reading materials in English.

2.1 Illustrated Authentic Materials

Authentic material refers to those taken from real life sources and they are not designed for teaching and learning purposes. The most common sources of authentic materials that can be used in the classroom are newspaper, magazine, songs, literature and materials from the internet. Wallace (1998: 145) defines authentic texts as "real-life texts, not written for pedagogic processes". One of the main purposes of using authentic materials in the classroom is to "expose" students to as much real language as possible. Therefore, the students can gain real information and know what is going on in the world around them. Moreover, an advantage of taking a complete newspaper or magazine into classroom, instead of photocopies of an article, is that students can actually choose what they want to read. They are much more likely to read with enthusiasm if they have made decision about what they want to read.

Authentic materials are often more interesting because they reflect real life phenomena. It is in line with Browns' (1999) statement that the learners are more eager to learn when the language is authentic or meaningful. It is supported by Nuttall (1996: 172) who states that "authentic texts can be motivating because they are proof that the language is used for real life purposes by real people". Moreover, they have a positive effect on comprehension and learner satisfaction (Berado, 2006). Berado (2014) asserts that the "authentic" presentation, through the use of pictures, diagrams, photographs, helps put the text into a context. This helps the reader not only understand the meaning of the text better but also how it would be used. A more "attractive" text will appeal to the student and motivate them into reading. Thus, it can be implied that the use of authentic materials affect the students' reading comprehension. (Guo, 2011, Wang, Lin, & Lee 2011) in their studies purported that textbooks materials provide valuable information to learners however students are least interested in them. They claim that the source of English learning should not be limited to specific textbooks and practices. This is supported by Griffith & Koehane (2000) and Widdowson (1990) who suggests the incorporation of authentic materials for learners. It has been argued by some proponents that the use of authentic materials may be challenging in terms of the complexity of vocabulary and structures especially to low proficiency learners. Baleghizadeh's study (2010) showed that the concerns could be overcome by adequate assistance. The experimental study involved 90 Iranian students in three groups: simplified text, unsimplified text, and unsimplified texts using an interactive approach with teacher's facilitation. The findings demonstrate that reading with a negotiation process in which students could ask questions about difficult words and text significantly outperformed the other groups, even the group that read simplified texts. The opportunity to interact with the teacher was proven to be more effective than linguistic simplicity alone. Baleghizadeh's study justified the incorporation of authentic reading materials as long as it was accompanied by the teachers' facilitation because the argument of linguistic complexity interfering with comprehension can be easily resolved by teachers' facilitation and students' interaction with teachers. Baleghizadeh's study (2010) showed that the concerns could be overcome by adequate assistance from teachers or facilitators. Reading with a negotiating process in which students could ask questions about difficult words and text significantly showed better results. Baleghizadeh justified that incorporation of authentic reading materials as long as it was accompanied by the teacher's facilitation and students' interaction, this concern could be easily resolved. Krashen (1982) also weighs in that contextualized clues can assist students in comprehending the text and provide extra linguistic information.

Thus, in this study the researcher exploits a wide variety of authentic materials with illustrations with the help of skimming and scanning skills to enable low proficiency learners to read with ease, less anxiety and with a purpose.

2.1.1 'SMART READS'
Smart Reads are a set of reading cards in which short simple illustrated authentic texts are selected from easily available printed or online resources such as newspaper articles, reports, advertisements and notice. The selected texts are represented by illustrations such as pictures, comics, manuals, infographics, graphs, maps and charts which allow LEP students to infer and enhance comprehension of the text. The Smart Reads contain a series of different but similar short unintimidating texts of various themes taking into consideration students' interest and level of proficiency. Among the themes chosen are entertainment, sports, movies, advertisements, general knowledge and manuals or procedures. Each reading card has one question posted on the back of the card to create a purpose for reading. The questions require students to provide answers by selecting the best options, stating true or false or providing short responses based on the text read. The students are required to use skimming and scanning skills as a reading strategy to identify main details or specific information from the text. The reading task itself masquerades as a game in which students read a series of cards on a particular theme, in a round-robin cycle within his or her group for 10 to 15 minutes. Given the time frame to complete their reading task, the students will have to be focused and attempt to skim and scan with speed to derive the answers to the questions posted on each reading card. This is the purpose of skimming and scanning skills which is a form of speed reading. This strategy allows LEP students to engage in the reading task without having to read word to word or understand meaning of every word in the text in order to answer the questions. In this way, the proposed intervention method reduces LEP students' anxiety and apprehension of reading English Materials as the task does not require tedious process of reading long and wordy texts. The short reading task which is accomplished within 10 to 15 minutes allows LEP students a sense of achievement as they are able to read at least 5 Smart Reads in one cycle as compared to not reading anything in English for one week before the introduction of the intervention method. At the end of each reading cycle, immediate self - access feedback is provided thus providing LEP students an experience of being autonomous learners. The Self-Access Feedback is placed in an envelope according to sets which are clearly number coded for easy reference of the students. As students check the answers within their group, anxiety level is reduced while self-esteem and confidence level is increased as the activity is done in a less intimidating and critical manner. The teacher's role here is merely as a facilitator making sure the task is carried out in an orderly manner and LEP students are engaged in their reading task. The Smart Reads encompasses the SMART attributes for students reading goals that is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and carried out within controlled time frame.

2.2   Skimming And Scanning Skills

Previous studies reveal the importance of reading strategies instruction (Anderson, 1991; et al., 1989; Paris, Lipson & Wixson, 1983). Research documents that good language learners are strategic readers who use more strategies compared to poor readers (Dole et al.; Irwin & Baker, 1989; O'Malley et al., 1985). Therefore, in this study, the explicit strategy instruction is exposed to low proficiency learners to enable them to process information and better comprehend reading materials. The goal for explicit reading strategy instruction is to move readers from conscious control of reading strategies to unconscious use of reading skills (Anderson,1991). It involves teaching learners how and when to use it, modeling and explaining how to perform it, providing ample assisted practice time, providing self-monitoring and evaluation, encouraging continued use and generalization in other independent learning situations (Beckman, 2002). The two selected explicit strategies are skimming and scanning in this study.

Skimming

By skimming, readers go through the reading material quickly in order to get the gist of it, to know how it is organized, or to get an idea of the tone or the intention of the writer (Grellet, 1981). As ESL readers tend to process texts in a "bottom-up" manner (Kern, 1989), learning to skim for the main idea is a good way to improve their top-down reading, which is beneficial to enhancing their comprehension of difficult texts. This is a practical strategy for ESL readers.

Scanning

Scanning technique is used for effective reading, to get specific information quickly. Richard and friends (1991: 322) in Susanti (2013) stated that scanning is a type of speed-reading technique which is used when the reader wants to locate a particular piece of information without necessarily understanding the rest of a text or passage and the reader can study the text in more detail.

Scanning is a skill that requires glancing or reading quickly through a text to search for specific information. It refers to the movement of the eyes quickly across the text without having to read every word or stopping when a word is not understood. Reading is done with the purpose of looking for specific words and phrases that form the information. Vaezi (2006: 5) in Susanti (2013) states that scanning is reading rapidly to find specific a piece of information. This technique is useful to minimize boredom in classroom.

2.3 Lep Students' Attitude And Motivation Towards Reading English Materials

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined attitude as "a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object" (p. 6). According to Fishbein and Ajzen's description, attitude seems to play an important role in affecting one's reading performance. They further characterized reading attitude as "a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation" (p. 1). Day and Bamford (1998) highlighted attitude and motivation as the two most affective dimensions of language learning. In general motivation is recognized as one of the most significant factors affecting students' performance of second language learning (Lei, 2012, Thang et. Al., 2011). In a study conducted by Lifrieri (2005) demonstrates that attitude is necessary but it has to be paired up with motivation proper to relate to the levels of student engagement in language learning and language attainment. It is further emphasized that a better understanding of students' motivation and attitudes may assist ESL or EFL curriculum and instruction designers to devise language teaching programs that generate the attitudes and motivation most conducive to the production of more successful to the production of more successful ESL or EFL learners (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Midraj, 1998, 2003).

As is mentioned in Lin (2004) different researchers such as Lee (1995), Little, Devitt, & Singleton (1988), Peacock (1997), and Shei (2001) claim that authentic materials have a motivating effect. Motivation can influence students' freedom, attention, attempt, patience, the frequency of using learning strategies and their learning success (Zhou, 2012). Oguz and Bahar (2008) contend that if learners' interaction with authentic materials is established with interest and without difficulty they can participate actively in learning and in the same way their motivation levels may raise. In addressing LEP learners lack of interest in reading English materials, it is relevant in this study to employ implementation method that focuses on enabling them to be strategic readers and increase their motivation to read more. This is done through the use of short and unintimidating illustrated authentic materials and skimming and scanning skills, administered in the form of game to promote reading enjoyment and frequency of materials read in English per week.

2.3.1 LOW ENGLISH PROFICIENCY STUDENTS (LEP)

In this action research, low English proficiency students refers to a group of students who have been categorized based on their achievement in their Form 3 Assessment (Penilaian Tingkatan 3). 20 form 4 students who scored poorly in their English assessment, scoring grades within the range of D and E were classified as low proficiency students. The Form 3 Assessment of the English Language encompasses listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that a gap exists in research that involves the use of authentic materials to encourage LEP students to read materials in English. It is also evident that there have been many studies which focused on tertiary level students as compared to secondary school students on the use of authentic materials to improve reading proficiency, reading habits, attitudes and motivation. Thus, the researcher is interested to investigate the effect of using illustrated authentic materials and skimming and scanning skills to motivate LEP students to read English materials. The researcher seeks to find answers to the following questions: Will the use of illustrated authentic materials present an avenue for low proficiency students to comprehend the text better with the help of graphics such as pictures, graphs, comics and tables? Will the real-life language use contained in authentic materials enable learners to associate what they read in the text and apply what they have learnt in a more meaningful way in their daily language communication? Will the explicit teaching of skimming and scanning skills

improve LEP students reading skills and increase their sense of achievement and motivate them to read more materials in English?

3.0   Methodology

Classroom Action Research (CAR) design was used in this study. Action research is research carried out in the classroom by the teacher of the course, mainly with the purpose of solving a problem or improving the teaching and learning process (Burns, 2010:5). It is carried out by teachers in the context of their classrooms.

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the use of short illustrated authentic materials and skimming and scanning skills as a reading strategy motivate low proficiency learners to read English materials. The Practical Action Research Plan by Mills (2000) is adopted in this study. It begins with identifying the problem, devising a plan, implementing the plan, observing, collecting and analyzing data and finally reflecting and sharing findings.

3.1   Samples

Purposive sampling was done in this study. The samples selected were 20 low English proficiency students studying in form 4 in a sub-urban school in Sandakan, Sabah. The samples were aged between 15 and 16 years. Out of the 20 samples, there were13 female and 7 male student   s of multi ethnicity (see TABLE 1). The samples were selected and categorized as LEP (Low English Proficiency) students based on their results in the national level standardized Form 3 Assessment (PT3), 2015.

TABLE 1 Respondents of the Study

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	%
15	4	3	7	35
16	3	10	13	65
TOTAL	7	13	20	100
%	35	65	100	

Students were ranked according to grades ranging from Grade A to Grade E (see TABLE 2). Based on the PT3 results, 8 students obtained grade C, 9 obtained grade D while 3 failed (grade E)

TABLE 2. Respondents' Results based on Form 3 Assessment (PT3) 2015

	GRADE A	GRADE B	GRADE C	GRADE D	GRADE E	TOTAL
n	0	0	8	9	3	20
%	0	0	40	45	15	100

(n=number of respondent)

3.2   Instrument

3.2.1   Questionnaire

A simple questionnaire consisting of 10 items (**Appendix 1**) was given to the targeted group of students in this action research at the beginning and at the end of this research. The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect data and feedback on their reading habits, attitude and motivation towards reading English materials. The feedback would reflect the number of reading materials in English read per week, the reasons for not choosing to read English materials, sources of support to help understand a text better and their preferred choice of reading materials in English. The questionnaire was made very simple to enable the students to provide responses easily without much discussion. *The items were translated into Bahasa Malaysia too, to help students respond correctly.*

3.2.2   Pre-test Scores based on reading of Non-Illustrated Reading Comprehension Text

A Pre-Test was carried out before the intervention program. Students were made to read 2 comprehension texts and answer 20 multiple choice questions based on the two linear texts (**Appendix 2**) of between 250 to 300 words. The purpose of this test was to compare their results in terms of their ability to comprehend texts without illustration and without explicit reading strategy instruction. The time allotted was 40 minutes. Each correct item was given a score 5 marks.

3.2.3   Post-test Score based on reading of Illustrated Authentic Materials and Using Skimming and Scanning Skills (after explicit reading strategy instruction)

The scores of the Post-Test were taken at the end of the students' intervention period *(week 12)*. The Post Test scores was based on 4 sets of Reading Cards. Each set requires students to answer 5 multiple choice questions, therefore the total number of questions answered was 20 (refer **Appendix 3**). The post-test scores represent students' scores based on their reading of short illustrated authentic materials. Each reading card had a question posted on it where students had to use their skimming and

scanning skills as a reading strategy to identify specific details or information in order to answer the question. Each correct item was given a score of 5 marks.

3.2.4   Interviews

The interviews consisted of 5 questions on their attitude towards reading materials in English. The interviews which were conducted before and after the intervention aimed to investigate their attitude and motivation towards reading materials in English before and after the research (**Appendix 4**).

3.2.5   Observation

A simple observation was done to compare the number of materials read in English by LEP students, before and after the intervention strategy. These two observations were done by counting the number of reading materials in English read by the LEP students in the classroom and library during their NILAM periods (**Appendix 5**). It was recorded based on the entries made by the students after they had done their reading in their NILAM reading record book. Observation of their library cards were also made to note the number of English materials read by the samples of the study.

3.3   Procedure

The time frame of this action research study was 3 months (February to April 2016). It was conducted in 12 weeks. Table 3 provides a summary of the action plan.

In **Weeks 1 - 4,** a *pre-intervention observation* in the classroom during NILAM and Library Periods were made to collect data on students' reading habits, attitude and motivation towards reading English materials. The data was also collected to know the number of English materials read per week.   Then, a questionnaire was distributed among the target group to identify their attitude towards reading English materials and the reasons for not preferring to read English materials. This was followed by a *focused interview* to seek their reasons for not preferring to to read English materials (pre intervention). Five out of twenty students were selected randomly for this purpose. Lastly, a *pre-test on reading* was administered to the targeted group based on *non-illustrated authentic materials* to measure LEP students' ability to read materials unsupported by illustrations and *without exposure to explicit reading strategy instruction (skimming and scanning skills)*. Their scores were quantitatively described using frequency and percentage. The results were tabulated to summarize the findings.

In **Weeks 4-8** illustrated authentic materials were developed for use during the intervention period. Various printed and online resources were selected and *Smart Reads* were prepared in Sets according to themes that would interest students and enable them to relate to real-life language use. *Answer Score Sheets, Graph Plotting Cards* and *SAL Answer Cards* (Self-Access Learning) were prepared. Each set of Smart Reads contained 5 reading cards for example **Set A1-A5**, on the same theme such as news report (Set A), entertainment (Set B), sports Set C), advertisement (Set D) and movies (Set E). The themes were selected based on students' interest. For each set, the students will have to answer 5 multiple choice questions, true or false or fill-in the blanks questions. Each reading card has one question on the back of it. Self-Access Learning Answer Cards are prepared and placed in envelopes according to themes. Graph Plotting Cards with 5 grids drawn horizontally to represent Reading Sets for example (Set A, Set B, Set C, Set D and Set E) and 5 vertical grids represent the number of questions for each set (Set A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5).

Weeks 9 to 11, *intervention* is implemented. Over the span of three weeks, the researcher exposes LEP students to skimming and scanning skills through practice during classroom instruction. The two reading strategies are taught explicitly in class. In Week 9, various short illustrated authentic materials were presented in class to familiarize students with the reading skills and activities. In Week 10 and 11 students were divided into groups of 5 and they were made to sit in circles. Each group were given a set of reading cards according to themes (Set A, B, C, D & E) and they were briefed on the rules of the reading task which masqueraded a game. This activity employed the cooperative learning strategies where students accomplished their tasks by collaborating with their peers and the researcher is a facilitator guiding them to achieve their reading goals. As they sit in circles, each student in the group has a reading card, Answer Score Sheet and Graph Plotting Card. A bell is rung to start the reading task, and 1 minute is given to answer the question for each card. At the end of one minute, a bell was rung and students move seats to read the next card within their circle. This is a round-robin activity allowing kinesthetic movements and fun. Once all the 5 reading cards were completed, a leader takes the SAL Answer cards from the facilitator (researcher). Scores are marked on their Answer Sheets and the Graph Plotting Card is shaded according to the total number of correct answers per reading set (e.g. if they scored 3/5 correct answers, then 3 grids are shaded) to show their scores for each complete sets of Smart Reads. In this way the students will be able to see their progress and it is a form of motivation to them. The bell is rung again to signal that they move to another group and start reading a different theme. The activity continues for several rounds.

In **Week 12** *post- intervention observation* in the classroom during NILAM and Library Periods were made to collect data on students reading habits and the number of English materials read. A *Post-Intervention questionnaire* was distributed to identify changes in their interest and motivation to read English materials. Post-test questionnaire was administered to the target group and the results is tabulated for summarize the findings. *Post-test Scores* on reading based on *illustrated authentic materials and skimming and scanning skills* was conducted to measure LEP students' reading ability after intervention.   A *focused post-intervention interview* was conducted to find out their views on reading English materials after the intervention. All the data were collected and analyzed. A comparison was made of their pre-test and post-test scores. Further reflection for improvement is done and the findings was reported.

Table 3:

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

DATE	ACTION	DURATION
FEBRUARY WEEK 1-4	**Problem identification** • Select target group • Pre-Intervention Observation (in the classroom, during Nilam Periods and Library Periods) • Distribute Pre-Intervention Questionnaire • Conduct Pre-Intervention Interview • Conduct Pre-test on students' reading comprehension • Analyse data and summarize findings	3 weeks
MARCH WEEK 5-8	**Material Development** • Collect authentic materials from newspapers and online resources • Prepare Reading Cards in Sets • Develop questions • Place each card in plastics and file them • Prepare Answer Score Sheets, Graph Plotting Card and SAL Answer Cards	
APRIL WEEK 9-11	**Implementation of Intervention** **Activity 1** • dictionary skills is taught • practice scanning skills in class **Activity 2** • divide students into groups of 5 • place Reading Cards on each table (Set A, B, C and D) • brief students on rules of the game • give each student their own Answer sheets to fill in their answers • ring the bell to signal start of the reading activity. • ring the bell again after 2 or 3 minutes • students move in round-robin-circles until they finish reading all the 5 cards in each set. • they take the answer card to check their answers and plot their scores on the Graph Plotting Card. • a dictionary is also placed on the table to enable them to find meanings of words • the cards are returned to the teacher's file at the end of the lesson. • this activity can be done in the class, or during library period or the Nilam period	**Day 1** 35 minutes 35 minutes **Day 2** (15-20 minutes per set)
APRIL WEEK 12	**DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS** • all the sets of cards have been read • students plot their graphs and see the changes in their progress • Post-Observation in the classroom Nilam Periods/Library Periods on students reading habits (English books/materials) • Post-test questionnaire • Post – Test scores are collected and analysed • Post interview on attitude forwards reading English books/materials • Report Writing • Reflections for improvement	

3.4   Data Analysis

3.4.1   Pre and Post Intervention Questionnaire

Data was qualitatively analyzed using frequency and percentage. Data of the pre and post intervention questionnaire was analyzed using frequency and percentage to reflect LEP students' reading habits, attitude and motivation towards reading English materials. The data was collected using Likert's three-point scale (Table 1). The feedback from the questionnaire allows

the researcher to identify and describe the patterns based on LEP students' reading habits, attitude and motivation towards reading English materials.

Table 4. Likert's three-point scale

Disagree	Uncertain	Agree
1	2	3

3.4.2   Pre and Post Intervention Focused Interview

The researcher sets up a situation for the respondents to present their views on their reasons for not reading English materials (pre intervention) and to seek their views on reading English materials after the intervention (post intervention). This method of collecting data created a positive rapport between the interviewer and respondent as it was simple, efficient and practical way of getting data about their feelings and emotions. It has high validity as the respondents were able to speak for themselves with little direction from the researcher (Table 2). The data was collected and a summary of their views were categorized.

Table 5. Focused Interview

ITEM	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	RESPONSES				
		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
1	How much do you like reading English materials?					
2	How many books or materials have read in the last six months?					
3	What is your opinion of the English materials used in your classroom?					
4	What is your biggest problem in reading English books?					
5	What will interest you to read material in English					

(R=Respondant)

3.4.3   Pre and Post Intervention Observation

Data from the pre intervention observation was analyzed based on the number of English books read or borrowed by the students per week from Week 1to Week 4 is recorded while in the post observation the number of books read or borrowed from Week 9 to Week 12 was recorded. The data is analyzed using frequency count (Table 3 and 4)

Table 3. Pre Intervention Observation

OBSERVATION	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Number of English books borrowed from the library				
Number of English books or materials read during NILAM programme				

n=20 (number of students)

Table 4. Post Intervention Observation

OBSERVATION	WEEK 9	WEEK 10	WEEK 11	WEEK 12
Number of English books borrowed from the library				
Number of English books or materials read during NILAM programme				

n=20 (number of students)

3.4.4   Pre Test Scores based on reading of Non Illustrated Comprehension Texts and Post Test Scores based on Illustrated Authentic Materials

Both pre and post test scores on reading before and after the intervention was analyzed using percentage and frequency. The total number of questions answered correctly out of 20 questions will be converted to percentage and compared on a range scale of 0% to 100% (see Table 5 and 6)

TABLE 5. Pre-Test Scores based on Reading of Non Illustrated Reading Texts

NO	RESPONDENTS	GENDER F- Female M- Male	Total Number of Correct Answer /20 Questions	% Total Mark Score
1	R1			
1	R2			

TABLE 6. Pre-Test Scores based on Reading of Illustrated Authentic Materials using Skimming and Scanning Skills

NO	RESPONDENTS	GENDER F- Female M- Male	Total Number of Correct Answers /20 Questions	% Total Mark Score
1	R1			
2	R2			

4.0 Findings And Discussion

4.1 Analysis of pre and post intervention questionnaire on LEP students' attitude and reading habits of materials in English

A table is provided below to provide a better understanding of the questions asked in the questionnaire and the responses given by each student. Following there is also a detailed analysis of each question taking into consideration the percentage scale. To conclude, there is a summary of the main aspects and significant information of the questionnaire.

Table 7 represents Likert's three-point scale which was used to obtain information regarding LEP students' attitude and reading habits towards reading materials in English before and after the intervention was carried out. Table 8 reflects the responses given by LEP students on a set of questions before the intervention strategy was introduced in the research known as pre intervention questionnaire.

TABLE 7. Likert's three-point scale

SCALE	RESPONSE
1	*DISAGREE*
2	*UNCERTAIN*
3	*AGREE*

4.1.1 LEP Students' Response to Pre Intervention Questionnaire On Their Attitude, Motivation and Habits Towards Reading English Materials

TABLE 8. LEP Students' Response to Pre Intervention Questionnaire

ITEM	STATEMENTS	LIKERT SCALE					
		1		**2**		**3**	
		n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
1	**I enjoy reading English story books, magazines or comics.** *Saya terhibur dengan membaca buku-buku cerita, majalah dan komik dalam bahasa Inggeris*	12	60%	2	10%	6	30%
2	**The number of books/materials in English, I read in a week** *Bilangan buku/bahan-bahan bacaan balam bahan Inggeris yang saya baca dalam seminggu*						
a	**I read 4-5 books/materials per week** *Saya membaca 4-5 buku/bahan seminggu*	20	100%	0	0%	0	0%
b	**I read 2-3 books/materials per week** *Saya membaca 2-3 buku/bahan seminggu*	20	100%	0	0%	0	0%
c	**I read at least a book/material per week** *Saya membaca sekurang-kurangnya sebuah buku/bahan seminggu*	17	85%	1	5%	2	10%
d	**I do not read any book/materials in English.** *Saya tidak langsung membaca sebarang buku/bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris*	2	10%	0	0%	18	90%
3	**Reading English books/materials is difficult.** *Membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris, menyukarkan.*	3	15%	2	10%	15	75%
4	**I do not read books/materials in English because**: *Saya tidak membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris kerana:*						
a.	**There are too many difficult words** *Terlalu banyak perkataan-perkataan yang sukar*	3	15%	2	10%	15	75%

b.	***I become tired and sleepy whenever I read book/materials in English*** *Saya menjadi letih dan mengantuk setiap kali membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris*	4	20%	4	20%	12	60%
c.	***There are no pictures to help me understand.*** *Tidak ada gambar-gambar untuk membantu saya memahaminya*	3	15%	2	10%	15	75%
5	**I usually use a dictionary to find meanings of words**. *Saya selalunya menggunakan kamu untuk memahami maksud perkataan*	8	40%	2	10%	10	50%
6	**I prefer to read materials with pictures or illustrations e.g. comics.** *Saya lebih gemar membaca buku-buku /bahan-bahan yang ada mengandungi ilustrasi atau gambar-gambar*	2	10%	3	15%	15	75%
7	**When I read, I will read every word in the page**. *Apabila saya membaca, saya akan membaca setiap perkataan dalam setiap muka surat*	5	25%	2	10%	13	65%
8	**I only read the books/materials with simple words** *Saya hanya membaca buku-buku /bahan-bahan yang mengandungi perkataan-perkataan yang mudah sahaja.*	6	30%	2	10%	12	60%
9	**Most of the time I can't understand the books/materials I read** *Kebanyakan masa, saya tidak memahami buku-buku/bahan-bahan yang saya baca*	2	10%	3	15%	15	75%
10	**I like to read books/material in English** *Saya tidak suka membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris.*	16	80 %	1	5%	3	15%

The data obtained from the pre intervention questionnaire reflects LEP students' attitude, motivation and reading habits.

In response to Item 1, only 30% of the students enjoyed reading English story books, magazines or comics while 65 % of the students did not like to read story books, magazines or comics and 2% of them were uncertain as to what they liked to read.

In response to Item 2, which was related to the number of books or materials read in English per week, there was a constant negative response towards reading materials in English. All of the 20 respondents claimed that they do not read more than one book or materials in English while only 10 % claim that they read at least one story book or material in English while another 10% claimed that they did not read even a single material in English per week.

In response to Item 3, on the difficulty of reading materials in English, 75% agreed that it was difficult to read English materials.

In response to Item 4, which required them to give their opinions on why they did not like to read books or material in English, 75% responded that there were too many difficult words which they did not understand, 60% said that they felt tired and sleepy whenever they read English materials and often gave up completing the task. Another 75% responded that there were no pictures or graphics to help them understand or comprehend the text. The respondents inferred that visuals might have helped them understand the content of the text better.

In response to Item 5, on whether they used a dictionary to find meanings of words, only 50% agreed that they used a dictionary while 40% did not resort to a dictionary probably because they did not know how to use a dictionary or the task of referring to a dictionary was too time consuming and they gave up reading the text.

In response to Item 6, 75% agreed that they preferred reading English materials that contained pictures or illustrations which mirrored a positive attitude toward materials with visual aids. It shows that with some visual support, LEP students can be motivated to read English materials.

In response to Item 7, which dealt with the reading strategy used when reading, that is whether they read every word in the page, 65% of them agreed that they did so in order to understand the whole text. It delayed their reading task. Their response reflected that LEP students lacked knowledge or ability to use appropriate reading strategy when reading.

In response to Item 8, 60% of the students claimed they read English materials that contained simple words while 30% responded that they did not read English materials even if it contained simple words.

In response to Item 9, on their level of understanding when they read materials in English, 75% responded that they failed to understand what they read, because they were not even able to understand simple words nor use appropriate reading strategy to help their reading process.

In response to Item 10, whether they liked to read English materials, only 15% of the LEP students responded positively while 80% of them reacted negatively towards reading English books or materials in English.

It can be concluded that in general, LEP students did not like to read materials in English mainly because they contained too many difficult words and had no visual support. These were the reasons why they avoided reading English books or materials. Another important factor that affected their attitude, motivation and reading habit was their inability to use reading skills strategies to process the content to enhance understanding. The language is seen as difficult because they were unfamiliar with the vocabulary, context and skills to process the reading materials and thus reacted negatively to reading English materials.

4.1.2   LEP Students' Response to Post Intervention Questionnaire on their Attitude and   Reading Habits of material in English

TABLE. 9   LEP Students' Response to Post Intervention Questionnaire on their Attitude   and Reading Habits of material in English

	STATEMENTS	SCALES					
		1		2		3	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	**I enjoy reading English story books, magazines or comics.** *Saya terhibur dengan membaca buku-buku cerita, majalah dan komik dalam bahasa Inggeris*	6	30%	2	10%	12	60%
2	**The number of books/materials in English, I read in a week** *Bilangan buku/bahan-bahan bacaan balam bahan Inggeris yang saya baca dalam seminggu*						
a	***I read 4-5 books/materials per week*** *Saya membaca 4-5 buku/bahan seminggu*	16	80%	0	0%	4	20%
b	***I read 2-3 books/materials per week*** *Saya membaca 2-3 buku/bahan seminggu*	13	65%	0	0%	7	35%
c	***I read at least a book/material per week*** *Saya membaca sekurang-kurangnya sebuah buku/bahan seminggu*	11	55%	0	0%	9	45%
d	***I do not read any book/materials in English.*** *Saya tdak langsung membaca sebarang buku/bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris*	9	45%	0	0%	11	55%
3	**Reading English books/materials is difficult.** *Membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris, menyukarkan.*	9	45%	2	10%	9	45%
4	**I do not read books/materials in English because**: *Saya tidak membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris kerana:*						
a.	***There are too many difficult words*** *Terlalu banyak perkataan-perkataan yang sukar*	7	35%	2	10%	11	55%
b.	***I become tired and sleepy whenever I read book/materials in English*** *Saya menjadi letih dan mengantuk setiap kali membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris*	11	55%	2	10%	7	35%
c.	***There are no pictures to help me understand.*** *Tidak ada gambar-gambar untuk membantu saya memahaminya*	16	80%	1	5%	3	15%
5	**I usually use a dictionary to find meanings of words**. *Saya selalunya menggunakan kamu untuk memahami maksud perkataan*	10	50%	2	10%	8	40%
6	**I prefer to read materials with pictures or illustrations e.g. comics.** *Saya lebih gemar membaca buku-buku /bahan-bahan yang ada mengandungi ilustrasi atau gambar-gambar*	3	15%	1	5%	16	80%
7	**When I read, I will read every word in the page**. *Apabila saya membaca, saya akan membaca setiap perkataan dalam setiap muka surat*	14	60%	2	10%	4	20%
8	**I only read the books/materialss with simple words** *Saya hanya membaca buku-buku /bahan-bahan yang mengandungi perkataan-perkataan yang mudah sahaja.*	3	15%	1	5%	16 80%	
9	**Most of the time I can't understand the books/materials I read** *Kebanyakan masa, saya tidak memahami buku-buku/bahan-bahan yang saya baca*	8	40%	1	15%	11	55%
10	**I like read books or materials in English** *Saya suka membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris.*	13	65%	0	0%	7	53%

Table 9 refers to the analysis of the post intervention questionnaire. The LEP students were asked to respond to the same questions as the pre intervention questionnaire to make a comparison of the effect on LEP students. The purpose of the post

intervention questionnaire was to investigate the impact of the intervention strategy that is if the Smart Reads and the explicit teaching of skimming and scanning skills had any positive effect on students reading habit, attitude and motivation. After the intervention LEP students responded positively towards all the 10 Items in the questionnaire. The findings show that 60% of the students enjoy reading English materials while 45% of the students read at least one book or material in English per week. There is an increase in the frequency of books or materials read as compared to pre intervention stage. Similarly the percentage of the students who found reading in English too difficult decreased from 75% to just 45% where else the percentage of the students who felt sleepy or tired when reading books or any material in English reduced from 60% to just 35% . The number of students who preferred reading materials with illustrations increased from 70% to 80%. The number of the students who used dictionary to help them find meanings of words dropped from 50% to 40%. Students attitude towards reading English books changed after the intervention. More students liked to read books and materials in English. More students were able to understand the books or the materials they read.

Over all the intervention strategy of using illustrated authentic materials (Smart Reads) has a positive effect on LEP students' attitude, reading habits and motivation towards reading books or materials in English. The short illustrated authentic materials were effective on LEP students because they did not have to read long texts, crowded with difficult words. The reading materials which were carefully selected to match students' reading level, interest and relevance to their daily life had a positive relationship with their attitude, reading habit and motivation. The explicit teaching of reading strategy, skimming and scanning enabled LEP students to identify details, specific information and provide short responses, thus, making learning purposeful and meaningful. Also, the use of authentic materials enabled LEP students to rely on their schemata to understand, comprehend and respond to the text appropriately.

4.2 Analysis of LEP Students' Response to Focused Interview

TABLE 10.   Pre-Intervention Interview

ITEM	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	STUDENTS' RESPONSES
1	How much do you like the English Language?	"I don't really like English' "English is difficult" Most of the time I don't know what I am reading" "I don't understand the words" "I will like English if it is easy as Bahasa Melayu" "It is very difficult to spell the words" The spelling and the sound is not the same"
2	How many books or materials have you read in the last six months?	"None madam" " The books are all so difficult to read" " I don't like to read children's book" " I don't have the need to read books in English" "It's too long and wordy"
3	What is your opinion of the English books or materials used in the classroom?	"Boring sir" "Too many text" "Very difficult words "Can't remembers the words" "I don't like school text book"
4	What is your biggest problem in reading English books?	"I can't understand the language" "No suitable books" "No interesting"
5	What do you think will interest you to read English books or any materials in English?	" Must be interesting" "Simple language" "I like comics" "More pictures" "interesting stories" "Short and simple"

TABLE 12.   The Post-Intervention Interview

No	Interview Questions	Summary of Student's respond
1	How do you feel about English Language now?	"Now, I quite like English madam." "I am happy I can understand better what I read in English now madam."
2	How many books or materials have you read in this 3 months?	"I have read more than 4 materials in these two weeks madam." "I choose simple story books to read, madam." "I read mostly comic books, madam."
3	After going through this reading intervention program, what is your opinion now of	"Quite interesting madam" "It is different madam and not many text."

	reading English materials?	"Its quite easy to understand, madam." "We use most of your materials, madam." " The materials are colourful, easy and attractive." "Skimming and scanning skills help us to read faster, madam." "Qur reading confidence had improved." "We like English better now, madam."
4	Do you have problem finding a book or English materials to read after the intervention?	"Not so much, madam." "The intervention activities were interesting and it is fun to learn English." "Now we are able select our reading materials suitable to our interest." "Now our motivation to read English books has improved.
5	What do you look for when you choose any English materials to read?	"Colorful illustrations." "short and simple language." "I like comics." "More pictures." "interesting stories." "Malaysian stories." "Not very long."

Based on the pre-intervention and post-intervention interviews, a pattern or themes emerged from their responses. Based on the themes that emerged, it can be concluded that the students have some interest in English Language but due to lengthy text which were unsupported by illustrations, long sentences, difficult words and foreign settings, students easily gave up reading English books or materials. In order to motivate LEP students to read English materials, the language of the content has to be simplified while the design has to be more illustrated. After the intervention, it was found that students' reading habit and attitude towards reading English materials had changed. There was more confidence and pride reflected on their faces in comparison to bored and anxiety filled appearance before the intervention. Improvement was seen in their reading habit, motivation to read English books, library going habits, the number of English books borrowed increased, liking towards English had improved. They were motivated to chose suitable reading materials in English as the explicit teaching or skimming and scanning had improved their ability to comprehend texts better supported by short illustrated authentic materials.

4.3 Analysis of the Pre and Post Intervention Observation

TABLE 13. Pre Intervention Observation

OBSERVATION	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Number of English books borrowed from the library	0	0	2	2
Number of English books or materials read during NILAM programme	0	0	1	2

n=20 (number of students)

The pre intervention observation revealed that at the initial stage (Week 1 and 2) LEP students did not show any preference to read materials in English. This is supported by data as shown in **Table 13**. In Weeks 1 and 2 there were neither books or materials read in English during the Nilam Program or borrowed during the library periods. In Weeks 3 and 4 showed 2 borrowings from the library while 2 students recorded entry in the Nilam Program book.

TABLE 14. Post Intervention Observation

OBSERVATION	WEEK 9	WEEK 10	WEEK 11	WEEK 12
Number of English books borrowed from the library	4	7	7	8
Number of English books or materials read during NILAM programme	6	10	9	12

n=20 (number of students)

The post intervention observation revealed that the scenario changed in the last four weeks of the research (see Table 14). The number of English books borrowed at the library and read during the NILAM periods increased from 0 to 8 and 12 books at the end of week 12. There were much changes in the students' attitude and habits in reading English books towards the end of this research. The intervention had a positive impact on changing the LEP students' attitude towards borrowing and reading English books. Even though the number of books borrowed and read were not that much yet there was marked changes in the pattern of borrowing and reading English books or materials among the students after this intervention. By the end of the intervention period (Week 12), improvement in the reading habit was evident with the total number of books borrowed from the library and read during Nilam period had increased to 8 and 12 respectively.

4.4 Analysis of the Pre Test Score on reading based on Non Illustrated Comprehension Texts and Post Test Scores on reading based on Illustrated Authentic Materials and Skimming Scanning Skills

TABLE 15. Pre-Test Scores based on Non-Illustrated Authentic Texts

RESPONDENTS	GENDER F- Female	Total Number of Correct Answer /20	% Total Mark

		M- Male	Questions	Score
1	R1	M	1	5
2	R2	M	3	15
3	R3	F	4	20
4	R4	F	4	20
5	R5	F	5	25
6	R6	M	1	5
7	R7	F	4	20
8	R8	M	6	30
9	R9	F	2	10
10	R10	F	2	10
11	R11	F	8	40
12	R12	F	3	15
13	R13	F	3	15
14	R14	F	5	25
15	R15	M	8	40
16	R16	M	5	25
17	R17	F	4	20
18	R18	F	3	15
19	R19	F	1	5
20	R20	F	3	15

RANGE	n	RANGE	n
5% - 9%	3	50% - 59%	0
10% - 19%	7	60% - 69%	0
20% - 29%	7	70% - 79%	0
30% - 39%	1	80% - 89%	0
40% - 49%	2	90% -100%	0

The findings in Table 15 show that students were very weak in comprehending the non- illustrated comprehension texts and achieved very low scores in the pretest. All the 20 students scored below 50%, while 2 students scored within the range of 40% to 49 %. The rest of the LEP students fell in the lower range, scoring below 30%.   This reflected their inability to comprehend long wordy texts without the support of illustrations. Having no exposure to explicit reading strategy instruction had posed as a deterring factor in identifying specific information or correct answers.

TABLE 16.   **Post-Test Scores Based on Reading of Illustrated Authentic Materials Using Skimming and Scanning Skills**

	RESPONDENTS	SET A 5 Q'S	SET B 5 Q'S	SET C 5 Q'S	SET D 5 Q'S	TOTAL Number of correct answers (20 Q'S)	TOTAL SCORE 100%
1	R1	5	3	2	2	12	60%
2	R2	3	4	4	2	13	65%
3	R3	2	2	3	5	12	60%
4	R4	2	2	2	3	9	45%
5	R5	2	2	2	3	9	45%
6	R6	4	2	4	4	14	70%
7	R7	3	1	4	3	11	55%
8	R8	4	3	2	4	13	65%
9	R9	1	2	1	5	9	45%
10	R10	2	2	3	4	11	55%
11	R11	3	3	4	5	15	75%
12	R12	3	2	3	1	9	45%
13	R13	4	3	2	2	11	55%
21	R14	3	1	2	3	9	45%
15	R15	4	4	3	3	14	70%
16	R16	3	4	4	3	14	70%
17	R17	4	3	2	4	13	65%
18	R18	2	3	1	4	10	50%
19	R19	2	1	2	3	8	40%
20	R20	3	2	3	3	11	55%

RANGE	n	RANGE	n
5% - 9%	0	50% - 59%	5

10% - 19%	0	60% - 69%	5
20% - 29%	0	70% - 79%	4
30% - 39%	0	80% - 89%	0
40% - 49%	6	90% -100%	0

Post test results revealed improvement in their scores and it was evident that illustrated authentic materials and skimming and scanning skills had a positive impact on students' reading ability. None of the LEP students scored below 40% as was the case before intervention had been carried out. The highest score after intervention was 75%, a great increase in the score which showed that given the right reading materials and explicit reading strategy instruction had a positive impact on LEP students reading ability.

4.4.1 Comparison of The Pre-Test and Post-Test Reading Scores

Table 17.   Comparison of the Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

	RESPONDENTS	PRE-TEST SCORES %	POST-TEST SCORES %	INCREMENT %
1	R1	5%	60%	+55%
2	R2	15%	65%	+50%
3	R3	20%	60%	+40%
4	R4	20%	45%	+25%
5	R5	25%	45%	+20%
6	R6	5%	70%	+65%
7	R7	20%	55%	+35%
8	R8	35%	65%	+35%
9	R9	10%	45%	+35%
10	R10	10%	55%	+45%
11	R11	40%	75%	+35%
12	R12	15%	45%	+30%
13	R13	15%	55%	+40%
21	R14	25%	45%	+20%
15	R15	40%	70%	+30%
16	R16	25%	70%	+45%
17	R17	20%	65%	+45%
18	R18	15%	50%	+35%
19	R19	5%	40%	+35%
20	R20	15%	55%	+40%

Table 17, shows that all the LEP students had improved their reading skills for specific information and they enjoyed doing the activities.

Summary of Findings

All the respondents in this action research had shown some level of improvement in their reading scores, their reading habits, attitude and motivation towards reading English materials as evident from the data analysis of through the use of four data collection instruments that is observation checklist, focused interview, questionnaire and pretest and post-test scores which provide a high validity of the data and findings. It can be added that the fun element provided during the activity had also motivated the LEP students to read with speed but without pressure. The scores also reflected students' ability to read, skim and scan for specific information from illustrated authentic reading materials. LEP students had the ability to read English materials given the purpose and skills to process what they read. Another positive observation was the number of materials read in English per week had increased during the intervention strategy. There was a noticed change of attitudes from feeling apprehensive to confident, passive to active and the enjoyment on their faces during the intervention reading sessions.

5.0   ImplicatioN

The implication of this action research using the intervention strategy can be looked upon from two aspects. First, is the implication to students and secondly its implication for teachers.

The explicit teaching of reading skills is necessary especially in the case of low proficiency students as it increases their ability to make predictions and conclusions, improve their ability to make a quick survey of the text they are reading. The use of illustrated authentic material enhances their vocabulary especially for daily use as they are exposed to real-life language and it is very useful to be practiced during their communication. Fun elements injected through this activity allows students to read and respond within the stipulated time frame. Most importantly, self-access learning provides autonomy towards learning.

Teachers should introduce authentic materials in the classroom to develop a host of reading skills. The frequent use of illustrated authentic materials will expose students to more real-life language and LEP students' motivation, attitude and interest towards reading English materials can be increased. Furthermore, authentic materials can be adapted and adopted through various printed and online materials. Another important element in classroom teaching is to provide and element of fun, enjoyment and autonomy. Self-access learning creates autonomous learners and all these will encourage LEP students to be more confident and increase their sense of achievement and motivation to read more English materials. Teachers can even convert the Smart Reads program into a computer assisted language learning (CALL), to engage learners to read more materials online and accomplish variety of reading tasks using online technologies which is more current and attractive to current learners. This is supported by Yunus et al, (2010) who asserts that "When integrated appropriately, CALL technologies can support experiential learning and practice in a variety of modes, provide effective feedback to learners, enable pair and group work, promote exploratory and global learning, enhance student achievement, provide access to authentic materials, facilitate greater interaction, individualize instruction, allow independence from a single source of information, and motivate learners". However, Mohamad (2013) asserts that the integration of technology in the English language classrooms, must be thought of carefully and implemented wisely to ensure its effectiveness. Not only does it involve infrastructure and technology, as it also involves a lot of other aspects; especially students, readiness, interest, apprehension level and competencies.

6.0   Variation And Recommendations

The intervention strategy provides some variation in its use. Authentic materials can be used to develop a host of reading skills such as predicting, paraphrasing and previewing. The Smart Reads can be used during classroom teaching. It can be used as take home exercises for students to practice further reading. The Smart Reads are portable and easily utilized by other teachers especially during relief classes. In terms of building banks of reading cards, teachers may develop more reading cards from time to time by varying the level of difficulty according to students reading level and banks of thematic reading cards can be diversified according to students' interest. This research can be extended to students with higher proficiency by carefully selecting appropriate levels of reading materials and themes.

7.0   Conclusion

This research study examined the effects of using illustrated authentic materials and scanning skills to a group of low proficiency learners (LEP) to motivate them read materials in English. This study demonstrated a measurable positive effect on students' attitude and motivation to read as well as the number of materials read per week. In particular, the results pointed to significant improvement in skimming and scanning skills to locate information and identify main ideas of the text within the time frame set. The positive effect was evident in their ability to employ self-access learning and keep a record of their reading process to improve their scores in future reading activities. Their reading habits improved and their liking towards English as a subject to learn improved as well. Illustrations helped them to understand and read better.

This study has shown a strong relationship between reading illustrated authentic material and using scanning skills and motivation to read materials in English which was purposeful and applicable in the real world. There was also an *increased sense of achievement and motivation to read in English and the number of new vocabulary learnt.*

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APPENDIX 1

**LEP Students' Response to Pre Intervention Questionnaire On Their Attitude,
Motivation and Habits Towards Reading English Materials**

SCALE	RESPONSE
1	*DISAGREE*
2	*UNCERTAIN*
3	*AGREE*

ITEM	STATEMENTS	SCALES					
		1		2		3	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	**I enjoy reading English story books, magazines or comics.** *Saya terhibur dengan membaca buku-buku cerita, majalah dan komik dalam bahasa Inggeris*						
2	**The number of books/materials in English, I read in a week** *Bilangan buku/bahan-bahan bacaan balam bahan Inggeris yang saya baca dalam seminggu*						
a	*I read 4-5 books/materials per week* *Saya membaca 4-5 buku/bahan seminggu*						
b	*I read 2-3 books/materials per week* *Saya membaca 2-3 buku/bahan seminggu*						
c	*I read at least a book/material per week* *Saya membaca sekurang-kurangnya sebuah buku/bahan seminggu*						
d	*I do not read any book/materials in English.* *Saya tdak langsung membaca sebarang buku/bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris*						
3	**Reading English books/materials is difficult.** *Membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris, menyukarkan.*						
4	**I do not read books/materials in English because** *:Saya tidak membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris kerana:*						
a.	*There are too many difficult words* *Terlalu banyak perkataan-perkataan yang sukar*						
b.	*I become tired and sleepy whenever I read book/materials in English* *Saya menjadi letih dan mengantuk setiap kali membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris*						
c.	*There are no pictures to help me understand.* *Tidak ada gambar-gambar untuk membantu saya memahaminya*						
5	**I usually use a dictionary to find meanings of words**. *Saya selalunya menggunakan kamu untuk memahami maksud perkataan*						
6	**I prefer to read materials with pictures or illustrations e.g. comics.** *Saya lebih gemar membaca buku-buku /bahan-bahan yang ada mengandungi ilustrasi atau gambar-gambar*						
7	**When I read, I will read every word in the page**. *Apabila saya membaca, saya akan membaca setiap perkataan dalam setiap muka surat*						
8	**I only read the books/materials with simple words** *Saya hanya membaca buku-buku /bahan-bahan yang mengandungi perkataan-perkataan yang mudah sahaja.*						
9	**Most of the time I can't understand the books/materials I read** *Kebanyakan masa, saya tidak memahami buku-buku/bahan-bahan yang saya baca*						
10	**I like to read books/material in English** *Saya tidak suka membaca buku-buku/bahan-bahan dalam bahasa Inggeris.*						

APPENDIX 2

Pre-Test Scores based on Non-Illustrated Authentic Texts

	RESPONDENTS	GENDER F- Female M- Male	Total Number of Correct Answer /20 Questions	% Total Mark Score
1	R1			

2	R2			
3	R3			
4	R4			
5	R5			
6	R6			
7	R7			
8	R8			
9	R9			
10	R10			
11	R11			
12	R12			
13	R13			
14	R14			
15	R15			
16	R16			
17	R17			
18	R18			
19	R19			
20	R20			

RANGE	n	RANGE	n
5% - 9%	3	50% - 59%	0
10% - 19%	7	60% - 69%	0
20% - 29%	7	70% - 79%	0
30% - 39%	1	80% - 89%	0
40% - 49%	2	90% -100%	0

APPENDIX 3

Post-Test Scores Based on Reading of Illustrated Authentic Materials Using Skimming and Scanning Skills

	RESPONDENTS	SET A 5 Q'S	SET B 5 Q'S	SET C 5 Q'S	SET D 5 Q'S	TOTAL Number of correct answers (20 Q'S)	TOTAL SCORE 100%
1	R1						
2	R2						
3	R3						
4	R4						
5	R5						
6	R6						
7	R7						
8	R8						
9	R9						
10	R10						

11	R11						
12	R12						
13	R13						
21	R14						
15	R15						
16	R16						
17	R17						
18	R18						
19	R19						
20	R20						

RANGE	n	RANGE	n
5% - 9%	0	50% - 59%	5
10% - 19%	0	60% - 69%	5
20% - 29%	0	70% - 79%	4
30% - 39%	0	80% - 89%	0
40% - 49%	6	90% -100%	0

APPENDIX 4

Pre-Intervention Interview

ITEM	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	STUDENTS' RESPONSES
1	How much you like English Language?	"Not so much sir' "English is difficult" Most of the time I don't know what I am reading" "I don't understand much the words" "I will like English if it is easy as Bahasa Melayu" "It is very difficult to spell the words" : The spelling and the sound not same"
2	How many books or materials you have read in this six month?	"None sir" " The books all so difficult to read" " I don't like to read children's book" " I don't have the need to read books in English"
3	What is your opinion on English books or any materials used in your classroom?	"Boring sir" "Too many text" "Very difficult words "Can't remembers the words" "I don't like school text book"
4	What is your biggest problem in reading English books?	"I can't understand the language" "No suitable books" "No interesting"
5	What will make you read English books or any material in English	" Much be interesting" "Simple language" "I like comics" "More pictures" "interesting stories" "Malaysian stories"

APPENDIX 5

The Post-Intervention Interview

No	Interview Questions	Summary of Student's respond
1	How do you feel about English Language now?	"Now, I quite like English madam." "I am happy I can read in English now madam."
2	How many books or materials you have read in this six month?	"I have read more than 4 materials in these two weeks madam." "I choose simple story books to read, madam." "I read mostly comic books, madam."
3	After going through this reading intervention program, what is your opinion now on English books or any materials used in your classroom?	"Quite interesting madam" "It is different madam and not many text." "Its quite easy to understand, madam." "We use most of your materials, madam." " The material are color full, easy and attractive." "Your scanning skills helps us to read faster, madam." "Qur reading confidence had improved." "We like English better now, madam."
4	Do you have problem finding a book or English materials to read after the intervention?	"Not so much, madam." "The program has given us much fun in learning English." "Now we are able select our reading materials suitable to our interest." "Now our motivation to read English books has improved
5	What do you look for when you choose any English materials to read?	"Colorfull." "Simple language." "I like comics." "More pictures." "interesting stories." "Malaysian stories." "Not very long."

APPENDIX 6

Table 3. Pre Intervention Observation

OBSERVATION	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Number of English books borrowed from the library				
Number of English books or materials read during NILAM programme				

n=20 (number of students)

Table 4. Post Intervention Observation

OBSERVATION	WEEK 9	WEEK 10	WEEK 11	WEEK 12
Number of English books borrowed from the library				
Number of English books or materials read during NILAM programme				

n=20 (number of students)