Effects of Online Differentiated Reading on Reading Comprehension and Learner Autonomy of Young Learners

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Abstract

The major purpose of this study was to determine the effects of online differentiated reading on comprehension skills and learner autonomy of young learners at a private college in İstanbul, Turkey. The researcher also attempted to explore the perceptions of the participants, who were 72 young learners from 3 fifth grade classes and 3 EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers. Data were gathered from pre-post-tests of reading comprehension and learner autonomy, semi-structured student interview and reflective teacher journals. The results demonstrated that the implementation resulted in better comprehension skills and boosted learner autonomy. It was also revealed that the participants perceived differentiated instruction effective in English reading classrooms. Based on these findings, the study suggests some pedagogical implications and provides suggestions for further research on differentiated instruction for English language learners.

Keywords: Differentiated instruction; EFL reading; learner autonomy, online reading.

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Introduction

In a language learning setting, adaptability and flexibility are of crucial importance as principles of forming an atmosphere where individual readiness levels, needs and interests can be taken into account (Tomlinson, 2005). For a reading activity, this atmosphere is where learners have the chance to choose texts according to their own levels and interest areas or, in other words, perform an independent, fluent, intensive and extensive reading activity (Loeser, 2014).However, conventional, purely intensive reading lessons aim to improve accuracy rather than fluency through a detailed, line-by-line analysis of any given text (Mart, 2015). They are merely in-class tasks conducted by using readers that share the same content and proficiency levels. "Therefore, a language teacher aiming to teach independent, fluent reading must embrace learner traits such as readiness level and interest. In other words, the instruction must be differentiated" (Tomlinson, 2005, p. 48).

Differentiated instruction (DI)appeals to the diverse interests, readiness levels and profiles(Hall, Vue, Strangman & Meyer, 2003). As Tomlinson (1999) put forward, applying DI in a language classroom can make the learning environment flexible. For a reading lesson, it includes differentiating the reading materials along with the learning outcomes and the means to promote comprehension (Tomlinson & Dockterman, 2002). Adapting these three elements requires background knowledge and time. Additionally, learners need unlimited access to differentiated readers if fluency are to be provided(McBride & Milliner,2016). Otherwise, the reading lesson might be far from providing an individualized learning (Day & Bamford,2002).

In this age of technology, online reading materials are indispensable for language learners and teachers thanks to technological aids for swift differentiation (Chien, 2015).Conducting some pre-tests or questionnaires to learn about learner profiles and interests, they are able to lead their students in choosing readers they can each find most appropriate by initially pinpointing their levels and interest areas in no time. Thus, by using online books, language teachers can apply DI in their classrooms by referring to its tenets (Tomlinson, 2014). As for students, they can perform individualized reading and learn to be more autonomous readers in the 21st century (Anderson, 2003).

By the word "autonomous" above, the concept of placing the learner at the centre of focus is referred (Holec, 1985). While performing a differentiated reading activity, a reader can implement individualized learning strategies (Bamford & Day, 2004). Hence, seamless engagement achieved through DI leads to autonomy. In turn, this independence brings about confidence, thus contributing to reading performance (Benson, 2001).

However, a large number of English language learners cannot gain these objectives of reading lessons because the texts are undifferentiated. Thus, they need a setting where they can focus on texts tailored to their profiles, levels and interest areas (Loeser, 2014). The studies on the effect of DI on reading skills carried out so far mostly provided ways for language learners to choose their own books of interest among different hard-copy materials (Baumgartner, Lipowski & Rush, 2003) or came up with techniques of adapting materials with a limited number of material choice (Servilio, 2009). No study has attempted to intertwine DI with reading for the sake of contributing to autonomy. To fulfil this gap in the literature, besides aiming to gauge the effects of online differentiated reading on young learners' comprehension skills and learner autonomy, the present study attempts to investigate the participant teachers' and students' reflection on the implementation of online differentiated reading.

Specifically, the below research questions were investigated:

- To what extent does the implementation of online differentiated reading affect 5th grade EFL learners' reading comprehension skills?

- How does online differentiated reading influence learner autonomy?

- What are the perceptions of the students about online differentiated reading lessons?

- What are the perceptions of the teachers about the implementation of online differentiated reading?

Literature Review

Extensive and Intensive Reading

Encouraging learners to do reading tasks with sufficient amount of familiar lexical and linguistic knowledge, extensive reading conforms to the nature of language learning because it can let learners perform individualized reading activities (Day & Bamford, 2002). According to Davis (1995), Extensive reading is a supplementary and complementary part of an English course where the learners are allowed to read as much as they can at their respective levels without any limitations of time and place.

An extensive reading activity engages the students in reading tasks where reading is used as a *means* to end. They perform reading and learning outside school. An intensive reading activity is the end itself (Usó-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2006). Students read to gain a detailed understanding out of a text, to develop their comprehension skills through different reading strategies under the guidance of a teacher (Aebersold & Field, 1998). Table 1 summarizes the differences between extensive reading and intensive reading:

Table 1 Intensive versus Extensive Reading (Adapted from Grabe & Stoller, 2002)

Intensive Reading		Extensive Reading
Language Analysis	LINGUISTIC FOCUS	Fluency, Skill Development
A common, difficult level	MATERIAL LEVEL	Unchallenging, respective levels
Restricted	READING AMOUNT	Unlimited
Selected by teacher	MATERIAL SELECTION	Selected by the students
The same genres/topics	MATERIAL VARIETY	Different genres/topics
In-class only	SETTING	In-class, out-of-class
Checked by local questions	COMPREHENSION	Checked by global questions
More central	TEACHER'S ROLE	Less central

As the above table indicates, intensive reading aims to improve the learners' skills through local and basic comprehension check questions like Do you understand this text, which solely direct their attention to the message in the text. However, the questions used in an extensive reading activity, such as those related to drawing conclusions, are global ones with a life-long support in reading, or fluency. As for the teacher's role, an intensive reading teacher both controls and is under the control of students' reading activities and directs their attention to linguistic features and local strategies. An extensive reading teacher, however, is only active when helping the students determine their interest areas and levels and while monitoring their overall progress for skill development. As far as the setting is concerned, a student can perform an extensive reading activity without being confined to one place as materials are available outside the classroom too. Correspondingly, the amount of the materials is limitless. Provided by the teacher after a close analysis of interest areas and levels, they help learners create a mind-set that sees reading as a pleasurable and mild activity. Extensive reading lessons also offer the chance to be familiar with different genres and purposes as materials are varied.

Although they may seem to have conflicting advantages, intensive reading and extensive reading must be considered complementary. While intensive reading produces skilled readers extensive reading produces skilled readers. In other words, learners can devise language skills to familiarize spontaneously and specifically with each text by reading intensively while they can learn how to merge and manifest these skills unconsciously to become fluent readers by reading extensively(Day & Bamford,2002).In intensive reading lessons, the texts can be used for different sub-aims contributing to communicative purposes. Myriad reading strategies can be tailored for different purposes in upcoming lessons. Extensive reading can occur in or outside a class and gives the learners the opportunity to practice what they have learned in intensive reading lessons autonomously (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

The studies on extensive reading in the literature have mostly measured language proficiency and reading comprehension. For instance, the experimental research by Mc Lean and Rouault (2017) took its data from two treatment groups, with the experimental one taking extensive reading and the control one being exposed to grammar translation. The answers given by the participants to the questions in timed-reading passages were analysed periodically by the researcher. The experimental group (n=23) was reported to have improved their reading rate and comprehension considerably relative to the other group. The research by Davoudi, Zolfagharkhani and Rezaei (2015) aimed to explore the effects of extensive reading on overall language proficiency. 106 university students were allocated into one control and two experimental groups according to the results of Preliminary English Test (PET). One experimental group received authentic reading texts and the other received simplified ones. All three groups received a post-test (PET) and some students were interviewed. The results of the t-tests showed that two experimental groups performed much better than the control group. And, the interview results confirmed the students' positive attitude towards extensive reading.

Correspondingly, the quasi experimental research by Suk (2016) gathered its data from two control (n=88) and two experimental groups (n=83) and attempted to investigate the impact of ER on reading comprehension, reading rate and vocabulary acquisition of undergraduate students. The researcher adapted two passages from a hard-copy course book through scanning and editing and analyzed the dependent variables descriptively in different periods. The results have revealed that ER has a positive effect on them.

Likewise, the research by Davoudi, Zolfagharkhani and Rezaei (2015) aimed to explore the effects of ER on overall language proficiency. 106 university students were allocated into one control and two experimental groups according to the results of Preliminary English Test (PET) they had previously taken. For the ten sessions of the treatment, one experimental group received authentic reading texts and the other received simplified ones. After the treatment, all three groups received a post-test (PET) and some students were interviewed. The results of the t-tests showed that there were not significant differences between two experimental groups but they both performed much better than the control group. And, the qualitative results were validated through the positive feelings the students stated they had harbored towards ER.

Through ER, learners develop a positive attitude towards reading simply because they can learn the language mostly by themselves or *autonomously* (Bedoya, 2014). It is then easy to conclude that learners exposed to ER can become capable of taking responsibility of their

own reading without needing much support – whether they are in or out of the classroom. This autonomous aspect of language learning has indeed been believed to increase students' overall language learning in time (Dickinson, 1987). Essentially, good readers are those who are able to take effective steps in overcoming problems related to comprehension (Pang, Muaka, Bernhardt & Kamil, 2003). So, what does it mean to be autonomous in language learning? As one of the objectives of the current research is to find the efficacy of differentiated reading lessons in LA, the related term will be discussed with its aspects in language learning further in the following section.

Learner Autonomy in L2 Reading

Learner autonomy is a situation where skills are performed through a capacity of inclination or willingness under one's own responsibility (Tabiati, 2016).According to Benson (2001), learner autonomy is "the capacity to take charge of one's own learning". Holec (1985) states that an autonomous learner feels the responsibility of learning in all stages of L2 learning. In the first stage, a learner pinpoints the objectives and formulates ways to achieve them. In the second stage, s/he prepares the content for learning by choosing and grouping the materials according to learning objectives. And, in the third stage, by choosing learning methods, the learner evaluates the learning activities. In the following stage, s/he determines the learning pace and chooses activities by monitoring the learning process. In the final stage, the autonomous learner evaluates the outcomes by setting self-assessment criteria. Overall, these four stages extend the abstract term "taking responsibility" and give it a metacognitive aspect of learner autonomy. Achieving autonomy requires metacognitive knowledge because it is a concept of capacity that involves being conscious of oneself, the learning context, the subject and the process of learning itself (Sinclair, 2008).

Additionally, the process of acquiring one particular skill is affected by various other factors of achieving autonomy (Bedoya, 2014).According to a recent study on the relation between reading and autonomy (Tabiati, 2016), autonomous readers are successful because they can learn by reading independently. The factors contributing to autonomy in reading were indicated by the research as:

Other studies depicted a positive relation between autonomy and reading comprehension but they did not refer to extensive reading or differentiated instruction. For instance, Bedoya (2014) attempted to gauge how university students manifested autonomy in virtual reading lessons through an autonomy questionnaire and a student interview. The results of the study showed that the students performed more independently and confidently in the lessons.

Table 2 Internal and external factors in achieving learner autonomy (Adapted from Tabiati, 2016)

	Internal Factors	**External Factors**
The capacity to make decisions to read:	a. Knowledge of importance of reading, b. Motivation to be good readers.	Parents, siblings, lecturers, environment with abundant reading materials and necessities to read, technology
The capacity to control EFL reading:	a. Knowledge of the reading topics of and reasons of reading, b. Skills to self-assess reading abilities.	
Taking responsibility in EFL reading:	Motivation to submit good assignments.	School,peers, parents,
Self-efficacy in reading:	Confidence in overcoming problems.	environmentwith abundant reading materials

Similarly, the study by Bayat (2011), tried to investigate the relationship between reading comprehension and autonomy through an autonomy perception scale and reading comprehension test administered to 560 university students. A considerable relationship between level of autonomy and reading comprehension achievement was found. The qualitative study by Tabiati (2016) attempted to explore the internal and external factors influencing LA development in EFL reading. Composed of two stages, the research selected the relevant topics in its first stage and answered the research questions in the other. The results of the study have shown that there are 14 internal and 14 external factors leading to LA and they all emerge naturally from childhood without the individual being conscious of developing them.

Conclusively, reading lessons are likely to promote LA and LA is likely to boost performance through differentiated reading (Bedoya, 2014; Renandya & Jacobs, 2002; Usó-Juan & Martinez- Flor, 2006; Waring, 2009). The premises for this interrelation can be constructed by the fact that students performing a reading activity can carry out *autonomous* strategies as they can choose readers according to personal interests and language levels (Benson, 2001; Tabiati, 2016). Likewise, LA in turn can enhance reading skills and help develop positive attitude towards reading – as one of the benefits of LA in reading is to motivate the learner to be better in the task (Benson, 2001; Tabiati, 2016). However, how can teachers implement reading in an L2 learning setting for the sake of improving LA? As a possibly answer to this question, online reading sources can be embedded through an alternate approach: differentiated instruction (DI), which will be discussed in the following section by referring to the literature (Bedoya, 2014; Tomlinson, 2000).

Differentiated Instruction

DI is grounded upon the tenet that each learner has got a respective learning map and dismisses the traditional instruction – which is constructed around "one size fits all" curriculum – as inadequate (Loeser, 2014). Since the late 1980s, it has been a common issue of awareness among educators (Tomlinson, 2014). Being a prevalent approach, it creates a learning setting facilitated by the teacher according to learner responses (Tomlinson, 2005). The benefits of DI are all achieved by considering such principles as:

- proactiveness,
- respectful tasks,
- continual assessment,
- community,
- adaptability & flexibility (Tomlinson, 2005).

Proactiveness refers to anticipating the classroom situations and adapting the learning environment and teaching content accordingly (Heacox, 2002). Respectful tasks help the learners combine their background knowledge with the activities, boosting their self-confidence. A sense of community is formed through collaborative tasks thanks to the interactions learners make with peers (Kearsley, 2005). This principle is based upon Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), a concept coined by Lev Vygotsky, which briefly refers to the space between a learner's capability of achieving under the guidance of a more adept peer and his or her capability of achieving alone (Vygotsky, 1978,as cited in Verenikina, 2008). This setting is rendered possible by DI, improving learners' cognitive skills and assigning the teacher the role of a "mediator". Adaptability and flexibility refer to adjusting the materials and learning setting according to each learner profile with the sole aim of rendering learning flexible (Tomlinson, 2014).

Three components have been identified for differentiation by Tomlinson (1999). They are *content* (the "input" of the unit as materials, principles, skills, concepts, ideas, etc.), *process* (the "how" of teaching or teaching style, interactions) and *product* (the "output" of the unit as final assessments or tasks with varying levels, types or length for evaluation). The content is tiered through a close analysis of instructional objectives for each learner. To differentiate the process, adaptable and dynamic grouping strategies, like interest grouping, ability grouping or learner profile grouping, are applied or the complexity of the tasks is tiered for each individual or group (Thiesen, 2002; Tomlinson, 2005). And, the product is differentiated by providing the learners with freedom of productive task choice in order to help them self-evaluate what they have learned (Flowerday & Bryant, 2004). Self-evaluation

refers to the phase when learners produce texts or speeches alone or collaboratively by making use of the new lexical or grammatical items. They unconsciously push their limits to test whether they have acquired how to use them properly. To differentiate these three components, the following student traits are first identified and assessed:

- readiness,
- interests,
- learning profiles (Tomlinson, 2005).

Readiness refers to the entry point of a learner in relation to an understanding or a skill. It is determined through a pre-assessment tool following an achievement spectrum and depicts learners' experience in L2 (Thiesen, 2002). Diagnosing learner interests helps decide how to link learning content with individual ideas and concepts (Tomlinson, Moon & Imbeau, 2015). For identifying the learning profiles in a classroom, students' innate strengths or Multiple Intelligences (MI) (Gardner, 1998 as cited in Thiesen, 2002)are taken into account along with their cultural background, learning styles and external factors such as access to learning sources (Tomlinson, 2005).

In the literature, few studies explored the effects of DI on reading skills but they neither referred to the need for extensive reading nor analysed learner autonomy. In addition, few of them were performed in a young learners' setting. To exemplify, Pilten (2016) explored the practicability of differentiated reading in Turkish primary schools by analysing the perceptions of participant teachers (n=17) who took training on DI. The findings of the research revealed that the teachers found it difficult to implement differentiation although they thought it was very practical.

In their mixed method study , Gülşen and Mede (2016) aim to investigate the impact of online reading lessons implemented on 24 EFL young learners' motivation and comprehension skills. The data collected from a questionnaire of motivation and semi-structured interviews with the students show that there is a positive relationship between learner motivations and differentiated reading lessons and those participants reading comprehension has boosted after the implementation.

The quasi-experimental study, by Little, Mc Coach and Reis (2014), aimed to gauge the impact of differentiated reading on 2150 middle school students' overall language achievement. The data were gathered through Hierarchical Linear Modelling (HLM) as pre-post-tests. The intervention was conducted according to The School wide Enrichment Model – Reading Framework (SEM-R). The experimental group was allowed to choose the books

they found interesting in their own level. The results indicated that the control group was outperformed on reading fluency but similar results were achieved in reading comprehension.

Considering the fact that reading is an independent activity, one study suggested ways for increasing learner autonomy in EFL reading (Tabiati, 2016) while another one tried to find a correlation between autonomy and increased comprehension skills (Koosha, Abdollahi & Karimi, 2016). However, no study has attempted to intertwine DI with reading for the sake of contributing to LA so far.

Using online reading sources in a DI setting, this study aims to show differentiated reading lessons are effective in improving reading comprehension skills and postulating a way of reading autonomously in respective proficiency levels. Besides suggesting a way of improving comprehension and LA in reading through DI, this study presents detailed perceptions of the participant teachers and students as to the implementation. Thus, it is of significance for institutions and EFL instructors planning to teach differentiated reading can benefit from the findings of this study.

Methodology

Participants

The student participants (*N*=72) were a convenience sample of 10 or 11-year-old fifth grade Turkish EFL learners at three classes of 24 students from a private secondary school in Turkey, İstanbul. Their common CEFR level was A1+. The EFL program provided was a four-skill integrated Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) curriculum with 17 lesson hours a week along with a curriculum of communicative skills (CS) with 4 lesson hours each week. This study was conducted in CLIL curriculum for two lesson hours a week for a period of five weeks. For semi-structured interview, all the student participants participated in groups of 6 in 12 different sessions over a two-week time period.

As for the three teacher participants, all of them had been working in the same institution for at least 2 years. They were all certified English teachers with minimum 5 years of experience. Their ages differed between 27 and 40. They provided their perceptions regarding the implementation.

Design of Study

Incorporating a con-current mixed method research design, this research first gathered quantitative data to measure the effects of online differentiated reading lessons through a comparative analysis of reading comprehension pre-post-tests and LA pre-post-tests. Afterwards, to form a more robust research frame and increase validity, the perceptions of both student and teacher participants regarding the implementation were analyzed

qualitatively. Teacher participants provided their views throughout the research procedure on their journals while the student views were gathered via a semi-structured interview in the end. Independent analyses and interpretation phases were conducted for two strands of data and their inferences were integrated. With the findings converging in the conclusion part, concurrent triangulation was reached to answer the first two research questions, which are overarching.

Instruments

To measure the effects of differentiated online reading, two reading comprehension tests were conducted before and after the implementation (see Appendices A and B). Both tests were prepared by the researcher himself and the short reading texts were adapted from a course book, Blaze 2 (Evans & Dooley, 2016). They both had 20 questions possessing a 1-point score.

The influence of the implementation on autonomy was measured through a learner autonomy scale as a pre-test and post-test, which was adapted from a study by Bedoya (2014)with a minor change (see Appendix C).The change was made to give the questionnaire a more specific aspect for reading lessons. Accordingly, the word 'course' was changed with the words 'reading lessons'. As for its outline, possessing 25 items, which were provided in students' L1 too, the questionnaire was structured upon a 4-point Likert Scale. Its answers ranged from Always (4) to Never (1).

As for qualitative tools, the questions in the student interview were taken from the study by Bedoya (2014)(see Appendix D). During the interview, the researcher raised the questions in Turkish as well and let the students use their L1 as their L2 level might not be enough for interpreting the questions. Notes from the students' sentences were jotted down during the interview for content analysis. At the same time, all the interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed. The researcher cross-checked his interview notes with the transcriptions during the interpretation phase.

The teacher participants' views and perceptions were gathered through reflective journals (see Appendix E). After every lesson, teachers reflected upon their students' reading comprehension skills and autonomy by referring to their observations.

Procedures

Before the study, Cambridge Flyers sample test was conducted to determine the learners' English proficiency levels and Questionnaire on Favourite Book Types, which was adapted from a study by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997), was applied to determine the types of books the students were mostly interested (see Appendix F).The particular Flyers sample test

conformed to the test format specified by Cambridge University for Cambridge Young Learners English Tests. It was administered to three classes simultaneously and the examination lasted for approximately 65 minutes. Subsequently, book levels ranging from H to P on www.raz-plus.comwere assigned to each student according to their scores.

Following the sample test, the students took Questionnaire on Favourite Book Types. Established upon a Likert scale with its points ranging from 4 (A lot like you) to 1 (Very different from you), it included 8 items. Each of the items measures the popularity of one of the genres of certain multi-level books on www.raz-plus.com. These genres were chosen among the online books multi-levelled between H and P – the levels which were proven to be appropriate for the 5th graders within the same context by Gülşen and Mede (2016).

The study was conducted at the beginning of the second term of 2017-2018 academic year for 5 weeks. After the reading comprehension and the learner autonomy pre-tests, Razplus was introduced to the classes and a list of reading levels was hung on the classrooms' boards. Later, the students were informed that they were going to have two lessons of online reading for the following five weeks and they would need to read Razplus books they chose at home as a reading competition was going to be held throughout the same period.

In the first week, lesson plans for each lesson were shared with the teachers. And, after each differentiated lesson, the teachers shared their experience on the implementation through reflective journal papers. In addition, during the implementation the researcher observed the other teachers' reading lessons and took down notes to share with them so that differentiated reading lessons could be applied in harmony. For extensive reading activities, the teachers checked their Razplus accounts to follow the students' progress everyday by posting feedback on the students' answers to comprehension questions and writing activities.

In total, the students participated in ten differentiated reading lessons by focusing on a separate reader from www.raz-plus.comin each. The length of the books ranged between twenty to thirty pages, including their glossary and activity pages. They were authored or unabridged from their original versions by various writers commissioned for Razplus. Each book was designed to teach a different reading strategy. For instance, in the third lesson, the students focused on identifying a topic sentence while their attention was emphasized on drawing conclusions in the seventh lesson. The convenient and seamless use of similar online differentiated reading materials chosen from the same repository in a previous, parallel study by the researcher (Gülşen & Mede, 2016) encouraged him to opt for it once more in the present research. With readers provided in various genres and adapted in three different proficiency levels, Razplus could save the researcher and the participant teachers from the

burden of editing and adjusting reading materials for the purpose of differentiation. With content already differentiated, the researcher was able to allocate more time and effort for differentiating process and product as it can be understood from the sample lesson plan (see Appendix G). The texts in different levels of a same reader varied in the size of target vocabulary, length and complexity and the types of the sentences.

After a five-week instruction period, the students took the post tests of learner autonomy and reading comprehension, and they were all analysed together with pre-tests, subsequent to which 5 students from each class were chosen randomly for a semi-structured interview.

Data Analysis

To analyse pre-post reading comprehension tests and pre-post learner autonomy questionnaire, dependent sample t-tests were performed. The level of significance for the statistical analyses was set at .05. In order to support these quantitative findings, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured student interviews and reflective journals kept by the teachers. The data were analysed on the basis of content analysis. Initially, domains were determined in the light of the third and fourth research questions by means of open coding. Subsequently, main themes were pinpointed under the domains.

Results

Findings of the Reading Comprehension Pre-Post-Tests

The pre-post-tests both had 20 questions in total, each one possessing 1-point score. Thus, the maximum overall score each student could get from a reading comprehension test was 20. To indicate the effects of the implementation on reading comprehension skills, the means, the standard deviations and the gain scores of reading comprehension pre-post-tests were calculated (see Table 3). The gain score was found to be *3.26.* To determine the statistical significance of this score, a dependent, paired two sample t-test was carried out(see table 4). The result of the reading comprehension post-test (*M=15.14, SD=2.45*) was statistically higher than that of the pre-test (*M=11.88, SD=2.74*); *t(72) =14.10, p=.01).* Hence, it can be concluded that online differentiated reading resulted in a significant improvement in reading comprehension skills.

Table 3 Means, standard deviations of the reading comprehension pre-post-tests and gain scores

	M	N	SD	SEM
Pre-test	11.88	72	2.74	.32
Post-test	15.14	72	2.45	.04
Gain Scores	3.26	72	.29	.28

Table 4 Results of Dependent, Paired Two Sample T-test

	F	Sig.	t	df	p
Average of differences between the scores of reading comprehension pre-test and post-test	1.26	.20	14.10	71	.01

*p<.05

Findings of the Leaner Autonomy Scale *Pre-Post-Tests*

The pre-post-tests both had 25 questions in total, each one possessing 4-point score. Thus, the maximum overall score each student could get from an autonomy test was 100. The means, standard deviations and gain scores of pre-post-tests of the leaner autonomy scale were calculated to measure the impact of online differentiated reading lessons on learner autonomy. The gain score between the tests was indicated as 5.68 (see Table 5).A dependent, paired two sample t-test was conducted to find the statistical significance of this score too. (see table 6).A significant difference was found between the results of the two tests as far as the gain score is concerned (p<.05). Participants' autonomy was statistically higher after the implementation (M=81.12, SD=8.53) than it was before the implementation (M=75.44, SD=8.30; t(72) =8.06, p=.01).

Table 5 Means, standard deviations of the learner autonomy scale pre-post-tests and gain scores

	M	N	SD	SEM
Pre-test	75.44	72	8.30	.98
Post-test	81.12	72	8.53	1.00
Gain Scores	5.68	72	.23	.02

Table 6 The comparative results of dependent, paired two sample t-test

	F	Sig.	t	df	p
Average of differences between the scores of learner autonomy pre-test and post-test	1.00	.13	8.06	71	.01

*p<.05

Findings of the Students' Perceptions about Online Differentiated Reading Lessons

The findings of the semi-structured student interview were described under four main categories, which are:

- Improved L2 learning and reading skills,
- Positive experiences towards reading lessons and reading itself,
- Peer collaboration,
- Autonomous reading and its benefits.

Improved L2 learning and reading skills.

Differentiated reading lessons improved reading skills both in terms of fluency and comprehension. In addition, the students could improve their vocabulary knowledge along with other skills and in turn their overall L2 proficiency. It can be concluded that differentiated reading was a practical way of supporting students in improving their reading skills as well as their English. Below is one excerpt in support of this finding:

[…] I can feel the following changes: I can read much faster. You know, when you become proficient at a skill, you feel it is getting more intricate. That is how I feel now. (S4, Interview Data, 14.03.2018)

Positive experiences towards reading lessons and reading itself.

The students' statements also demonstrated that reading lessons actually met their expectations and they could encourage them to read more. In addition, they supported them in considering reading as a pleasurable activity, thanks to which they could learn more about the topics they found interesting. To draw a conclusion, the learners could stop dismissing reading as a dull activity following the reading activities adapted to their respective L2 levels. This finding of the study can be supported by the below comment:

[…] These books were more fluent. So, I could read faster and enjoyed all the activities. Reading books in our own level and reading our favourite genres were fantastic. (S9, Interview Data, 15.03.2018)

Peer collaboration.

The findings revealed that collaboration with peers was a benefit because they supported each other in time management and they could build mutual confidence. Thus, it is easy to deduce that working with peers was a practical way of facilitating learning in differentiated reading lessons. The below excerpt from the data prove these findings:

[…] I think we were fantastic. We worked with team spirit. We read the books together even though the levels were different. (S4, Interview Data, 14.03.2018)

Autonomous reading and its benefits.

Reading and learning in their respective ways helped the students improve their reading and researching skills in addition to encouraging them to work more. Indeed, they enjoyed working autonomously because this helped them gain confidence, and responsibility over how they should proceed. They liked the process of reading freely. The following excerpts can support this finding:

[…] While reading online, we control what we do. We determine what we do. I feel more self-confident. (S10, Interview Data, 15.03.2018)

[…] I lost the track of time as I think I was concentrated on dealing with my reading activities. I wanted to read and understand more as I saw I could accomplish on my own. (S8, Interview Date, 15.03.2018)

As it is obvious from the above comments, the teachers managed to keep the students engaged throughout the implementation thanks to autonomous reading tasks, in which they were not intervened and could devise ways of their own to negotiate their obstacles. This achievement could also be associated with the fact that the students had been reading books in their favourite areas and genres.

Findings of the Teachers' Reflections about Online Differentiated Reading Lessons

The findings were categorized under four main themes, which were;

- Improved reading skills over time,
- Engagement and interest in activities,
- Observations of autonomous learning
- Problems observed.

Improved reading skills over time.

The teachers were satisfied with the way the reading lessons were going on as their students' reading efficiency were increasing. They were not having difficulties as they had been at the beginning of the implementation. Therefore, it can be concluded that differentiated reading lessons had a positive effect on the students' reading fluency and comprehension skills over time. The following statement could support this finding:

[…] As the time goes by, the students' reading levels are gaining pace and speed. They can follow the lines and instructions flawlessly without me supporting them as much as I did in the beginning. (T1, Journal Data, 23.02.2018)

Engagement and interest in activities.

The teachers reflected that the students were engaged throughout the lessons because they found differentiated reading quite enjoyable. Besides, the familiarity and attractiveness of the genres and topics facilitated their comprehension and supported them in using different reading skills. This finding can be supported by the following comment:

[…] The students were eager to start the lessons and they were totally concentrated. They tried to answer the questions accurately after the reading (T2, Journal Data, 09.02.2018)

Observations of autonomous learning.

The reflections by the teachers indicated that differentiated reading lessons provided the students with the opportunity to design their learning steps or find alternatives to their respective learning methods on their own. Besides, it was highlighted that such an

autonomous learning setting gave the students the opportunity to learn in individually flexible ways. The following statement can support this finding:

[…] For the activities in which there were not any unfamiliar words, they were able to work themselves, arranging their steps themselves and referring to their friends help. (T2, Journal Data, 02.03.2018)

Problems observed.

According to the teachers' reflections, differentiated online reading lessons posed some problems regarding student motivation and internet connectivity. In the first lessons, some students found it hard to concentrate because it was the first time they were having an online reading lesson. In some weeks, one of the teachers could not establish the internet connection, which affected student engagement badly. Following quotations support these findings:

[…] There was one student who lagged behind. He was one of the above-level students. I need to talk to him before our lesson next week. I tried hard to encourage him and helped him a lot. (T1, Journal Data, 09.02.2018)

[…] We had a big problem, internet connection. Near the end of the lesson, it was lost and some students lagged behind and they could not complete their activities. (T1, Journal Data, 16.02.2018)

Discussion

The present study found that the implementation of online differentiated reading lessons had quite a positive impact on the participant students' reading comprehension skills. This improvement may be attributed to unchallenging, differentiated reading activities. This argument conforms to the findings of the studies(Mclean & Rouault, 2017; Waring & Takaki, 2003), which have shown that differentiated reading can help the students overcome their difficulties in reading and gain a life-long aid in this skill. Providing a collection of texts could have similarly helped adjust the stages of complexity and provided the students with higher readiness levels. Thus, when blended with DI, reading also provided the language teachers with the opportunity of complying with the tenet of DI, adaptability and flexibility of the content (Thiesen, 2002; Tomlinson, 2005).

Another reason why online differentiated reading lessons had a positive impact on the reading comprehension skills of the learners might be due to the fact that they were able to develop a positive attitude towards reading. In this aspect, the results of the present study are in accordance with those of the studies (Jokar & Hasabi, 2014), which demonstrated that implementing differentiation in accordance with interest areas had a considerable effect on attitude. Just as Tomlinson (2005) states, a teacher can help each learner achieve their aims

best by determining their interests. And, the learners can have a better attitude towards reading in differentiated reading lessons when they are free to choose among their favourite genres, as Renandya and Jacobs (2002) suggest.

In addition, unlimited amount and variety of reading materials was one of the defining features of the implementation of the present study, so the students could improve their reading whenever and wherever they liked as Mc Bride and Milliner (2016) suggested. Similarly, Mermelstein (2015) allowed 211 participants of the study to choose among 600 books in their own levels. The study suggested that unlimited access to readers helped increase language students' reading achievement over time. Hence, it can be concluded that the more unlimited the students' access to materials is for reading, the better their comprehension skills are (Waring & Takaki, 2003).

In the present study, DI necessitated a sense of community or a cooperative learning atmosphere where below level students worked with above level ones heterogeneously or where students with the same readiness levels collaborated homogeneously (Kearsley, 2005). So, it is important to note that peer collaboration may have created an atmosphere where students could achieve better by engaging with each other according to their readiness levels or interests thanks to the community principle of DI (Lawrence-Brown, 2004).

From another aspect, as the learners read more in their favourite genres, they enjoyed their reading more since they could increase their world knowledge and take effective steps in dealing with problems of comprehension autonomously (Dickinson, 1987).The increase in learner autonomy can be attributed to the use of metacognitive strategies (Oxford, 2001).The participants could use their capacity by choosing and organizing their reading materials according to their reading purposes (Sinclair, 2008). And, they could show their commitment by designing and evaluating their respective learning techniques. These steps all conformed to the metacognitive stages suggested by Holec (1985). Hence, thorough a manifestation of autonomy may has leaded to better reading comprehension skills. In addition, applying DI approach and allowing learners to perform their extensive reading activities may have increased autonomy levels and improved reading comprehension in turn significantly as the literature (Bedoya, 2014; Little, Mc Coach and Reis, 2014) suggests. To conclude, taking the learner traits into consideration for DI could readily contribute to the emergence of independent learning (Tomlinson, 2005).

According to students' statements, using books in their own levels was what rendered reading comprehensible and learning achievable just as Tomlinson (2005) suggested. In addition, they found the activity of reading enjoyable since they felt they were learning with

comparative ease (Richards & Renandya, 2002). And, the students mentioned they took their own responsibility, drew paths and arranged their pace, which shows they went through the stages of autonomy achievement stated by Holec (1985). It is easy to infer here that the students became more knowledgeable of the importance of EFL reading and obtained self-efficacy. This finding was in line with the results of the qualitative study by Tabiati (2016), which pinpointed the internal and external factors contributing to autonomy in reading. By taking responsibility, controlling their learning, making decisions and achieving self-efficacy, the participants used internal factors. And, by cooperating with their peers and using a technological environment with abundant reading materials, they benefitted from external factors.

As students emphasized, consulting peers while reading autonomously helped their reading skills flourish more quickly. Hence, it can be concluded that reaching ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development, Borja, Soto & Sanchez, 2015)helped form a sense of community, one of the benefits of DI as stated by Kearsley (2005) and Tomlinson (2008). In other words, peer collaboration appeared as a factor contributing to both autonomy and reading comprehension, just as the relevant literature (Heacox, 2002; Tabiati, 2016) suggests.

According to teacher observations, the students' reading comprehension skills had improved by the end of the implementation, thanks to the achievement of DI principles stated by Tomlinson (2008), and in turn, the students were encouraged to read more. Their reflections also treated of continuous engagement thanks to material variety as stated by Aebersold and Field (1998). In other words, students were successfully engaged in reading because they read as many books in their favourite genres and own L2 levels as possible, which created a setting where they could perform fluent reading (Day & Bamford, 2002). Besides, owing to this existence of abundant reading materials, autonomy readily emerged. During the shared instances when the students achieved autonomy, the students assumed responsibility, controlled their learning processes and made their decisions unconsciously, which showed they made use of internal factors promoting autonomy (Tabiati, 2016).

In addition, problems were more apparent for the teachers' part during the lessons. Troubles related to internet connection were challenging and imminent as they were in the studies by Bedoya (2014) and Mc Bride and Milliner (2016). Besides, problems associated with engagement at the beginning were apparentdue to unfamiliarity with reading online. Therefore, it is noteworthy to stress that teachers should have alternative solutions for technical problems in online reading lessons and be ready to support some students more at the beginning.

In short, the students and the teachers qualitatively confirmed the significantly high quantitative findings thanks to the autonomous learning provided by online differentiated reading. The teachers and students were equally satisfied with the implementation and most of their observations and views were in harmony.

Conclusion

The present study significantly contributes to the literature by investigating the effects of online differentiated reading lessons on reading comprehension skills and learner autonomy of 5th grade Turkish EFL learners. The results revealed that the participants had both improved their skills and achieved autonomy in reading. Besides, it was demonstrated that the students had positive perceptions regarding online differentiated reading and extensive reading because they could achieve their aims in their respective L2 levels and on their own more effortlessly. Moreover, according to the teachers' reflections, the students were more engaged and had considerably better reading skills over time thanks both to DI and to the autonomous learning setting consequently formed.

Briefly, the findings of the present study illustrated that integrating online differentiated reading lessons could be regarded as an efficient way of instruction to support the development of reading comprehension skills and enhance the achievement of autonomy in foreign language classrooms.

The current study can put forward some certain recommendations for further research. Initially, it was conducted without any reference to a group who did not receive the implementation. Thus, it can be replicated by carrying out a comparative analysis of data gathered from an experimental and a control group. In addition, the number of the student participants (n=72) was not high enough and they were all fifth graders. Using a larger sample with different grades could also be recommended for future studies. Finally, the participants of the present study used readers only from a specific online source. Other multi-level book sources can be amalgamated into online differentiated reading lessons to provide the students with a wider range of choices for genres. Besides, a control group performing ER or differentiated reading on hard-copy books can be included to compare the effectiveness of online differentiated reading on reading comprehension skills and LA of language learners.

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Appendices

A. READING COMPREHENSION PRE-TEST

1) Choose the best title for the text.
a) Life of a Democratic Leader
b) The Tragic Moments in Lincoln's Life

2) Read the paragraphs quickly and write what happened.
a) 1815:
b) 1826:
c) Near the end of April in 1865:

3) Put the paragraphs in correct order.

A) On April, 1865, he and his wife were at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. John Wilkes Booth, one of the actors, shot the president. Lincoln died nine hours later. On 21 April, a train carrying his body left Washington DC. They buried him on 4 May.
B) Abraham Lincoln was a leader and a man who wanted the people of his country to work together as one.
C) By the time he was 17 he knew he wanted to be a lawyer. At the age of 21, he moved to Illinois. He managed to become a lawyer in 1836. In 1842 he married Mary Todd. The couple had four sons. In March 1861 Lincoln became the 16th President of the United States.
D) Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky, USA in 1809. His family was very poor. He used to work in the fields and help with chores. In the evenings, he used to sit by the fireplace and study. When he was tired of doing arithmetic, he used to write poems. Abe first went to school when he was 6 years old.
E) Five weeks later the Civil War began. It was a fight between the north and the south about slavery. Lincoln wanted to stop slavery in the US. He also wanted the US to remain one nation. He achieved both of his goals.

4) Read the sentences about the text and write T (True) or F (False).
a) He was born in Washington DC.
b) He came from a poor family.
c) He became a lawyer.
d) He had three sons.
e) He became president during the civil war.
f) He died in the war.
g) He helped end slavery.

5) Read the text again and complete the chart below.

1809: _____
1830: _____
1836: _____
14 April, 1865: _____

B. READING COMPREHENSION POST-TEST

1) Choose the best title for the text.
a) How the Sun Came to Be
b) Scientists' Views on the Sun

2) Read the paragraphs quickly once more and write what or whom the below words refer to.
a) her (paragraph A, line 2):
b) them (paragraph B, line 3):

c) it: (paragraph C, line 4):
d) red giant (paragraph E, line 2):
e) its (paragraph E, line 3):

3) Put the paragraphs in correct order.

A) She walked for a long time until she felt very tired. She was hungry and cold. Then, **her** ancestors' spirits gently lifted her up into the sky forever. The woman slept peacefully. When she woke up, she found food. She lit a campfire in the sky and was happy to be warm.

B) So, she did. Then, she let her fire die down while her people built their own campfires. The woman saw that her people were happy so she decided to build her fire every morning to keep **them** warm. The people called this wonderful light of heat the Sun.

C) The woman looked down on her tribe and saw that they were worried about her. She also saw that they were quite tired and cold. "I'll make a big campfire," the woman thought. "**It**'ll be so big that it will warm all the people while they look for food."

D) Early in the history, before the sun shone in the sky, the world was very cold. People only had camp fires. In one tribe, there was a young woman. The elders of the tribe did not allow her to marry the man she loved, so she quietly left her home.

E) Our sun is getting bigger and brighter and scientists think that it will continue to grow until it becomes a '**red giant**'! Eventually, the Sun will burn **its** hydrogen and then it will disappear. But how did the sun appear? The Aboriginal people in Australia have their own story about the creation of the Sun.

4) Choose the best answer (A, B or C).
   1) After the ancestors' spirits brought her up into the sky, the woman
     a) woke up.
     b) fell asleep.
     c) ate something.
   2) The woman left her tribe because
     a) she did not want to marry anyone.
     b) she could not marry the man she wanted.
     c) the elders wanted her to marry someone.

   3) The woman felt sorry for her people because
     a) there was not enough food to eat
     b) they had to look for food in the cold.
     c) she left without saying goodbye.
   4) In the evening, the woman,
     a) allowed her fire to go out.
     b) added more fuel to her life.
     c) helped her people to build their fires.
   5) Scientist think the sun will become smaller because
     a) it is still getting bigger
     b) its hydrogen will finish
     c) it will change its colour

5) Write the sentences in correct order.

She started lighting her fire every day to make her people happy and warm forever.

> ***After walking for a while, tired and injured, she was lifted up in the sky by her ancestors' spirits and she lit a campfire to get warm there.***
>
> ***A young woman from a tribe left her people as she could not marry her lover and reached a desert-like place.***
>
> ***She saw that her people was tired, hungry and cold too and decided to make a huge campfire to help them.***

1) First,

2) Then,

3) Next,

4) Finally,

C. LEARNER AUTONOMY QUESTIONNAIRE

Adapted from Bedoya (2014)

Dear 5th graders;

In this questionnaire, you will answer some questions related to your role in reading lessons or while doing reading assignments.

Check the level of frequency for each activity.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1) I plan the time for reading in this course.				
2) I submit reading assignments on time.				**D.**
3) I self-assess my performance in my reading lessons.				
4) I reflect on what I learn from reading.				
5) I interact with my classmates while reading.				
6) I am interested in the teacher's feedback.				
7) I spend enough time reading in English during the week.				
8) I read in English on my own (additional to the course).				
9) I am able to work alone while reading.				
10) I manage my time while I am reading.				
11) I ask the tutor when I need clarification.				
12) I express my opinions in the lessons.				
13) I think I can achieve my objectives in this course.				
14) I think I am committed to reading tasks and assignments.				
15) I have a good opinion of the reading lessons.				
16) I like to study English in and out of my school.				
17) I need the teacher's support to learn while reading.				
18) I need a classmate's help to do the activities.				
19) What I have learned in this course has been useful.				
20) I understand assignments easily.				
21) I search information on the Internet for learning.				
22) I can control my emotions related to learning.				
23) I feel confident about my performance while reading.				
24) I identify my learning difficulties.				
25) I can control my attention when I am reading.				

SEMI-STRUCTURED STUDENT INTERVIEW (*Taken from Bedoya, 2014*)

1. What can you say about this reading course?

2. What was your goal in this course?

3. Learning in an online reading course requires time management. How do you rate yourself related to this?

4. It also implies independent work. It means going beyond the activities proposed in the course. How was your performance concerning this?

5. It is assumed that an autonomous student does not need the teacher's supervision to work during the course. How did you see yourself and the group regarding this?

6. An autonomous student communicates and cooperates with others for learning. How was your performance in this aspect?

7. How was your performance comparing the first weeks and the last weeks of the course?

8. To what extent was the course beneficial for you?,

9. What do you think about reading in English online? Compare your regular reading lessons with online reading lessons?

E. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTIVE JOURNALS TO BE WRITTEN BY PARTICIPANT TEACHERS

1- Reflect on your observations regarding the effects of online multi-level reading lessons on your students' overall reading skills.

2- Reflect on your observations regarding the effects of multi-level reading lessons on your students' learning autonomy.

3- Reflect on what you have observed while your students are reading their online books.

F. QUESTIONNAIRE ON FAVOURITE BOOK TYPES

Directions: Please indicate the preference of reading different types of books presented in the following sentences. We would like you to answer this questionnaire by giving marks from 1 to 4. Thank you for your help.

Very different from you	*A little different from you*	*A little like you*	*A lot like you*
Circle 1	*Circle 2*	*Circle 3*	*Circle 4*

1. I read stories about fantasy and make-believe.	1	2	3	4
2. I read a lot of adventure stories.	1	2	3	4
3. Complicated stories are fun to read.	1	2	3	4
4. I like mysteries.	1	2	3	4
5. I do not like it when there are too many people in the story.	1	2	3	4

6. I enjoy reading books about people in different countries.	1	2	3	4
7. I read about my hobbies to learn more about them.	1	2	3	4
8. I read to learn new information about topics that interest me.	1	2	3	4

Taken from Wigfield & Guthrie (1997)

G. A SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Main Aims
To provide detailed reading practice using an unrealistic fiction in the context of problem solution

Subsidiary Aims
To provide process writing practice of a summary in the context of story telling

Materials
Exercises on suffix *-ing* (differentiated)
Problem and Solution Worksheets (Differentiated)
Brainstorm Bear (Online Reader) Levels H, K, N

Stage	Procedure	Interaction Pattern	Time (min.)
Warmer/Lead-in To set lesson context and engage students	Before the lesson starts, the teacher assigns the book Brainstorm Bear to each student in their respective English levels determined according to Cambridge Flyers Sample Test. Thus, the component of DI, content (the reading material), is differentiated in the beginning (Tomlinson, 1999). And, the teacher gets the students to sit in a way that there will be pairs with different reading levels at each desk. - First of all, the teacher writes the sentence "Brainstorm bear has a problem" on the board and gives each student one empty sheet of paper. S/he asks them to draw what comes to their minds when they hear this sentence. They have to finish their drawings in 40 seconds in black pencil. When they are done, the teacher asks the students to swap their paper with their friends' and explain to each other what they see on their friends' papers and share their opinions. This exercise is to help the students with spatial and interpersonal intelligences as put forward by Multiple Intelligence Theory (Tomlinson, 2011; Conti, 2013). Fifth grade students are mostly keen on expressing their feelings or sharing their ideas with each other, just as they are good at describing their ideas through drawings and imagination. - For students with *bodily-kinestheticintelligences*, an alternative warm-up task can be practiced. The teacher hangs 4 empty papers on four corners of the classroom and divides the students into groups of 4-6. S/he gives each group one board marker and asks them to stand up and write what comes to their minds when they see the words on each paper. (The words are brainstorm, bear, problem and solution). They do this activity through a gallery walk. Alternatively, the teacher may let the groups use the smart board in turn. The papers stay where they hang till the end of the lesson. At the end of the lesson, the teacher may ask the students whether their ideas were true according to the	Pair work, Teacher-Student, Group Work	3-5

	story. Here, the student trait, *learning profile* is considered according to the principles of DI. (Thiesen, 2002). Since the activities and content are designed by considering different learner types, it can be concluded that tasks provided are respectful in this step, as required by the tenets of DI (Heacox, 2002). - These last two activities can also be used in a classroom where students cannot get fully engaged - as additional ones. Thus, the teacher can be *proactive* in this way, which is one of the benefits of DI as put forward by Tomlinson (2001), because s/he will readily have solutions for adapting the learning environment in accordance with the present state of the learners (Tomlinson, 2008). - In addition, such respectful tasks before the main task help the readers combine their background knowledge with the current activity and they form a sense of community – another benefit of DI - by changing their peers and using different interaction patterns for different activities (Kearsley, 2005).		
Pre-Reading To prepare students for the text it	- Before pre-reading session, the teacher organizes the student peers once more. (In a way that there will be students with the different English levels - or book levels - at each desk). This is related to differentiating the component, process. Letting the students work with different peers for each activity in this way, or making cooperation dynamic, can boost the motivation and fasten learning (Tomlinson, 2001). - Next, the teacher tells the students that they are going to read a story about a family who finds a bear in a tree in their backyard. S/he has them work in small groups and brainstorm ideas about how they would try to get the bear out of the tree. The groups discuss for 5-8 minutes and then the teacher asks them to share their ideas to the whole class in the end. The teacher may also ask the students to give feedback on the other groups' ideas through a short debate. The students work on their own here. The teacher does not give any feedback. So, by working with different peers and debating with the whole class, the students have the change to collaborate in different ways and learn from or support each other, which differentiates the component process further (Heacox, 2002; Theisen, 2002).	Pair Work, Whole Class	8-10
While-Reading To provide students with autonomous reading task	- After the pre-reading session, the teacher organizes the peers again; this time, in a way that there will be students with the same proficiency or book levels at each desk. Then, s/he asks the students to open their tablets and go to Razplus. There, they find the book assigned in their respective levels. Before they start reading, the teacher explains that good readers stop now and then while they are reading to retell what has happened so far in the story. S/he points out that stopping to retell the events of the story helps readers understand and remember what they are reading. The teacher also reminds that the students all retell the story with their partners after they finish reading. Before the differentiated reading begins, s/he provides three ways of retelling, to heed different learning profiles (Loeser, 2015) - Taking down notes, - Drawing pictures, - Copying and pasting sentences from the book on tablet - Taking screenshots Next, the students start reading their books. The teacher		

	tells them that they can use the internet sources for unknown vocabulary, answer the questions at the beginning of the book before or after they read, work on reading comprehension questions at the end with their desk peers (because each level has got a different number of questions, which vary in complexity and level) or themselves, finish reading the book early and start thinking about the answers they gave in the warm-up session. Also, the teacher reminds the students that they should reread the books if they have got more than 2 wrong answers. So, to take responsibility of their own learning, the students are given the chance to perform the below metacognitive stages in achieving learner autonomy (Oxford, 2001; Bedoya, 2014). 1) Determining learning styles (each has a chance to learn about the vocabulary and content in their own way - through peer collaboration or doing research) 2) Planning the learning process (they can answer the questions while reading the book or after reading it. They can start reading it again to rectify their mistakes) 3) Planning the pace of learning (they can read their books quickly and check their guesses) 4) Monitoring and evaluating learning (they reread their books to check their mistakes). The students are free to choose their own way of taking responsibility. The teacher should not confine them to only one way here. The sole reason behind this is that different factors such as achievement and language learning experience influence the emergence of LA (Benson, 2014). In other words, the students can make use of their capacity to make decisions to read, control their reading, take responsibility and achieve self-efficacy in reading by using internal and external factors (Tabiati, 2016). After the teacher ensures that the students finish reading their books, s/he hands out the Problem/Solution worksheets to each peer. There are three levels of the same worksheets (H, K, N). Differentiation of content, process, students' readiness and learner profiles are taken into consideration again here. Thus, each peer should take the relevant worksheet to work on (Tomlinson, 2001; 2008) Also, the students work on their own levels again. The teacher asks the students to do the activities as stated in the instruction section. The students work autonomously, by getting support from their peers again (Tabiati, 2016). If they get difficulty understanding the meaning of the words "problem" and "solution", the teacher may ask them to use online dictionaries or get help from their friends. Thus, here, the teacher gives the students the chance to overcome their problems on their own, one of the factors in achieving LA (Warin, 2009). - After that, the teacher hands out the next differentiated material to each peer in their relevant levels, in which they work on -ing forms in their own levels. Again, the teacher can let them do the activities with their peers by referring to online dictionaries, if necessary.		
Post-Reading To provide with a chance to respond to the text and expand on what they've learned	- The teacher rearranges the peers again, to boost the opportunity of collaboration and differentiate the process more (Chick & Hong, 2012). S/he asks them to work in groups in 10 minutes to retell the story. There are three options for this activity: - Role-playing (for kinesthetic learners) - Preparing posters or videos (for linguistic and spatial	Group work	8-10

	learners) (Conti, 2013) Three options are given here to ensure that the last component of DI, product, is differentiated properly (Thiesen, 2002). The end products of the students are actually the reflection of their interests and profiles. These post-reading activities are applied as formative assessments, to get information about what students have learned and to determine their learning processes (Tomlinson, et al. 2015). The student groups present their products after 10 minutes. They can present it in the classroom, before their classmates, or at break times, before their teachers and other students from the same school. This is to differentiate another component, which is environment (Tomlinson, 2001). Change of environment may give the students more motivation. Or, alternatively, the teacher may turn off the lights, dim them – if possible – open some songs on the internet while the students are performing. After the lesson, the teacher checks his or her Razplus account and give feedback to the answers of the students.		