



## Do Teachers Fond of Reading? Teachers' Affective States in EFL Reading

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### Abstract

This article presents findings from a study investigating the affective states of English teachers in East Nusa Tenggara regarding their EFL reading. Affective states related to motivation, feelings, volition, attribution and self-efficacy in EFL reading that make the readers be persistent to achieve their reading comprehension. This study used qualitative approach and the data were collected through questionnaire, interview, and observation. The participants were four English teachers in senior high school that have teaching experiences more than 10 years. The result showed that teachers' affective states in EFL reading were high and triggered by external motivation. Regarding the feelings in EFL reading, the teachers have more positive feelings depending on text difficulties. Furthermore, the teachers showed high volition, attribution and self-efficacy in EFL reading because of internet era that allow them to access many reading sources and exercises. The analysis revealed that the teachers were more confident in this present time compared to their past experiences in EFL reading. The higher affective states could be beneficial for the teachers to overcome their reading problem and to train the teachers' responsibility toward their own reading experience.

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## INTRODUCTION

In reading context, Grabe and Stoller (2011) explained that individual has different motivation as well as different senses of self-esteem, interest, involvement with reading and emotional responses to reading. It leads to varying EFL reading experiences based on personal states on reading. This difference should be explored in classroom setting, especially teachers' states in EFL reading that affect their teaching practice. Dornyei & Ushida (2009) stated that it is useful to make effective instruction and understand the strength and weakness in reading activities.

Teachers' perception toward EFL reading are affected by their past experiences and traditional teaching. Yulita & Safrina (2019) found that there is a discrepancy between what teachers perform in the classroom was based on their perception about what was relevant and attainable for their students and the intended learning outcome. Many of the teachers viewed reading skill as basic text comprehension skill and linguistic development (Jang, Dunlop & Park, 2015; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Andriani, 2017; Hasanah, 2017). Moreover, Bakken (2018) revealed the teachers' reasoning on activities they choose during the EFL reading process. One of the reasons is the teachers choose their reading approaches based on the authority of tradition and convention. Most of the teachers tend to see pronunciation and reading aloud as parts of classroom reading routine. Another reason is the influence of teachers' background and experiences towards reasoning about EFL reading.

However, this pattern does not seem consistent because there are individual preferences around teachers reasoning on their EFL practices. Since teachers' practice in EFL reading activities are influenced by their affective states, it is important to investigate teachers' affective states in EFL reading. The affective states related to person knowledge that included their motivation, feelings, attribution, volition and self-efficacy. Many previous researches focus only on cognition, so there is not much research on how teachers' affective states develop from their past to present reading experiences. Meanwhile, it is documented that language learning success or failure is influenced by the affective side of the learner. Especially in reading, Ghonsooly (2010) revealed that learners with positive affective states could reduce reading anxiety and improve reading comprehension. Thus, this study was aimed to explored teachers' affective states in EFL reading.

### **Affective States**

Based on Adkins (2005) classification of element of metacognition, Mbato (2013) put affective states as element of metacognition and divided it into motivation, feelings, volition, attribution, and self-efficacy. The explanation of affective states in language learning will be divided as follow.

#### 1) Motivation

Motivation is typically examined in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motives of learners. The ability to combine intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can enhance

learning. Dornyei (1994) stated that under certain circumstances, if they are sufficiently self-determined and internalized, extrinsic reward can be combined with intrinsic motivation. Chamot (1999) added that intrinsic motivation has more power to triggers learners to continue learning a foreign language than extrinsic motivation, particularly when learners are given choice to acquire new information in the foreign language.

## 2) Feelings

Feelings relate to emotional aspect of learning English as a foreign language that as important as motivation and volition. As it has been emphasized by Horwitz (1995), learners are not only thinking beings but also emotional beings who will not use their cognitive ability unless their emotional needs have been meet. Additionally, foreign language learning demands a level of personal engagement.

## 3) Volition

Borkowski et al (1994) defined volition as similar to self-determination and might be understood as a sense of control individual has over experience. It is argued that persistent and incremental learners demonstrate the capacity to search out task that lead to learning opportunities and understand that their success due to the acquisition of appropriate cognitive knowledge.

## 4) Attribution

The psychologist Bernard Weiner (cited in Brown 2007) concerning attribution theory focuses on how people explain the cause of their success or failures. Weiner and other writers describe attribution theory in terms of four explanations for success or failures in achieving personal objective: ability, effort, perceived difficulty of a task and luck.

## 5) Self-efficacy

Bandura et al. (1995) define self-efficacy as the person belief of their capability to succeed in any chosen endeavor. Zimmerman (2000) added that it concerns beliefs about one's capabilities to organize and implement actions necessary to attain designated performance of skill for specific tasks.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study used qualitative approaches in one particular and natural setting. Initially the open-ended questionnaire was distributed. The follow up answers from questionnaire was elaborated through interview. The next procedure was classroom

observation to crosscheck the result of questionnaire. After combined the data of the questionnaire, interview and observation, the findings and discussion was concluded. This study was conducted in two public schools in East Nusa Tenggara. The participants of this study were four English teachers that consisted of three experienced teachers and one novice teacher. They have experiences in teaching English for more than 10 years. The novice teacher has experiences in teaching English for almost 4 years.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **FINDING**

The findings on teachers' affective states in EFL reading are constituted in motivation, feelings, volition, attribution, and self-efficacy. The results are explained and described below.

#### **Motivation**

Related to teachers' motivation in EFL reading, most of them are affected by external motivation. They read English text as a part and obligation of their job.

*"Mau tidak mau kami harus membaca karena tugas kami sebagai guru (We read because it is our job as teachers)"*

Most of the teachers valued reading as extensive activity. It is an activity in spare time. However, teachers admitted that now they rarely read a book. T2 confirmed that reading time is limited due to many other works to be done. Moreover, teachers' reading interest did not seem to include any forms of academic reading.

*"Saya punya banyak kerjaan lain, jadi tidak cukup waktu untuk membaca teks akademis atau teks yang berat. Karena membaca teks akademis butuh banyak waktu dan harus berulang-ulang (I have other jobs to do, so there is not much time to read any kind of academic texts. Reading academic texts need much time because I have to read it intensively over and over)"*

The fact above shown that teachers' motivation is also affected by their perception on the text difficulty or depend on what kind of text they read. The more difficult the text, their motivation become less or decrease. When they think that the text is easy and fun to read, their motivation become more or increase.

Generally, teachers' motivation is also affected by their attitudes towards English subject. They perceive English as very important for their future employment

opportunities, and becoming English teachers' is promising to make a living. This external motivation pushed them to read English more to get good grade at school and college.

*"Karena dari keluarga saya menginginkan saya jadi guru, dan dulu susah mencari kerja, maka saya mencari kesempatan sebagai guru Bahasa Inggris (Most of my family member wanted me to be a teaches. At that time, it was not easy to find a job, and the chance to be English teacher seemed more possible)"*

Being aware of the usefulness of reading for future job, teachers' motivation is formed by making learning goals and checking those goals. Through conversation, teachers usually focus on two types of goals; those are the goal of learning English in relation to their career and the goal that more specific to their English language learning.

*"Motivasi saya dalam membaca adalah untuk menunjang karir saya sebagai guru. Untuk bisa naik pangkat saya harus menulis karya ilmiah dan saya harus membaca banyak karya ilmiah dalam Bahasa Inggris (My motivation in EFL reading is for supporting my career as a teacher. In order to get high ranking I need to write research paper and I have to read many English research paper)"*

In order to raise their motivation in EFL reading, teachers took the benefit of internet to read and explore English text faster. Because teachers seemed to get stuck on past habits and strategies in reading English, they tended to not try much with the new method of learning English. Some teachers showed their willingness to start learn to read English to increase their teaching technique in the classroom.

*"saya ingin belajar kembali untuk memperdalam kemampuan Bahasa Inggris saya tapi waktunya sulit, karena sebagai guru seringkali kami sibuk dengan masalah administrasi. Jika diberikan kesempatan dan urusannya tidak susah, saya mau belajar kembali (I do want to learn English more to get better comprehension, but it is difficult to find the time since as a teacher, I have many administration things to be completed. But if I have given a chance, and have easy access, I would like to learn more)"*

In conclusion, teachers already had awareness of the important of focusing on learning goals rather than on negative experiences and difficulties in EFL reading. Teacher 4 was determined to put more effort to re-learn English although she didn't have much time to read. Teachers showed that they try to increase their motivation in EFL reading to support their teaching practice.

## Feelings

During interaction with teachers, it was found that teachers held a range of positive and negative feelings toward EFL reading in their past and current learning experiences. Teachers reflected and developed their positive feelings towards reading that have been impacted by people or other external factors. Retrieving values, beliefs, and past experiences is important because as explained by Phelps (2002), learners will start to recognize factors that impact on their learning and this recognition can bring key insights into how they can help themselves to change.

The teachers' different experiences and feelings in EFL reading eventually have impacted their teaching practice. Most of teachers experienced reading as for fun activity, not for academic purpose. In their past experiences, they read magazines, comic books, tabloid, and other popular reading sources. Unfortunately, due to lack of reading source, they just got books from school library.

The interview showed that teachers seldom read any English books, or comic, or magazines because the technology was not advanced in the past time. There was no internet so that their reading sources were limited. Compared to now, the teachers already have access to many reading sources by using internet.

*"Sekarang lebih mudah untuk mendapatkan bahan bacaan Bahasa Inggris dengan internet. Kami biasa mengunduh bahan bacaan untuk mengajara di internet. (Now, it is easy to access reading sources by browsing in the internet, we can download many text for our teaching)"*

However, some teachers still to think that reading English text was difficult because they did not the meaning of unknown words. Based on their past experiences, they started to read English with negative feelings and only read when it is related to their work as teachers.

*"Bagian yang paling sulit ketika membaca teks Bahasa Inggris adalah mencari arti kata. Harus ada kamus untuk membantu. Jadi, butuh waktu lebih lama dan bikin malas (The difficult part of English reading is finding the meaning of unknown words. We need dictionary. So, it took much time to read and it made us lazy)"*

Generally, teachers agreed that they feel positive about English reading in the past time if the reading purpose was for fun and entertainment. They feel negative toward EFL reading if the reading text became difficult to understand. The

influence of grammar-translation method made the teachers' perception of reading as an activity to translate the words rather than getting knowledge.

### **Volition**

The survey responses indicated that teachers' volition is quite high even though in some way they still try hard to manage peer pressure and surroundings. The teachers agreed that they more focus during reading process and have commitment to monitoring reading process and directed attention in reading. Moderate agreement occurred to the statements not to give up in pursuing reading comprehension and ability to manage distraction. Importantly, it might be noted that teachers agreed that they will always keep trying to achieve and protect their effort in doing reading task.

**Table 1. Teachers' responses on volition**

No	Statement	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
1	I am trying hard to achieve my reading goals			4
2	I am monitoring my reading process		1	3
3	In reading process, I focus my attention into the text			4
4	I never give up in pursuing reading comprehension		2	2
5	I could put away any distraction during my reading		2	2
6	I could face any negative pressure from my surroundings		3	1
7	I always try many strategies and make effort in doing reading task			4

Based on their past reading experiences, the teachers confirmed that they started to read English from their curiosity to understand the unknown words, then they developed good volition to comprehend English texts. Thus, the teachers showed that they have strong volition in understanding reading texts. Teacher 4, for example, was determined to keep trying in understanding reading passage even with the personal difficulties he was encountering. His reflection showed that he had strong volition to succeed.

*"Dulu saya berusaha memahami teks bacaan dengan menerjemahkan arti kata menggunakan kamus. Saya senang ketika saya bisa memahami kalimat yang saya baca dan mendapat arti kata baru dalam Bahasa Inggris (In the past, I was trying to comprehend the reading text by translating the words using dictionary. I was happy when I got to understand the sentence and got new words in English)"*

Beside the words meaning, grammar was also important for the teachers when reading English text. The teachers experienced to learn grammar-translation method for a long period in their school, so it was reflected to their consciousness and explicit volition in their effort to focus on grammar that will help them to understand English texts.

However, teachers' strong volition in EFL reading was decreased by external factors. The first factor is age which they considered that they are getting old and not as excited as they were young in reading English. The second factors that they felt that they already had steady job or career. Their goals in life already being accomplished so they felt they did not need to struggle much. The fact that they already got fixed income as teachers make their attention to reading becoming less and less.

### **Attribution**

Specifically, for EFL reading, the teachers showed their attribution explicitly and implicitly. For the explicit statement, teacher 3 revealed that her difficulties in reading English due to her lack of motivation, effort, and reading strategies. It showed that strong internal and controllable cause is important factors in attribution. *"membaca teks Bahasa Inggris bukan seperti membaca teks bahasa Indonesia, butuh kerja dua kali karena harus mengartikan kata per kata dulu untuk memahami isi teks. Hal ini membuat saya jadi agak malas dalam membaca (reading EFL is not like reading Bahasa Indonesia, we need to work twice because we have to translate the word by word in order to understand the text. It makes me a little bit lazy to read)"*

By evaluating her statement, teacher 3 recognized that her attribution in EFL reading were distracted by text difficulty and the need to put a lot of effort into it. However, she realized that she needs to keep going and put much effort in EFL reading because her job as English teacher obliged her to do so.

*"Sebagai seorang guru bahasa Inggris, saya harus tetap membaca banyak teks agar saya bisa mengajar dengan baik dan meningkatkan kinerja saya (As an English teacher, I have to keep reading many text so that I can teach my students well and improve my capabilities at work)"*

It can be said that the teachers attributed their lack of success in EFL reading based on both internal and external cause. Internal cause was reflected through their perception on text difficulty and their external cause was reflected through



trigger from their job as teacher. It showed that attribution is very complex to apply in EFL reading because the conflicting views between internal and external cause.

Positively, the teachers feel that it is easy to success in EFL reading now compared to their past experiences. It is because of the internet innovation that help them to get faster to translate the word and that there are so many reading sources in the internet so they can practice more. This indicated that teachers have more positive views in their attribution towards EFL reading that could lead to their success in the future reading experiences.

### **Self-efficacy**

In doing reading task, the survey responses in self-efficacy indicated that teachers have good self-efficacy in EFL reading. The results of the teachers' responses on self-efficacy can be seen in table below.

**Table 2. Teachers' responses on self-efficacy**

No	Statement	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
1	I could find main ideas in the text		1	3
2	I could answer question about specific information in the text			4
3	I could write summary of the text in English		2	2
4	I could retell the content of the text		1	3
5	I could comprehend the meaning in English text		1	3
6	I could finish the reading task well		2	2
7	I could improve my reading skill		1	3

In EFL reading, most of the teachers believed that they could find the main idea in the text. T2 was doubt about her ability to find the main idea in reading text. However, all teachers were sure that they could find specific information within the text which they confirmed that they usually find the clue by looking for similar words or phrases. They have moderate agreement in their ability to write a summary of what they read. This could be caused by their ability in writing and paraphrasing because when they were asked to retell what they read, they quite sure they could do it. In the same way, most of the teachers believed that they could comprehend the reading text or whether they could accomplish set reading task. A record change occurred to statement that they quite believe that they could improve their reading skills and they were confidence that they could speak English in front of people. This result indicated that teachers have more self-efficacy in retelling the reading text rather than in accomplishing reading task.

Mbato (2013) said that self-efficacy is related to self-awareness in learning achievement. It was found that the teachers' self-efficacy in EFL reading become more compared to their past time. It is because of the internet era that give the teachers more exposure to reading experiences.

*“sekarang gampang karena ada internet. Ada google translate dan banyak sumber bacaan tersedia. Saya bisa melatih kemampuan membaca saya, hanya terkendala oleh waktu saja (Now it is easier because of internet. There is google translate and there are many reading sources. I could practice my reading, but the problem is just about the available time to do it)”*

By the help of the internet, the teachers have more confidence in their EFL reading compared to their past experiences. As supported by Yulita & Safrina (2019), being conscious about the importance of self-efficacy could increase learners' confidence despite of their limitation and fear in learning foreign language. This attitude could lead learners to a sense of success and made them to dare to take risk to read the variance of English texts.

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on interview about their affective states and observation, teachers with more affective states were aware that motivation, feeling, volition, attribution, and self-efficacy in EFL reading significantly impact the reading process and help them to create good reading habits. Reader with high affective states also increased readers' engagement and confidence that could reduce their reading anxiety. The high affective states allowed the teachers to be responding to text difficulties. As an adult, teachers should promote their responsibility and self-control of their own learning. They act to facilitate, plan, and guide instruction in a collaborative manner (Bakken, 2018). Teachers' affective states were useful to prevent them from experiencing learned helplessness.

Brown in Li & Wang (2010) explained that the possibility to of increasing the affective state will make teacher less concern to the cognition aspect. Concerning to this conflicting view, reading strategies would be useful to help the teachers making balance with their reading. The affective state could be combined with reading strategies to give the readers the best learning experiences.

Importantly, the teachers need to see that reading was an ongoing process that did not stop at some point of age. In other words, teacher should create a sustainable EFL reading to control their cognition while reading and it remained in the future

learning. Renandya (2007) added that this also can be supported by creating extensive reading program to get higher affective states. By increasing affective states in EFL reading, the teachers persistently could identify themselves, along with their weaknesses and strength in EFL reading. This was beneficial for teachers in order to overcome their reading problem. The role of affective states also trained the teachers to take responsibility toward their own reading by providing strategies that matched to their capacity and needs. At the end, teachers would get depth understanding and reflection of their reading experience.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

The affective states were important and central in influencing teachers' effort to pursue their EFL reading competence. Some of them started to read English because of extrinsic motivation that change to be intrinsic motivation along their learning experiences. Their feelings also changed from indifferent to EFL reading to enjoying EFL reading for some condition. They did self-evaluation by attributing their weaknesses and strength in EFL reading. This change increased their volition and self-efficacy so that they became persistent as L2 reader.

It can be concluded that there was changing on teachers' affective states towards English reading. They used to find that English reading was more difficult because of lack of reading sources, but now it got more easy and accessible because of internet era. They had confidence about their English reading in the present time compared to their past experiences where they were less confident because of unfamiliarity with the texts.

There was anxiety in English reading if they encountered unfamiliar texts or words. They felt comfortable to read English if they knew the words by words and familiar with the topic. Their extensive reading was limited because they did not have any English books or sources outside the school. Now, they gain more time to extensive reading because of Internet however it was limited to job-related materials. It was shown that teachers' self-efficacy was not high as they were learners because they did not take any test in reading to measure their achievement. It made them less confident about their reading comprehension. Thus, the teachers need to measure their reading achievement gradually to boost their self-efficacy.

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