



Undergraduate Students' Perception of Using Extensive Reading Strategy in Vocabulary Mastery

Zelvina Dina Octavianti^{1*}, Pratiwi Retnaningdyah², Ahmad Munir³
^{1,2,3} Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia



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ABSTRACT

Objective: Reading is one of the most essential skills in learning, especially in English learning. Technological sophistication that is developing rapidly in the 21st century requires students to be literate in order to be able to compete in critical thinking and receive the latest information. The program suitable for the conditions of students in this century is extensive reading, which offers reading for pleasure according to the level of students' abilities. **Method:** The type of approach used in this research is qualitative. Only fifteen undergraduate students have received an extensive reading course in the fifth semester to obtain optimal results. In collecting data using two instruments, namely questionnaires and interviews. **Results:** The results shown in this research are that most undergraduate students have positive perceptions after receiving extensive reading course program activities, one of which is the addition of vocabulary that affects their reading motivation. **Novelty:** The results of this research encourage future researchers to dig up information about the effectiveness of using extensive reading in increasing vocabulary acquisition.

INTRODUCTION

Reading skill is one of the most essential abilities used as an activity to provide information and ideas about new things. All activities carried out daily, especially regarding learning activities carried out in schools, require all students to have reading skills to learn new things simultaneously without anyone being left behind to get new information (Chanthap & Wasanasomsithi, 2019). This statement is supported by Niklas et al. (2016), who states that the most crucial requirement that students must possess is reading skills. However, acquiring language in children takes a long time (Pelin, 2020). In addition, reading activities can be done not only at school and in the classroom but anywhere and anytime. Students should have mastery of reading from an early age; this aims to make it easier for them to read easily and quickly, which will help them easily receive information they did not know before. On the other hand, students' reading skills also aim to reduce reading difficulties, making it difficult for students to understand the contents of ideas from information and reducing their interest in reading (Kuşdemir & Bulut, 2018).

Even though reading is considered the most critical skill for EFL students who learn languages, especially English, many students think reading is challenging and tedious because it is not a habit for them (Brier & Jayanti, 2020; Nur et al., 2019). This is supported by the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) results, which state that Indonesia is ranked 62nd out of 70 countries in reading. This proves that interest in reading in Indonesia still needs to be higher. (Andreas, 2018). However, this is in stark contrast to the activities the government is promoting in the SLM (School Literacy Movement). The government designed a

movement to overcome the problem of low interest in reading in Indonesia: reading books fifteen minutes before class starts (Kemendikbud, 2015). Thus, are the activities designed not appropriate or the implementation of activities that make this activity not solve the problem of students' interest in reading?

Reading is also a complex activity in which students capture and convey new information and the author's messages that will increase their knowledge (Alenezi, 2021) and involve lexical language skills. In addition, students will also learn about vocabulary, expressions, and grammar, which will help them quickly understand the ideas conveyed in the information. However, it makes students feel that reading is a complex activity and makes them even more lazy to read. On the other hand, reading is a fundamental learning activity for students (Erdem, 2015). Therefore, if students make reading a routine activity, it will significantly impact their understanding, especially for students in tertiary institutions who are required to have broad and deep thoughts. In addition, reading has a significant influence on EFL students in college who choose English majors. They can learn vocabulary acquisition, spelling ability, style, and grammar unconsciously from reading. This statement is supported by the opinion of Alqahtani (2015) that the relationship between vocabulary and language use is very strong to make it easier for students to convey ideas using appropriate language. In addition, the selection and use of language can also increase students' vocabulary.

Meanwhile, in practice, many teachers who teach languages, especially English, to EFL students through traditional methods, do not care about learning vocabulary. In addition, students in the classroom need to be given more time to do reading activities; they don't get much time, making them lose information and understand vocabulary (Ruzin, 2019). This statement is also based on (2022), which states that with enough time to be given to students in reading activities, they will gain knowledge and information they have never known. The language curriculum used by developing countries focuses more on intensive reading. Meanwhile, in reading, students must know a lot about learning vocabulary so that they can convey information using the target language in contrast to the activities required by EFL students in Indonesia, especially university students, where they are required to read several book sources to improve and explore their critical thinking in understanding information from specific readings. In addition, EFL students in tertiary institutions will tend to understand a sentence from some information in a reading regardless of the meaning of each word. They often rely on dictionaries to interpret and transfer the meanings of new words that they did not know before.

Therefore, students' reading difficulties and lack of motivation to read in students must be overcome by the teacher by choosing the right learning strategy. One strategy to overcome students' reading difficulties and increase students' reading motivation is to increase reading interest, primarily through extensive reading. Based on Carrell & Carson (1997) and Wijaya (2021), extensive reading focuses on students as readers to get the purpose of reading for pleasure without focusing on linguistic understanding. Student motivation will increase automatically by making students comfortable and happy doing reading activities. Several studies explain that extensive reading is a strategy for learning texts that require students to read many books, including linguistics learning (Grabe & Stoller, 2020). Many researchers have also implemented extensive reading in learning (Niazifar & Shakibaei, 2019), where they have examined quantitatively the relationship between extensive reading and learning motivation and language development students possess through student reading activities.

Extensive reading plays an important role in the vocabulary development of EFL students in college, especially those majoring in English, where English is their second language, which requires them to understand four aspects: listening, writing, speaking, and reading (Susanto & Widyaningsih, 2018). In line with that, Day (2015) assumes that the purpose of extensive reading is to increase students' vocabulary even though they read many texts they like. In addition, using extensive reading strategies is recommended to use tiered reading materials. This is one of the reading materials used in extensive reading strategies to facilitate EFL student's reading comprehension due to the selection of vocabulary in graded reading books (Singkum & Chinwonno, 2021). The extensive reading strategy, which contains ten principles from Day and Bamford, is very suitable to be implemented to help with motivational problems in reading (Ng et al., 2019). In addition, the ten principles of extensive reading from Day & Bamford are also able to improve students' abilities, especially in the field of language; this increase is not only in the linguistics aspect but also non-linguistics (Puspa & Ragawanti, 2022).

Some previous studies also raised issues in extensive reading. One of the advantages of implementing extensive reading in the classroom is that it can increase students' vocabulary. This statement is also supported by Chavangklang et al. (2019), who explains that by implementing the extensive reading program, students will acquire new vocabulary incidentally. The new vocabulary they get depends on how many books they read. Other studies providing similar results regarding the advantages of an extensive reading program were conducted on high school students. Nursiwi & Floriasti (2020) stated that there was an increase in vocabulary on the results of the pre-test and post-test conducted on high school students after they had carried out an extensive reading program. Based on the background of the problems mentioned above, only a few studies have focused on using extensive reading strategies to improve the vocabulary skills of EFL students in tertiary institutions, especially in Indonesia. Therefore, this study focuses more on students' perceptions of the extensive reading strategies used in teaching extensive reading.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used descriptive qualitative research to present various data and describe the activities and conditions that take place in the EFL class. The selection of a qualitative approach was based on research results that had been analyzed by researchers who were presented by providing descriptions in the form of words; besides that, researchers also did not need numbers or measurements in presenting research results (Hawkes, 1994).

To understand how the procedures are carried out by researchers when collecting data, Figure 1 will be summarized in a flowchart.

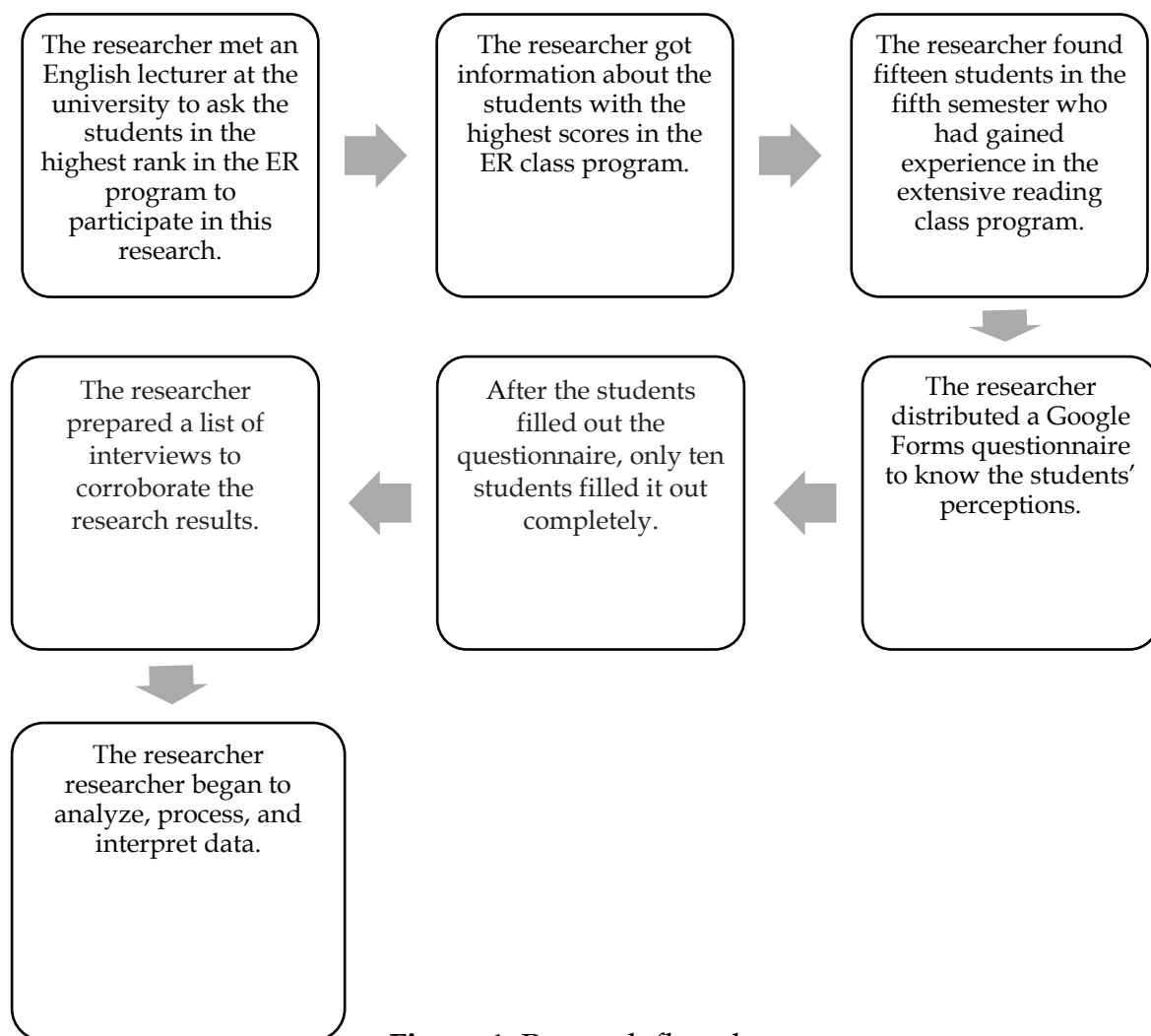


Figure 1. Research flowchart.

This study used survey methods in questionnaires and interviews to collect data to be analyzed. Questionnaires and interviews were conducted to determine students' perceptions of the extensive reading program when carrying out extensive reading activities in English class. A total of fifteen fifth-semester students who had gained experience in getting the extensive reading class program filled out a survey in the form of a questionnaire, which was distributed online using the Google form. The researchers prepared and organized the data obtained in the first step. Then, in the second stage, the researchers wrote separate codes on the data to make it easier to analyze the data based on the questions and problems that arise in this study. The third stage was to reduce data that were not needed in analyzing research results. In the final stage, namely interpreting data, the researchers wrote down the study results in a descriptive and structured manner to make it easier to conclude data (Pelin, 2020).

Fifteen students were selected based on the results of the highest scores in the extensive reading class program. After all the selected students filled out the survey using the Google form, only ten students provided information and answered the questionnaire wholly and correctly. The activity continued with conducted interviews with the ten students. The interview list was prepared to support and strengthen the results of a questionnaire filled in by students. Researchers have prepared five questions in the interviews covering the conditions and practices in the extensive reading class program in the English department, students' perceptions of the extensive

reading learning program, and the final question about the effect of the progress of students' vocabulary development on extensive reading activities and learning motivation especially in reading activities after students carry out the ER program (Grabe & Stoller, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of this study were shown to be concluded using a questionnaire and interview presented online. The list of questionnaires was given to fifteen fifth-semester undergraduate students majoring in English who had received extensive reading courses, but only ten students filled them out completely. The questionnaire list is classified into two categories: the conditions of the extensive reading program class and the effect of students' vocabulary mastery through extensive reading. The conclusions from the results of the questionnaire are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The result of the questionnaire

The Conditions of the ER Class Program	YES	NO	UNSURE
I understand what extensive reading is	73.3%	6.7%	20.0%
I understand the importance of an extensive reading program	93.3%	0.0%	6.7%
I believe extensive reading programs increase my interest in reading	86.6%	0.0%	13.4%
The extensive reading program helps me understand the story's contents.	20.0%	66.6%	13.4%
I believe that I can learn English quickly through reading for pleasure in an extensive reading program	93.3%	0.0%	6.7%
The Effect of Students' Vocabulary Mastery Through ER	YES	NO	UNSURE
I believe that extensive reading has a good impact on increasing vocabulary	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I believe that reading books in an extensive reading program can increase motivation in vocabulary building in the classroom	79.9%	6.7%	13.4%
I believe that I can get new vocabulary through graded reading material in the extensive reading program	93.3%	0.0%	6.7%
I can understand the meaning of vocabulary and story content	20.0%	66.6%	13.4%
I can overcome problems in vocabulary difficulties that arise	73.3%	6.7%	20.0%

From the questionnaire results in Table 1, the researchers categorize them in graphical form to make it easier to find the conclusions from the data analysis, which is likely in Figure 2.

The Conditions of the ER Class Program

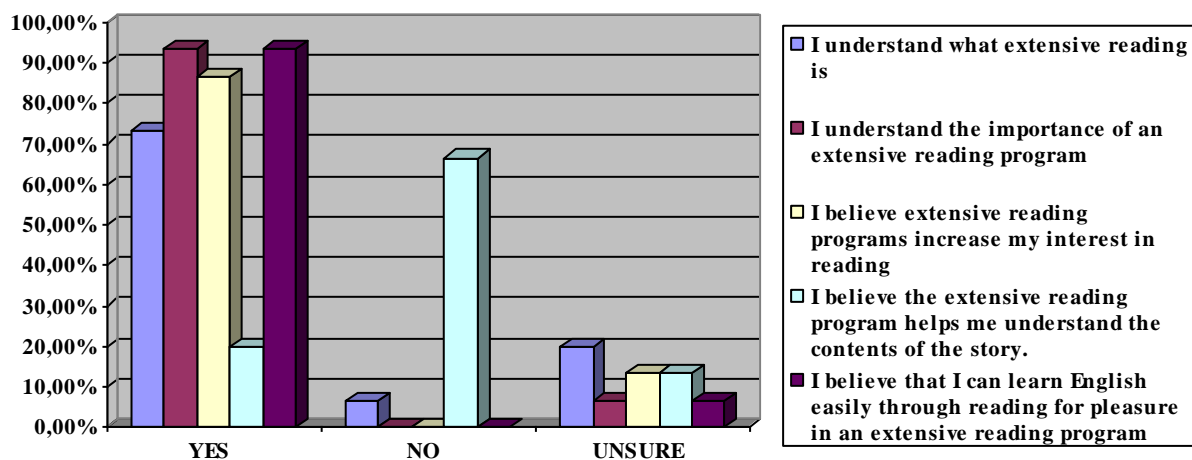


Figure 2. A graph of ER class program conditions.

Figure 2 illustrates students' perceptions of class conditions when they received the extensive reading program. Most students have understood an extensive reading program and how to implement it. This is shown by the figure of 73.3% depicted on the graph. Students' understanding of extensive reading also aligns with their thoughts about it; almost all students (93.3%) know the importance of this extensive reading program. The extensive reduction program can also increase students' reading interest. This was shown by 86.6% who stated that their interest in reading had increased by participating in the program. Even though students' interest in reading increased because they participated in the extensive reading program, some students (66.6%) found it challenging to understand the context of the stories they read. However, on the other hand, many students (93.3%) felt happy and easy to learn English when participating in the extensive reading program.

The Effect of Students' Vocabulary Mastery Through ER

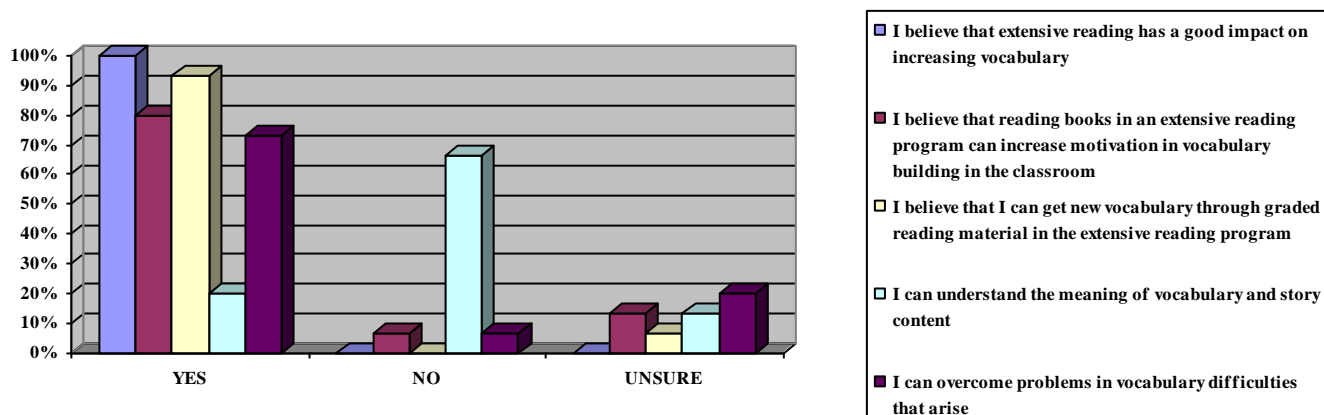


Figure 3. The effect of students' vocabulary mastery through ER.

Figure 3 describes the effects arising after students participate in the extensive reading program. From the graph, it can be seen that the extensive reading program affects students' vocabulary mastery. All students thought that the extensive reading program had a good effect on increasing students' vocabulary. Some students (79.9%) also believed their motivation increased through the extensive reading program. With the increased motivation to read, many students (93.3%) felt that they had acquired new vocabulary in this program. Unfortunately, this is not matched by students' understanding of the story's contents. A number (66.6%) found understanding the contents of the stories they read challenging. Nevertheless, this can be overcome, as evidenced by the opinions of students (73.3%) who state that they can overcome the problems that arise around vocabulary.

Discussion

From Table 1, the questionnaire results are divided into two figures, which aim to make it easier to conclude the analysis of the data obtained. Figure 1 depicts the questionnaire results that focus on ER program class conditions. Not a few students (73.3%) already have a good understanding of extensive reading. Almost all students agree (93.3%) with this program's importance in supporting their reading skills. Several students (86.6%) supported this, who believed that their reading motivation could be increased through an extensive reading program. The findings from this study's results align with (Yang et al., 2021), who also argue that the motivation and understanding of vocational high school students in Taiwan increase with the extensive reading program. However, only a few students (20.0%) could understand the story's contents and the vocabulary they read. However, almost all students (93.3%) agree that reading through reading for pleasure in extensive reading courses can motivate them to read by choosing the vocabulary used in the books they read. Therefore, many students agree with the practice of the extensive reading program in courses with the same name. Extensive reading helps improve students' reading skills in learning English because reading is for pleasure in the extensive reading program.

Figure 2 explains the effect of students' vocabulary mastery through ER. Figure 2 shows that all students (100.0%) believe that the extensive reading program positively impacts students' skills, especially in reading activities. In addition, some students (79.9%) said that reading books in the extensive reading program increased their motivation to learn to understand their vocabulary for reading. On the other hand, almost all students (93.3%) stated that they found new vocabulary through reading in this program. The increase and acquisition of vocabulary through extensive reading activities shown by the results in this study support the results of several studies (Ateek, 2021; Chavangklang et al., 2019), which state that students' vocabulary increases when they participate in an extensive reading program. Although many students could find new vocabulary through this program, only a few students (20.0%) could understand the contents of the book and the meanings of some of the vocabulary. Therefore, it is unfortunate that only a few students (73.3%) can overcome their difficulties in reading.

The Result of the Interview

The second survey method to answer questions in this study uses interviews. The interview was conducted after the students filled out the questionnaire and the researchers got the questionnaire results. After filling out the questionnaire, it was

found that only ten students took part in the interview stage. This stage is used to find out information about the effect of the extensive reading class program on students' vocabulary mastery skills after they get and run the ER program in the course. Every student gets the same question. The first question explains students' perceptions of this ER program and shows that all students explain that the program can help students acquire new vocabulary. This is supported by previous research (Green, 2022), which states that students' vocabulary acquisition can be increased through an extensive reading program. It is because each student gets an assignment from the lecturer to read several articles according to each student's interests. Besides that, they have to record vocabulary they did not know before. Extended reading is successful if students enjoy reading activities, which can influence their motivation to read more. Understanding and acquiring new vocabulary affects students' reading fluency; they become excited to read because they understand the vocabulary in their books when they do extensive reading programs. This was proven from the results of student interviews, one of which was the third and fifth students who stated that:

"At first, I was confused and had trouble because my lecturer gave me the task of reading several articles, but after getting used to it, I was happy to do it because by reading it, my vocabulary would increase."

"My lecturer not only asked me and my friends to read a lot of reading materials, especially articles, but also asked us to write new vocabulary that we did not know before. By writing the vocabulary, I feel the benefits of this subject program because I can add to the vocabulary that I have"

The findings from this research also mention not only the addition of new vocabulary, but students also explain that they can find out more about the latest study because, in the ER course, the lecturer asks students to read articles. The following is an explanation from the fifth student:

"With the ER course program, I get a new vocabulary, especially the vocabulary used to write scientific articles. Besides vocabulary, with the habit of reading many articles in the ER course, I can also know the scope of the latest research."

On the other hand, some students have different opinions about the ER course program. They realized that there was an addition of new vocabulary after the program. However, they feel the reading in the ER program is more complex. They have to make a summary of each reading material they have read, where this activity requires critical thinking for each student (Adilla & Jatmiko, 2021; Ma'Arif, 2018; Ramdani et al., 2021; Saphira & Prahani, 2022; Supena et al., 2021). Moreover, students are asked to compile a framework and hypothesize from every article title they read.

"I agree that by reading in the ER course, my vocabulary will increase because I have to write down new vocabulary I have never known. However, I need help to select vocabulary in the reading material. Besides that, making a summary at the end of each reading makes me think critically because the reading material I read is a research article."

"The lecturer asked my friends and me to summarize every article we have read. I found it difficult because I did not understand all the vocabulary in the reading material."

Some students who experience reading difficulties have other views on the extensive reading activity program, which is one of the subjects in tertiary institutions. They get

the motivation to learn complex vocabulary from continuing to read and looking for the meaning of the vocabulary from easy vocabulary, and they know. This means that reading material in extensive reading increases students' motivation to read.

"I have a little difficulty when I have to read, especially in English texts, because sometimes I cannot understand all the vocabulary in the text. However, when I do not know a vocabulary in the text I read, it makes me even more interested in finding the meaning of that vocabulary from other words I know the meaning of."

Even though some students found it difficult with this reading activity, all thought they got new knowledge after reading in this Extensive Reading activity program. In addition, by reading many articles based on the themes they have chosen according to their preferences, they can also understand the culture of several countries and learn about activities in the world of education in these countries through articles read by students. Supporting the results of this study, previous research (Aka, 2015; Laili et al., 2022) stated that mastering knowledge about culture when doing this extensive reading program allows students to know and learn about the culture of other countries that they may have never visited.

"At first, I was bored and confused when I was asked to read as many articles as possible because I did not know much vocabulary in English. However, after reading many articles, I am happy with this extensive reading activity because my vocabulary has increased. I can also understand activities and culture in countries I have never visited."

"By reading the many articles in this extensive program, I can discover the specific vocabulary often used in writing scientific papers. I also know stories about other countries, especially in education. So, this extensive reading program has allowed me and my friends to process learning, especially English."

"Sometimes, I still do not understand the language used in some English articles. Nevertheless, I am happy because I can learn how to make articles based on the summaries we have made and know about activities in other countries based on the articles I read; I am participating in learning activities in that country."

After knowing about the perceptions of students who have carried out reading activities in this extensive reading program towards the reading texts they read. The question arises again about how students perceive the classroom conditions when they do the extensive reading program in a course with the same name. Several three students where they are a minority feel that this course is boring, supported by the opinions they convey as follows:

"This course did not run smoothly. This can be seen from the fact that not all students can speak in this course. They are embarrassed and cannot express themselves in speaking because the situation in the class is only reading activities without any other activities, which makes students unable to interact and have discussions with each other."

"I am bored with class models like this. Reading many articles increases vocabulary, but the discussions are concise, so we must understand the meaning of the articles we read ourselves."

"The class that only read then summarized the contents of the reading made me confused and bored with the class atmosphere, plus I had a little difficulty reading in English. There was a concise discussion after we concluded the articles I had read. "

Even though there is a slight difference of opinion about this extensive reading program, there are still many students who are the majority who think that their motivation to read has increased because of this program. The increase in vocabulary occurred when they had finished participating in the extensive reading program. In addition, they hope that later in the extensive reading activity program, there will be added types of books that students can read, such as novels or comics, not just journal articles that make students feel bored. Students' interest in reading can be increased by selecting good books and the strategies used in teaching reading to EFL students. When students read with pleasure, they can quickly increase their motivation to read and influence the addition of vocabulary in their vocabulary log (Tuan, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: The results showed that many students positively perceived the extensive reading program. The majority of students explained that there was an increase in their vocabulary through extensive reading. In addition, the researchers also found that students' reading motivation and knowledge increased after they underwent an extensive reading program. When students read a lot of reading material, it makes it easier for them to understand the contents of the reading with increased vocabulary.

Implication: The findings of this research, it is hoped that it can help to design and develop English learning activities, especially those that focus on reading skills, and can also facilitate university students to increase vocabulary acquisition because they already have a high motivation to read.

Limitation: This research was conducted to determine university students' perceptions of the extensive reading program.

Future Research: The results of this research are expected so that lecturers can provide innovation in learning to read. In addition, this research can also support further research to find out about the effectiveness of vocabulary acquisition in English reading programs through extensive reading activities.

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***Zelvia Dina Octavianti, S.Hum., M.Pd. (Corresponding Author)**

Surabaya State University

Jl. Lidah Wetan, Lidah Wetan, Surabaya, East Java, 60213, Indonesia

Email: zelvia.19008@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Prof. Pratiwi Retnaningdyah, M.Hum., M.A., Ph.D.

Surabaya State University

Jl. Lidah Wetan, Lidah Wetan, Surabaya, East Java, 60213, Indonesia

Email: pratiwiretnaningdyah@unesa.ac.id

Ahmad Munir, S.Pd., M.Ed., Ph.D.

Surabaya State University

Jl. Lidah Wetan, Lidah Wetan, Surabaya, East Java, 60213, Indonesia

Email: ahmadmunir@unesa.ac.id
