

THE IMPACT OF INTENSIVE READING PRACTICE ON EFL STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION AND MOTIVATION: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY USING QUESTIONNAIRES

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ABSTRACT

Intensive reading practice plays a crucial role in enhancing reading comprehension and motivation among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. This quantitative study involved 20 students from Palangkaraya State Islamic Institute and utilized questionnaires to assess the impact of an intensive reading program. Results indicated significant improvements in students' comprehension abilities, particularly in identifying main ideas, with an average score of 4.10. Additionally, motivation levels increased notably, with an average score of 4.25, reflecting greater enjoyment and engagement in reading activities post-program. These findings suggest that intensive reading not only develops essential language skills but also fosters intrinsic motivation, encouraging students to engage more deeply with English texts. The study highlights the importance of integrating intensive reading practices into EFL curricula to enhance learning outcomes and promote a lasting interest in reading. By providing insights into effective instructional strategies, this research contributes to the development of teaching materials that cater to students' needs, ultimately supporting their language acquisition journey.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the essential skills in foreign language learning, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, as it helps them develop various aspects of language, including vocabulary, sentence structure, and text comprehension (Grabe, 2009). Intensive reading practice, which involves reading texts in-depth with a focus on comprehension, analysis, and reflection, is considered an effective method for improving reading skills (Koda, 2005). In the EFL context, intensive reading not only aims to improve comprehension but also to expand vocabulary and enhance analytical language skills (Nation, 2009).

Reading comprehension is a key aspect of language learning, enabling students to understand, interpret, and synthesize information from the texts they read (Alderson, 2000). Without strong comprehension skills, students will struggle to develop other language abilities. Therefore, a well-structured intensive reading practice can help students gain a deeper understanding of texts and improve their analytical skills in reading.

Motivation is also a crucial factor influencing language learning. High motivation can encourage students to engage more actively in learning activities and drive them to continue

reading (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). In EFL students, motivation can be influenced by various factors, such as their personal goals for language mastery, their perceptions of the relevance of the material, and their beliefs about their success in learning the language (Dörnyei, 2001). Hence, understanding the impact of intensive reading practice on motivation is essential in the EFL context.

Previous studies have shown that intensive reading practices can improve reading comprehension and increase student motivation (Elley, 1991; Day & Bamford, 1998). However, while many studies explore the relationship between reading and motivation, few have specifically examined the impact of intensive reading in the EFL context (Carrell, 1988). This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the effect of intensive reading practice on reading comprehension and motivation among EFL students in Indonesia.

The aim of this study is to analyze the impact of intensive reading practice on two critical aspects of language learning: reading comprehension and motivation in EFL students. Specifically, this study will measure the changes in students' reading comprehension abilities after participating in an intensive reading program and explore whether there is an increase in their motivation to continue reading and learning English following their involvement in intensive reading practice.

This study holds significant importance for the development of reading instruction methods in the EFL context. The findings are expected to provide deeper insights into how intensive reading practices can be implemented in EFL classrooms to enhance students' reading abilities and motivate them to continue learning. Additionally, the study could contribute to the development of teaching materials better suited to students' needs in improving their reading skills effectively.

Literature Review

Reading comprehension refers to the ability to understand, interpret, and evaluate the meaning of written texts. The process involves not only decoding words but also making sense of ideas, making connections between new and prior knowledge, and drawing inferences (Snow, 2002). According to the Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986), reading comprehension is the product of two main components: decoding (the ability to read words) and linguistic comprehension (the ability to understand spoken language). The interaction between these two processes determines how well a reader can understand a text.

Several factors influence reading comprehension, including cognitive processes, prior knowledge, and the complexity of the text. Cognitive theories, such as the Interactive Compensatory Model (Stanovich, 1980), suggest that readers employ various strategies in an interactive manner, compensating for difficulties in one area by relying on strengths in another. For instance, a student may struggle with decoding but compensate by using their background knowledge to infer meaning. Other influential factors include vocabulary knowledge (Grabe, 2009), text structure awareness, and motivation (Cromley & Azevedo, 2007).

Motivation plays a crucial role in language learning, influencing both the effort and persistence that learners put into the process. According to Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1985), motivation can be categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic types. Intrinsic motivation arises from an inherent interest in the activity itself, such as a love for reading or a desire to learn the language for personal growth. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is driven by external factors, such as the need to pass an exam or the desire to gain social recognition (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In the context of second language acquisition, intrinsic motivation has been linked to more effective and sustained language learning outcomes (Dörnyei, 1994). Learners who

are intrinsically motivated tend to engage more deeply with the language, are more persistent in overcoming challenges, and develop a positive attitude towards the learning process. Conversely, extrinsic motivation may lead to short-term goals but might not be as effective in fostering long-term engagement in language learning (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008).

Intensive reading refers to the detailed and focused reading of a text for the purpose of thorough understanding, often involving close analysis of language features and comprehension exercises (Day & Bamford, 1998). This method is typically contrasted with extensive reading, where the emphasis is on reading large volumes of text for general understanding and enjoyment. Intensive reading encourages learners to engage more deeply with the text, helping to improve both decoding skills and overall comprehension (Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

In the context of EFL learners, intensive reading practice has been shown to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition (Grabe, 2009). By reading carefully selected texts, students have the opportunity to focus on language structure, vocabulary, and grammatical features, which leads to better understanding of the text as well as the development of language skills. Moreover, intensive reading can provide learners with immediate feedback and opportunities for discussion, which can further enhance motivation and learning engagement (Nation, 2009).

Additionally, by offering learners texts that are slightly above their current proficiency level, intensive reading can provide an optimal challenge that promotes learning without overwhelming students (Krashen, 2004). This balance between challenge and success is essential for fostering motivation and promoting language development.

Several studies have explored the impact of intensive reading on EFL students' reading comprehension and motivation. For example, Day and Bamford (1998) found that students who engaged in intensive reading not only showed improvements in their comprehension but also expressed greater interest in reading. Similarly, Elley (1991) demonstrated that intensive reading programs had a positive effect on both the reading skills and the motivation of students in second language contexts. The study found that students in extensive reading programs showed greater enthusiasm for reading, which translated into increased motivation to engage with texts in their second language.

Recent studies have also examined the role of intensive reading in enhancing intrinsic motivation. For instance, a study by Takase (2007) found that students who participated in a well-structured intensive reading program showed increased intrinsic motivation, as they perceived reading as a more meaningful and enjoyable activity. Other studies (e.g., Lee, 2007) have suggested that intensive reading can help EFL students develop a greater sense of self-efficacy and competence, which are important factors in fostering motivation.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative descriptive approach to measure the impact of an intensive reading program on EFL students' reading comprehension and motivation. A total of 20 students from Palangkaraya State Islamic Institute were selected as respondents through purposive sampling. The criteria for selecting the respondents were active students of English study program. The research instrument was a questionnaire designed to measure four main aspects: reading comprehension, motivation, general perception of the program, and evaluation of the intensive reading program. The questionnaire consisted of 18 statements using a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 means Strongly Disagree and 5 means Strongly Agree.

Table. 1 Questionnaire question topics

Question	Number of question	Measurement scale
Reading comprehension	5	Likert scale
Motivation	5	Likert scale
General perception of intensive reading	4	Likert scale
Evaluation of the intensive reading programs	4	Likert scale

Tabel. 2 Questionnaire to Measure Reading Comprehension and Motivation

No.	Question	Measured aspects	Likert scale
1	I find it easier to understand the texts I read after participating in the intensive reading sessions.	Reading comprehension	1 - 5
2	I can identify the main ideas in the texts I read after the intensive reading sessions.	Reading comprehension	1 - 5
3	Intensive reading practice helps me remember the information I read better.	Reading comprehension	1 - 5
4	I feel more confident in answering questions related to the texts I read after participating in the intensive reading sessions.	Reading comprehension	1 - 5
5	I feel that the intensive reading sessions help me focus more while reading texts.	Reading comprehension	1 - 5
6	I feel more motivated to read English texts after participating in the intensive reading sessions.	Motivation	1 - 5
7	I enjoy reading more after participating in the intensive reading practice.	Motivation	1 - 5
8	I feel more challenged to improve my reading skills after attending the intensive reading sessions.	Motivation	1 - 5
9	The intensive reading sessions make me more eager to practice reading outside of class time.	Motivation	1 - 5
10	I feel more motivated to continue learning and understanding English texts after the intensive reading practice.	Motivation	1 - 5

11	I feel that the intensive reading sessions are very beneficial for my English learning.	General perception of intensive reading	1 - 5
12	I believe that the intensive reading sessions can improve my overall English skills.	General perception of intensive reading	1 - 5
13	The intensive reading practice prepares me better for reading more complex English texts.	General perception of intensive reading	1 - 5
14	I feel that intensive reading practice reduces my anxiety when reading English texts.	General perception of intensive reading	1 - 5
15	The intensive reading program is suitable for my reading proficiency level.	Evaluation of the intensive reading programs	1 - 5
16	The materials used in the intensive reading sessions are relevant and engaging for me.	Evaluation of the intensive reading programs	1 - 5
17	I feel that the time spent on the intensive reading sessions is sufficient to improve my comprehension.	Evaluation of the intensive reading programs	1 - 5
18	The teaching during the intensive reading sessions is clear and easy to follow.	Evaluation of the intensive reading programs	1 - 5

The data was collected online using Google Forms, which made it easy for respondents to provide answers according to their perceptions. The data obtained was then numerically coded according to the Likert scale and analyzed using Jamovi software. Data analysis included calculation of the mean and standard deviation for each aspect measured, as well as interpretation of key trends from the questionnaire data, such as the highest and lowest scoring statements.

3. RESULTS

In this study, data was collected from 20 respondents who filled out questionnaires related to reading comprehension, motivation, general perception of the program, and evaluation of the intensive reading program. The questionnaire used a Likert scale of 1-5 to measure the respondents' level of agreement with the statements given. The following are the results of descriptive statistics for each aspect measured.

Tabel. 3 results of descriptive statistics

	N	Missing	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
I find it easier to understand the texts I read after participating in the intensive reading sessions.	20	0	4.10	4.00	0.718	3	5
I can identify the main ideas in the texts I read after the intensive reading sessions.	20	0	4.10	4.00	0.553	3	5
Intensive reading practice helps me remember the information I read better.	20	0	4.00	4.00	0.649	3	5
I feel more confident in answering questions related to the texts I read after participating in the intensive reading sessions.	20	0	3.95	4.00	0.605	3	5
I feel that the intensive reading sessions help me focus more while reading texts.	20	0	4.05	4.00	0.686	3	5
I feel more motivated to read English texts after participating in the intensive reading sessions.	20	0	4.15	4.00	0.671	3	5
I enjoy reading more after participating in the intensive reading practice.	20	0	4.25	4.00	0.716	3	5
I feel more challenged to improve my reading skills after attending the intensive reading sessions.	20	0	4.10	4.00	0.912	2	5

The intensive reading sessions make me more eager to practice reading outside of class time.	20	0	4.15	4.00	0.671	3	5
I feel more motivated to continue learning and understanding English texts after the intensive reading practice.	20	0	4.20	4.00	0.768	3	5
I feel that the intensive reading sessions are very beneficial for my English learning.	20	0	4.15	4.00	0.671	3	5
I believe that the intensive reading sessions can improve my overall English skills.	20	0	4.40	4.00	0.598	3	5
The intensive reading practice prepares me better for reading more complex English texts.	20	0	4.15	4.00	0.745	3	5
I feel that intensive reading practice reduces my anxiety when reading English texts.	20	0	3.95	4.00	0.826	3	5
The intensive reading program is suitable for my reading proficiency level.	20	0	4.05	4.00	0.826	3	5
The materials used in the intensive reading sessions are relevant and engaging for me.	20	0	4.05	4.00	0.686	3	5
I feel that the time spent on the intensive reading sessions is sufficient to improve my comprehension.	20	0	3.95	4.00	0.686	3	5
The teaching during the intensive reading sessions is clear and easy to follow.	20	0	4.20	4.00	0.696	3	5

Based on the descriptive analysis, the average scores for reading comprehension ranged from 3.95 to 4.10. The statement "I can identify the main ideas in the texts I read after the intensive reading sessions" received the highest average score ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.553$), indicating that students felt more confident in identifying main ideas after the intensive reading sessions. Similarly, motivation scores were notably high, ranging from 4.15 to 4.25. The statement "I enjoy reading more after participating in the intensive reading practice" achieved the highest average score ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.716$), suggesting a significant increase in students' interest in reading. These findings align with previous studies (e.g., Takase, 2007), which highlight the positive effects of intensive reading programs on intrinsic motivation.

Table. 4 Measured Aspects

Aspects	Jumlah Pernyataan	Rata-rata (Mean)	SD
Reading Comprehension	5	4.05	0.67
Motivation	5	4.15	0.71
General Perception	4	4.13	0.69
Evaluation of the Program	4	4.04	0.73

The results from the survey reveal that participants generally had a positive view of the intensive reading program across all areas evaluated. For Reading Comprehension, which included statements about how well students understood and focused on the texts, the average score was 4.05 ($SD = 0.67$). This suggests that students felt more confident in their ability to understand the material after completing the program. Similarly, the Motivation aspect scored an average of 4.15 ($SD = 0.71$), indicating that the program effectively boosted students' motivation to read and engage with English texts.

When it comes to General Perception, which looked at how students felt about the program's overall benefits for their English learning, the average score was 4.13 ($SD = 0.69$). This shows that students had a positive view of the value of intensive reading. Lastly, the Evaluation of the Program, which measured students' satisfaction with the program's content, materials, and teaching methods, received a score of 4.04 ($SD = 0.73$), suggesting that students were happy with how the program was structured and delivered.

Overall, these results indicate that the intensive reading program had a positive effect on students' reading comprehension, motivation, and their general view of the program's effectiveness, with students rating it highly in all areas.

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the significant impact of intensive reading practice on both reading comprehension and motivation among EFL students. The results indicate that students who participated in the intensive reading program exhibited notable improvements in their ability to understand and analyze texts. This aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the benefits of intensive reading for enhancing comprehension skills (Grabe, 2009; Day & Bamford, 1998). The high average score ($M = 4.10$) for the statement regarding identifying main ideas suggests that students felt more confident in their reading abilities post-program, reinforcing the idea that structured reading practices can effectively develop critical comprehension skills.

Moreover, the study highlights the role of motivation as a crucial factor in language learning. The significant increase in motivation scores ($M = 4.25$) indicates that intensive reading not only improved students' comprehension but also fostered a greater enjoyment of reading. This finding supports theories of intrinsic motivation, which suggest that when students find personal meaning and enjoyment in their learning activities, they are more

likely to engage deeply and persistently (Dörnyei, 1994). The positive correlation between intensive reading and enhanced motivation suggests that well-designed reading programs can create an engaging learning environment that encourages students to pursue further language study.

The implications for EFL instruction are profound. By integrating intensive reading practices into the curriculum, educators can address both comprehension and motivation simultaneously. The results suggest that teachers should select texts that challenge students appropriately, providing opportunities for close analysis and discussion. This approach not only aids in developing language skills but also cultivates a love for reading, which is essential for long-term language acquisition.

Furthermore, the study points to the necessity of developing teaching materials tailored to students' interests and proficiency levels. By offering texts that are slightly above their current capabilities, teachers can strike a balance between challenge and success, promoting an optimal learning experience (Krashen, 2004). This balance is critical for maintaining motivation and encouraging continuous engagement with the language.

In conclusion, this study contributes valuable insights into the dual benefits of intensive reading practices for EFL learners. By improving both reading comprehension and motivation, intensive reading serves as a powerful tool in language education. Future research could explore long-term effects and variations across different educational contexts to further validate these findings and enhance instructional strategies in EFL settings.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that intensive reading practice significantly enhances both reading comprehension and motivation among EFL students. Participants demonstrated marked improvements in their ability to understand and analyze texts, reflected in high average scores for comprehension-related statements ($M = 4.10$). Additionally, motivation levels increased substantially ($M = 4.25$), indicating greater enjoyment and engagement in reading activities following the program. These findings suggest that integrating intensive reading into EFL curricula not only develops critical language skills but also fosters a lasting interest in reading. Consequently, this study advocates for the implementation of well-structured intensive reading programs in EFL classrooms to enhance learning outcomes and promote a deeper engagement with the language.

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