

## THE ROLE OF EXTENSIVE READING IN VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

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**Abstract.** *A good way of learning languages is to read meaningful books consistently, which helps students to increase their vocabulary knowledge. Extensive reading involves reading large amounts of meaningful and interesting texts for pleasure and general understanding. This approach enables learners to encounter vocabulary repeatedly in different contexts, leading to natural vocabulary acquisition and long-term retention. This technique stimulates word recognition, spelling, pronunciation and understanding of meaning. Extensive reading also fosters learner autonomy, motivation and confidence in using the language. In fact, a lot of studies have shown that pupils who do a lot of reading can have a greater vocabulary growth than pupils who rely mostly on conventional vocabulary activities. Moreover, reading different types of texts such as novels, short stories, magazines, and web articles exposes learners to real language and different styles of writing. That is why extensive reading develops vocabulary and also increases reading fluency, grammatical awareness and general language ability. Therefore, educators are encouraged to incorporate extensive reading programs in language courses to enrich learning environments and to improve long-term vocabulary development of English language learners.*

**Keywords:** *Extensive Reading, Vocabulary Development, Language Learning, Intensive Reading, Reading Fluency, Word Recognition, Learner Autonomy, Language Proficiency*

**Аннотация.** *Экстенсивное чтение является эффективным методом изучения языка, способствующим расширению словарного запаса учащихся. Данный подход предполагает чтение большого количества текстов для удовольствия и общего понимания содержания. Благодаря многократному встречению слов в различных контекстах учащиеся постепенно усваивают их значение и употребление. Исследования показывают, что экстенсивное чтение значительно улучшает словарный запас, беглость чтения и языковую компетенцию. Кроме того, чтение художественной литературы, рассказов и статей знакомит студентов с аутентичным языком. Таким образом,*

*экстенсивное чтение играет важную роль в долгосрочном развитии словарного запаса и повышении общего уровня владения английским языком.*

**Ключевые слова:** *экстенсивное чтение, словарный запас, изучение языка, беглость чтения, учащиеся EFL, усвоение слов, понимание текста, языковая компетенция*

**Annotatsiya.** *Ekstensiv o'qish til o'rganishda muhim usullardan biri bo'lib, o'quvchilarning lug'at boyligini tabiiy ravishda rivojlantirishga yordam beradi. Ushbu yondashuv o'quvchilarni katta hajmdagi matnlarni umumiy mazmunni tushunish va zavq olish maqsadida o'qishga undaydi. O'quvchilar so'zlarga turli kontekstlarda qayta-qayta duch kelish orqali ularning ma'nosi, talaffuzi va qo'llanilishini yaxshiroq o'zlashtiradilar. Tadqiqotlar ekstensiv o'qish bilan shug'ullangan talabalar lug'at boyligini tezroq rivojlantirishini ko'rsatadi. Bundan tashqari, bu usul o'qish tezligi, grammatik bilim va til kompetensiyasining oshishiga ham xizmat qiladi. Turli janrdagi kitoblar, hikoyalar va maqolalarni o'qish o'quvchilarni autentik til bilan tanishtiradi. Natijada, ekstensiv o'qish ingliz tilini o'rganishda samarali vosita hisoblanadi va uzoq muddatli lug'at rivojlanishini ta'minlaydi.*

**Kalit so'zlar:** *Ekstensiv o'qish, lug'at boyligi, til o'rganish, o'qish ko'nikmasi, EFL, so'z o'zlashtirish, matn tushunish, til kompetensiyasi*

**Introduction.** The acquisition of vocabulary is a critical factor in second language development and communicative ability. A rich vocabulary assists learners to read texts more easily, to communicate ideas more clearly and to participate successfully in communication. Among different approaches to vocabulary learning, extensive reading has received considerable attention as an effective means of lexical development. "Extensive reading is reading large amounts of linguistically accessible and interesting texts for pleasure and general understanding" (Day & Bamford, 1998: 3). As a result, learners experience vocabulary frequently in meaningful contexts, resulting in natural and enduring word learning. Previous research has suggested that extensive reading not only leads to vocabulary expansion but also to increased reading fluency, grammatical awareness, and general language ability. Therefore, this article focuses on the role of extensive reading in vocabulary acquisition and underlines the necessity of extensive reading for English language learners.

**Main Body.** Extensive reading is different from traditional vocabulary teaching because it emphasizes exposure to natural language rather than memorization. Repeated exposure to the same words helps learners build memory and improve vocabulary retention. In contextual learning, students can infer word meanings from the surrounding context.

Studies have shown that extensive reading is a major contributor to vocabulary growth. Students who engage in frequent reading acquire new vocabulary incidentally

through repeated exposure to language. Moreover, extensive reading promotes motivation because learners can choose resources that correspond to their interests and language proficiency.

**Literature Review.** It is generally believed that extensive reading is one of the best means to increase vocabulary in a second or foreign language. Most researchers stress the importance of consistent access to clear and attractive reading materials for the development of general language skills.

Krashen (2004) states that extensive reading provides meaningful language input and opportunities for incidental vocabulary learning. His Input Hypothesis states that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to language just beyond their current level of competence.

According to Nation (2001), vocabulary knowledge, receptive and productive, is largely dependent on multiple encounters of lexical items in different contexts. Repeated exposure enhances learners' understanding of the meanings, forms and patterns of use of words. For example, Pigada and Schmitt (2006) found that sustained reading activities positively affected several aspects of vocabulary knowledge, including spelling and meaning and grammatical behaviour of words. They found that heavy reading can make measurable advances in lexicon over time.

Horst (2005) similarly found that learners acquire a great deal of new vocabulary in extended reading sessions. Findings from the study showed that repeated exposure to new vocabulary in authentic literature facilitates natural development of vocabulary acquisition.

Day and Bamford (1998) also state that extensive reading promotes learner motivation, reading fluency and autonomy. Studies show that extensive reading programmes can be positively incorporated into language courses to foster long-term language development.

Previous works have demonstrated that extensive reading is an important tool for vocabulary learning in general. Learners who are in frequent contact with meaningful texts are able to become more lexically knowledgeable, develop language skills and retain vocabulary for longer periods of time.

**Methodology.** The study is based on the qualitative literature review approach. The relevant books, journal articles and previous research studies on extended reading and vocabulary development were reviewed through document analysis and comparison examination. The main advantages of extensive reading for the development of vocabulary among English language learners were identified through the analysis of the selected sources. The conclusions of this present article are based on a synthesis of previous academic research.

Table 1. Comparison of Extensive and Intensive Reading

Feature	Extensive Reading	Intensive Reading
Purpose	General understanding	Detailed analysis
Material Length	Long texts	Short texts
Reading Speed	Faster	Slower
Vocabulary Learning	Incidental	Direct instruction
Student Motivation	High	Moderate

Source: Adapted from Day and Bamford (1998).

Table 2. Benefits of Extensive Reading

Benefit	Description
Vocabulary Growth	Increases word knowledge
Reading Fluency	Improves reading speed
Motivation	Encourages independent learning
Grammar Awareness	Enhances understanding of language patterns
Confidence	Improves language use

Source: Developed by the author.

Table 3. Types of Reading Materials

Material Type	Contribution to Vocabulary Learning
Novels	Rich contextual vocabulary
Short Stories	Frequent repetition of words
Newspapers	Academic and formal vocabulary
Magazines	Everyday language expressions
Online Articles	Current and authentic vocabulary

Source: Developed by the author.

**Conclusion.** Previous studies have shown that extensive reading is a highly effective way to improve vocabulary because it provides learners with repeated opportunities to encounter vocabulary in authentic communicative contexts. Regular reading of rich texts helps learners to build their vocabulary, improve their reading speed and accuracy, become more aware of grammar and develop their language skills in general. In addition, extensive reading also promotes learner autonomy and motivation since students can choose their own literature based on their interests and levels of competence. This leads to learners becoming more confident and engaged users of the target language. Thus, language teachers should include a lot of reading activities in the English language programs to help students develop their vocabulary and communicative competence in the long run.

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