

# The Effectiveness of Extensive Reading Programme to Enhance Reading among Primary School Students in Rural Sarawak

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the L2 learners reading ability with low language proficiency in rural parts of Sarawak, Malaysia. The study was conducted by introducing a few extensive reading program to enable learners to gradually start reading a text with interest and not pressured or stressed to read due to exam. The researcher embarked on this research to find out what is lacking in the learners because they are not interested in reading an English text. The learners are only interested in reading materials that are related to their examination. The research was carried out on Year 3 students in a rural area in Kuching, Sarawak. The learners were not exposed to materials pertaining to English unless they are in school. The respondents were familiar with the Bahasa Melayu and other local dialects or their first language only. The lack of interest was due to the influence of first language and the environment which is only filled with one race that are fluent in the Malay language. A total of 32 students were chosen to take part in this study. Students' feedback on the effectiveness of Extensive Reading programme were obtained via questionnaire and interview with teachers and school principals. The findings of the study revealed that the unanimous agreement among respondents on the significance of English reading and the positive impact of the program aligns harmoniously with the existing literature. These findings underscore the value of such initiatives in cultivating a genuine interest in reading, particularly in contexts where access to educational resources may be limited. The findings of this research will be able to bring a paradigm shift in the reading habit among young learners in rural area in Sarawak.

**Keywords:** Extensive Reading Programme, Literacy, Effective Reading

## Introduction

As stated by the Ministry of Education, Primary Literacy and Numeracy programme was introduced as per the "KPM Bil. 14/2018 letter dated 19th December 2018. The steering committee agreed to implement this programme in selected schools based on their meeting

held in 2019. This meeting was chaired by the Director General of Education, Malaysia on 5th March 2019. The Levels of Mastery of Literacy & Numeracy with regard to English Language in schools in the state of Sarawak is low. The number of schools in Sarawak with students unable to achieve the required level of Mastery of the English language is 1,112 schools from a total of 1738 schools in Malaysia, the most when compared to any other state, as per the data from Institut Aminuddin Baki & the Sarawak State Education Department in February 2022. In addition, the level of Mastery of English Language in a comparison study of all states in Malaysia between the year 2020 & 2021 showed that there was a decline of 9.68% in the year 2021. Using the data above as a take-off value, programmes in Year 3 should be designed according to the needs and the abilities of the individual students. In this regard, teachers are given the autonomy to select relevant educational programmes to help their children better in the mastery of the English language. Mariano (2020) Emphasises on the Philippines, where English is a second language, students struggle with reading despite extensive use of intensive assessments in public schools. To address this, researchers tested Extensive Reading (ER) as an alternative to spark interest. In a study involving 10 frustrated readers from a local barangay in Manila, participants selected materials based on their reading levels, with assessments after each session. After ten weeks, notable improvements in both reading speed and comprehension were observed, forming the basis for extending the study to monitor ongoing progress.

In this extensive reading program, the learners' involvement was maximal to ensure the learners would benefit from the program. Regular conferencing or a small chat between the teacher and the learners was an ongoing process to ensure the learners were motivated and they stayed being motivated. Reading aloud in the class was encouraged and learners were given appraisal based on their performance. Furthermore, learners were asked to write down the synopsis, their thoughts whether positive or negative about the book. One main factor that was looked into is the over-use of dictionary that might discourage the learners to read further and also lead to the lack of understanding the gist of the story because more emphasize was given to focus on the language. Researcher motivated the students by showing the synopsis of certain story books on video, CD rom or audio.

It is an alarming wakeup call among educators and parents with children who totally cannot read average level of reading but more seriously about students who can read but lack of interest or motivation to read. Reading is also closely related to writing skill and students who do not take interest in reading tend to perform poorly in writing activity. In the last decade, there was a development in agreement on skills that blend in as the foundation for reading and writing task (Dickinson & Newman, 2006). A student needs to be rich in vocabulary, analyzing the gist of content through reading, and prior knowledge to understand text that is conveyed through print. In accordance to attain this level of achievement, students need to develop gradually these strands and be given opportunities to develop the skills, not in isolation but interactively. Knowing a meaning of word, is not sound of words, could motivate students' earliest experiences with print (Neumann et al., 2000). Chan (2020) critically evaluates the effectiveness of extensive reading (ER) in ESL/EFL contexts, focusing on three aspects: motivation for second or foreign language reading, enhancement of reading skills, and development of language proficiency. Despite widespread recognition of ER's benefits, obstacles hinder consistent implementation. While numerous researchers have generally advocated for the benefits of ER, it has not been widely implemented, and teachers sometimes encounter various obstacles and hindrances to successfully and consistently

implementing it. Atinuke (2018) in his study investigated the impact of extensive reading on students' interest in reading comprehension using a pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design. Conducted with Junior Secondary School (JSS) two English Studies students in Kwali Area Council, FCT, Abuja (n=210), the research reveals that extensive reading effectively enhances learners' interest in reading comprehension. Additionally, female students demonstrate a higher interest in reading comprehension than their male counterparts. No significant interaction effect is found between extensive reading strategy and gender on JSSII students' interest in reading comprehension. Recommendations include encouraging English language educators to employ extensive reading strategies to stimulate interest and allocate more time in schools for extensive reading, aiming to enhance students' interest and performance in reading comprehension.

Lee, et al (2020), highlighted the fact that learning to read can be particularly challenging for children from minority ethnic groups or where their first language is not English. Early on the researchers highlights that there is no comprehensive reading assessment battery that can be used for identifying reading problems in multilingual Malaysia. Therefore, Lee, et al (2020), developed a comprehensive reading assessment battery in the Malay official language for children from multi-ethnic and multilingual backgrounds by borrowing from The Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC). The highlights from this paper are, Lee, et al (2020), comprised 13 assessments of the reading assessment battery namely, reading comprehension, spelling, listening comprehension, letter name knowledge, letter name fluency, rapid automatized naming, word reading accuracy, word reading efficiency, oral reading fluency, expressive vocabulary, receptive vocabulary, elision, and phonological memory.

By analysing the three main constructs of phonological-decoding, sublexical-fluency, and vocabulary-memory, Lee, et al (2020) found that phonological-decoding is the most reliable constructs to distinguish at-risk children from non-at-risk children. To conclude, according to the paper, there are thirteen assessments of the reading assessment battery that need to work together to make it work for an early diagnosis of reading difficulties in multilingual children in Malaysian classrooms. Nakanishi (2015) explores the overall effectiveness of extensive reading, investigating the impact of learners' age and the duration of engagement on test scores. The author conducted a meta-analysis, encompassing 34 studies with 3,942 participants. The findings indicate a medium effect size ( $d = 0.46$ ) for group contrasts and a larger one ( $d = 0.71$ ) for pre-post contrasts, favoring extensive reading instruction. In conclusion, the research suggests that incorporating extensive reading into language learning curricula enhances students' reading proficiency. Syamsuddin (2021) explores the advantages of extensive reading (ER) in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context, employing an integrative literature review method. The comprehensive review reveals that ER enhances students' general reading proficiency, reading rate, strategies, motivation, attitude, vocabulary, speaking, and writing skills, ultimately improving overall English proficiency. Supporting techniques like the Task-Based Approach (TBL) and The Lexical Approach (LA) are identified. Practical aspects, including the use of graded readers, classroom libraries, and reading circles, are also highlighted. The findings contribute valuable insights to English language teaching, providing a foundation for implementing extensive reading programs in EFL settings. Rimi (2016) Teaching English to non-native learners is challenging due to limited exposure to the target language. While intensive reading is often prioritized in classrooms, developing a broader reading habit is crucial. This article explores the use of Diaspora

Literature to promote extensive reading in ESL/EFL classrooms. It defines and compares extensive and intensive reading, highlighting the cultural relevance of Diaspora Literature. The paper argues that Diaspora Literature, with its familiar settings, helps learners feel at home while acquiring the target language, supported by an Action Research study demonstrating its success in a language classroom.

According to Ghazali & Habil (2020) in the article "Reading Intervention Practice: Effects of Print and E- Dictionary Use," the use of e-dictionary and print dictionary has made some impacts for students during a reading intervention program. However, there was no significant relationship between the use of e- dictionary and print dictionary in the students' score for reading comprehension test.

In the research, the authors employed mixed- method approach whereby the quantitative data for students' reading habits and attitudes was gathered through questionnaires and interview data from students, teachers and school principal were used to triangulate the data from the questionnaire. Reading on the other hand, was the second least preferred activity among the students during their free time.

### **Research Gap**

Although many researches have been done in Malaysia and other countries, very limited studies on Extensive Reading Programmes have been conducted in the interior or rural parts of Sarawak. The findings of this study is expected to help curriculum planners and language instructors on how an Extensive Reading programme (If properly conducted) can help develop reading skills among rural young learners who do not have any digital or IT facilities.

### **Methodology**

A research design will ensure that the researcher addresses the research problems effectively, logically, and as unambiguously as possible, and home in on research methods that are suitable for the subject matter. It is the set of methods, techniques, and procedures chosen by the researcher in collecting and analyzing measures of the variables specified in the research problems. The choice of a proper research design depends on the research questions and hypotheses posed.

According to Creswell (2018), research design can be classified into three main categories: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method research. Quantitative research methods refer to the planning and counting of things which primarily rely on the collection and analyses of the numerical data in the study of social phenomena, to generate results and to interpret answers. The objective of quantitative research is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories, and hypotheses relating to phenomena. The quantitative approach has been extensively used in educational research. Broadly speaking, quantitative research designs can be divided into two main types: experimental research design and non-experimental research design. Different from experimental designs, non-experimental designs investigate social phenomena without direct manipulation of the conditions which the subjects experience. Comparative design and correlational design are two main types of non-experimental designs. Comparative research design is to investigate the differences between two or more groups on the phenomenon which is being studied. In correlational research, the researcher examines the relationship between two or more constructs (Gagnon & Barber, 2018)

### **Sampling Procedure**

The sampling procedure for this research involved the purposeful selection of 32 Year 3 students within the age range of 9 to 10 years old. Employing a purposive sampling method, participants were intentionally chosen to ensure representation from the target demographic. The criteria for inclusion were specific, focusing on students of Malay ethnicity to maintain cultural homogeneity in the study. Furthermore, a careful balance was maintained by equally distributing the participants between male and female students. This meticulous sampling approach not only provided a diverse yet cohesive participant group but also facilitated a nuanced exploration of the effectiveness of the extensive reading program across different demographic variables within the primary school context.

### **Instrumentation**

In this research, the instrumentation column was enriched by the utilization of both questionnaires and interviews as the primary methods for data collection. The questionnaire served as a structured tool, allowing the researcher to gather quantitative insights regarding the Year 3 students' views towards reading in English and their motivation towards reading habits through the extensive reading program. Complementing this, interviews provided a qualitative dimension, enabling a more in-depth exploration of the participants' experiences and perceptions. The validity of these instruments lies in their ability to capture a comprehensive understanding of the research questions. The questionnaire, designed with carefully constructed items, ensures consistency and reliability in quantifiable data, while interviews, through open-ended inquiries, allow for the exploration of nuanced and context-specific responses. By employing both instruments, the researcher not only achieves a robust triangulation of data but also ensures a holistic and valid exploration of the effectiveness of the extensive reading program in enhancing reading habits among primary school students in rural parts of Sarawak, Malaysia.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the Year 3 students' views towards reading in English?
2. How extensive reading program strategies motivate learners to indulge in more reading activities.

### **Findings**

In the realm of education, understanding students' attitudes and perspectives towards language-related activities is crucial for fostering effective learning environments. This research embarks on a journey to unravel the intricate fabric of Year 3 students' views towards reading in English. As foundational years play a pivotal role in shaping language skills, delving into the minds of these young learners promises insights that can inform educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers alike. The research question at the forefront of this investigation is: What are the year 3 student's views towards reading in English? Through an exploration of students' perceptions, preferences, and challenges related to English reading, this study seeks to shed light on the factors that influence their engagement with literature, comprehension levels, and overall enthusiasm for reading in the English language.

By addressing this research question, we aim to contribute valuable knowledge to the educational landscape, offering evidence-based insights that can guide the refinement of language teaching methodologies and curriculum design for Year 3 students. As we embark

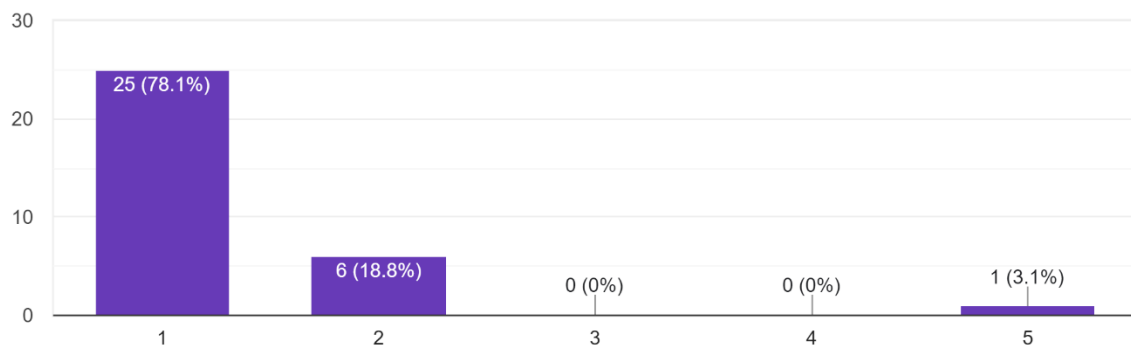
on this inquiry, we anticipate uncovering a mosaic of perspectives that will not only enrich our understanding of young learners' experiences but also pave the way for targeted interventions to enhance the English reading journey for these students.

### Research Question 1

Below is the data collected from the questionnaire.

19. Being able to read in English is important.

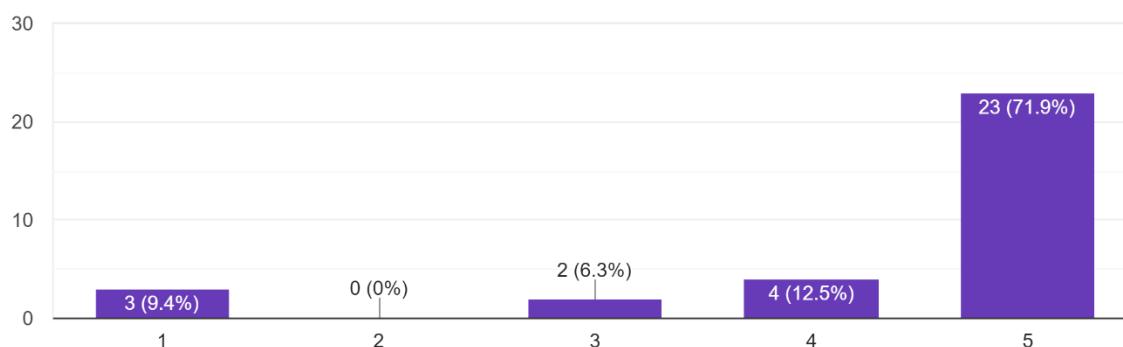
32 responses



The overwhelming majority of students, at 78.1%, expressed a strong agreement with the statement that being able to read in English is important. This high percentage suggests that most students recognize the importance of English reading skills in their educational journey and beyond. A significant portion, at 18.8%, agreed with the statement. This reinforces the idea that a substantial majority of students consider English reading proficiency to be a valuable skill. Interestingly, none of the respondents chose the "don't know" option, indicating that students had a clear opinion about the importance of English reading. This suggests that they have thought about this aspect of their education. None of the students disagreed with the statement. The absence of disagreement underscores the unanimous agreement on the significance of English reading skills among the surveyed students. Only a small percentage, 3.1%, expressed a strong disagreement with the statement. While this percentage is relatively low, it's important to note that a small minority does not share the same level of conviction regarding the importance of English reading. The statistical interpretation reveals that the vast majority of primary school students in rural Sarawak hold a strong belief in the importance of being able to read in English. This consensus is a positive indicator for the effectiveness of the Extensive Reading Programme, as it aligns with the program's objective of enhancing reading comprehension in English. The results suggest that students are motivated to develop their English reading skills, which is a crucial aspect of their education and future prospects.

20. Reading in English is a waste of time.

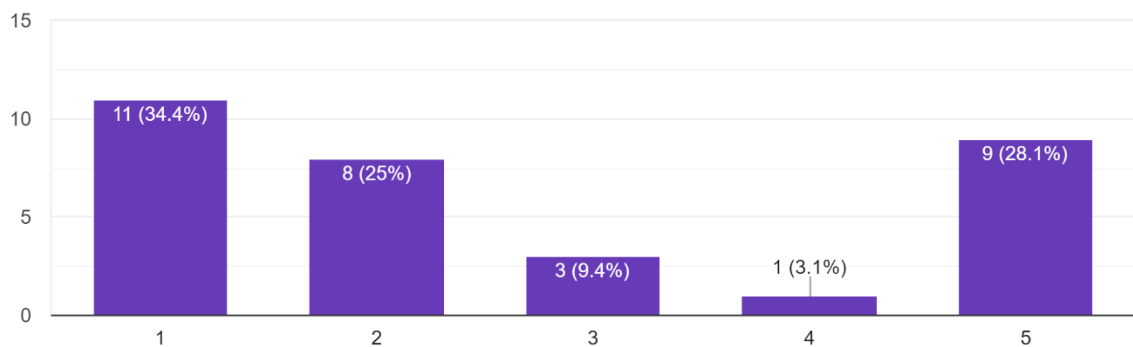
32 responses



A small percentage, 9.4%, strongly agreed with the statement that reading in English is a waste of time. This indicates that there is a minority of students who hold a strong negative opinion about reading in English. None of the students agreed with the statement, suggesting that there is no agreement among the respondents that reading in English is a waste of time. A minority, 6.3%, indicated that they don't know whether reading in English is a waste of time. This suggests that some students may be uncertain about the value of English reading or may not have formed a clear opinion on the matter. A relatively small percentage, 12.5%, disagreed with the statement. This indicates that some students hold a contrary view and do not believe that reading in English is a waste of time. The overwhelming majority, at 71.9%, strongly disagreed with the statement. This is a significant finding, as it suggests that the vast majority of students firmly believe that reading in English is not a waste of time. The statistical interpretation reveals that the overwhelming majority of primary school students in rural Sarawak do not consider reading in English to be a waste of time. In fact, the majority of students strongly disagree with this notion. This strong disagreement is a positive indicator for the effectiveness of the Extensive Reading Programme, as it suggests that students generally perceive value in reading in English. However, it's essential to consider and address the perspectives of the small minority who may hold negative or uncertain views to ensure that the program is effective for all students.

## 22. I like to write English essays.

32 responses

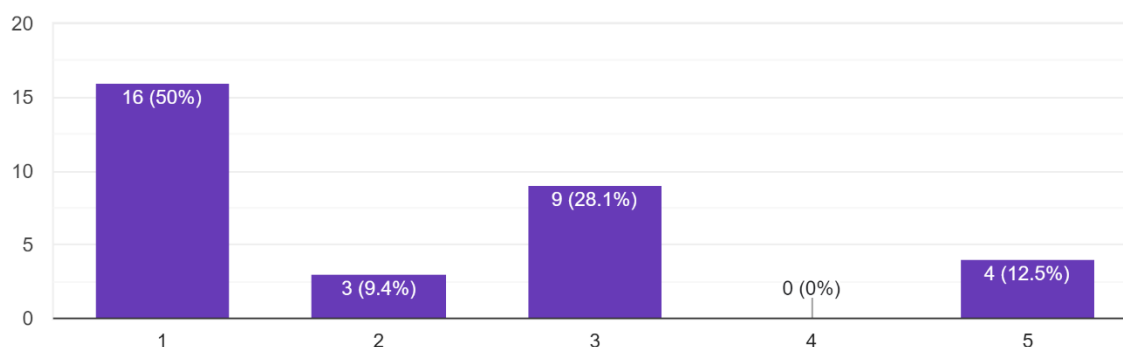


A notable percentage, 34.4%, strongly agreed with the statement, indicating a positive inclination towards writing English essays. This suggests that a significant portion of the students has a strong preference for writing in English. Another significant percentage, 25%, agreed with the statement. This further reinforces the positive attitude of a substantial number of students towards writing English essays. Collectively, nearly 60% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree that they like to write in English. A small but notable minority, 9.4%, indicated that they don't know whether they like to write English essays. This suggests that some students may be uncertain about their preferences regarding writing in English. A relatively small percentage, 3.1%, disagreed with the statement. This indicates that a minority of students do not have a positive attitude towards writing English essays. A significant percentage, 28.1%, strongly disagreed with the statement. This suggests that there is a substantial portion of students who have a very negative view of writing English essays. The statistical interpretation reveals a diverse range of attitudes and preferences among primary school students in rural Sarawak regarding writing English essays. While a significant portion of students either strongly agree or agree that they like to write in English, there is also a notable segment who either disagree or strongly disagree with this statement, indicating a negative view of writing English essays. The presence of students who are uncertain about their preferences highlights the complexity of student attitudes towards writing in English.



25. I enjoy reading a story book than watching an English movie.

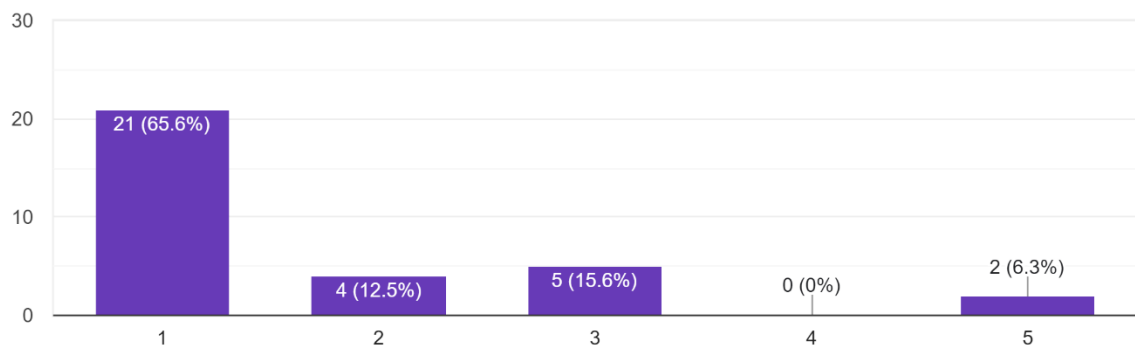
32 responses



A significant majority, 50%, strongly agreed with the statement, indicating a strong preference for reading storybooks over watching English movies. This is a noteworthy finding as it suggests that a substantial portion of the students values the act of reading and storytelling through books. A smaller percentage, 9.4%, agreed with the statement. While this percentage is lower than the strongly agree category, it still indicates a preference for reading over watching movies among this subset of students. A notable minority, 28.1%, indicated that they don't know whether they enjoy reading a storybook more than watching an English movie. This suggests that a significant portion of students may have mixed feelings or uncertainty about their preferences in this regard. None of the students disagreed with the statement, indicating that no one expressed a preference for watching English movies over reading storybooks. A minority, at 12.5%, strongly disagreed with the statement, suggesting that there is a smaller portion of students who enjoy watching English movies more than reading storybooks. The statistical interpretation reveals a diversity of attitudes and preferences among primary school students in rural Sarawak regarding their enjoyment of reading storybooks versus watching English movies. While a significant majority strongly agrees with the statement, indicating a strong preference for reading, there are also students who disagree, strongly disagree, or express uncertainty.

27. I would acquire a lot of knowledge if I could read in English.

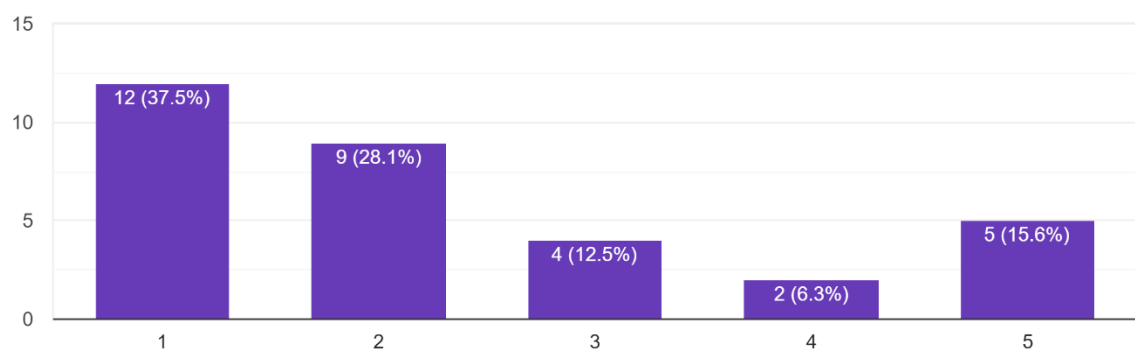
32 responses



A significant majority, 65.6%, strongly agreed with the statement, indicating a strong belief that reading in English could lead to the acquisition of a substantial amount of knowledge. This is a highly positive finding as it demonstrates that a substantial portion of students recognizes the educational value of reading in English. A smaller but still notable percentage, 12.5%, agreed with the statement. This further supports the positive view that reading in English can contribute to knowledge acquisition among this subset of students. A significant minority, 15.6%, indicated that they don't know whether reading in English would lead to the acquisition of knowledge. This suggests that a considerable portion of students may have mixed feelings or uncertainty about the potential benefits of reading in English. None of the students disagreed with the statement, indicating that no one expressed a belief that reading in English would not contribute to knowledge acquisition. A minority, at 6.3%, strongly disagreed with the statement, suggesting that there is a smaller portion of students who do not share the same positive view about reading in English leading to knowledge acquisition. The statistical interpretation reveals that the vast majority of primary school students in rural Sarawak believe that reading in English can lead to the acquisition of knowledge. This strong consensus on the potential educational value of reading in English is a positive indicator for the effectiveness of the Extensive Reading Programme.

28. I have difficulty reading in English because I cannot understand the content.

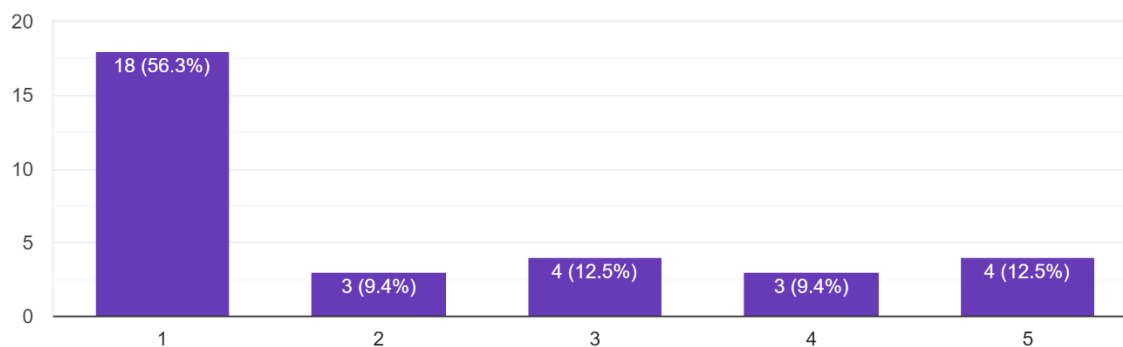
32 responses



A significant percentage, 37.5%, strongly agreed with the statement, indicating a strong perception of difficulty in reading English due to comprehension issues. This suggests that a substantial portion of students recognizes challenges in understanding the content when reading in English. Another notable percentage, 28.1%, agreed with the statement. While this percentage is lower than the strongly agree category, it still indicates a perception of difficulty in comprehending English reading materials among this subset of students. A significant minority, 12.5%, indicated that they don't know whether they have difficulty reading in English due to comprehension issues. This suggests that a considerable portion of students may have mixed feelings or uncertainty about the challenges they face in understanding English content. A relatively small percentage, 6.3%, disagreed with the statement. This indicates that some students do not perceive difficulty in understanding English content when reading. Another minority, at 15.6%, strongly disagreed with the statement, suggesting that there is a smaller portion of students who do not experience difficulty in comprehending English content while reading. The statistical interpretation reveals that a significant portion of primary school students in rural Sarawak perceives difficulties in reading in English due to challenges in understanding the content. While there are students who disagree or strongly disagree with this statement, indicating less difficulty in comprehension, the high percentages of agreement and strong agreement underscore the importance of addressing comprehension challenges in the Extensive Reading Programme.

29. I have a desire to be able to read fluently in English.

32 responses

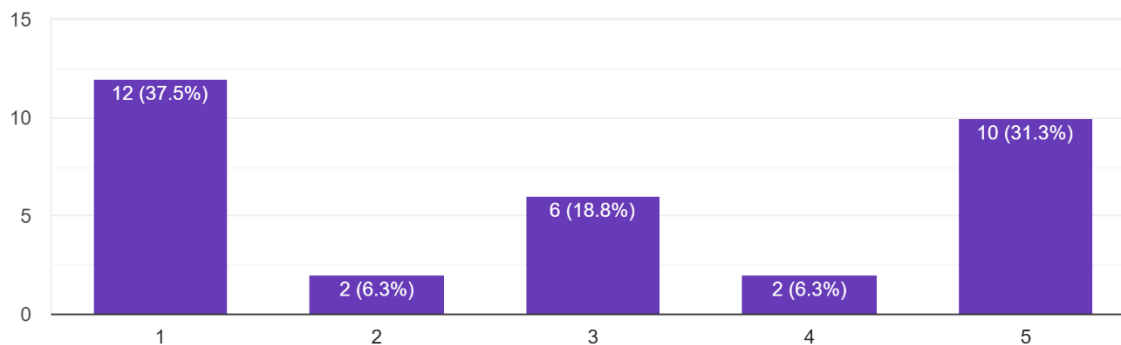


A significant majority, 56.3%, strongly agreed with the statement, indicating a strong desire to be able to read fluently in English. This is a highly positive finding as it demonstrates that a substantial portion of students is highly motivated to develop fluency in English reading. A smaller percentage, 9.4%, agreed with the statement. While this percentage is lower than the strongly agree category, it still indicates a desire to read fluently in English among this subset of students. A notable minority, 12.5%, indicated that they don't know whether they have a desire to read fluently in English. This suggests that a considerable portion of students may have mixed feelings or uncertainty about their aspirations regarding English reading fluency. A relatively small percentage, 9.4%, disagreed with the statement. This indicates that some students do not have a strong desire to read fluently in English. Another minority, at 12.5%, strongly disagreed with the statement, suggesting that there is a smaller portion of students who do not aspire to read fluently in English. The statistical interpretation reveals that a significant majority of primary school students in rural Sarawak have a strong desire to be

able to read fluently in English. This strong consensus on the aspiration for English reading fluency is a positive indicator for the Extensive Reading Programme's effectiveness.

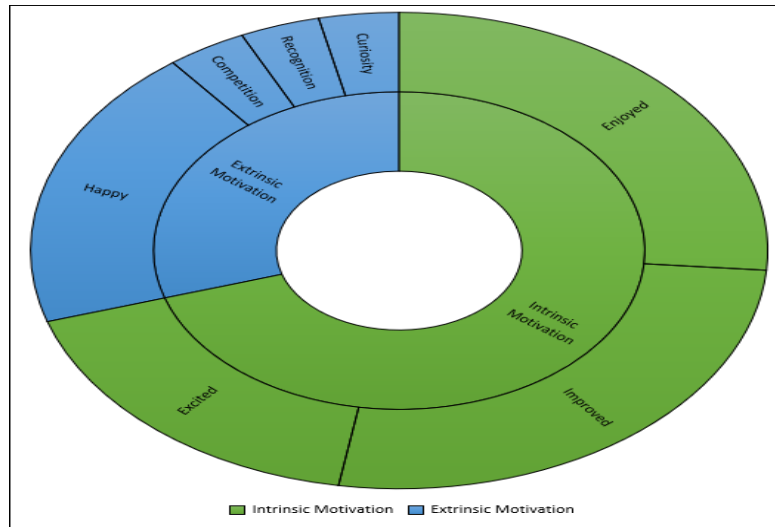
30. I do not see the necessity to be able to read English when I am well versed in other languages.

32 responses



A significant percentage, 37.5%, strongly agreed with the statement, indicating a strong belief that English reading skills are not necessary when they are proficient in other languages. This suggests that a substantial portion of students may view English as less important in comparison to their proficiency in other languages. A smaller percentage, 6.3%, agreed with the statement. While this percentage is lower than the strongly agree category, it still indicates a belief that English reading skills may not be necessary due to proficiency in other languages among this subset of students. A notable minority, 18.8%, indicated that they don't know whether English reading skills are necessary when they are well-versed in other languages. This suggests that a considerable portion of students may have mixed feelings or uncertainty about the importance of English reading skills in the context of their multilingual abilities. A relatively small percentage, 6.3%, disagreed with the statement. This indicates that some students do not share the view that English reading skills are unnecessary when proficient in other languages. A significant minority, at 31.3%, strongly disagreed with the statement, suggesting that there is a smaller portion of students who strongly believe in the necessity of English reading skills regardless of proficiency in other languages. The statistical interpretation reveals a diversity of attitudes and perceptions among primary school students in rural Sarawak regarding the necessity of English reading skills in the context of their multilingual abilities. While a significant portion either strongly agrees or agrees with the statement, indicating a belief that English may not be as necessary, there are also students who disagree, strongly disagree, or express uncertainty.

## Research Question 2



The statistical interpretation of the thematic analysis on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation provides insights into how the Extensive Reading Programme influenced the motivations of primary school students in rural Sarawak. The Extensive Reading Programme appeared to have a positive impact on intrinsic motivation for 15 students. This suggests that the program contributed to a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction in reading, which is essential for long-term engagement and comprehension development. An equal number of students (15) reported that they enjoyed the reading activities. This reinforces the positive impact of the program on intrinsic motivation, as enjoyment is a key driver of reading engagement. While slightly fewer students reported feeling excited (10 pupils), it still reflects a positive emotional response to the reading program. Excitement can contribute to sustained interest in reading. A small number of students (2 pupils) mentioned that extrinsic motivation created curiosity. This indicates that external incentives or rewards, possibly associated with the program, sparked their curiosity to engage in reading. A larger group (11 pupils) reported feeling happy due to extrinsic motivation. This suggests that external factors, such as rewards or recognition, contributed to their positive emotional response to the reading program. A few students (2 pupils) specifically mentioned recognition as a source of extrinsic motivation. This implies that acknowledgment or praise for their reading achievements played a role in motivating these students. Another small group (2 pupils) cited competition as a form of extrinsic motivation. Competitive elements within the program might have driven their engagement. The thematic analysis reveals that the Extensive Reading Programme had a predominantly positive impact on intrinsic motivation, with many students reporting improvement, enjoyment, and excitement. Additionally, extrinsic motivation also played a role, with some students mentioning curiosity, happiness, recognition, and competition as motivators. This suggests that a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators can be effective in encouraging reading engagement and comprehension among primary school students in rural Sarawak. These findings emphasize the importance of incorporating diverse motivational strategies within the program to cater to the varied motivations of students and enhance its overall effectiveness.

### Interview Session on the Impact of the Extensive Reading Programme on Students

These responses highlight the positive impact of the Extensive Reading Programme and provide insights into how intrinsic and extrinsic motivators contributed to the students' engagement in reading.

1. *Interviewer: Can you share your overall experience with the Extensive Reading Programme?*

*Student: The Extensive Reading Programme was a great experience for me. It made reading enjoyable, and I felt a genuine sense of satisfaction.*

2. *Interviewer: How did the program impact your intrinsic motivation for reading in English?*

*Student: The program positively influenced my intrinsic motivation. I found a lot of enjoyment and satisfaction in reading, which made me more engaged and improved my comprehension skills*

3. *Interviewer: Could you elaborate on the emotions you felt during the reading activities?*

*Student: I enjoyed the reading activities a lot, and it was exciting for me. Feeling excited about reading kept me interested and engaged in the program.*

4. *Interviewer: Can you share any specific instances where recognition played a role in motivating you?*

*Students: Yes, recognition played a role when I received acknowledgment or praise for my reading achievements. It motivated me to continue putting effort into the program.*

5. *Interviewer: How do you think the combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators contributed to your overall engagement in the program?*

*Student: The combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators worked well for me. It made the program more comprehensive, enjoyable, and kept me excited to participate consistently.*

The interview responses closely align with the research questions, offering valuable insights that substantiate the study's rationale. Concerning Research Question 1, which delves into Year 3 students' views towards reading in English, the interviewee's positive experience with the Extensive Reading Programme underscores the program's role in making reading enjoyable and fostering genuine satisfaction, directly influencing students' perceptions of reading. The exploration of emotions and enjoyment during reading activities provides a firsthand reflection of students' perspectives, reinforcing the notion that the program strategies positively shaped their views on reading in English. Regarding Research Question 2, which investigates how extensive reading program strategies motivate learners to engage in more reading activities, the interviewee's responses furnish compelling evidence of the program's motivational impact. The mention of heightened intrinsic motivation, increased engagement, and improved comprehension skills illustrates the effectiveness of the program's strategies. Additionally, the acknowledgment of extrinsic motivators, including rewards and recognition, supports the idea that these strategies played a pivotal role in encouraging active participation. The student's reference to competitive elements further underscores the success of the program in motivating learners. Overall, the interview responses collectively depict the Extensive Reading Programme as a positive force shaping students' views on reading in English and effectively motivating them to partake in more reading activities. These firsthand accounts emphasize the program's success in cultivating intrinsic motivation, fostering enjoyment, and promoting active participation, thereby providing valuable insights that directly substantiate and justify the two research questions posed in the study

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the efficacy of an extensive reading program in enhancing reading among primary school students in rural areas of Sarawak, Malaysia. The study, involving 32 Year 3 students, delved into their perspectives on reading in English and explored how the implementation of extensive reading program strategies influenced their reading habits. The unanimous agreement among respondents on the significance of English reading and the positive impact of the program aligns harmoniously with the existing literature. These findings underscore the value of such initiatives in cultivating a genuine interest in reading, particularly in contexts where access to educational resources may be limited. As educators and policymakers consider strategies to promote literacy, this research provides valuable insights into the tangible benefits of incorporating extensive reading programs, ultimately contributing to the broader goal of fostering a love for reading among young learners in rural settings.

This study significantly contributes to the understanding of enhancing English reading abilities among L2 learners with low language proficiency in rural Sarawak, Malaysia. By implementing an extensive reading program tailored for Year 3 students, the research addresses the prevailing issue of disinterest in English reading materials. The findings reveal that the lack of interest stems from the influence of the learners' first language and a local environment dominated by a single race proficient in the Malay language. Through the introduced extensive reading program, which fosters a gradual and stress-free approach to reading, the study not only underscores the unanimous agreement among respondents regarding the importance of English reading but also highlights the positive impact of the program on cultivating genuine interest in reading. This research, situated in the specific context of rural Sarawak, contributes to existing literature by emphasizing the value of initiatives that go beyond exam-oriented learning, particularly in areas where access to educational resources may be limited. The insights gained from this study have the potential to bring about a paradigm shift in the reading habits of young learners in similar rural settings, offering a valuable contribution to the broader discourse on language learning strategies and educational intervention.

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