The Effect of Extensive Reading on Vocabulary Development

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Acknowledgment

I want to thank my mother because her memory has always been in my heart and in my mind. Every action I do is to honor her memory and her words kept me fighting for the dream I am fulfilling now.

Resumen

El presente trabajo pretende socializar la importancia de la lectura por los efectos y

ventajas que esta puede presentar, además se establecerá un contraste entre las distintas

estrategias de lectura que actualmente existen basándose en teorías expuestas por variedad de

autores y estudios. Adicionalmente se demostrará el rol que la lectura tiene en el aprendizaje de

una segunda lengua. Luego se hará un contraste entre los dos tipos de estrategias más comunes,

los cuales son lectura extensiva e intensiva. Además, se establecerán las ventajas y las

desventajas de la lectura extensiva y los tipos de lectura extensiva que existen actualmente.

También se mostraran estudios y los beneficios que se han demostrado en contextos donde la

lectura extensiva fue aplicada, teniendo como factor común la mejora en la adquisición de

vocabulario. Finalmente se adjunta una idea y/o sugerencia de un plan de clase en el que se

aplica la lectura extensiva.

Abstract

This research paper presents the importance of reading, the effects and advantages that the appliance of it may have. Besides there will be a contrast between the different reading strategies that currently exist. Additionally, the role of reading in the process of second language learning will be discussed. Then, a contrast between the most common strategies, Extensive reading and Intensive Reading is discussed. Besides, the advantages and disadvantages of Extensive Reading will be stated. Also, the types of Extensive Reading that currently exist are explained. In addition, the characteristics of an extensive reading approach are presented. Moreover, supporting studies which prove the benefits of extensive reading and the acquisition of vocabulary as a common factor are exposed. Finally, an idea or suggestion of a lesson plan using extensive reading is proposed.

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Vocabulary Development

In many second or foreign language teaching situations, reading receives a special amount of attention and a special focus. Bearing in mind that one of the main goals of students is to be able to read in the second or foreign language, they consider it as something very important for their career, for pleasure and an infinite number of purposes. Then the reading skill receives special attention (Kharaghani, 2013). Reading in an EFL context takes many forms but as Tennant (n.d.) says it is mainly used to introduce grammar and vocabulary. Besides, reading is an amazing strategy to be linguistically exposed to comprehensible written texts that can enhance the process of language acquisition (Kit, 2009). Moreover, students can discover some special features about writing, context and information about any topic, giving them an idea or a model about how to write a text in a good way. Besides, students are able to develop their vocabulary skills due to the appearance of new words and new ways of expressing when writing. Also, students can develop grammar in a directly way by being in contact with a grammar book or a text in which grammar is widely expressed or in an indirectly way by reading any text and unconsciously some grammar should be being learnt because of the word order, the way in which a text is organized etc. Therefore, students can discover grammar in an aware way or in an implicit way.

The reading skill is one of the most important skills because with it people can learn and develop some other skills such as vocabulary, speaking, grammar as well as pronunciation since some books contain pronunciation models or instructions. What is more, every student always needs reading in every context because in any place they find billboards, advertisements,

magazines, books and investigations which can be useful for them. Therefore, the reading skill is essential to acquire new knowledge as stated by Fielding & Pearson (1994):

> Reading results in the acquisition of new knowledge, which, in turn, fuels the comprehension process. Research of the late 1970s and early '80s consistently revealed a strong reciprocal relationship between prior knowledge and reading comprehension ability. The more one already knows, the more one comprehends; and the more one comprehends, the more one learns new knowledge to enable comprehension of an even greater and broader array of topics and texts

It is very important to remember that human beings learn and acquire new knowledge until they die so it is significant to say that the acquiring of new knowledge through reading is limitless, making reading a very good source of wisdom.

Every day, every year there are more articles which are published in English, the vast majority of scientists write in English and research is mostly written in a lingua franca. Nowadays English is considered as a lingua franca, so everyone needs to know how to read short and long texts according with their purposes, by the way there are some research that show that more than 80% of data is written in English as stated by Crystal (Crystal, 1997, as cited in Baker and Jones 1998), "Over two thirds of the world's scientists write in English. Three quarters of the world's mail is written in English. Eighty percent of all the information stored in the electronic retrieval systems of the world is stored in English" (p. 311).

As a result it is necessary to keep up with the latest texts to be updated in any topic. Then reading for pleasure or reading for information is something that everyone is doing nowadays. In addition nowadays universities are giving students texts but not in their own language but in

English so people are reading and trying to understand the texts given at the university, even when they do not know this language they have to do it.

In Colombia, students are not likely to read many texts during their lives and as a hobby, as they do not have reading as a habit. Therefore, because of people's lack of reading frequency, reading may well be assumed as something boring and tiring; as a result Colombian people would not read for pleasure because they struggle with this activity and even more they discourage themselves when they find new words or grammar they do not understand. Thus, reading develops more than one skill, it is also one of the best and quickest ways of developing vocabulary and writing skills and even more important, it gives and sends grammar issues implicitly as Krashen claimed about the implicit grammar (Krashen, 1981, as cited in Mendoza 2004) when learners are exposed to a second language input or when learners experience contact with the second language the acquisition of implicit grammatical structures occurs .On the other hand we have the fact that there is a direct link between reading, being a good learner and academic success (Zimmerman, 2012), and some other benefits such as protection to Alzheimer, besides reading is good to exercise memory and brain, and to reduce stress etc. (Gelman, n.d.). Then reading is a great tool to develop knowledge and brain development. So, it is necessary to say the reading skill in L2 should be taught in every school in Colombia, giving a better style or kind of learning to read in a second language, in this case this research is focused on English because this language is currently known as a lingua franca. With some reading techniques people could be encouraged to read in Colombia and this might create a new reading culture, not only for a compulsory (intensive reading) purpose but also for a pleasure purpose (extensive reading), as a result developing well-informed people in any topic helping to the development of Colombia through its citizens.

People have forgotten the power or reading, and even now finding good books and texts is easier due to the use of internet as a tool, a lot of text is available everywhere, any time just by turning on a computer, although there are some Colombian contexts where this tool is not available, but books are almost everywhere, so just as in 2009, Maley claimed that comprehensible input can be provided in many ways for readers by choosing some good books that can suit readers. It means that reading provides comprehensible input almost in every context when maybe there is a lack of it. Moreover, reading develops and stimulates many parts of our brain (Ryan, 2014) so it might be a good idea to take reading as a habit. However in Colombia despite the new tendencies reading is just taken as a reinforcement of grammar, to check dialogues or it is just used in translations (Zuñiga, 2003). Thus it is a good idea for teachers to try to encourage students to have reading as habit and then readers may get all the benefits that the reading skill can provide.

Keeping these aspects in mind it is compulsory to encourage students to read more not only in their mother tongue but also in a foreign language, besides it is relevant to state the importance of the types of reading that currently exist. This research paper will be focused on the importance of extensive reading as a technique of developing vocabulary in EFL students and to state how efficient it was in some countries where this kind of reading technique was applied, showing remarkable improvements in many aspects of their lives.

First, it is essential to define what reading is. So for this paper the definition given by Harris and Sipay (1985) quoted by Le Thanh (2010) is going to be taken: reading has been defined as "the meaningful interpretation of written or printed verbal symbols" and "a result of interaction between the perception of graphic symbols that represent language and the reader's language skills, cognitive skill, and knowledge of the world" Then it is inferred that reading is

the process of looking and comprehending symbols that are written, in this order people make an interpretation of the symbols which are in texts, pictures and so on.

Keeping in mind the last idea, it is important to remember that in a learning process the first step to start acquiring knowledge is to learn how to understand symbols, letters, pictures and simple messages which convey meaning to a person, therefore the role of reading is among the most important skills and is essential when acquiring knowledge due to through history most of the data is stored in books, magazines, articles or in any other source but in most of the cases the information or knowledge is presented in a written way. Then the role of the reading skill is very important for any person who wants to start a learning process.

The objective of this research paper is to provide a clear idea about the improvement of vocabulary that readers achieve when they applied or used extensive reading around the world. Moreover, some extra benefits of extensive reading will be also stated due to extensive reading provides an enhancement and improvement in readers' vocabulary, as well as to the fact that it provides different assets such as the acquisition of knowledge, improvement in reading comprehension, grammar accuracy, among others.

The Role of Reading in Language Learning

The role of reading in an EFL setting is important for several reasons, with reading students start discovering new issues, reading is one of the first skills developed in any language to learn grammar, vocabulary to interpret pictures. It is important because as Rosdiana (2011) claims, reading can lead the reader to academic success, people who are not usually good readers are likely to fail in schools or in any academic context; another remarkable feature of reading is that through reading its users are able to see or understand the organizational pattern in writing and therefore they also may develop the writing skill. Moreover, nowadays as the internet is

almost everywhere people are reading everyday in many contexts such as socializing, searching information through websites or just by reading for pleasure. It is useful to use reading as a tool for communicating and for getting information about what is happening in the world or to keep in touch with people, Wong (2012), in other words the importance of this skill is essential in any setting.

First, reading is a very useful tool to enhance pronunciation because when someone whispers what he or she is reading he or she will be pronouncing sounds and will be practicing what they have already know, also the reader will try to pronounce the words he is reading. Besides whisper reading helps to get conceptual information and what is more it helps people to imagine what they are reading.

There is also a strong link between reading and spelling correctly because when reading people get an image in their brains to remember the order of the letters, thus strong readers are likely to be more accurate when spelling. Then it is remarkable that the more people read, interact and see the language the better they remember words. According to Joshi, Treiman, Carreker and Moats (2008)

> The correlation between spelling and reading comprehension is because both depend on a common denominator: proficiency with language. The more deeply and thoroughly a student knows a word, the more likely he or she is to recognize it, spell it, define it, and use it appropriately in speech and writing. (p. 9)

Some people find reading as a source of relaxation so it is considered another advantage of reading. People who have reading as a habit are always carrying a book with them to read their books when on a bus, when they are waiting or sitting around and in some cases they find books

as a way of releasing stress. Although in Colombia this is not a commonplace habit that people have but may be with the correct application of reading this could change dramatically.

On the other hand, the writing skill enhancing is also an effect that reading has. Reading and writing, both are interactive and the link between these two activities is very well-known. The more students read the more they improve their writing skills due to the development of vocabulary, grammar, using of words and so on.

Nowadays it is clear that people in any job need to be doing refreshing and updating courses so it is imperative for people to keep up with the latest trends in any job and study field. Therefore doing this courses via internet is one of the most suitable options because they are cheaper and people never go out from a comfortably place, as a result this courses have been rising steadily and internet is a source of written knowledge, thus reading is always playing a role in the continuous updating that people need in the society. Besides people not only are updated with the latest trends but also they know and get better ideas about any topic and with this becoming more polite people. Just by typing the requested topic people will find many available texts on internet, so reading is everywhere because of the globalization process and because internet is a worldwide phenomenon.

Finally, the vocabulary enrichment, there is a huge important advantage to learn and enhance vocabulary through reading. It is essential to state that there is a remarkable link and correlation between reading and academic success (Tunell and Jacobs, 1989, as cited in Cullinan, 2000) because when people read, they learn large sums of vocabulary because of the context, because readers remembered words they had forgotten and because they would look up the unknown words in a dictionary. For academic purposes and to be able to read in a foreign

language is compulsory to learn vocabulary, therefore when people read there is big possibility to enhance and improve vocabulary skills.

Different types of reading strategies

Reading then is something fundamental as stated above. So it is very important to consider the different types of reading strategies that are available in an everyday context. There is a variety of reading types according to the purpose and the way of reading. For this research four definitions or the current kinds of reading will be taken.

There are two kinds of speed-reading which are important to define because they are two reading techniques that help people to cover a large amount of text in less time than ordinary, because they are used to go rapidly and to search specific information and not to read the whole text carefully. They have a similar core process but they are different in aims and purposes.

1.   *Skimming:* this is a method where people use their eyes in a fast way in order to search specific information. People just move the eyes to get a general idea and maybe an overview to understand what text is about and aimed at. This method is just used when there is a need to get the core idea and a general overview of the text read, Marks (2013)

Skimming is a useful tool in some cases and situations as those stated by Anne Arundel Community College (n.d)

Skimming is useful in three different situations.

Pre-reading—Skimming is more thorough than simple previewing and can give a more accurate picture of text to be read later.

Reviewing—Skimming is useful for reviewing text already read.

Reading—Skimming is most often used for quickly reading material that, for any number of reasons, does not need more detailed attention.

2.   *Scanning:* this technique is aimed at locating particular information, facts, and figures or just to see if a text is related or mentions the subject that someone is looking for without reading the whole text (Freedman, n.d.). In this way readers are covering a great amount of text quickly, in some minutes readers are able to find what they are seeking because they are looking for specific words for instance a specific name, statistic, date and so on, instead of reading a large amount of text to get the global idea of the text. This means people read small pieces of information and they do not pay attention to every aspect of the text. This technique allows readers to cover more than one thousand words per minute because people must be willing to read quickly and to skip a large amount of text so they have to be aware they are not likely to understand the whole text.

3.   *Intensive Reading:* this type of reading is one of the most used in EFL settings because asks students to complete and fulfill specific aims and purposes usually given by the teacher in charge. Then, this kind of reading is focused on detailed reading because students and readers will have to accomplish requirements, besides students usually use this type of reading when they are asked for. Readers use this when they need to understand exactly the meaning of what they are reading, this type is usually used when people are interested in reading formal documents such as job contracts, financial documents, legal documents or everything according with business and academic texts where the main purpose is to get not only all the ideas which are written down but also to take into account the details the text has. Usually this type is a challenge for students because the grammar given in intensive-reading-texts are beyond the current level of students, this means that students are going to be very focused on the text and

they might need a dictionary to guide themselves into the string of the text itself. According to Anderson (2006) intensive reading is that kind of reading which is mainly used in the classroom and therefore teachers use some reading strategies to assess what readers have read, intensive reading also enhances reading comprehension, vocabulary, speed and fluency. With this type of reading, readers usually read articles, interviews, long texts and so on.

4.   *Extensive Reading:* extensive reading is also known as free reading, book flood, reading for pleasure or as the names stated by Renandya and Jacobs,

> Extensive reading programmes come under different names, including Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR), Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), and Silent Uninterrupted Reading for Fun (SURF), and the Book Flood programme (Elley and Mangubhai 1983), they all share a common purpose: that learners read large quantities of books and other materials in an environment that nurtures a lifelong reading habit. In addition, these programmes also share a common belief, that is, the ability to read fluently is best achieved through reading extensively in the language (2002, p.296)

This type of reading is by far the most important among the others because extensive reading is used in any foreign language learning setting because this type has the purpose to read a large amount of text but the main aim is to provide pleasure to readers, the main purpose is to give extra information or to provide knowledge to the readers but because they want to do it, so it is known that extensive reading takes place when readers take a book, any book they like and they read it because they find the book enjoyable and not because this text is demanded by someone. Then, readers are given freedom to choose any topic they feel like and in this way readers seek the supporting ideas, texts and knowledge they are interested in due to they want to do it and because they want to make a further investigation about a specific matter.

This type of reading has several benefits and is very enticing because the text the readers choose is a free choice and not because someone asked it for, in this way learners can develop their language knowledge as Nation explained (1997),

The idea that learners can develop their language knowledge through extensive reading is attractive for several reasons. First, reading is essentially an individual activity and therefore learners of different proficiency levels could be learning at their own level without being locked into an inflexible class program. Second, it allows learners to follow their interests in choosing what to read and thus increase their motivation for learning. Third, it provides the opportunity for learning to occur outside the classroom (para. 1)

An advantage which is very important to be stated is that when students, readers and people in general read extensively, they are more likely to read more and more because they find texts so useful and enjoyable that when they understand a foreign language text they feel so motivated and encouraged that they will definitely read more texts and even they will read more complex texts in order to find another challenge for themselves.

This kind of reading is by far the most used technique by students, and teachers are always trying to encourage them to start implementing this useful technique, although this is something a little hard to do because in Colombian settings people who do not have reading as an everyday custom scramble or struggle to acquire this in order to improve their skills and of course their knowledge in any topic they wish to.

Differences between Intensive and Extensive reading

It is usual to find these two terms very similar, therefore in this research the differences are going to be stated in order to give a clear message about each one. It is remarkable that

extensive reading has a wider purpose because it is aimed at broadening students' knowledge in comparison to intensive reading which sometimes is used when reading academic texts. Besides, intensive reading covers a narrower area of text because this has some aims to be completed, in contrast extensive reading covers a large amount of text because readers are trying to get information they find useful, therefore they are going to need more information and in that order they are likely to read more. There are some differences which stand out when making a comparison among these two terms so in this research the differences from: Extensive and intensive reading (n.d.) retrieved from: http://dianingpadmi.wordpress.com/eedduuccaattiioonn/extensive-and-intensive-reading/ , will be very suitable, in this blog the information is stated as follows:

> Extensive reading involves students reading long texts or large quantities for general understanding, with the intention of enjoying the texts. It means that students are given freedom to choose their own topic which they think are interested to be discussed. In this case, the students also have to find supported articles related to the topic in order to give them background knowledge, so that they know more about the topic they have chosen. It is different from intensive reading that does not allow the students to find a topic they like. The topic is given by the teacher. The students also do not necessary to look for supported articles because the topic which is chosen by the teacher is usually short and easy to understand

This shows that readers have freedom to choose any text they think is good for them to have more background and to get more knowledge about a specific topic, though in intensive reading the text is not chosen, this text is given by an external entity for instance given by a

teacher or by a company demanding its employees to read a specific text about what they consider important and remarkable.

Another important difference is as stated in the blog**:** Extensive and intensive reading (n.d.) retrieved from http://dianingpadmi.wordpress.com/eedduuccaattiioonn/extensive-and-intensive-reading/:

> The second difference is about students' activity in class. In Extensive Reading the students' activity is more complex than in Intensive Reading. The students, in Extensive Reading class, usually are asked to write a summary after reading an article/ passage.

With this information it is inferred that the activity used to assess extensive reading is a little more complex because it demands more attention from the students and because they have to show their knowledge usually through summaries, debates, public performances and even giving speeches to an interested public, however in intensive reading the tasks used to assess students work are different because in intensive reading readers are usually asked for, readers are doing academic essays, gap filling or any other activity where specific information is needed. Even, the most used activity is answering questions; those questions are usually given by the teacher or the person who gave the task. Thus, this activity usually demands from students just to rewrite the same information which is given in the core text.

In the following chart basic differences among intensive and extensive reading are given by Kredátusová (n.d.):

Intensive Reading		Extensive reading
Analysis of the language	LINGUISTIC FOCUS	Fluency, skill forming

Usually difficult	DIFFICULTY	Very easy
Little	AMOUNT	A book a week
Teacher selects	SELECTION	Learner selects
All learners study the same material	WHAT MATERIAL	All learners read different things (something interesting to them)
In class	WHERE	Mostly at home
Checked by specific questions	COMPREHENSION	Checked by reports / summaries

Further information about Extensive Reading

In this investigation the use of extensive reading is going to be the focus, therefore is very important to state some of the most important details, advantages and disadvantages of extensive reading which are going to be described in the next section, furthermore it is imperative to state a definition of Extensive Reading taking into account the aspects in which this research is done, thus the author will provide a new definition according to an EFL setting. According to Davis (Davis, 1995, as cited in Renandya and Jacobs 2002) says:

An extensive reading programme is a supplementary class library scheme, attached to an English course, in which pupils are given the time, encouragement, and materials to read pleasurably, as they can, without the pressures of testing or marks. Thus, pupils are competing only against themselves, and it is up to the teacher to provide the motivation and monitoring to ensure that the maximum number of books is being read in the time available. The watchwords are quantity and variety, rather than quality, so that books are

selected for their attractiveness and relevance to the pupils' lives, rather than for literary

merit (p. 296)

As well as any other technique, method, theory etc. extensive reading may also have some

drawbacks or disadvantages which must be mentioned. Then in the next section the weak points

or disadvantages will be described as well as the advantages of extensive reading

Advantages and disadvantages of extensive reading

There are not many disadvantages associated with extensive reading, although the most

remarkable is that when teachers want to implement extensive reading in their activities or as a

further task, there is a lack of linguistic material in some places and settings. The lack of text is

something that is commonplace in every L2 setting because sometimes students who desire to

read a book or a magazine might not find it useful, enjoyable or good enough for them, therefore

is a good idea to have a wide range of books, libraries, documents, magazines and texts that can

provide to students a good reason to read it. Then in some places and settings this will be the

main drawback because having a good source of good texts is not so easy for every college. A

huge effort needs to be carried on and every college should try to give and provide as many texts

as they may get to make extensive reading a useful activity and a well-intentioned activity

outside the classrooms.

Another drawback might be that in extensive reading students want to read some

interesting text but sometimes they do not feel completely identified with the topics and the kind

of text which is being read. This means that sometimes magazines articles, internet articles or

any type of text could not be good enough to encourage readers to keep on reading and in this

order they may feel disappointed. Even though, extensive reading has many advantages for

instance students read a large amount of text and material, students are encouraged to read as

much as they can by teachers so that teachers are trying to create a reading culture in students,

giving them the opportunity to read any text they want in a second or foreign language, though

students need to be encouraged by someone in some way otherwise the extensive reading is not

going to be suitable, as Renandya and Jacobs (2002) state: "The program will not obtain optimal

benefits unless students are "hooked" on reading". Then, it is imperative for teachers to give

strong opinions, variety and good materials for extensive reading to make students read

consciously and repeatedly.

Another good point of extensive reading is that every student will have the freedom to

choose the text he or she feels like reading, so it is very important to have motivated students

because a motivated student is more likely to read more and more texts than someone who does

not like reading or is not motivated to read. Thus, with less motivated students extensive reading

could be a great tool because if the reader is given a wide option of material, the reader may be

more encouraged to read extensively. Again the availability of material is very important for

every student in every extensive reading program.

Another positive point of extensive reading is that students will read texts which are

suitable for them, that means that the texts are going to be aimed at the reader's proficiency level

or even to a lower level of proficiency of the foreign language because there is no doubt that

readers will understand and will enjoy the text because they are in that level or beyond it (Maley,

2009). Thus, it is a good idea to start with easier texts to get students into the way extensive

reading works and then provide a more challenging text in order to make it a little more difficult.

Finally, it is very important to say that with extensive reading, the after-reading activities

could vary and be enjoyable for students. This is an advantage because teacher could ask for a

summary (in most of the cases), inventing an alternate ending and even a role-play game may

also be applied, as a result students and readers are more likely to participate and share information about what they really read, making a more enjoyable activity with books.

The benefits of extensive reading are wide, as those given by (Day & Bamford, 1998; Krashen, 1993; Nation, 1997 as cited by Renandya and Jacobs 2002):

1. Enhanced language learning in such areas as spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and text structure

2. Increased knowledge of the world

3. Improved reading and writing skills

4. Greater enjoyment of reading

5. More positive attitude toward reading

6. Higher possibility of developing a reading habit

Types of extensive reading

Not every extensive reading program is the same; there are some kinds of extensive reading that are a bit different from the others, so it means that according to the purpose readers have, or according to the purpose of the task given by the teacher the kind of extensive reading will vary and be different, as those stated by Rob Waring (2010) in a column in ELTnews.com:

Purist ER. This version of ER involves the students only in READing massive amounts of self-selected comprehensible input at their own pace with no tests, and little if any follow-up work.

Integrated ER. This flavor of ER exists as part of an existing class or curriculum whereby students would probably READ their self-selected materials but may follow this up with discussions, reports or do other follow up class work all with the aim of building the four skills.

Class reader ER. In this mode, all the students READ the same book and work through it slowly, often over a period of weeks stopping to predict, check comprehension and discuss the story. Often there is some language work developing vocabulary, reading skills and grammar.

ER as literature. Here, students READ the same book usually slowly and treat it as a work of literature examining the plot, character and various literary aspects of the book.

Then we can say that it is very difficult to have all these kinds of extensive reading in the same program, therefore is important to choose the best option and to check what students really would enjoy and choose a type of extensive reading which really represent a meaningful activity

Characteristics of an extensive reading approach

It can be said that a good extensive reading approach has to accomplish some basic aspects such as:

Reading material

When people want to read for pleasure it is important to have a good variety of texts, as a result students have a broader alternative to choose. Then, it is fundamental to have a good library or a good source of text. Nowadays, there are many editorials that provide these kinds of texts, because they need to be aimed at the current level that the foreign language students have. As a result they are able to choose a text which they find enjoyable and for their level of foreign language proficiency and if they select a text that goes beyond their proficiency they can change it for another which is maybe more suitable for them.

Extensive reading out of class

Students have more time outside the classroom and for this reason encouraging students to read a text at home or in any free-timed place they possess could be very helpful. Then, it is important to provide a huge range of possibilities when students want to read something extensively, thus teachers should try to provide as many text as possible or try to promote the using of blogs, libraries or any place where students are able to find texts. The greater the variety the greater students are likely to choose a book to read at home or in their free time. Then it is fundamental to search, seek and to collect text to possess a wide range of available texts.

Application of ER in some EFL settings

Extensive reading has been a great subject of studies along the last years, because it has shown many advantages and improvements in many students' aspects. In many different settings and contexts this type of reading has proved its value in a long term basis. Besides, the benefits extensive reading showed were not only in the vocabulary improvement but also in some other aspects. In a research made at Al Al-Bayt University by Alqadi (2013) a group of freshmen was chosen to demonstrate the degree in which extensive reading improved the grammatical accuracy because the learners in the extensive group were in touch with a variety of texts and therefore they worked with texts of various forms, structures, levels, different referential words and so on. Another remarkable aspect of extensive reading in an EFL study has proved the development and acquisition of vocabulary made in the Omid Language Center by Rashidi and Piran (2011); the results of this study demonstrated that the use of reading techniques such as intensive and extensive reading helped to acquire and to develop the level of vocabulary that students had, it also showed that students which are in an advanced level are more likely to improve vocabulary through extensive reading because those students generally have a better proficiency and they are

proficient enough to read independently and they are autonomous enough to read texts without asking, therefore they improve vocabulary in a greater way. Another important remarkable improvement when extensive reading is applied, was in a study made in Korea with a group of teenagers by Song and Sardegna (2014), the study results showed a great improvement in the using of correct prepositions so they conclude that extensive reading might lead to gains on incidental acquisitions of prepositions, they also found some other benefits such as an increasing in reading comprehension and also an increasing of vocabulary in the group in which ER was applied.

In a study made by Savaş (2009) in which ER was applied in a Turkish University with students who belonged to an electrical engineering program, the benefits were also positive in more than one aspect. Firstly, there was a remarkable improvement in reading comprehension in the group in which ER was implemented. Also, students acquired vocabulary related to the engineering field through extensive reading; this means that those students gained jargon terms, related to electrical engineering because of the application of ER. Besides in this study they conclude that in a tertiary level of English for academic purposes, extensive reading is more useful than intensive reading because the students reported ER as more meaningful, easier and more interesting than intensive reading.

Also, a study made by Ruiz and Arias, described in the Colombian journal How (2009) at the Universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino in Tunja – Colombia. The results were surprising not only in the overall conclusions but also in the way and comments students manifested after the appliance of the mentioned research. One of the most important conclusions would be that students gained knowledge and vocabulary, the second important conclusion is that students practiced useful techniques to be applied in reading and in the way they write and read oral

reports. Moreover, the study demonstrated the way in that students decrease their negative feelings towards studying English and the way in that they improved their reading proficiency via the implementation of extensive reading in the English program at Universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino.

Conclusions

As a conclusion it can be said that this skill usually develops other sub-skills such as vocabulary, grammar, spelling etc. Besides, reading generally has more attention than the other skills to take advantage of the benefits which reading usually provides. Another advantage of reading is that by reading people can acquire and develop general knowledge about the world and aspects of life that is why this ability is essential for life because knowledge is generally shared via texts. Additionally, as previously stated there is a connection among being a good reader and academic success. Thus, the importance of reading cannot be underestimated.

Reading has more than one strategy according to the purposes that it may have, so this research paper showed the four types of reading strategies that currently exist. Skimming, scanning, intensive reading and extensive have some specific purposes and are applied in different ways. Therefore detailed information about each one was provided in this research paper in order to help readers to clarify the aspects that each one has. In this way readers can obtain a clear notion about the reading types by reading this investigation, so readers would be able to know the correct moments or contexts in which each type should be applied and according to the specific goals they want to achieve.

Due to the most common known types of reading are extensive and intensive reading, this research paper also provided a detailed concept about them. Besides the amount of text that

should be read, the linguistic focus, the places where each type usually happen, the difficulty, the way in which they should be assessed and many other aspects were stated to make a clear difference among these two types of reading. In this way readers can use the two types in an effectively and accurate way by keeping in mind the specific aims that each type achieves.

This research paper has shown the varieties of reading types that currently exist and the purpose that each one has, so it is very important that EFL teachers know about them to apply all these types in a suitable way to achieve specific goals. Besides, extensive reading (ER) demonstrates to be one of the best tools to acquire not only vocabulary but also to acquire a wide amount of knowledge, grammar and many other good advantages regarding the person who chooses the text. Nowadays the text can be found in any place or in many sources such as internet, magazines, and journals and so on. Therefore people are able to find enjoyable information and text that are good for them to make reading an interesting process so there is no excuse to avoid reading or to say that reading is a boring activity. The power of ER is huge due to it broadens some other skills but especially the vocabulary for L2 learners, Then, bearing in mind what is written above, it can be concluded that extensive reading is a powerful tool to acquire knowledge, vocabulary enhancement, grammar and many other benefits.

As Freire, P (1983) claimed in his article: the importance of the act of reading, reading always needs and involves the perception of the reader, this means that readers are critical with the text they read and of course the reader uses the information he read and therefore it also includes a re-writing process, applying in this way new knowledge, ideas or perceptions which were acquired from the texts.

Although in Colombia there is a lack of resources in some settings and in this country people usually do not have the reading culture, teachers can use or apply extensive reading to

help students to acquire the reading habit and in many EFL settings it would be very useful to use digital media. Digital media is now almost everywhere and therefore teachers could get a variety of good input for students from internet, magazines, journals (hard and soft copies). Teachers can have an average knowledge about what their students are into so they could provide resources by printing digital material or by creating reading blogs making the reading process a more enjoyable language experience Renandya (2007). A good idea about how to choose suitable books, texts magazines etc. is through a survey that teachers can apply before starting an ER program or by asking students about the topics they find interesting, in this way a general idea about what readers are interested in can be obtained and therefore the reading material would be more accurate and enjoyable for readers, thus the reading program may have some good foundations and it could work in a better and easier way.

Another conclusion might be that when including ER in a second language context, it would be very useful because if ER is included since the beginning of a L2 course, students will start to develop it as a day to day habit and they would start to develop all the sub-skills that ER can enhance. Then the language acquisition process might be easier and better due to the contact that a learner would have with simple books for beginners. If extensive reading takes place since an early stage of a second language process the amount of vocabulary, collocations and implicit grammar which can be learnt would be very considerable. Then if ER is present through all the second language acquisition process then L2 students would have better developed skills as well as a wide range of knowledge. The appliance of extensive reading might be a very good strategy for students in order to practice, to reinforce and to see in context the grammar and some other aspects that they study in class. Hence, ER can provide the necessary exposure that L2 students need to learn a language (Maley, 2009).

Finally, in this research paper the author tries to suggest a model of an extensive reading program which could be applied in any contexts not only with university students but also with high school students (see appendix A). Due to an extensive reading program is something which is done outside the classroom, it is difficult to set time, constancy, and is up to the person in charge to set the period of time in which ER is going to be applied. According to the last idea, a good extensive reading program should take at least six months to be successful (Day, 2013), so the lesson plan is just a suggestion and some items have been stated according to the author's ideas, assumptions and opinions of the Colombian context.

In Colombia there are some limitations that may affect the effectiveness of applying extensive reading in the schools, high schools or even at the universities. The first limitation is the time when ER could be applied because in the Colombian context the time scheduled for a foreign language subject is not long enough to share the ideas that an ER program should have, it is known that ER reading usually occurs out of the classroom but there is a need of presenting the texts, the purposes or just the idea why the texts are given to the readers and generally the time that a teacher of L2 has is way too short to do this, besides in some other contexts teachers are to complete a series of topics which are demanded by the school itself so the time is just long enough to accomplish these topics. Hence, sharing the steps, ideas or concepts of ER could represent a delay in the demanded program and it could represent a drawback for teachers, students etc. Therefore, it is important to be done when there is enough time to do it otherwise teachers should try some other ways such as printing a document explaining everything about ER.

Another important point to consider might be that Colombian people do not have reading as an enjoyable hobby or it can be said that reading is not generally a culture in this country, so

people tend not to read a text by pleasure but because they have to. Colombian people have been used to reading just to accomplish tasks, homework or because they do not have any other option to get the information they want, then people usually see or consider reading as a boring activity or they take it as an obligation and this common way of thinking has been present for many years, therefore it may be difficult to set reading as a good habit in Colombian people and that is why a question appears, if people do not read extensively in their mother tongue, why would they read extensively in a second or foreign language? Then it would be important for teachers to try to encourage students to read a lot of more because it is a relevant limitation in the application of extensive reading.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Lesson plan using extensive reading for a 60-minute class

	Background information	To do before class
	Course / level: Elementary/ beginners **Aims / Objectives:** ✓ Use of integrated ER ✓ Vocabulary development ✓ Reading for pleasure **Skill Focus:** ✓ Reading ✓ Grammar ✓ Speaking (optional) **Texts / materials:** Graded readers books for beginners **Previous class work:** ✓ Present simple tense ✓ Common verbs ✓ Family vocabulary ✓ Possessives **Work to be collected:** ✓ Extensive reading weekly report (see	✓ Ask students about topics they find interesting **Bring to class:** ✓ As many books as possible ✓ Enough copies of the weekly report format ✓ Enough copies of the student / book / in class report

Time frame (in minutes)	Procedure	Notes
	appendix 2)	
	✓ Student / book / in class report (see appendix 3)	
3 – 5 3 - 5	**Warm up:** ✓ Ask students about the main ideas of common stories they know. ✓ Read a piece of one book which might be captivating	**Transition:** Choose one of the books that students talked about and read a small part to check if they were correct
5 - 7	**Review:** ✓ Make a small review of the present simple tense and its rules	**Transition:** Tell students that the books they will read usually use the present simple tense so it must be clear. Give a brief explanation of it.
5 - 10	**Introduction:** ✓ Introduce and explain what ER is. ✓ Explain the benefits that a L2 learner can get by using ER. ✓ Tell students that they should not use a dictionary because they should guess the meaning of the words by context.	✓ After the suggestion of the suggestion of the non-use of dictionary, choose one book randomly, take a small paragraph and guess a couple of unknown words with the students to show

		them that they can indeed do the guessing.
7 - 10	**Presentation of activities:** ✓ The teacher will socialize the weekly oral report that the students must do in the beginning of next class ✓ Show to students the format that they have to fill weekly and the way it has to be filled. ✓ Tell the students they have to be prepared because two or three students will be selected in all the following classes.	✓ Clarify that students are going to be chosen randomly in all the following classes. ✓ Use a copy or draw the format in the board to model how to fill the extensive reading weekly report (appendix 2).
5 -10	**Presentation of materials** ✓ The teacher will call students one by one and they will choose a book they find interesting. ✓ The teacher will fill the name of the chosen book and the student's name to keep a record of the books and to control coherence of the reports.	✓ The teacher should organize the books regarding genres (horror, suspense, drama etc.) so that students can choose a book easily. ✓ Use the student / book / in class report to keep a record (appendix 3).
8 - 10	**Extra activities (if necessary)** ✓ The teacher will choose a random book	✓ Correct pronunciation if necessary.

	and one or two students who will read it aloud to the class ✓ Make questions about the book which was just read	✓ Ask about what might happen in the next part of the story. ✓ Ask about an ending which may happen. ✓ Ask someone to retell the story in their own words.
	Comments/Evaluation: ✓ Extensive reading is not something to be assessed by tests so the in class process should be enough. ✓ Some books have activities which can be done at home.	✓ It is possible to assign pre reading, while reading and post reading activities if necessary. They are usually in the last pages of books.

Appendix B

Weekly report

The weekly report that students should fill to demonstrate that they have continued with the

process of reading extensively

Extensive reading weekly report					
Student Name:			**Starting date:**		
Week #	**Date** **Dd/mm/aa**	**Name of the book**	**Number of pages I read**	**Most relevant information about what I read**	**Average time I spent reading**
1					
2					
3					
4					

Appendix C

Student – book – in class record format

In order to keep an in class record of the weekly reports that students will provide, this format is aimed at helping teachers to control the books which are being read by students. Besides, it allows teachers to control the reports that students are going to provide in class, it means that every week the teacher can fill a space according to the number of the week. In this way teachers can assure the coherence of the process of extensive reading by checking the name of the student and by checking if this student talked about the book which is recorded in the format. Additionally, a brief note about the comment which was provided can be written in the week spaces so that teachers can confirm a coherent sequence of the reading process and to check if the comments about the book are not repeated. The numbers of the weeks and number of students may vary according to the term length and class size.

Student Name	Name of the book	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4