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STUDENTS' LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF EXTENSIVE READING INTO SPEAKING TASKS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

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Abstract

This study explores how pedagogical strategies for integrating extensive reading into speaking tasks should be designed for EFL students and whether such integration had the potential to enhance students' language acquisition. A qualitative case study was employed, and twenty undergraduate students participated in the study. Interviews and observation were used as the data collection methods. Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis. The findings revealed that students who had previously struggled to read longer texts became well-motivated to engage with a wide range of reading materials across various genres. They also believed that the tasks encouraged them to read a variety of texts, gain more knowledge about 'the new worlds' and could eventually speak confidently. The integration of extensive reading and speaking tasks created a natural atmosphere for students' language acquisition by enhancing their mastery of contextual vocabulary and other language elements. Therefore, EFL teachers are encouraged to integrate this approach into their courses as findings indicated that extensive reading integrated into speaking tasks provided rich language input, allowed for better cognitive processing, and cultivated students' motivation, confidence, and communicative competence through active exposure to various genres.

Keywords: EFL students, extensive reading, language acquisition, speaking, tasks

Introduction

English education practitioners believe that reading any text genres extensively is highly worthwhile to develop students' language proficiency. By reading extensively, language students will be fluent readers as well as confident writers and speakers (Renandya et al., 2018; Rothville & Skalicky, 2025). Reading extensively, which is commonly known as extensive reading (ER, henceforth), refers to a reading that involves joyful reading of longer texts and exposes students to large quantities of material within students' language competence (Govender &

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Arnedo-Moreno, 2025; Taye & Teshome, 2025). Therefore, ER is supposed to improve students' language skills, such as speaking and writing skills (Kim & Ro, 2023); it has positive effects on students' language acquisition, such as vocabulary, grammar, text structure, and the like (Guo, 2012; Maryani, 2023), and improves students' knowledge on specific topics being read from the texts (Renandya & Jacobs, 2002). In other words, the better their knowledge of the language and new worlds becomes. Students' knowledge of both leads them to communicate effectively and fluently in second and foreign language (L2/FL) contexts. To achieve this end, ER is supposed to be used by teachers as one of the effective ways to help students become proficient readers and writers, enhance their vocabulary mastery and grammatical rules, and improve their spelling (Day & Bamford, 1998; Green, 2020; Taye & Teshome, 2025). In this respect, English teachers need to encourage students to read large quantities of reading materials, and they have to serve themselves as role models of avid readers.

Although ER provides students with an opportunity to increase their language proficiency, the practical implementation of instructional activities using the ER approach still poses several challenges. One challenge is allocating sufficient time for students to read extensively, reflect, and discuss the texts, mainly when the curriculum is content-heavy (Jennings et al., 2025; Renandya & Jacobs, 2002). In this sense, the curriculum is packed with a number of subjects, dense material, and tight schedules that leave restricted rooms for additional reading activities. The challenge is heightened when measuring students' progress in ER (Chan, 2020). While traditional assessment methods like tests and quizzes may not effectively capture the improvement in language skills and reading proficiency acquired through ER, developing appropriate and meaningful assessment tools can be time-consuming.

In terms of material selection, students' varying levels of English proficiency significantly contribute to the complexity of ER (Renandya & Jacobs, 2002; Thongsan and Waring, 2024), which is evident when teachers select suitable texts to cater to the diverse reading abilities within a single class. Some students may find that the texts are beyond their language abilities, especially when they find some texts containing many unfamiliar words, complex grammatical structures, and cultural references that they are not familiar with. This can lead to frustration, decrease their motivation to read, and obstruct their capacity to engage with the reading materials effectively, while others may feel bored with materials that are too easy. Moreover, in practice, the implementation of ER should ensure that students are convinced that regular and frequent reading practice contributes to enhancing their vocabulary, reading fluency, and language proficiency (Peterson, 2022).

A plethora of studies has revealed that ER positively affects EFL writing, including vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, and writing proficiency (Duoang & Nguyen, 2021; Kim & Ro, 2023; Vivaline & Njoroge, 2023). Other studies have indicated that ER contributes more to EFL students' acquisition of content knowledge than to their knowledge of language itself, as students who engaged in ER activities improved their understanding of subjects, such as history, science, and culture (Rahmany et al., 2013; Sun, 2022). Hence, engaging in ER activities may broaden students' understanding and retention of various subjects beyond language proficiency. In addition, some studies reported that ER activities improved self-

perceived competence and increased students' intrinsic motivation and positive attitudes toward reading (Nation & Waring, 2020). These studies confirmed the positive effects of ER on students' motivation, emphasizing increased intrinsic motivation, enjoyment, engagement, and positive attitudes toward reading. As such, engaging in ER activities contributes to fostering a motivating language learning environment.

Although previous studies have largely highlighted the positive effects of ER on students' writing proficiency, content knowledge, and motivation, little attention has been paid to its differential effects on writing versus speaking tasks. In particular, within tertiary EFL contexts, the literature reveals a gap concerning the integration of ER into speaking tasks. (see Ateek, 2021; Bui & Macalister, 2021; Norbaevna & Yuldashevna, 2019; Strong, 2024). Previous studies have focused primarily on ER as an effective technique to improve vocabulary mastery, fluency, and reading motivation, but did not explore how reading-derived input can be channeled into speaking tasks. Without such integration, ER risks becoming a passive activity that does not contribute to speaking performance. Indeed, the input gained from ER can develop students' vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, and discourse competence, thereby equipping them with the linguistic resources needed to produce more accurate, fluent, and meaningful oral communication. That is why the present study explores how ER can be integrated into speaking tasks to enhance language acquisition and speaking proficiency. Emphasizing the integration of ER into speaking tasks may give students an understanding of its impact on language acquisition and language proficiency.

Given the potential of ER to foster language acquisition, it is important to consider how this approach can be effectively integrated into classroom practice. Such integration not only exposes to students' rich language input through reading but also provides them with opportunities for output through speaking. Investigating how different instructional approaches and task designs may maximize the benefits of ER programs and provide practical guidelines for teachers. Hence, an effective pedagogical design for integrating ER into speaking tasks is essential, as it systematically facilitates students' engagement with input, promotes purposeful language outputs, and creates optimal conditions for language acquisition. The current research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of integrating ER into speaking tasks in higher-education EFL classrooms by qualitatively examining students' spoken performances, classroom interactions, and reflective accounts, which can provide teachers and researchers with actionable insights into how pedagogical design and task implementation foster meaningful language acquisition. The following research questions guide the study:

1. What pedagogical strategies can be designed to effectively integrate ER into speaking tasks in EFL classrooms?
2. In what ways does the integration of ER into speaking tasks affect students' language acquisition in EFL contexts?

Literature Review

The integration of ER into speaking tasks contributes substantially to language acquisition in EFL classrooms. This follows cognitive approaches to language learning, which emphasize the role of comprehensible input and learning

contexts. Through the exposure to varied linguistic contexts, internalization of English vocabulary and structures in the language takes place. It is a process that highlights the potential of ER as a comprehensible input that can be transformed into meaningful output through speaking tasks.

Extensive reading as an input for speaking tasks

Similar to natural language acquisition, ER serves as an input for speaking tasks, which is a very complicated process that can be significantly facilitated by comprehensible input (Bahrani & Soltani, 2012; Fathi et al., 2024; Wang & Lee, 2025). Based on the Input Hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1982), a language learner proceeds when he or she is exposed to language which goes slightly beyond his or her present proficiency. This idea supports the concept that language learning occurs when students are encouraged to reach their potential, producing language while maintaining some sense of the input context (Rastelli, 2022; Zare & Derakhshan, 2022). In addition, Krashen (1982) indicates that comprehensible input will give rise to "i+1" situations, whereby input is just a little more advanced than what the learner is capable of at present, but with which he or she can participate and learn. This also resonates with Vygotsky's (1986) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which suggests that learning is best achieved within a zone where the learner can grasp new concepts with minimal guidance. Incorporating ER into speaking activities replicates this process, allowing students to engage with language structures and vocabulary that challenge them (Kormos et al., 2022) and provide useful input for enhancing their speaking abilities (Hamrayevna et al., 2019). Integrating the features of ER into speaking tasks harnesses the synergy between comprehensible input and language acquisition.

The integration further enables students to acquire varied language patterns, idiomatic expressions, and new vocabulary. Highlighting its immersive nature, the principles of ER also align with Bruner's (1991) constructivist theory, which emphasizes that information should be presented in meaningful contexts so that students can grasp concepts more clearly. ER offers substantial evidence of exposure to a range of linguistic contexts (Juayong-Caldoza & Cruz, 2023; Samaraweera, 2024) within which meaningful language use is created (Kim & Ro, 2023), thereby supporting Krashen's (1982) concept of comprehensible input. This aspect also aligns with the principles of the noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; Szcześniak, 2024), which posits that students internalize new language elements when they perceive or "notice" them within the input. Consequently, ER, through its contextual exposure, helps students recognize patterns of language use (Liu & Saad, 2025; Guo, 2012) and fosters greater awareness in applying these structures.

Krashen's foundational insight extends to ER integrated into speaking tasks, where the approach serves as a catalyst for enhancing language proficiency (Davoudi et al., 2016; Puripunyavanich, 2025). This progression from reading to speaking aligns with cognitive learning theories such as the connectionist model (Rohde & Plaut, 2015), which posits that learning occurs through the strengthening of neural connections via repeated exposure. Through ER, students encounter a wide range of linguistic elements (Delfi & Yamat, 2017; Isaee & Barjesteh, 2023), enabling them to learn words and structures in varied contexts (Norman et al., 2023) that support memory and retention (Binhomran & Altalhab, 2023). Such repetition across different contexts is consistent with dual-coding theory (Clark & Paivio,

1987), which holds that memory is strengthened when information is processed both verbally and visually. The vivid mental imagery fostered by ER helps create generalized mental representations of language, facilitating spoken expression. In this way, students draw on the input gained from ER when producing speech, effectively bridging the transition from reading to speaking.

Cognitive foundations of language acquisition

Language acquisition is closely tied to cognition and schema theory (Yu, 2022), which suggest that EFL undergraduates, typically classified as adult learners, draw on prior knowledge and experiences to interpret and assign meaning to new information. This framework highlights the importance of contextual understanding and the systematic organization of information within mental structures (Bouquet & Warglien, 1999). Adult language learners are also believed to rely on previously acquired linguistic knowledge, cultural experiences, and semantic understanding when encountering new language elements (Peterson & Warnick, 2025). Moreover, language acquisition tends to follow a predictable sequence, as learners' internal cognitive readiness enables them to assimilate certain structures while others remain inaccessible (Nor & Ab Rashid, 2018). In essence, integrating ER into speaking tasks capitalizes on this cognitive phenomenon by providing varied scenarios of language use that align with learners' preexisting cognitive schemas.

The integration of the ER into speaking tasks provides adult students with an effective environment that they tackle the language from multiple contexts. The exposure to language in multiple contexts implies that meaningful learning takes place when the students have information in a real contextual setting (Lee & Kim, 2025). In this regard, as students engage themselves with reading materials spanning from dialogues and stories to informative texts, they develop their cognitive schema with various aspects of language. This corroborates the ideas that the development of cognitive schemas aids in the identification of the pattern of the language and supports better usage of language (Neumann & Kopcha, 2018). In this case, students become aware of the finesses of using vocabulary and structures when they encounter them within diverse communicative contexts; hence, they become subtler and proficient in their communication skills.

Integrating ER into speaking tasks can be seen as the culmination of communication skills, representing a synthesis of cognitive theories and practice. This approach is grounded in the proposition by Kroll and Finger (2023), which suggests that students acquire knowledge through their experiences and interactions with the environment. ER supports this process by providing abundant opportunities for students to engage with language elements in diverse contexts (Mio, 2011; Park, 2020) and fostering deeper cognitive engagement and comprehension (Gonzales-Torres & Vargas, 2025; Saito, 2025). When students transition from reading activities to speaking tasks, their cognitive schemas serve as repositories of linguistic knowledge, enabling them to draw on a repertoire of vocabulary and language structures for oral communication. This integrated approach promotes progress in linguistic skills and reinforces the view that ER significantly contributes to language acquisition (Muravev, 2022; Yang, 2014). Such multidimensional development of linguistic competencies empowers students to employ their cognitive frameworks in delivering their thoughts and ideas accurately and fluently.

Method

This study adopted a qualitative case study (Baxter & Jack, 2008) to provide an in-depth understanding of how ER could be effectively integrated into speaking tasks to enhance students' language acquisition. This research design offered a comprehensive and holistic path to investigate comprehensively the intricate dynamics of an integrated-extensive reading program. The design provided the researcher with an opportunity to profoundly investigate the ways in such a way that the integration of ER into speaking tasks had positive impacts on the students' language acquisition. By employing this integrated approach, the study aimed to unveil not only the superficial impacts but also to underline the students' switch in attitudes, practices, and the potential learning outcomes.

Setting and participants

This study involved undergraduate EFL students from a public university in Indonesia with an intermediate level of English proficiency as the participants. The participants were twenty students (six men and fourteen women) aged 20 to 21, who were enrolled in an Extensive Reading (ER) course conducted in English. Voluntary participation and the right to withdraw were ensured, and students were informed that they could discontinue at any time. All participants provided informed consent prior to taking part in the study. They were in their fifth semester during data collection and were deemed satisfactory in terms of proficiency level. Meanwhile, the ER course was a formal curricular activity that aimed at developing students' reading fluency, reading comprehension, and overall English proficiency. In this context, "extensive reading program" comprised regular, structured reading activities and environments.

The course adopted an integrated methodology, combining ER with speaking activities to support reading comprehension, developing reading habits, as well as stimulating language acquisition in an immersive English-speaking environment. Speaking activities were focused on connecting reading and speaking. The students engaged in learning activities, such as orally summarizing readings, debating themes, and performing role-plays based on texts. Throughout the semester, the students read five to ten longer texts, selected according to students' level of proficiency and personal interest. Although teachers provided reading lists to guide selections, students remained free to choose any texts that met the program's standards.

Data collection

To scrutinize how this pedagogical design enhanced students' language acquisition, classroom observation and in-depth individual interviews were used. Three students were recruited for in-depth interviews using strict criteria to ensure diverse viewpoints, including varying levels of language proficiency and differing degrees of engagement with the ER program, to capture diverse experiences and examine the impact of this pedagogical approach on language acquisition. Hence, through these criteria, the researcher delved into how integrated-extensive reading into speaking had been perceived and how it contributed to students' language acquisition. In-depth interviews allowed the researcher to understand in detail students' responses to the pedagogical design of the integration of ER into speaking tasks, changes in reading habits, and language acquisition. In addition, classroom

observations provided the researcher with valuable insights into how students engaged in the integrated-extensive reading and speaking tasks.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was employed to systematically examine the qualitative data in the study. The analysis followed several key steps. First, the data were transcribed and thoroughly read multiple times to achieve familiarity. Second, a total of 24 initial codes were generated to identify significant features relevant to the research questions and to capture key aspects of students' language acquisition. Third, the codes were organized into four potential themes that captured recurring patterns across the data, such as enhanced language acquisition, motivation and engagement in reading, the development of reading habits, and confidence to speak in English. Fourth, these themes were reviewed, refined, and clearly defined to ensure coherence and relevance. Although no peer debriefing was carried out, the process of refinement involved iterative comparison between the data, themes, and codes to maintain analytical rigor and consistency. Finally, the themes were interpreted to explore how the integration of ER into speaking tasks influenced students' reading habits and language acquisition. This analytical approach enabled the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the instructional pedagogies on language acquisition. Table 1 presents an example of data analysis.

Table 1. Example of thematic analysis process

Data excerpt	Initial Codes	Categories	Themes
"I am quite pleased with the extensive reading integrated into speaking tasks, particularly the presentations in front of the class. It enables me to develop and articulate my ideas effectively. Additionally, combining these two programs has significantly improved my English language skills, as my vocabulary has noticeably expanded through the extensive reading activities I've engaged in."	- Satisfaction with integrated ER and speaking tasks - Positive attitude towards presentations - Belief in the improvement capacity to express ideas - Development of vocabulary mastery	- Positive response to task design - Enhanced ability to articulate the ideas - Vocabulary growth	- Enhanced language acquisition - Confidence to speak in English

Trustworthiness

To ensure the validity of the study, methodological triangulation was employed by collecting data from multiple sources, including classroom observations and in-depth interviews, thereby enabling cross-validation and a richer understanding of the phenomenon. Through such a process, the consistency of findings was assured by the cross-comparison between students' behavior as directly observed and their self-described experiences. Furthermore, member checking was carried out by submitting the interview data in transcribed form and

preliminary interpretations for checking to participants, so that they could authenticate accuracy in records and remove any incorrect interpretations. These measures improved the findings credibility and ensured that the interpretations accurately reflected the participants' experiences and views.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The findings demonstrate that when teaching strategies were aligned with ER principles, they enabled EFL students to transform reading input into meaningful spoken output. Furthermore, the data revealed the impact of integration on students' language acquisition and communicative competence. The insights shed light on the complex interplay between instructional strategies, student engagement, and language development in EFL contexts.

Pedagogical strategies for facilitating the integration of ER into speaking tasks

The pedagogical strategies were embedded in carefully designed courses that actively engaged the students and facilitated effective language acquisition. One such strategy comprised six pedagogical stages aimed at integrating ER into speaking tasks. In Stage 1, *Introduction and Orientation*, the teacher familiarized the students with the integrated approach that structured the course. At this stage, the teacher explained how ER would be combined with speaking tasks throughout the program, thereby setting the foundation for meaningful and productive learning experiences.

In Stage 2, *Genre Selection and Reading*, the students initiated free choices regarding genres that appeared to be appropriate for them according to their proficiency level and personal taste. In this regard, it is also common for teachers to provide a reading list of various genres to guide students and help them begin reading with enthusiasm. The students improved reading skills through independent reading outside of class and gradually began to think critically about the content by following storylines, different characters, and themes.

Through the *Evaluation and Reflection* stage, the students reflected on the importance of the narrative to which they were exposed by finding those connections of how the readings were relevant to their life and what insights they had gained. Such reflective processes enhanced cognitive development and allowed for deeper connections between the students and texts.

The crux of this pedagogical approach was Stage 4, *Oral Presentations*, where the integration of reading and speaking activities was carried out in regular class meetings. The students took the lead to summarize readings, and shared storylines, character details, personal impressions, and new vocabulary. This oral presentation easily unfolded into class-wide discussion driven by student-generated questions that urged critical thinking and allowed connections with real experiences of students. This stage also involved analysis challenges, complex passages, and thought-provoking questions that raised the level of students' engagement with the texts.

Active learning took place in Stage 5, *Question Creation and Peer Interaction*. At this stage, the students generated thought-provoking questions based on their reading, which served as discussion openers. The discussions transformed

the classroom into a space where multiple perspectives converged to foster a shared learning environment.

Stage 6 was the final phase, where *Assessment and Conclusion* were closely interconnected. The teacher measured, through oral presentations, class discussions, and written reflections, the progress made by students in reading comprehension, speaking, critical thinking, and participation. The teacher further solicited student feedback to ensure that the process yielded continuous improvement, promoting language acquisition, critical thinking, cultural awareness, and oral proficiency. Table 2 provides a summary of the findings on pedagogical strategies for integrating ER into speaking tasks.

Table 2. The key insights regarding the integration of ER into speaking tasks in EFL classrooms

Pedagogical stages	Description	Findings
Stage 1: Introduction and Orientation	Familiarizes students with the integrated approach, setting the stage for learning experiences.	Students appreciated the clear introduction to the integrated method.
Stage 2: Genre Selection and Reading	Students choose genres based on proficiency and interest, practicing reading skills independently.	Students enjoyed the freedom to select genres, enhancing engagement and enthusiasm for reading.
Stage 3: Evaluation and Reflection	Students reflect on readings, connecting narratives to personal experiences, enhancing cognitive skills.	Reflection helped students relate readings to their lives, deepening their understanding and engagement.
Stage 4: Oral Presentations	Students summarize readings and engage in class discussions, promoting critical thinking.	Students felt empowered by sharing ideas and appreciated the opportunity for class discussions.
Stage 5: Question Creation and Peer Interaction	Students create questions based on readings, fostering a collaborative learning environment.	This stage encouraged diverse viewpoints and created a shared learning space, enhancing interaction.
Stage 6: Assessment and Conclusion	Teachers assess progress through presentations and discussions, soliciting feedback for improvement	Students valued feedback and recognized the importance of assessment in their language development journey.

The integration of ER into speaking activities was proven to help EFL students' language acquisition significantly, as evidenced by their positive attitudes, improved vocabulary, and improved confidence in communicating, hence cultivating an improved and interesting learning environment. The current research portrays important understanding of how the students responded to the integration of ER into speaking activities in class. One of the related themes is how the incorporation helped the students acquire language. The theme summarizes students' standpoints of the combined program as boosting their capacity to express ideas, building their vocabulary as well as their proficiency in English in general,

directly relating to endeavoring to serve the purpose of investigating such activities' prospects to help acquire language. The students expressed satisfaction with using this pedagogical practice because it made them able to formulate and communicate their ideas better. The integration led to enhancing their language skills. The students further expressed enthusiasm for exploring the 'new world' offered by ER programs, noting both the development of their knowledge and the expansion of their intellectual horizons, as stated by Student 2 (St.2) as follows.

> *I am very fond of ER as part of speaking activities, especially class presentations. It helps me form and express ideas smoothly. By doing these two programs together, I also feel I have made remarkable progress in speaking because I can utter plenty of newly acquired vocabulary from ER activities I participate in*.

The positive viewpoints of St.2 with ER used during speaking activities indicates he was provided with comprehensible input, as is most of his peers in the course. Using ER in speaking activities presented a contextualized meaning that aided in language acquisition and facilitated students' ability to express ideas effectively. Working with ER materials and distributing them in class facilitated active language use and enhanced speaking skills. Working with extensive vocabulary, fully in context, helped retain information in memory, whereas distributing new vocabulary using presentations and classwork enhanced knowledge by necessitating active manipulation as well as use in situated real-world communication. Students' positive viewpoints demonstrated that the integration of ER into speaking activities provided comprehensible input, built speaking skills, and cognitively supported contextualized learning and vocabulary retention. Therefore, as an instructional intervention, using ER during speaking activities is an important pedagogical tool for developing acquired competence in language as well as building speaking skills in communication.

This research also discloses that through the implementation of an integrated ER into speaking tasks, the students enhanced their language proficiency and communication skills but at the same time increased a long-lasting desire to read a wide range of materials. As St.1 said:

> *I like reading English in various genres, especially short stories, novels, magazines, film reviews, poetry, and many more. I would do it for fun, but also to improve my linguistic competence and skills of communication. I explored different genres, and I enjoyed doing it.*

Students' reflections underscored the role of ER in language acquisition. St.1 demonstrated solid enthusiasm for diverse genres, such as short stories, novels, magazines, film reviews, and poems showing active engagement with varied language structures. This engagement provided enjoyment, enhanced communicative competence, and built positive, lifelong reading habits. Such habits fostered language growth, a love of literature, and self-improvement. Additionally, St.3's statements supported this view, affirming that the exposure to multiple genres strengthened both language proficiency and communication skills.

> *To improve my communication skills, I highly assure that taking an ER program is worthwhile. I was motivated to rove various genres to improve my spoken and written English. Through my broad experience in reading extensively, I obtained new understandings that contributed to this enhancement.*

This statement reflects students' solid belief in the value of participation in ER programs to improve oral communication. Such standpoints serve as a strong motivation to engage actively in reading a variety of genres. Their self-motivation demonstrates a proactive approach, supported by the belief that ER improves language proficiency and develops self-confidence. The positive standpoints of the reading class foster the intention to explore a variety of genres, and as the students gained more experience with ER, their confidence grew, illustrating the ongoing interaction between motivation and language acquisition.

The potential effects of integrating extensive reading into speaking tasks on students' language acquisition

In this dynamic world of ELT, enhancing language acquisition among EFL students remains a key concern. The process is complex and shaped by a number of variables, i.e. pedagogical strategies and students' standpoints on those strategies. The standpoints reveal how pedagogical innovations influence their language learning. Delving deeper into the findings, it can be highlighted that the relatively rare combination of ER and speaking tasks promises to boost students' linguistic competencies and grow their self-confidence and fluency, eventually paving the road for possibly more effective language acquisition strategies in EFL classrooms. St.1 said "I like reading in variety of genres and do it for fun but it can slightly improve my linguistic competence and communication skills". In this regard, St.2 also claimed:

> *Yes, necessarily, an ER program has improved my mastery of English vocabulary, grammatical rules, and idiomatic expression. While reading, coming up to some unfamiliar words, my curiosity disturbed; it encouraged me to grasp their meaning. As a result, this process enhanced my vocabulary mastery, which eventually forces me to improve my communication skills.*

Student responses suggest that an ER program had necessarily enhanced the students' mastery of vocabulary, grammatical rules, and knowledge of idiomatic English expressions. It exposed them to a wide variety of vocabulary, language patterns, and idiomatic expressions that raised their curiosity whenever they came across unfamiliar words. The curiosity to know such words, therefore, drove them to comprehend these words, which motivates them to explore and master the language, hence enhancing their vocabularies. The data show that the use of ER was an effective tool for language acquisition as well as proficiency in the EFL classroom. It corresponds with St.3 as follows:

> *ER courses have enlightened me about the numerous merits of exploring the world of long fictional texts. I realized that reading more*

> *fiction is one effective and innovative way through which I can obviously improve my oral communication skills. These texts serve as useful models for word usage, grammatical construction, and useful expressions in daily English conversation*.

The data submitted orally by the students was then validated with observational data. These data were consistent with the results of observations made by the researcher as follows.

> *Students improved their speaking abilities significantly after participating in the ER program. They expressed their thoughts smoothly and with focus. The intensive reading process positively impacted their speaking skills, allowing them to communicate seamlessly. Students also exhibited a deeper understanding of the topics, evident in their ability to clarify and illustrate concepts. These observations confirm that the ER program enhances speaking skills and boosts comprehension, indicating its effectiveness in English language learning.*

The ER courses had enlightened the students about the numerous advantages of delving into lengthy fictional texts. This suggests that they had gained an understanding of the benefits of ER. Therefore, ER contributed to a comprehensive mental representation of language. The students also indicated that immersing themselves in works of fiction had proven to be an effective and creative method for honing their oral communication skills. This reassures that ER facilitated practical spoken expression. By immersing themselves in diverse texts, the students developed the ability to communicate effectively in everyday English conversation. In summary, the provided data aligns well with the concept that ER nurtures a more comprehensive mental representation of language, facilitating practical spoken expression. It highlights how ER enhances oral communication skills by providing the students with valuable examples of word choice, grammar, and practical expressions.

Discussion

The positive perspectives revealed by the students regarding the incorporation of ER into speaking activities provide valuable evidence of the effectiveness of this technique in facilitating language acquisition. These findings align with the argument that students develop most effectively when they are exposed to language input that is just slightly above their current level of proficiency (Kormos et al., 2022). This integral methodology has convinced students that comprehensible input facilitates effective language acquisition, as it stretches them beyond their current linguistic capacity, while still remaining within the broader contextual knowledge they already possess (Dweni et al., 2021). However, this research advances beyond a mere alignment with prevailing theories. It demonstrates the pedagogical value of integrating ER into productive speaking tasks to enhance students' interactivity and engagement within a conducive learning environment.

The findings indicate that the students were not merely passive consumers of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982), but active agents who transformed input

into productive output. They affirmed that input facilitated acquisition most effectively when it stretched them beyond their current abilities, showing that progress stemmed from productive struggle rather than simple exposure. The interplay between input and output in communication thus assumes a more dynamic role than in traditional input-based models. This process also aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development, where tasks are achievable with support. In practice, when the students engaged in extensive reading (ER) followed by oral communication, they moved between decoding texts and encoding meaning, stimulating both receptive and productive systems. Such engagement enhanced vocabulary mastery, fluency, and overall proficiency. The study shows that strategically integrating ER into speaking tasks provides not only comprehensible input but also cognitive engagement, purposeful language use, and meaningful interaction.

Incorporating ER into speaking activities provided the students with input that drove measurable gains in speaking skills. This supports Bruner's (1991) and Khonamri's (2025) claim that exposure slightly beyond learners' competence creates "suitable difficulties" for sustained development. The data show that texts followed by speaking tasks offered such challenges, which were demanding yet engaging, consistent with arguments that language learning thrives in content-rich, goal-oriented contexts (Guo, 2012; Juayong-Caldoza & Cruz, 2023; Samaraweera, 2024). The students drew on vocabulary and forms emerging naturally from texts, confirming Kroll and Finger's (2023) view that language is retained more effectively in meaningful contexts. Their successful use of these forms in speaking further aligns with Lamberti et al.'s (2024) finding that meaningful input consolidates memory and transfers into productive skills. Hence, ER in speaking tasks provides comprehensible input within the ZPD and transforms it into productive competence, extending theoretical claims with classroom-based evidence.

In this study, reading various types of English genres, such as short stories, novels, magazines, film reviews, and poems, not only supplemented students' linguistic development but also instilled their reading motivation. Extending their reading horizon further, the students were introduced to different linguistic forms and communicative styles, supporting Fazliddinovich's (2025) proposition that ER introduces students to various linguistic contexts and situations and thereby enhances their communicative repertoires. What is even important is that pleasure proved to be the key to sustaining such reading activity. The students were found to read not only to meet compulsory study requirements but also as an enjoyable activity, aligning with Endris's (2022) proposition that reading for pleasure fosters sustainable reading habits. In the current research context, this enjoyment seemed to amplify students' willingness to engage deeply with texts, leading to both sustained reading habits and measurable gains in speaking fluency. The dual benefits of language enjoyment and skill development observed here demonstrate the synergistic relationship Kone (2023) describes, where affective engagement drives cognitive progress. Furthermore, the positive reading habits developed align with Arboleda et al.'s (2024) and Chen's (2018) arguments that ongoing, self-directed reading fosters continuous language acquisition.

Some EFL students acquire new language features when they consciously notice these features in the input, as proposed by Kalashi (2023) and Schmidt's

(1990) Noticing Hypothesis. In the current study, students' exposure to a rich variety of English genres through integrated ER created repeated opportunities for such noticing to occur, particularly when they encountered language forms that were directly relevant to the speaking tasks. This intentional engagement appears to explain their improved grasp of language patterns; they were not merely reading for meaning but also attending to how the language was constructed. Consistent with Llorca's (2025) and Nation's (1997) view that ER provides students with abundant chances to notice and internalize language features, the integration into speaking tasks likely deepened this process by requiring immediate oral application, thus reinforcing retention. The data suggest that the combination of contextualized reading and purposeful speaking tasks encouraged both cognitive and affective engagement, which in turn fostered measurable gains in speaking fluency and structural accuracy. The enjoyment the students expressed further amplified this effect, sustaining their motivation to read and speak beyond classroom requirements. Taken together, these findings support the argument that integrating ER into speaking tasks is not merely a means of linguistic enrichment, but a catalyst for long-term language acquisition, a sustained love of literature, and ongoing self-directed development in communication skills.

Students' positive attitudes toward reading programs not only reflected an interest in reading but also actively fostered their motivation for ER. This resonates with Anggia and Habok's (2024) and Saito's (2025) notion of perceived behavioral control because students who think they can effectively do ER are likely to invest in it. Their desire to try out various genres betrays not just self-motivation but also the type of active involvement as Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory recognizes as essential toward desired performances. In this research, such self-efficacy turns out to be a determinant. The students who thought they could handle their reading activities did so more actively, hence further enhancing their communicative competence. The data also reveal an interdependence between belief and motivation, consistent with Xiong's (2025) proposition that self-motivation is reinforced when students recognize specific benefits from their actions. In operational terms, students' self-confidence in handling reading activities breeds wider intention to use English constructively, which further bolsters their language acquisition as well as belief in their communicative competence. Such a cycle highlights that where EFL contexts are concerned, favorable perceptions are far from being mere attitudes because they work as active agents that fashion motivation, foster sustainability in engagement, and directly influence language learning performance.

The findings indicate that integrating ER into speaking activities is not only an innovative classroom practice but also a theory-informed practice bridging theory and practice. In line with Rohde and Plaut's (2015) cognitive theory, the integration of ER into speaking tasks provides rich contexts that foster noticing and strengthen memory, enabling students to process and internalize language more effectively. This is consistent with Jahrani and Listia's (2023) claim that exposure to meaningful input and diverse language patterns enhances acquisition; in this study, multiple genres offered the students such varied contexts. The findings also support Swart's (2018) argument that practical language exposure, particularly in meaningful contexts, is essential for development. Importantly, students' recognition of the program's benefits served as a motivational driver, encouraging

them to explore a wider range of genres. This active engagement, in turn, nurtured greater confidence in oral English use and created a reinforcing cycle between perception, motivation, and ability. Hence, the study contends that the gains in communicative competence were not incidental but stemmed from the synergy of cognitive processing, meaningful exposure, and sustained learner motivation, all activated through the integration of ER into speaking activities.

Conclusion

The integration of ER into speaking tasks in the EFL classroom has proven to be an effective pedagogical intervention, which has clarified students' standpoints and aided language acquisition. This integrated approach, implemented through six carefully arranged stages, has contributed to promoting effective language acquisition. Students' rich experiences with multiple genres of English provide dual advantages, namely enjoyment and proficiency, which support language acquisition theories and underscore the value of this approach. The interplay between motivation to read and mastery of language acquisition outcomes reveals the interlinking of these factors in the process of language learning.

It is suggested that EFL teachers consider integrating this approach into their curricula, as the findings indicate that incorporating ER into speaking activities may not only provide rich language input and facilitate cognitive processing but also foster students' motivation, confidence, and communicative competence through active engagement with multiple genres. Consequently, providing EFL teachers with the knowledge and resources to implement this strategy can empower them to create dynamic and engaging language learning environments. Future research could examine the long-term effects of this methodology on linguistic development and reading habits, explore effective EFL teachers' implementation strategies, and investigate its transferability to other contexts such as ESL and foreign language education.

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