



## Students' Perspectives on Using M-Reader to Support Extensive Reading Initiatives for Non-English Majors

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### Abstract

*This research aims to explore the perspectives of non-English major students on the use of M-Reader as a tool for supporting extensive reading initiatives. The study investigates the effectiveness of M-Reader in enhancing reading skills, vocabulary acquisition, and fostering a love for reading in the target language. The research also examines students' experiences, satisfaction, and challenges faced while using M-Reader. By understanding students' perspectives, the study provides valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers to optimize the use of M-Reader in supporting extensive reading initiatives for non-English majors. The study adopts a quantitative descriptive research methodology to collect data and analyse the perspectives of the students. Surveys or questionnaires were employed to gather quantitative data, enabling a systematic and structured approach to acquire information about the participants' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences concerning the usage of M-Reader. The survey instruments are designed to elicit quantitative responses, such as ratings on a Likert scale or multiple-choice questions, thus producing numerical data that can be statistically analysed. This quantitative approach empowers the researchers to identify trends, patterns, and correlations within the data, facilitating a comprehensive comprehension of the students' outlook on the effectiveness and usability of M-Reader in supporting their extensive reading programs. The findings from this research contribute to the existing knowledge on the impact and utility of digital tools like M-Reader in language learning contexts.*

## Introduction

English has become a dominant language in the contemporary world, playing a significant role in various aspects such as education, business, and global communication (Rao, 2019; Sofyan, 2021). It serves as a means of communication for people from different cultures, facilitating international relations and promoting cultural exchange (Baker & Fang, 2022). In the field of education, English is taught worldwide as a second language, and its proficiency is becoming a necessary prerequisite for higher education and job opportunities (Ament, 2021; Haidar & Fang, 2019). English is also the primary language of the business world, used in global commerce, trade, and industry (Irawan et al., 2022). The widespread use of English has made it a tool for globalization, enabling people from different regions of the world to communicate and collaborate.

Learning English involves developing proficiency in four essential language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Ahmadzai, 2021; C. Sharma & Puri, 2020; M. C. Sharma & Puri, 2021). The skill of listening enables learners to comprehend spoken English, understand conversations, and follow lectures or instructions (Listiyarningsih, 2017; Musa & Fojkar, 2019).

Speaking skills allow learners to express themselves fluently, participate in discussions, and engage in verbal communication (Kiruthiga & Christopher, 2022; Wang et al., 2022). Reading skills involve the ability to understand written English, comprehend texts, and extract information from various sources (Sutthisan & Kongsoongnoen, 2017; Vuzo, 2023; Wahyono, 2016). Writing skills encompass the capability to construct coherent and grammatically accurate sentences, express ideas effectively in written form, and produce well-structured essays or reports (Dastgeer & Tanveer Afzal, 2015). These four skills are interconnected and complement each other to provide learners with a well-rounded understanding and command of the English language, enabling effective communication in both academic and real-life contexts.

Reading skills are crucial in language acquisition and personal development. Through reading, individuals gain knowledge, expand their vocabulary, and enhance their comprehension abilities (du Sautoy, 2021; G. Amirova, 2020). Proficient readers can understand various genres and text types, including books, articles, and online content. They can analyze and interpret information, evaluate arguments, and critically assess the credibility and reliability of sources (Aliponga, 2013). Reading skills also foster critical thinking (Shihab, 2011), as readers are exposed to different perspectives and develop their own opinions. Additionally, reading improves writing skills (Apsari, 2018) by exposing learners to different writing styles, grammatical structures, and vocabulary usage.

Intensive reading and extensive reading are two different approaches to language learning through reading (Mughtar, 2020). Intensive reading involves a focused and detailed examination of a short text (Fu, 2021), typically involving close analysis of vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. Learners engage in careful reading, often with the aid of dictionaries and other learning materials, to fully understand the nuances and intricacies of the language. On the other hand, extensive reading involves reading longer texts (Fu, 2021), such as novels, magazines, or news articles, for pleasure and general understanding. The emphasis is on reading quickly and effortlessly, without getting bogged down by translating every word or dissecting every sentence. Extensive reading aims to enhance reading fluency, expose learners to a wide range of vocabulary and grammar patterns, and develop a sense of enjoyment and engagement with the language (Ng et al., 2019). Both intensive and extensive reading approaches are valuable for language development, as they target different aspects of reading proficiency and provide learners with diverse opportunities to sharpen their language skills.

Extensive reading is a reading approach that focuses on reading for pleasure and general understanding (Mughtar, 2020). It involves reading longer texts, such as novels, magazines, or newspapers, with the aim of developing reading fluency and enjoyment in the language. In extensive reading, learners are encouraged to read extensively without getting bogged down by every word or sentence, which helps to improve reading speed and comprehension (Vuzo, 2023). By immersing themselves in a variety of texts, learners are exposed to different vocabulary, grammar structures, and writing styles, thus expanding their language knowledge. Additionally, extensive reading promotes a love for reading and creates a positive attitude towards language learning, as learners have the opportunity to choose texts that align with their interests and preferences.

Non-English major students face unique challenges when it comes to language learning. Unlike their counterparts who are immersed in English language courses, these students often have limited exposure and practice in using English outside of the classroom (S. Van Nguyen & Habók, 2022). Nevertheless, their determination and perseverance in language acquisition should not be underestimated. They often put in extra effort to improve their language skills

through self-study, joining language clubs, or seeking additional resources(S. Van Nguyen & Habók, 2021).

Non-English major students may face certain obstacles when it comes to developing strong reading skills in English. Unlike their English major counterparts who are exposed to extensive literary and academic texts, non-English major students may have limited access to such materials. They may also struggle with unfamiliar vocabulary and complex sentence structures that are common in academic texts (Arifin, 2020). However, these students should not be underestimated as they possess great potential and determination to improve their reading skills. They often make use of various resources, such as online articles, graded readers, and language learning apps, to enhance their comprehension and vocabulary.

Moreover, non-English major students demonstrate resilience and adaptability in honing their reading skills. They actively seek out opportunities to practice reading in different contexts, such as participating in reading circles or joining book clubs. They understand the importance of reading as a means to broaden their knowledge, enhance critical thinking, and improve language proficiency(Nguyen, 2022).

M-Reader is a digital tool designed to enhance extensive reading in language learning (Rajabpour, 2020). It provides learners with a variety of graded texts that are tailored to their individual reading level. M-Reader incorporates features such as vocabulary assistance, interactive exercises, built-in dictionaries, and comprehension quizzes to support learners as they engage in extensive reading (P. L. McBride & Milliner, 2014). The tool tracks learners' progress, identifies areas for improvement, and adapts the difficulty level of the texts accordingly. M-Reader also offers a personalized reading experience, allowing learners to choose texts based on their interests and preferences (Al Damen, 2018). With its user-friendly interface and comprehensive features, M-Reader helps learners develop reading fluency, expand vocabulary, and improve overall language proficiency in an engaging and interactive way. It serves as a valuable companion for language learners on their journey towards becoming proficient readers.

The research titled "Students' Perspectives on Using M-Reader to Support Extensive Reading Initiatives for Non-English Majors" aims to explore the viewpoints of non-English major students regarding the use of M-Reader as a tool for supporting extensive reading. The study will investigate how students perceive the effectiveness of M-Reader in enhancing their reading skills, improving vocabulary acquisition, and fostering a love for reading in the target language. Additionally, the research will explore the students' experiences, satisfaction, and challenges encountered while using M-Reader. By delving into students' perspectives, the study seeks to provide valuable insights that can inform educators and curriculum developers in implementing and optimizing the use of M-Reader to better support non-English major students' extensive reading initiatives. Findings from this research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the impact and utility of digital tools like M-Reader in language learning contexts.

## Literature Review

Extensive reading refers to an approach to language learning that emphasizes reading a large volume of accessible and interesting texts for pleasure and comprehension, rather than focusing on intensive studying of individual texts. It involves reading a wide variety of materials, including books, articles, magazines, and online content, at a level that is comfortably understood by the learner. The goal of extensive reading is to develop reading fluency, expand vocabulary, improve comprehension skills, and foster a positive attitude towards reading (Ng

et al., 2019). It promotes learner autonomy, as learners have the freedom to choose texts based on their personal interests and preferences. Extensive reading encourages learners to develop a reading habit by engaging with authentic and meaningful texts, ultimately enhancing their overall language proficiency while enjoying the process of reading.

There are several key terms associated with extensive reading that help define and understand this approach to language learning (Ng et al., 2019). First, there is the concept of graded readers, which refers to books that are specifically designed for language learners at different proficiency levels. These books have controlled vocabulary and grammar, allowing learners to read with ease and comprehension. Another term is reading fluency, which emphasizes the ability to read effortlessly and smoothly. Extensive reading also involves the concept of free voluntary reading (Ng et al., 2019), which means that learners have the autonomy to choose texts that align with their interests, making the reading experience enjoyable and motivating. Furthermore, extensive reading promotes the idea of pleasure reading, as the ultimate goal is to foster a love for reading in learners, encouraging them to engage with texts for enjoyment and personal satisfaction.

According to experts in the field of extensive reading (Day and Bamford, 2002), there are ten principles that are considered fundamental in implementing an effective extensive reading approach; (1) Reading Materials: Extensive reading requires the availability of a wide variety of reading materials that are easy and accessible to learners; (2) Variety: There should be a diverse range of topics and genres to cater to the interests and preferences of learners; (3) Easy Language: The reading materials should be at a level that is suitable for learners, allowing them to comprehend and enjoy the texts effortlessly; (4) Choice: Learners should have the autonomy to select their own reading materials according to their interests and proficiency level; (5) Time: Regular dedicated time should be set aside for extensive reading activities to develop reading skills and habits in learners; (6) Monitoring Progress: Teachers should provide guidance and monitor learners' progress to ensure they are making continuous improvement in their reading abilities; (7) Comprehension: The focus of extensive reading is on overall comprehension of the text rather than analyzing every individual word or phrase; (8) Motivation: Creating a positive and enjoyable reading experience plays a crucial role in motivating learners to engage in extensive reading activities; (9) Graded Reading: Reading materials should be carefully selected and graded according to learners' proficiency levels to provide appropriate challenges and opportunities for growth; (10) Support: Teachers should provide support to learners by offering pre-reading activities, vocabulary assistance, and comprehension checks, ensuring successful engagement with the reading materials.

Technology has transformed the landscape of education, offering new and diverse opportunities for teaching and learning (Haleem et al., 2022; Yadav et al., 2018). The integration of technology tools and resources has enabled educators to facilitate engaging and interactive learning experiences for learners (Dinc, 2019; Qureshi et al., 2021). Technology classrooms feature tools such as interactive whiteboards, educational software and applications, online resources, and collaborative tools, all of which have the potential to increase learner engagement and motivation, support personalized learning, and assist educators in providing targeted instruction (Barakina et al., 2021). The availability and use of technology in education have become increasingly important as the demand for digital literacy and technology skills continue to grow in modern society.

M-Reader is a revolutionary mobile application that seamlessly integrates with extensive reading practices, providing learners with a comprehensive platform to enhance their language skills (Simon, 2017). With an extensive library of graded reading materials spanning various

genres and proficiency levels, M-Reader offers learners a wide range of choices to match their interests and abilities (Cheetham et al., 2016). This vast collection ensures that learners can find reading materials that engage and challenge them, promoting the principles of choice and access in extensive reading.

One of the key benefits of using M-Reader in extensive reading is its user-friendly interface and interactive features (Al Damen, 2018). The app provides learners with access to built-in dictionaries, allowing them to easily look up unfamiliar words and expand their vocabulary. Moreover, M-Reader supports audio playback, enabling learners to listen to the texts as they read. This audio support not only helps improve pronunciation and listening skills but also enhances overall comprehension (P. McBride & Flowers, 2020). By providing these language support features, M-Reader effectively caters to individual learner needs and facilitates a deeper understanding of the texts.

Furthermore, M-Reader incorporates progress tracking and assessment tools that enable learners and educators to monitor their reading achievements. Learners can set personal reading goals and track their progress, fostering a sense of achievement and motivation. Educators can also utilize the app's data and analytics to gain insights into learners' reading habits and identify areas for further support or improvement. This integrated approach to extensive reading not only promotes learner autonomy but also allows for targeted instruction and personalized feedback, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the extensive reading experience (Al Aghar et al., 2023).

## Methods

The research titled "Students' Perspectives on Using M-Reader to Support Extensive Reading Initiatives for Non-English Majors" employs a quantitative descriptive research method to gather data and analyse the students' perspectives. The study uses surveys or questionnaires to collect quantitative data, allowing for a systematic and structured approach to gather information on participants' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to using M-Reader. The survey instruments were designed to elicit quantitative responses, such as Likert scale ratings or multiple-choice questions, providing numerical data that can be analysed using statistical techniques. This quantitative approach enable the researchers to identify trends, patterns, and correlations in the data, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the students' perspectives on the effectiveness and usability of M-Reader in supporting their extensive reading initiatives.

All participants were thoroughly introduced to the research and informed that it investigated their perceptions of M-Reader. Participants were informed that they would be involved in an extensive reading program. All participants were asked to choose at least ten readings they enjoyed from the available materials in M-Reader of University T. Students outside of regular class hours would conduct this extensive reading program. Participants were also given a series of questionnaires to assess their opinions regarding the reading program. The online questionnaires were sent to the students via email. On the first page of the questionnaire, participants were asked to consent to participate. They were asked to agree to participate in the survey and allow their data to be used for research purposes. They were informed that their names and other personal information would be confidential. Their data was anonymized through the allocation of M-Reader usernames for each student.

## Results and Discussion

The table below provides an overall depiction of students' perception on the use of M-Reader in their efforts to improve their English proficiency.

Table 1. The overall perception of students towards M Reader

No	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I enjoy reading using M-Reader.	16%	20%	47%	17%
2	I feel that my reading skills have improved after using M-Reader.	40 %	31%	16%	13%
3	I feel that my English grammar skills have improved after using M-Reader.	20%	31%	29%	20%
4	I feel that my English vocabulary skills have improved after using M-Reader.	27%	53%	13%	7%
5	M-Reader motivates me to read more frequently.	29%	47%	13%	11%
6	M-Reader helps me achieve the extensive reading target set by my lecturer.	17%	15%	48%	20%
7	The latest update from the lecturer about vocabulary acquisition motivates me to read more using M-Reader.	47%	31%	17%	5%
8	The questions at the end of the reading are very challenging.	91%	8%	1%	0%

It can be seen that 47% of students expressed dissatisfaction with using the M-Reader when it was first introduced. One factor causing their disagreement were due to the requirement to visit the Language Centre to access M-Reader.

After using the M-Reader app, there was a noticeable change in the students' responses, where they felt that using M-Reader helped them improve their English reading skills. This change can be seen from the results of the second questionnaire. A total of 40% agreed that their English language skills had improved after using the M-Reader app. Some students provided positive comments about M-Reader regarding their English language skills, such as:

*"At first, I thought it would be quite troublesome to have to go to the Language centre and read there. But after I found out that I could choose the reading materials and adjust them to my own abilities, I found it very helpful. It seems that my ability to understand the content of the stories has improved."*

*"By using the M-Reader application, I feel more confident in reading English books. I am also confident that my ability to understand the stories I read has improved significantly compared to before."*

*"It turns out that reading with the M-Reader application has increased my English language proficiency."*

The answers to the third question regarding improving grammatical skills have the same percentage level. This result indicates that English grammatical ability still depends on the students' abilities. 31% of the answers stated that their English grammatical skills have improved.

Furthermore, in the fourth question, more than 50% of the participants stated that their vocabulary mastery improved after using the M-Reader application. This is because they can choose reading titles according to their interests or preferences.

*"My vocabulary has expanded after I read using M-Reader. I am becoming more motivated to learn English."*

In the fifth question, which is about motivation to read after using M-Reader, most participants strongly agreed. A total of 47% expressed their agreement on this matter.

### **The Students' Perceptions Regarding the Various Aspects of the M-Reader**

This section describes students' perceptions regarding specific aspects of the M-Reader application. As shown in the table above, only a few students agree that achieving extensive reading for one semester can be accomplished. The main goal of extensive reading in this context is to read at least 200,000 words.

The following questionnaire is a report or update from the English lecturer regarding the number of words acquired each week. The English lecturer will consistently update the students on their vocabulary progress every week. This is intended to motivate each student to read more frequently. The received questionnaires show that more students are motivated to read more after receiving the latest update from their lecturer.

After reading, there is always an exercise or quiz given to the students. The students' comprehension of the reading material and their vocabulary mastery can be assessed through these quizzes or questions. Based on the answers provided, the system will then indicate points that reflect the participants' ability to comprehend the reading material. The researchers also asked the students about the questions that challenged them and motivated them in their reading. From the given questionnaires, 91% strongly agree that the exercises or quizzes given after reading challenge them, as they can immediately assess their ability to understand the reading material after answering the questions. However, the participants' answers regarding these quizzes vary. Some participants responded that the given quizzes are quite challenging. However, some participants give negative answers because they will only earn additional points if their answers are correct. Additionally, responses state that the given questions are rather difficult, so they prefer to wait to level up until they finish their current level in the book, aiming to accumulate points continuously.

### **Conclusion**

The use of M-Reader by students in this study did not target a specific word count to be achieved, but instead focused on introducing the use of the M-Reader app. However, almost all participants shared the same opinion regarding M-Reader, where they found that the app could help improve their English language skills, especially in vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. Most participants started reading from the lowest level for various reasons. Some believed starting from the beginner level was sufficient to assess their basic abilities. On the other hand, others found the stories presented at the beginner level more relaxing and exciting, and the quizzes provided could be quickly answered. This encourages teachers to provide more challenges to their students, such as setting word count targets for each level. By implementing these challenges, students will significantly progress in their reading abilities. With consistent effort and dedication, non-English major students can also overcome the challenges and become skilled readers in the English language, proving that their passion and commitment can lead to significant growth in their reading abilities.

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