

Reader Preferences in Teacher-guided and Self-directed Extensive Reading Program

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Abstract: Extensive Reading (ER) is a pedagogical approach in second language (L2) education that has a strong foundation and is highly effective in fostering a passion for reading and enhancing reading proficiency. This study aimed to investigate the diverse landscape of ER, revealing the extensive range of genres, topics, and book selections it contains. The study examined a group of 83 nursing students in Seoul, who were divided into two groups: one receiving teacher guidance and the other engaging in self-directed learning. The program lasted for a duration of 15 weeks and focused on extensive reading training. The results indicated a strong preference for non-fiction literature, particularly in the field of Science, which aligns with the professional interests of the nursing students who took part in the study. The group that was supervised by the teacher demonstrated a wider range of subject study, particularly in the areas of Science, Social Studies, and History, highlighting the significance of having organized direction. On the other hand, the self-directed group exhibited a more equitable distribution of reading materials, encompassing both fiction and non-fiction genres. The observation may potentially indicate a correlation with their personal motivations and educational paths. Notable correlations were observed among specific subjects, suggesting a strong inclination towards interdisciplinary pursuits and the possibility of integrating disparate areas of knowledge. The books that are most frequently read tend to be focused on the subject of Science, while also maintaining a balanced reading level. This suggests that students have a preference for materials that are neither excessively simplistic nor excessively hard. Despite being somewhat overshadowed by factual content, narratives continue to maintain their attractiveness, therefore underlining their crucial position in the landscape of extensive reading settings. Furthermore, the study provides valuable perspectives on the reading habits of second language (L2) learners, emphasizing the ongoing popularity of narratives, the need of multidisciplinary education, and the delicate equilibrium between self-direction and instructional support. The aforementioned discoveries have the potential to impact instructional approaches, leading to a more effective integration of student needs and interests. Additionally, they provide a foundation for future investigations into the underlying motivations driving these preferences for reading materials.

Keywords: Extensive Reading, Teacher-guided, Self-directed, Genres, Subjects, Books

1. Introduction

The practice of extensive reading (ER) is deeply rooted in the field of second language (L2) instruction and is widely regarded as a method for cultivating a strong interest in reading and refining one's reading skills. However, the fundamental nature of ER extends beyond its instructional methods to encompass a wide range of genres, issues, and literary works. ER's scope encompasses a wide range of literary works, including captivating works of fiction and enlightening narratives in the non-fiction genre. Previous studies have emphasized the inclination of readers, especially second language (L2) learners, to exhibit a preference for

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fictional literature. Nevertheless, it is crucial to emphasize the need of providing a diverse and comprehensive range of reading materials. The versatility of books, encompassing various genres including romance, horror, and detective fiction, not only captivates the reader's imagination but also facilitates the development of language fluency and comprehension skills.

Moreover, a crucial investigation in the field of extensive reading pedagogy revolves around the comparison of teacher-guided and self-directed instructional methods. While the first approach prioritizes adherence to curricular objectives and a structured learning environment, the later approach emphasizes the importance of learner autonomy, aligning with Krashen's (1993a) support for promoting a diverse range of reading materials[1]. The current study is situated within this context, undertaking an exploratory investigation with 83 nursing students in Seoul, divided into two groups: one receiving guidance from teachers (teacher-guided) and the other engaging in self-directed learning. The objective of this study was to uncover the reading preferences of individuals, identify any relationships between different subjects, and determine the books that held their attention the most over a 15-week extended reading program. In order to methodically address the objectives of this study, the researcher formulates the subsequent research questions: Research Question 1: *What are the preferences of learners in terms of genres and subjects with respect to the quantity of reading in extended reading?* Research Question 2: *Are there discernible relationships among subjects that learners seem to be drawn to along their reading progression?* Research Question 3: *What are the primary book preferences exhibited by learners participating in the extensive reading program?* The following sections provide a detailed exposition of the research methodology employed, the preferences expressed by the participants, and other noteworthy findings. Collectively, the components provide a thorough depiction of the significant influence that extensive reading has on the reading behaviors and preferences of second language (L2) learners. However, the literature reveals a gap in understanding the specific genre and book preferences of L2 learners within structured academic settings, such as nursing programs. And unlike the previous studies, this study looks at the distinctions between teacher-guided and self-directed learning environments. In line with this, the study aimed to examine the intricacies of reading preferences in a specialized academic context, providing educators with insights to enhance ER programs tailored for specific cohorts.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Extensive Reading

Extensive Reading (ER) stands as a pivotal method in the realm of second language (L2) reading pedagogy, renowned for boosting reading enthusiasm and refining reading skills. Grounded in its effectiveness, numerous educators have woven ER into their teaching modules (Day & Bamford, 1998)[2]. Initially coined by Harold Palmer (1968) as 'abundant reading,' ER centers on immersing readers in vast volumes of text, aiming for overarching comprehension and personal enjoyment[3]. The diverges from intensive reading, where the lens zooms in on detailed dissection of smaller text portions, entailing linguistic tasks and vocabulary drills (Alderson & Urquhart, 1984)[4]. Over time, the nomenclature for ER has evolved, reflecting various facets of the technique. For instance, 'independent reading' by Nation (2009) signals self-driven learning[5], while Milulecky (1990) tags it as 'pleasure reading'[6]. Similarly, 'free voluntary reading' and 'sustained silent reading' (SSR) underscore the joy and autonomy inherent in ER (Krashen, 1993a; McCracken, 1971). Regardless of these semantic nuances, the essence remains - a reading experience marked by understanding and delight, devoid of undue strain (Day & Bamford, 1998). Fundamentally, ER champions the reading of vast, simpler L2 content with clarity, comfort, and contentment (Grabe, 1991)[7]. Nuttall (2005) avers its power in skill enhancement, especially when nurtured in a conducive setting[8]. Graded readers, offering leveled reading difficulty, often serve as the backbone for ER initiatives (Day & Bamford, 1988). Extensive

reading emerges as a dynamic pedagogical tool, distinguished by its expansive L2 text consumption, emphasis on reader joy, learning through reading, and the use of graded literature. By amalgamating these features, ER presents a holistic, captivating learning journey for pupils, augmenting both their linguistic prowess and reading competencies.

2.2 Diverse Reading Materials

Since reading ability can be developed through reading a variety of materials over a period of time (Krashen, 1993), ER's flexibility allows for a vast exploration of genres, subjects, and books, catering to diverse reader preferences. From fiction to non-fiction, historical accounts to contemporary tales, classic literature to modern writings, ER encompasses a broad spectrum. Helgesen's 1997 research highlighted an overwhelming inclination of readers toward fiction, with nearly 91% of 655 books falling under this category[9]. Despite the evident bias, Helgesen advised against sidelining nonfiction, emphasizing the importance of a diverse reading repertoire to cater to varying tastes. Building on this, both Brown (2000)[10] and Scott-Conley (2000)[11] underscored the allure of novels and stories for extensive reading enthusiasts. The streamlined plots in novels, they argued, can be easily and quickly grasped by readers. Besides, the multifaceted nature of novels, encompassing genres from romance and comedy to detective stories and horror, ensures sustained reader engagement and more enriched reading outcomes. Therefore, these choices, often influenced by cultural, educational, and personal preferences, play a pivotal role in engaging students, enhancing their reading experience, and consequently, their linguistic absorption.

2.3 Teacher Guidance and Learner Autonomy in Extensive Reading

One major aspect of extensive reading programs is the separation between teacher-guided and self-directed instruction. Teacher-guided extensive reading involves educators actively guiding students toward certain texts, setting a trajectory, and ensuring that the readings meet academic objectives or language targets. This instruction can help beginning readers and people who need systematic learning. Day and Bamford (2002) advise that extended reading instructors read the same books as their students to facilitate discussions and offer suggestions[12]. Teachers can inspire good reading habits by showing passion. Self-directed extensive reading allows students to investigate literature according to their interests. As people read articles that resonate with their interests and preferences, this format fosters internal drive. Despite this, challenges remain. Without proper guidance and supervision, students may lose direction and motivation, according to Day and Bamford (1998)[13]. Goal-setting and planning are key here. Self-Directed Learning (SDL) relies on individuals to promote learner autonomy and engagement (Brockett & Hiemstra, 2018; Stolk et al., 2010). Locke and Latham (2002) found that students are more committed and expectant when they set personal goals. Students' ownership of their personal goals increases commitment and anticipation[14]. Thus, educators must encourage this self-directed endeavor through multiple means. These solutions may include explicit SMART objective instructions or goal-setting workshops (Morrison, 2003; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2014). Research shows that intrinsic goal framing, which is consistent with self-directed learning, increases engagement and comprehension compared to extrinsic framing (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). The instructor's role remains crucial. To encourage extensive reading, educators should evaluate students' progress, provide suitable materials, and provide a pleasant reading atmosphere. Thus, educators can guide students while respecting their autonomy, creating a supportive environment that encourages lifelong reading. Teacher leadership and learner autonomy are interdependent and essential to an extended reading program, as seen above.

3. Methods

3.1 Research Design

In this study, 83 first-year nursing students at a college in Seoul were chosen as the primary participants, further divided into two groups: Experimental Group A (42, Teacher-guided) and Experimental Group B (41, Self-directed). The choice of first-year nursing students is particularly relevant as they represent a unique demographic transitioning from general education to a specialized field of study, which offers a pertinent context to understand reading preferences amid evolving academic demands. A pre-TOEIC test was administered to ensure the homogeneity of the two groups. The resulting F-value was 0.240, and the p-value (Sig.) was 0.787. This signifies that there was no significant difference between the groups, ensuring that any variances in reading preferences could be more confidently attributed to the reading interventions (teacher-guided versus self-directed) rather than any inherent group differences. The uniformity of the participants' language proficiency and academic backgrounds further justifies their selection, making them the most appropriate data sources for the study's objectives. The students participated in the extensive reading program for a duration of 15 weeks. They all agreed to participate in the research program on a paper-consent and were informed of the protection of confidentiality and privacy. Their selection not only allows for insights into the reading behaviors of a specialized academic cohort but also supports the generalizability of the results, especially within similar academic and cultural settings.

3.2 Research Instrument

Reading materials (461 graded books) were made available both online and offline, and additional treatment in the form of mentoring and facilitating was offered to participants in the teacher-guided group by the researcher. On the other hand, participants in the self-directed group were responsible for completing their reading assignments on their own time. The process was seen and monitored by the researcher, and the data collection instruments used to obtain the results included before and post TOEIC tests, pre and post questionnaires, and book lists that included information on the subjects and genres of the books that the participants had read.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Participants actively participated in a blended comprehensive reading endeavor for almost four hours per week in an extracurricular activity. Although participants could read whenever they wanted, many coordinated owing to class timings. Two hours of online and offline reading were planned for the program. Participants were encouraged to read two books each week from a tailored book list that promoted balanced literacy. The study lasted 15 weeks, including the first week for preparations, program orientation, and implementation. During the second week of the study, participants were administered a pre-test and questionnaire. Over the following 13 weeks, participants engaged in an extensive reading program. At the conclusion of the 15th week, they completed a post-test and post-questionnaire. In addition to administering tests and questionnaires, data pertaining to the quantity of reading, genres of literature, and lists of books were gathered for the purpose of analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

SPSS version 25.0 served as the primary tool for the quantitative data analysis in this study. This facilitated the execution of several statistical procedures critical to evaluating the effectiveness of the

extensive reading program among the first-year nursing students. Key among these procedures was the one-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance), which was instrumental in comparing the reading outcomes between the two groups: Teacher-guided (Experimental Group A) and Self-directed (Experimental Group B). In addition to one-way ANOVA, descriptive statistics were employed to provide a basic understanding of the data, including means and standard deviations for the TOEIC test scores and questionnaire responses. This helped in delineating the initial levels of language proficiency and reading preferences among the participants.

4. Result

4.1 Participants' Preferences for Genres and Subjects

In pursuit of an answer to Research Question 1. *What are the preferences of learners in terms of genres and subjects with respect to the quantity of reading in extended reading?*, the preferences of participants based on the genre and subjects relative to the amount of reading and the investigation on genres and subjects was examined and yielded the following result. The teacher-guided group (42 participants) read a total of 1,044 books. The data set was further divided into three subgroups based on the number of books read by the participants: '+30', '20-29', and '0-19'.

[Table 1] provides a comprehensive overview of the genre and subject differences with respect to the amount of reading in the teacher-guided group.

[Table 1] Descriptive Statistics for Differences in Genres and Subjects in relation to Reading Amount [Teacher-guided Group]

Group	No.1	No.2	Genre No.3(%)	Subject No.4(%)					
				Language Art	History	Social Studies	Science		
Teacher -guided	+30	12	457 (44%)	Fiction	171(37.4)	46(26.9)	17(9.9)	30(17.5)	78(45.6)
				Non Fiction	286(62.6)	56(19.5)	31(10.8)	46(16.0)	153(53.4)
				Sub total	457(100)	102(22.3)	48(10.5)	76(16.6)	231(50.5)
	20 -29	18	443 (42%)	Fiction	192(43.3)	67(34.9)	20(10.4)	20(10.4)	85(44.2)
				Non Fiction	251(56.7)	55(21.9)	32(12.7)	43(17.1)	121(48.2)
				Sub total	443(100)	122(27.5)	52(11.7)	63(14.2)	206(46.5)
	0 -19	12	144 (14%)	Fiction	95(66.0)	39(41.1)	10(10.5)	12(12.6)	34(35.7)
				Non Fiction	49(34.0)	24(48.9)	6(12.2)	4(8.1)	15(30.6)
				Sub total	144(100)	63(43.7)	16(11.1)	16(11.1)	49(34.0)

Teacher-guided	42	1,044 (100%)	Fiction	458(43.9)	152(33.1)	47(10.2)	62(15.3)	197(43.0)
			Non Fiction	586(56.1)	135(22.2)	69(12.3)	93(17.4)	289(49.3)
			Grand total	1,044 (100)	287(27.4)	116(11.1)	155(14.8)	486(46.5)

Note : +30, 20-29, 0-19 = Range of books read by participants, No.1= No. of Participants, No.2= No. of Books Read, No.3= No. of Books Read Based on Genre, No.4= No of Books Read Based on Subjects

Non-fiction predominated in all subgroups (62.6%, 56.7%, and 34.0%), with 56.1% preference among all teacher-guided participants. As individuals read fewer books, non-fiction proportions decline (62.6%, 56.7%, 34.0%). Interestingly, 66.0% of the 0-19 group read fiction. Less regular readers may prefer narrative or story-based content, as shown by their preference for fiction. All groupings favoured Language Art in fiction, with a considerable spike in the group reading 0-19 novels, when it accounted for 41.1% of fiction books read. Language Art is the most chosen subject among non-fiction books read by the group reading 0-19 books, with 48.9%. Science was the most popular subject across genres and subgroups, followed by Language Art. This implies that teacher-guided participants liked science-related information regardless of reading intensity or genre. Because science books cover medical topics that nursing majors are interested in. Overall, teacher-guided participants preferred non-fiction, especially frequent readers. Non-fiction literature may need more patience, knowledge, and concentration, which are likely associated to reading quantity. However, less frequent readers in this group preferred fiction, suggesting that genre preferences may change with reading frequency. Science was the most popular subject across reading intensities, indicating a strong interest in it.

As in the study of the teacher-guided group, this investigation was conducted and yielded the following result. The self-directed group (41 participants) read a total of 802 books. The data set was further divided into three subgroups based on the number of books read by the participants: ‘+30’, ‘20-29’, and ‘0-19’. The [Table 2] describes the genre and subject distribution relative to the amount of reading in the self-directed group. Fiction and non-fiction genres are analyzed across subjects: Language Art, History, Social Studies, and Science.

[Table 2] Descriptive Statistics for Differences in Genres and Subjects in relation to Reading Amount [Self-directed Group]

Group	No.1	No.2	Genre No.3(%)	Subject No.4(%)				
				Language Art	History	Social Studies	Science	
Self-directed	+30	8	Fiction	117(40.6)	27(23.1)	6(5.1)	13(11.1)	71(60.7)
			Non Fiction	172(59.4)	55(32.0)	17(9.9)	22(12.8)	78(45.3)
			Sub total	289(100)	82(28.4)	23(8.0)	35(12.1)	149(51.6)
	20-29	12	Fiction	156(52.7)	52(33.3)	11(7.1)	12(7.7)	81(51.9)
			Non Fiction	139(47.3)	42(30.2)	13(9.3)	17(12.2)	67(48.2)

			Sub total	295(100)	94(31.9)	24(8.1)	29(9.8)	148(50.2)
			Fiction	123(56.2)	55(44.7)	13(10.5)	11(8.9)	44(35.8)
			Non Fiction	95(43.8)	48(50.5)	12(12.6)	6(6.3)	29(30.5)
0-19	21	218 (27%)	Sub total	218(100)	103(47.2)	25(11.4)	17(7.7)	73(33.5)
			Fiction	396(49.4)	134(33.8)	28(7.1)	34(8.6)	196(49.5)
			Non Fiction	406(50.6)	145(35.7)	42(10.3)	45(11.1)	174(42.9)
Total	41	802 (100%)	Grand total	802(100)	279(34.7)	70(8.7)	79(9.8)	370(46.1)

Note : +30, 20-29, 0-19 = Range of books read by participants, No.1= No. of Participants, No.2= No. of Books Read, No.3= No. of Books Read Based on Genre, No.4= No of Books Read Based on Subjects

Non-fiction drove 59.4% of +30 subgroup book reading, followed by fiction at 40.6%. Science was the most read subject in fiction (60.7%) and non-fiction (45.3%). With 52.7% fiction and 47.3% non-fiction, the 20-29 segment read more evenly. Science dominated fiction and non-fiction with 51.9% and 48.2%, respectively. Fiction climbed to 56.2% in the 0-19 grouping, while non-fiction had 43.8%. Language Art was the most popular subject in fiction (44.7%) and non-fiction (50.5%). In the self-directed group, fiction made up 49.4% of books read and non-fiction 50.6%. Science was the most read subject in both genres, with 49.5% in fiction and 42.9% in non-fiction. Language Art followed with 33.8% and 35.7%. Regardless of book count, the self-directed group shows a balanced inclination toward fiction and non-fiction. Science is the most popular subject in each genre. This suggests self-directed participants are more interested in scientific and intellectual information relating to their nursing major.

The data presented in [Table 3] gathered from both teacher-guided and self-directed groups across four subjects provides insights into reading patterns and preferences.

[Table 3] Descriptive Statistics for Differences in Subjects in relation to Reading Amount Across Groups

Subject	Group	N	Mean	SD
Science	Teacher-guided	42	11.571	7.1197
	Self-directed	41	9.024	6.4011
	Total	83	10.313	6.8537
Language Art	Teacher-guided	42	6.833	2.5174
	Self-directed	41	6.805	3.1322
	Total	83	6.819	2.8204
Social Studies	Teacher-guided	42	3.690	2.3005

	Self-directed	41	2.073	1.7662
	Total	83	2.892	2.1976
History	Teacher-guided	42	2.7619	1.37592
	Self-directed	41	1.6585	1.38942
	Total	83	2.2169	1.48199

In Science, the teacher-guided group read more ($M = 11.571$, $SD = 7.1197$) than the self-directed group ($M = 9.024$, $SD = 6.4011$). This shows that researcher-led participants read more science books than self-led participants. However, the standard deviation in both groups shows a large range around the mean, demonstrating that science book reading varies within each group. Both groups read Language Art books at similar rates ($M_{\text{teacher-guided}} = 6.833$, $SD = 2.5174$; $M_{\text{self-directed}} = 6.805$, $SD = 3.1322$), showing similar interest or involvement. The teacher-guided group read more ($M = 3.690$, $SD = 2.3005$) than the self-directed group ($M = 2.073$, $SD = 1.7662$) for Social Studies, indicating a greater exposure or inclination toward Social Studies topics when learning is guided by the researcher who stressed balanced reading. Finally, for History, the teacher-guided group read more ($M = 2.7619$, $SD = 1.37592$) than the self-directed group ($M = 1.6585$, $SD = 1.38942$). This shows that teacher-guided learners engage better with history books.

In conclusion, teacher-guided learning increases average reading in Science, Social Studies, and History, whereas self-directed and teacher-guided groups engage similarly with Language Art books. The greater standard deviation scores, especially in Science, imply a wide book reading range among the groups. This may be due to reading habits, preferences, or advice or learning tactics. These findings indicate that researcher assistance may encourage participant reading and intellectual exploration.

[Table 4] Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Subject	Science	134.594	1	134.594	2.933	0.091
	Language Art	0.017	1	0.017	0.002	0.964
	Social Studies	54.267	1	54.267	12.862	0.001*
	History	25.258	1	25.258	13.213	0.000*

*. The test statistic is significant at the .05 level.

The study used the Between-Subjects Effects Test using ANOVA to compare participant involvement across subjects. [Table 4] shows that Social Studies and History had substantial effects with p-values of 0.001 and 0.000.

The between-subjects effects tests show that participant engagement varies by subject. Significant group differences were seen for Social Studies and History, indicating different participant engagement. These subjects may naturally engage participants more, according to the findings. No significant group differences were detected for Science with p-value 0.961 and Language Art with p-value 0.964. This shows similar participant engagement across these subjects' groups. The consistency of participant engagement across groups is encouraging given the importance of these two themes.

4.2 Correlations among Subjects

In answering Research Question 2, *Are there discernible relationships among subjects that learners seem to be drawn to along their reading progression?* [Table 5] displays the results from the Tests of Between-Subjects Effects to assess the associations among subjects.

[Table 5] Analysis of Correlations

Subject		Science	Language Art	Social Studies	History
Science	Pearson Correlation	1	.603**	.665**	.640**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	83	83	83	83
Language Art	Pearson Correlation	.603**	1	.491**	.479**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	83	83	83	83
Social Studies	Pearson Correlation	.665**	.491**	1	.674**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000
	N	83	83	83	83
History	Pearson Correlation	.640**	.479**	.674**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	83	83	83	83

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis reveal significant associations between all pairs of subjects.

1. Science and Language Art: There is a strong positive correlation ($r = .603$, $p < .001$), indicating that as Science scores increase, Language Art scores also tend to increase.

2. Science and Social Studies: There is a very strong positive correlation ($r = .665$, $p < .001$), suggesting that higher scores in Science are associated with higher scores in Social Studies.

3. Science and History: There is a strong positive correlation ($r = .640$, $p < .001$), suggesting a similar association as with Language Art and Social Studies.

4. Language Art and Social Studies: There is a moderate positive correlation ($r = .491$, $p < .001$), indicating that higher scores in Language Art tend to be associated with higher scores in Social Studies.

5. Language Art and History: There is a moderate positive correlation ($r = .479$, $p < .001$), suggesting that higher scores in Language Art tend to be associated with higher scores in History.

6. Social Studies and History: There is a very strong positive correlation ($r = .674$, $p < .001$), indicating that as scores in Social Studies increase, scores in History also tend to increase.

The strongest correlations are observed between Social Studies and History, and Science and Social Studies, indicating particularly strong relationships between these subjects.

4.3 10 Most Read Books

In the beginning of the program, participants were given 461 books ranging level 2 to 5. In order to figure out which books were mostly chosen and read by participants, the researcher calculated the most read top 10 books with the aim of answering Research Question 3. *What are the primary book preferences exhibited by learners participating in the extensive reading program?* This [Table 6] below represents the top 10 most frequently read books across two groups with each level, genre, subject and frequency.

[Table 6] The Most Read Top 10 Book List

No	Title	Level (AR)	Genre	Subject	Frequency (Times)
1	The Hard Stuff! All About Bones	3.0-3.33	N	Science	72
2	Influenza	3.7-3.9	N	Science	70
3	Bedbugs Bite!	2.8-2.9	N	Science	69
4	Microbes: Friend or Foe?	4.0-4.5	N	Science	65
5	Get Moving! All About Muscles	4.0-4.5	N	Science	64
6	Book of Blood	4.0-4.5	N	Science	61
7	Genetics at Work	6.0-6.4	N	Science	56
8	Breeds of Dogs	2.8-2.9	N	Science	55
9	The Trouble with English	3.4-3.6	F	Language Art	55
10	Mystery in the Moonlight (Xeroderma Pigmentosum)	4.0-4.5	F	Language Art	54

The Top 10 Most Read Book list reveals individuals' reading habits. Non-fiction literature, particularly science books, top the list, as expected given genre and subject preferences. Eight of the ten works are non-fiction, two fiction. With 72 reads, 'The Hard Stuff! All About Bones' is the most popular science book. The second and third most read science non-fiction books are 'Influenza' (70 reads) and 'Bedbugs Bite!' (69 reads). All of the non-fiction books on the list are about science, from bones and influenza to bacteria, muscles, blood, genetics, and canine breeds. This supports the earlier analysis that found participants preferred science-related topics. Fiction novels in Language Art rank ninth and tenth. 'The Trouble with English' was read 55 times and 'Mystery in the Moonlight (Xeroderma Pigmentosum)' 54 times. These novels indicate that while participants preferred non-fiction, they also liked Language Art in fiction. Notable factors include book reading level. Most books are between 4.0 and 4.5, however the range is 2.8 to 6.4. Participants favored content at this reading level, according to research.

The Most Read Top 10 Book list shows that participants favor non-fiction science books at a moderate reading level and have a little but considerable interest in fiction, particularly Language Art novels.

5. Discussion

The comprehensive analysis of learners' reading preferences, as presented in the result section, offers illuminating insights into the complex web of factors influencing reading habits in extensive reading programs. This discussion seeks to contextualize the findings, linking them to broader pedagogical practices, learner psychology, and the future of literacy education.

5.1 Genre and Subject Preferences

A clear inclination towards nonfiction, particularly in the field of Science, is seen among both teacher-guided and self-directed groups. Considering that the participants are pursuing a nursing major, it is reasonable to expect their leaning towards scientific content. It is probable that individuals perceive the immediate applicability of such knowledge to their academic pursuits and prospective careers. This phenomenon is rooted in the educational principle that learners tend to exhibit greater levels of engagement when they believe the material to be immediately relevant or advantageous. According to Hollis (2021), the findings of her study indicate that nonfiction literature is highly regarded in the nursing field due to its qualities of straightforwardness, authorship that is easily comprehensible, and its capacity to stimulate inquiry[15]. These attributes are in line with the scholarly rigor and critical analysis that are typically expected within the nursing profession. Within the teacher-guided group, an evident hierarchical preference was revealed, wherein participants who engaged in more regular reading had a greater inclination towards non-fiction literature. This observation implies that the development of consistent reading habits is facilitated by a more profound involvement with informative and scholarly material. On the other hand, the contrasting pattern observed within the subgroup of individuals who read 0-19 books, with fiction being the predominant genre, could potentially be ascribed to the inclination of less regular readers to seek rapid fulfillment or escapism. Hollis (2021) posited that fiction serves as a nuanced and indirect medium for conveying ideas, thereby cultivating a profound comprehension of the world[15]. This characteristic of fiction may attract infrequent readers who seek escapism.

5.2 Reading Autonomy vs. Guidance

Comparing the two groups from this study, the influence of guidance on the range of subjects explored becomes evident. The teacher-guided group registered a higher average reading volume in Science, Social Studies, and History. Such structured guidance, resonating with Vijayalakshmi and Dasai's observations(Vijayalakshmi & Dasai, 2020), transitions the role of educators from direct instruction to creating environments that address diverse learning requirements[16]. This approach appears to expose students to a broader spectrum of topics, pushing them beyond their comfort zones and offering a more rounded educational experience. Conversely, the self-directed group's inclination for fiction and non-fiction illustrates the possibilities in learner autonomy. When students exercise control, molding their learning processes based on intrinsic motivations, they tend to forge individualized reading habits. This trend aligns with the research's emphasis on learners navigating their education at their own pace and in their preferred style(Vijayalakshmi & Dasai, 2020). However, periodic teacher intervention or a structured curriculum can be crucial for efficiency and ensuring a comprehensive exposure to diverse topics. To sum up, an integrated approach, merging both learner autonomy with periodic guidance, may present the optimal strategy.

5.3 Correlations and Their Implications

The strong correlations found between pairs of subjects are fascinating. The link between Science and Language Art may indicate a desire to understand scientific concepts in linguistic and narrative forms. Such a trend could advocate for interdisciplinary pedagogies, integrating scientific content with language studies.

5.4 Book Preferences and Reading Levels

The predominance of Science-based non-fiction in the Top 10 Most Read Book list echoes the previously discussed preference for science-related material. What is additionally noteworthy is the reading level of these books. With most books falling within the middle range of reading levels, it suggests that participants are seeking a balance-content that is neither too simplistic nor excessively challenging. However, the inclusion of fiction, especially in the Language Art domain, in this list signifies the enduring appeal of narratives. This reinforces the notion that while academic content is paramount, narratives and stories remain essential in engaging learners. And this is in align with the previous studies on the reading habits and preferences of 13-15-year-old boys in the study by Wicks (1995), which states that they prefer fiction especially in the Language Art domain[17]. In addition, as stated earlier, Helgesen's 1997 research also supported the strong preferences toward fiction, with nearly 91% of 655 books falling under this category.

6. Conclusion

Several important implications may be taken from the full analysis of teacher-guided and self-directed participants' reading preferences. First, both groups preferred non-fiction, especially science. As nursing majors, this preference for science-related content may be due to its medical significance. Second, reading amount affects genre selection. In the teacher-guided group, fiction preference grew as reading quantity declined. This shows that less-readers may prefer stories. Such findings underscore the importance of reading quantity in genre selection. Teacher-guided learning environments also tend to encourage a wider investigation of academic areas, as Science, Social Studies, and History reading averaged more. Though different, both groups showed a persistent interest in Language Art and Science books and topics, regardless of learning setting. Strong relationships between subjects show that readers of one subject were likely to read about others. This may indicate an interdisciplinary or comprehensive learning strategy. Finally, the top 10 most read books confirmed the general patterns, with a predilection for moderately read science non-fiction works. This research's shortcomings must be noted. The study's findings may be limited to nursing students in Seoul, which may limit their applicability to other academic fields or cultures. The 15-week program may not reflect changing reading interests over time. Without qualitative data like personal reflections or interviews, reading preferences may have been better understood. Potential book selection or availability biases may have influenced participant choices. The findings affect educator pedagogy. First, learners focus more on relevant content to their lives and futures. For IT students, teachers can use current IT concerns texts. Second, balanced approach is valued. Although reading choices might be liberating, guidance broadens subject inquiry. Even in one semester, teachers can blend teacher-guided and self-directed learning. Interdisciplinary learning is another milestone since subject correlation emphasizes its importance. Science classes might study technology ethics using philosophical writings, or literary classes could study historical events using period novels. This technique deepens awareness and highlights knowledge interconnectivity. Despite the preference for non-fiction, narratives are still important in comprehensive reading programs, according to the research. In conclusion, this study illuminates student reading choices and offers a

precedent for incorporating such insights into curricular decisions to align pedagogical methods with student requirements. Further investigation into these choices could bridge the gap between educational tactics and student incentives. Future studies will examine different cohorts to see if results vary. This subsequent study may reveal various patterns and preferences in extensive reading.

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