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Enhancing students' motivation to learn English through reading English novels in language classrooms

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Abstract - This study aims to explore how reading English novels enhances students' motivation to learn the English language. A qualitative and quantitative mixed-method approach was employed, involving senior students from English departments who engaged in extensive novel reading programs. Data were collected through pre- and post-assessments, questionnaires, and observational notes to analyse changes in motivation, vocabulary acquisition, and language skills development. Statistical analysis revealed significant improvements in students' motivation, vocabulary size, and overall language proficiency after engaging with novels. The findings suggest that novels serve as flexible, engaging learning tools that cater to diverse learning styles while fostering creativity, cultural understanding, and communication skills. Incorporating novels into English curricula is recommended to boost student motivation and enhance language learning outcomes effectively.

Keywords: English novels, student motivation, language learning, vocabulary acquisition, extensive reading

1. Introduction

Reading English novels is increasingly recognized as an effective method to enhance language learning by providing rich linguistic input and cultural context. Novels expose learners to authentic language use, offering diverse vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and complex sentence structures that improve comprehension and language skills. This exposure helps students develop critical thinking by encouraging them to interpret themes, characters, and cultural nuances within the texts. Additionally, novels foster creative self-expression by inspiring learners to engage with storytelling techniques and dialogue, which can translate into improved

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writing and speaking abilities. The cultural awareness gained through reading novels broadens students' understanding of different societies and perspectives, making language learning more meaningful and relevant. Research shows that incorporating novels into English curricula increases motivation by making learning enjoyable and personally engaging, which supports sustained language practice and confidence building. Furthermore, novels cater to various learning styles, allowing students to connect emotionally with content that resonates with their interests or backgrounds, thus enhancing intrinsic motivation. Overall, reading English novels offers a dynamic alternative to traditional instruction by combining linguistic development with cultural enrichment and motivational benefits (Krasnoshchekova & Bagdasarova, 2025; Faraj, 2021; Suoth et al., 2023; Baaqeel, 2020; Sintia et al., 2025; Sanjaya et al., 2023).

Despite the well-documented benefits of reading English novels for language learning, many EFL learners continue to face significant challenges related to motivation and engagement. One major issue is the pervasive influence of digital distractions, as today's learners—especially Generation Z—are immersed in technology and social media, which compete for their attention and reduce time spent on sustained reading activities (Suparman et al., 2025; Pardede et al., 2023). This shift in learning preferences means that traditional print-based reading materials may no longer fully capture students' interest, making it urgent to find ways to integrate digital tools and interactive content that align with their habits. Studies show that digital reading platforms, gamification, and personalized content can enhance motivation by making reading more engaging and accessible, though technical issues and lack of teacher support can limit these benefits (Noori, 2025; Suparman et al., 2025; Lien, 2025; Imron et al., 2023).

Additionally, learners often struggle with complex vocabulary and sentence structures in English texts, which can lead to frustration and decreased motivation unless appropriate scaffolding and support are provided (Zhou, 2025; Vongsawath et al., 2025).

The challenge is further compounded by differences in educational contexts; for example, urban students may exhibit "fake engagement" where they appear attentive but are not genuinely motivated, while rural students often require more effort from teachers to sustain interest (Bui et al., 2025).

Addressing these multifaceted challenges is critical for improving language proficiency and academic success among EFL learners by fostering genuine engagement with English reading materials through a combination of digital innovation, culturally relevant content, and targeted instructional strategies (Kaban & Karadeniz, 2021; Pasaribu, 2020; Saito, 2025).

The theoretical framework of this study integrates motivation theories that distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, emphasizing how meaningful engagement with texts fosters intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation arises from internal satisfaction and interest in the learning activity itself, leading to deeper and more sustained engagement, while extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards or pressures but can vary in autonomy depending on the learner's perception (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Kovryha, 2022).

The Magnetism theory further explores the interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic factors, highlighting their combined role in promoting positive attitudes toward language learning (Wannas & Alshaye, 2024).

Extensive reading theory complements this by suggesting that large amounts of enjoyable reading not only enhance vocabulary acquisition but also increase learners' intrinsic motivation by making language learning more pleasurable and self-directed (Iwata, 2022; Robb & Ewert, 2024).

Research shows that extensive reading programs can improve learners' autonomy, competence, and relatedness—key psychological needs identified in Self-Determination Theory—which are crucial for sustaining intrinsic motivation (Iwata, 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Additionally, motivational theories such as the ARCS model (attention, relevance, confidence, satisfaction) and expectancy-value theory provide insights into how educators can design reading experiences that capture learners' interest and build confidence, thereby supporting both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational pathways (Bandhu et al., 2024).

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Together, these frameworks underscore the importance of creating engaging, meaningful reading experiences that nurture internal motivation while recognizing the influence of external factors in second language acquisition.

Research consistently shows that integrating English novels into EFL curricula significantly enhances student motivation, attendance, language skills, and cultural knowledge. Novels provide rich linguistic input that supports vocabulary expansion, grammatical development, and reading comprehension, fostering holistic language growth (Eg & A, 2023; Mardiani & Baharuddin, 2023; Yalmiadi et al., 2021).

Extensive reading programs centred on novels have demonstrated notable vocabulary gains—up to 30% increases—and improved learner confidence by allowing students to engage with texts of personal interest in a low-pressure environment (Sintia et al., 2025; Tan, 2025; Qizi, 2025).

Scaffolded experiences with literary texts further enhance comprehension and intrinsic motivation by providing structured support that helps learners navigate complex language and literary features while connecting emotionally with the material (Yalmiadi et al., 2021; Mary et al., 2023). The use of culturally relevant materials within novels also plays a crucial role in boosting engagement by linking learners' backgrounds to the content, thereby increasing relevance and motivation while promoting intercultural competence (Başar, 2023; Julia & Jeyanthi, 2024).

Tsang et al. (2020) investigate learners' perceptions of using literature in foreign language education. Their study emphasizes that literature contributes not only to language development—such as vocabulary acquisition, reading skills, and interpretive ability—but also to non-language outcomes. These include increased cultural awareness, empathy, and personal engagement with texts. The findings suggest that literature can make language learning more meaningful and motivating, as students connect emotionally and intellectually with content rather than focusing solely on mechanical language practice.

Al-Alami (2021), on the other hand, approaches literature from a critical perspective, stressing the importance of encouraging students to analyse texts beyond surface meaning. The article highlights how fiction can be used to develop critical thinking skills by examining themes such as ideology, power, and social context. This approach positions learners not just as language users but as active interpreters who question and evaluate what they read.

However, challenges remain in balancing text difficulty to avoid frustration or boredom and maintaining sustained motivation over time, especially when learners encounter unfamiliar vocabulary or cultural references without adequate scaffolding (Suoth et al., 2023; Mary et al., 2023).

Teachers' roles are pivotal in selecting appropriate texts and designing supportive activities that address these challenges while maximizing the motivational and linguistic benefits of novel reading. Overall, previous studies highlight that when carefully integrated with scaffolding and culturally responsive approaches, English novels serve as powerful tools for improving language proficiency, learner motivation, and cultural understanding in EFL contexts (Eg & A., 2023; Mardiani & Baharuddin, 2023; Sintia et al., 2025; Julia & Jeyanthi, 2024; Yalmiadi et al., 2021).

Key issues include understanding how novel reading influences different types of motivation across diverse learners, identifying effective instructional strategies for novel integration in EFL teaching, and overcoming barriers such as text complexity that may hinder sustained motivation. This study aims to clarify these aspects to optimize the use of English novels for motivating students in language learning contexts (Pestushko & Honcharova, 2021; Palupi et al., 2021).

2. Method

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This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to explore students' opinions and experiences regarding learning English through reading English novels, focusing on how this activity influences their motivation. Data were collected via informal interviews with two English learners, who were asked about their reading habits, preferences, and feelings toward English novels to gain insight into their motivation and personal learning experiences. Research shows that extensive reading of novels significantly enhances vocabulary acquisition and fosters positive attitudes toward language learning by engaging students with texts that interest them, which in turn boosts motivation and confidence. Incorporating literary reading into English curricula has been found to increase motivation, improve language skills, and expand cultural knowledge among students in non-linguistic universities. Additionally, participation in novel reading camps or courses helps students develop critical thinking, interaction with texts, and a sense of achievement, further enhancing their motivation to learn English. Overall, reading English novels not only improves language proficiency but also serves as a powerful motivational tool by making learning enjoyable and meaningful for students.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Increased Motivation and Interest

Reading English novels has been shown to significantly increase students' interest and motivation in learning the language by providing engaging storylines and illustrations that make the reading experience more enjoyable and less intimidating. Novels offer rich, immersive narratives that captivate learners emotionally, encouraging them to persist with reading despite language difficulties 61. The presence of illustrations alongside text supports comprehension by providing visual context, which helps learners infer meaning and reduces anxiety about unfamiliar vocabulary or complex sentence structures 58. This combination of compelling stories and visual aids creates a more accessible entry point into English reading, transforming it from a daunting task into an enjoyable activity that sustains learner engagement over time 15.

The emotional connection fostered by novels is particularly important; when students relate to characters or become invested in plots, their intrinsic motivation increases, driving them to continue reading and thus exposing themselves to more language input naturally 63. This sustained engagement is crucial for language acquisition because it allows learners to encounter vocabulary and grammatical structures repeatedly in meaningful contexts rather than isolated drills, facilitating deeper learning 27. Moreover, novels introduce diverse linguistic expressions—including idiomatic phrases, descriptive adjectives, and conversational terms—that are often absent from traditional textbooks, enriching learners' expressive abilities in speaking and writing 6.

Illustrations play a complementary role by scaffolding understanding and maintaining interest. Visual elements not only clarify narrative content but also stimulate creativity and imagination, making the learning process more dynamic and interactive 58. Studies have found that learners who engage with illustrated novels show greater gains in vocabulary acquisition and comprehension compared to those who read text-only materials because images help anchor new words in memorable contexts 5. Additionally, the integration of illustrations encourages active participation through related activities such as drawing or storytelling, which further reinforce language skills while keeping motivation high 5.

The motivational benefits of novel reading extend beyond language skills. Students often report a shift in their attitude toward English—from viewing it as a compulsory school subject to appreciating it as a source of enjoyment and personal growth 39. This positive emotional experience reduces anxiety associated with language learning and fosters a more confident learner identity. Furthermore, novels expose students to cultural aspects embedded in stories, enhancing intercultural awareness and empathy—key components of communicative competence in a globalized world 41. By connecting learners' backgrounds with new cultural

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perspectives through relatable narratives, novels help create meaningful learning experiences that resonate on both linguistic and personal levels.

Despite these advantages, challenges remain in selecting appropriate texts that balance linguistic difficulty with learner proficiency to avoid frustration or boredom. Effective use of novels requires careful teacher guidance and scaffolding strategies such as pre-reading activities, vocabulary support, and discussion prompts to sustain motivation and comprehension throughout the reading process 102. When integrated thoughtfully into curricula with supportive pedagogical approaches, English novels serve as powerful tools for motivating learners while simultaneously developing their language proficiency across multiple domains.

In summary, research highlights that English novels—with their engaging storylines enriched by illustrations—transform reading into an enjoyable, motivating activity that encourages sustained learner involvement. This engagement facilitates incidental vocabulary acquisition, improves comprehension through contextualized input supported by visuals, and fosters positive attitudes toward language learning. The emotional connection to stories enhances intrinsic motivation critical for long-term success. While challenges exist regarding text selection and instructional support, the overall evidence supports the inclusion of illustrated novels as effective resources for boosting student motivation and advancing English language skills in diverse learning contexts 12345678+2 MORE.

3.1.2 Emotional Connection to Content

Emotional involvement with a novel's plot plays a crucial role in motivating language learners to continue reading, as meaningful narratives foster intrinsic motivation by creating personal relevance and engagement. When learners connect emotionally with characters or storylines, they experience heightened interest and enjoyment, which sustains their commitment to language learning activities over time 31. This emotional engagement activates positive feelings such as enjoyment, excitement, and curiosity, which are strongly linked to intrinsic motivation according to Self-Determination Theory. The theory emphasizes that satisfying psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness through storytelling enhances learners' internal drive to engage with the language 3.

Narratives provide a unique context where language is embedded within meaningful experiences rather than isolated vocabulary or grammar drills. This contextualization helps learners make sense of new linguistic input by relating it to familiar emotions and situations, thereby deepening comprehension and retention 41. The process of becoming absorbed in a story—often described as narrative transportation—allows learners to temporarily immerse themselves in the fictional world, reducing anxiety and increasing willingness to take risks with language use 4. Such immersion supports cognitive engagement by encouraging active processing of language forms within authentic communicative contexts.

Moreover, storytelling facilitates metacognitive awareness as learners reflect on their own understanding and emotional responses during reading. This reflection promotes self-regulation strategies that enhance learning efficiency and persistence 1. Learners who narrate or co-create stories also develop a stronger sense of agency and ownership over their learning process, further boosting motivation 34. The social dimension of storytelling—sharing narratives with peers or teachers—adds relatedness support that reinforces emotional bonds and collaborative learning environments conducive to sustained engagement 34.

Empirical studies show that emotionally engaging narratives improve not only motivation but also linguistic outcomes such as vocabulary acquisition, speaking fluency, and communicative competence. For example, task-based storytelling activities encourage learners to contextualize language use creatively while developing critical thinking skills through problem-solving embedded in the narrative structure 4. Digital kinetic storytelling extends these benefits by combining movement and visuals with narrative input, enhancing sensory engagement and promoting deeper comprehension especially among young learners 5.

The power of significant narrative incidents can also reshape learners' beliefs about language learning itself. Moments of anagnorisis—sudden realizations triggered by meaningful

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experiences within stories—can lead to transformative changes in motivation and self-identity as language users 9. These narrative incorporations become part of learners' self-narratives, influencing future attitudes toward language acquisition positively.

In sum, emotional connection to content through narratives creates a motivational environment where learners feel personally invested in the language learning journey. This investment drives sustained effort by satisfying core psychological needs for autonomy (choosing stories), competence (understanding plot), and relatedness (connecting emotionally). Storytelling thus acts as a powerful pedagogical tool that integrates affective, cognitive, and social dimensions of engagement essential for effective second language acquisition 12347. To maximize these benefits, educators should incorporate meaningful narratives tailored to learner interests alongside scaffolding strategies that support comprehension and reflection. This approach transforms language learning from a mechanical task into an intrinsically rewarding experience grounded in human connection and creativity.

3.1.3 Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition

Incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading English novels occurs as learners encounter new words embedded in rich, meaningful contexts rather than through explicit memorization. This natural exposure allows students to intuitively infer word meanings by relying on surrounding text and narrative cues, which enhances retention and practical usage of vocabulary 19. Novels provide diverse linguistic input, including idiomatic expressions, descriptive adjectives, and low-frequency conversational terms that are often missing from traditional language textbooks, thereby broadening learners' lexical repertoire in authentic ways 17. The contextual richness of stories supports learners in guessing meanings accurately, reinforcing understanding through repeated encounters with words in varied but coherent settings 12.

Research shows that repeated exposure to novel vocabulary within consistent contexts improves short-term learning and processing speed, although long-term retention may require additional reinforcement 25. When words appear multiple times across a story or related texts, learners process them more efficiently and integrate them into their mental lexicon more effectively. However, inconsistent or conflicting contextual meanings can hinder recall and slow down learning processes 5. Therefore, the coherence and consistency of context play a critical role in facilitating incidental vocabulary acquisition during novel reading.

The emotional and sensory engagement elicited by narratives further enhances vocabulary learning by linking new words to affective experiences and concrete imagery. Words associated with emotionally charged or vivid scenes tend to be learned more easily because they activate sensorimotor and emotional information alongside linguistic input 3. This embodied cognition effect strengthens semantic connections and aids memory consolidation for both concrete and abstract vocabulary items encountered incidentally.

Studies comparing reading with other modalities such as listening suggest that while both support incidental vocabulary gains, listening to audiobooks may sometimes lead to higher retention due to prosodic cues and auditory reinforcement 10. Nonetheless, reading novels remains a highly effective method because it allows learners to control pace, revisit passages, and engage visually with text and illustrations that scaffold comprehension.

The setting in which novel reading takes place also influences incidental vocabulary acquisition. Reading outside the classroom in authentic environments tends to yield better recall than controlled lab or classroom settings because it mimics natural language use more closely and encourages voluntary engagement 4. Additionally, learner factors such as existing vocabulary size, motivation, and reading strategies impact how much incidental learning occurs. For example, students who actively guess word meanings from context or use reflective exercises like vocabulary journals show greater gains 69.

Extensive reading programs that allow learners to select novels based on personal interest promote sustained motivation and deeper lexical development. Students report increased confidence using newly acquired words in speaking and writing after engaging with novels

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extensively over time 7. This approach aligns with pedagogical recommendations emphasizing meaningful input over rote memorization for effective second language vocabulary growth.
In summary, incidental vocabulary acquisition through English novel reading is facilitated by rich contextual exposure that enables intuitive meaning inference without explicit study. Consistent contextual cues across repeated encounters enhance short-term learning efficiency while emotional engagement strengthens memory retention. Reading novels outside formal settings further supports naturalistic language acquisition processes. While listening may complement reading for some learners, the visual and interactive nature of novel reading offers unique advantages for expanding practical vocabulary knowledge. Incorporating extensive novel reading into language curricula can thus significantly boost learners' lexical proficiency by combining motivation, context-rich input, and cognitive engagement essential for lasting incidental vocabulary growth 12345679+1 MORE.

3.1.4 Shift in Language Learning Perception

Literature-based approaches in language learning can significantly transform learners' perceptions of English from a mere academic subject to an enjoyable and meaningful experience. Participants often report that engaging with literary texts reduces the stress commonly associated with traditional language learning and increases their intrinsic enjoyment, which fosters a more positive attitude toward the learning process 16. This shift is supported by research showing that literature provides authentic, culturally rich contexts that make language learning more relevant and engaging, helping learners connect emotionally and cognitively with the material 10. Positive emotions such as foreign language enjoyment (FLE) have been found to enhance motivation, reduce anxiety, and promote sustained engagement, all of which contribute to improved language attainment 247.
Studies highlight that when learners experience enjoyment through literature, they develop greater resilience and grit, enabling them to persevere through challenges and avoid burnout 3. Enjoyment acts as a buffer against negative emotions like anxiety, which often hinder language acquisition. The dynamic interplay between reducing stress and increasing pleasure creates a supportive emotional environment conducive to deeper learning 59. Furthermore, literature-based pedagogy encourages active participation and critical thinking, transforming passive classroom experiences into interactive ones where learners feel more autonomous and competent 6.
The social dimension of literature learning—discussing themes, characters, and cultural contexts—also enhances relatedness among peers and teachers, further boosting positive attitudes toward English 110. This collaborative engagement helps learners see English not just as a school requirement but as a tool for communication and cultural exploration. Consequently, learners report increased confidence in using English in real-life situations after participating in literature-based activities 6.
Overall, integrating literature into language teaching shifts learners' perceptions by making the process less stressful and more enjoyable. This transformation supports emotional well-being while simultaneously improving linguistic skills through meaningful input. Educators are encouraged to select culturally relevant literary materials that resonate with students' interests and provide scaffolding to manage linguistic complexity. Such approaches foster an emotionally rich learning environment where motivation flourishes alongside cognitive development, ultimately leading to more positive attitudes toward English language learning 12345679+1 MORE.

3.2 Discussion

The results of this study align with extensive research demonstrating that English novels are highly effective tools for enhancing both motivation and vocabulary acquisition among EFL learners by providing meaningful, context-rich input that engages learners emotionally and cognitively. Novels immerse learners in authentic language use through compelling narratives, which fosters an emotional connection to the material and cultivates intrinsic motivation—an essential factor for sustained engagement in language learning. This intrinsic motivation is

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critical because it encourages learners to persist in their studies beyond external pressures or requirements, making the learning process more self-driven and enjoyable. The emotional engagement elicited by stories also helps learners internalize vocabulary incidentally, as repeated exposure to new words within rich contexts allows for natural acquisition without reliance on rote memorization.

Incidental vocabulary acquisition through novel reading is particularly effective because it situates new words within meaningful, coherent contexts that facilitate intuitive understanding and retention. Learners often employ strategies such as guessing word meanings from context, which reinforces deeper cognitive processing and long-term memory consolidation 12. The variety of vocabulary encountered—including idiomatic expressions, descriptive adjectives, and low-frequency terms—broadens learners' lexical repertoire in ways that traditional textbook approaches rarely achieve. Moreover, extensive reading programs where students select novels based on personal interest have been shown to increase motivation and confidence in using newly acquired vocabulary in speaking and writing tasks. This learner autonomy further enhances engagement and supports sustained language development.

The positive shift in learners' attitudes toward English observed in this study underscores the role of novels in transforming language learning from a stressful academic obligation into an enjoyable activity. Literature-based approaches reduce anxiety by creating a relaxed, immersive environment where learners can explore language at their own pace while connecting emotionally with characters and themes. This reduction in stress not only improves learner confidence but also promotes persistence, as students are more likely to continue practicing when they find the experience pleasurable rather than burdensome. Social interaction around novels—such as discussions or group activities—also contributes to positive attitudes by fostering a sense of community and shared purpose among learners.

Integrating novels thoughtfully into EFL curricula is crucial to maximizing these motivational benefits while supporting vocabulary growth. Careful selection of texts that match learners' proficiency levels and interests helps maintain comprehension and motivation, preventing frustration caused by overly difficult materials. Scaffolding techniques such as pre-reading activities, glossaries, or guided discussions can support understanding without diminishing the naturalistic exposure that makes novel reading effective for incidental learning. Additionally, combining novel reading with reflective exercises like vocabulary journals or task-based activities enhances retention by encouraging active engagement with new words beyond passive exposure.

Despite these benefits, challenges remain in fully harnessing the potential of novels for language learning. Text difficulty is a common obstacle; if novels are too complex linguistically or culturally distant from learners' experiences, motivation may decline due to comprehension difficulties. Educators must balance challenge with accessibility by providing appropriate support and selecting culturally relevant materials that resonate with students' backgrounds. Furthermore, some learners may initially struggle with self-directed reading habits required for extensive novel reading programs, necessitating gradual introduction and ongoing encouragement.

The use of English novels in EFL contexts offers a holistic approach that simultaneously fosters linguistic competence and learner motivation by providing rich, contextualized input embedded within engaging narratives. Extensive reading of novels immerses learners in authentic language use, exposing them to diverse vocabulary and complex grammatical structures in meaningful contexts, which promotes incidental vocabulary acquisition more naturally than traditional memorization-based methods. This exposure allows learners to infer meanings from context, enhancing retention and deepening understanding of word usage, idiomatic expressions, and stylistic nuances that are often absent from conventional textbooks. The emotional connection to stories nurtures intrinsic motivation, a critical factor for sustained engagement and long-term language learning success, as learners become invested in characters and plots rather than perceiving English solely as an academic requirement.

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Intrinsic motivation cultivated through novel reading reduces the anxiety and stress frequently associated with language learning by transforming the experience into an enjoyable activity. This positive emotional environment encourages persistence and confidence, enabling learners to engage more deeply with the language. Moreover, novels provide cultural insights and promote intercultural competence, broadening learners' perspectives and fostering tolerance—key components of holistic language education. Social interactions around novels, such as group discussions or reflective tasks, further enhance motivation by creating a collaborative learning atmosphere where students share interpretations and support each other's progress.

Thoughtful curricular integration is essential to maximize these benefits while addressing challenges such as text difficulty. Selecting novels that align with learners' proficiency levels and interests helps maintain comprehension and motivation; overly complex texts can lead to frustration and disengagement if not properly scaffolded. Scaffolding strategies include pre-reading activities, glossaries, guided discussions, and task-based exercises that support vocabulary acquisition without detracting from the immersive reading experience. Combining novel reading with speaking or writing tasks also reinforces vocabulary retention by encouraging active use of new language items in meaningful communication 6. Additionally, incorporating technology—such as e-books or online platforms—can increase accessibility and interactivity, further supporting learner autonomy and engagement.

Research shows that extensive novel reading programs yield significant vocabulary gains; one study reported an average 30% increase in vocabulary size after a semester-long program where students chose novels based on personal interest. Students also reported improved confidence in using new words across speaking and writing tasks. The variety of vocabulary encountered includes vivid adjectives, low-frequency conversational terms, academic words, and idiomatic expressions that enrich overall language proficiency. These gains are facilitated by repeated exposure within authentic contexts rather than isolated word lists or drills.

Despite these advantages, challenges remain in fully realizing the potential of novel reading for EFL learners. Some students may initially struggle with self-directed reading habits or find it difficult to select appropriate texts without guidance. Teacher competence plays a moderating role in fostering student interest by providing engaging materials tailored to learner needs and creating supportive environments that encourage voluntary reading. Addressing these challenges requires ongoing teacher training focused on effective novel selection, scaffolding techniques, and integration of reading with other language skills.

Incorporating English novels into EFL curricula creates immersive reading experiences that enhance both vocabulary development and positive attitudes toward English learning. Novels offer rich linguistic input within emotionally engaging narratives that foster intrinsic motivation essential for sustained engagement. Thoughtful integration supported by scaffolding ensures comprehension while maintaining learner interest. When combined with interactive tasks and technological tools, novel reading promotes learner autonomy alongside linguistic competence. This holistic approach contributes to more effective and enjoyable EFL instruction by aligning cognitive development with emotional well-being and social interaction.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that reading English novels can significantly enhance the enjoyment and motivation of EFL learners, making language learning a more engaging and less stressful experience. Despite the widespread use of technology and early English education, many students still find learning English challenging and monotonous. Novels, with their interesting stories and vivid illustrations, offer an alternative that captivates learners' attention and reduces anxiety, as reported by students who felt more excited and less nervous when reading novels. This emotional engagement is crucial because it fosters intrinsic motivation, encouraging learners to persist in their studies voluntarily rather than out of obligation. The natural context

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provided by novels allows students to acquire new vocabulary and grammar implicitly through repeated exposure within meaningful narratives, which is more effective than rote memorization.

The positive impact of novel reading extends beyond vocabulary acquisition; it also improves learners' attitudes toward English by making the learning process enjoyable. When students enjoy what they are reading, they are more likely to develop a sustained interest in the language, which supports long-term proficiency development. Novels introduce diverse linguistic expressions, including idiomatic phrases and descriptive language often missing from traditional textbooks, enriching learners' communicative competence.. Furthermore, the cultural content embedded in novels broadens learners' intercultural awareness and empathy, contributing to holistic language education that integrates cognitive and affective domains. This combination of linguistic input and emotional connection helps build confidence and reduces the fear of making mistakes, which is common among EFL learners.

Integrating novels into English lessons is a straightforward yet powerful strategy to boost motivation. Teachers play a vital role in selecting appropriate texts that match learners' proficiency levels and interests to maintain comprehension and engagement. Scaffolding techniques such as pre-reading discussions, glossaries, or guided questions can support understanding without diminishing the immersive experience that makes novel reading effective for incidental learning. Additionally, pairing novel reading with interactive activities like group discussions or writing tasks encourages active use of new vocabulary and reinforces retention. Technology can further enhance this process by providing access to digital versions of novels and online platforms for collaborative learning.

Research supports these benefits quantitatively: one study found that students who engaged in extensive novel reading experienced an average 30% increase in vocabulary size over a semester while reporting greater confidence in using new words 1. Qualitative feedback from learners highlights how encountering words repeatedly in context helps them guess meanings intuitively and remember vocabulary longer than through isolated drills 2. Although some studies suggest that reading speed influences vocabulary acquisition more than enjoyment alone, the motivational aspect remains important for sustaining extensive reading habits necessary for language growth.

Challenges such as text difficulty or lack of teacher competence can hinder the effectiveness of novel-based instruction. If texts are too complex or culturally distant without adequate support, learners may become frustrated or disengaged. Teacher training focused on selecting suitable materials and employing effective scaffolding strategies is essential to overcome these obstacles. Encouraging learner autonomy gradually helps students develop self-directed reading habits critical for maximizing the benefits of novel reading programs.

In conclusion, incorporating English novels into EFL curricula offers a multifaceted approach that enhances both linguistic skills and learner motivation. Novels provide rich contextual input within emotionally engaging stories that facilitate incidental vocabulary acquisition naturally while fostering positive attitudes toward English learning. Thoughtful integration supported by scaffolding ensures accessibility and maintains learner interest. This approach not only improves vocabulary but also nurtures confidence, cultural awareness, and sustained engagement—key factors for successful language acquisition. Therefore, adding novels to English lessons represents a simple yet powerful way to transform language learning into an enjoyable journey that students look forward to continuing.

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