

Extensive reading and the problem of interference in efl writing : a case study

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of extensive reading on the problem of interference in EFL writing among secondary school learners. Data were collected through a writing test administered to 116 students. The analysis compared interference errors between students who practiced extensive reading and those who did not. Results show that extensive readers produced fewer errors in verb conjugation and spelling, while persistent difficulties remained with articles, prepositions, and lexical transfer from French. The findings confirm the pedagogical value of extensive reading in reducing interference, though complementary explicit instruction is necessary. This study highlights the importance of integrating extensive reading into EFL curricula to foster accuracy and fluency in writing. Suggestions for future research include longitudinal and comparative studies across proficiency levels.

Keywords: *EFL writing, Error analysis, Extensive reading, Interference, Pedagogy*

Résumé

Cette étude examine l'impact de la lecture extensive sur le problème de l'interférence dans la production écrite en anglais langue étrangère (ALE) chez des élèves du secondaire. Les données ont été recueillies au moyen d'un test de rédaction administrés à 116 apprenants. L'analyse a comparé les erreurs d'interférence entre les étudiants pratiquant la lecture extensive et ceux qui ne la pratiquent pas. Les résultats montrent que les lecteurs extensifs commettent moins d'erreurs de conjugaison et d'orthographe, mais que des difficultés persistent au niveau des articles, des prépositions et des transferts lexicaux du français. Les conclusions confirment la valeur pédagogique de la lecture extensive pour réduire l'interférence, tout en soulignant la nécessité d'un enseignement explicite complémentaire. L'étude suggère d'intégrer la lecture extensive dans les programmes d'Anglais Langue Etrangère (ALE) afin de renforcer la précision et la fluidité en écriture.

Mots-clés : *Ecriture en ALE, Analyse des erreurs, Lecture extensive, interférence, Pédagogie*

Introduction

In many educational contexts where English is taught as a Foreign Language (EFL), writing remains one of the most demanding skills to master. Unlike speaking, which often tolerates fluency at the expense of accuracy, writing requires precision in grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and style. Learners in EFL environments, particularly those with limited exposure to authentic English input outside the classroom, tend to transfer linguistic and stylistic features from their first language (L1) into their second language (L2) writing. This phenomenon, generally referred to as interference or negative transfer, manifests in errors that affect lexical choice, syntactic structures, spelling, punctuation, and discourse organization. One pedagogical approach that has gained increasing attention for its potential to improve EFL learners' writing competence is extensive reading. Extensive reading is based on the idea that regular exposure to large amounts of comprehensible input contributes to vocabulary growth, syntactic awareness, and overall linguistic fluency. The premise is that by engaging with authentic texts in the target language, learners naturally internalize the patterns of English and gradually reduce the reliance on their L1 structures. While numerous studies have explored the role of extensive reading in vocabulary acquisition, comprehension, and motivation, relatively few have examined its direct impact on the problem of interference in EFL learners' writing.

Despite years of formal instruction in English, many EFL learners continue to produce written work that is heavily influenced by their first and second languages. For example, direct translations of idiomatic expressions, incorrect word order, and inappropriate use of prepositions are common markers of interference in student writing. Teachers frequently report frustration with the persistence of such errors, even after explicit grammar instruction (K. Kouamé (2016)). This suggests that exposure to isolated grammatical rules and limited classroom practice may not be sufficient to address the deeper cognitive influence of L1 on L2 production. There is therefore a pressing need to explore alternative pedagogical strategies that can complement classroom instruction and help learners internalize authentic

language use. The main question leading this reflexion is as follows : To what extent does extensive reading reduce interference in EFL learners' writing? This main question calls for the following secondary concerns : What types of interference errors are most frequent in EFL learners' writing? How does extensive reading influence learners' lexical choice and sentence structure? What is the relationship between the amount of reading and the reduction of interference errors?

The main objective of the study is to investigate the impact of extensive reading on reducing interference in EFL writing. This main objective suggests these operational objectives : To identify the most common interference errors in EFL learners' writing, to measure learners' progress in writing after engagement in extensive reading, to establish the correlation between reading input and writing accuracy. to evaluate learners' perceptions of the role of extensive reading in improving writing skills. We hypothesise that Extensive reading significantly reduces interference in EFL learners' writing. More specifically, we presume that extensive reading improves learners' lexical choices and reduces literal translation from L1 ; extensive reading enhances syntactic accuracy in learners' writing ; learners exposed to extensive reading report increased confidence and accuracy in writing.

The problem of interference in second language writing has been a central concern in applied linguistics for decades. Early studies in contrastive analysis suggested that many learner errors could be attributed to the influence of the native language (R. Lado, 1957). Later research emphasized that while interference is not the only source of error, it remains a major obstacle to writing accuracy in EFL contexts (T. Odlin, 1989). At the same time, the theoretical foundation of extensive reading rests on S. Krashen's Input Hypothesis (S. Krashen, 1985), which argues that exposure to comprehensible input in the target language is essential for acquisition. R.R. Day and J. Bamford (1998) further developed the pedagogical principles of extensive reading, emphasizing reading for pleasure, variety of texts, and learner autonomy. Empirical studies (Example : F. M. Hafiz & I. Tudor, 1989; J. Yamashita, 2008) have shown that extensive reading improves vocabulary, grammar sensitivity, and motivation. However, the direct

connection between extensive reading and the reduction of interference errors in writing remains underexplored.

This study therefore seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the extent to which sustained exposure to English through extensive reading can mitigate the problem of interference in EFL learners' written production.

1. Methodology

1.1. Description of Study Site

The study was conducted at Lycée Municipal Simone Ehivet Gbagbo, a public secondary school located in Yopougon, a densely populated suburb in the northern part of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The school serves a large student population from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and provides general secondary education leading to the Baccalaureate examinations. The EFL learning environment at the institution reflects the broader Ivorian educational context, where English is taught as a compulsory foreign language from lower secondary to upper secondary levels. Students generally have three hours of English instruction per week, with a strong emphasis on grammar, vocabulary acquisition, and reading comprehension. Writing activities are also part of the curriculum, but they tend to focus on sentence transformation and guided writing exercises rather than free or creative writing.

As is common in many Francophone African contexts, the exposure of students to English outside the classroom remains very limited. Their primary source of English input is through classroom instruction, prescribed textbooks, and occasional audiovisual materials. This limited exposure contributes to the persistence of interference errors in their writing, as students tend to rely heavily on French (their L2) structures when producing texts in English. The study site therefore provides a relevant context for investigating the potential of extensive reading as a pedagogical strategy to reduce L1 interference and enhance writing competence in EFL learners.

1.2. Population and Sampling

The target population of this study consisted of EFL learners enrolled in the final year of secondary education (Terminale A) at Lycée Municipal Simone Ehivet Gbagbo in Yopougon, Abidjan. The

learners, generally aged between 17 and 20 years old, have studied English as a compulsory subject for at least six years. At this stage of their schooling, they are expected to demonstrate a functional command of English in preparation for the national Baccalaureate examinations, which include a writing component. The sampling technique combined purposive and random sampling. Out of the five Terminale A classes available, two classes were purposively selected because of their accessibility and willingness of the teachers to participate in the study. Within these two classes, students were invited to take part voluntarily by completing a short written test and filling out a questionnaire designed to gather information about their reading habits.

After the administration of the instruments, 58 students reported that they had never read a book for their own pleasure, which indicated a lack of engagement in extensive reading. In order to establish a balanced comparison, an equal number of students (58) were randomly selected from the remaining respondents who declared having read at least one book for pleasure. This process resulted in a sample size of 116 students, divided equally between the non-extensive readers ($n = 58$) and the extensive readers ($n = 58$).

This sampling procedure provided two groups with contrasting reading profiles, thereby offering a solid basis for examining the potential impact of extensive reading on the problem of interference in EFL writing.

1.3. Method of Data Collection

A writing test was used as method of data collection for this study. The task required students to produce a short essay in English on a familiar topic, designed to elicit free written expression. The students' scripts were subsequently subjected to error analysis, with a particular focus on identifying instances of linguistic interference from French, their first language. These errors were categorized at different linguistic levels (lexical, syntactic, morphological, and pragmatic) and compared across the two groups (extensive readers vs. non-extensive readers).

On the heading of each worksheet, students were asked to write the number of books they had ever read for pleasure. This variable added to the test allowed both the classification of learners

according to their reading practices and the empirical measurement of the impact of extensive reading on interference in EFL writing.

1.4. Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

For the written productions, an error analysis method was employed. Students' essays were carefully examined in order to identify and classify linguistic errors that could be attributed to interference from French, their second language. The errors were grouped into categories such as lexical interference (e.g., false cognates, literal translations), syntactic interference (e.g., word order, use of articles and prepositions), morphological interference (e.g., verb conjugation, pluralization), and pragmatic interference (e.g., inappropriate use of idioms or discourse markers). The frequency and distribution of these errors were compared across the two groups (extensive readers vs. non-extensive readers) in order to evaluate the extent to which extensive reading contributed to reducing interference in EFL writing.

2. Results

2.1. Analysis of the errors of students who read books for pleasure

Category	Occurrences	Percentage
Adjective	02	1.94
Article	17	16.50
Conjugation	26	25.24
Expressions	16	15.33
French words	22	21.36
Gerund	02	1.94
Modals	00	0
Morphology (spelling)	13	12.62
Negation	01	0.97
Plural	00	1.94
Possessive	01	0.97
Prepositions	02	1.94
Relative pronoun	01	0.97
Total	103	100

The table presents the distribution of interference errors identified in learners' written productions, categorized according to their grammatical or lexical nature. A total of 103 errors were

recorded. The most frequent category of errors was conjugation (25.24%), followed by French words (21.36%) and articles (16.50%). These three categories alone accounted for more than 63% of all occurrences, highlighting that interference primarily affects the core grammatical structures of English and the transfer of lexical items from French into English. Errors in expressions (15.33%) and morphology/spelling (12.62%) were also significant, reflecting learners' tendency to either translate idiomatic expressions literally or reproduce phonological forms inaccurately in written form.

By contrast, errors in categories such as adjectives, gerunds, prepositions, and relative pronouns were relatively rare (each below 2%), suggesting that learners were less affected by interference in these areas. Interestingly, modal verbs did not register any occurrences, which could indicate either a limited use of modals in the writing tasks or a relative mastery of this structure. Overall, the results reveal that verb-related errors (conjugation, morphology, negation, plural forms) are particularly problematic, alongside the direct transfer of French lexical items into English. These findings show the pervasive influence of the learners' L2 on EFL writing.

2.2. Analysis of the errors of students who have never read books for pleasure

Category	Occurrences	Percentage
Adjective	01	0.81
Article	14	11.38
Conjugation	41	33.33
Expressions	11	8.94
French words	15	12.20
Gerund	03	2.44
Modals	01	081
Morphology (spelling)	27	21.95
Negation	04	3.25
Plural	01	081
Possessive	00	0
Prepositions	04	3.25
Relative pronoun	01	0.81
Total	123	100

The table summarizes the 123 interference errors identified in the learners' written productions, distributed across various grammatical and lexical categories. The most frequent errors were related to conjugation (33.33%), which alone accounts for one-

third of the total. This indicates that verb tense and agreement remain a major challenge for learners, largely influenced by the different tense–aspect system in French compared to English. The second most common errors concerned morphology/spelling (21.95%). They reflect difficulties in transferring phonological forms into accurate orthography in English. Errors that consisted to use French words (12.20%) and on articles (11.38%) were also prominent, showing that direct lexical transfer and the absence of a clear article system in French vs. English create significant interference.

Moderate levels of errors were observed in expressions (8.94%). These errors point to learners' tendency to translate idiomatic structures literally from French. Less frequent categories included gerunds (2.44%), negation (3.25%), and prepositions (3.25%), each reflecting specific syntactic differences between English and French. Rare errors occurred in adjectives, modals, plurals, and relative pronouns (all below 1%), suggesting that these areas are either less problematic for learners or less frequently used in their writing tasks. Interestingly, no errors were reported in possessives, which may imply a more stable acquisition of this structure. Overall, the results show that verb-related errors (conjugation and morphology) dominate, alongside difficulties with articles and lexical transfer from French. This pattern highlights the areas where first and second language interference most strongly affect learners' EFL writing.

3. Discussion

3.1. Interpretation

3.1.1. Overall Error Distribution

The first finding that emerges from the comparison of the two groups is that the students who had not engaged in extensive reading committed a greater total number of interference errors (123) than those who had practiced extensive reading (103). This difference, although not very large in absolute terms, suggests that exposure to reading materials in English can contribute to reducing the frequency of errors in written production. Extensive reading appears to offer learners opportunities to internalize grammatical and lexical patterns through repeated exposure, which results in fewer mistakes. This finding supports the claims of Krashen's Input

Hypothesis (1985) and Day & Bamford (1998), who argue that sustained reading exposure reinforces linguistic competence more naturally than explicit instruction alone.

3.1.2. Verb-Related Errors (Conjugation, Morphology, Negation, Plural)

A closer look at verb-related categories shows a striking difference between the two groups. Conjugation errors accounted for 25.24% of errors among extensive readers, but rose to 33.33% among non-readers. Similarly, spelling and morphological errors were almost twice as frequent in the non-readers' group (21.95%) compared to extensive readers (12.62%). These results clearly indicate that extensive reading plays a significant role in reinforcing verb forms, tense usage, and spelling accuracy. As students encounter verb structures repeatedly in authentic texts, students develop an implicit understanding of how verbs function in context. This reduces their reliance on direct translation from French. On the other hand, errors related to negation and plural forms remained marginal in both groups (under 4%), which suggests that these categories are either better acquired through explicit instruction or less frequently mobilized in writing tasks. Overall, the results confirm that extensive reading helps learners gain stronger control over verb morphology and spelling.

3.1.3. Article Use

The results concerning the use of articles reveal a slightly different trend. Interestingly, the percentage of article-related errors was higher among extensive readers (16.50%) than among non-readers (11.38%). This finding may appear counterintuitive, since one would expect extensive reading to improve article usage. However, it highlights the persistent difficulty of the English article system for Francophone learners, given that the use of articles in French and English is governed by different rules. Extensive reading seems not to have fully compensated for this structural difference, as learners continue to apply French rules when writing in English. This suggests that while extensive reading reinforces some aspects of grammar, certain areas, such as articles, may require explicit instruction in addition to exposure through reading.

3.1.4. Lexical Transfer (French Words and Expressions)

Another important observation concerns lexical interference. Errors involving the use of French words were more frequent among extensive readers (21.36%) than non-readers (12.20%). Similarly, the proportion of errors in idiomatic expressions was higher for extensive readers (15.33%) compared to non-readers (8.94%). This finding may be explained by the fact that extensive readers tend to write more complex sentences and attempt to express ideas beyond their current lexical repertoire. When vocabulary gaps arise, they often resort to direct borrowing from French or literal translation of French expressions. Non-readers, in contrast, may restrict themselves to simpler sentence structures and avoid risks, which reduces the number of lexical interference errors but also limits the richness of their writing. In this sense, the higher rate of lexical interference among extensive readers can be seen as a by-product of greater writing confidence and ambition, even if accuracy is not always achieved.

3.1.5. Minor Categories (Adjectives, Gerunds, Modals, Prepositions, Relative Pronouns, Possessives)

In both groups, the categories of adjectives, gerunds, modals, prepositions, relative pronouns, and possessives showed relatively low error frequencies, each accounting for less than 3% of the total. This suggests that these categories are either less prone to L1 interference or less frequently used in the writing tasks that were administered. For example, errors in adjectives and possessives were almost non-existent, possibly because these categories share structural similarities between English and French. On the other hand, prepositions and gerunds are known areas of difficulty in EFL contexts, but the relatively low error rates in this study may reflect limited use of these structures in the students' essays. Overall, the minor categories do not constitute the central problem of interference, but they still illustrate the subtle ways in which French influences English writing at different grammatical levels.

3.1.6. General Trends

Taken together, the results reveal two complementary trends. On the one hand, extensive reading clearly reduces interference in areas such as verb conjugation and spelling, where repeated exposure to written forms consolidates learners' grammatical and orthographic competence. On the other hand, extensive readers

tend to make more errors in lexical transfer, reflecting their willingness to experiment with complex language but also their vulnerability to gaps in vocabulary knowledge. This dual finding confirms that extensive reading enhances grammatical accuracy while also encouraging greater fluency and risk-taking in writing. However, the persistence of article errors and the rise of lexical interference suggest that extensive reading alone is not sufficient. It needs to be complemented by targeted vocabulary development and explicit grammar instruction, especially in areas where English and French diverge significantly.

3.2. Discussion in Light of Prior Empirical Studies

The data show that the students who report pleasure reading (“readers”) commit noticeably fewer conjugation and spelling/morphology errors than non-readers. This mirrors classic findings that extensive reading (ER) benefits not just comprehension but also written accuracy and style. For example, F. M. Hafiz and I. Tudor (1989)’s controlled three-month ER program reported “marked improvement” in learners’ language skills, especially in writing, a close match to our accuracy gains. Meta-analytic evidence reinforces this direction of effect. T. Nakanishi (2015)’s TESOL Quarterly meta-analysis concluded that ER yields small-to-moderate positive effects across proficiency measures, with stronger outcomes when ER is sustained over time, consistent with the idea that readers gradually internalize grammatical patterns and orthographic conventions that reduce error rates. Similarly, B. Mason and S. Krashen (1997)’s three experiments with Japanese EFL learners show ER participants catching up to or surpassing comparison groups; although their primary measures were reading-related, their interpretation emphasizes ER’s spillover to grammar, vocabulary, and writing. This is congruent with our lower conjugation/spelling error profile among readers.

Both groups in the study show non-trivial article and preposition errors, with only modest advantages for readers. P. Master (1997)’s synthesis in system explains why articles pose a durable challenge (semantic complexity, multiple functions, zero article), and argues that targeted form-focused support is often necessary, reading alone rarely eliminates article errors. On the acquisition side, T. Ionin, H. Ko, & K. Wexler (2004) show that

learners may “fluctuate” between definiteness-based and specificity-based mappings when their L1 offers different cues, which leads to systematic misselection of a/the/∅ despite abundant input. Our lingering article errors, even among readers, fit this account: ER helps, but conceptual mappings still need focused attention. Prepositions show a similar pattern. Because they encode fine-grained semantic relations and often lack one-to-one L1–L2 correspondences, they remain vulnerable to transfer and fossilization; reading increases exposure but does not always yield categorical gains without feedback. This interpretation is consistent with the broader transfer literature summarized by S. Jarvis and A. Pavlenko (2008).

French-word intrusions and calque-like expressions were also observed in both groups, though typically fewer among readers. Crosslinguistic-influence research explains why these errors persist: when learners reach for more nuanced meanings, they often recruit L1 lexical/conceptual patterns, especially under production pressure. S. Jarvis & A. Pavlenko (Ibib) document how such transfer survives considerable input; better readers may attempt more ambitious content and phrasing, occasionally increasing the opportunity for transfer even as overall accuracy improves. Moreover, the strongest gains appear in conjugation and morphology (spelling). That asymmetry is predicted by ER research showing faster improvement in global fluency and form familiarity than in fine-grained function-word systems. J. Yamashita (2008), for instance, found that ER tends to boost reading speed and general proficiency before it normalizes subtler grammatical subsystems, an explanation for the relatively stubborn article/preposition errors in our data. Book-flood studies (e.g., W. Elley (2000)) similarly report broad literacy gains from massive input, with spelling and general accuracy improving in tandem, but they also caution that certain grammatical subsystems may require complementary instruction.

Extensive reading (ER) primarily enhances input-based learning by providing learners with repeated exposure to well-formed sentences in meaningful contexts. Through this process, morpho-syntactic structures and orthographic patterns are internalized via frequency and salience, allowing learners to develop a more intuitive understanding of grammar and spelling

conventions. This mechanism helps explain why students in the ER group demonstrated a clear advantage in areas such as verb conjugation and morphological accuracy, as repeated encounters with correct forms reinforce linguistic patterns that become increasingly automatic. However, certain features, particularly those tied to abstract grammatical concepts, such as article choice, often require learners to go beyond passive exposure. According to Merrill Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis, language development is accelerated when learners are pushed to actively produce language, notice gaps in their knowledge, and attempt to self-correct. These findings suggest that while ER offers a strong foundation for improving accuracy, it is most effective when combined with guided writing activities and constructive feedback. Such a combination not only consolidates the benefits of extensive reading but also addresses the persistent error types identified in this study, including article misuse, preposition errors, and lexical transfer.

Overall, the findings of this study converge with previous research indicating that extensive reading (ER) improves writing accuracy. Studies by F.M. Hafiz and I. Tudor (1989) and B. Mason and S. Krashen (1997) have similarly demonstrated that sustained reading input contributes to greater accuracy in written production. The present results also support observations by J. Yamashita (2008) and P. Master (1997), who noted that ER tends to produce stronger gains in general grammatical and morphological accuracy than in the mastery of function-word subsystems such as articles and prepositions. Nevertheless, consistent with the work of S. Jarvis and A. Pavlenko (2008), this study confirms that L1 transfer remains visible even with abundant input, emphasising the enduring influence of learners' first language on their second language writing. In terms of divergence, this study identified persistent lexical-transfer and expression errors among extensive readers. While these findings do not contradict previous research, they are less frequently quantified in ER studies, which often focus on reading comprehension or vocabulary acquisition rather than detailed error typology. A plausible explanation for this divergence lies in task design and learner context: the study's explicit focus on L2-influenced categories highlights issues that many ER studies do not measure directly. Moreover, the secondary-school Francophone

context may accentuate specific interference patterns that differ from those observed in university-level or different-L2 populations.

3.3. Pedagogical takeaway

The findings of this study indicate that extensive reading (ER) is a highly effective and cost-efficient approach to improving writing quality in EFL contexts. By providing sustained exposure to authentic written language, ER significantly reduces common accuracy errors, particularly in verb conjugation and spelling, confirming predictions from large-scale syntheses and classic ER studies (F.M. Hafiz & I. Tudor, *Ibid*; B. Mason & Krashen, *Ibid*; T. Nakanishi, *Ibid*). This evidence reinforces ER's role as a powerful pedagogical tool that not only strengthens grammatical awareness but also promotes fluency, learner autonomy, and motivation. However, the results also reveal that ER alone may be insufficient to fully resolve certain persistent challenges, such as article and preposition usage or L1 lexical transfer. Research suggests that to address these deeper, conceptually driven issues, ER should be complemented by focused instructional interventions. For example, brief focus-on-form mini-lessons (P. Master, *Ibid*) can explicitly address article semantics, preposition collocations, and other nuanced areas of English grammar that do not easily emerge from input alone. Additionally, integrating pushed-output opportunities (M. Swain, *Ibid*), such as short, guided writing tasks followed by feedback, can help learners notice gaps in their knowledge and consolidate new language mappings. Taken together, these findings advocate for a blended pedagogical approach: ER serves as the foundation for language development, while targeted grammar instruction and output-based activities ensure that learners gain precision in areas prone to L1 interference. This approach is especially valuable in EFL settings, where exposure to authentic English is often limited, and where maximizing classroom time with high-yield strategies is crucial for long-term proficiency development.

3.4. Importance of the Results

The findings of this study carry several significant implications for EFL teaching. First, the clear reduction in grammatical and spelling errors among students who engaged in extensive reading suggests that incorporating ER activities can

meaningfully enhance writing accuracy. By providing learners with abundant exposure to authentic language input, ER helps internalize correct verb forms, morphological patterns, and orthographic conventions, which are often resistant to explicit instruction alone. Second, the results highlight the potential of extensive reading to complement traditional grammar-based teaching. While ER alone does not fully eliminate interference errors, particularly in areas such as articles, prepositions, and lexical transfer, it offers a low-cost, motivating, and scalable strategy to improve overall writing performance. Teachers can therefore integrate ER into regular curricula, pairing it with targeted grammar instruction and guided writing activities to address persistent difficulties. Finally, from a curriculum design perspective, the study underscores the value of allocating time for self-selected reading, reading logs, or classroom-based book clubs. Embedding ER systematically within the curriculum can foster learner autonomy, broaden vocabulary, and create a richer linguistic environment, which is particularly important in EFL contexts where exposure to English outside the classroom is limited.

3.5. Weaknesses of the Results

Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small, with 116 students divided equally between readers and non-readers. While sufficient for initial analysis, a larger sample would increase the generalizability of the findings.

Second, the study was conducted over a limited duration, capturing only a snapshot of learners' writing performance after a single reading intervention. Longer-term exposure to extensive reading may produce different results, particularly in areas such as article usage and idiomatic expression, which require repeated and prolonged input to fully stabilize. Third, there is a potential learner motivation bias. Participation in the study was voluntary, and students who agreed to take part may have been more motivated or confident in their English abilities. Such self-selection could have influenced the results, particularly in the extensive reading group, as motivated learners are more likely to engage deeply with texts and apply what they read to their writing.

Conclusion

This study examined the impact of extensive reading on the problem of interference in EFL writing, focusing on students at Lycée Municipal Simone Ehivet Gbagbo in Abidjan. The results indicate that extensive reading can significantly reduce certain types of interference errors, particularly in verb conjugation and morphology/spelling, confirming that exposure to authentic written English reinforces grammatical and orthographic patterns. However, the study also revealed persistent challenges. Errors in articles, prepositions, and lexical transfer from French were less affected by reading alone, suggesting that extensive reading, while beneficial, should be complemented with explicit instruction and targeted vocabulary development to fully address L1 interference. Interestingly, extensive readers sometimes made more ambitious lexical attempts, which led to occasional increases in French-word intrusions, highlighting a trade-off between fluency and accuracy.

Pedagogically, the findings support the integration of extensive reading into EFL curricula as a low-cost, motivating, and effective strategy to enhance writing competence. At the same time, teachers should provide structured guidance to tackle residual error types and support learners in transferring the benefits of reading into accurate written production. Finally, the study points to avenues for further research, including longitudinal investigations, comparisons across proficiency levels, and exploration of ER's effects on other language skills such as listening and speaking. Overall, the study confirms that extensive reading is a valuable pedagogical tool in EFL contexts, capable of reducing interference and promoting more accurate, confident, and fluent writing.

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