





# Role of Extensive Reading in Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension, and Reading Speed: A Systematic Literature Review

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**Abstract**

The practice of extensive reading (ER) is widely recognised as an effective approach to language acquisition, facilitating vocabulary expansion, text comprehension, and reading fluency. This study examines the role of ER in enhancing these aspects, offering a structured analysis of its impact on language learning. Drawing upon Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Automaticity Theory, the research explores how ER promotes natural language acquisition through repeated exposure to contextually rich texts. A systematic literature review (SLR) methodology was adopted, concentrating on peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2024. Ten high-quality studies were selected through a rigorous keyword search, Boolean operators, and predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria applied across academic databases such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and Scopus. The analysis highlights ER's critical role in vocabulary acquisition, as it enables learners to encounter words in meaningful contexts, thereby enhancing retention and deepening understanding of lexical nuances. Regarding reading comprehension, ER was found to strengthen critical thinking skills, including inference-making and identifying central ideas, while also increasing motivation and engagement through self-selected reading materials. Additionally, ER was shown to improve reading fluency and speed by familiarising learners with high-frequency vocabulary and common linguistic structures, facilitating more efficient text processing over time. The findings confirm ER as an essential pedagogical strategy in language education, providing a comprehensive framework for skill development. Practical recommendations include integrating ER into curricula, ensuring access to diverse reading resources, and employing digital tools to enhance learner engagement. However, the study's reliance on secondary data and its limited focus on implementation challenges suggest the need for further research in these areas.

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**Keywords:** Extensive Reading (ER), Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency, Language Acquisition.

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## Introduction

### *Background*

ER is widely acknowledged as one of the most effective approaches to language learning, as it facilitates

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vocabulary acquisition, text comprehension, and increased reading speed. Ng, Renandya, & Chong (2019) assert that, in contrast to intensive reading, which requires in-depth engagement with a limited number of texts, ER involves exposure to a broad range of easily comprehensible and engaging texts, often referred to as 'pleasure' reading. This approach is grounded in the premise that sustained and meaningful interaction with contextualised texts, coupled with an intrinsic interest in reading, is more effective for language acquisition than methods focusing solely on vocabulary or grammatical structures. Keshmirshakan (2019) further highlights that ER is rooted in Krashen's Input Hypothesis, introduced in 1982, which emphasises comprehensible input as a fundamental component of second language acquisition. Through ER, this input is delivered in a non-didactic manner, allowing learners to encounter words and structures repeatedly in meaningful contexts, thereby enhancing vocabulary retention and application. Additionally, Nation & Waring (2019) observe that ER significantly contributes to reading speed development. As learners engage in extensive reading practice, they become more adept at word and phrase recognition, thereby improving reading fluency. This, in turn, enables them to process texts more efficiently, reducing the cognitive effort required for word identification and enhancing overall comprehension.

Thus, ER serves as an effective approach for developing vocabulary knowledge. Unlike rote memorisation or compiling word lists, ER allows learners to encounter words in meaningful contexts, thereby broadening their understanding of word usage, associations, and nuances. Furthermore, vocabulary acquired through ER is less likely to be forgotten compared to intentional learning methods, as it is reinforced by contextual and semantic associations (Sun, 2022). Beyond vocabulary acquisition, research has demonstrated that ER also enhances reading comprehension. By engaging with a diverse range of text genres, structures, topics, and ideas, learners develop a deeper understanding of texts, enabling them to make inferences, identify key points, and interpret arguments more effectively (Elturki & Harmon, 2020). This aligns with schema theory, which suggests that learning is optimised when new information is connected to prior knowledge. Consequently, ER has become a fundamental pedagogical strategy in language instruction (Bakla, 2020). However, its effectiveness and application may vary depending on contextual factors. Therefore, further research is necessary to explore optimal ER implementation strategies for reinforcing vocabulary knowledge, reading proficiency, and fluency.

### *Problem Statement*

ER is widely advocated in language learning and acquisition, primarily for its benefits in improving vocabulary, comprehension, and reading fluency. However, systematic understanding of its precise effects on these aspects remains limited, despite its growing integration into pedagogical practices (Chan, 2020). While ER is hypothesised to yield positive outcomes, existing literature reveals that findings are often fragmented, context-dependent, or fail to consider the interrelation between ER benefits. Additionally, challenges in implementing ER programmes, such as sustaining learner motivation and ensuring access to suitable reading materials, remain insufficiently explored. This knowledge gap highlights the necessity for a systematic literature review to provide a comprehensive analysis of ER's role in vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and fluency, while also identifying best practices and addressing implementation challenges.

### *Research Objectives*

- To explore the role of extensive reading in vocabulary development
- To understand how extensive reading contributes to the development of reading comprehension skills
- To investigate how extensive reading facilitates improvements in reading speed

### *Research Questions*

- What is the role of extensive reading in vocabulary development?
- How does extensive reading contribute to the development of reading comprehension skills?
- In what ways does extensive reading facilitate improvements in reading speed and fluency?

### *Significance of Study*

This study holds significance as it offers a comprehensive examination of the role of ER in language learning, particularly in vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and reading fluency. By synthesising existing research, it provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum designers to refine ER practices. Furthermore, it identifies effective strategies and challenges associated with ER implementation, contributing to the advancement of more efficient and accessible language learning methodologies. Ultimately, the study aims to enhance learners' linguistic proficiency and foster greater autonomy in language acquisition.

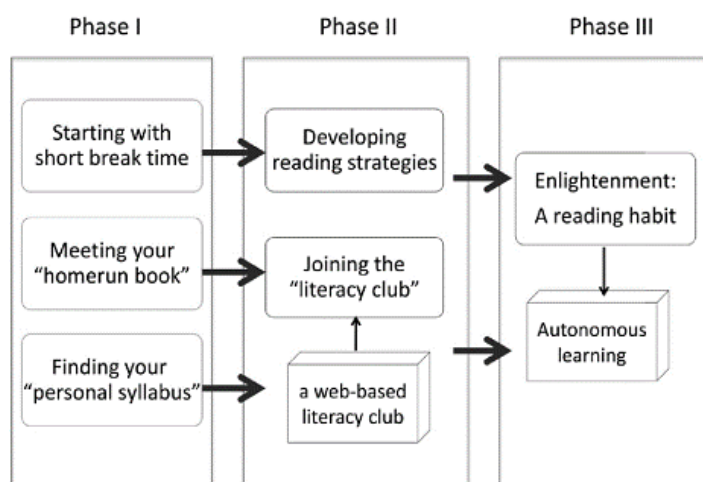
## **Literature Review**

This chapter examines the role of extensive reading in vocabulary development, reading comprehension,

and reading fluency. It also explores relevant theoretical frameworks and identifies gaps in the existing literature, establishing a foundation for further research.

### *Role of Extensive Reading in Vocabulary Development*

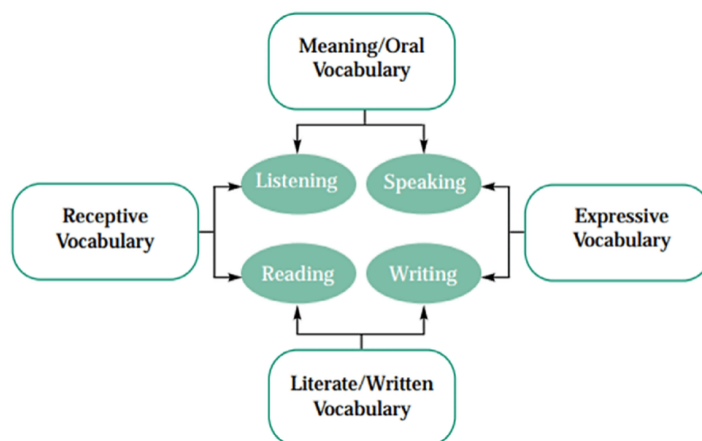
Multidimensional text is strongly linked to vocabulary development, with extensive reading playing a crucial role in this process by exposing learners to a large volume of text. As [Alsaif & Masrai \(2019\)](#) observed, vocabulary acquisition through ER does not require explicit instruction, in contrast to traditional methods that rely on rote memorisation or word lists. Instead, learners naturally acquire new vocabulary by repeatedly encountering words in meaningful contexts. Furthermore, [Ateek \(2021\)](#) explained that engaging with various reading materials, such as books, newspapers, novels, and graded readers, allows learners to encounter a diverse range of vocabulary within different syntactic and semantic structures, thereby enhancing comprehension and memory retention. Similarly, [Azizi et al. \(2020\)](#) concluded that an additional advantage of ER is its facilitation of natural word associations, aiding not only in vocabulary acquisition but also in comprehension, word placement, grammatical frequency, and overall linguistic proficiency. A three-phase model for extensive reading is presented in [Figure 1](#).



**Figure 1:** A Three-Phase Model of Extensive Reading.

Source: ([Lee, 2014](#))

Extensive reading exposes learners to both high-frequency and low-frequency words, thereby broadening their vocabulary range. Research indicates that students who engage in extensive reading acquire a greater vocabulary compared to those who rely solely on classroom language exercises ([Boutorwick, Macalister, & Irina, 2019](#)). Moreover, as reading is self-paced, learners can process new words at their own speed, reducing cognitive load and enhancing retention. Over time, this incidental exposure fosters a deeper understanding of vocabulary, including nuances of meaning, register, and contextual usage. Extensive reading thus serves as an essential tool for vocabulary development, providing learners with a natural and engaging means of expanding their lexical knowledge ([Ramonda, 2020](#)). [Figure 2](#) illustrates the various types of vocabulary that can be enhanced through extensive reading.

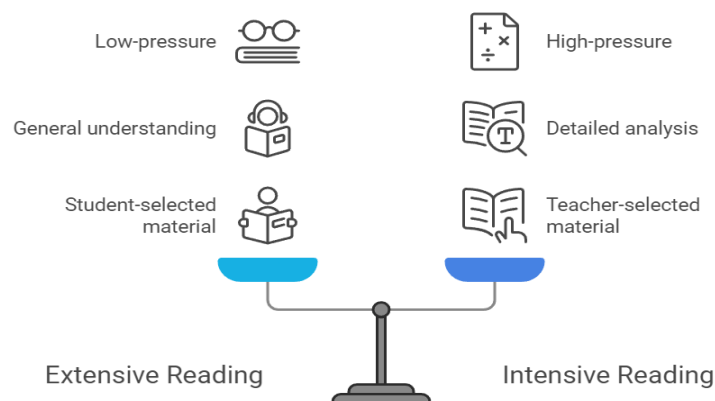


**Figure 2:** Types of Vocabularies.

Source: ([Uncp.edu.pe, 2025](#))

### Extensive Reading Contribution to the Development of Reading Comprehension Skills

Extensive reading plays a crucial role in improving reading comprehension by encouraging learners to engage with diverse and meaningful texts over an extended period. Vaughn et al. (2019) note, unlike intensive reading, which involves detailed analysis of short passages, extensive reading prioritises volume and enjoyment. This approach enables readers to encounter a broad range of content, fostering comprehension skills in a natural and unpressured manner. Figure 3 illustrates this process.



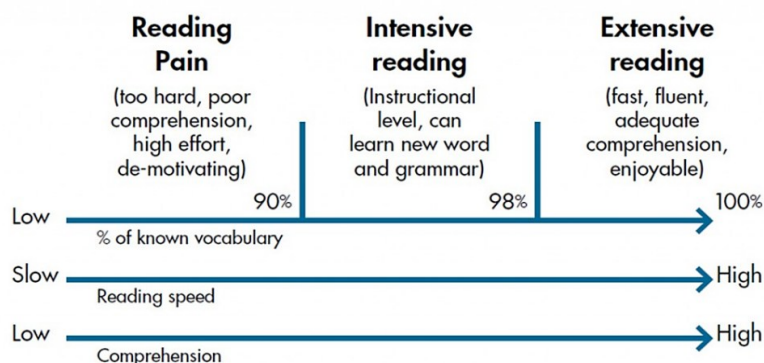
Balancing extensive and intensive reading in language learning.

**Figure 3:** *Extensive Reading in Language Learning and Teaching.*

Source: (Weller, 2024)

Extensive reading primarily enhances comprehension through repeated exposure to language in context. Allington & McGill-Franzen (2021) highlight that regular encounters with language structures, thematic patterns, and cultural references enable learners to develop a mental framework for processing texts more effectively. This exposure strengthens their ability to infer meaning, recognise main ideas, and identify supporting details. For instance, when learners read multiple narratives centred on journeys, they begin to discern recurring patterns such as setup, conflict, and resolution, which improves their ability to anticipate and comprehend plot developments in future readings. Additionally, extensive reading cultivates critical reading strategies, including skimming, scanning, and using contextual cues to infer meaning, thereby reducing dependence on reference materials such as dictionaries. Learners also develop the ability to interpret longer texts and appreciate subtleties such as tone, perspective, and underlying implications (Durak & Yavuz, 2024). Furthermore, extensive reading enhances cognitive endurance by enabling readers to engage with complex texts for prolonged periods.

Motivation is another crucial factor influencing reading outcomes. Through extensive reading, learners can select texts based on their interests, fostering greater engagement and a more positive attitude towards reading. Figure 4 illustrates the relationship between vocabulary knowledge, reading speed, and comprehension across different reading approaches: reading pain, intensive reading, and extensive reading. This intrinsic motivation enables learners to persist with longer and more complex texts, ultimately enhancing their comprehension skills (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). In conclusion, extensive reading fosters the necessary skills and confidence to interpret diverse texts, establishing itself as a fundamental component of reading comprehension development.



**Figure 4:** *Reading Pain or Reading Gain.*

Source: (Turner, 2014)

### Extensive Reading Facilitating Reading Speed

Extensive reading effectively enhances reading speed. Neshatian & Khaghaninejad (2024) explained that exposure to large amounts of text in an enjoyable, low-stress setting fosters fluency and efficiency. Unlike intensive reading, which focuses on analysing individual words or sentences, extensive reading emphasises language flow, enabling smoother, faster reading. Ivone & Renandya (2019) further noted that repeated exposure to high-frequency words and common patterns improves automaticity, allowing learners to process text more quickly and focus on overall meaning rather than decoding individual words. Extensive reading is voluntary, allowing learners to choose texts that interest and challenge them. Li et al. (2023) noted that this autonomy fosters prolonged, uninterrupted reading, enhancing both stamina and speed. Green (2020) further highlighted that this practice improves fluency and comprehension over longer texts in less time. Additionally, prioritising content comprehension over individual words helps readers develop effective scanning behaviours, essential for increasing reading speed.

### Theoretical Framework

This research is theoretically grounded in the Input Hypothesis and Automaticity Theory.

#### Input Hypothesis

The Input Hypothesis highlights the role of comprehensible input ( $i+1$ ) in language acquisition, as shown in Figure 5. Patrick (2019) suggests that language acquisition occurs when learners encounter input slightly beyond their current proficiency level. Extensive reading aligns with this theory by providing access to diverse, meaningful texts containing manageable amounts of new vocabulary and grammar in natural contexts. This exposure enables learners to expand their vocabulary incidentally, without direct instruction.

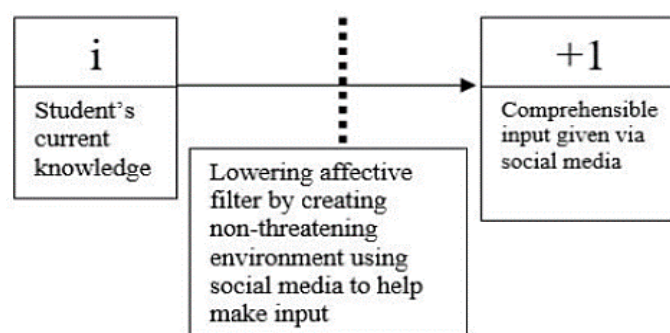


Figure 5: Input Hypothesis.

Source: (Sivagnanam & Yunus, 2020)

#### Automaticity Theory

The Automaticity Theory explains that repeated exposure and practice enhance language processing speed and efficiency. This theory posits that fluency and reading speed improve as learners shift from controlled to automatic word recognition. Extensive reading supports this process by ensuring repeated exposure to high-frequency words and language patterns, enabling effortless word processing over time (Feruzi, 2021). This automaticity allows readers to focus more on higher-level comprehension tasks, such as inference and critical thinking.

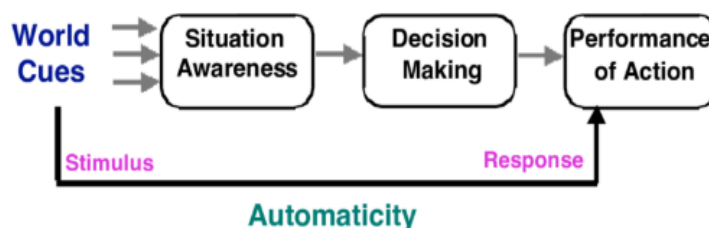


Figure 6: Automaticity.

Source: (Endsley & Garland, 2000)

#### Literature Gap

The literature confirms that extensive reading positively impacts vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and reading speed. However, limited research explores their interrelation and mutual support.

Additionally, there is insufficient examination of learner-specific factors, such as proficiency level, cultural background, and motivation, in shaping extensive reading outcomes. Furthermore, the role of technology-driven reading tools and the long-term retention of vocabulary and reading skills remains underexplored.

## Research Methodology

To examine the role of extensive reading in enhancing vocabulary, comprehension, and reading speed, this chapter outlines the research methodology. It details the research design, data collection, and data analysis procedures to ensure credibility and quality.

### *Research Method*

The study employed a qualitative research method, which involves analysing existing literature on a given phenomenon. This approach aligns with the study's objective of examining the role of extensive reading in developing reading skills through scholarly articles, books, and other academic sources. As noted by Taherdoost (2022), unlike quantitative methods that rely on numerical data, qualitative research provides depth and context, making it suitable for exploring potential interactions. By using qualitative research, the study investigated how extensive reading influences language learning across different teaching environments. This method facilitated the synthesis of findings from various studies, identifying patterns and research gaps, thereby offering deeper insights into the topic.

### *Research Design*

The study utilised a SLR design to aggregate and analyse existing evidence. SLR ensures a structured and objective approach to identifying trends, gaps, and recurring patterns within the literature (Ritterbusch & Teichmann, 2023). This design enabled the synthesis of findings across multiple studies, offering a comprehensive understanding of the impact of extensive reading on vocabulary, comprehension, and reading speed. The SLR process followed a step-by-step approach, including keyword searches, Boolean operator refinement, database selection, and the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria. By employing an SLR design, the study ensured thorough coverage of relevant literature while reducing bias. Additionally, this approach facilitated the identification of research gaps, providing a foundation for future studies on extensive reading.

### *Data Collection*

Secondary data was systematically collected through a structured approach involving keyword strategies, Boolean operators, and multiple databases. The application of inclusion and exclusion criteria ensured the selection of relevant and high-quality studies.

### *Keyword Strategy*

A comprehensive keyword strategy was used to retrieve relevant studies. Core keywords and their synonyms were combined to broaden the search scope while maintaining relevance. These terms were refined iteratively to improve the precision of the search results.

**Table 1: Keywords and Categories.**

Category	Keywords	Examples of Related Terms/Synonyms
Core Concepts	Extensive reading, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, reading fluency	Literacy, reading practice, incidental learning
Skills Focus	Vocabulary acquisition, reading speed, comprehension skills	Word learning, language fluency, reading efficiency
Learner Focus	Language learners, second language acquisition, EFL learners	ESL learners, non-native speakers, L2 learners
Context	Graded readers, authentic texts, self-paced reading	Leisure reading, autonomous reading, naturalistic learning
Intervention Goals	Improving vocabulary, enhancing comprehension, increasing reading speed	Language development, reading skill improvement

### *Boolean Operators*

Boolean operators were employed to refine and enhance the precision of database searches. Logical combinations of terms systematically filtered out irrelevant studies while expanding the scope to include variations in phrasing or focus.

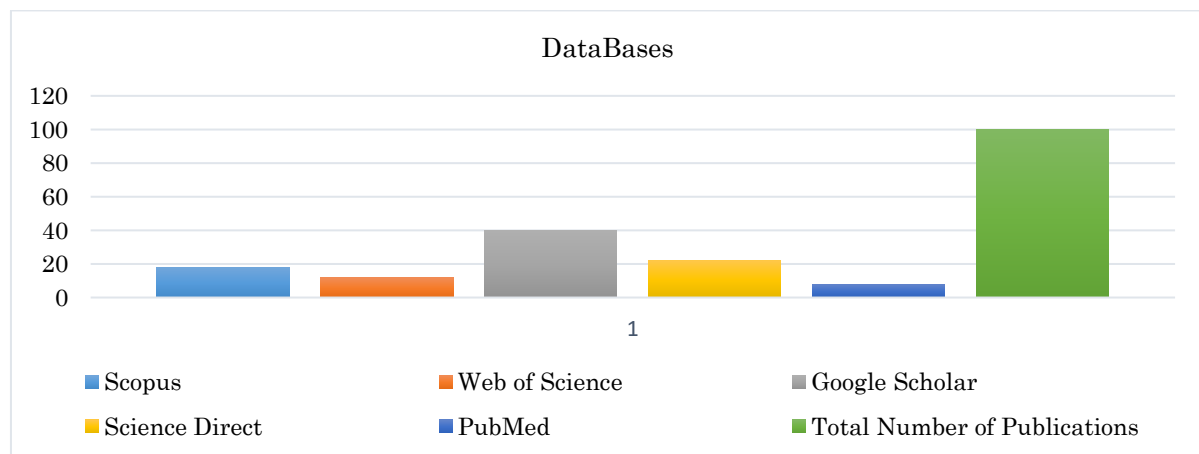


**Table 2:** Boolean Operators Used and Examples.

Boolean Expression	Purpose	Example of Results
"Extensive Reading" AND "Vocabulary Development"	Retrieves studies that focus on both extensive reading and vocabulary acquisition	Articles discussing how extensive reading aids vocabulary growth
"Reading Comprehension" OR "Comprehension Skills"	Broadens the search to include studies using either term	Results including studies on comprehension development and related skills
"Extensive Reading" NOT "Intensive Reading"	Excludes studies focused solely on intensive reading	Removes irrelevant articles on intensive reading strategies
"Reading Fluency" AND "Language Learners" AND "Vocabulary Acquisition"	Narrows the focus to articles addressing these specific combinations	Identifies research targeting fluency and vocabulary growth in language learners
"Graded Readers" OR "Authentic Texts" AND "Self-Paced Reading"	Explores studies discussing different types of reading materials	Results including materials like graded readers or authentic text studies
"Language Development" AND ("Incidental Learning" OR "Naturalistic Learning")	Expand results to include incidental and naturalistic learning approaches	Retrieves studies on implicit learning through reading
"EFL Learners" OR "L2 Learners" AND "Extensive Reading"	Targets articles on extensive reading specifically within these learner populations	Focuses on English as a foreign language and second language contexts

### Databases

A variety of reputable academic databases were utilised to ensure comprehensive coverage of the relevant literature. These databases provided access to peer-reviewed articles and grey literature, enhancing the study's credibility and scope. Google Scholar yielded the highest number of studies, followed by Science Direct and Scopus. PubMed and Web of Science contributed comparatively fewer studies, as illustrated in Figure 7.

**Figure 7:** Databases.

### Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were implemented to ensure the relevance and quality of the studies selected.

**Table 3:** Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.

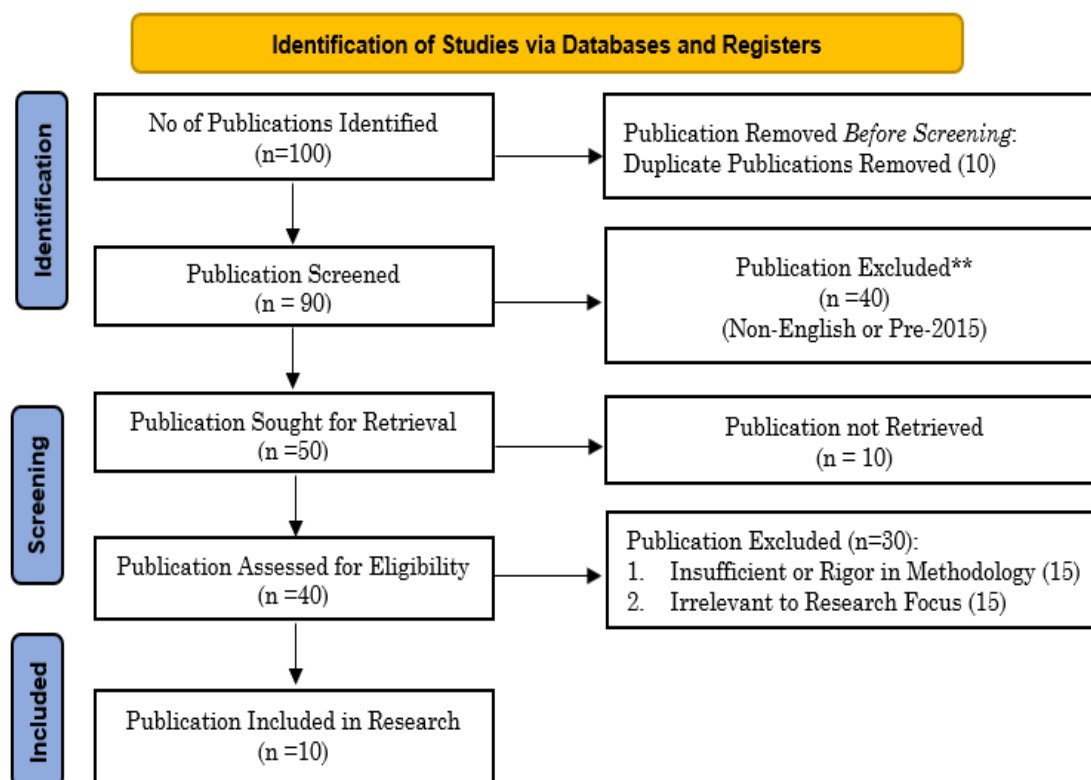
Criteria Type	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Timeframe	Articles published between 2015–2024	Articles published outside this range
Peer Review	Peer-reviewed studies	Non-peer-reviewed studies
Focus Area	Extensive reading and its impact on reading skills	Studies unrelated to extensive reading
Language	English-language publications	Non-English publications
Accessibility	Full-text articles available for analysis	Articles unavailable in full text

### Data Analysis

Thematic analysis, following the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2006), was employed to identify recurring themes and patterns within the selected studies. This systematic process involved familiarizing oneself with the data, coding it, and refining themes to extract meaningful insights.

### PRISMA Framework

The PRISMA framework was employed to ensure transparency in the study selection process. Out of the initial 100 articles retrieved, irrelevant studies were systematically excluded, leaving 10 high-quality articles for final analysis [Figure 8](#).



**Figure 8:** PRISMA Framework.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were prioritized in this study. Secondary data was properly attributed to the original authors, and analyses were conducted within the context of the studies to avoid misrepresentation. All selected articles were handled responsibly, ensuring adherence to academic integrity standards.

## Results

This chapter offers a thorough review of studies exploring the effects of ER on vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and reading speed. It involves a thematic analysis of the findings, focusing on how ER promotes incidental learning, improves text comprehension, and accelerates reading speed. The chapter also correlates these results with established linguistic and learning theories, providing a framework to understand the underlying mechanisms and impacts of extensive reading in language development.

### The Role of Extensive Reading in Vocabulary Development

[Table 4](#) synthesises data from three sources regarding the impact of ER on vocabulary development. [Celik \(2019\)](#) highlights that ER promotes the acquisition of vocabulary relevant to learners' contexts. The study integrates both quantitative and qualitative data, demonstrating how incidental word encounters through ER contribute to grammatical and vocabulary development. Similarly, [Daskalovska \(2018\)](#) views ER primarily as a means of incidental learning, emphasising that student interest and re-reading improve vocabulary acquisition. Using an experimental design, the study illustrates that ER enhances vocabulary learning without direct instruction. [Suk \(2017\)](#) investigates the effects of combining ER with reading fluency and comprehension and finds that ER is particularly effective in enhancing vocabulary development. His statistical analysis shows that ER not only aids in the immediate expansion of vocabulary but also supports long-term retention. Collectively, these studies affirm that ER is a powerful tool for vocabulary development, offering contextual, incidental learning advantages over traditional, more rigorous reading methods. Thus, ER plays a crucial role in vocabulary acquisition within language learning.



**Table 4:** *The Role of Extensive Reading in Vocabulary Development.*

In-text Citation	Aims and Objectives of Papers	Research Methods Used	Data Analysis Results	Conclusion
Celik (2019)	To examine how extensive reading contributes to the development of vocabulary and grammar knowledge.	Mixed methods: Surveys and pre-/post-tests.	Extensive reading significantly improved learners' vocabulary retention and their ability to use words in context.	Extensive reading is a vital strategy for fostering vocabulary development and contextual grammar application.
Daskalovska (2018)	To investigate the impact of extensive reading on incidental vocabulary acquisition in L2 learners.	Experimental design: Participants engaged in ER tasks.	Learners acquired new vocabulary incidentally through repeated exposure to meaningful and engaging texts.	Extensive reading is an effective tool for incidental vocabulary acquisition, especially when texts are engaging.
Suk (2017)	To explore the effects of extensive reading on vocabulary acquisition, comprehension, and reading rate.	Quantitative: Pre- and post-tests over a semester.	Students significantly improved vocabulary knowledge and retention compared to those using intensive reading.	Extensive reading accelerates vocabulary growth while simultaneously improving comprehension and reading fluency.

**Table 5:** *Enhancing Reading Comprehension Skills Through Extensive Reading.*

In-text Citation	Aims and Objectives of Papers	Research Methods Used	Data Analysis Results	Conclusion
Abame et al. (2017)	To examine how ER impacts the reading comprehension skills of university students.	Mixed methods: pre- and post-intervention testing, and surveys.	ER significantly improved students' ability to comprehend and analyse texts, particularly in making inferences.	ER develops critical reading comprehension skills by exposing learners to diverse and meaningful texts.
Ahmed & Rajab (2015)	To investigate the impact of an extensive reading enrichment program on elementary EFL learners' reading comprehension.	Action research: Implementation of an ER program.	Students demonstrated better comprehension and were more confident in analysing longer and more complex texts.	ER enrichment programs effectively enhance reading comprehension and promote learner autonomy in EFL students.
Nhapulo, Simon, & Van Herreweghe (2017)	To explore the role of extensive reading in improving academic reading comprehension skills in higher education.	Experimental design: ER tasks integrated into coursework.	Learners improved in understanding academic texts, making inferences, and identifying key arguments.	ER is a valuable tool for improving academic reading comprehension, especially for complex and technical texts.
Yang, Chu, & Tseng (2021)	To examine the effect of text difficulty in ER on reading comprehension and student motivation.	Quantitative study: Testing comprehension and motivation based on graded texts.	Learners performed better with texts at slightly higher difficulty levels, which motivated them to engage more deeply.	ER improves comprehension when texts are moderately challenging, and motivation plays a crucial role in learning.

### *Enhancing Reading Comprehension Skills Through Extensive Reading*

Table 5 presents self-generated questions for four studies that explored the impact of ER on academic reading comprehension. Addressing how ER can affect and improve university students' reading, Abame et al. (2017) demonstrate that an increased level of ER helps learners develop better inference-making abilities and analyse various texts. The mixed-methods approach highlights the practical benefits of engaging learners with diverse texts. Similarly, Ahmed & Rajab (2015) provide evidence of improved confidence and comprehension among elementary learners exposed to ER enrichment programmes, as well as a positive impact on learners' autonomy. Academic reading skills are also emphasised by Nhapulo et al. (2017), who stress how ER aids in understanding academic texts. In an experimental design, they demonstrate that learners improve in recognising arguments and interpreting conceptual ideas. Meanwhile, Yang et al. (2021) investigate the effect of text difficulty on comprehension and motivation. Their study shows that optimal results in comprehension and skill development occur when the text difficulty level is matched to the learners' expertise and ability. All of these studies support the notion that extensive reading enhances the reading

comprehension skills learners acquire by engaging with a variety of texts. Furthermore, the alignment of text difficulty with learners' abilities and motivation is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of ER. These findings confirm ER as an effective strategy for improving overall and content-area reading comprehension among students and learners more broadly.

### *Facilitating Improvements in Reading Speed and Fluency via Extensive Reading*

Table 6 synthesises generalisations from three studies that investigated the extent to which ER enhances reading speed and fluency. Stevens, Walker, & Vaughn (2017) present a systematic review of literature showing that ER interventions improve fluency, particularly for specific populations. Their study establishes that ER, alongside other fluency strategies, enhances both fluency and comprehension, particularly for elementary learners with learning disabilities. The study also highlights the broad applicability of ER in adapting to diverse learner needs. In a more specific context, Bui & Macalister (2021) focus on online ER in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting, demonstrating that gradual progress in reading speed is achievable. Their study underscores the positive attitudes of learners towards online ER, suggesting that technology can enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of ER. This aligns with the notion that digital platforms facilitate fluency improvements, reflecting current educational practices.

**Table 6:** *Facilitating Improvements in Reading Speed and Fluency via Extensive Reading.*

In-text Citation	Aims and Objectives of Papers	Research Methods Used	Data Analysis Results	Conclusion
Stevens et al. (2017)	To evaluate the effects of reading fluency interventions on the fluency and comprehension of elementary students with learning disabilities.	Systematic review of studies (2001–2014).	Reading fluency interventions, including ER, improved both reading fluency and comprehension in students with disabilities.	ER, when combined with other fluency strategies, is effective in enhancing fluency and comprehension.
Bui & Macalister (2021)	To examine the impact of online extensive reading on reading fluency and students' perceptions in an EFL context.	Mixed Methods: Online ER tasks and participant surveys.	Students showed increased reading fluency over time, and participants expressed positive perceptions of the online ER experience.	Online ER provides a practical and engaging way to enhance reading fluency and foster positive learner attitudes.
McLean & Rouault (2017)	To investigate the effectiveness of extensive reading in developing reading rates and improving reading efficiency.	Quantitative: Experimental design comparing ER and non-ER groups.	Students in the ER group significantly improved reading rates and fluency compared to non-ER counterparts.	ER is an efficient method for developing reading speed and fluency, offering long-term benefits for language learners.

McLean & Rouault (2017) further support ER's role in increasing reading rates and fluency through an experimental quantitative study. Their findings show that learners engaged in ER programmes perform significantly better than those in other programmes, highlighting the effectiveness of continuous, meaningful interaction with texts. Collectively, these studies illustrate that ER, whether in traditional or digital forms, is a valuable method for increasing reading speed, automaticity, and positive attitudes towards reading. Due to its flexibility and ease of use, ER is a highly beneficial tool in the language teaching process.

## **Discussion of Results**

The results indicate that ER significantly contributes to the development of language skills, particularly in word recognition, reading comprehension, and reading speed. These findings align with the theoretical framework adopted in the study, including Krashen's Input Hypothesis and the Automaticity Theory, both of which emphasise the importance of meaningful input and repeated exposure. ER offers learners abundant, meaningful input that has the potential to be absorbed incidentally, making it a crucial tool in strategies designed to facilitate language learning. From the perspective of vocabulary acquisition, the analysis confirms that ER allows learners to encounter words frequently in meaningful contexts, enabling rapid and effective consolidation of knowledge. ER improves not only the quantity (number of words known) but also the quality (understanding of nuances, collocations, and usage) of vocabulary. It is more effective and practical than rote memorisation or isolated word study because the words are embedded in rich, engaging texts. This aligns with prior studies indicating that learners are more likely to acquire words incidentally, rather than through direct instruction.

In terms of reading comprehension, the study revealed that ER enhances critical skills such as inferring,

identifying themes, drawing conclusions, and understanding complex texts. This supports schema theory, which suggests that students relate new knowledge to existing knowledge. By immersing learners in a variety of texts, ER strengthens these connections, improving comprehension. Additionally, since students choose their own reading material, they are likely to be intrinsically motivated, which further enhances their comprehension performance. These findings align with prior studies that highlight ER's role in both improving understanding and fostering a positive attitude towards reading. Regarding fluency and reading rate, the results indicate that rereading and reinforcing high-frequency vocabulary and familiar grammar patterns enable faster reading. This supports Automaticity Theory, which posits that repeated practice transitions word processing from controlled to automatic. The findings also highlight how self-paced reading aids in developing endurance and speed, allowing learners to tackle complex texts at a higher rate. These results align with previous studies that demonstrate ER's effectiveness in enhancing fluency, particularly when the reading materials slightly exceed the learners' current abilities. Overall, these findings confirm that ER is a crucial element in language teaching methodologies. It provides learners with the means to naturally acquire vocabulary, comprehend texts effectively, and read fluently. By focusing on meaningful, enjoyable reading experiences, ER addresses both cognitive and motivational aspects of learning, offering a comprehensive approach to skill development.

### *Practical Recommendations*

In light of the research conclusions, educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers should prioritise ER as a vital component of language teaching and learning. Practical recommendations include ensuring that learners have access to diverse reading materials, such as graded readers, authentic texts, and electronic readers. These materials should be chosen to maximise student engagement and match their proficiency level. Incorporating technology, such as tablets, e-readers, and online applications, can further enhance this approach, particularly for younger learners. Teachers should promote free-choice reading, allowing students to select books that interest them. This not only boosts motivation but also encourages learners to take more responsibility for their learning. Additionally, teachers can support ER by organising reading incentives, book clubs, or sharing sessions, where students discuss books they have read, thus fostering enjoyment and social interaction with reading.

Integrating ER alongside intensive reading can offer a balanced approach to language acquisition. Intensive reading focuses on detailed analysis of short texts, while ER provides extensive exposure to longer texts, benefiting vocabulary development and reading speed. Teachers can track progress through methods like extra-credit reading or quizzes, without placing undue pressure on students. Professional development programs should equip teachers with strategies to implement ER effectively. This includes guiding students in selecting suitable materials, setting reading goals, and addressing potential challenges such as loss of motivation or lack of resources. By incorporating ER across classrooms and learning environments, educators can create a supportive atmosphere that maximises students' language acquisition potential.

### *Practical Implication*

This study offers significant practical implications for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers. Extensive reading should be intentionally integrated into language learning programmes to promote vocabulary awareness, reading skills, and reading fluency. Providing a variety of texts, along with increased print and digital resources, can enhance student engagement and increase reading participation. Teachers should encourage reading for pleasure, allowing students to select books that interest them to maintain motivation. Additionally, professional development programmes must equip educators with specific strategies for implementing extensive reading effectively. Stakeholders should prioritise extensive reading to foster learning environments that contribute to the sustainable development of students' language proficiency.

## **Conclusion**

This systematic review highlights the significance of ER in enhancing vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and reading speed. Through frequent engagement with meaningful, context-rich texts, ER fosters automatic reading, enabling learners to deepen their understanding of words and structures while supporting incidental learning. The findings confirm ER as a core concept in language learning, supported by Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Automaticity Theory, which emphasise the importance of meaningful input and repeated practice. Moreover, ER facilitates the development of critical processing skills, such as deduction and identifying key ideas and details. The flexibility and motivation promoted by ER, along with learner autonomy, play a crucial role in fostering sustained language acquisition. As learners encounter texts at high speeds, the repetition of word patterns and high-frequency vocabulary enhances their reading fluency. This study underscores the value of ER as an enjoyable, real-world approach to language learning. Successful implementation requires careful consideration of material availability, learner motivation, and technological integration. Ultimately, ER should be integrated into language curricula to support both academic and

sociocultural learning, addressing diverse learner needs and contexts.

### Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, it primarily relied on secondary data, which may have been influenced by the methodological approaches and contexts of the original studies. As a result, the findings cannot be universally applied to all language learning and teaching contexts. Second, the review predominantly focused on studies published in English, limiting the scope of research from other languages. Finally, while the study highlighted the benefits of ER, it did not delve deeply into the challenges that learners and educators might face in implementing ER, such as issues related to motivation, access to materials, or individual learner differences.

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