

Research Article

Assessing Secondary School Students' Awareness and Challenges in Using Intensive and Extensive Reading Methods in Ethiopia

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Abstract

Language proficiency plays a vital role in students' academic success and personal development. This study examines how secondary school students in Ethiopia recognize and apply intensive and extensive reading methods to enhance their language skills. A descriptive survey design, employing a mixed-methods approach, was used to gather data. Quantitative data were collected from 380 students selected through a simple random sampling technique. In contrast, qualitative data were obtained from interviews with nine purposively selected English teachers based on their teaching experience. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods provided a comprehensive understanding of both the benefits and challenges associated with these reading practices. The findings indicated a significant gap between students' awareness of the advantages of intensive and extensive reading methods and their practical application. Challenges contributing to this gap, as reported by students and supported by teachers, include time management issues, limited vocabulary proficiency, varying levels of motivation, comprehension difficulties, and the need for sustained focus during reading sessions. Both perspectives provided a holistic view of the barriers hindering effective implementation. To address these challenges, strategic interventions are proposed, including programs to enhance time management, vocabulary enrichment initiatives, motivation-building strategies, and structured support to improve comprehension and sustained focus during reading activities. These measures aim to bridge the gap between awareness and effective application, fostering improved language proficiency among secondary school students in Ethiopia.

Keywords

Intensive Reading, Extensive Reading, Language Skills

1. Introduction

Reading is a fundamental skill for academic success and lifelong learning [1]. It plays a crucial role in helping students understand complex texts, develop critical thinking skills, and gain the ability to synthesize information across different subjects [1]. In secondary education, the ability to effectively

apply both intensive and extensive reading strategies is essential for students to succeed academically and to prepare for professional careers [2]. Intensive reading, focusing on shorter texts for detailed analysis, helps students develop the critical skills required to comprehend, interpret, and evaluate

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academic content [1]. Extensive reading, on the other hand, encourages students to read broadly across various genres, helping them build fluency, expand their vocabulary, and enhance their overall comprehension abilities [2]. Together, these methods foster well-rounded readers who are better equipped to navigate the demands of higher education and the professional world.

However, many secondary school students face significant challenges in developing effective reading skills. In Ethiopia, students often struggle with reading techniques due to a combination of academic, social, and economic barriers [3]. Teachers across numerous secondary schools in Ethiopia have observed that students frequently encounter difficulties in extracting key information from texts, understanding complex academic materials, and synthesizing the ideas they read [3]. These challenges are compounded by a lack of adequate reading materials and insufficient exposure to a wide range of texts. While English is a mandatory subject in Ethiopian schools, many students find it difficult to read fluently in English, hindering their ability to engage fully with academic content. Furthermore, teachers report that students often lack the motivation to engage with reading material, as they do not perceive its value for their academic success or future career aspirations [4].

Another significant factor contributing to these challenges is the socio-economic background of students [5]. Many students in Ethiopia come from low-income families with limited access to supplementary educational resources, such as books, digital materials, or private tutoring [6]. This lack of access not only affects their motivation to engage in extensive reading but also limits their ability to practice and refine intensive reading skills necessary for academic success [12]. Furthermore, language barriers, such as limited proficiency in English as a second or foreign language, exacerbate these challenges, making it difficult for students to grasp complex texts across various subjects [6]. The challenges faced by students are further compounded by gaps in instructional practices. Research indicates that many teachers in secondary schools lack sufficient training or resources to effectively teach intensive and extensive reading techniques [7]. As a result, students receive limited guidance in developing the skills needed to comprehend and engage with texts critically. Without structured support, students often resort to rote memorization or superficial reading strategies that fail to enhance their deeper understanding of the material [13].

Mastering intensive and extensive reading methods is crucial for secondary school students as they prepare for higher education and professional life. Intensive reading equips students with the ability to focus on linguistic details, such as vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure, enabling them to decode complex academic texts effectively [8]. This skill is particularly important in subjects requiring precise understanding, such as science, mathematics, and literature. On the other hand, extensive reading encourages students to read widely and fluently, exposing them to diverse genres and

perspectives [9]. This practice not only enhances their vocabulary and language fluency but also broadens their cultural awareness and critical thinking skills, preparing them for participation in a globalized world [9]. Despite the acknowledged benefits of intensive and extensive reading, their implementation in secondary schools often remains inconsistent. For example, time constraints within the curriculum may limit opportunities for students to engage in extensive reading activities [8]. Similarly, the lack of structured programs for teaching intensive reading techniques means that students often struggle to develop the analytical skills needed for close reading [9]. Addressing these gaps requires a deliberate effort to integrate reading skill development into the curriculum and provide teachers with the resources and training needed to support students effectively. As a result, this study aims to address the following two key questions:

What is the level of awareness and practice among students regarding the use of intensive and extensive reading methods for improving language skills?

What challenges do students encounter when implementing intensive and extensive reading methods to improve their language skills?

2. Method and Materials

3. Research Design and Approach

This study employed a descriptive survey design, incorporating a mixed approach to collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data.

4. Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at three secondary schools in Saylem Woreda, Southwest Ethiopia: specifically Saylem Secondary and Comprehensive School, Hidase Secondary School, and Techib Secondary School. These schools were chosen because the researcher had prior teaching experience at one of them, providing direct insight into the challenges students face with intensive and extensive reading. Grade 10 students were selected because it is crucial to emphasize the importance of reading for their academic and future careers, including preparation for significant upcoming university entrance examinations.

The study aimed to investigate the reading habits of these students to identify more effective teaching and support strategies, thereby enhancing their language skills and preparing them comprehensively for their academic journey. The insights gained from this research are crucial for informing educational practices, lesson planning, and support mechanisms tailored to their specific needs. From a total student population of 3,796 across these schools, a sample of 380 students was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure fair representation of both schools and student genders

in the study, amounting to approximately 10% of the total student enrollment during the 2022/2023 academic year

5. Data Collection Tools

In the data collection phase, the researchers employed two main methods: structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Firstly, a structured questionnaire was designed specifically for grade 10 students, focusing on their reading habits, the challenges encountered, and their perceptions of educational support. This questionnaire aimed to systematically gather quantitative data, providing insights into how students perceive their reading experiences and the support they receive.

Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected teachers and school administrators. These interviews were intended to explore the qualitative aspects of the educational environment and the support systems available to students. The semi-structured format provided flexibility, allowing for a deeper dive into diverse perspectives and unexpected insights related to students' reading habits and overall educational experiences. Moreover, the study conducted interviews with 9 purposefully selected English teachers, each of whom had over 12 years of experience teaching English. These interviews aimed to obtain detailed insights into various aspects related to students' reading habits, challenges faced in language learning, effective teaching methods, and strategies used to support students. The purposeful selection ensured that the interviewees had substantial experience and expertise, providing rich qualitative data that complemented the quantitative findings from the structured questionnaires.

6. Data Collection Procedure

During the data collection phase, the researchers utilized structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gather detailed insights into grade 10 students' reading habits

and educational experiences. The structured questionnaires were distributed to 380 students, aiming to systematically collect quantitative data on how students read, the challenges they faced, and their perceptions of educational support. Simultaneously, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with 9 experienced English teachers, each having over 12 years of teaching English. These interviews focused on exploring qualitative aspects such as effective teaching methods, the difficulties students encounter in language learning, and strategies used to support them.

7. Data Analysis

The data collected through the instruments was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Firstly, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the responses from the questionnaires. This involved organizing and presenting the data to give an overview of students' reading habits, the challenges they encountered, and their perceptions of educational support. Descriptive statistics, such as averages and percentages, were used to quantify and summarize the main findings derived from the questionnaire responses. These analyses helped identify significant trends in how students approach reading and the support they receive. Additionally, the qualitative data from the interviews with English teachers were analyzed thematically. The thematic analysis involved identifying recurring themes, patterns, and categories within the qualitative data. This approach provided deeper insights into effective teaching methods for reading skills, the specific difficulties students face, and strategies used to assist them. Through combining quantitative summaries with qualitative themes, the researchers gained a comprehensive understanding of students' reading habits and educational experiences across the selected secondary schools.

8. Results

Results from Students' Questionnaire.

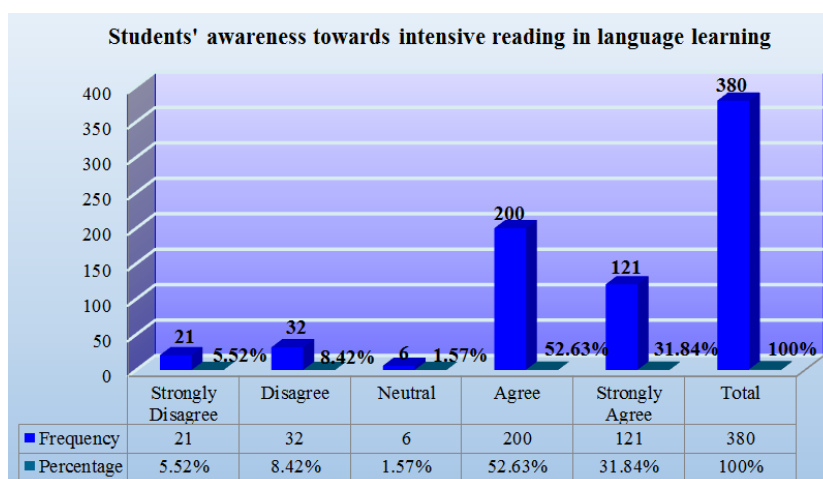


Figure 1. Students' awareness of intensive reading in language learning.

Based on the data in Figure 1, it is evident that a significant majority of students have a positive awareness of intensive reading in the context of language learning. Specifically, (84.47%) of respondents either agreed (52.63%) or strongly agreed (31.84%) with the concept of intensive reading. This high level of agreement suggests that students perceive intensive reading as a valuable method for enhancing their language skills. Scholars in the field provide insights that support these findings. [10] argues that intensive reading promotes deeper engagement with texts, leading to improved vocabulary acquisition and comprehension skills [19]. [20] further highlights that intensive reading not only enhances linguistic abilities but also encourages critical thinking and cultural awareness. Additionally, [21] emphasizes the pedagogical benefits of intensive reading, advocating for its integration into language learning curricula to foster both language proficiency and broader cognitive skills.

The data from Figures 1 to 5 show that most students view intensive and extensive reading positively for improving language skills. They believe intensive reading helps with vocabulary, comprehension, critical thinking, and under-

standing different cultures. Similarly, extensive reading is seen as beneficial for learning languages by exposing students to diverse texts and enhancing their linguistic abilities. While some students have doubts about these methods, most are confident in distinguishing between them. Overall, these findings emphasize the importance of these reading strategies in language education, though there's room for clearer understanding and support among students.

Despite the majority agreement, minorities of students expressed disagreement with intensive reading, with (8.42%) disagree and (5.52%) strongly disagree. This indicates some doubt among students about the effectiveness of intensive reading as a language-learning strategy. Nonetheless, the overwhelmingly positive response underlines the perceived value of intensive reading in improving language proficiency among students. The data from Figure 1, coupled with scholarly viewpoints, highlight students' generally positive awareness of intensive reading in language learning. These insights highlight the method's significance in enhancing language skills and fostering critical thinking among students, despite differing opinions among a minority.

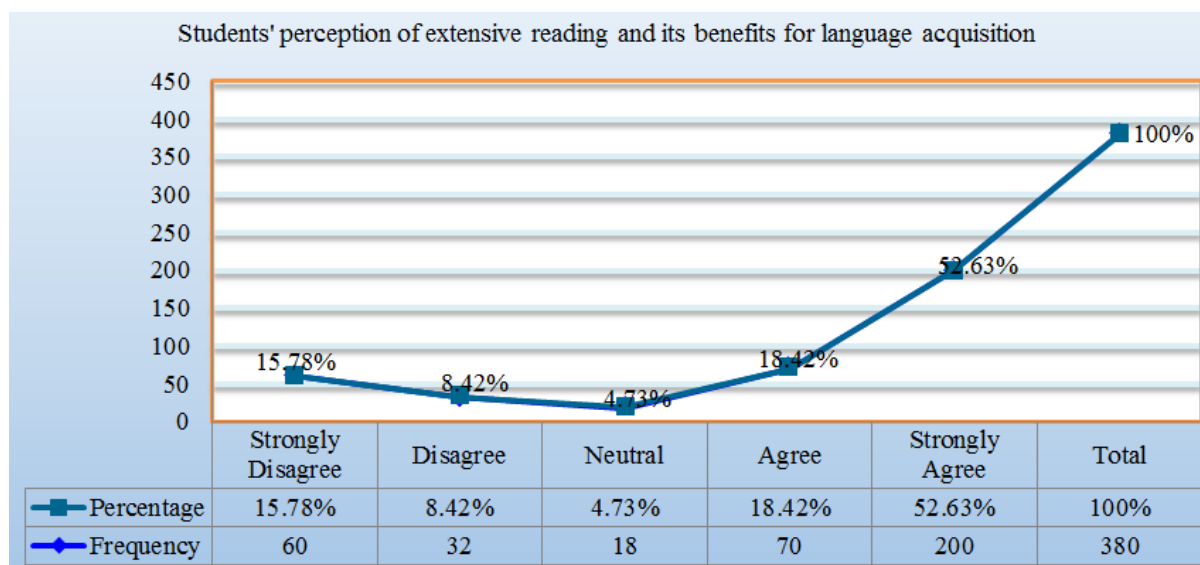


Figure 2. Students' perception of extensive reading and its benefits for language acquisition.

The data in Figure 2 illustrates students' perceptions of extensive reading and its effectiveness in language acquisition. A majority of respondents, totally (71.05%), either agreed (18.42%) or strongly agreed (52.63%) with the concept of extensive reading. This indicates prevalent belief among students in the benefits of extensive reading for improving language skills. Scholars in the field support these findings with various insights. [11] argues that extensive reading exposes learners to diverse vocabulary and language structures,

thereby enhancing language proficiency. [20] adds that extensive reading fosters not only linguistic competence but also a deeper understanding of cultural contexts embedded in texts. However, minorities of respondents expressed disagreement with extensive reading, with (15.78%) strongly disagree and (8.42%) disagree. This suggests some uncertainty among students about the benefits of extensive reading as a language acquisition strategy, possibly due to differing learning preferences or experiences.

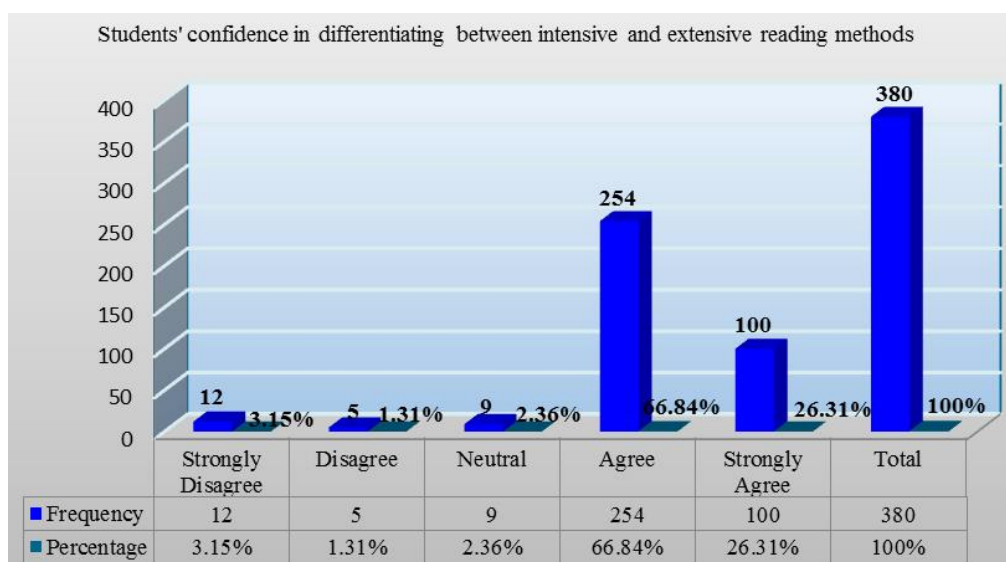


Figure 3. Students' confidence in differentiating between intensive and extensive reading methods.

Figure 3 depicts students' confidence levels in distinguishing between intensive and extensive reading methods. The data illustrates a strong agreement among respondents, with (93.15%) indicating they either agreed (66.84%) or strongly agreed (26.31%) that they can differentiate between these two approaches. This high level of confidence suggests a strong understanding among students regarding the distinctions and applications of intensive versus extensive reading in language learning contexts.

Scholars in the field provide insights that support these findings. [14] argues that the ability to differentiate between intensive and extensive reading methods is crucial for opti-

mizing reading strategies tailored to specific learning objectives and texts. [20] adds that such differentiation enhances students' ability to engage critically with texts, thereby improving language proficiency and comprehension skills. Despite the overwhelming agreement, a small minority of respondents expressed uncertainty or disagreement about their ability to differentiate between intensive and extensive reading methods, with (6.85%) either disagree or strongly disagree. This highlights a potential area for targeted educational interventions to ensure all students have a clear understanding of these reading approaches.

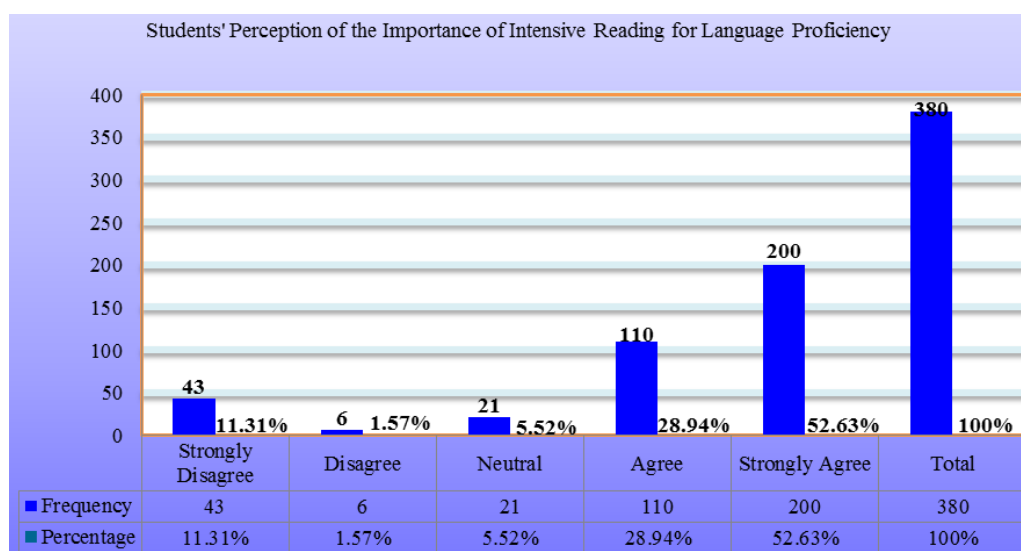


Figure 4. Students' perception of the importance of intensive reading for language proficiency.

Figure 4 illustrates students' perspectives on the role of intensive reading in enhancing language proficiency. The data

shows a strong consensus among respondents; with (81.57%) either agreeing (28.94%) or strongly agreeing (52.63%) that

intensive reading is crucial for improving language skills. [19] argues that intensive reading, characterized by focused and thorough engagement with texts, facilitates a deeper understanding of language structures and enhances vocabulary acquisition, thus significantly contributing to language proficiency [21]. [22] supports this view, suggesting that intensive reading promotes critical thinking and analytical skills, which are essential for effective language use. [15] emphasizes that intensive reading not only improves linguistic competence but

also fosters cultural awareness and empathy through exposure to diverse perspectives in texts. However, a minority of respondents expressed disagreement with the statement about the importance of intensive reading for improving language proficiency, with (11.31%) strongly disagree and (1.57%) disagree. This indicates some variability in students' perceptions regarding the efficacy of intensive reading as a language learning strategy.

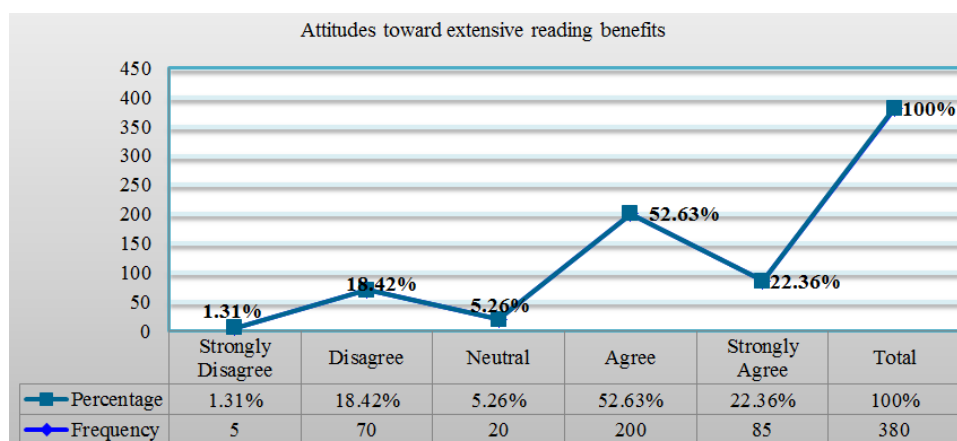


Figure 5. Students attitudes towards the benefits of extensive reading for language skills and vocabulary development.

Figure 5 illustrates respondents' attitudes toward the benefits of extensive reading in developing language skills and vocabulary. The data indicates a range of perspectives among participants, with 75.99% expressing positive views (52.63% agreed, 22.36% strongly agreed) regarding the efficacy of extensive reading. [23] emphasizes that extensive reading, which involves exposure to a wide array of texts, significantly enhances vocabulary acquisition and improves overall language proficiency. This study supports this stance, highlighting that extensive reading not only strengthens linguistic competence but also enriches cultural understanding and

promotes critical thinking skills. Moreover, [24] underlines extensive reading cultivates a passion for reading and independence in language learning, facilitating sustained language development. However, a minority of respondents held negative views towards the benefits of extensive reading. Specifically, (18.42%) disagreed and (1.31%) strongly disagreed with the statement regarding its effectiveness in developing language skills and vocabulary. This indicates skepticism or differing opinions among participants regarding the impact of extensive reading as a language-learning strategy.

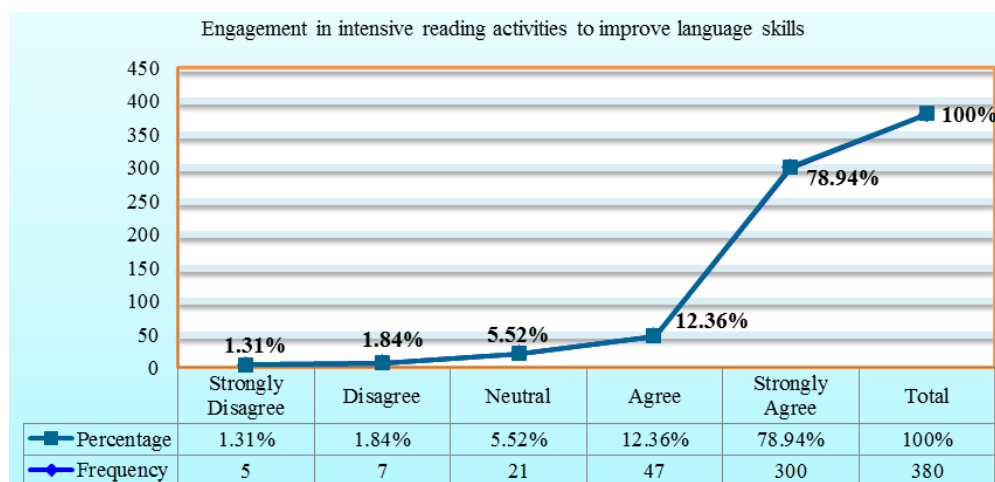


Figure 6. Engagement in intensive reading activities to improve language skills.

Figure 6 provides clear insights into how respondents perceive and engage with intensive reading to enhance their language skills. The data reveals that a majority, (78.94%) of participants, strongly agreed that they regularly practice intensive reading activities like close reading and detailed analysis. An additional (12.36%) agreed with this sentiment, indicating widespread support for intensive reading's effectiveness in improving comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and critical thinking skills crucial for language development. In contrast, a minority of respondents held reservations (1.84%) disagreed and (1.31%) strongly disagreed with the idea of using intensive reading for language improvement. Another (5.52%) remain neutral on the matter. These varying viewpoints suggest differing perspectives among respondents regarding the benefits of intensive reading as a language learning strategy.

Based on the data from Figure 6, which shows a strong preference among students for intensive reading to enhance language skills, it suggests they tend to prioritize intensive reading for shorter texts over extensive reading. However,

educational scholars stress the importance of a balanced approach that includes both intensive and extensive reading methods, rather than exclusively favoring intensive reading even for shorter texts. The high agreement (91.3% combining strongly agree and agree responses) with intensive reading reflects its perceived effectiveness in deepening comprehension and language proficiency within focused contexts, likely due to its efficiency in achieving specific learning goals. Despite this preference, scholars highlight the complementary benefits of extensive reading, which fosters fluency, expands vocabulary, and enhances understanding of language and cultural nuances. By integrating both approaches, students benefit from a comprehensive language learning experience that enhances both depth of analysis and breadth of exposure, optimizing overall language proficiency.

and critical thinking skills [16]. Therefore, while students may lean towards intensive reading for its focused benefits, scholars advocate for a holistic approach to maximize language learning outcomes.

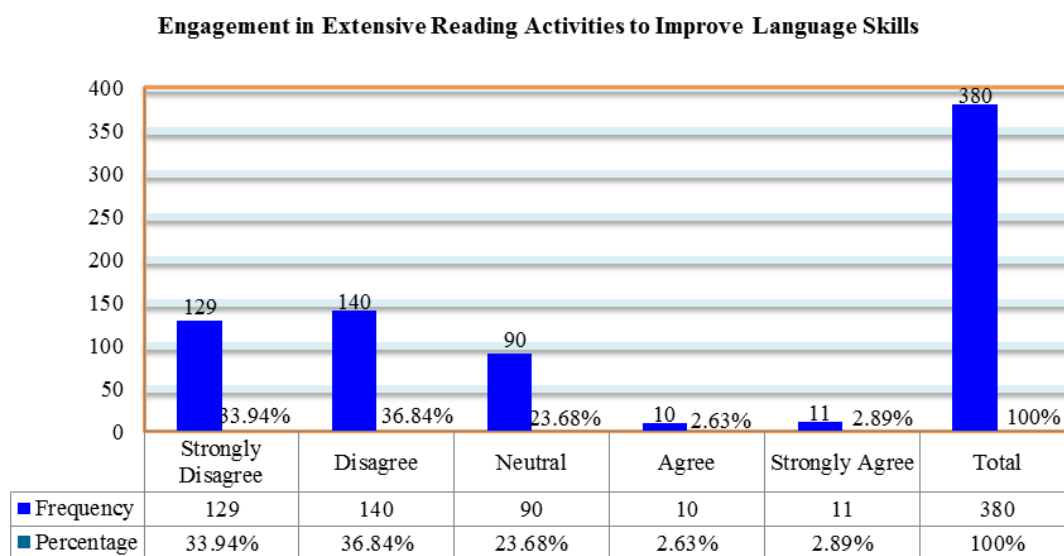


Figure 7. Engagement in extensive reading activities to improve language skills.

Figure 7 presents respondents' attitudes towards engaging in extensive reading activities, such as reading for pleasure and reading widely, to improve language skills. The data reveals a varied range of responses among participants, reflecting differing levels of engagement in extensive reading. The majority of respondents (70.78%) indicated lower levels of engagement by either strongly disagreeing (33.94%) or disagreeing (36.84%) with the statement about frequently participating in extensive reading activities for language skill improvement. This suggests that a significant portion of participants may not prioritize extensive reading as a primary method for developing language proficiency. [19] argues that

extensive reading, characterized by exposure to diverse texts and contexts, enhances vocabulary acquisition and comprehension skills, thereby supporting language proficiency. [17] emphasizes that extensive reading not only improves linguistic competence but also promotes cultural understanding and critical thinking abilities. In contrast, a smaller percentage of respondents (5.52% neutral, 2.63% agreed, 2.89% strongly agreed) expressed positive attitudes towards engaging in extensive reading activities for language skills enhancement. This highlights varying levels of interest and participation among respondents regarding the perceived benefits of extensive reading.

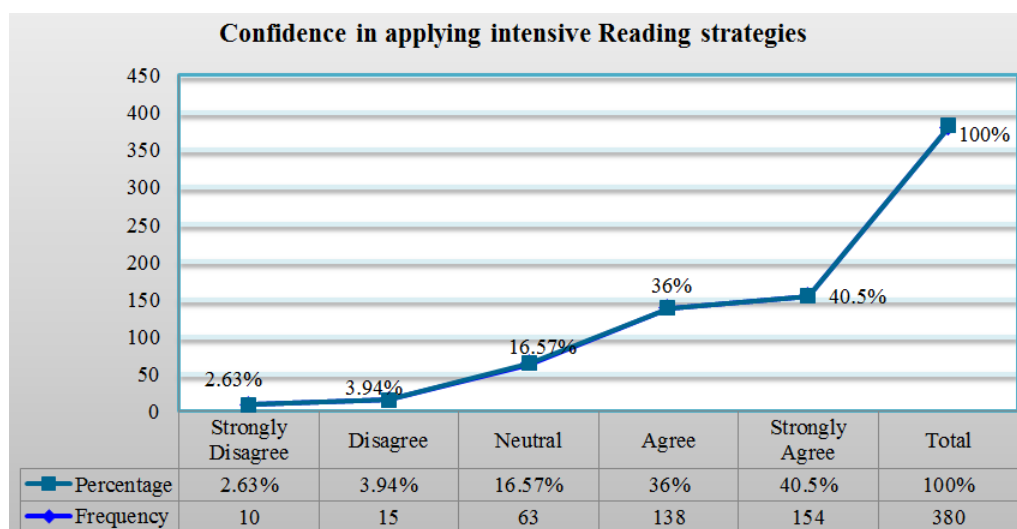


Figure 8. Confidence in applying intensive reading strategies.

Figure 8 presents a clear view of students' confidence in their ability to effectively apply intensive reading strategies, particularly in analyzing texts for deeper understanding. The data reveals that a significant majority of students feel confident in their skills (36%) agreed and (40.5%) strongly agreed that they can successfully employ intensive reading techniques. This indicates a total (76.5%) of students expressing strong confidence in their proficiency with intensive reading. Conversely, a smaller percentage of students demonstrate uncertainty or lack of confidence (16.57%) is neutral, (3.94%) disagreed, and (2.63%) strongly disagreed

with their ability to apply intensive reading strategies effectively. These numbers highlight a minority of students who may benefit from additional support or guidance to enhance their confidence and skills in intensive reading. Overall, the data highlights a positive perception among the majority of students regarding their readiness to engage deeply with texts. This confidence is crucial for fostering stronger comprehension and analytical abilities through intensive reading practices, suggesting a solid foundation for further development and refinement of their reading strategies.

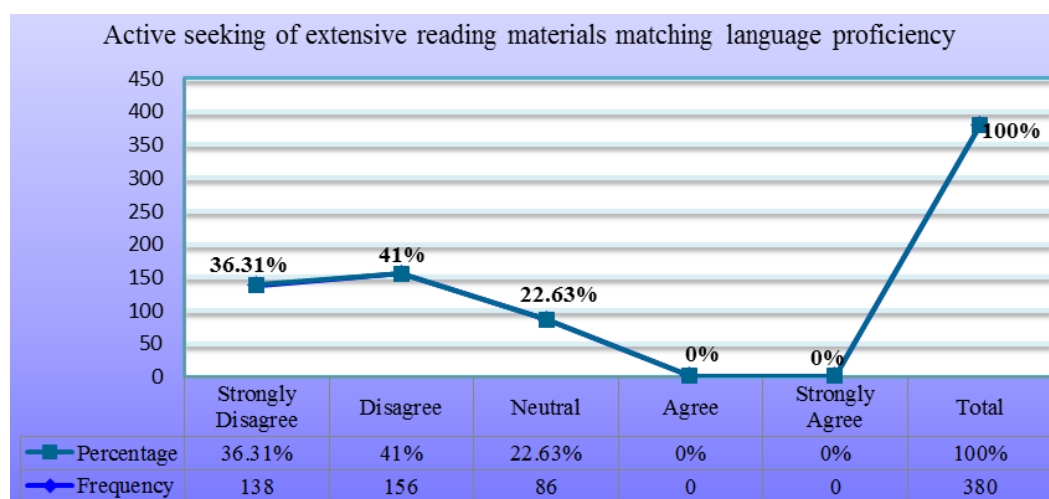


Figure 9. Students' active seeking of extensive reading materials matching language proficiency.

Figure 9 provides a clear depiction of students' behaviors concerning seeking out extensive reading materials that match their language proficiency level. The data reveals a significant trend where a majority of students, comprising 36.31% who strongly disagree and 41% who disagree, do not actively seek out such materials. Additionally, 22.63% of students remain

neutral on this aspect. Notably, no respondents indicated agreement or strong agreement with actively seeking extensive reading materials. This data underscores a notable gap in students' proactive engagement with reading materials that could enhance their language skills. The absence of affirmative responses suggests a potential area for educational in-

tervention to encourage and guide students in selecting appropriate extensive reading materials. This proactive approach is crucial for promoting language development, ex-

panding vocabulary, and fostering independent learning habits among students.

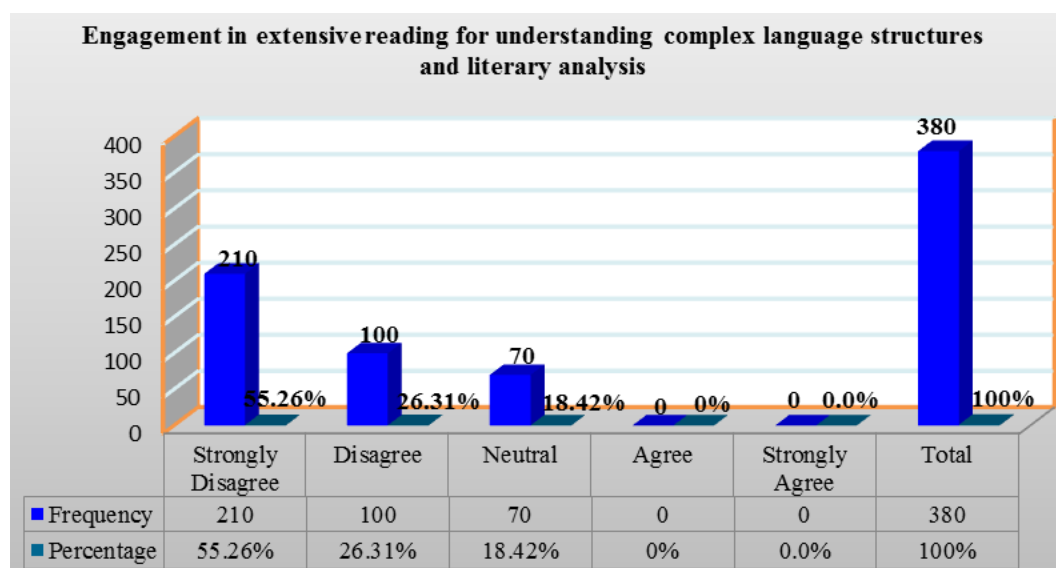


Figure 10. Students' engagement in extensive reading for understanding complex language structures and literary analysis.

Figure 10 illustrates students' engagement in extensive reading activities aimed at enhancing their understanding of complex language structures and literary analysis. The data reveals a significant lack of participation (55.26%) strongly disagreed and (26.31%) disagreed that they regularly partake in extensive reading for these purposes. An additional 18.42% of students remain neutral on the matter. The absence of any respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing highlights a missed opportunity for students to utilize extensive reading effec-

tively. This underscores the need for educational initiatives that actively promote and encourage students to engage in extensive reading. Through fostering a culture that values extensive reading, educators can help students develop critical analytical skills, expand their vocabulary, and deepen their appreciation for literature. Encouraging greater participation in extensive reading activities is essential for enhancing students' language proficiency and overall academic success.

Table 1. Students' challenges in engaging with intensive and extensive reading methods.

No	Statement	Strongly Dis-agree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
1	Finding enough time in my schedule to engage in intensive reading activities is challenging.	6 (1.57%)	15 (3.94%)	20 (5.26%)	239 (62.89%)	100 (26.31%)
2	It is difficult for me to maintain focus during intensive reading sessions.	123 (32.36%)	126 (33.15%)	90 (23.68%)	20 (5.26%)	21 (5.52%)
3	I struggle with understanding complex texts during intensive reading exercises.	10 (2.63%)	20 (5.26%)	11 (2.89%)	214 (56.31%)	125 (32.89%)
4	Balancing intensive reading assignments with other academic tasks is challenging for me.	23 (6%)	18 (4.73%)	13 (3.42%)	200 (52.63%)	126 (33.15%)
5	I find it challenging to locate appropriate resources for extensive reading outside of class.	11 (2.89%)	15 (3.94%)	21 (5.52%)	200 (52.63%)	133 (35%)
6	It is hard for me to stay motivated to read extensively when not guided by a teacher.	15 (3.94%)	21 (5.52%)	11 (2.84%)	133 (35%)	200 (52.63%)
7	I struggle to find reading materials that match my	6 (1.57%)	20 (5.26%)	15 (3.94%)	239	100 (26.31%)

No	Statement	Strongly Dis-agree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
	language proficiency level for extensive reading.				(62.89%)	
8	Keeping up with the volume of reading required for extensive reading is challenging.	13 (3.42%)	8 (2.10%)	19 (5%)	240 (63.15%)	100 (26.31%)
9	Applying intensive reading strategies like close reading and analysis is difficult for me.	134 (35.26%)	123 (32.36%)	100 (26.31%)	3 (0.78%)	20 (5.26%)
10	I face challenges in remembering and applying new vocabulary learned through extensive reading.	11 (2.89%)	5 (1.31%)	0 (0%)	270 (71.05%)	94 (24.73%)

Based on the data in Table 1, question 1 reveals that a significant majority of students (89.20%) find it challenging to find enough time in their schedules for intensive reading activities. Specifically, (62.89%) of students agreed and (26.31%) strongly agreed that this is an issue. This suggests that time management is a significant barrier for students when it comes to engaging in intensive reading. The high percentage of agreement indicates that many students perceive their schedules as too busy to allocate sufficient time for focused reading activities, which are essential for deep comprehension and learning.

Question 2 shows that (58.63%) of students find it difficult to maintain focus during intensive reading sessions. Specifically, (33.15%) agreed and (25.48%) strongly agreed with this statement. This indicates that more than half of the students struggle with maintaining concentration when engaged in intensive reading, possibly due to distractions or difficulty in staying engaged with complex texts. This challenge can hinder students' ability to comprehend and retain information effectively. In question 3, 89.20% of students struggle with understanding complex texts during intensive reading exercises. Specifically, 56.31% agreed and 32.89% strongly agreed. This high percentage underscores a notable challenge among students in dealing with the intricate nature of texts essential for intensive reading. The widespread agreement indicates that many students could benefit from additional support or strategies to bolster their comprehension skills, such as vocabulary enrichment or targeted reading techniques.

Moving to question 4, balancing intensive reading assignments with other academic tasks is challenging for (85.78%) of students. Specifically, 52.63% agreed and 33.15% strongly agreed with this statement. This indicates that a large proportion of students perceive difficulty in managing their workload effectively, with intensive reading assignments often competing with other academic responsibilities. This challenge underscores the need for better time management skills or potentially more balanced academic demands to support students in their reading practices.

Question 5 indicates that 87.63% of students find it challenging to locate appropriate resources for extensive reading outside of class. Specifically, 52.63% agreed and 35.00% strongly agreed. This high percentage suggests that many

students encounter difficulties in accessing suitable reading materials that align with their interests and proficiency levels outside of structured classroom settings. This challenge highlights the importance of improving resource availability or guiding students in finding relevant materials to foster independent reading habits.

In question 6, a significant majority of students (87.63%) find it hard to stay motivated to read extensively when not guided by a teacher. Specifically, 52.63% strongly agreed and 35.00% agreed with this statement. This indicates that many students rely on external motivation or structure provided by teachers to sustain their interest and commitment to extensive reading activities. Enhancing intrinsic motivation or providing alternative forms of guidance could potentially address this challenge and encourage more independent reading habits. Question 7 shows that 89.20% of students struggle to find reading materials that match their language proficiency level for extensive reading. Specifically, 62.89% agreed and 26.31% strongly agreed. This indicates a mismatch between available resources and students' language abilities, highlighting the need for a more tailored approach in selecting reading materials that cater to diverse proficiency levels. Providing a variety of reading options or adapting materials could help address this challenge and support students in developing their language skills through extensive reading.

Question 8 indicates that 89.46% of students find it challenging to keep up with the volume of reading required for extensive reading. Specifically, 63.15% agreed and 26.31% strongly agreed with this statement. This suggests that many students perceive the workload associated with extensive reading as overwhelming, potentially affecting their ability to engage deeply with the texts or complete assigned readings. Strategies to manage reading volume or integrate reading more effectively into the curriculum could help alleviate this challenge. In question 9, a significant portion of students (67.62%) find applying intensive reading strategies like close reading and analysis difficult. Specifically, 35.26% strongly agreed and 32.36% agreed with this statement. This indicates that many students may struggle with applying advanced reading strategies effectively, which are crucial for deep comprehension and critical thinking. Providing explicit instruction and practice opportunities in these strategies could

support students in developing their analytical skills and enhancing their reading comprehension.

Question 10 shows that 95.78% of students face challenges in remembering and applying new vocabulary learned through extensive reading. Specifically, 71.05% agreed and 24.73% strongly agreed with this statement. This high percentage suggests that many students encounter difficulties in retaining and using new vocabulary effectively, which are essential for language acquisition and comprehension. Implementing vocabulary-building strategies or integrating vocabulary practice more systematically could help students overcome this challenge and enhance their language proficiency. The analysis of students' challenges with intensive and extensive reading highlights important considerations for educators. Firstly, many students struggle with time management, staying focused during reading sessions, and understanding complex texts. These skills are crucial for their academic development and lifelong learning. Additionally, students face difficulties finding appropriate reading materials, staying motivated without teacher guidance, and handling the amount of reading required.

Despite understanding the importance of reading, these practical challenges often hinder students' ability to fully engage. Issues like time constraints, lack of focus, and trouble with complex texts are significant barriers. Moreover, challenges in finding suitable resources, staying motivated independently, and managing the workload make it harder for students to participate in reading activities effectively. To address these challenges, teachers should implement clear strategies to improve time management, focus, and comprehension skills. It's also crucial to design curricula that offer diverse reading materials and encourage students to read independently. By tackling these obstacles, teachers can empower students to take charge of their learning, improve their comprehension and language skills, and achieve better academic outcomes. This approach not only supports students in their immediate learning goals but also prepares them for future success in their education and beyond.

9. Analysis of Teachers' Interview

The results obtained from the teachers' interviews convey some similar views. The analysis of data gathered through interviews has also shown consistent results with the findings of the questionnaire. As mentioned in the methods, a semi-structured interview was held with nine English teachers. The six leading questions were raised with relevant probes. For presentation, the teachers were referred by randomly given numbers T 1, T 2, T 3 up to T 9.

Based on insights gathered from interviews with nine English teachers (T 1 to T 9) their perspectives on intensive and extensive reading methods offer a thorough understanding of effective strategies for teaching literacy. These insights are crucial for designing educational approaches that can effectively meet the needs of students and improve their ac-

ademic outcomes. To assess and promote students' comprehension of these methods, educators emphasize clear differentiation and targeted instructional approaches. They focus on actively engaging students in intensive reading through techniques like close reading, annotation, and detailed analysis, all integrated into interactive classroom activities aimed at enhancing comprehension and critical thinking skills.

Teachers further elaborated on their methods for evaluating and fostering students' grasp of intensive and extensive reading techniques. They stress the importance of providing clear definitions and practical examples of both approaches. Assessment strategies vary and include quizzes, class discussions exploring methodological differences, and reflective tasks such as journal entries or essays, which encourage students to independently apply these methods. By employing this mix of approaches, teachers ensure students not only understand the distinctions but also learn to effectively apply each method in their reading practices.

In encouraging active participation in intensive reading tasks, teachers implement structured close reading sessions where students analyze texts in-depth, annotate key passages, and interpret the author's intent. Detailed analytical exercises encourage students to identify themes, evaluate character motivations, and analyze literary devices. Peer discussions and group activities further stimulate engagement, fostering collaborative learning environments where students share interpretations and enhance critical thinking and comprehension skills.

Reflecting on their teaching experiences, educators acknowledged common challenges students face in intensive and extensive reading, such as vocabulary acquisition, comprehending complex texts, and managing time effectively. To address these challenges, teachers integrate preparatory activities to build vocabulary and activate prior knowledge. They also provide explicit instruction tailored to individual student needs and assign tasks that cater to varying levels of proficiency and interests. Cultivating a supportive classroom atmosphere where students feel encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification is crucial for overcoming these obstacles.

Teachers emphasized their dedication to creating a nurturing environment that extends students' reading experiences beyond the classroom. They curate a diverse selection of reading materials, including graded readers and digital resources, tailored to students' proficiency levels and personal interests. Initiatives like book clubs and personalized recommendations based on student preferences promote the discovery of enjoyable reading materials. Additionally, establishing and maintaining classroom and school libraries, complemented by tools such as reading logs and online platforms, allows students to track progress and share insights, fostering a community of enthusiastic readers and nurturing a passion for independent exploration of literature. Articulating the numerous benefits of extensive reading for language acquisition, teachers highlight enhanced fluency, expanded

vocabulary, increased cultural awareness, and improved comprehension skills. They substantiate these benefits with research findings demonstrating the positive impact of extensive reading on language proficiency. Practical applications, such as improved communication abilities and academic achievements, underscore the relevance of extensive reading in students' overall language learning journey. Personal anecdotes and success stories from former students who have benefited from extensive reading serve to inspire and motivate current learners to engage actively in this practice.

Teachers also outlined strategies for effectively managing intensive reading assignments alongside other academic responsibilities. This includes setting clear expectations, providing structured timelines, and offering flexibility in deadlines to accommodate individual schedules and academic demands. Integrating intensive reading tasks across the curriculum ensures alignment with other subjects and reinforces key concepts across disciplines. Regular check-ins and feedback sessions enable students to reflect on their progress, refine study habits, and sustain motivation and engagement in both intensive and extensive reading activities.

Based on interviews with nine English teachers (T 1 to T 9), their perspectives on intensive and extensive reading methods provide crucial insights that highlight effective strategies for literacy instruction. These insights illuminate significant considerations in shaping impactful educational practices. They stress the importance of clear differentiation and targeted teaching methods to assess and enhance students' understanding of reading strategies. Teachers emphasize using diverse assessment techniques and practical applications to help students grasp intensive and extensive reading. They also prioritize creating engaging classrooms, supporting independent reading, and managing academic tasks to develop essential literacy skills for students' academic achievement and lifelong learning. However, despite students' initial positive awareness, implementing these strategies effectively faces challenges like vocabulary acquisition, understanding complex texts, and managing time, as noted by the teachers. Overcoming these challenges is crucial to bridging the gap between theory and practice in literacy education.

10. Discussion and Conclusion

The study findings reveal a predominantly positive attitude among students towards both intensive and extensive reading methods within the context of language learning. A significant majority of students perceive intensive reading as highly beneficial for enhancing comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and critical thinking skills. Specifically, the data indicate that 84.47% of respondents either agreed (52.63%) or strongly agreed (31.84%) with the concept of intensive reading. This positive reception underscores students' recognition of intensive reading's role in deepening their understanding of language structures and improving their ability to engage critically with texts.

These findings are consistent with existing literature [19, 20, 21], which highlights the pedagogical benefits of intensive reading in fostering analytical skills and enhancing linguistic proficiency. [19] argues that intensive reading promotes deeper engagement with texts, leading to improved vocabulary acquisition and comprehension skills, while [20] suggests that intensive reading encourages critical thinking and cultural awareness. [18] emphasizes the broader cognitive benefits of intensive reading, advocating for its integration into language learning curricula to enhance both language proficiency and overall academic achievement. The study also reveals that students demonstrate a robust ability to differentiate between intensive and extensive reading methods. A significant majority of respondents (93.15%) indicated that they either agreed (66.84%) or strongly agreed (26.31%) with their ability to distinguish between these two approaches. This high level of confidence suggests that students possess a clear understanding of the distinctive features and applications of intensive versus extensive reading in language learning contexts.

Educational scholars support these findings by emphasizing the importance of such differentiation [20, 21]. [19] argues that the ability to distinguish between intensive and extensive reading methods is essential for optimizing reading strategies tailored to specific learning objectives and texts. [20] adds that this skill enhances students' ability to engage critically with texts, thereby improving their language proficiency and comprehension skills. The data's strong alignment with scholarly perspectives underscores the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches aimed at developing students' analytical capabilities and strategic reading skills. Despite the overall positive perceptions towards intensive and extensive reading, the study identifies several challenges that students encounter. Time management emerges as a significant issue, with 89.20% of students agreeing that they find it challenging to allocate sufficient time for intensive reading activities. This finding highlights a practical barrier that impacts students' engagement with intensive reading tasks, potentially limiting their ability to delve deeply into texts and extract nuanced meanings. Maintaining focus during intensive reading sessions and comprehending complex texts were also identified as challenges by a majority of students (58.63% and 89.20% respectively). These challenges underscore the cognitive demands associated with intensive reading and the need for targeted instructional support to enhance students' concentration skills and comprehension abilities.

Addressing these challenges requires educators to implement structured reading sessions that incorporate strategies for managing time effectively and enhancing students' focus and comprehension. Through providing clear learning objectives, scaffolding activities, and differentiated instruction, educators can support students in overcoming these barriers and maximizing their engagement with intensive reading tasks. The findings of this study carry several implications for educational practice in language learning contexts. Firstly,

teachers should leverage students' positive perceptions towards intensive and extensive reading methods by integrating both approaches into curriculum design. By offering a balanced approach that combines focused reading activities with broader exposure to diverse texts, educators can cater to diverse learning preferences and objectives, thereby promoting comprehensive language development and critical thinking skills among students. Secondly, addressing students' challenges such as time management and comprehension difficulties through targeted instructional strategies is crucial. Teachers can support students by providing scaffolding activities, peer collaboration opportunities, and differentiated instruction to enhance reading proficiency and engagement. These implications align with best practices in language education, which emphasize the importance of integrating intensive and extensive reading methods to foster students' linguistic competence, critical thinking skills, and overall academic achievement.

This study examined students' perceptions and practices regarding intensive and extensive reading methods in three secondary schools, aiming to enhance language skills. The findings underscore a prevalent positive attitude among students towards both intensive and extensive reading methods. They perceive intensive reading as pivotal for improving comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and critical thinking skills. This aligns with the pedagogical benefits highlighted in existing literature, emphasizing the role of intensive reading in deepening engagement with texts and fostering language proficiency. Importantly, students demonstrated a robust understanding of the distinctions between intensive and extensive reading methods, illustrating their capacity to apply these approaches effectively in language learning contexts. This competency is essential for tailoring reading strategies to specific learning objectives and texts, thereby optimizing language acquisition outcomes.

However, the study also identified significant challenges encountered by students. These include difficulties in managing time effectively during intensive reading sessions, maintaining focus on complex texts, and comprehending intricate language structures. These challenges highlight the need for structured instructional support and targeted interventions to bolster students' reading proficiency and engagement with intensive reading tasks. The educational implications of these findings suggest integrating both intensive and extensive reading methods into curriculum frameworks to accommodate diverse learning preferences and objectives. By fostering supportive learning environments that promote independent reading habits and provide access to a variety of reading materials, educators can capitalize on students' positive perceptions and enhance their language development. Acknowledging the study's limitations, such as reliance on self-reported data and potential biases, future research could benefit from longitudinal studies to track students' progress in language proficiency over time. Additionally, qualitative research approaches could offer deeper insights into students' experiences and perceptions of intensive and extensive

reading methods.

Abbreviations

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language

Ethical Approval Statement

The study titled "Assessing Secondary School Students' Awareness and Challenges in Using Intensive and Extensive Reading Methods in Ethiopia," conducted by *Tamirat Taye Simel*, was reviewed and approved by the school research committee and received approval from the school review committee of Saylem Secondary and Preparatory School under Reference Number SSS/263/2023. Participants were informed about the study's objectives, and verbal informed consent was obtained from each participant. Additionally, participants were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any consequences.

Author Contributions

Tamirat Taye: Conceptualization, methodology, original draft preparation; writing—review and editing, visualization.

Gemechis Teshome: supervision. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Consent for Publication

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Data Availability Statement

The datasets used in this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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