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The Role of Extensive Reading in Developing EFL Learners' Reading Skills: Case of Municipal Lycée of Bwiza Third Year Post-Basic Students in Languages Section

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INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED PEDAGOGY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

**MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS
OF OTHER LANGUAGES (TESOL)**



**THE ROLE OF EXTENSIVE READING IN DEVELOPING EFL
LEARNERS' READING SKILLS: CASE OF MUNICIPAL LYCEE
OF BWIZA THIRD YEAR POST-BASIC STUDENTS IN
LANGUAGES SECTION**

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DEDICATION

To my parents who always stand by my side, for their understanding, loving patience, encouragement, and support,

To my brothers and sisters who are never tired of showing me love and attention,

To my relatives who always encourage me to keep going,

To all my friends who helped me in one way or another,

I warmly dedicate this work.

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Joel Irakoze

RESUME

La lecture, en tant que l'une des compétences linguistiques fondamentales de toute langue, revêt une grande importance et contribue de manière significative à l'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère (EFL), tout comme les autres compétences langagières. Parmi les différents types de lecture connus, il en existe un qui est particulièrement indispensable pour tout apprenant souhaitant atteindre un niveau élevé de maîtrise de l'anglais : il s'agit de la lecture extensive (Extensive Reading). L'objectif principal de la lecture extensive est d'accroître l'exposition des apprenants à la langue dans un contexte naturel et agréable, ce qui renforce leur motivation à apprendre. La lecture extensive s'est révélée très prometteuse pour le développement des compétences linguistiques des apprenants, notamment leurs compétences en lecture. L'objectif de cette étude était d'explorer le rôle de la lecture extensive dans le développement des compétences de lecture chez les élèves de troisième année de la section Langues du Lycée Municipal de Bwiza. L'étude a adopté une approche mixte, un devis de recherche parallèle convergent ainsi qu'un paradigme pragmatique. À l'aide de la technique d'échantillonnage aléatoire simple, un échantillon de 34 élèves de troisième année de la section Langues a été sélectionné. Les participants ont ensuite été répartis aléatoirement entre un groupe expérimental et un groupe témoin. Les élèves du groupe expérimental ont bénéficié de supports de lecture extensive pendant une période d'un mois. Afin d'évaluer les différences de performance avant et après l'intervention, un pré-test et un post-test ont été administrés aux participants. Un entretien a également été réalisé auprès des membres du groupe expérimental à l'issue du traitement. Les résultats des tests ont révélé que la lecture extensive a contribué à l'amélioration des compétences de lecture des apprenants EFL, en particulier la compréhension écrite et l'acquisition du vocabulaire. Le groupe expérimental (Moyenne = 42,50 ; Écart-type = 10,51) a obtenu des résultats supérieurs à ceux du groupe témoin (Moyenne = 34,29 ; Écart-type = 11,31), cette différence étant statistiquement significative avec une valeur de p égale à 0,036. Les résultats des entretiens ont également montré que les apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère manifestaient des attitudes positives à l'égard de l'utilisation des supports de lecture extensive. L'étude conclut que la lecture extensive constitue un outil particulièrement efficace pour le développement des compétences linguistiques des apprenants EFL, et plus spécifiquement de leurs compétences en lecture. Enfin, elle recommande l'intégration de programmes de lecture extensive dans les établissements scolaires à travers la création de bibliothèques, de clubs de lecture et d'autres environnements favorables à la lecture, afin d'encourager les apprenants à développer et à maintenir cette habitude bénéfique.

ABSTRACT

Reading, as one of the language skills of any language, is very important and it has much to contribute for EFL learners as the other skills do. Among the types of reading that are known, there is one which is really indispensable for any English language learner who wants to be proficient enough and that is Extensive Reading (ER). The fundamental goal of ER is to increase exposure to the language in a naturally enjoyable way and this motivates learners to learn. Extensive Reading has been found very promising in enhancing learners' language skills, including reading skills. The objective of this study was to explore the role of Extensive Reading in developing reading skills among 3rd year students in Languages Section of Municipal Lycée of Bwiza. The study employed a mixed method approach, a convergent parallel research design and pragmatic paradigm. Using Simple Random Sampling, the study's size was 34 learners of 3rd year of the Languages Section at Bwiza; and they were randomly assigned to either Experimental Group or Control Group. The participants in the experimental group were assigned extensive reading materials within a one month timespan. To check the differences of the participants' performance before and after the intervention, a pre-test and a post-test were employed. An interview was also run to the experimental group after the treatment. The results from the tests revealed that ER helped EFL learners in boosting their reading skills especially reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition as its aspects. The Experimental Group (Mean=42.5000, SD=10.50595) outstripped the Control Group (Mean=34.2941, SD=11.31241) in getting higher scores where the difference is statistically significant with the p-value of .036. The results obtained from the interview also indicated that the EFL learners had positive attitudes towards the use of extensive reading materials. The study concluded that ER is very powerful in developing EFL learners' language skills and more specifically reading skills. Finally, the study recommended the integration of ER programs in schools by setting up libraries, reading clubs and other more conducive environments for learners to read and cultivate this good habit in them.

CONDENSÉ DU MÉMOIRE EN FRANÇAIS

Introduction générale

L'anglais occupe aujourd'hui une place prépondérante dans le monde en tant que langue internationale de communication, d'éducation, de commerce, de diplomatie et de technologie. Sa maîtrise constitue un atout majeur pour les apprenants qui souhaitent accéder à l'enseignement supérieur, au marché de l'emploi et aux échanges internationaux. Dans de nombreux pays où l'anglais est enseigné comme langue étrangère, les systèmes éducatifs accordent une importance particulière au développement des compétences linguistiques nécessaires pour permettre aux apprenants d'utiliser efficacement cette langue.

Parmi les quatre compétences fondamentales de la langue, à savoir la compréhension orale, l'expression orale, la compréhension écrite et l'expression écrite, la lecture occupe une place centrale. Elle constitue non seulement un objectif d'apprentissage en soi, mais également un moyen de développer les autres compétences linguistiques. En effet, la lecture permet aux apprenants d'enrichir leur vocabulaire, de découvrir de nouvelles structures grammaticales, d'améliorer leur expression écrite et de renforcer leur compréhension globale de la langue. Pour de nombreux chercheurs, elle représente l'une des sources les plus importantes d'exposition à la langue cible.

Dans les contextes où l'anglais est appris comme langue étrangère, les possibilités d'exposition à la langue en dehors de la salle de classe sont souvent limitées. Les apprenants disposent rarement d'occasions de communiquer régulièrement en anglais dans leur environnement quotidien. Par conséquent, la lecture constitue un moyen privilégié d'augmenter le contact avec la langue et de favoriser son acquisition. Grâce à la lecture, les apprenants peuvent être exposés à une grande variété de mots, d'expressions et de contextes linguistiques qu'ils ne rencontrent pas toujours dans les activités traditionnelles de classe.

Parmi les différentes approches de lecture utilisées dans l'enseignement des langues, la lecture extensive (Extensive Reading) a suscité un intérêt croissant au cours des dernières décennies. Cette approche encourage les apprenants à lire une grande quantité de textes faciles et adaptés à leur niveau, principalement pour le plaisir, l'information et la compréhension générale. Elle se distingue de la lecture intensive, qui met davantage l'accent sur l'analyse détaillée du vocabulaire, de la grammaire et des structures textuelles. La lecture extensive vise plutôt à développer des habitudes de lecture régulières et à favoriser une exposition naturelle et continue à la langue cible.

La littérature existante montre que la lecture extensive contribue de manière significative au développement des compétences linguistiques. Plusieurs études ont démontré qu'elle favorise la compréhension écrite, l'acquisition du vocabulaire, la fluidité en lecture, l'autonomie de l'apprenant, la motivation à apprendre ainsi que la confiance en soi. Elle permet également aux apprenants de développer une attitude positive envers la lecture et de devenir progressivement des lecteurs plus compétents et plus indépendants.

Au Burundi, l'Anglais occupe une place importante dans le système éducatif, particulièrement depuis l'intégration du pays dans la Communauté Est-Africaine. Malgré les efforts entrepris pour améliorer l'enseignement de cette langue, de nombreux apprenants continuent de rencontrer des difficultés en compréhension écrite et en acquisition du vocabulaire. Ces difficultés peuvent limiter leur réussite scolaire et leur capacité à utiliser efficacement l'Anglais dans différents contextes académiques et professionnels.

Bien que la lecture extensive ait fait l'objet de nombreuses recherches dans différents pays, peu d'études expérimentales ont été menées dans le contexte burundais afin d'évaluer son efficacité auprès des apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère. C'est dans cette perspective que la présente étude a été réalisée. Elle vise à explorer le rôle de la lecture extensive dans le développement des compétences de lecture des élèves de troisième année de la section Langues au Lycée Municipal de Bwiza et à contribuer à l'amélioration de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage de l'anglais au Burundi.

Problématique et objectifs de l'étude

Malgré l'importance de la lecture dans l'apprentissage de l'Anglais, les élèves des écoles post-fondamentales au Burundi continuent d'éprouver des difficultés considérables en compréhension de textes, en acquisition du vocabulaire et en maîtrise générale de la langue anglaise.

Les résultats scolaires observés au Lycée Municipal de Bwiza ont révélé des performances relativement faibles en Anglais. Cette situation a conduit le chercheur à s'interroger sur les stratégies susceptibles d'améliorer les compétences de lecture des apprenants.

L'objectif général de l'étude était d'explorer le rôle de la lecture extensive dans le développement des compétences de lecture chez les apprenants de l'Anglais Langue Etrangère (EFL).

Plus spécifiquement, l'étude visait à :

- Identifier les types de textes les plus bénéfiques pour le développement des compétences de lecture ;
- Examiner les attitudes des apprenants envers la lecture extensive ;
- Évaluer l'impact de la lecture extensive sur les compétences de lecture.

Importance et justification de l'étude

Cette étude se justifie par les difficultés persistantes que rencontrent de nombreux apprenants burundais dans le développement de leurs compétences de lecture en Anglais langue étrangère. Malgré l'importance de la lecture dans l'apprentissage des langues, peu de recherches ont été consacrées à l'efficacité de la lecture extensive dans le contexte éducatif burundais. Il était donc nécessaire d'examiner dans quelle mesure cette approche peut contribuer à améliorer les performances des apprenants en compréhension écrite et en acquisition du vocabulaire.

L'importance de cette étude réside dans sa contribution à la fois théorique et pratique. Sur le plan académique, elle enrichit la littérature existante sur la lecture extensive en fournissant des données empiriques issues du contexte burundais. Sur le plan pédagogique, ses résultats offrent aux enseignants, aux concepteurs des programmes et aux décideurs éducatifs des informations utiles pour promouvoir des stratégies d'enseignement favorisant le développement des compétences de lecture. En outre, l'étude met en évidence la nécessité de créer des environnements favorables à la lecture, notamment à travers les bibliothèques scolaires, les clubs de lecture et l'accès à des ressources adaptées aux besoins des apprenants.

Cette recherche contribue ainsi à la réflexion sur l'amélioration de l'enseignement de l'anglais au Burundi et sur le développement d'une culture durable de la lecture chez les apprenants.

Cadre théorique et revue de la littérature

Cette recherche s'appuie principalement sur l'Hypothèse de l'Input de Stephen Krashen (1982). Selon cette théorie, l'acquisition d'une langue se produit lorsque les apprenants sont exposés à des messages compréhensibles légèrement supérieurs à leur niveau actuel de compétence.

La lecture extensive constitue un moyen efficace de fournir cet input compréhensible. En lisant régulièrement des textes adaptés à leur niveau, les apprenants développent progressivement leurs compétences linguistiques sans se focaliser exclusivement sur l'analyse grammaticale.

La littérature consultée montre que la lecture extensive contribue de manière significative au développement des compétences linguistiques des apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère. Tout d'abord, elle favorise le développement de la compréhension écrite en exposant les apprenants à une grande variété de textes authentiques et adaptés à leur niveau. Grâce à une pratique régulière de la lecture, les apprenants développent leur capacité à identifier les idées principales, à comprendre les détails importants et à interpréter le sens global des textes. Cette exposition répétée renforce progressivement leurs stratégies de compréhension et leur permet de lire avec plus d'efficacité.

Par ailleurs, la lecture extensive joue un rôle important dans l'enrichissement du vocabulaire. En effet, elle offre aux apprenants de nombreuses occasions de rencontrer de nouveaux mots dans des contextes variés. Cette exposition répétée facilite l'acquisition naturelle du vocabulaire et favorise une meilleure compréhension du sens et de l'utilisation des mots. Au fil du temps, les apprenants développent ainsi un répertoire lexical plus riche qui contribue à améliorer leurs performances dans les différentes compétences linguistiques.

En outre, la lecture extensive favorise l'amélioration de la fluidité en lecture. En lisant régulièrement des textes adaptés à leur niveau, les apprenants deviennent plus rapides et plus à l'aise dans leur lecture. Ils consacrent progressivement moins d'efforts au décodage des mots et davantage à la compréhension du message. Cette automatisation du processus de lecture leur permet de lire avec davantage de confiance et d'efficacité.

De plus, cette approche contribue au développement de l'autonomie des apprenants. La possibilité de choisir librement des textes correspondant à leurs intérêts et à leurs besoins les encourage à prendre en charge leur propre apprentissage. Par conséquent, ils développent des habitudes de lecture en dehors de la salle de classe et deviennent des acteurs plus actifs de leur formation linguistique.

La lecture extensive exerce également une influence positive sur la motivation des apprenants. Le fait de lire des textes intéressants, accessibles et librement choisis rend l'activité de lecture plus agréable et plus engageante. Ainsi, les apprenants développent une attitude positive envers la lecture et manifestent un intérêt accru pour l'apprentissage de l'anglais.

Enfin, la lecture extensive contribue au renforcement de la confiance en soi. À mesure que les apprenants constatent leurs progrès en compréhension écrite et en acquisition du vocabulaire, ils gagnent en assurance dans leurs capacités linguistiques. Les réussites répétées lors de la lecture de textes adaptés réduisent l'anxiété liée à l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère et renforcent leur sentiment de compétence. Cette confiance accrue les encourage à s'engager davantage dans les activités de lecture et dans l'apprentissage de l'anglais en général.

Dans l'ensemble, les études menées dans différents pays concluent que les apprenants participant à des programmes de lecture extensive obtiennent généralement de meilleurs résultats que ceux qui suivent uniquement des approches traditionnelles de lecture intensive. Ces résultats témoignent de l'efficacité de la lecture extensive comme stratégie pédagogique favorisant le développement global des compétences linguistiques.

Méthodologie de recherche

Cette étude a adopté une approche méthodologique mixte combinant les méthodes quantitatives et qualitatives afin de mieux comprendre le rôle de la lecture extensive dans le développement des compétences de lecture des apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère. Le choix de cette approche repose sur sa capacité à fournir à la fois des données statistiques mesurables et des informations descriptives approfondies sur les perceptions et les expériences des apprenants.

L'étude s'inscrit dans le paradigme pragmatique et utilise un devis de recherche parallèle convergent. Cette conception a permis de recueillir simultanément des données quantitatives et qualitatives, puis de les analyser séparément avant de les comparer et de les intégrer pour une meilleure interprétation des résultats.

La recherche a été menée au Lycée Municipal de Bwiza auprès de trente-quatre élèves de troisième année de la section Langues. Les participants ont été sélectionnés à l'aide de la technique d'échantillonnage aléatoire simple afin de garantir à chaque élève une chance égale d'être retenu dans l'étude. Après leur sélection, les élèves ont été répartis aléatoirement en deux groupes : un groupe expérimental composé de dix-sept apprenants et un groupe témoin comprenant également dix-sept apprenants.

Pendant une période d'un mois, les apprenants du groupe expérimental ont participé à un programme de lecture extensive basé sur divers supports de lecture adaptés à leur niveau linguistique et à leurs centres d'intérêt. Le groupe témoin, quant à lui, a poursuivi les activités pédagogiques habituelles sans bénéficier de ce programme.

Afin d'évaluer l'impact de l'intervention, un pré-test a été administré aux deux groupes avant le début du programme afin de mesurer leur niveau initial en compréhension écrite et en vocabulaire. À la fin de l'intervention, un post-test a été administré pour mesurer les progrès réalisés. En complément, des entretiens semi-structurés ont été menés auprès des apprenants du groupe expérimental afin de recueillir leurs perceptions concernant l'expérience de lecture extensive.

Les données quantitatives ont été analysées à l'aide du logiciel SPSS, tandis que les données qualitatives ont fait l'objet d'une analyse thématique permettant d'identifier les principales tendances exprimées par les participants.

Résultats obtenus

Cette section présente les principaux résultats obtenus à l'issue de l'étude menée auprès des élèves de troisième année de la section Langues du Lycée Municipal de Bwiza. Les données recueillies à travers les pré-tests, les post-tests et les entretiens ont permis de répondre aux questions de recherche et d'atteindre les objectifs fixés au début de l'étude.

Les résultats sont organisés en fonction des trois objectifs spécifiques de la recherche. Il s'agit, premièrement, d'identifier les types de textes les plus bénéfiques pour le développement des compétences de lecture des apprenants. Deuxièmement, l'étude examine les attitudes des apprenants envers la lecture extensive afin de comprendre leurs perceptions et leur niveau d'appréciation de cette approche. Enfin, les résultats évaluent l'impact de la lecture extensive sur les compétences de lecture, notamment en ce qui concerne la compréhension écrite et l'acquisition du vocabulaire.

L'analyse des données quantitatives et qualitatives permet ainsi de mettre en évidence les effets de la lecture extensive sur l'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère et d'apprécier sa contribution au développement des compétences de lecture des apprenants.

a. Résultats relatifs aux types de textes les plus bénéfiques

L'étude a également cherché à identifier les types de textes que les apprenants considèrent comme les plus utiles dans le cadre de la lecture extensive. Les résultats montrent que les nouvelles courtes occupent la première place parmi les préférences des apprenants. La majorité d'entre eux ont indiqué que ces textes étaient plus faciles à comprendre, plus attrayants et mieux adaptés à leur niveau de compétence linguistique.

Les poèmes ont été classés en deuxième position. Les apprenants ont particulièrement apprécié leur caractère créatif, leur brièveté ainsi que leur contribution à l'amélioration de la prononciation et de la sensibilité linguistique. Les extraits de romans ont également été jugés utiles, notamment pour leur richesse narrative et culturelle, même si certains élèves les ont trouvés plus exigeants en raison de leur longueur et de la complexité du vocabulaire utilisé.

Ces résultats montrent que le choix des supports de lecture joue un rôle essentiel dans la réussite des programmes de lecture extensive. Les textes doivent être adaptés au niveau des apprenants tout en étant suffisamment intéressants pour maintenir leur engagement.

b. Résultats relatifs aux attitudes des apprenants envers la lecture extensive

Les données qualitatives recueillies lors des entretiens révèlent que les apprenants ont développé des attitudes très favorables envers la lecture extensive. La plupart des participants ont déclaré avoir pris davantage de plaisir à lire en anglais après avoir participé au programme.

Plusieurs élèves ont affirmé que la lecture extensive leur avait permis de découvrir de nouveaux mots, d'améliorer leur compréhension des textes et de développer leur intérêt pour la lecture en général. Ils ont également souligné que le fait de pouvoir lire des textes variés et adaptés à leurs centres d'intérêt rendait l'apprentissage plus agréable et moins contraignant.

Les entretiens montrent également que les apprenants se sentent plus motivés à lire en dehors des heures de cours. Cette motivation accrue constitue un élément important puisqu'elle favorise l'apprentissage autonome et l'exposition continue à la langue cible. De nombreux participants ont exprimé le souhait de poursuivre cette pratique même après la fin de l'étude.

c. Résultats relatifs à l'impact de la lecture extensive sur les compétences de lecture

L'analyse des résultats des pré-tests a montré que les deux groupes présentaient des niveaux relativement comparables avant l'intervention. Cette situation permettait de garantir que les éventuelles différences observées après le traitement seraient principalement attribuables au programme de lecture extensive.

Les résultats du post-test ont révélé une amélioration significative des performances du groupe expérimental. Les apprenants ayant participé au programme de lecture extensive ont obtenu des scores plus élevés que ceux du groupe témoin, notamment dans les domaines de la compréhension écrite et de l'acquisition du vocabulaire.

La moyenne obtenue par le groupe expérimental était de 42,50 contre 34,29 pour le groupe témoin. Cette différence s'est révélée statistiquement significative ($p = 0,036$), ce qui confirme l'efficacité de la lecture extensive dans le développement des compétences de lecture.

Les résultats des entretiens viennent renforcer ces conclusions quantitatives. Plusieurs apprenants ont indiqué qu'ils comprenaient plus facilement les textes, lisaient plus rapidement et reconnaissaient davantage de mots après avoir participé au programme. Ces observations démontrent que la lecture extensive contribue non seulement à améliorer les performances académiques, mais également à renforcer les compétences linguistiques générales des apprenants.

Discussion des résultats

Les résultats obtenus dans cette étude sont cohérents avec ceux de nombreuses recherches antérieures menées dans différents contextes d'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère. Ils confirment notamment les principes de l'Hypothèse de l'Input de Krashen selon laquelle l'acquisition d'une langue est favorisée par une exposition régulière à des messages compréhensibles.

L'amélioration observée dans la compréhension écrite et l'acquisition du vocabulaire peut être expliquée par l'exposition répétée des apprenants à des textes variés et adaptés à leur niveau. Cette exposition leur a permis de rencontrer fréquemment de nouveaux mots et de développer progressivement leurs capacités de compréhension.

Les attitudes positives exprimées par les apprenants rejoignent également les conclusions de plusieurs études internationales qui soulignent l'impact de la lecture extensive sur la motivation, la confiance en soi et l'autonomie des apprenants. Ainsi, les résultats obtenus démontrent que la lecture extensive constitue une stratégie pédagogique efficace pouvant être intégrée dans l'enseignement de l'anglais au Burundi.

Conclusion générale

Cette étude avait pour objectif principal d'examiner le rôle de la lecture extensive dans le développement des compétences de lecture chez les apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère du Lycée Municipal de Bwiza. Les résultats obtenus montrent clairement que la lecture extensive favorise l'amélioration de la compréhension écrite, l'acquisition du vocabulaire ainsi que le développement d'attitudes positives envers la lecture.

L'étude a également révélé que les apprenants apprécient particulièrement les nouvelles courtes, les poèmes et les extraits de romans comme supports de lecture. De plus, les participants ont manifesté un niveau élevé de motivation, de confiance en soi et d'intérêt pour la lecture après avoir participé au programme.

Par conséquent, la lecture extensive apparaît comme une approche pédagogique efficace susceptible de contribuer à l'amélioration de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage de l'anglais dans le contexte burundais.

Recommandations

À la lumière des résultats obtenus, plusieurs recommandations peuvent être formulées.

Au Ministère de l'Éducation, il est recommandé de promouvoir davantage les programmes de lecture extensive dans les établissements scolaires et de soutenir la création de bibliothèques scolaires suffisamment équipées en matériels de lecture adaptés aux différents niveaux des apprenants.

Aux concepteurs des programmes scolaires, il est suggéré d'intégrer explicitement la lecture extensive dans les curricula d'anglais et de prévoir des périodes régulières consacrées à la lecture autonome.

Aux chefs d'établissements scolaires, il est recommandé de mettre en place des clubs de lecture, des concours de lecture et d'autres activités susceptibles d'encourager les apprenants à développer des habitudes de lecture durables.

Enfin, aux enseignants d'Anglais, il est conseillé d'encourager les apprenants à lire régulièrement en dehors de la salle de classe, de leur proposer des textes variés et adaptés à leurs intérêts, et de créer un environnement favorable à la lecture. De telles initiatives contribueraient non seulement à améliorer les compétences linguistiques des apprenants, mais aussi à développer leur autonomie et leur motivation pour l'apprentissage de l'anglais.

Implications pédagogiques de l'étude

Les résultats de cette étude mettent en évidence l'importance de la lecture extensive comme stratégie pédagogique efficace dans l'enseignement de l'anglais langue étrangère. L'amélioration significative des performances des apprenants du groupe expérimental suggère que les enseignants devraient intégrer davantage d'activités de lecture extensive dans leurs pratiques pédagogiques. Au lieu de se limiter exclusivement à la lecture intensive des manuels scolaires, ils gagneraient à offrir aux apprenants des occasions régulières de lire des textes variés, adaptés à leur niveau et à leurs centres d'intérêt.

Par ailleurs, les résultats montrent que les nouvelles courtes, les poèmes et les extraits de romans constituent des supports de lecture particulièrement appréciés par les apprenants. Cette observation souligne l'importance du choix des matériels pédagogiques. Les enseignants sont ainsi encouragés à diversifier les ressources de lecture afin de répondre aux besoins, aux intérêts et aux niveaux de compétence de leurs élèves. Une telle diversification peut contribuer à rendre l'apprentissage plus attractif et plus significatif.

L'étude révèle également que la lecture extensive favorise l'autonomie des apprenants. Cette constatation invite les enseignants à adopter des approches centrées sur l'apprenant en lui accordant davantage de liberté dans le choix de ses lectures. En encourageant les élèves à lire en dehors des heures de cours, les enseignants peuvent contribuer au développement de l'apprentissage autonome et à l'acquisition d'habitudes de lecture durables.

De plus, les attitudes positives exprimées par les apprenants montrent que la lecture extensive constitue un moyen efficace de renforcer leur motivation et leur confiance en soi. Les enseignants devraient donc créer un environnement favorable à la lecture en mettant en place des activités telles que les clubs de lecture, les discussions autour des livres, les présentations de lectures ou encore les défis de lecture. Ces initiatives peuvent stimuler l'intérêt des apprenants pour la langue anglaise et renforcer leur engagement dans le processus d'apprentissage.

Enfin, les résultats de cette recherche soulignent la nécessité pour les établissements scolaires et les responsables éducatifs de soutenir la mise en œuvre de programmes de lecture extensive. Cela implique notamment l'amélioration de l'accès aux ressources de lecture, la création ou le renforcement des bibliothèques scolaires, ainsi que la mise à disposition de matériels adaptés aux différents niveaux des apprenants. Une telle démarche contribuerait à améliorer les compétences linguistiques des élèves et à promouvoir une véritable culture de la lecture dans les écoles burundaises.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

IAP	: Institute for Applied Pedagogy
EFL	: English as a Foreign Language
ER	: Extensive Reading
IR	: Intensive Reading
UB	: University of Burundi
ENS	: Ecole Normale Supérieure (Higher Teacher Training College)
SRS	: Simple Random Sampling
SPSS	: Statistical Package for Social Sciences
ESL	: English as a Second Language
SIR	: Sustained Independent Reading
FVR	: Free Voluntary Reading
R	: Respondent
ERP	: Extensive Reading Project
ANCOVA	: Analysis of Covariance
USSR	: Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading
KKU	: King Khalid University

PREFACE

This dissertation is the result of a research project conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Master's Degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The study investigates the role of Extensive Reading in developing reading skills among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, with a particular focus on third-year students in the Languages Section of Municipal Lycée of Bwiza.

The choice of this topic was motivated by the observation that many EFL learners experience difficulties in reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and overall language proficiency. Since reading is a fundamental skill that supports the development of other language skills, it is important to identify effective pedagogical approaches that can help learners improve their reading abilities. Extensive Reading has been widely recognized as a valuable strategy for increasing learners' exposure to the target language while promoting reading for pleasure and independent learning.

This study was undertaken with the aim of examining the effectiveness of Extensive Reading in enhancing learners' reading skills within the Burundian educational context. It also sought to explore learners' attitudes toward Extensive Reading and identify the types of reading materials that best support their learning.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on language teaching and learning and provide useful insights for teachers, curriculum developers, educational administrators, and policymakers. Furthermore, the study may encourage schools to promote reading culture through the establishment of libraries, reading clubs, and other learner-friendly environments that foster regular reading habits.

This condensed version presents the main aspects of the research, including the background of the study, methodology, key findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This section starts by giving the background to the study which is followed by the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study and the research objectives. The research objectives are immediately followed by the research questions and hypotheses. The next points concern the significance of the study, its justification, scope and delimitation. Additionally, this section deals with both theoretical framework and conceptual framework and then closes with defining operational definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Reading is one the four language skills that are commonly known as the foundation of any language learning all over the world. Taking into account the role they fulfil in the learning process, these skills must be thoroughly explored so as to extract their power to the fullest.

The reading skill, as one of the four language skills, has been found very imperative in English as a Foreign Language. Its compulsoriness lies in the fact that without reading, one can never assume to be proficient in EFL or ESL contexts. In their book exploring the language skills, Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) affirmed that many language teachers assume that teaching and learning a foreign or second language depends on reading skills. This is to highlight how important and necessary the reading skill is.

In fact, the reading skill is critically important for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, as it significantly impacts language acquisition, academic success and overall communication competence. As Mahmood (2014) notes, learners who engage in continuous and effective reading develop stronger literacy, accumulate richer learning experiences, and perform better academically. In other words, reading does not only affect reading proficiency but also all other spheres of academic achievement. Certainly, no academic success is possible in the absence of reading.

For EFL learners, developing strong reading skills is particularly crucial because reading provides access to an immense amount of knowledge, facilitates vocabulary acquisition and supports the development of other language skills such as writing, speaking and listening (Lindawati, 2022).

In the study conducted by Nzirarusha (2018) in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Burundi, the findings revealed that reading can enhance speaking fluency. This implies that not only does reading boost reading skills, but also enhances other language skills.

In spite of the fact that the reading skill is highly recognized as indispensable, a considerable number of EFL learners find it burdensome to achieve high levels of reading proficiency, more often due to limited exposure to authentic English texts and insufficient practice of reading outside the classroom.

As an illustration, many years ago, even today in some contexts, reading was taught by focusing on intensive reading which involves a close and detailed analysis of texts. This model of teaching or this approach of reading instruction has got a lot of limitations in terms of what students finally achieve after such instruction (Mahmood, 2022).

The focus on linguistic analysis can to some extent lead to a fragmented approach to language learning, leaving learners less confident in their ability to read fluently and enjoyably in real-world contexts. Simply put, intensive reading did not show its potential to transform learners into good communicators in the language. Therefore, on its own, intensive reading is not fully suitable and consequently it is ideal to be supplemented in one way or another.

Among approaches to strengthen reading, ER characterized by reading large amounts of text for pleasure and general comprehension, has been shown to have a positive effect on language development, including vocabulary acquisition, fluency, and reading comprehension and many other aspects (Hafiz&Tudor,1989; Miriam et al., 2003; Mahmood, 2022). Ellis (2008) equates Extensive Reading with implicit learning which is a process of acquiring knowledge without knowing it or to some extent unconsciously.

From the same lens, the way ER is naturally conceptualized, it makes it effective for learners to keep improving in their learning process. Ideally, because ER is self-motivated rather than externally imposed, it often leads to greater satisfaction and sustained engagement.

Furthermore, ER is really an alternative approach that has garnered increasing attention in both research and language teaching. In this approach, Carrel and Eisterhold (1983: 567) state “Students select their own reading texts with respect to content, level of difficulty, and length”. From this, we understand that students are free to choose materials that fit their level and explore them at their pace without any single pressure of detailed linguistic analysis as it is done for Intensive Reading.

It is worth recalling that the fundamental goal of Extensive Reading is to increment exposure to the language in a naturally enjoyable way. This approach is often seen as a means of encouraging students to read more in the target language (English here) and fostering a lifelong habit of reading. Aebersold and Field (1997:234) put it in another way: “An extensive approach to teaching reading is based on the belief that when students read for general comprehension large quantities of text of their own choosing, their ability to read will consequently improve”. However, while there is common evidence backing up the benefits of extensive reading, its specific role in improving reading skills in EFL contexts like Burundi requires further exploration.

Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) state that teachers find themselves underequipped to help their students develop their reading skills when students need instructional intervention. To put it differently, we may not recognize the complexity of reading because, as proficient readers, we often take reading ability for granted, assuming that reading processes are automatic. Departing from this statement, the researcher at hand realized that there is a gap that needs to be filled by conducting further research in EFL contexts in general and the context of Burundi in particular.

This study seeks to investigate the impact of ER on the development of reading skills in EFL learners. By understanding how extensive reading practices affect reading fluency, vocabulary acquisition, comprehension skills and many other aspects, the research provides insights into how EFL educators could incorporate extensive reading into their daily teaching practices to improve learner outcomes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Reading is recognized as an important skill for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), serving as a gateway to the development of other essential language competencies such as writing, vocabulary growth, and overall language proficiency.

Ideally, learners should be able to tackle readings they meet in their school settings; showing competence in the target language. Nevertheless, the reality in Burundi is far from what we would expect. At the Post-Basic School level, particularly in the Languages Section, students frequently encounter persistent challenges caused by poor reading skills (challenges in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and general reading proficiency). Observations in this context reveal that many learners struggle with low reading performance, a lack of confidence

in handling extended texts, and limited exposure to meaningful reading practices (Nzirarusha, 2018).

Additionally, the researcher himself realized the same problems where he had been teaching as a volunteer at Bwiza Municipal Lycée. These difficulties do not only impede learners' academic progress but also have a direct negative impact on their success in English if we consider for example how they score in either local or national exams. More specifically, official results indicated that out of 26 learners who sat for the examination, only 8 scored at 50% in English course. This reflects a very low success rate in the English course, particularly in skills related to reading comprehension and language use. Moreover, the school was ranked 585th nationwide with an overall success rate of 2.33%, (Report from the Ministry of Education 2024-2025).

To address this problem, the present study investigates the potential of extensive reading (ER) as a strategy for enhancing reading skills among Burundian EFL learners. Extensive reading, as described by Krashen (2004), is an approach that encourages learners to read large quantities of engaging and level-appropriate texts, often for enjoyment rather than for explicit instruction. This method has been linked to improvements in vocabulary acquisition, reading fluency, and overall language competence.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to investigate the role of ER in developing the reading skills of students at the post-basic level in the context of Burundi.

1.4 Research Objectives

General Objective

The main objective of this study was to explore the role of ER in developing reading skills among EFL learners in Burundi.

Specific Objectives

More specifically, the study intended:

1. To identify the types of reading materials that are most beneficial for enhancing reading skills.
2. To explore 3rd year post-basic students' attitudes towards Extensive Reading among EFL learners in Burundi.
3. To examine the impact of extensive reading on 3rd year students in Languages Section.

1.5. Research Questions

This research on the Role of Extensive Reading in Developing EFL Learners' Reading Skills sought to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What types of texts are most effective in promoting reading skills among EFL learners in Burundi?
2. What are the attitudes of 3rd year students in Languages Section towards Extensive Reading?
3. To what extent does extensive reading impact the reading skills of 3rd year students in Languages Section?

1.6 Hypotheses

1. There would be significant difference in the reading skills improvement between students who engaged in Extensive Reading of texts that match their level and those who did not.
2. Students would have positive attitudes towards Extensive Reading.
3. Extensive Reading would have positive impact on the reading skills of Post-basic students in Languages Section.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Conducting a research on the role of Extensive Reading in developing EFL Learners' Reading Skills helped gain more insights into how the overall academic success of students can be enhanced. In the context of Burundi, more specifically in Languages Section, this study informs both students and teachers on the benefits of Extensive Reading, the most effective materials to use in enhancing and fostering such a reading habit in students, and also get to know students' attitudes towards Extensive Reading. In detail, students from the Languages Section got to discover their potential in handling different reading materials and interact with them without any external pressure as it is the case when reading intensively.

Students apparently enjoyed the free choice of materials to read and develop the sense of autonomy in the whole learning process. This research also contributed to the growing body of literature on Extensive Reading in the EFL context of Burundi considering that there was scarcity of such studies. It also provided practical insights for all concerned stakeholders in the education sphere such as students, teachers and curriculum planners.

1.8 Justification of the Study

Among the four language skills that are taught to learners, the reading skill is the key that opens the development of the other three remaining skills. From the researcher's one year experience as a teacher of English and a hundred conversations with other teachers and classmates, he realized that students in Post-basic schools, specifically in Languages Section, had a little level of reading ability. In addition, it is not uncommon to hear, either in Post-basic schools or different universities including the University of Burundi (UB), Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) and so forth complain about the level of the learners in the language. Bearing all the above in mind, an idea came to my mind and it was like a question: What can be done to develop the reading skills of Post-basic school learners? This was then what motivated the researcher to embark on this journey to discovering how effective Extensive Reading can be in developing reading skills.

1.9 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

Since the study could not include all the students of Post-Basic Schools in Bujumbura Municipality, the researcher needed to set some conditions of eligibility. This study concerned the Municipality of Bujumbura and more particularly students of Municipal Lycée of Bwiza only enrolled for the school year 2025-2026 in 3rd year of the Languages Section. The study was not concerned with other English Language skills other than the reading skill although they appeared somewhere in the work when making comparisons. As far as the school selection is concerned, Municipal Lycée of Bwiza (Lycée Municipal Bwiza) was selected because it is one of the schools which have unsatisfactory rate of success during the national test done by 3rd year post-basic students in the school year 2024; it occupied the 585th place with a success rate of 2.33%.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

This study drew upon Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis. This theory suggests that language learners acquire language most effectively when they are exposed to comprehensible input slightly above their current level of proficiency. Krashen (1982) discusses the Input Hypothesis Theory focusing on the context in understanding the language system that learners have not known. According to Krashen (2004), the causal factor in the acquisition of an L2 is the input that the learner receives from his surrounding environment, whether classroom or natural setting, given that the input is comprehensible.

From the same perspective of Krashen's hypothesis, Syofia Delfi and Hamidah Yamat (2017) opine that this Input Hypothesis indicates that we acquire by "going for meaning" first, and as a result, we acquire structure. They argue that learners are expected to use more than the linguistic competence to help them understand language, especially in understanding the language aspects that they have not known yet. The terms used by different scholars to support the theory demonstrate how indispensable the comprehensible input is when it comes to learning a foreign language like English.

Krashen classifies the Hypothesis into three parts: (1) the Input Hypothesis Theory relates to acquisition; (2) We acquire by understanding language that contains structure beyond our current level of competence $i + 1$. The formula $(i + 1)$ can be understood as follows: the i stands for the current level of knowledge that the reader has and $+1$ denotes slightly more advanced language that can be understood with the help of the context or extra-linguistic information and finally (3) communication is successful when the input is understood and there is enough of it, " $i + 1$ " will be provided automatically.

In the way of supplementing Krashen's theory, Rezaee (2011) opines that the most powerful and economical pathway of providing the comprehensible input proposed by Krashen is Extensive Reading, especially in a foreign or second language context where learners usually do not have enough access to authentic spoken input assumed necessary for the progression of L2 competence forward.

Krashen (1985) points out that second languages are acquired by receiving comprehensible input; language that is heard/ read and that is slightly ahead of a learners' grammatical knowledge. Krashen emphasizes the importance of natural communication and meaningful engagement with the target language, arguing that exposure to sufficient input in context leads to successful learning.

This theory was helpful in making us understand how Post-basic learners in Languages Section can benefit from Extensive Reading in boosting their reading skills. From the lens of this hypothesis, a conceptual framework was drawn. To this end, the researcher needed to look at the variables in the study.

First of all, we have independent variables. According to Ary et al. (2019), an independent variable is the variable which is manipulated in experimental research, it is the one that drives change over the dependent variable. The independent variables that are dealt with in this

research are mainly Extensive Reading and the types of materials used like short-stories, poems and novels' excerpts.

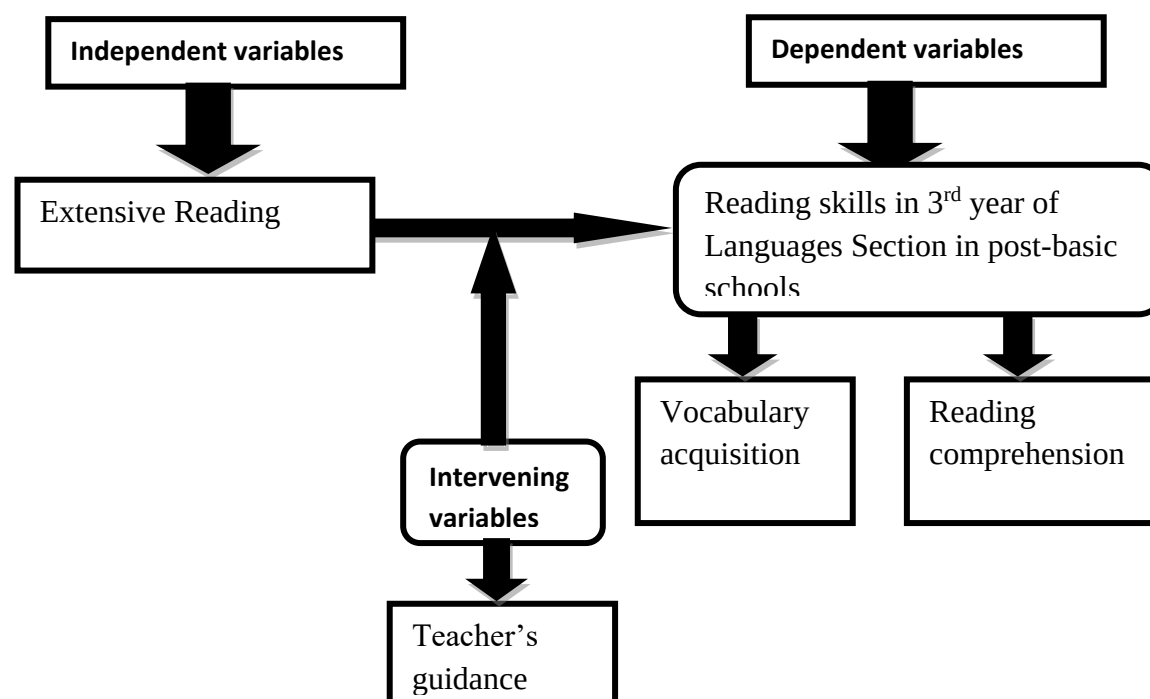
On the other hand, dependent variables are also explored in this study as opposed to independent ones. According to Creswell (2014), dependent variables are those that depend on the independent variables; they are also the outcomes or results of the influence of the independent variables. Creswell also calls them criterion, outcome, effect, and response variables. As far as the dependent variables are concerned in this study, there was first of all Reading skills with aspects such as vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension skills.

Apart from independent and dependent variables, there were also intervening variables which are the ones that might affect or influence the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Mediating variables stand between the independent and dependent variables, and they mediate the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Creswell, 2014). In this study, there was only one intervening variable and that is teacher's guidance.

Combining all the above-mentioned information, the researcher came up with the following conceptual framework.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

The figure below is a visual representation showing the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent ones.



From the above conceptual framework, the relationship between variables is clearly observable. Therefore, it is no longer difficult to understand how these variables are engaged in the reading skills and its specific aspects (vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension skills) as dependent variables.

The only one independent variable dealt with in this study was Extensive Reading. This variable has an influence on the reading skills. It is also highlighted in the literature that there may exist mediating or intervening variables. In the study at hand, the intervening variable was teacher's guidance.

1.12 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Since some terms might have different meanings depending on their context of use, it was of paramount importance to define some key terms in the light of the study in question. Here are some key terms:

► **Extensive Reading:** According to Aebersold and Field (1997), it is a type of reading in which the reader is free to choose what to read which matches their level and then read it at their own pace without being compelled by the teacher.

► **Intensive Reading:** Unlike Extensive Reading in which learners are free to choose materials to deal with, Intensive Reading, according to Bamford and Day (2002), is a type of reading which is done in classroom and monitored by the teacher and everything is assigned; no free choice. Nearly always, it is followed by a set of questions that learners must answer after reading.

► **Reading Skills:** From Hudson's point of view (2007), these are the skills that help the reader to decode and then interpret the message which is written in a given piece of writing. Such skills may include vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension skills, grammatical knowledge development, critical thinking skills and overall reading fluency, among others.

► **EFL Learners:** These are learners who learn English as a Foreign Language, not as their mother tongue.

► **Post-Basic School:** In the educational system of Burundi, Post-Basic School is like secondary school and it comes immediately after the basic school which begins from first grade up to grade nine. Post-Basic School lasts three or four years depending on the section. In Languages Section, which is our concern here, it lasts three years (Law N01/19 of September 10, 2013, Article 35; The World Bank Burundi: Early Grade Learning Project P161600, 2018).

1.13 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provides a comprehensive introduction to the study by outlining several essential components. It begins with the background to the study, which sets the context and highlights the relevance of the research topic. This is followed by the statement of the problem, clearly identifying the issue the study seeks to address. The chapter then presents the purpose of the study, research objectives, and corresponding research questions that guide the investigation. In addition, it outlines the hypotheses to be tested and their respective null hypotheses. The chapter also includes the justification for conducting the research, explaining its relevance and importance. Furthermore, it defines the scope and delimitation of the study to clarify its boundaries. The significance of the study is discussed to highlight its expected contributions. Finally, the chapter presents both the theoretical and conceptual framework and provides operational definitions of key terms used throughout the research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

For decades, literature on Extensive Reading has demonstrated its power to enhance and develop reading proficiency among EFL Learners from all over the world. Extensive Reading highlights the capacity of boosting learners' language proficiency in general and reading skills in particular and it does so in a non-stressful and enjoyable way. A number of studies suggest that Extensive Reading intervenes in enhancing vocabulary acquisition, reading fluency, comprehension skills, grammar and many more that will be explored later (Hedgcock & Ferris, 2009 ; Day & Bamford, 2002). The review of this literature is articulated on some themes so as to show precisely this relationship between Extensive Reading and Reading Skills. The themes included assembling views of different researchers on defining Reading in general and Extensive Reading, its role in enhancing language proficiency and more specifically reading skills, students' attitudes towards Extensive Reading and the most effective materials to use in an Extensive Reading program.

2.1 The Reading Skill

As a starting point, the review of this literature commenced by probing the reading itself before adding the word Extensive which is another ingredient to the skill of reading. Reading has been viewed mainly as an interactive process between the reader and the text. In fact, the reader interacts dynamically with the text in order to elicit meaning. In other words, it is the skill of word recognition, phonemic decoding, and text comprehension. Meaning is constructed through a process which includes productive interactions involving the reader's background knowledge, the information in the text, and the reading situation context (Mahmood, 2022). According to the same scholar, it is the process of creating meaning through the dynamic interaction between the reader's existing knowledge, the text information, the author, and the context of the reading situation.

As we can see from the discussion, reading is a complex skill and the nature of its complexity lies in the fact that it includes the correlations of language elements with meaning. Although it was not the main intention of this research, the researcher found it helpful to say something on processes involved in this complex skill.

The most known reading comprehension processes are top-down processing and bottom-up processing. Depending on the level of proficiency, a language learner usually uses either top-down processing or bottom-up processing or just uses both to get meaning out of what s/he is reading. Celce-Murcia & Olshtain (2005) as cited in Rezaee (2011:1168) argue that in top-down processing “contextual factors such as socio-cultural knowledge and task assessment” are employed for interpreting discourse, whereas “bottom-up processing is the productive or interpretive choices one makes regarding words, phrases, and sentence structures comprising the discourse of the task”. In accordance with the cited source, Rezaee (2011) affirms that top-down processing is in on-mode when the reader tries to call for his/her world knowledge for comprehending what s/he is reading; whereas, bottom-up processing occurs when the reader restricts himself solely to the text. Speaking from experience, in many cases readers, particularly experienced ones utilize both processing models to get as much as they can from a text at hand.

Hedgcock & Ferris (2009) developed the same models but employed different terminologies. In their point of view, learners are of two styles when it comes to processing information. They are either analytical or global. The scholars in question give the following explanation. Learners who focus carefully on details and who move precisely and systematically through the learning process are referred to as analytical learners, whereas those who process information in a more holistic way, often getting the gist of the input without necessarily paying much attention to specific details are referred to as global learners. From the above explanations, we can undoubtedly match analytical to bottom-up and global to top-down respectively.

Despite the fact that the reading skill is naturally complex, it is irreplaceable in the EFL/ESL contexts since there is no way you can be competent enough in the target language without reading. Reinforcing the importance of reading, we can come back to what Fatimah and Vishalache (2006) realized. In their opinion, reading acts as a bridge to proficiency.

In other words, the same way the bridge is essential to passengers when crossing the river, so is reading to language proficiency. As a matter of fact, it is very necessary to build up the discussion from the basics so as to maintain the smooth understanding.

In the same way of showing the role of reading in developing learners' language proficiency in general and reading skills in particular, some local studies (studies in the context of Burundi) are reviewed. Several studies conducted in Burundi have highlighted the importance of reading skills in improving learners' academic performance and English language

proficiency. According to Ndikubwayezu (2009), proficient and adaptive readers are more likely to achieve academically and in other areas, which validates the idea that reading is essential to educational success.

Similarly, Niyongabire et al. (2025) state that reading, as a fundamental activity in any learning process, is a cornerstone of education. They further explain that reading not only enables the acquisition of new knowledge, but also develops essential cognitive skills such as comprehension, analysis, and critical thinking. In the same perspective, Nkurunziza (2017) argues that the quality of English is likely to improve if reading skills receive the attention they deserve. He further emphasizes that if progress is to be made in teaching English, priority should be given to improving the teaching of reading skills in English.

Furthermore, some researchers have focused on the role of reading materials in enhancing learners' performance. For instance, Harerimana et al. (2024) conducted a study examining the contribution of English reading materials to improving students' English performance in lower secondary schools. The findings revealed that increased use of reading materials leads to corresponding improvement in students' English language performance. These findings confirm the significant role of reading in language enhancement, including the development of reading skills. Likewise, Ntagwabira et al. (2024) explored factors influencing students' reading skills through the use of electronic textbooks in secondary schools. Their findings showed that the lack of English printed books negatively affects students' reading skills and their overall English language proficiency.

In addition, the issue of insufficient reading materials has been associated with broader educational challenges. Niyibizi et al. (2020) point out that the problem of inadequate books contributes to the graduation of incompetent students with a limited reading culture, which consequently results in poor research competence and reading laziness. However, despite these challenges, some studies reveal encouraging attitudes toward reading. For example, when Niyokwanza et al. (2024) explored students' perceptions of English reading attitudes in selected public upper secondary schools, the findings indicated that students generally have a fairly positive attitude toward reading in English.

In general, the studies discussed above demonstrate that reading plays a crucial role in improving learners' academic achievement, English language proficiency, comprehension, and critical thinking skills. They also highlight the importance of providing adequate reading materials and promoting positive reading attitudes among learners. Therefore, these views can

be closely connected to Extensive Reading, as it encourages learners to read a large amount of interesting and accessible materials regularly.

2.2. What is Extensive Reading?

Now that we know what reading is and what it involves, it sounds meaningful to delve into the main concern. Due to the fact that Extensive Reading does not mean always the same thing depending on where it is used, it is of paramount importance to begin with a range of definitions from different researchers. Palmer (1917), who is credited to be the first one to apply the term Extensive Reading to L2 Pedagogy, described it as “rapidly reading book after book”.

Palmer’s definition emphasizes the rapidity when practicing Extensive Reading. This is certainly because students read materials that are appropriate to their level of proficiency, it is really possible to read rapidly.

Day (1993) defined extensive reading in very simple terms: “the teaching of reading through reading”. Day is of the idea that the only way of internalizing something is by doing it. In other words, students will master reading through doing a lot of readings. While defining Extensive Reading, there is this inclusion of free choice of materials to read and pleasure. From this perspective, Krashen (2004) emphasized the crucialness of Free Voluntary Reading (FVR), meaning “reading because you want to”.

According to Hedge (1985:23),

Extensive reading plays a vital role not only in improving reading skills but also in improving students' abilities to communicate in English in speech and writing, and thereby raising their performance in other subjects.

Extensive reading requires a reader to avail himself of or consult different reading materials. In this connection, Nuttal (1982:193) states that

Showing that you are a reader means carrying books around with you, referring to books as you teach, reading out brief passages that may interest students, talking about what you are reading at the moment, and handling books as if you loved them.

In the same light of trying to understand what Extensive Reading is and what it is not, Bamford & Day (1998) explore ten principles of extensive reading: 1) The reading material is easy, (2) A variety of reading material on a wide range of topics is available, (3) Learners

choose what they want to read, (4) Learners read as much as possible, (5) Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower, (6) The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding, (7) Reading is individual and silent, (8) Reading is own reward, (9) The teacher orients and guides students, (10) The teacher is a role model of a reader.

The principles of Extensive Reading proposed by Bamford and Day are in the light of what Carrel and Eisterhold (1983: 567) stated. In their view, “students select their own reading texts with respect to content, level of difficulty, and length.” The definition given by Aebersold and Field (1997) (1997) emphasizes both the amount of reading and understanding the general meaning, while allowing learners to freely choose their reading materials. He argues that an extensive reading approach is founded on the idea that when students engage in reading large volumes of self-selected texts for overall comprehension, their reading proficiency naturally improves as a result. From all the definitions and principles given, we can keep in mind that extensive reading is an activity done for pleasure, without any pressure and whose intention is to enhance the language competence and very specifically the reading skills.

2.3. Extensive Reading Effects on Students' Reading Skills and Attitudes towards it

Many researches that were conducted have confirmed the important role of Extensive Reading on Reading proficiency. Let us then go through some studies from different parts of the globe. Extensive reading has got numberless credits in the literature when it comes to language competence enhancement. Hedgcock & Ferris (2009) summarized the benefits of Extensive Reading in six categories. As we go, the author will use other scholars who are in the same line of what Hedgcock & Ferris summarized.

First, Extensive Reading intervenes in improving comprehension skills. When reading extensively, students get familiar with techniques of decoding messages of the texts they interact with. Doing it as much time as possible helps them to boost comprehension skills. It is worth mentioning that comprehension skills are indispensable for achieving reading proficiency. We cannot assume to say that one is a proficient reader when their comprehension skills are not well developed.

In a quasi-experimental study carried out by Suk (2016) to examine the effects of ER on 171 Korean EFL university students' ESL/EFL learning, the findings showed that after the treatment duration, the treatment group outperformed the control group in reading

comprehension and reading rate. The results of Suk were later confirmed by McLean and Rouault (2017) who used an experimental design that was able to ensure equal time spent on extensive reading and grammar-translation treatments to study the impact of these treatments on 50 randomly assigned university students' reading rates. They concluded that Extensive Reading was an important factor to improve learners' rate and reading comprehension skills.

Furthermore, Tran (2018) investigated whether Extensive Reading can be a source of improving reading speed and reading comprehension of EFL learners on 68 Vietnamese university students. The results revealed that the group exposed to ER recorded greater reading speed and reading comprehension enhancement compared to the control group. Kerhsin and Razali (2023) reviewed 32 studies published from 2003 up to 2019 on Extensive Reading programmes in Malaysia to find out the impact of ER on ESL students' reading proficiency and reading motivation. The results of the review showed that there are positive impacts of ER on ESL reading, particularly reading rate and reading comprehension, vocabulary development and reading motivation. Syofia and Hamidah (2017:153) say "The more the learners read, the more they acquire the language, and the more they acquire the language, the more they develop their language competency."

From the same perspective of Syofia and Hamidah, Kargar (2012) sought to know the Efficiency of Extensive Reading Project (ERP) in an Iranian EFL Context. The study recruited 40 low level learners and they were divided randomly into one experimental and one control group. After a ten month timespan, the obtained results revealed that there was a significant difference between the performances of both groups; in other words, extensive reading (ER) had a positive effect on the reading proficiency achievement of low level EFL students.

In the study that he conducted, Yamashita (2008) found that extensive reading improves the students' reading rate or reading strategy and the general language proficiency. In other words, when students read extensively, the speed of reading gets increasing and their overall language proficiency is boosted on a daily basis. Thus, students who read extensively will no longer read as beginners, but develop this habit of reading quickly and understanding at the same time. In the same perspective, they will be enhancing their strategy of reading.

Park (2017) conducted a quasi-experimental study to compare the effect of the ER approach with that of the conventional Intensive Reading (IR) approach on EFL learners' reading rate and reading comprehension with regard to learners' proficiency level. Over a 12 week timespan, two intact classes of 72 Korean secondary students received either ER (N = 36) or

IR (N = 36) instruction. Results of an ANCOVA revealed that students' reading rate and comprehension increased significantly more from the ER approach than from the IR approach.

The sources mentioned above all confirmed the capacity of Extensive Reading in developing reading skills and more particularly comprehension skills as the benefit was first stated by Hedgcock & Ferris.

Second, Extensive Reading develops automaticity. Smith (2004) stated that fluent readers can instantly recognize a minimum of 50,000 words without needing to decode them. This type of word recognition which is immediately fast liberates the mind to call other types of schemata to reading process. In this sense, the reader develops this automaticity and it affects the whole language proficiency particularly reading proficiency.

Third, Extensive Reading enhances background knowledge (schemata, both content and formal). When you are reading, there is information which is stored in your memory and this information will help you when reading or doing something similar to what you have already seen. The background knowledge prepares readers to the future reading. Extensive Reading then helps to sustain this background knowledge. Bamford and Day (1998) observed that the background knowledge developed by extensive reading can promote readers' critical thinking skills (e.g., comparing and questioning evidence, evaluating arguments, and so forth).

Fourth, Extensive Reading builds vocabulary and grammar knowledge (i.e., linguistic schemata). Although all the points here are necessarily complementary, this point seems to be even more important than others. In his "power of reading" work, Krashen (2004), opines that readers acquire knowledge about language incidentally through reading. He reviewed research specifically for vocabulary, grammar, and spelling knowledge, concluding that students can acquire at least as much linguistic knowledge through FVR. Krashen (2004:18) noted that "language is too complex to be deliberately and consciously learned one rule or item at a time".

Highlighting this, Hedgcock & Ferris (2009:214) put it in another way: "There is simply too much complex linguistic information for learners to master consciously or intentionally under the typical time constraints that affect most L2 readers".

In the way of agreeing with Krashen and others, Hedgcock & Ferris (2009:214) stated the following:

Certain aspects of language can only be acquired through extensive and authentic exposure to the L2 (i.e., through reading, listening, and interaction), and once learners arrive at a certain stage of L2 acquisition (intermediate to advanced levels), it is likely that their continued progress in that language will largely result from such natural exposure and not classroom instruction.

Furthermore, there are other researchers who conducted related researches recently on vocabulary acquisition through Extensive Reading. Nwabudike & Anaso (2013) found that the students of Nigerian-Turkish International College, Kano have high stock of vocabulary although they engaged in extensive reading on their own. The meta-analysis done by Liu and Zhang (2018) using data from 21 empirical studies published conducted between 2007 and 2016 also supported the power of ER in vocabulary acquisition. Results showed that ER has positive impact on vocabulary acquisition. The other two recent studies that took place in Malaysia confirmed the fourth benefit from Hedgcock & Ferris. Tan and Kasuma (2019) conducted a research on EFL/ESL Malaysian students. When analyzing results, the findings showed that the treatment group that was exposed to Sustained Independent Reading (SIR) achieved an increase of 21% in vocabulary size. Similarly, Tan, Pandian & Jaganathan (2018) found that ER can effectively contribute to both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge development and the gains were largely sustained over time.

Another important study to mention here is the one conducted in Columbia on University students in two separate private Universities. Bautista and Marulanda (2018) who ran this study found that the free voluntary reading programme implemented with vocabulary-learning instruction improved active vocabulary use and retention on Columbian University students.

The conclusions drawn by McQuillan (2019) also supported the effectiveness of ER. McQuillan compared the relative efficiency of direct instruction of academic vocabulary and free reading (ER). The results demonstrated that extensive reading is two to six times more efficient in acquiring new academic words than explicit teaching (IR). He adds that reading is more enjoyable for most learners and less work for the teachers.

To wind up this point of vocabulary through ER, let us consider a few studies on vocabulary enhancement through Extensive Reading. Boutorwick, Macalister & Elgort (2019) compared two approaches to ER (ER only and ER-plus, i.e. ER with small group post reading

discussions) and their effect on vocabulary development. Their findings indicated that there were similarities in gains in word association knowledge for both groups; however, the ER-plus group recorded significantly greater gains in word association knowledge of words that were focused on in the group discussion. Ahmad & Ahlullah (2021) worked on the project called "Extensive Reading: A Multifaceted Panacea for EFL Students at King Khalid University (KKU)". The approach was referred to as uninterrupted sustained silent reading (USSR) where two distinct groups of students, namely experimental and control groups, participated in the study. The study intended to measure the effect of ER on students' reading comprehension, vocabulary development and speaking fluency. After the intervention, the experimental group that underwent 12 weeks training program showed remarkable progress in their reading comprehension, speaking fluency, and vocabulary development.

Fifth, Extensive Reading improves production skills (speaking and especially writing). It has an important impact on how we produce the language especially writing. Writing is the most difficult skill for EFL learners but plays a crucial role in language production (Dang, 2019; Omar, 2019). Undoubtedly, there is a strong link between reading and writing. Lee & Hsu (2009) emphasize that reading is the source of good writing style because learners can learn vocabulary, syntax and discourse structure of the written language.

To establish this symbiotic relationship between reading and writing, Hedgcock & Ferris (2009:215) stated the following:

Where written production is concerned, it has been well established in L1 and L2 research that, although successful readers may not necessarily be effective writers, it is virtually impossible to find successful writers who are not also good readers. For writers, reading provides material to write about, linguistic tools with which to express ideas, and rhetorical models to learn from.

From the above statement made by Hedgcock & Ferris, there are some points to mark with a highlighter in terms of their relationship. Successful readers and effective writers, successful readers and good readers. The researcher strongly agrees with the above statement and takes reading as a must when it comes to writing. The fact that reading and writing are integrated skills implies their symbiotic relationship ever. Therefore, there is no way one can be a good writer when they do not take reading as an integral part.

The research conducted in Vietnam shed light on the importance of Extensive Reading to writing. Duong and Nguyen (2021) designed a study to evaluate the effectiveness of ER on EFL learners' writing performance and learners' attitudes towards these effects. The study recruited 59 non-English majors at a public University. The results revealed that ER supported EFL learners in their writing performance where the experimental group had more significant enhancement in terms of content, communicative achievement, organization and language use in writing. On the side of attitudes, the results also indicated that EFL learners had positive attitudes towards the use of ER.

Sixth, Extensive Reading promotes student confidence and motivation. Confidence and motivation are very fundamental when it comes to reading. It is apparently known that confident and motivated learners always find it easier to learn than those who are not. Then, Confidence and motivation, as important aspects of attitude, have much to contribute in language proficiency enhancement and more specifically reading skills. As it is the case for other aspects influenced by Extensive Reading, a number of researchers investigated the role of ER in building motivation and confidence in learners.

According to Yopp (2005), extensive reading, particularly Free Voluntary Reading (FVR), can be highly enjoyable for students, encourage them to read independently in the future, and enhance their confidence in both their reading abilities and their capacity to use the second language beyond the classroom context. Ghanbari and Marzban (2013) explained the advantages of Extensive Reading in almost similar way. Extensive Reading does not only motivate the students to read more, but also helps them to enrich the students' vocabulary, enhance their writing skills, increment the students' confidence, and crystallize the students' knowledge.

Similarly, Lindawati (2021) ran a study on Indonesian students and the results showed that the students had positive perceptions toward Extensive Reading practices. This is to say that students' attitudes affected how they read. Jang et al. (2015) studied the effect of English extensive reading activities on the students' reading proficiency and reading motivation. The study found that extensive reading activities have a positive influence on students' reading proficiency and their intrinsic motivation.

As we move forward in this review of related literature, we can now see the credits that ER holds in promoting learners' attitudes especially confidence and motivation. Malaysia was not also left behind in researching the effect of ER on motivation. Ker-hsin and Razali (2023) who also manipulated these variables of ER and motivation reviewing 32 studies found that

ER helped Malaysian EFL learners to increase their motivation in reading. In his study, Ro (2013) found that the ease of engaging in ER created a conducive environment for the participants to learn and found themselves satisfaction in completing English books and this motivated them to read more than before.

In Japanese context, Tanaka and Stapleton's (2007) findings on EFL learners showed that the experimental group participants were positive towards ER as they found the graded texts used were easier to read than the textbook they were using in class. Similarly, Tan and Kasuma's (2019) study of remedial English language learners in a Malaysian public university who experienced Sustained Independent Reading (SIR) indicated that they felt more motivated to read in English because the task was not too complex or over-whelming for them.

Tan and Kasuma's findings align perfectly with the principles of ER in that materials and tasks were not too complex or overwhelming which helped learners to build their motivation in reading. It is also in line of Krashen's formula $i+1$ as explained in the introduction of this work.

A longitudinal study that investigated ESL/EFL reading motivation change Judge (2011) found links between ER and motivation to read. From the two and a half-year study conducted by Judge (2011) on nine high school students in an ER programme, he found that the two strongest themes that emerged from the data were love of literacy and the appeal of autonomy. ER did not only increase their motivation to read but also strengthened their autonomy.

In addition, findings from Tanaka (2017) also showed that learners' perceived autonomy increased intrinsic motivation, and that providing them with choice during an ER programme gave them a sense of control over reading. In Indonesia, Ningsih (2019) also found that ER activity affected students' level of autonomy as it indirectly forced them to practice in and outside the classroom context.

The aspect of attitudes and ER has really got numberless proponents whose researches and studies confirmed the effectiveness of ER in promoting confidence, motivation, autonomy and so forth. Chen et al. (2013) studied the effects of extensive reading of e-books on Taiwanese tertiary level EFL technological students' English reading attitude, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. The findings showed that extensive reading of e-books facilitates Taiwanese tertiary level EFL technological students' English reading attitude, reading comprehension, and vocabulary growth. The findings also indicated that extensive reading via e-books could

improve tertiary level EFL students' L2 learning. Ahmed & Rajab (2015) suggest that promoting Extensive Reading in young learners can lead them to gain more self-efficacy and self-confidence on their academic lives. In the study conducted in Indonesia, Lindawati (2022) concluded that extensive Reading is much more than just having read a lot; it also aids in the enhancement of language skills.

From the beginning of this review of related literature, the researcher has been showing the power of Extensive Reading. Extensive Reading has been found and reported to be effective in boosting many aspects of reading skills such as vocabulary development, comprehension skills, grammatical knowledge, overall fluency and so forth. The last section of this literature review identifies gaps that the present study seeks to fill.

2.4 Identification of Gaps in the already Existing Literature

The role of extensive reading (ER) in improving EFL (English as Foreign Language) learners' reading skills has been widely acknowledged in the existing literature. However, studies examining its effects in specific contexts like Post-Basic schools in Bujumbura Municipality are very limited. Much of the existing research on Extensive Reading has been conducted in Western contexts such as Europe, U.S or Asia. There are many cases like Day & Bamford (1998), Krashen (2004), Javharova Sattorovna & Muhayo Javharova (2020), Syofia Delfi & Hamidah Yamat (2017), Mahmood (2022), Gönen (2015), Mohammad (2013) and many more. Based on these studies of which none of them is local, ER's role in the Burundian setting remains unexplored.

Many studies claim that Extensive reading improves general reading proficiency, very few explore its influence on specific aspects of reading skills such as vocabulary development, reading comprehension and fluency (Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2006; Mohammad, 2013; Ramin Rahmany et al., 2013). Therefore, it is worth exploring this topic from the lens of its potential to boost reading skills such as vocabulary development, reading comprehension and fluency in the context of Post-Basic schools in Burundi. There is also scarcity of experimental studies on the impact of ER on reading skills.

Moreover, while numerous studies investigate learners' attitudes toward reading in general (Day & Bamford, 2002; John S. Hedgcock & Dana R. Ferris, 2009), there is a dearth of research on how Burundian students, especially at the Post-Basic level, perceive and engage with Extensive Reading. Although the list is not exhaustive, the researcher is convinced that there is a strong need to probe such a topic and fit it to the Burundian context.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the research design and methodology employed to investigate the role of extensive reading (ER) in developing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' reading skills. It firstly provides a comprehensive explanation of the philosophical research paradigm and research approach before it moves to research design. The following part of this chapter explores the study area and the population. Furthermore, it keeps on to describe the sampling, research instruments and validity. In the last section, it clarifies the process of data collection before it ends with data analysis procedures. Additionally, ethical considerations are addressed to ensure the ethical integrity of the research.

3.2 Philosophical Research Paradigm

Taking into account the kind of research at hand and also considering the field in which they are operating, researchers are guided by some beliefs or orientations when conducting their researches. These orientations demonstrate how they view the world of their studies. Huff (2009), cited in Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth (2013), articulated the importance of philosophy in research. According to him, philosophy gives “direction of research goals and outcomes, scope of training and research experiences, and basis of evaluative criteria for research-related decisions” (p. 59). The common term which is used in this perspective is paradigm. Among the definitions given by Merriam-Webster, there is one which fits this context.

According to Merriam-Webster (2025), paradigm is “a philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws, and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated”. According to Thomas Kuhn (1970), a paradigm is a set of generalizations, beliefs, and values of a community of specialists. Depending on the researchers, the term paradigm has got a range synonyms. Some call it worldview as meaning “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17). Others have called them paradigms (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011; Mertens, 2010); philosophical assumptions, epistemologies and ontologies (Crotty, 1998), or broadly conceived research methodologies (Neuman, 2009). Creswell (2014:35) sees worldview as “a general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher brings to a study”.

In their view, John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth (2013) say that these philosophical assumptions are beliefs about ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (what counts as knowledge and how knowledge claims are justified), axiology (the role of values in research), and methodology (the process of research).

From the above discussion, it is now understandable what philosophical assumptions are and why they are important in research. The following step is to delve into these assumptions. There exist four philosophical research paradigms or assumptions.

The first one is constructivism. Social constructivists believe that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences, meanings directed toward certain objects or things (Lincoln and colleagues (2011), Mertens (2010), and Crotty (1998).

The second is post-positivism. Creswell (2014) states that postpositivists reflect a deterministic philosophy about research in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes. The postpositivists are concerned with issues that need to identify and assess the causes that influence the outcomes.

The third one bears the name of transformative advocacy or participatory paradigm. Proponents of this paradigm felt that the constructivist stance did not go far enough in advocating for an action agenda to help marginalized peoples nor did post-positivism. In his words, Mertens (2010) concludes that transformative worldview holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political change agenda to confront social oppression at whatever levels it occurs.

Another position about worldviews comes from the pragmatists. This philosophical assumption is called pragmatism. In this worldview, there is shift; there is focus on the research problem itself rather than methods and use all possible approaches in order to reach the solutions (Rossman & Wilson, 1985). This paradigm has been found effective in mixed methods for the attention it gives to the problem. This is the view of Morgan (2007), Patton (1990), and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), among others.

Creswell (2014:39-40) used Cherryholmes (1992), Morgan (2007) and his views and came out with the following:

“Pragmatism is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality, individual researchers have a freedom of choice, truth is what works at the time, the pragmatist researchers look to the what and how to research based on the intended consequences—where they want to go with it, pragmatists agree that research always occurs in social, historical, political, and other contexts, pragmatists have believed in an external world independent of the mind as well as that lodged in the mind”.

From the views of different researchers on these four philosophical assumptions, the researcher of the study at hand finds the last one fitting this study. This paradigm, which is used in researches with mixed methods, gives the researcher the freedom to choose whatever strategies and approaches provided that they lead to finding solutions to the problem. Its focus on research problem rather than methods gives it credits to fit this study.

With this philosophical assumption, the conductor of the research probes the problem to get to identify its hidden roots for the only intention of generating sustainable solutions to it. Looking at the nature of the issue to be tackled in this study, the researcher used the pragmatism research since this study requires both quantitative and qualitative data. Using this paradigm, it became helpful for the researcher to thoroughly collect data that finally answered the research questions of this study.

3.3 Research Approach

In the area of research, there are three research approaches that are commonly used all over the world: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Creswell, 2014). Taking into account the nature of the problem to deal with, it was found important to triangulate from various sources when finding solutions to the problem. This study used a mixed method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods. According to Johnson et al. (2007), “Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration.” (p. 123).

The mixed approach helped gain a comprehensive analysis of the role of extensive reading, including both numerical data and textual information of learners' experiences. Qualitatively, it helped explore learners' perceptions and experiences of extensive reading, whereas quantitatively it examined the impact of ER on reading proficiency through pre- and post-tests.

3.4 Research Design

In the research arena, research design plays a significant role and therefore must be chosen carefully for the success of the whole research. Research designs, as defined by Creswell & Plano Clark (2018), are procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting data in research studies. Creswell & Plano Clark (2018) distinguished the convergent design, the explanatory sequential design, and the exploratory sequential design as the three core mixed methods designs. These three core mixed methods designs provide a useful framework for researchers working to plan their own studies.

In convergent design (also known as concurrent or parallel design), both quantitative and qualitative data are collected roughly at the same time. For explanatory sequential design (also known as explanatory design), the collection and analysis starts with quantitative data only. This first phase is followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data in order to explain or expand on the first-phase quantitative results.

In contrast to the explanatory design, the exploratory sequential design (also known as exploratory design) begins with and typically prioritizes the collection and analysis of qualitative data in the first phase. Finally, the researcher conducts a development phase by designing a quantitative feature based on the qualitative results.

Considering the nature of the research at hand, the researcher decided to use the convergent parallel mixed methods. It is a form of mixed methods design in which the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). In this design, the investigator typically collects both forms of data at roughly the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results.

The intent of the convergent design is to get different but complementary data on the same topic (Morse, 1991) in order to best understand the research problem. According to Creswell & Plano Clark (2018), some of other compelling reasons for using the convergent design include its usefulness when the researcher has limited time for collecting data in the field and must gather both types of data in one visit and the researcher needs both quantitative and qualitative forms of information from every participant. Since the researcher of this study needs information from every participant, this design then fits the research perfectly.

The participants from the selected school were divided into two groups, the experimental group and the control group respectively. After assigning participants to groups, a pre-test was devised to both the experimental and control group. The next step was about the treatment. For this, only the experimental group engaged into Extensive Reading during this period of the treatment. The treatment was followed by a post-test also to both groups to check the progress of the participants by the end of the treatment.

Apart from the above, qualitative data was collected through interviews so as to get information about participants' perceptions (attitudes) towards Extensive Reading approach and how it influenced their reading skills.

3.5 The Study Area

The study took place in Bujumbura Municipality, the economic capital city of Burundi. This province was singled out by the researcher because it shelters many Post-Basic School students and consequently many Languages Sections. Since the study sought the participants enrolled in Languages Section, it was reasonable to look for a province where these sections are located like Bujumbura. The section of Languages was strategically chosen due to the fact that in its curriculum, it focuses on the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

In addition, among the three competences in the Languages Section curriculum for third-year post-basic students, reading competence holds an important position as it is central to learners' overall language development. Therefore, the study area is directly aligned with the focus of this research. Regarding the selection of the school, Municipal Lycée of Bwiza was chosen due to its low performance in the 2024 national examinations administered to third-year students. Official results indicated that out of 26 learners who sat for the examination, only 8 scored at 50% in English course. This reflects a very low success rate in the English course, particularly in skills related to reading comprehension and language use. Moreover, the school was ranked 585th nationwide with an overall success rate of 2.33%, further

highlighting its weak academic performance (Report from the Ministry of Education 2024-2025). This situation justifies the choice of this school as an appropriate site for investigating the role of Extensive Reading in improving learners' reading skills.

3.6 Research Population

According to Ary et al. (2019:25), population is “the larger group to which a researcher wishes to generalize; it includes all members of a defined class of people, events, or objects”. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), cited by Irambona (2018), add another ingredient in specifying that these people or things have some commonalities. In their view, the term "population" refers to an entire group of people, things, or events that share some common observable features.

The study population consisted of students enrolled in Post-Basic School in Provincial Education Directorate of Bujumbura (Direction Provinciale de l'Education), Commune Education Directorate (Direction Communale de l'Education) at Municipal Lycée of Bwiza (Lycée Municipal Bwiza) in the Languages Section in 3rd year. These were the students learning English as a foreign language (EFL).

3.7 Sampling Methods and Sample Size

Sampling is the process by which you select a number of individual cases from a larger population (Leavy, 2017). As for sample, Leavy defines it as the number of individual cases that the researcher ultimately draws and from which/whom s/he generates data. According to Leavy (2017), all sampling procedures fit into two umbrella categories: probability sampling and purposeful sampling. Depending on the study at hand, the researcher used the first category (probability sampling). According to Leavy (2017:78), probability sampling, “relies on probability theory and involves the use of any strategy in which samples are selected in a way that every element in the population has a known and nonzero chance of being selected”.

As there are subcategories of probability sampling, Simple Random Sampling (SRS) was the one chosen when selecting students who participated in the study. This is a sampling strategy in which every element in the study population has an equal chance of being selected. Keppel & Wickens (2003) argues that with random selection or random sampling, each individual has an equal probability of being selected from the population, ensuring that the sample will be representative of the population.

As far as randomization is concerned, Ary et al. (2029:223) support it in the following terms, “experimental studies utilizing randomization provide the best evidence for determining the effectiveness of educational practices and programs, and they are considered the gold standard for determining "what works" in educational research”.

Using SRS, the researcher assigned 3rd year post-basic learners of Bwiza Municipal Lycée to groups before starting anything else. One was an experimental group (these students who engaged in extensive reading activities, N= 17) and another group constituted the control group (N=17). The allocation of participants to groups was done in the following way.

The researcher used slips of paper of two kinds, one with the phrase “experimental group” and another with the phrase “control group”. The slips of paper were multiplied proportionally to the number of all participants. After, the researcher put all slips of paper in a box, shook the box and called one participant to pick one slip of paper without looking in the box. If the participant picked a slip with the phrase “experimental group”, he/she was allocated to the Experimental Group and vice-versa. The process kept going in the same way until when all participants finished (Kothari, 2009).

3.8 Research Instruments

The very first instrument that was used concerns the treatment itself. For this, various texts were availed for participants during the experiment. Those texts were fictional and non-fictional namely short-stories from Paul Nation’s collection, novels’ excerpts from African Literature and poems.

The following set of research instruments that this study used include tests intended to assess the reading skills of participants. A pre- and post-assessment was used to evaluate the reading skills of both groups. The test included comprehension questions and vocabulary assessments as it was the objective of the study.

On the other hand, the qualitative data collection was done through interviews. According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), an interview is where “knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee” (p. 4). From the lens of qualitative research methods, according to the same authors, an interview is further described as “attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experience, to uncover their lived world” (p. 3).

An interview was then conducted by the researcher to gather data on learners' attitudes toward reading in general and extensive reading in particular. The interviewees were only participants belonging to the experimental group as they were the ones who engaged in Extensive Reading.

3.9 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity is an important key to effective research. Considerations about validity and quality in mixed methods have long been identified as one of the major issues in mixed methods research and as the most important aspect of a research project (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). In some versions, for instance the one of Winter (2000:1), validity is regarded as an essential demonstration that a particular instrument in fact measures what it intends, purports or claims to measure, that an account accurately represents “those features that it is intended to describe, explain or theorize”.

Furthermore, Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion and Keith Morrison (2018) linked the term validity to the term warrant. They define warrant as the logical link made between data and proposition, between data and conclusions. According to them (2018:245), “a piece of research is valid if the warrants that underpin it are defensible and, thereby, if the conclusions drawn and the explanations given can stand their ground in the face of rival conclusions and explanations; validity and warrants are linked intimately”.

To ensure that the research instruments are valid and measure what they are intended to measure, they were presented to the supervisor to get either approved or improved according to the recommendations of the supervisor before being used on the ground.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

The process of collecting data started with a pre-test for both the experimental and control groups in order to see their starting point level of reading skills. After administering the pre-test to all groups, the treatment followed. According to Ary et al. (2019:222), “the experimental group receives a specific treatment or intervention and the control group receives no treatment or receives a different treatment”. In this study therefore, the experimental group engaged in Extensive Reading approach over a period of 4 weeks while the control group received no treatment. Participants had a variety of interesting reading materials (short-stories from Paul Nation's collection, novels' excerpts from African Literature and poems) and they had to choose what pleased them. Once a student had finished, s/he was free to take another text from the collection or simply exchange with a classmate.

During the period of treatment, the sessions of Extensive Reading had to take place in the afternoon after class and occasionally on Saturday on the agreement with participants. The afternoons and Saturday were chosen so as not to interfere with already established timetable of the school. Two days a week, participants had to spend two hours reading extensively in one place (Municipal Lycée of Bwiza) together with the researcher. In the two hours, they would read as much as they could. In addition, the researcher would provide guidance whenever and wherever necessary during the treatment.

After the 4-week timespan, both groups took the same post-test intended to measure reading skills in order to assess their improvements in their reading skills. The next step was to interview the respondents of the experimental group. An interview was held in order to get qualitative data on their attitudes towards Extensive Reading. Now the following step ahead was to analyze the data collected.

3.11 Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis of data involved both quantitative and qualitative methods as the two had been used to collect data. Both Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Excel were used to analyze these data. As far as quantitative analysis is concerned, the results from the reading pre-test and post-test were analyzed by comparing the experimental group and the control group to see their improving after the experiment. Thus, measures of central tendency (mean and standard deviation) were calculated to see how far the distribution of scores to the mean was. In addition, to ensure that the two groups are significantly different, an independent sample t-test was calculated.

On the other hand, the qualitative analysis was done. For this part of analysis, the responses from the interview by the respondents were analyzed thematically to get insights into the participants' attitudes towards Extensive Reading on the development of reading skills.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

This part is very important and should be approached cautiously. The Belmont Report (1979) identified three essential ethical principles that must be followed in all research with human subjects: (1) protection of the human subjects from harm (physical or mental); (2) respect for participants' right to know the nature and purpose of the study and their right to give or withhold consent to participate (the right of informed consent); and (3) respect for subjects' privacy. Therefore, all participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the research methods, and their right to confidentiality.

Furthermore, all personal information, responses, and data collected from participants had been kept confidential. Data were stored securely and used only for research purposes. Moreover, the study did not cause any harm to participants. They had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Participants' identities remained anonymous in the reporting of findings.

3.13 Summary of Chapter

This chapter has presented a detailed account of the research design and methodology employed to investigate the role of extensive reading in developing reading skills among EFL learners in Bujumbura. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The chapter outlines the philosophical paradigm that underpins the study, the specific research design, the characteristics of the target population, and the sampling techniques used to select participants.

It also provides a thorough description of the data collection instruments, including pre-tests, post-tests, and interview protocols, as well as the procedures for administering them. Furthermore, attention is given to ethical considerations, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of participation, ensuring that the research adheres to ethical standards. Overall, the methodology has been carefully selected and designed to ensure the reliability, validity, and credibility of the study's findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Based on the data collected on the field from the participants' pre and post-tests including the interview, this fourth chapter presented all the finding of the research. With the intention of data triangulation, the researcher opted to use a variety of research tools to adequately address the problem at hand. Therefore, the collected data were both quantitative and qualitative. The former were analyzed using descriptive analysis where the measures of distribution (percentages and frequencies), measures of dispersion or variation (standard deviations), and the central tendency (mean) were computed. On the other hand, the latter were analyzed thematically considering the verbatim of the respondents.

Since the study employed the convergent research design, quantitative data from the experiment itself were supported by qualitative data collected through interviews with respondents of the experimental group.

As we present data, it is worth recalling that the main objective of this study was to explore the role of extensive reading in developing reading skills among 3rd year students in Languages Section. Apart from the general objective stated above, the study had the following specific objectives:

1. To identify the types of reading materials that are most beneficial for enhancing reading skills.
2. To explore 3rd year post-basic students' attitudes towards Extensive Reading among EFL learners in Burundi.
3. To examine the impact of extensive reading on 3rd year students in Languages Section.

4.2 Response Rate

In this study, two different types of research instruments were used to gather all the necessary information: tests (pre and post), interviews with participants of the experimental group. To make the study possible, learners in 3rd year of Languages section at Lycée Municipal Bwiza were targeted. The total number was 34 and they were randomly divided into two different groups: 17 in Experimental group and 17 in Control group. No absence was remarked in both pretest and post-test and the interview; all the students did the tests and passed the interview. This implies that the response rate after the treatment and test administration was 100%.

With such a rate of 100% it was then acceptable to get to data analysis with assurance. According to Creswell (2012), the return rate of 65% is considered appropriate for analysis. Now that we had 100%, the next move was undoubtedly the analysis. The next section of this chapter presented, analyzed and interpreted data thoroughly.

4.3 Quantitative and Qualitative Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

4.3.1 Types of texts that are most beneficial in boosting reading skills

The first objective of this study sought to identify the types of materials, especially texts, which are most effective and beneficial in developing learners' reading skills. To be able to answer this kind of question, an interview was held with the Experimental group participants to tell the researcher the kinds of texts that were most beneficial during the extensive reading sessions they spent together.

The respondents' reactions are in the following excerpts extracted from the interview recordings where they specified the texts that helped them a lot. The shared views were backed up by what the literature says about it; different studies that were conducted before and addressed similar questions in different corners of the globe.

After analyzing the interviewees' answers to the questions (Q1, Q2 & Q3) addressing this theme, the researcher found out that most respondents reported enjoying texts that are short, simple, and familiar. The reasons associated with texts' choices depending on the respondent's preference. Their reactions showed how much text type strongly influences engagement in extensive reading, highlighting the importance of providing accessible and interest-based texts.

For example, the following respondents emphasize on what makes them to continue reading. For them, the level of difficulty of the text has a direct effect on whether they read or not. Most of them highlighted that the vocabulary items that are new to them can push them to leave the reading.

For example, R1 finds it right when the text has used the words that he knows, "*When I get some vocabulary that I know, it is right.*" R5 focuses on the complexity of the text itself by saying the following, "*Uh, I like texts that I understand, not complex ones.*" R11 said almost the same thing as the former one here, "*When the text is not understandable, I leave it. The text that is just right for me is the one that I understand.*"

R6 put that the unfamiliarity with the words makes her weak, *“Yes when I see vocabulary I understand, I read the text. But when I see that I don’t understand, I become weak.”* R9 came back to what the others had mentioned about the difficult words, *“It is when I see that there are some words that I can understand, I can know their meanings.”*

Although the researcher did not present all the respondents’ answers here, it is clear that the kinds of texts that learners like and enjoy are the ones that are at their level. From the above interview passages, almost all of them mentioned words that are difficult. This correlates with the characteristics of Extensive Reading as they are presented by different researchers like Bamford & Day (1998).

On the other hand, however, for some students, the difficulty of a text is not a problem, rather an occasion to learn something new. Here are some excerpts from the recordings. R16, for example, said, *“Even when I don’t understand I take note of what I don’t know and check the meaning or ask someone.”* For R14, the understanding of the title is self-sufficient to read the text even when other things are new to her, *“The first when I understand the title of that text I become happy to know it. Other things I will know them or ask, but I have to read it no matter what I don’t know.”*

R2 is of the idea that a text must have something to challenge the reader in terms of vocabulary. He says, *“When I am reading a text and I see that I understand all the thing, I don’t feel good because I find that that text it is not my level.”*

In few words, it can be seen from the excerpts above that some interviewees found no harm in reading the text that has new difficult words. They showed that difficult words do not have to stop them from reading. For them, it is even most beneficial when there are new words in the text as it is a good opportunity to take note of them and check their meanings and all this for the improvement of their overall proficiency in the language.

Under the same objective, students were asked to indicate which types of texts they found most engaging and helpful in improving their reading. The following preferences emerged from their answers.

The following table summarizes the respondents’ preferences of texts that they find most beneficial in developing their reading skills.

Table 4.1 Types of texts and preferences

Types of text	Frequency	Percentage
Short Stories	14	76.47%
Poems	2	17.64%
Novels' Excerpts	1	5.88%

The table presents respondents' preferences for different types of texts used in developing reading skills during the Extensive Reading program. The findings indicate that short stories were the most preferred reading materials among participants. Out of the total respondents, 14 participants (76.47%) preferred reading short stories, while 2 respondents (17.64%) preferred poems, and only 1 participant (5.88%) preferred novels' excerpts.

The following excerpts support what is presented in the above table. For instance, R1 preferred short stories and the reason behind his choice is the fact that short stories are understandable and funny, *"I can say that short stories are easier for me but also novels are easier. Short stories because there are many things that are understandable in the short stories and they are funny."*

As far as R4 is concerned, he emphasizes understandability of short stories, *"Yeah, when I read short stories. I like a short story because it is a text which I understand more than a long story."* R7 comes back to what R1 said; short stories are funny, *"I like a short story, yeah. Because a short story tells me what happened in past and I know many things; they are also funny. I get to know how to prepare a short story."* In the same vein, R8 chooses short stories because they are among what her siblings discuss at home, *"I like to read a short story because I like to speak English and I have siblings who like to tell story in English."*

On the other hand, R6 naturally likes poems, but also mentions something important on pronunciation, *"Poems because I really love poems. I love because pronunciation is good in poem."* R11 also mentions poems as their preferred type of text, *"I really like poems because they make me feel happy due to their musicality."*

R16 shares the views with R6 and R11 who both chose poems by stating the following, *"Poems because they help me to feel happy and I learn pronunciation."*

R9 comes with another preference different from the others. For this interviewee, novels' excerpts are most enjoyable and helpful to improve reading, *"I like novels because they are like a whole story and when I read a text and find that it's a story I can get some motivation."* In summary, learners have different preferences of texts that help them the most. However, these results suggest that learners were more attracted to short stories than to other forms of texts. This preference may be linked to the fact that short stories are usually easier to understand and more engaging for readers. Poems were less preferred, possibly because they may contain figurative language or complex meanings that can be difficult for some learners to interpret. Novels' excerpts received the lowest preference, which may be due to their length or lack of complete context compared to full stories.

4.3.2 Learners' attitudes towards extensive reading

Apart from identifying the most beneficial texts to enhance reading skills in 3rd year learners in the Languages section, the researcher was also curious to know the attitudes of learners towards extensive reading in particular and reading itself in general. To that intention, learners were interviewed and they shared their points of view based on their experience with the one-month extensive reading sessions. They were specifically asked about their feelings when reading in English for a long time, whether this ER has changed their motivation to read in the target language.

Moreover, they were questioned whether ER had made them feel more confident in understanding English, and finally the challenges they generally face when reading longer texts in the target language.

As it was done for the first research objective, data from interview with Experimental group were supplemented by elsewhere studies on the same question and what different authors say about it in the literature. For this objective, four questions were asked in the interview and the following are the respondents' reactions to each question.

Q4. How do you feel when reading in English for a long time?

When asked about how they feel when reading in English for a long time, the respondents answered differently, but most of them shared views. The following table shows the respondents' feelings, frequency and respective percentages.

Table 4.2 Respondents' feelings when reading for a long time

Feeling	Frequency	Percentage
Happy	14	82.35%
Unhappy	3	17.65%

The table presents learners' attitudes towards Extensive Reading based on how they felt about the activity. The findings indicate that the majority of learners had positive attitudes toward Extensive Reading. Out of the total participants, 14 learners, representing 82.35%, reported feeling happy, while only 3 learners, representing 17.65%, reported feeling unhappy.

The interview responses support these findings. Several learners clearly expressed happiness and enjoyment when engaging in Extensive Reading. For example, one respondent stated, *"For me I feel happy, I enjoy,"* while another said, *"I feel good and happy to read."* Similarly, another participant explained, *"I feel happy especially when the topic is interesting."* These responses show that many learners enjoyed reading English texts and had positive feelings toward the activity.

According to this respondent, the pleasure of reading is closely linked to comprehension and interest in speaking English, *"I feel... yes I feel good. For example if I read the story I understand I feel happy because I like to speak English."* In a similar vein, R14 shared a positive and aspirational feeling toward reading in English. The respondent felt good and motivated, associating reading with the possibility of becoming proficient in English and interacting confidently in an English-speaking environment, *"I feel good because I see that I can be an English woman and then I can live in the world where I can speak English only."*

In addition, some learners directly associated Extensive Reading with pleasure and satisfaction. One participant mentioned, *"I feel pleasure because I like English,"* while another stated, *"I feel fine I feel happy."* Such comments reinforce results showing that most learners appreciated Extensive Reading and experienced positive emotions during reading activities.

However, a small number of learners expressed negative feelings toward Extensive Reading. For instance, one learner stated, *"I don't feel good because I don't like it."* Another learner explained that long reading sessions lead to boredom and loss of motivation when the text is difficult to understand, *"If I am reading and I take a long time, I don't like it because I feel bored. I lose motivation when I am reading a thing that I don't understand anything."* These instances show that not all learners enjoyed the activity.

In conclusion, the interview findings reveal that the majority of learners held positive attitudes toward Extensive Reading, as many participants expressed happiness, enjoyment, pleasure, and satisfaction when reading English texts. Learners particularly appreciated reading when the topics were interesting and understandable, which increased their enjoyment of the activity. Nevertheless, a few learners expressed negative attitudes, mainly due to boredom and difficulties in understanding some texts. Overall, the findings indicate that Extensive Reading was generally perceived positively by most learners, despite a few challenges experienced by some participants.

Q5. Has ER changed your motivation to read in English? In what ways?

From the interviewees' answers, it was clear and well stated that the one month Extensive Reading sessions highly changed their motivation to read in English. The change in motivation was expressed even by learners who had said they did not like English. The following table shows the participants' reaction when interviewed on motivation.

Table 4.3 Respondents' change in motivation after ER

Change in motivation	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	94.1%
No	1	5.9%

The table presents participants' responses regarding changes in motivation after engaging in an Extensive Reading program. The findings reveal that the majority of participants experienced a positive change in their motivation. Out of 17 participants, 16 respondents (94.1%) reported that their motivation changed positively after taking part in the Extensive Reading activities, while only 1 participant (5.9%) indicated no change in motivation. These results suggest that the one-month Extensive Reading program had a significant positive influence on learners' motivation. The high percentage of positive responses indicates that engaging in regular reading activities helped learners develop greater interest, enthusiasm, and willingness to read and learn in English.

The following passages from interviewees support what is presented in the above table. For example, R1 explained that extensive reading changed their attitude toward reading by giving them a strong passion for it, *"Yeah, it changed. It gave me passion to read, I saw that reading is more important and we can learn new things from that reading. So I got passion of reading from the Extensive."* Similarly, R2 reported a clear change in reading behavior, *"Yes because*

in past, I would always read when the teacher say "take the book and read", but now I can take the book and I read."

R7 also noted a positive transformation, stating that they now enjoy reading in English frequently. This response suggests that extensive reading has helped develop a regular reading habit, *"Yes, it changed me because nowadays I like to read English every time, yeah."* R12 directly attributed the increase in motivation to extensive reading, emphasizing its role in enhancing their interest and willingness to read in English, *"Yeah, my motivation increased because of the Extensive Reading I did."*

Overall, the interviewees' responses reveal that extensive reading significantly enhanced learners' motivation and interest in reading English. It shifted reading from a teacher-controlled activity to a self-driven habit, fostered enjoyment and passion for reading, increased exposure to vocabulary, and strengthened learners' desire to read and learn independently.

Q6. Does reading extensively make you feel more confident in understanding English? Explain.

Confidence is of paramount important in any language. When it comes to English language, confidence has a lot to contribute in the understanding of it. As we explore learners' attitudes towards extensive reading, interviewees were asked to rate the added value of Extensive Reading in strengthening their confidence. The following table summarizes the respondents' reactions on confidence.

Table 4.4 Respondents' change in confidence after ER

Feeling	Frequency	Percentage
Confident	16	94.1%
Not confident	1	5.9%

The table shows participants' levels of confidence after taking part in a one-month Extensive Reading program. The results indicate that most learners gained confidence as a result of their involvement in the reading activities. Among the 17 participants, 16 respondents (94.1%) stated that they felt confident, whereas only 1 participant (5.9%) reported not feeling confident even after the treatment. These findings demonstrate that the Extensive Reading program had a positive effect on learners' confidence in reading and using English. Consequently, the results suggest that Extensive Reading played an important role in strengthening learners' confidence in English learning.

Here are some passages from the interviewees as they express their feelings after the Extensive Reading sessions they did. For instance, R2 explained that reading in English contributes positively to her confidence, especially when comprehension is achieved, *“Yes, it makes me confident because if you are reading and you understand the thing, you feel pleasure and you read with a smile in spite of the thing you don’t understand.”* Similarly, R3 emphasized increased comfort and confidence when engaging with English reading materials, *“Yes, I feel more comfortable, confident because there is many people who doesn’t like English, but me I like to read the short story and to listen the poem because I need to know many in English.”*

R7 reported a growing sense of confidence resulting from reading stories in English. This confidence is linked to vocabulary development, as the learner translates new words into their native language to achieve clearer understanding, which reinforces her self-assurance, *“Yes I feel more and more confident because when I read those stories, I get some vocabulary and I translate them in my native language and then I understand them clearly.”*

R10 also associated reading with increased confidence, explaining that realizing the acquisition of new knowledge enhances self-belief. For this respondent, confidence grows when progress in understanding becomes noticeable, *“Yes it makes me to feel more confident because when you realize that you get something you had not before, you feel more confident.”* R12 acknowledged a certain level of confidence in English, despite ongoing comprehension difficulties, *“At least now I have some kind of confidence in English although I don’t understand many.”*

Although a lot of respondents reported gaining confidence through the one-month ER, there is one whose confidence did not improve. R9 stated the following when interviewed *“Unfortunately not because it is not easy to get... I don’t have this confidence.”*

Synthetically, the interviewees consistently reported that reading in English enhances their confidence and comfort with the language except one respondent who gained no confidence. This confidence is mainly derived from understanding texts, learning new vocabulary, recognizing personal progress, and being able to translate content into their native language. Even when full comprehension is not achieved, learners still experience increased self-confidence, suggesting that reading plays a significant role in fostering positive attitudes and self-belief among EFL learners.

Q7. What challenges do you face when reading longer texts in English?

The interviewees reported several interrelated challenges when reading longer texts in English, with limited vocabulary knowledge emerging as the most prominent difficulty. Many participants explained that encountering unfamiliar words interrupts their reading and makes comprehension difficult.

One learner stated, *"I get stuck because I get some new vocabulary. So it is very very difficult for me"* (R1), while another emphasized that *"when I got difficult words, vocabulary... I struggle to understand"* (R4). Similarly, a respondent noted that *"there are many words that I don't understand"*, which causes boredom and discouragement during reading (R8). These responses indicate that insufficient vocabulary significantly hinders learners' ability to understand longer English texts.

In addition to vocabulary difficulties, loss of motivation and interest was frequently mentioned as a major challenge, especially when texts are long or linguistically demanding. Several learners reported that difficult words directly affect their willingness to continue reading. As one interviewee explained, *"when I find some words that are not easy for me... I lose motivation"* (R6). Another learner linked text length to demotivation, stating, *"When the text is too long I feel like I am sleeping"* (R13). Feelings of boredom were also common, as one respondent remarked, *"I feel bored because there are many words that I don't understand"* (R10). These findings suggest that both text length and difficulty reduce learners' engagement with reading tasks.

Furthermore, some participants highlighted cognitive and comprehension-related challenges when dealing with longer texts. Learners reported difficulties in understanding complex grammatical structures and retaining information from passages they had already read. One respondent mentioned that *"the verbs and some grammatical structures that are complex... I feel like I have no motivation again"* (R12), while another admitted, *"I can also forget what is in the passages I finished"* (R9).

In summary, these challenges demonstrate that longer texts place heavy cognitive demands on learners, affecting both comprehension and memory. Overall, the interview data reveal that vocabulary limitations, reduced motivation, and cognitive overload collectively hinder EFL learners' ability to read longer English texts effectively.

4.3.3 The impact of extensive reading on learners' reading skills

The last research objective constitutes the core of the whole research. The researcher sought to examine the extent to which extensive reading impacts reading skills of 3rd year learners in Languages Section. In addressing this objective, an experiment was held on such learners. The treatment lasted for one month of extensive reading sessions. The experiment was introduced and concluded by a pre-test and post-test respectively for 34 learners. The results of these tests are presented in form of tables.

Table 4.5 Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test results)

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	17	49.1176	15.10229	3.66284
Control	17	37.6765	14.18840	3.44119

This table shows the descriptive statistics of the groups involved in the study before the treatment (Pre-test results). As it can be seen, the number of all participants is 34 (17 in the Experimental Group and 17 in the Control Group). The measure of central tendency calculated was the mean of 49.1176 in the Experimental Group and 37.6765 in the Control Group. Their respective standard deviations (measure of dispersion) are 15.10229 and 14.18840. Finally the standard error means were 3.66284 and 3.44119 respectively.

From the above statistics, it can be seen that the Experimental Group outperformed the Control Group if we only consider the Mean scores of the two groups. However, from the above table we cannot be sure whether the difference is statistically significant. Therefore, we need to consider Table 4.6 before drawing such a conclusion.

Table 4.6 Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test									
Pre-test results	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.237	.630	1.477	32	.149	7.44118	5.03812	-2.82114	17.70350
Equal variances not assumed			1.477	31.619	.150	7.44118	5.03812	-2.82600	17.70835

The results in this table are there to approve or disapprove the significance of differences of the Experimental and Control Group. First of all, let us consider the Levene's Test which helps to know which row to discuss and interpret in the table above. Accordingly, if the P-Value of Levene's Test is greater than $>.05$, then there is homogeneity of variances; equal variances are assumed and we have to discuss or interpret the first row only. If the P-Value of Levene's Test is less than $<.05$, then there is no homogeneity of variances; equal variances are not assumed and in that case we are expected to discuss the second row (Lawrence, 2018).

In the present case, the P-Value is .630 which is $> .05$; this means that the data have homogeneity of variances indicating that equal variances are assumed. Considering the Probability Value, if the P-Value (α) is less than .05, there is statistical significance difference. In the above table, the P-Value is .149 and this is greater than .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the Experimental Group and the Control Group on the Pre-test scores.

Moreover, the difference remains statistically significant if we consider the 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference. It is said that if the range of the lower limit is negative and the upper limit is positive, then there is no significant difference. If the lower limit and the upper limit are either negative or positive, there is statistical significant difference. In the present case, the low limit is -2.82114 while the upper limit is 17.70350. Since the two values have different signs (one is negative and another is positive), the conclusion to be drawn is that the two groups are not statistically significantly different.

Table 4.7 Descriptive Statistics (Post-test results)

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	17	42.5000	10.50595	2.54807
Control	17	34.2941	11.31241	2.74366

The table above shows the descriptive statistics of the groups after the treatment (Post-test results). As it can be seen, the number of all participants is 34 (17 in the Experimental Group and 17 in the Control Group). The measure of central tendency calculated was the mean of 42.5000 in the Experimental Group and 34.2941 in the Control Group. Their respective standard deviations (measure of dispersion) are 10.50595 and 11.31241. Finally the standard error means were 2.54807 and 2.74366 respectively. From the above statistics, it can be seen that the Experimental Group outperformed the Control Group if we only consider the Mean scores of the two groups. However, from the above table we cannot be sure whether the difference is statistically significant. Therefore, we need to consider Table 4.8 before drawing such a conclusion.

Table 4.8 Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test									
Pre-test results	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.290	.594	2.192	32	.036	8.20588	3.74437	.57884	15.83292
Equal variances not assumed			2.192	31.827	.036	8.20588	3.74437	.57721	15.83455

The results in this table are used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the Experimental and Control Groups. To begin, let's examine the Levene's Test, which guides us in deciding which row to focus on for interpretation. If the P-Value of Levene's Test is greater than 0.05, it indicates homogeneity of variances, meaning equal variances are assumed, and only the first row should be interpreted. Conversely, if the P-Value is less than 0.05, it suggests that the variances are not homogeneous, and we must refer

to the second row (Lawrence, 2018). In this case, the P-Value is 0.594, which is greater than 0.05. This means the data exhibit homogeneity of variances, and we assume equal variances.

When considering the Probability Value, if the P-Value (α) is less than 0.05, it indicates a statistically significant difference. In the table, the P-Value is 0.036, which is below 0.05, suggesting a significant difference between the Experimental and Control Groups in their Pre-test scores. Furthermore, the difference remains statistically significant when examining the 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference. If the lower limit is negative and the upper limit is positive, no significant difference is found. However, if both the lower and upper limits are either negative or positive, a significant difference exists. In this case, the lower limit is 0.57884, and the upper limit is 15.83292, both of which are positive. Therefore, it can be concluded that the two groups differ significantly.

4.4 Discussion of the Findings

In relation to this section, it presents a discussion of the study findings, which hinge around the research objectives. As indicated at the outset of this work, this study intended to explore the role of Extensive Reading in developing reading skills among 3rd year students in Languages Section. To that end, the section that follows expands on the discussion of both quantitative and qualitative data findings per objective.

4.4.1 Types of texts that are most beneficial in boosting reading skills

The findings of the present study revealed that learners benefited most from level-appropriate and engaging texts, particularly short stories. These materials were found to contribute significantly to the development of reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition as reading aspects. This outcome supports the core principle of extensive reading (Bamford & Day, 1998) which emphasizes exposure to large amounts of comprehensible input through meaningful texts.

In Iraq, Mahmood (2022) conducted a similar study and the results concluded that short stories are considered as motivating reading material as they involve simple short plots and entertaining trends. From the interview held to the treatment group, most learners reported having benefited a lot from short stories because of their length (they are too short as the name indicates) and comprehensibility and this matches Mahmood's conclusion.

The effectiveness of novels' excerpts was also reported by the interviewees and their reasons are consistent with other scholars' conclusions. Considering the fact that such texts (novels) have familiar structure, contextualized language, and sustained content, this allows learners to focus on meaning rather than form.

Similar findings were reported by Hedgcock and Ferris (2009), who observed that extensive exposure to longer texts enhances learners' ability to infer meaning, identify main ideas, and process texts more fluently. Likewise, Suk (2016), in a quasi-experimental study, demonstrated that students who read novels extensively achieved significantly higher gains in reading comprehension than those who followed traditional reading instruction.

These findings concerning the types of materials that are most preferred by learners and also most beneficial in developing their reading skills are really significant. Therefore, they gave the researcher the power to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) suggesting that there would be no significant difference in the reading skills improvement between students who engaged in Extensive Reading of texts that match their level (such as short stories, novels' excerpts and poems) and those who did not.

4.4.2 Learners' attitudes towards extensive reading

In regard to learners' attitudes towards extensive reading, this study found that learners generally held positive attitudes towards extensive reading, particularly when they were allowed to select texts based on their interests and reading levels. During the treatment, there were many texts (short stories, novels' excerpts and poems) with various topics and learners were free to choose whatever text they wanted dependently of their interests. Many learners who benefited from the intervention reported increased enjoyment, confidence, and motivation to read in English and it could be seen during the interview that they were happy and confident.

These findings are consistent with Bamford & Day's (2002) extensive reading model, which emphasized learner autonomy and enjoyment as key factors in cultivating positive reading attitudes. Similarly, Yamashita (2013) found that extensive reading positively influenced learners' affective dimensions of reading, including enjoyment, emotional engagement, and reduced anxiety.

In regard to learners' attitudes towards extensive, Lindawati (2021) conducted a similar study at Universitas Islam Majapahit in Indonesia. The results showed that the students had positive perceptions toward Extensive Reading practices. They reported that Extensive Reading is a

reading activity for pleasure and information search where they can read material without any restraint. Moreover, Extensive Reading did not only enable them to read but also to enjoy the overall learning experience.

Finally, studies by Nakanishi (2015) and Ro (2013) also corroborated these results, showing that learners who participated in extensive reading programs developed more favorable perceptions of reading in a foreign language and demonstrated increased willingness to read beyond classroom requirements. Therefore, the positive attitudes reported in this study suggest that extensive reading can transform reading from an academic obligation into a meaningful and more enjoyable practice. From the above discussion of findings, the researcher opted to reject the second null hypothesis (H_02) suggesting that students would have neutral or negative attitudes towards Extensive Reading.

4.4.3 The impact of extensive reading on learners' reading skills

After a thorough analysis of the participants' results, the scores of the post-test of both the Experimental Group and Control Group, this study found out that the treatment group outperformed the control group on the test. The Mean scores of the two groups (Mean=42.5000 for the Experimental Group and Mean=34.2941 for the Control Group) revealed it clearly before even running the t-test for difference significance verification.

The Independent T-test came to clear out all the doubts related to whether the difference is significant. The results from the T-test demonstrated that the two groups were statistically significantly different. The Experimental group highly benefited from the one-month timespan Extensive Reading and this intervention was effective to boost their reading skills.

These findings showed the effectiveness of ER in developing learners' vocabulary and reading comprehension skills as admitted by scholars such as Hedgcock & Ferris (2009) and other contemporary writers on the subject. In their work on Extensive Reading, Hedgcock & Ferris found out that ER intervenes in improving comprehension skills.

According to the same source, when reading extensively, students get familiar with techniques of decoding messages of the texts they interact with. Such acquaintances made it possible for the Experimental Group of this study to perform better than the other group that received no treatment.

Similarly, the results presented in this chapter are consistent with the quasi-experimental study carried out by Suk (2016) when examining the effects of ER on 171 Korean EFL university students' ESL/EFL learning. Suk's findings showed that after the treatment

duration, the treatment group outperformed the control group in reading comprehension and reading rate.

As it was specified in the objectives of this study, reading comprehension skills and vocabulary acquisition were the two aspects of focus in the tests administered to the participants. Therefore, the discussion under this objective emphasized the two mentioned aspects.

As far as vocabulary acquisition was concerned as an aspect of reading skills, students in the treatment group showed significant improvements in their vocabulary stock. These results corroborate with the research conducted on students of Nigerian-Turkish International College. Nwabudike & Anaso (2013) found that the students of Nigerian-Turkish International College, Kano got high stock of vocabulary after engaging in extensive reading on their own. From the same perspective, the meta-analysis done by Liu and Zhang (2018) using data from 21 empirical studies published conducted between 2007 and 2016 also supported the power of ER in vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, a similar study was conducted in Malaysia and the results were promising as the ones found in the study at discussion here. Tan and Kasuma (2019) conducted a research on EFL/ESL Malaysian students.

When analyzing results, the findings showed that the treatment group that was exposed to Sustained Independent Reading (SIR) achieved an increase of 21% in vocabulary size. Similarly, Tan et al (2018) found that ER can effectively contribute to both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge development and the gains were largely sustained over time.

Taken together, these findings reinforce the conclusion that Extensive Reading is an effective pedagogical approach for improving key aspects of EFL learners' reading skills, particularly reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. By providing learners with frequent and meaningful exposure to authentic and level-appropriate texts, ER creates favorable conditions for language input to be processed naturally and repeatedly. This sustained engagement with written language allows learners to develop deeper textual understanding, enhance inferencing abilities, and gradually expand their lexical knowledge without the pressure of intensive language analysis.

The consistency between the present study and previous research conducted in diverse educational and cultural contexts further underscores the robustness and generalizability of ER as a pedagogical practice. Such convergence of evidence suggests that the positive effects of ER are not context-bound but can be realized across different EFL learning environments.

Therefore, considering these findings, the third null hypothesis (H_03) suggesting that Extensive Reading would have no impact on the reading skills of Post-basic students in Languages Section was finally rejected.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study purported to explore the role of extensive reading in developing reading skills among 3rd year students in Languages Section. The chapter at hand is then to summarize the findings, to draw conclusions and recommendations arising from the fourth chapter. This study was important because in the context of Burundi, to the researcher's knowledge, there was no other experimental study on extensive reading and its impact on developing learners' reading skills. The data collection process employed a pre-test and post-test intended to assess learners' reading skills and this was followed by a semi-structured interview.

Based on the research variables, the study had the following specific research objectives: types of texts that are most beneficial in boosting reading skills, learners' attitudes towards extensive reading and the impact of extensive reading on learners' reading skills. Since it was a mixed methods study, data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and presented in tables and figures where applicable. The following section presents the summary of the findings.

5.2 Summary of the findings

The research findings are presented based on each research variable in relation to the research objectives, as was outlined in the introductory section.

5.2.1 Types of texts that are most beneficial in boosting reading skills

The first objective of the study was to identify the types of reading materials that are most beneficial for enhancing reading skills. After the analysis of the data gotten from the respondents, short stories were found most effective in promoting reading skills, supported by their accessibility and relevance to students' interests and language levels. The second position, if we consider the respondent's choices, is taken by poems which are finally followed by novels' excerpts. These are the three types of texts that were presented during the treatment.

5.2.2 Learners' attitudes towards extensive reading

The second objective was to explore 3rd year students' attitudes towards extensive reading. The results of the research revealed that extensive reading helped learners to build their confidence in the target language. Results also demonstrated the power of extensive reading in strengthening learners' motivation to read. Moreover, learners reported increased enjoyment gained from the intervention brought to their disposal. In other words, students demonstrated overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards extensive reading, recognizing the indispensable role of learners' attitudes in the whole learning process.

5.2.3 The impact of extensive reading on learners' reading skills

The third objective of the study was to examine the impact of extensive reading on 3rd year students in Languages Section of Municipal Lycée of Bwiza. The findings concluded that learners of the treatment group got higher scores than those of the control group.

These findings supported the effectiveness of the Extensive Reading in developing learners' reading skills at the post-basic level in languages section. In other words, the treatment given to the Experimental group was really impactful in terms of reading comprehension skills and vocabulary acquisition as aspects of reading skills.

5.3 Conclusions of the study

The study concluded that level-appropriate texts (short stories, poems and novels' excerpts respectively) were found to be most beneficial in boosting learners' reading skills. In addition, learners had positive attitudes towards Extensive Reading by associating it with joy, confidence and motivation. The study finally concluded that **extensive reading is a powerful pedagogical tool** for developing reading skills among EFL learners. It provides students with meaningful input, encourages independent learning, and fosters positive attitudes toward language learning.

5.4 Recommendations

➤ Recommendations to the Ministry of Education

- i. Via the Ministry of Education, the Government of Burundi should support the implementation of extensive reading programs in Post-basic schools by formulating relevant policies that emphasize reading for learners.

- ii. It should allocate funds for the provision of enough English reading materials (apart from the books they use in class) in public secondary schools, particularly in Post-Basic education.
- iii. It should also consider equipping libraries where they exist and building ones where they do not exist.

➤ **Recommendations to Curriculum Designers**

- i. Curriculum designers should explicitly integrate extensive reading activities into the English language syllabus for Post-Basic students in the Languages Section.
- ii. The curriculum should allow flexible reading time and encourage learner-centered approaches that promote autonomy and motivation.
- iii. Learning outcomes related to reading fluency, vocabulary growth, and comprehension through extensive reading should be clearly stated.

➤ **Recommendations to School Administrators**

- i. They should create a supportive reading environment by establishing school libraries, reading corners, or English reading clubs.
- ii. They should encourage teachers to implement extensive reading programs by providing logistical support, such as scheduling regular reading periods.
- iii. They should monitor and support the sustainability of extensive reading initiatives within the school.

➤ **Recommendations to English Language Teachers**

- i. They should actively implement extensive reading by encouraging students to read regularly and select materials appropriate to their proficiency levels.
- ii. They should guide learners without excessive testing, focusing instead on motivation, enjoyment, and overall language development.
- iii. Alternative assessment tools such as reading journals, summaries, and group discussions should be used to monitor learners' progress.

➤ **Recommendations to Students**

- i. They should develop regular reading habits by reading English materials both inside and outside the classroom.
- ii. They should take responsibility for choosing reading texts that interest them and match their language level.
- iii. They are encouraged to reflect on what they read through short summaries or discussions to enhance comprehension.

➤ **Recommendations for Future Researchers**

- i. Future researchers should conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of extensive reading on EFL learners' reading skills.
- ii. Studies should include larger samples and different educational contexts to enhance generalizability.
- iii. Further research could explore the impact of extensive reading on other language skills such as writing, speaking, and vocabulary acquisition.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Reading materials

- Here is the list of the short-stories taken from Paul Nation's (2009) collection entitled **4000 Essential English Words 1**.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. The Lion and the Rabbit | 16. The Race for Water |
| 2. The Laboratory | 17. The Little Red Chicken |
| 3. The Report | 18. Shipwrecked |
| 4. The Dog's Bell | 19. The Seven Cities of Gold |
| 5. The Jackal and the Sun Child | 20. Katy |
| 6. The Friendly Ghost | 21. A Better Reward |
| 7. The Best Prince | 22. The Camp |
| 8. How the Sun and the Moon Were Made | 23. A Strong Friendship |
| 9. The Starfish | 24. Joe's Pond |
| 10. Princess Rose and the Creature | 25. Archie and His Donkey |
| 11. The Crazy Artist | 26. The Spider and the Bird |
| 12. The Farmer and the Cats | 27. The Party |
| 13. A Magical Book | 28. How the World Got Light |
| 14. The Big Race | 29. Cats and Secrets |
| 15. Adams County's Gold | |

- **Novels' excerpts:** Excerpt from *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, chapter one

1. Excerpt from *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, chapter two
2. Excerpt from *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, chapter eight
3. Excerpt from *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, chapter nine
4. Excerpt from *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, chapter seventeen
5. Excerpt from *The Narrative of Douglass*, chapter two
6. Excerpt from *The Narrative of Douglass*, chapter four
7. Excerpt from *The Narrative of Douglass*, chapter ten

➤ **Poems**

1. "Nightfall in Soweto" by *Oswald Mtshali* (South Africa)
2. "The Grieved Lands" by *Agostinho Neto* (Angola)
3. "The Casualties" by *Chinua Achebe* (Nigeria)
4. "An African Thunderstorm" by *David Rubadiri* (Malawi)
5. "Building the Nation" by *Henry Barlow* (Uganda)
6. "A Government Driver on His Retirement" by *Olu Oguibe* (Nigeria)
7. "The Cry of the Children" by *Niyi Osundare* (Nigeria)
8. "I Am an African" by *Kwame Nkrumah* (Ghana)
9. "Your Silence My Song" by *Micere Githae Mugo* (Kenya)
10. "Black Woman" (Femme Noire) by *Léopold Sédar Senghor* (Senegal)

Appendix B: Tests

PRE-TEST

Text 1: Princess Rose and the Creature

ID:

There was once a beautiful princess named Rose. Her mother, the queen, however, was not as beautiful as the princess. The queen felt bad that she was not the most beautiful woman in the kingdom anymore. She was tired of competing with her daughter. She made a decision. She prepared a drink for the princess. After the princess drank it, she fell asleep. Then the queen took the princess to the forest. She left the princess there. It was a very serious thing to do. "Either she will be killed by animals or she will get lost in the forest," the queen thought.

The princess had a dream. She dreamed about a man with brown hair and brown eyes. It was the man she would wed. The princess woke up. She saw a strange creature on the ground. It looked like a man, but he was hairy and green. He had horns on his head and a pig's nose. The creature said, "Did I scare you? I hope not. Let me introduce myself. I am Henry."

"I am not scared. To tell you the truth, I think you are cute," said Rose. Rose and Henry spent the day together. They collected berries, caught fish, and had lunch. They had a very good day filled with nice conversations. "Rose, I have to go home," said Henry. "My ship will sail home soon. I can't leave you here in the forest alone. Will you come with me?" Rose was very happy. She gave Henry a kiss right on his pig nose. As soon as she kissed Henry, he began to change. His pig nose turned into a man's nose. His horns and green hair went away. Standing in front of her was the man Rose had dreamt about. Rose and Henry were married, and they lived happily.

From Paul

Nation's collection

Read the text and answer the following questions by circling the letter corresponding to the right answer (5 pts per question)

1. What is this story about?

a. A strange creature that competes with a princess

b. Why a queen had a conversation with a princess

c. How a princess met a creature in a forest

d. A serious decision made by a princess

or scary.

a. to introduce

b. to prepare

c. to marry

d. to invite

2. What did the queen want to happen to the princess?

a. A creature would wake the princess.

b. A creature would prepare a drink for the princess.

c. An animal would kill the princess if she was left on the ground.

d. Rose and a creature would collect either berries or fruits.

Text 2: How the Sun and the Moon Were Made

Do you ever wonder where the moon and the sun came from? The Inuit people of Alaska have a theory. They tell a story about a beautiful girl. She was very nice. In contrast, her brother was a mean little boy. One day he proposed something. "We should go to a party," he said. The girl accepted. First, it was necessary for her to prepare. She arranged her hair and put on nice clothes. This required a lot of time. But the girl worked hard, and soon she had success. She looked perfect.

They attended the party together. The girl was having fun. Later, she walked into the bathroom. Suddenly, the lights were turned off! Someone grabbed her hair and tore her clothes. She ran out of the bathroom. She wanted to know who did this to her. Then she had an idea. She fixed her hair again. This time it was even more beautiful. She even balanced beautiful jewels in it. She wanted to encourage the person to grab it again. She put black dirt in her hair. The purpose of this was to catch the person.

She went to the bathroom again, and it was the same pattern. The lights went off, and someone grabbed her hair. When he released it, his hand was black. The girl returned to the party. She knew there was only a single person with a black hand. When she saw that person, he was very familiar. It was her brother!

He ran into the woods. The girl ran after him. They both carried fire so they could see in the dark. The smoke went into the air. As they ran, they grew. They became huge. Then they went into space. When the girl's fire went out, she hung in the sky. She became the moon, and her brother became the sun. They chase each other forever.

From Paul Nation's collection

Read the text and either answer the questions or choose the right answer where applicable (5 pts per question)

2. Why did the girl put black dirt in her hair before going back to the bathroom?.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3. "She **arranged** her hair and put on nice clothes." Choose the right meaning.

A. cut off B. styled or organized

C. hid D. untangled

4. What transformation happened to the girl and her brother as they ran into the woods with fire?

.....
.....
.....
.....

5. "They **attended** the party together." Choose the right meaning.

A. Joined/ participated in B. Hosted
C. Interrupted D. Ignored

6. What does the moon and the sun symbolize in the story?

.....
.....

1. How did the girl finally discover who had been grabbing her hair?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

7. What was the contrast between the brother's character and the girl's character at the beginning of the story?

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.....
.....
.....
.....

8. "This time it was even more **beautiful**." Choose the right meaning.

A. Attractive in appearance

B. Expensive to buy

C. Difficult to maintain

D. Complicated in design

9. Do you think the girl's strategy to catch the person was clever? Why or why not?.....

.....
.....
.....

POST-TEST

Text 1: Home and village

ID:

‘You don’t like our village any more, do you?’ the chief said, once more addressing himself to Gregory. He adjusted his tie and after commenting on the absence of the buttons on his jacket, added, ‘You prefer to spend your holidays at school.’

‘That doesn’t mean that I don’t like the village, sir,’ Gregory said and produced his vague smile. ‘I have been very busy these last two days and I have had to do some of my work during the holidays.’ Jingala jerked and looked at Gregory without a smile on his face. Then, after turning his head so that he looked at the chief straight in the face, he said, ‘What he means, sir, is that he had been receiving some private lessons from one of his masters during the holidays.’

‘I see,’ the chief said in his nonchalant manner. Again he adjusted his tie after **loosening** the knot which seemed to make his breathing hard and heavy. ‘If you want to learn and if you think you can learn more by taking private lessons during the holidays, by all means do so,’ he continued. ‘I want my village to be educated, and I am always proud of clever boys like you. But don’t spend all your time on book learning and forget your own people. That would be a disaster, my child.’

Gregory smiled, then said, ‘Yes, sir,’ He started wondering how long such a **dull** conversation was going to last. All three of them sat very uneasily as though they were expecting something terrible to happen any moment. ‘But do you know what lessons he has been receiving during his holidays, sir?’ Jingala asked and leaned forward towards the chief. ‘Yes, I understand you wanted to become a priest,’ the chief said. Gregory remained silent for a while, deciding in his mind whether to phrase his reply in the past as the chief had put it, or to employ the present tense since, in his opinion, he had not changed his mind on the subject.

‘I did, sir,’ he finally said. ‘If I hadn’t gone to collect him at the time I did, sir,’ Jingala said, ‘he would still be there today, dreaming about becoming a priest and never even bothering to tell us here about his intentions. It is a very bad school, sir. They **persuaded** him so thoroughly that I had to fight to get him out of the school as though he wasn’t my son at all. If you had been present, sir, you would have thought he was their son and that I was trying to snatch him away from them,’

Gregory, feeling furious, almost said, 'You are exaggerating, sir!' but, remembering that he was not expected to argue or start an argument with or in the presence of the chief, merely said – and in an overly polite tone – 'That's not quite so, sir, It's true that I wouldn't have come home if my father hadn't gone to collect me, but it's also true that he didn't fight to get me out.' 'I didn't fight?' Jingala said. 'You were refusing to come!' he continued loudly in an accusing manner. 'You ran away from me and hid yourself in the **principal's** house, didn't you?'

From Jingala by Legson Kayira

Read the text and answer the following comprehension questions by circling the letter corresponding to the right answer (5 pts per question)

1. Gregory
 - A. once wanted to become a priest, but had decided against it
 - B. still wanted to become a priest
 - C. never wanted to become a priest
 - D. had not yet decided whether he wanted to become a priest
2. According to Gregory's account, he
 - A. had been about to come home from school in any case
 - B. he would not have come home from school unless his father had collected him
 - C. would not have been allowed to return home unless his father intervened
 - D. would not have come home from school unless his father had fought the school authorities
3. Which word or phrase can almost mean the same thing as: He started wondering how long such a **dull** conversation was going to last.
 - A. Boring
 - B. Interesting
 - C. Serious
 - D. Severe
4. Which account of the incident at the school is true?
 - A. Gregory's
 - B. Jingala's
 - C. We cannot be sure from the text
 - D. Both Gregory's and Jingala's
5. It is clear that Gregory
 - A. disliked the village
 - B. did not get any holidays for 2 years
 - C. did not come home for 2 years
 - D. liked the village
6. Which word or phrase can almost mean the same thing as: Again he adjusted his tie after **loosening** the knot...
 - A. Attach
 - B. Tie
 - C. Connect
 - D. Unfasten
7. Who is Jingala?
 - A. An envoy of the chief of the village
 - B. The father of Gregory
 - C. The school principal
 - D. A mate of Gregory

8. The chief said, "I want..., and I am always proud of clever boys like you." This means:

- A. Gregory is allowed not to go home on holidays provided he is learning
- B. The chief allowed Gregory to become a priest
- C. The chief is not against educated people as far as they maintain the links with the village
- D. The chief dislikes learning

9. Which word or phrase can almost mean the same thing as: They **persuaded** him so thoroughly...

- A. Fought B. Pushed
- C. Accepted D. Convinced

10. During this conversation, Gregory's chief concern is

- A. not to offend
- B. to persuade Jingala and the chief to allow him to decide his own future
- C. to tell them his point of view
- D. to get the chief's advice

11. Which word or phrase can almost mean the same thing as: ...hid yourself in the **principal's** house

- A. Teacher B. Trainer
- C. Student D. Headmaster

12. Which of the following statements is correct?

- A. It's obvious that all the three interlocutors enjoyed the conversation
- B. Their conversation was boring
- C. Gregory would like the conversation to last long
- D. Their expectation was that something great was to happen

13. Who are the characters in the text?

.....

.....

.....

.....

14. Say whether the following statements are **True (T)** or **False (F)** /5 pts

- a. Gregory furiously told Jingala that he exaggerated
- b. Gregory didn't care the presence of the chief in his answering
- c. Gregory was very polite
- d. Jingala persuaded Gregory to go back to the village
- e. The chief's tie has no knot

Text 2: The First Peacock

Argos lived in Ancient Greece. He was a husband and a proud father. He worked hard and did well at his job. But one thing about him wasn't normal. He was born with 100 eyes. Having many eyes was usually a benefit to him. He had a chance to see many things. Also, since he had so many eyes, he was very good at guarding things. While sleeping, he only rested a few eyes at a time. The others stayed awake. He worked for Hera, a great goddess. His primary function was to guard a special cow. The cow was very important to Hera. It was her favorite pet. The most essential part of his job was to keep the cow alone. It had to be kept separate from all the other cows and far away from people. This was an easy job for Argos. The cow just ate grass all day. But the god Zeus wanted the cow. He wanted to take it away from Hera. He had a plan. He found a great music player. He asked the man to play a beautiful song for Argos. Zeus was certain Argos would go to sleep. The song had an immediate effect. Argos couldn't focus on his job. He fell asleep. Zeus saw this, and he took the cow. Hera was very angry with Argos. She turned him into a peacock. She put his many eyes on his tail. Argos was very sad. Zeus saw how much trouble he had caused Argos. He made another plan. He turned Argos into a group of stars. He wanted Argos to remain in the sky forever. Even today, Argos' image remains there, above the site where all his problems began. We can still see him in the night sky.

Read the text and answer the following questions (2pts per question) / 10 pts

1. What is this story about?
.....
2. Why was guarding Hera's cow easy for Argos?
.....
.....
3. Why did Zeus turn Argos into a group of stars?
.....
.....
4. What was the primary function of Argos' job?
.....
.....
5. How did Argos sleep?.....
.....

Appendix C: Interview protocol

Study title: The Role of Extensive Reading in Developing EFL Learners' Reading Skills: Case of Municipal Lycée of Bwiza Third Year Post-Basic Students in Languages Section

A. Interview per se

1) Warm-up

Q1. Tell me about the last thing you read in English for pleasure or personal interest. What was it, and where did you get it?

2) Materials (Objective 1)

Q2. Which kinds of English texts are easiest and most enjoyable for you to read?

Q3. Thinking about difficulty level, what makes a text feel “just right” for you?

3) Attitudes & Motivation (Objective 2)

Q4. How do you feel when reading in English for a long time (for example, 15–30 minutes)?

Q5. Has ER changed your motivation to read in English? In what ways?

Q6. Does reading extensively make you feel more confident in understanding English? Explain.

Q7. What challenges do you face when reading longer texts in English?

B. Conclusion

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with extensive reading in English?