**Review from *Modern Language Journal* Vol 83(1), 1999**

**DAY. RICHARD R., & JULIAN BAMFORD. Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Pp xv, 238. $19.95. paper.**

*Extensive Reading the Second Language Classroom* argues the case for extensive reading as a means of making second language reading more effective and more pleasant than may be the case presently The preceding is the intent of part 1, 'The Dimensions of Extensive Reading," which consists of five chapters. Part 2, "Materials for Extensive Reading: Issues in Development," consists of two chapters, and addresses the suitability of materials and introduces the concept of language learner literature Part 3, "The Practice of Extensive Reading," has eight chapters that discuss the implementation and evaluation of a¹ extensive reading program. And finally, an appendix presents a bibliography of language learner literature in English, including the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading.

This book will interest those who teach courses in ESL/EFL theory and methods, ESL/EFL reading, and instructional design. The hallmarks of an extensive reading approach include, at minimum, reading as much as possible, a variety of material to be read and chosen by the student, silent reading at one's own speed, and the teacher's being a role model.

There are a number of unique points made by the text that deserve special mention. Extensive reading can enhance the development of a large sight vocabulary and the development of a large general vocabulary. The authors reformulate Krashen's "i + 1" formula for second language comprehensible input into "i minus 1" for reading material that a reader can use to develop a large sight vocabulary by automaticity training. Of course, calibrating "i minus 1" vocabulary and syntactic structures is an onerous task because of the subjectivity of the operationalization of this construct.

Bootstrapping -- initial success results in further success -- is accounted for by showing how the nature of the reading material, second language reading ability, attitude, and environment individually and collectively affect a second language reader's motivation to read in a second language.

Integrating extensive reading into a second language program will entail establishing priorities in terms of how much time will be devoted to extensive reading in the curriculum. The authors propose four options, each having its pluses and minuses: (a) a separate, stand-alone course; (b) part of an existing reading course; (c) a non-credit addition to an existing course; and (d) an extracurricular activity.

What constitutes authentic reading material has been widely discussed and its definition disputed for many years. Some of the major positions are reviewed, but the authors defuse the issue by advancing the concept of *language learner literature,* work that has been written for second language learners. Such work has one defining characteristic: "a fully realized, complete-in-itself act of communication between author and audience" (p. 64) .Several examples are given.

How much to read in an extensive reading program is the third major subjective topic addressed by the authors. A broad spectrum of targets is examined, but the authors prefer a simple rule of thumb for formulating reading targets: "a book a week if the books are short and simple" (p. 85) How one defines *short* and simple is the devil in the detail.

The chapter on materials is engaging in terms of sources for language learner literature: literature adapted for language learners, children's books, learners' own stories, newspapers, magazines, children's magazines, popular and simple literature, young adult literature, comics, and translations. Readers of this book may find the use of children's books and comics off-putting to adult learners, but the authors cite studies in which adult clientele offer no resistance to the use of such material.

Day and Bamford have written a short, thoroughly engaging book that reading teachers, materials designers, and teaching methodologists use to great benefit. All of us could find points with which we would disagree, but that is not the point: The point is that the authors have tackled a very sticky wicket of how to increase a second language reader's speed, efficiency, and pleasure in reading, and I believe they have been most successful in doing so.

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