

**Call for Abstracts on a Special Issue Honoring Richard R. Day’s Contributions  
to Extensive Reading: Theories and Practices in the AI Era**

Guest editors:

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Over the past several decades, the field of foreign language reading has witnessed significant theoretical shifts, moving from viewing reading as a primarily receptive process to understanding it as an interactive endeavor between the reader and the text (Day, 2020; Grabe & Yamashita, 2022; Perfetti, 1985). This evolution underpins the role of readers in selecting interesting and level-appropriate reading materials, choosing when, where, and how to read, and achieving the optimal experience of reading. Reading is a process that elicits a sense of flow (Kirchhoff, 2013), enjoyment (Zhou, 2025), and satisfaction (Tabata-Sandom, 2023).

Extensive Reading (ER), as championed by Richard R. Day, aligns seamlessly with these theoretical advancements by emphasizing the power of voluminous, pleasurable reading to build reading fluency, reading comprehension, and language proficiency. ER—an approach where learners read large amounts of accessible and enjoyable material in the target language (Bamford & Day, 2004)—is an effective way to provide rich English input, particularly in input-poor foreign language contexts, and to cultivate autonomous readers. Also known as “pleasure reading,” “free voluntary reading,” or “sustained silent reading,” ER has been widely implemented in L2 settings and proven effective for developing reading skills (Jeon & Day, 2016; Waring & Puripunyavanich, 2025). Day and Bamford (1998) establish the linguistic, cognitive, and affective benefits of ER while providing practical guidance for implementation, such as curriculum integration, library setup, material selection, and assessment. ER encompasses several instructional approaches, including supervised ER, independent ER, and blended extensive-intensive reading models (Day, 2015). ER—the practice of reading large amounts of accessible material—offers crucial fluency development and fosters a positive attitude toward reading, which is often neglected in foreign language classrooms. This special issue seeks to honor Day’s monumental contributions to ER while exploring its contemporary applications, challenges, and future directions.

Conceptualizations of ER emphasized three key elements: volume (reading large quantities), speed (rapid reading), and authentic engagement with texts (Zhou, 2024). Research has consistently demonstrated ER's positive impact on multiple dimensions of language proficiency, including vocabulary acquisition (Day et al., 1991; Horst, 2005; Luppescu & Day, 1993; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Teng, 2020; Zhou & Day, 2020), reading comprehension (Robb & Kano, 2013), and reading fluency (Robb & Ewert, 2024; Suk, 2017). The efficacy of ER hinges primarily on student engagement with texts, as research consistently shows that reading proficiency develops through sustained reading practice (Day & Robb, 2015). Empirical studies demonstrate ER's multifaceted benefits across various learning contexts: it enhances reading fluency in English for academic purposes settings (Zhou & Day, 2021), boosts L2 Chinese learners' reading confidence and motivation (Zhou & Day, 2023), and facilitates incidental vocabulary acquisition (Day et al., 1991). The implementation and effects of ER have been investigated in contexts other than English as a foreign/second language, and extended to contexts such as Chinese as a foreign/second language (Zhou & Day, 2023; Zhou & Li, 2025), Japanese as a foreign/second language (Tabata-Sandom, 2023); French as a foreign/second language, German as a foreign/second language, and Russian as a foreign/second language (See Zhou, 2024 for a review). These findings collectively underscore ER's value in developing both linguistic competence and learner attitudes.

Richard R. Day's pioneering work laid the foundation for ER as a transformative pedagogical approach. His Top Ten Principles (Day & Bamford, 2002)—ranging from the importance of easy reading materials to the role of the teacher as guide—remain a touchstone for educators worldwide and have been examined and reexamined by researchers and practitioners around the world (e.g., Arai & Takizawa, 2025). His advocacy for learner autonomy and the joy of reading reshaped L2 classrooms, proving that ER is not merely a supplementary activity but a core strategy for language acquisition. Similarly, approaches to foreign language reading instruction have incorporated interactive exercises and tasks to reflect these pedagogical developments. Research and classroom experience demonstrate that strategically designed ER activities facilitate meaningful student-text interaction and form group learning dynamics (e.g., Tosun & Gönen, in press).

Language teaching faces both opportunities and challenges in today's educational landscape and technological era (Renandya et al., 2023), and ER is no exception. The rise of digital platforms has expanded access to graded readers and multilingual texts, yet questions persist about sustaining motivation and ensuring equitable access, including

online ER programs (Zhou & Day, 2021) and hybrid curricula that balance extensive and intensive reading.

This special issue aims to galvanize the ER community by synthesizing research, theory, and practice. It will serve as both a tribute to Richard R. Day's legacy and a roadmap for future inquiry, inviting scholars to examine ER's role in diverse contexts, especially in AI era. By showcasing empirical studies and theoretical understandings, the issue will equip educators with evidence-based strategies to nurture lifelong readers. ER continues to evolve as a dynamic, inclusive, and theoretically grounded approach to language learning. We welcome submissions that advance ER scholarship in the spirit of Day's work, whether through cutting-edge research, critical reviews, or actionable classroom innovations.

### **Submissions**

Enquiries and submissions should be addressed to the guest editors at:

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*Topics included but not limited to the following:*

1. Vocabulary learning and ER
2. Reading rate and ER
3. Extensive reading and extensive listening
4. ER in the digital age
5. AI and ER
6. Task-based learning and ER
7. Individual differences in ER
8. ER activities
9. Emotions and ER
10. ER in EAP/ESP
11. ER and teacher education
12. ER materials
13. Assessment of ER
14. ER in different foreign/second language contexts
15. Longitudinal examination of the effects of ER

Please submit an abstract of about 300 words to the guest editors. All abstract submissions must be received no later than 1st September 2026.

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