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Extensive reading: an expensive extravagance?

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Abstract

During the last fifteen years, extensive reading programmes (ERPs) have been growing in popularity worldwide as a significant support to the teaching of English, whether in L1, ESL, or EFL. The Edinburgh Project in Extensive Reading (EPER) has done much to promote the aims and methods

of extensive reading, and has successfully developed programmes in countries with such varied learning contexts as Malaysia, Tanzania, Hong Kong, and the Maldives. And yet, it seems that ERPs have not been adopted as readily as they might have been. This article considers the benefits of extensive reading, examines some of the reasons for its failure to 'take off', describes two programmes with which the writer has been intimately involved, and offers teachers some leading questions to help them develop their own programmes.

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