Extensive Reading in Japan

ERJ

ER SIG News

Dear ER SIG Members,

I would like to update you about some of our efforts to keep you better informed on ER-related issues in a timely manner. Many of you may have noticed that in addition to the *ERJ*, now in its sixth year, in the past year or so we have revamped the original SIG website and developed the new *Journal of Extensive Reading*. We have also begun maintaining an ER SIG Facebook page, tweeting information related to ER, and sending out a monthly e-newsletter. I have started the latter, and now that Cheryl DiCello, our new Publicity Chair, has settled into Japan she will be primarily responsible for that. I have noticed that about half of you have not opened the most recent newsletter I sent. I really do encourage you to at least open it and browse through it as we try to include timely notices and reminders such as event announcements, calls for papers, deadlines, etc. We also encourage you to send us news for the "member to members" section and add facebook posts, which we see as chances for you to reach out to other ER SIG members. Please feel free to email Cheryl at jaltersigpublicity@gmail.com or me at er@jalt.org with anything you think might be useful to add.

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A Story of the New ER SIG Logo

Leslie Chivers

EXTENSIVE READING
SIG

"A logo doesn't sell, it identifies. A logo derives its meaning from the quality of the thing it symbolizes, not the other way around. A logo is less important than the product it signifies; what it means is more important than what it looks like." Paul Rand

In January of 2013, we (the ER SIG) got our new logo, which you can see above! I couldn't agree more with the sentiment expressed in the above quote that a logo is nowhere near as important as what it signifies, i.e. promoting our goals of supporting and encouraging extensive reading for language learning, but in essence this article is not about extensive reading. It is about that little image you see and how we got it. I would like to share with readers some of the story behind the getting of our new Logo. This is of course a personal perspective. My esteemed Team Logo colleagues will no doubt have an equally interesting story to tell from their viewpoint. We are immensely pleased with our new logo and we think it is a quality product. We believe it will serve us well in identifying our organization, and signifying what we are "all about".

"Recognizing the need is the primary condition of design." Charles Eames

The idea of an ER SIG logo is almost as old as the SIG itself! Since before the 1st ERWC there had been discussion about getting one. Mark Brierley has records from October 2010, in which Marc Helgesen suggested the "All you can Read" logo. The need was recognized, especially in connection with a banner for our SIG table at ERWC. The idea kept resurfacing with an occasional mention in emails. One I have on record is from Bjorn Fuisting, our former Coordinator. Nothing much happened on the project though until the Autumn of 2012 when Cheryl DiCello, our

Publicity Chair, resurrected the idea. At a meeting on November 17, 2012, the Officers made the decision to form a committee (which I will, from here on in, refer to as Team Logo) and provide a budget for getting a logo. Interested officers, Mark Brierley, Cheryl DiCello, Sophie Muller and I volunteered for the job.

"Design is the search for a magical balance between business and art; art and craft; intuition and reason; concept and detail; playfulness and formality; client and designer; designer and printer; and printer and public." Valerie Pettis

Sophie got the ball really rolling by scouting out a good logo contest website viz., logoarena.com. Following up, Cheryl checked the site out thoroughly and put together a Google doc where team members could discuss and record their preferences regarding the design specifications required by logoarena.com. We established our design values and specs: ideas involving main concepts such as Japan, Reading and books and Language learning. We discussed colour—whether we wanted red and white (not necessarily, but we mentioned them in specs as one option for designers to explore), style of logo we wanted—abstract, emblem, pictorial, letterform mark (we kept as many options open as possible in order to encourage variety in the design and designer creativity) and values—we stayed neutral on many paired values, e.g. masculine/feminine, but leaned towards serious, simple and obvious. You can check out the full specifications at http://www.logoarena. com/logo-contests/extensive-reading-sig-n1852. With a credit card sorted for the contest prize of USD249.00 and USD10.00 Logo Arena fee, we settled on the best time to hold it. Around the New Year wasn't ideal, so we agreed to shoot for mid-to-late January. Leslie made an account at logoarena.com, set the contest up

with the pre-agreed values and contest descriptors, and we were off!

"It's really hard to design products by focus groups. A lot of times, people don't know what they want until you show it to them." Steve Jobs

Two design concepts appeared early on in the contest. The first was of a "person reading a book". In this concept the head of the person represented the circle of the Rising Sun. The second concept was "a book with an open door on its cover". The team members discussed these concepts, what they signified, and debated as to which served our purposes best. The book with the open door was a popular concept because it seemed to say, for many us, that reading was a conduit to people and places and human experiences—we all know the joys of reading and the worlds that reading can transport us to, so the message appealed to us a great deal. These two main conceptual representations of reading were the fodder for much of our thought and discussion over the week of the contest, and the judging week. I relayed a lot of our team's thoughts to the various designers particularly in the early days to designer 62B (person reading a book) and to designer Rays (open book/open door). You can see examples of "person reading a book" designs submitted by 62B and his/her culminating entry is seen in entry #73 at http://www.logoarena.com/logo-contests/extensive-reading-sign1852.

Many of us were attracted to Rays' open door/book concept, and at one stage I thought his idea would be first past the post. We worked on it with him for much of the week. Ultimately though, some other team members and I felt that reading was an essentially human activity and the open book concept didn't make that concept of human involvement obvious, which was one of our stated values. Ultimately, Rays left the contest, and removed his designs from the contest because he did not retain 1st rank during the Judging period. As a result his designs are not available for viewing on the Logo Arena website. It seems this is actually a common practice among designers, so in retrospect, I don't think he flounced off, although I confess to wondering whether it was a petulant act at the time.

"Art is like masturbation. It is selfish and introverted and done for you and you alone. Design is like sex. There is someone else involved, their needs are just as important as your own, and if everything goes right, both parties are happy in the end." Colin Wright
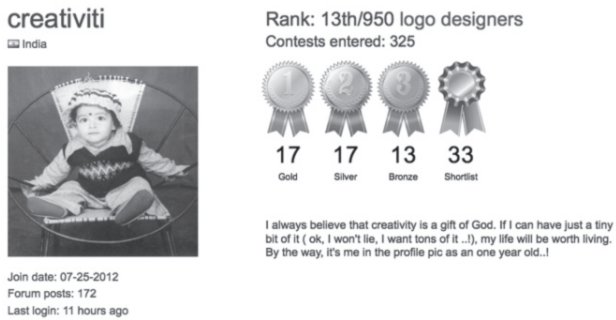
On the Logo arena website, designers can submit any number of designs and any number of variations on those designs. Contest holders can rank them, request alterations, ignore entries or even actively assign a "not interested" appraisal to individual entries, which temporarily shades them out so they are not in your face and not in the main group of entries—you can retrieve them from this "not interested" limbo though. You can set the degree to which you choose to interact with designers. The site is flexible, and depending on whether you are busy or have the time for more communication, there is a mode that will suit you at any given time of day or stage of the contest week. Your choice of mode of interaction will govern how thoroughly you exploit the resource that each designer represents and how much you participate in the shaping of your own design products and potentially, how satisfied you will be with the end result. Within the contest and judging weeks, I used all modes of interaction at one time or another, although I couldn't bring myself to use "not interested" as more than just an experiment to see what would happen. Chat communiqués with designers and emails with Team members were integral to the collaborative effort of guiding the design of our new logo, while Creativiti, Rays, 62B and many other designers were always willing to attempt altering/adjusting their designs to take into account our responses to their designs.

As one example of everything going right, follow the path we went on starting with Creativiti's original entry #20 (below) to his final, winning logo #78 at the top of this artcicle. Almost every single detail of the design journey expressed below was negotiated via email exchanges with Team Logo members, my feedback written to Creativiti and responses in the

creativiti's original design #20

creativiti
India

Rank: 13th/950 logo designers
Contests entered: 325

17 Gold   17 Silver   13 Bronze   33 Shortlist

I always believe that creativity is a gift of God. If I can have just a tiny bit of it (ok, I won't lie, I want tons of it ..!), my life will be worth living. By the way, it's me in the profile pic as an one year old..!

Join date: 07-25-2012
Forum posts: 172
Last login: 11 hours ago

A screenshot from creativiti's profile page, taken just prior to the final judging.

form of images and accompanying messages from Creativiti on the Logo Arena website.

"A designer knows he has achieved perfection not when there is nothing left to add, but when there is nothing left to take away." Antoine de Saint-Exupery

At the end of the contest on January 25th there were 67 entries from 11 designers. During the judging period of 1 week from January 25th the entries increased to 78. These 11 extra were all variations on concepts presented before the close of the entry period. They involved the final tweaking of designs to get them optimal.

Our winning designer was Creativiti from India (real name: Prabbal Kanti Dey) and our Team Logo's choice for winning design was his entry #78. Creativiti, at the time of the contest, was ranked 13th (and at the time of writing this article, he is ranked 10th) out of some 950 designers on the Logo Arena site. This win snagged him his 18th Gold Medal!

Creativiti's original entry was accompanied by the following message.

> "This is a pictorial mark logo design. I have creatively symbolized a person holding a book and reading. The head portion symbolizes the Japan flag. Please provide your valuable feedback and suggestions to improve further, thanks."

"The details are not the details. They make the design." Charles Eames

Mark was the first person to bring #20 to our attention in a verbal way, remarking that it was similar to another design, but better executed. I thought the curvy wave in the book edges and sharp corners were a bit too suggestive of a butterfly - an image not immediately associated with our raison d'être, and possibly difficult to draw by hand if we ever need to do so, so I asked Creativiti to make the top corners of

the book less acute.

At the same time, designers were coming up with only red and white designs and I for one felt a bit disappointed at the lack of color range. When I mentioned the designers' self-limiting to red and white to Shannon our Membership Chair, at work one day, she responded that she had envisioned a green logo. She said, "Red is too in-your-face. Green is natural and relaxing. For me, reading is natural and pleasurable, so green … but not a 'wimpy' green … it has to be a nice, strong clear green!"

When I put the green idea to Team Logo members they liked it too, so after checking out some different shades (none of those "wimpy" greens for us!), we came around to #006600. At the time, Shannon mentioned it had to have more of a blue tinting than a yellow one, if it leaned either way. Shannon thought we had hit pay dirt with #006600 and no-one disliked it, although everyone had a different favorite, which was not an unexpected result. I personally leaned towards the "drab" olive grey-greens but could live with strong and clear! Our one male team member Mark deferred to the X-chromosome representatives on Team Logo regarding the question of colour. Wise man!

I have since discovered that our choice of green is known as "Pakistan green" due to its use in the Pakistan flag and long association with the All-Muslim League organization, which was the driving force behind the establishment of Pakistan (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Shades_of_green).

Not being keen on pure black with that specific green, I suggested we go to a dark grey or charcoal (#3b3b3b) for the contrast, so I added the two new colour guidelines to the contest's specs. Designers got back to us with their green-grey designs - among them Creativiti's #23 and #30 to which he added grey page leaves.

"How can there be too many typefaces in the world? Are there too many songs, too many books, too many places to go?" Rian Hughes

Once the color question for the time being had been settled, I found myself re-focusing on another detail of design i.e. fonts—I felt passionately that we should make a conscious choice and hoped we would use a classy serif font, so I threw various font names into the ring … Palatino, Garamond Premier Pro, Georgia

creativiti's #23

creativiti's #30. For those reading in black and white, it's green

or Times New Roman among others. There were just too many that I adored, and this was the part of the process that was the most fun for me, being somewhat of a font phreak. Cheryl wrote back with her preferences—she liked Helvetica, Courier and Palatino. Thomas expressed concerns with how size, bolding and italics would be used in combination with any given font. Funnily, in the end, our logo font wasn't one I had picked out - we went with Trajan Pro on the designer's recommendation. Lastly Thomas wondered about the "SIG" being larger than "Extensive Reading"—really, we wanted the latter emphasized, but design-wise the higher base looked better. In the end we let the designer do his stuff.

"Good design begins with honesty, asks tough questions, comes from collaboration and from trusting your intuition" Freeman Thomas

Meanwhile, two questions came up and they both related to the use of text and the interrelationship between image and text in a logo. Of course we wanted our full name in one version of our eventual logo but the question arose as to whether our "official" logo should be image with text or image sans text? Thomas and Mark both envisaged a variety of scenarios where we might want to use the image with and without text. So it became clear to me that I would need to keep tabs on the bits and bobs and to negotiate for owning as many of these variations as possible with our winning designer in order to keep our options open.

This led to a further design question i.e. that if our default logo was going to be textless then,

"Should we think about having the initials "ER" on the image itself?" There were two schools of thought on this—one was, "Yes, it is very practical, if we want to use just the image without the text of the SIG name." The other viewpoint was that the image needs to speak for itself—writing letters on an image is tantamount to the aesthetic crime of writing, "This is a hammer" on a hammer! One was an argument for pragmatic use and functionality, the other aesthetic, with the idea that simplicity conveys a more powerful message. Personally, I was torn. I could see the value in both, but didn't like the "ER" letters on the books in #24 and #44 below for being too cluttered. Even the serif font in #44 didn't do much for the image. Would we keep the "ER" … or would it have to go …?

I mused on what it might look like if those 4 fingers on either side could be shaped to look more like an "E" and an "R". Late one night, I wrote to Creativiti, "...Can you make the left fingers look more like an "E" and the right fingers look more like an "R" while still keeping sense of fingers? Can fingers be letters? I don't know. It is just an idea and may be impossible. Yet, I think it might solve our dilemma about "ER" on the book image." Creativiti came up with something that I thought actually worked. It was subtle enough not to jump out at you and announce "ER!" but it was there to see if you looked, as in #50 below.

"Don't design for everyone. It's impossible. All you end up doing is making everyone unhappy." Leisa Reichelt

At this stage, I was thinking perhaps that the above was going to be our outcome. Not everyone was 100% convinced and the discussion went on as to

creativiti's #24

creativiti's #44

creativiti's #50

whether the ER was too obvious or not obvious enough. The "R" especially has been a focal point for discussion with responses including, "It looks like an upper-class British tea drinker with their pinky finger in the air." One member reported that her teenage daughter didn't see the R at all and only after-the-fact of it being pointed out. My own 29-year old son commented that the "R" was "kind of creepy" because it looked "broken". Our illustrious Coordinator, on hearing that comment riposted, "Well, we managed to include the Yakuza too, then!" I conclude the "R" is a success, if only because it is a talking point. Despite these amusingly quirky perceptions, our group had the breadth of experience to flow with the concepts as they developed, to more generally pick up on the group zeitgeist and to see good designs followed through, a situation I know many organizations fail to achieve at times. So, what do you see? We would be interested to know your impressions and any comments you have about our logo.

"Every designer's dirty little secret is that they copy other designers' work. They see work they like, and they imitate it. Rather cheekily, they call this inspiration." Aaron Russell

A majority of the 11 designers parachuted in at the end. As a result, it was difficult to engage in the kind of lengthy to-and-fro discussions with the late-comers that I had had with our winning designer, Creativiti and others. Perhaps the late-comers had a perfectly understandable strategy, but it was one I never fathomed. It was puzzling that they left so little time to discuss and develop a design—possibly they just hoped to "wow" us at the end and scoop the pool with a lucky strike. I know designs need to be judged on their own terms as an image, a product, a plan, but I had invested time and energy in my conversations with the designers who had been in the contest for the whole week and who had worked hard to make us something we wanted. I really didn't want the top

prize to go to a designer who had not been part of that longer dialogue. It was hard to separate this desire to reward perseverance from judging the image as an isolated artifact on its own merits. Some of these later designs also seemed somewhat imitative of concepts that had been developed throughout the week, and while I can acknowledge that old axiom that there is nothing new under the sun, I didn't on the other hand feel drawn to rewarding these Johnny-come-lately's. All culture builds on what has gone before. I guess what can offend (or not) can vary according to what the gap is between iterations, … what we consider a "respectful" distance temporally and has sufficient difference, originality-wise.

For the purposes of completing the contest according to Logo Arena rules we needed to vote on the top 3 designers, selecting a specific design in each case. Our final Winning Designers voted on by our Team Logo members were …

Gold:	Creativiti	9 [29]	Design #78
Silver:	GPdesign	7 [12]	Design #39
Bronze:	62B	7 [9]	Design #73

The numbers in square brackets include additional votes from our 2 tie-breakers, Thomas (Coordinator) and Shannon (Membership Chair), whose votes were needed to decide the Silver and Bronze medals.

Both Creativiti and 62B were long haul designers, whereas GPdesign, who offered a design very similar to another of our most popular long haulers (Rays), parachuted in at a late stage. I was glad 62B got the Bronze. 62B had a solid idea and we worked together on it a lot at the beginning of the contest. One week is a long time when you are trying to keep several designers going and coordinating team opinions and I think 62B fell through the cracks to some extent. When I look back at 62B's work I still like it and feel some sympathy with Sophie's reflection that maybe we had abandoned the red of Japan too easily. You can view the top 10 ranked designs on the contest site at http://www.logoarena.com/logo-contests/extensive-reading-sig-n1852

"Design is easy. All you do is stare at the screen until drops of blood form on your forehead." Marty Neumeier

Being very central to the logo design process by virtue of using my credit card to start the contest, I can offer some observations of the process for any group considering using the same process and site.

1.   Whoever offers to use their credit card ultimately has both more responsibility to see the contest through and more control (than any other team member) over communication with designers. Conveying messages from Team Logo members to designers can be extremely time-consuming, and will keep you up late at night across time zones with designers.

2.   Logo Arena is an easy to use site for setting up a logo contest. Any SIG could get their own logo designed there and for a higher prize than we offered, you will get even more highly ranked designers participating. The process is straightforward—you don't pay until you are satisfied that you have received the files you negotiated for and that the designer agreed to provide.

3.   Logo Arena is an intensive, all-consuming way to get a logo designed. If you are representing an organization make sure you have a team and that your team has the time and energy to give you feedback frequently (at least once a day) within the contest week. If you want to explore/exploit as many designs as possible it is best to have a team who can help you by providing creative input from different perspectives. I was fortunate to have a solid team behind me with a breadth of experience and range of perspectives that made the whole experience much easier to keep the dialogues with designers going. It makes me shiver a bit to realize that I might very well have passed our winning designer over if not for Mark, that we would not have thought much about colour alternatives without Shannon and we wouldn't have had the thoughtful input from Cheryl about fonts. Thomas was dedicated and unfailingly supportive on every aspect and question I threw to the group. But quite apart from that, if you are the piggy in the middle, be prepared to give up a couple of weeks of your life to this!

4.   Interact with as many designers as possible—you will get closer to what you want. Muse on even the designs you don't initially like (I didn't initially give much shrift to Creativiti's first entry), and what could be changed to make them more along the lines of what you want.

5.   Designers live for the ranking … ranking is all-important to them, although I never discovered the specifics of why it is so all-important within a contest, I can understand this site-wide. You need to be ready to rank designs daily (but probably not more frequently than that, unless you are getting dozens a day).

6.   Many designers will fly in late in the last day or two of your contest. If you expect to be able to have a dialogue as in-depth as you had with your first entry designers, you will probably need superhuman energy or some engaged team members ready to carry the load for you late in the competition day.

7.   In theory, each design made by a designer is distinct, but Creativiti was agreeable to including separate parts of his different designs in the final delivery of files, so it is good to ask for any variations or elements of variations made along the way, as well as the main deal—keep tabs on those bits and bobs. Even when it may not be part of your official logo, it is good to be able to claim ownership of these as well—more bang for your buck! You never know when or where you might find a use for the different elements. We also asked for different file formats and grey-scales and received them, willingly.

I would like to thank our winning designer Creativiti for his willingness and creativity in working with us to evolve our logo design until it was perfect for us. I also want to thank the members of my team for their energy, invaluable insights, attention to the issues as they came up and their thoughtful and pragmatic insights. Everyone contributed in different ways and to their strengths, so it was a truly successful collaboration of talents. The value of their different perspectives cannot be overestimated.

"A design isn't finished until somebody is using it." Brenda Laurel

We are already well on the way to "advancing our logo". We are putting our logo on books, brochures and on virtual ER products. To date, it is on the SIG website (www.ersig.org), our new e-newsletter to members, and a grey-scale of the icon version has been employed on our new, peer-reviewed Journal of Extensive Reading site (http://jalt-publications.org/access/index.php/JER/index). Sophie has taken it as far afield as India - (McLeod Ganj and Bangalore) for the Extensive Reading workshop held at Tibet Charity and targeting Tibetan refugees. I am confident that our logo design is going to be a success as it is both functional and aesthetic … a finished product and a new beginning. We, the logo team, are anticipating seeing where we take it and how it will help us achieve our goals in the future.

Design quotes from:

http://quotesondesign.com/

http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic_design.
html
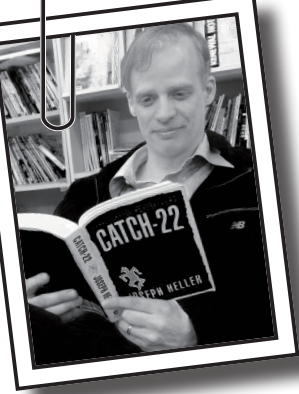
Reading all over the world: Extensive reading in Korea

Scott Miles

Daegu Haany University

Extensive reading only gained traction in Korea around the turn of the century. Like many Asian countries, Korea has traditionally followed a teacher-centered approach to English education that emphasizes rote-memorization and analysis of vocabulary and grammar, typically through intensive reading practices, to prepare students for the college entrance exam (KSAT). This view of language learning has made extensive reading a hard sell in Korea (J-H Byun, 2010; Cho, 2007; Kim & Krashen, 1997), but there are a number of encouraging signs that extensive reading may not be far from entering the mainstream in Korean education.

The earliest mentions of extensive research conducted in Korea can be found back in the 90s when several researchers, some having done their graduate work under Stephen Krashen at the University of Southern California, began exploring the use of extensive reading with Korean learners (Cho & Krashen, 1994, 1995; Kim & Krashen, 1997). Although these articles may have had little immediate impact on English education in Korea, they served to raise awareness of the practice and set the foundation for what was to come in the following decade.

The turn of the century saw a sharp increase in publications and presentations on extensive reading. An increasing number of scholars conducted research on Korean classrooms (e.g., Cho & Krashen, 2001; Cho, 2004; Kweon & Kim, 2008; J. M. Byun, 2009; Oh & Yang, 2009), both in local journals and internationally.

Among expats in Korea, Rocky Nelson, a former professor at Pusan University of Foreign Studies, was a pioneer in promoting extensive reading in Korea, giving the first presentation on ER at the KOTESOL International Conference in 2004 (after a number of proposals being rejected in the years prior). Presentations and workshops on extensive reading have since become regular events at KOTESOL, with an average of six to eight extensive reading presentations offered in each conference in recent years. A number of other major conferences held around Korea have also picked up on extensive reading, inviting prominent ER scholars such as Richard Day, Rob Waring and Marc Helgesen to participate as keynote and plenary speakers. Although some misperceptions of exactly what ER is may still exist among educators in Korea (J-H Byun, 2010), the term itself has arguably become as recognizable as any other major practice within the field of English education.

Several organizations devoted to extensive reading have arisen over the past 10 years. Aaron Jolly and Scott Miles formed an extensive reading SIG in KOTESOL in 2007. The Extensive Reading SIG is one of the more active SIGs in KOTESOL, having a relatively high membership and holding a number of events such as symposiums, KOTESOL chapter presentations, and a regularly well-attended Colloquium (patterned after the ER Colloquium at JALT) at every KOTESOL International Conference. Acknowledging the limitations of KOTESOL in making inroads into mainstream educational practices among Korean educators, Rob Waring initiated the establishment of the Korean English Extensive Reading Association (KEERA) in 2010. The purpose of KEERA is to move beyond the KOTESOL membership and focus on getting extensive reading into mainstream practice in elementary and secondary schools in Korea. The current President of KEERA is Kim Jeong-ryeol, a well-known scholar and former president of a number of English teacher organizations in Korea. KEERA's proposal to host the second Extensive Reading World Congress was accepted, and currently the members of KEERA are preparing for this international event in 2013.

Despite this heightened level of awareness of extensive reading in Korea, the practice is still outside the mainstream. Although there are many individual teachers and professors implementing some form of ER in their classes, at the university level there are few language departments that include ER as an official part of the curriculum. The situation is even worse at the secondary education level. Though many Korean teachers have learned about extensive reading in graduate schools and at conferences, they find that the pressure to teach the course book and prepare students for the college entrance exam through direct instruction is difficult to overcome. In addition to resistance due to the focus on exam

preparation, teachers also find it difficult to convince administrators and parents of the efficacy of extensive reading (J-H Byun, 2010).

Nonetheless, we are optimistic about the future of extensive reading in Korea. The obstacles may be considerable, but awareness and recognition of extensive reading has been steadily growing, and with the new generation of Korean teachers entering the field we feel we are approaching a tipping point in which extensive reading becomes a common practice in English language education.

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Planning a short in-service course to introduce an extensive reading program

Gillian Le Roux

The purpose of an extensive reading (ER) program is to encourage learners to read a wide variety of texts for fun and pleasure. When texts are at an appropriate level and interesting for readers, ER provides the ideal conditions for meaning-focused input and fluency development (Nation, 2009, p. 49). In order to benefit from such a program, schools that do not already have a plan for introducing this curriculum innovation may consider designing a short in-service course to help teachers accept and implement the innovation. Based on my experience of designing and implementing a full-day in-service course for English teachers at an English-medium private school in Taiwan, this paper will address some of the factors to consider when planning such a course for ER. In order to plan an effective and appropriate in-service course, current knowledge of teaching principles should be applied, the environment in which the ER program will be conducted should be evaluated, and the needs and wants of the learners should be considered (J. Macalister, lecture delivered at Temple University, Tokyo campus, June 9, 2012). This paper describes factors such as the environment, needs, and principles that influenced decisions about the goals of the in-service course. Then the goals of the course and the desired outcome are outlined. A description of how the course will be conducted follows: outlining the content, sequencing and format of the course, and how monitoring and assessment will take place. Finally, there is an explanation of how the overall success of the in-service course will be evaluated and how feedback from evaluation will be used to design future in-service training courses.

Environment

In this section, I will describe the environment that influenced decisions about content, sequencing and assessment.

The school is in a rural area of Taiwan, Nan Kan, near the Tao Yuan International Airport in LuJu County. The nearest bookstore that sells English language books is 40 minutes away by bus in Taipei. The weather is very humid and hot. The owner of the school has decided to invest in a selection of English books for the school library, and is in the process of ensuring it is adequately air-conditioned and de-humidified. Renovating the school to accommodate a library demonstrates a strong commitment to the ER program. The school is a buxiban (or cram school) that takes children from two to five years old in the morning, then runs an after-school program for elementary and high school children. The first class of the day starts at 8:00 and the last class of the day ends at 21:00. Teachers are scheduled to teach every period, leaving short, 10 to 15-minute breaks between classes and the lunch hour to prepare for class, grade students' work, and rest.

Eight English teachers will participate in the course. They all have extensive experience teaching EFL to pre-K up to high school students in Taiwan. They all have Bachelor degrees in various disciplines, and they all have TESL certificates. Most of them have been at the institution for more than four years, and one has been teaching at the school for ten years. They are involved in working groups that meet regularly to discuss curriculum development and participate in yearly program reviews. Their comments and suggestions are brought to the school administrator at annual meetings. Their input is often used to design new materials and influence teaching practices. These teachers are used to improvising and creating their own materials from whatever they have on hand. There are no posters or flash cards available locally, so the teachers are used to making their own props and other materials. Due to the time constraints facing the teachers, they should find this in-service activity and materials workshop very useful because they will not be asked to prepare materials during their breaks.

Needs

The goal of a course should be based on the needs, wants, and necessities of the group for which the course is being designed. The results of a needs analysis can be used to set the goals and objectives of a course. "… needs assessment is an integral part of systematic curriculum building" (Brown, 1995, p. 35). The teachers do not have a lot of time to plan new

lessons or to make materials, so the need to make materials during the in-service course was a deciding factor in setting course goals. To set further goals and objectives, before the course design is completed, I will send an information package about the extensive reading program to the teachers and seek their feedback on what kind of support they would like in order to be able to implement the innovation. The teachers are fairly sophisticated educators and as such will be able to give a lot of insight into their needs.

Other needs to take into consideration are the needs of the institution, the students, and the parents. The school needs to be able to sell the innovation to parents who are paying for their children to attend an English-medium school that delivers results, usually measured in test scores that allow entry to private schools in Taiwan and abroad. The school needs to ensure teachers understand and can justify the use of ER in order to convince the parents that their money is well-spent. The students need to be able to impress their parents and get the scores they want on tests. There is no immediate need for the students to speak English, and most of the parents cannot speak English either. The only English native speakers children see in Nan Kan are on TV or are English teachers. The children often plan to study in the USA or in Canada when they are older, but for now they have to keep passing school exams and show that they are progressing. The ER program is a way for the owner to show that the school is progressive and is taking advantage of the latest knowledge about teaching. At the same time, the administration must be careful to demonstrate that the students are doing a lot of grammar-translation, which is the preferred method of instruction in that society. For that reason, the teachers must produce materials that the students can take home to their parents to show evidence of "something happening" in the classroom.

Principles

"The application of principles involves first of all deciding on the most important principles to apply and monitoring their application through the whole design process" (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p.1). Time on task is the most important principle to apply to this course design. Since the teachers will need to produce materials and activities under time constraints, the time on task principle has been determined to be the most important and therefore will be applied and

> For a curriculum innovation to be successful, it needs to be accepted by the teachers who must implement it, and it must be designed with the particular learning environment in mind.

monitored throughout the course design process. Most of the course time will be spent on preparing activities and materials to help teachers apply the curriculum innovation in their classrooms. Motivation and feedback are also important, but the main focus is on reaching the goal: to learn about ER and to produce useable materials and activities.

The course

The two goals of this in-service course are for the teachers to understand the principles and limitations of an ER program, and to produce materials and activities to use in the classroom. We will reach these goals by understanding and remembering ideas, making materials and then experiencing and evaluating what the class has produced.

I chose to follow Nation and Macalister's suggestions for structuring a course. "A major sequencing decision involves deciding whether input by a speaker should come at the beginning of the workshop or after participants have had a chance to explore their own needs and teaching environment" (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 193). In order to meet the first goal, to increase knowledge, a week before the course teachers will be given information about ER and asked to reflect on it in light of their own experience and knowledge. Teachers will be asked to come to the course with ideas for activities or materials they would use to teach ER that they can develop with the group in the course. At the beginning of the course, I will give a short PowerPoint presentation about ER, drawing from Nation's guidelines for setting up and managing extensive reading programs (Nation, 2009, p.49). I will show ways in which ER is taught in other schools, and give samples of activities and materials used in other schools. I will emphasize that materials and activities prepared for other situations might not be practical or available for use in their situation, so they will be making decisions about whether to create, adapt, or adopt materials. Then the teachers will participate in group work to explore ways they can apply their knowledge of ER to their classes.

To meet the second goal of making materials

for classroom use, I will ask the teachers to get in small groups (two or three per group) and share the activities or materials they prepared in advance. Once they have shared their work they will be asked to switch groups and share again, this time incorporating feedback received from the first group. As experienced teachers, they bring a lot of practical knowledge about what "works" in their classrooms with their learners. After gaining feedback from each other, the teachers will be given time to revise their materials and in the afternoon session they will present their teaching materials and activities to the whole group. This will be an opportunity to try out their materials on each other before teaching it to their students. There is another opportunity to give and receive feedback at this point, and at the end of the course the materials and activities can be typed up and printed out to share with all the participants.

For a curriculum innovation to be successful, it needs to be accepted by the teachers who must implement it, and it must be designed with the particular learning environment in mind. For that reason, teachers will be asked to come to the course with their own suggestions, materials, comments and questions. They will be given an active role in designing the way the innovation will be taught, based on their experiences and knowledge of their situation.

> Growing, dynamic language programs are a product of an ongoing creative dialogue between teachers and among teachers and those that are assigned to compile curricula. Not to involve teachers in the process is to run the risk of programs that are generated in a vacuum of sorts, devoid of a dynamic interaction among student, teacher, and administrator. (H.D. Brown, 2007, p.504)

A language program needs to include input from many sources in order to be useful and practical in the context of the school, town and culture. The experts on these influencing factors are the people involved in teaching and learning in that situation, so they should be consulted when making changes and decisions about curriculum. Lamb (as cited in Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 187) made the point that the main focus of a short in-service workshop should be to influence the teacher's beliefs about teaching, and that this change in beliefs should lead to a better understanding and acceptance of the curriculum change. This course should encourage the teachers to think about the way they can include ER in their

teaching repertoire and apply their understanding of ER to their classroom practice.

Course evaluation

In the short term, the desired outcome for the course is to increase knowledge of the classroom innovation, and to produce a set of materials and activities for the teachers to implement in their classes. In the longer term, the desired outcome is to have teachers incorporate ER into their regular teaching routine. The evaluation of the course will necessarily take place in stages and will be monitored over time.

Informal evaluation of the in-service course will take place as the course unfolds. At the end of the course it will be possible to judge how well it met the goals by the amount of materials and new activities that are produced. The success of the course could also be judged by the level of understanding and buy-in from the teachers, which will be reflected in the quality and quantity of the output (materials). An anonymous questionnaire will be given at the end of the day to find out how well the course met the teachers' expectations and needs. The teachers will be asked to identify any gaps in their knowledge and to report whether or not they would be willing and able to teach ER in their classes. The course evaluation should include information about how practical the course was, based on the factors that influenced decisions about course design, such as the learning environment, the students and teachers, the needs and wants of the learners, and an evaluation of how well the course met the best practice principles of learning. Feedback on the course itself will be used to design follow-up courses to this one, as the ER program progresses and as teachers identify ideas or concerns to share.

After a period of time determined by the school administration, an evaluation of whether the teachers are implementing the innovation will be conducted. The results of such an evaluation will influence planning other in-service courses. If the initial course was not successful in convincing teachers to use ER, then the reasons for non-compliance must be identified, through a needs assessment, and addressed based on further investigation and planning.

In this paper, I identified the goals and the desired outcomes for the in-service course. I described the factors such as the environment, needs, and principles that influenced the decisions I made about

the course goals. I demonstrated how the situation influenced the design and implementation of this course in terms of the format, sequencing, monitoring and assessment. I have described how I propose to evaluate the overall success of the learning seminar and how I would use feedback from the course evaluation to design future in-service training courses. I hope that this paper will be used as a starting point, to be adapted and modified, for teachers asked to implement an ER program in their schools.

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ER SIG presenter grants

The ER SIG is proud to announce the 2013 ER SIG Presenter Grant. This grant is intended to help encourage the presentation of research related to Extensive Reading or Extensive Listening through offsetting costs of attending and presenting at conferences. The ER SIG aims to present grants of up to 20,000 yen to a number of qualified recipients.

To be eligible a recipient must:

- Be attending a national or international conference related to language teaching.
- Be presenting a vetted presentation about ER or EL at this conference.
- Not be receiving funding from home institution to offset costs of attendance.
- Submit an application, including the title and abstract of the accepted presentation, via the link on www.ersig.org no later than 28 days prior to the conference.

See www.ersig.org for more details.

The 2nd Extensive Reading World Congress

Hosted by The Korean English Extensive Reading Association

Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul, Korea

September 14th & 15th, 2013

The World Congress will be a two-day gathering of scholars, educators, writers and publishers for the purpose of discussing and promoting the theory and practice of extensive reading in second language education.

For more details, visit erfoundation.org or keera.or.kr

ER outreach grant

As part of its outreach program, the ER SIG is happy to announce two library seed endowments, one for within Japan, and one for overseas. To be eligible a recipient must demonstrate a need for or benefit of acquiring specific ER materials for their teaching context, a reasonable likelihood of these materials providing ongoing support to reading education and potentially being a seed for a wider establishment of a program, and not currently have access to a budget adequate to purchase the required materials. The application procedure and other requirements can be found on the ER SIG website. It is intended that each year at least one recipient for each endowment (the overseas and the domestic) will be selected, provided that SIG funds are adequate and that qualified applications are received. We also look forward to working with our Associate Members in seeing how they also can support this mission.

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INNOVATIONS IN ER: Starting your students at the right level.

Daniel Stewart

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One of the keys to a successful ER programme is having students read books at the appropriate level right from the first class. If the first book they read is too difficult they might not understand the difference between ER and Intensive Reading. They end up reading word by word and consulting a dictionary too often. On the other hand if the first book is too easy they are not going to make as much progress as they would with books that have 3-5% unknown words. This article is going to look at a website that helps students find the best level for starting.

The way it has been.

Teachers often tell students to read one page out of books of several levels. In this way students can determine their level, but this method assumes the students understand the concepts of ER clearly. As this is the first lesson with ER, it may be expecting too much to have them pick the correct level. For example, they might compare the books to ones they have 'read' in Intensive Reading classes and thus end up with books that are too difficult for ER.

Other teachers have used more impartial systems to determine student level such as having them do the EPER Placement Test. That test gives students several cloze passages of different difficulty levels. I used it once with 300 students and found three problems with it. First of all, marking 300 tests was an enormous job for the two teachers involved. Secondly, the test is supposed to be checking reading level, but by having students write in the missing words you are also testing spelling ability. If a student wrote 'chose' instead of 'choose', did the student understand the story took place in the past or did they just make a spelling mistake? Finally, commercial tests cost money which could be used to buy more books.

What is good about it?

The Extensive Reading Foundation has created a free website called the ERF Placement Test. It uses both the opinion of the student and an impartial testing system to determine the best starting level for students. There are many good reasons to use this test.

Whereas the EPER test takes a lot of time and effort to mark, with the ERF Placement Test the computer does all the marking. Not only does that make life much easier for the teacher, but the students learn their level right away.

The passages used in the test are taken directly from graded readers that the students will soon be reading. Several publishers kindly allowed the ERF to

以下のストーリーをどこまでスラスラと読むことができますか？

Sally goes out of her house and walks to the store. The sun is shining brightly and it is very hot.

ここまで

Every day, when she went to the store, she said 'Hello' to Mr. Brown, the owner. He was very kind, but he never gave her anything for free.

ここまで

Sally found some strawberries and brought them to the counter. Mr. Brown said "What do you want with all those strawberries? That's too much for just you to eat!" "Yes, I know," she replied "and they are a bit more than I can afford."

ここまで

Sally told Mr. Brown that she was quite excited because she was having guests. Her aunt and uncle, who lived in the north, were passing through and had written to say that they would call on her today. She felt quite anxious, as she hadn't seen them for over ten years.

ここまで

In fact is wasn't quite accurate to say that she hadn't seen them for over ten years, since even then, it was only at a distance--at the funeral of her great-grandmother. She hadn't had occasion to speak with them directly, and even now she wondered if there were some sort of special business that was bringing them to her today. In fact, unlike her, they were quite well off and through her uncle had connections to some of the leading politicians and businessmen in the country.

ここまで

use excerpts from their books for this purpose.

Using computers in class is still relatively rare in Japan so it gives students a good impression of the reading programme if it uses modern technology.

The placement test does not require the students to write anything so it is testing reading level rather than both reading level and production skills.

Lastly, the website is quick. Often new websites take time to process data. With this one, as soon as you finish answering questions the website uses the data to show you the appropriate next page. This will make more sense after you have read the following section.

How does it work?

1. A student goes to the website at https://erfpt.ealps.shinshu-u.ac.jp/ and logs in as an anonymous guest or signs in with a password given by their teacher if the results need to be recorded.

2. The student is shown five 1-3 sentence passages and asked which is about their level. An example is shown above.

3. Next they are asked to read a two- or three-page text at that level. As you can see, they have the option of giving up if it is too difficult.

about other things. 'Don't forget to write to me when you arrive,' she said.

1 / 3

○ 前のページ　　次のページ ○　　　　　　　　ギブアップ ▶

下記の問いにお答え下さい。

| Emil usually travels alone. | ✔ True ✖ False |
| Emil has money to give to his grandmother. | ✔ True ✖ False |

If a student just skips through the pages without taking the time to read, the website forces them to slow down.

4. When they finish the text, they are given eight True / False questions to see if they understood it. The questions are simple and in chronological order. They are easy to answer if you understood the text despite not being able to go back and check the answers.

5. The student's own opinion is then checked using four questions concerning their understanding and reading speed.

6. Depending on their answers to steps 4 and 5, another passage is shown to them. Steps 4-6 are repeated to zero in on their correct level.

7. Finally the website provides the student with a chart showing their level and an explanation of what that level means in several series. In the chart below you can see the student's level is 4.4 which means they should try books such as Penguin Readers level 1 or Cambridge Starter level.

This level is determined by the number of questions they correctly answered, the amount of time they spent reading and their own opinion as well.

Potential weaknesses

It takes about 30 minutes to complete the test. That is fine in a classroom setting, but if students take it at home they might get bored and just guess at the True / False answers. If you are worried about that, just do the test at school.

出題されたテキストに対して、以下の問いにお答え下さい。

難易度はどの程度でしたか？	難しかった	1 2 **3** 4 5	簡単だった
知らない単語はありましたか？	沢山あった	1 **2** 3 4 5	なかった
どの程度のスピードで読みましたか？	遅く	1 2 **3** 4 5	速く
内容は理解できましたか？	理解できなかった	1 2 **3** 4 5	理解できた

回答を送信する ○

多読レベルの測定が完了しました！

あなたの多読レベルは **4.4** です。

4.4 レベル以下の多読本を選択することで学習効果を得ることができます。

下記の対応表中でより濃く色付けされた範囲があなたにとっての適切なレベルの範囲となります。各出版社のレベルを確認し、適切な多読本を選択しましょう！

多読レベル		Beg.				Elem			Int.			Upper			Advanced		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
YL		0.4 - 0.5	0.6 - 0.7	0.8 - 0.9	1.0 - 1.1	1.2 - 1.4	1.6 - 1.8	1.8 - 2.2	2.2 - 3.0	3.1 - 3.7	3.8 - 4.5	4.6 - 5.2	5.3 - 6.0	6.0 - 6.8	6.8 - 7.5	
Penguin readers			Easystarts	1		2			3		4		5	6		
Cambridge				Starter	1		2			3		4		5		6
Macmillan			1	2	3		4				5 - 6					
Oxford				Starter	1		2	3		4	5			6		
Scholastic				Starters		1		2		3						

終了する ●

There is a danger that the test might be misused. It is not meant to be a pre / post reading ability test. The teacher has to make it very clear the placement test is meant to help the student find books of their level. It is not for giving them a grade. Students should not say they understood a passage when they really did not or they might end up wasting time trying to read books which are too difficult.

As you will have noticed from the pictures in this article, the website instructions are all in Japanese. That will be addressed in the future, but as it is being piloted in Japan only Japanese instructions are currently available.

Finally the ERF Placement Test is not yet perfect. While I took a test, I was given a three-page passage about a man looking for a ride to the train station. Unfortunately the second page was from a different book about a fugitive. This is just a database problem. Someone typed in the wrong file name so the wrong text was shown. That made the questions about the man looking for a ride very difficult to answer. This kind of mistake will be cleared up as more people use the test and point out problems.

Conclusion

There was a need for a solid ER placement test that takes into consideration both the opinion of the student and includes an impartial level check without putting a heavy burden on teachers or school budgets. The ERF Placement Test fits the bill. It is not yet perfect, but it is certainly good enough and will only get better as more people use it.

For more information:

Brierley, M., Lemmer, R., & Adachi, K. (2013). The Extensive Reading Foundation's Online SelfPlacement Test. In R. Chartrand, S. Crofts, & G. Brooks (Eds.), *The 2012 Pan-SIG Conference Proceedings* (pp. 22-30). Hiroshima: JALT. http://www.pansig.org/2013/JALTPanSIG2013/Proceedings/The2012Pan-SIGProceedings.pdf

Notes on extensive listening

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Extensive listening is listening to large amounts of texts that that can be easily understood by the listener. Much like the foundations of extensive reading, the listener is listening at or below their comfortable listening level as well as listening for general meaning, rather than specific details. Depending on the objective and goals of the lesson, recordings may or may not be accompanied by text.

How can you use it?

As a reading teacher, I often look for different activities, which will encourage my students to read. Intensive or extensive reading may be considered a tall order, especially in an era when many students have been stimulated by various types of mass media. For many L2 students reading has been nothing more than a decoding and translation exercise. Listening to a reading while following the text allows students to relax and get the gist of the story.

Graded readers on audio provide L2 students with a voice to the text, while also giving them a model for pronunciation and word grouping. Audio recordings provide intonation, which encourages the reader listener to understand the feeling of the text. By listening to a reading, students realize the mass of words that seemed so intimidating is a text about people, places and events. When my students are asked to listen to an audio recording while following the text, I am always impressed with their willingness to apply their undivided attention towards the reading and listening. It is at this time in my class that I take the opportunity to introduce literary genres in order to encourage students to be aware of what they enjoy reading and to choose books that stimulate their interest.

Before a library visit, I spend some class time exploring literary genres and subgenres and listening to excerpts from various graded readers. Oxford's *Cover to Cover* includes several graded reader excerpts. I introduce each excerpt by genre and with a brief background introduction. In order to encourage class response, I model the first excerpt. For example, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is a work of fiction by Oscar Wilde. The story is about a young man who exchanges his soul for eternal youth. Now let's give it a listen! Then for the next excerpts I prompt students for answers: What is the name of this book? Who is the author? What is the title? What genre do you think it is? After listening I follow up with questions: What names did you see in the story? What do you think will happen next? How many people are interested in reading *The Picture of Dorian Gray?* All three levels of *Cover to Cover* offer excerpts from graded readers with audio recording. In my own experience, students have often reported in graded reader journals that they chose a book because they heard the excerpt in class, and they wanted to know the end of the story.

Where can I find extensive listening resources?

Several publishers offer graded readers on audio: for example Black Cat, Macmillan, Oxford University Press. A comprehensive list of what's available in graded readers on audio can be found on the Extensive Reading Foundation website at www.erfoundation. org. Black Cat Readers at www.blackcatreaders.com offers downloadable mp3s and several videos, and information on getting the most out of graded readers on audio. *Using Graded Readers in the Classroom*, an online publication by Macmillan Readers at www. macmillanreaders.com also offers several lesson ideas on how graded readers on audio can be used as extensive listening materials.

ER Webstuff

Check out Jez Uden's blog:
EFL reading in cafes
http://jezuden.edublogs.org/

Liana's Extensive Reading Journal
A blog about Extensive Reading in Japanese
http://joechip.net/extensivereading/

Can extensive listening to rhyme facilitate L2 English literacy?

Meredith Stephens

Tokushima University

Extensive listening is recommended as a method of facilitating extensive reading, because an auditory representation can enhance comprehension of the written word. Clearly, the quality of what is listened to needs to be addressed. The ideal type of listening for beginners would exaggerate the prosodic features of everyday language in order to reinforce grammatical boundaries, and contain sufficient repetition so that the language can function as a mnemonic device. Extensive listening to rhyme for children learning L2 English is suggested as a means of furthering this aim. This could be effective for learners of any age, but here it is suggested that children in Japan be exposed to rhyme from kindergarten and throughout elementary school.

The relationship between phonemic awareness and reading

Pronunciation has been treated as a separate skill from reading comprehension in EFL classes in Japan, and therefore the relationship between the two skills may not be apparent. Why should attention to phonemes facilitate the development of reading skills? In her paper entitled "Phonology in second language reading: Not an optional extra", Catherine Walter (2008) explains a function of short-term memory known as the 'phonological loop', in which two seconds of what the listener has heard remains in the memory after it has been uttered. This applies not just to what has been heard, but also to what has been read. According to Walter, L1 readers of alphabetic languages store the two seconds of what they have just read phonologically rather than visually. For L2 learners, the ability to distinguish phonemes from one another is critical because these differences refer not only to sound but also to meaning. Accordingly, Walter does not recommend the teaching of reading skills in the L2 class (unless the students also lack reading skills in their L1): "Good L1 readers do not need to learn how to comprehend in order to become good L2 readers, but this study has shown that they do need to be better at mentally representing spoken language" (p. 464). Thus, the following discussion addresses how to aid learners to form better mental representations of spoken L2 English, in order to become competent readers of English.

Phonemic discrimination plays a critical part in listening comprehension. One sound can critically affect the sense of what it said, whether it be a vowel in the middle of a word (cup/cap), a consonant (lip/rip) , or the final 's' used to distinguish singular from plural. Clearly weaknesses in phonemic discrimination can be circumvented somewhat by attention to contextual clues, but phonemic awareness undoubtedly plays a role in fine-tuning learner's comprehension. Traditionally, minimal pairs have been the exercise of choice to teach L2 learners of English these distinctions, but here an alternative will be suggested: extensive listening to rhyming phrases.

Why not stick to minimal pairs?

Minimal pairs refer to pairs of words which vary in terms of a single phoneme, and which may be difficult for the L2 learner to distinguish. A minimal pair activity proceeds as follows: For example, in the case of cap and cup, the teacher says one of the following to the class: cap cap (a, a), cup cup (b, b), cap cup (a, b), or cup cap (b, a). Students write down aa, bb, ab, or ba according to what they perceived the teacher to have said. This is repeated for other minimal pairs which contrast in the same way, such as truck/track, or cat/cut.

Minimal pairs are a simple and effective way to draw attention to minimal phonemic differences between words, and to highlight how a small difference in pronunciation can lead to an important difference in meaning. Minimal pairs can certainly be an engaging exercise, and are called for when listening comprehension is impaired due to difficulties distinguishing between pairs such as those above, or even words containing two phonemic differences such as trouble and travel. However, simply drawing students' attention to the minimal pair, and conducting a quiz to distinguish between them, does not necessarily result in the ability to make this distinction. Minimal pair exercises function as a testing device, rather than an educational one. Some minimal pairs appear to be resistant to instruction, and this is frustrating for both teachers and students.

A further limitation of minimal pairs is that, as the name suggests, they provide the minimal phonemic distinction between otherwise identical word pairs. They are not presented in the wider context of an extended text, such as rhyming verse, in which the stress placed on the rhyming words serves to indicate grammatical boundaries (see Cook, 2000).

The advantages of nursery rhymes over minimal pairs

Accordingly, an alternative to the above minimal pairs exercise is the presentation of such pairs in the context of nursery rhymes. However, the use of nursery rhymes in the L2 English classroom may be considered problematic. The setting of nursery rhymes is distant in both time and place, and the language is often archaic. Nevertheless, there are clear advantages to the teaching of rhyme. Cook (2000) outlines the function of rhymes for L1 acquisition: "rhythmic breaks not only coincide with linguistic boundaries, they also emphasize those boundaries much more than they would be emphasized in everyday speech. Grammar, rhythm and actions all echo each other." (p. 15) Accordingly, nursery rhymes perform an important linguistic function despite their apparent lack of cultural relevance. Cook demonstrates this with examples of common rhymes such as Hickory dickory dock, and Lucy Locket lost her pocket: "such isolated, disconnected events and characters appearing without introduction are far from uncommon" (2000, p. 24).

The role of rhyme in L1 literacy

There is strong support for the role of rhyme in furthering L1 literacy: "the experiences which a child has with rhyme before he goes to school might have a considerable effect on his success later on in learning to read and to write" (Bradley and Bryant, 1983, p. 419). Cook highlights the role of rhyme and rhythm as "an aid to, even a precondition, of literacy" (2000, p.26). Similarly, Wolf provides a powerful argument in favour of the role of rhymes in L1 literacy: " Tucked inside Hickory, dickory, dock, a mouse ran up the clock and other rhymes can be found a host of potential aids to sound awareness- alliteration, assonance, rhyme, repetition. Alliterative and rhyming sounds teach the young ear that words can sound similar because they share a first or last sound." (2008, p. 99). Importantly, Wolf connects this ability to hear individual phonemes to the facilitation of literacy.

Can rhymes also be used to foster L2 literacy?

Some of the techniques which foster L1 literacy could also be exploited for L2 learners of English. Referring to L1 learners of English, Goswami and Bryant remind us that "there are other speech units to think about than the phoneme" (1990, p. 47). Here they refer to onset and rime, which mean the division of sound within the syllable that is larger than the phoneme and shorter than the syllable, that is, the beginning of the syllable, referring to the onset, and the end of the syllable, referring to the rime (p.3). Children make generalizations based on onset and rime, and this explains why it is easier for them to form categories on the basis of an onset and rime such as str and ing, than stri and ng (p.77). This distinction commonly used by L1 learners could also be introduced to L2 learners. L1 learners learn to distinguish between onset and rime due to the abundance of rhyme in their daily exposure to songs, advertisements, and nursery rhymes. This rich exposure is typically unavailable to L2 learners, and will therefore examples of rhyme need to be provided in the L2 classroom.

However, teachers may consider that traditional English nursery rhymes are not meaningful for L2 learners. L2 learners differ from L1 learners in a multitude of ways, not least in that there is reduced input and interaction in their environment and less opportunity to make sense of apparently nonsensical verse. For these learners, there are alternatives to traditional rhymes, which nevertheless preserve their important linguistic features. Rhyme also features in Carolyn Graham's (1978, 1986) wealth of chants for L2 English learners. These present contemporary language in familiar contexts, set to rhythms which highlight the prosody of spoken English. Furthermore, much of popular music, from its inception in the 1960's to the present, is similarly characterized by the essential features of rhyme, alliteration, and rhythms which, like traditional rhymes, present an exaggerated prosody of spoken English.

Emotional engagement

One of the tenets of extensive reading is the importance of affect. Day and Bamford contrast the purposes of intensive and extensive reading, the former to translate and answer questions, and the latter to get information and enjoy (1998, p. 123).

Clearly, not only extensive reading, but also extensive listening should provide the listeners with a sense of enjoyment to facilitate retention of the linguistic features in their memory. Emotional engagement is recommended as a useful tool to aid the memory (Willis, 2006). A skilful practitioner can introduce rhyme in the context of verse or song in order to encourage the enjoyment and therefore retention of the material presented in both extensive listening and reading.

Frequency of Listening

Manfred Spitzer recommends frequent short periods of practising a new skill rather than long irregular ones: "neural networks digest the new input with every repetition, thereby changing the weights of the synaptic connections – that is, learning." (1999, p. 204) If this reasoning is applied to the teaching of rhyme to English learners, who are partaking in a curriculum which contains a range of other important subjects, this suggests that short daily exposure to rhyme would be more effective than a weekly lesson of longer duration.

When to start?

Clearly exposure to rhyme alone will not produce the equivalent results to being immersed in an L1 environment. Cook warns against the "popular misconception" (2010, p. 133) that children can acquire an L2 at school in the same way as children who function in bilingual environments before puberty. However it is recommended here to provide children in the early years of elementary school with short regular exposure to English rhyme to provide them with at least a better prospect than at present. Spitzer refers to children's "phonetic maps on which only the phonemes that have been represented are actually heard. Once the map has been formed, it becomes increasingly difficult to change it." (1999, p. 215). The phonetic map for a second language is characterized by individual variation, so it is not assumed that the exposure to rhyme will produce a uniform result for all children. However many children will benefit from this kind of exposure in the elementary school years. This will provide a foundation for the progressively difficult reading comprehension skills that are required in later years. The repetition, grammatical parallelisms, vocabulary and pronunciations that are presented in rhymes will serve as a model of those that are encountered in the different context of the more formal texts in successive stages of their schooling.

Recommendations

The demanding elementary school curriculum in Japan may not afford the time for extended periods of English instruction. Furthermore there are those who oppose the introduction of L2 English because they fear this may take away from the time devoted to Japanese literacy instruction. (eg: Otsu, 2007). In recognition of these concerns, it is not proposed here that significant time blocks be devoted to L2 English instruction. Rather, short and yet regular listening to rhyme for elementary school children is suggested as a way to introduce the distinctive segmental and non-segmental features of English pronunciation. The result is not anticipated to be equivalent to that of L1 education. As Jenkins reminds us, "A 'native-like' accent is not necessary for intelligibility in EIL [English as an International Language]" (2000, p. 207). However it is hoped that many children will develop the ability to discriminate between onset and rime, prosodic awareness, and the concomitant awareness of grammatical boundaries, and that this will facilitate their path into L2 English extensive reading.

Finally, Walter's (2008) recommendation that learners form a better mental representation of spoken language needs to be applied to Japanese learners participating in extensive reading programmes. If these learners too can utilize the phonological loop when reading they will be able to more accurately and effectively store the last two seconds of what they have read, and keep this in the working memory in order to process larger stretches of text. Extensive listening to rhyme in the early years is suggested as a means of helping children develop an auditory image of written language.

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Write for us!

Deadline for submissions ERJ 6.2: July 31st

⌨ Anything related to extensive reading or extensive listening, or of interest to members of the JALT ER SIG

⌨ Maximum length: 4 sides of A4, around 2,500 words

⌨ APA6 style

⌨ No footnotes

⌨ Headings and subheadings sentence-capitalised (only the first letter of the heading and the first letter of proper names capitalised—like this list!)

⌨ Photos, graphs and graphics submitted as separate, clearly named files

⌨ MSWord or text format (If you have any layout requests, send separately or consider the position of layout editor!)

⌨ In English or Japanese, but not both (No Japanese characters within English text)

⌨ Put your name and part of the title in the filename.

⌨ Authors should prepare a photo, relatively close-up with good contrast and ideally reading something. Add your academic affiliation if you would like that to appear in print.

Send to erj@jalt.org

ER Seminar 2013 plenary speaker: Donalyn Miller

Donalyn Miller is a 4th grade Language Arts teacher at O.A. Peterson Elementary School in Fort Worth, Texas. She has enabled students of many different backgrounds to enjoy reading and to be good at it. Her approach is simple yet provocative: affirm the reader in every student, let students choose their own books, allow for extra reading time in class, model authentic reading behaviors, and develop a classroom library filled with high-interest books. On average, Miller's approach has helped 85 percent of her students score in the 90th percentile on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills or "TAKS", which is the state reading assessment.

In her quest to spread reading freedom, Miller gives staff development presentations on campuses and conference rooms across the country. Her articles and essays appear in national publications like Library Sparks Magazine. Miller also shared her ideas and strategies for teaching reading and inspiring students to read in her book The Book Whisperer. Her new book, Reading in the Wild, will be published this November and features more research on how to teach students to become lifelong readers. Last but not least, Miller co-writes a monthly column with Alyson Beecher for Scholastic's Principal to Principal E-Newsletter, focusing on school-wide reading initiatives like book clubs, book talks, and promoting reading throughout the school day.

Following the communication trend of the 21st century, Miller started writing about teaching reading as a guest columnist for Education Week Teacher (formerly Teacher Magazine) in their Ask the Mentor series. She then created her own blog The Book Whisperer before moving to The Nerdy Book Club Blog where she now leads a vibrant and committed community of readers encouraging children to read more and celebrate books.

Language Learner Literature Awards
Finalists 2013

Every year, the Extensive Reading Foundation recognizes the best new works of language learner literature in English. From books published in 2012, the ERF judges have selected fourteen titles of particular merit – the finalists. From these fourteen, the ERF will select one winner in each of five categories, taking into account the votes and comments of students and teachers of English worldwide.

All finalist books can be ordered online from the independent CIBC: www.eflbooks.co.uk/reader_finalists.php. If you or your students read any of the books and feel that they are worthy of the LLL Award, vote for them via the '2013 LLL Finalist Feedback' link on the ERF main page: www.erfoundation.org/erf/. Voting closes on June 30, 2013. The winning books will be announced in September 2013.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **Young learners** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
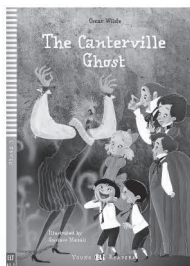
The Canterville Ghost
By Oscar Wilde
Retold by Jane Cadwallader
Illustrated by Gustavo Mazali
ELI Readers
ISBN: 978-88-536-0769-0

Judges' comment: Beautifully illustrated, fast-moving story of the Otis family and Sir Simon, the ghost. Do they just see past each other?
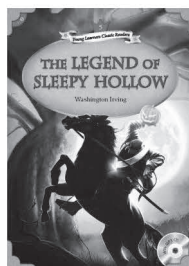
The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
By Washington Irving
Retold by Casey Malarcher
Illustrated by Fabio Leone
Compass Publishing
ISBN: 978-1-59966-678-5

Judges' comment: Innovation and classic story-telling are mixed seamlessly in this story. The book includes wonderful illustrations and a playlet for a class performance.
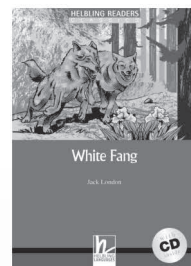
White Fang
By Jack London
Retold by Jane Cadwallader
Illustrated by Gustavo Mazali
ELI Readers
ISBN: 978-88-536-0771-3

Judges' comment: Well-managed retelling of a classic story of love, respect, and loyalty between people and animals. We promise you'll keep turning the pages quickly.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **Adolescent and Adult: Beginner** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
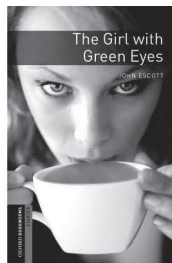
The Girl with Green Eyes
By John Escott
Illustrated by Dylan Gibson
Oxford Bookworms
ISBN: 978-0-19-479434-3

Judges' comment: Who is the girl with the green eyes? Why is she so interested in Greg? And is the man in the hotel really her stepfather? Find out when you read this story. Boy meets girl – with a difference!

The Little Match Girl
By Hans Christian Andersen
Retold by Bill Bowler
Illustrated by Monica Armino
Oxford Dominoes
ISBN: 978-0-19-424940-9

Judges' comment: The little match girl lives in a big city. Her family is very poor, and the little match girl is very cold, and very, very hungry. What will happen to her? This famous story is more than 100 years old. It is told here in simple words with beautiful pictures.

For a wealth of information about extensive reading and the Language Learner Literature Awards please visit the Extensive Reading Foundation website: **www.erfoundation.org**

You can also download a free *Guide to Extensive Reading* **http://erfoundation.org/ ERF_Guide.pdf**

The Extensive Reading Foundation's **Guide to Extensive Reading**
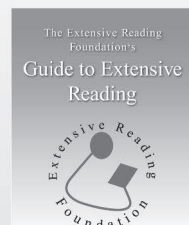
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Adolescent and Adult: Elementary ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
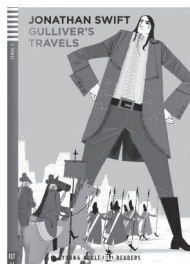
Gulliver's Travels
By Jonathan Swift
Retold by Janet Borsbey and Ruth Swan
Illustrated by Simone Massoni
ELI Readers
ISBN: 978-88-536-0787-4

Judges' comment: An excellent retelling of this classic, with good clarity and language control. Including several of Gulliver's journeys, it goes much farther than some other 'simple' versions in familiarizing readers with the thrust of Swift's social commentary.
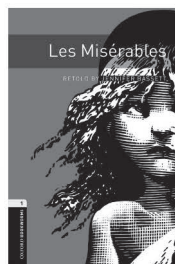
Les Misérables
By Victor Hugo
Retold by Jennifer Bassett
Illustrated by Giorgio Bacchin
Oxford Bookworms
ISBN: 978-0-19-479440-4

Judges' comment: Loosely based on Victor Hugo's novel, this well-written retelling is an excellent way to get to know this great story. We became involved in the story, caring about the characters, and the set-the-stage sections help the reader catch up on important events.
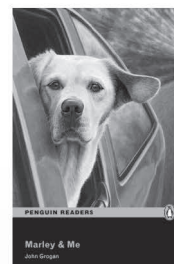
Marley and Me
By John Grogan
Retold by Anne Collins
Pearson Education/Penguin Readers
ISBN: 978-1-40-826376-1

Judges' comment: A simply told, true story about a dog by his owner brings the reader through years of shared experiences to gain a feeling for Marley, his family, and the bond that develops between them. Dog lovers, especially, will love this story and lose track of time as they read page after page.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Adolescent and Adult: Intermediate ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
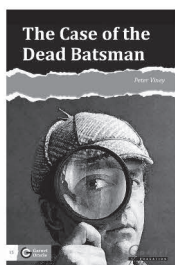
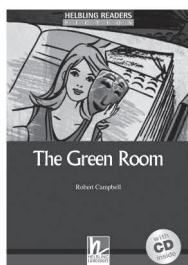### The Case of the Dead Batsman
By Peter Viney
Illustrated by Kay Dixey
Garnet Oracle Readers
ISBN: 978-1-90757-521-1

Judges' comment: You may think, 'Oh, not another Sherlock story!'… But this is extremely well-written, with a masterly control of the language, an interesting plot, and good illustrations that help the reader. It is accessible, without patronizing the reader.

The Green Room
By Robert Campbell
Illustrated by Valentina Russello
Helbling Fiction
ISBN: 978-3-85272-327-3

Judges' comment: This is a sort of 'classical' story about adolescents' conflicts and the growing up process. What makes it different is the clever way in which the author interweaves the main plot with the plot of the play-within-the-story.

Owl Hall
By Robert Campbell, from an original idea by Robert Campbell & Lindsay Clandfield
Illustrated by Simon Williams
Macmillan Readers
ISBN: 978-0-230-42283-4

Judges' comment: This is a very well-constructed story with a quite elaborate plot that develops in a very intelligent way. It builds on the tension and adds a couple of good twists that keep you hooked to the end.

## ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Adolescent and Adult: Upper-Intermediate and Advanced ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
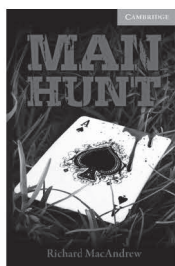
Manhunt
By Richard MacAndrew
Cambridge English Readers
ISBN: 987-01-107-62455-1

Judges' comment: This original murder mystery, set in a rural community, is a compelling read. It moves back and forth between the voices of the criminal and the police, and draws the reader into the narrative. Clear, vivid language enables the reader to participate in the problem-solving of the detectives as they unravel the mystery.
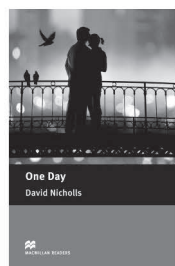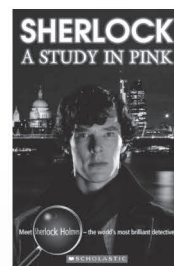
One Day
By David Nicholls
Retold by Fiona Mackenzie
writing as F. H. Cornish
Macmillan Readers
ISBN: 978-0-230-42235-3

Judges' comment: This successful retelling has accessible language and good illustrations. It propels the reader through a series of moments in a complicated 20-year romance, in which Dexter and Emma are revealed – sometimes together, sometimes not.

Sherlock: A Study In Pink
By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
Adapted by Steven Moffat and
retold by Paul Shipton
Scholastic Readers
ISBN: 978-1-906-86193-3

Judges' comment: Based on a TV script adaptation of Conan Doyle's 1887 novel, *A Study in Scarlet*, this captures the atmosphere of the original novel wonderfully. It uses easy English to build a sense of excitement and mystery that pulls the reader into the story.

New graded readers releases

Bjorn Fuisting

Ritsumeikan University

The new school year brings a lot of joy: cherry blossoms, warm days, a chance to start afresh, but for ER lovers it above all brings a lot of new graded readers. Over 500 new titles are available from a host of publishers and book retailers.

New series

If you like to use readers originally published for native elementary and junior-high school students, you are in luck as there are five new series that have been brought to Japan.

Collin's Big Cat
ENGLISHBOOKS.JP

Collin's Big Cat is a collection of fiction, non-fiction, play scripts and phonic readers for young readers split into 11 levels, originally targeted at native speakers aged 3-11. Englishbooks.jp are bringing 198 titles to Japan initially. This series has a comprehensive system with very good online support, and includes free downloadable material that would also be of interest to teachers not using the books: http://collinsbigcat.com/support-and-assessment

National Geographic Ladders: Common Core Readers
CENGAGE

Ladders is another reading program originally for native speakers that has been brought to the EFL market, but this series is a bit different from others since it offers 4 levels of each title (Above level, On level, 1 Below level, 2 Below level). It is originally intended for grades 3-5 in elementary school. Along with many products from National Geographic/Cengage, the books are visually beautiful, and I would recommend them for any international school or returnee program. A total of 24 titles makes for 96 books with the 4 levels of each title.
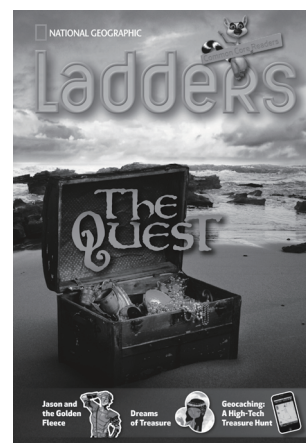
National Geographic Explore On Your Own
CENGAGE

Similar to the Common Core Readers in target and style but with two levels of title book: Pioneer and Pathfinder. A total of 27 titles (54 books) for native speakers grades 3-5 in elementary school.
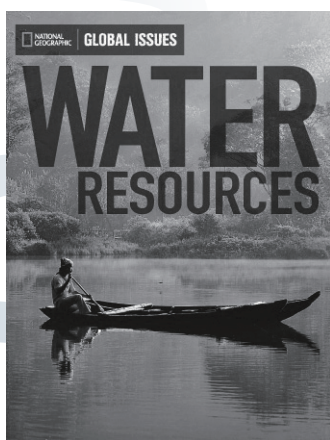
National Geographic Global Issues
CENGAGE

Same style as Explore On Your Own but for grades 5, grades 6 and 7, and grade 8 and with 3 levels for each title (Above, On, and Below). A total of 12 titles (36 books).

Factual Readers
MACMILLAN

The Factual Readers series makes use of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and was originally developed for 6-12 year olds native speakers in the UK. The series consists of 6 levels that gradually increase in length and difficulty (CEFR A1.1-B1). It is accompanied by extensive support material in the form of audio downloads of all texts, teaching notes and photocopiable worksheets with extra exercises. Since the series focuses on facts it seems very suitable for using when doing projects at a returnee program or international school but some levels could also be used at high school or with lower level university classes.

Expansions & new editions

For those who prefer to use graded readers developed for ESL/EFL students there are have been no new series released this year but plenty of new titles and a couple of expansions of existing series.
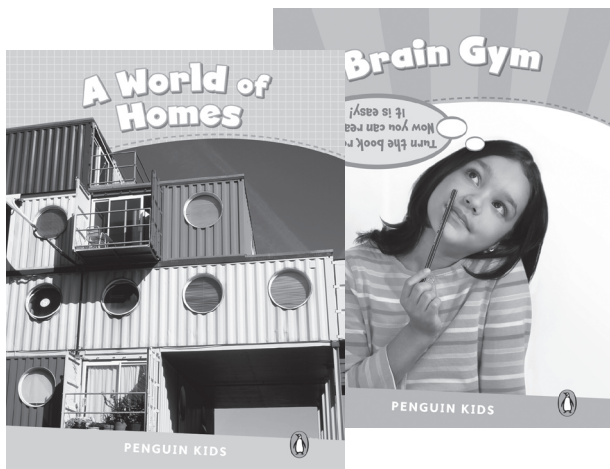
Penguin Kids
PEARSON

Penguin Kids, brought out last year, has added a new strand to complement their classic Disney Stories, namely Content Readers, and has the same 6 levels with headwords from 200 to 1,200. The Disney Stories are very popular among young kids (my daughter loves the pictures even though she can't read yet) and this adds another dimension to the series. These books are very engaging, especially from level 2 (300 headwords) up, and beautifully illustrated. I'd recommend this great series for any children's school and for elementary school students.

Classic Tales
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

This series came out in a new edition last year, and I didn't notice how much it had been changed until I got hold of a copy. Titles come in three versions: Book only, Activity Books & Plays, and as an e-Book with and audio pack that can be used with an interactive whiteboard. With good illustrations, and as always, excellent online support, Classic Tales can be used with other material so this series is a great stepping stone before getting into Oxford's Bookworms (or other major series). Level 1 starts at 100 headwords and the series gradually increases to 400 headwords at Level 5. http://elt.oup.com/teachers/classictales/?cc=global&selLanguage=en

Other new titles

All the titles of Choose Your Own Adventure, featured in the last ERJ, have now been released. Other additions to existing series are new titles to Cambridge Experience Readers (previously called Cambridge Discovery Readers), Eli Readers, Penguin Readers, Macmillan Graded Readers, Black Cat Readers, Oxford Read and Discover, Oxford Bookworms and Dominoes, as well as Scholastic's Popcorn, DVD, and ELT Readers. The full list of new readers is available at our informative ER SIG website: http://www.ersig.org/drupal-ersig/new-releases-graded-readers
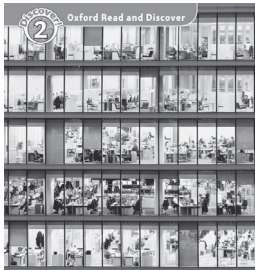
Discover and read Oxford's Read and Discover

Ben Shearon

Tohoku Unievrsity

Oxford's Read and Discover series fills an important niche in graded reading: low-level non-fiction.

Student surveys at my university indicate that 15% of students prefer non-fiction and a further 10% like fiction and non-fiction equally. Our library has some non-fiction readers, but they tend to be of a higher level, so I was very pleased to see this series when it came out.

The series now consists of around 60 titles (OUP claims 174 on their website, but this includes CD versions of the books as well as Activity Books) over six levels. The lowest level uses just 200 headwords, going up to 1050 for level six.

Content for the series consists of a range of topics, mainly science, history, nature, and travel.

Read and Discover is aimed at younger learners (8 years old and up), but so far I have found them to be popular with older Japanese learners, up to and including university students.
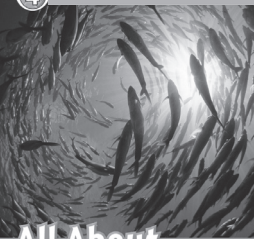
The familiar content allows students to overcome potentially new vocabulary, and the books are extremely attractive, with large, full-colour photographs. The layout of the series is also conducive to less able readers: the books all have multiple short chapters, mostly just a couple of pages long.
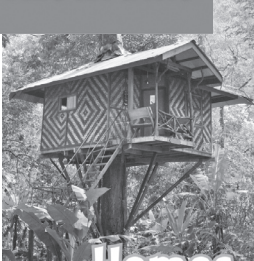
For students that like a bit more structure to their reading, the books include exercises based on the content and language: this could also be useful for teachers looking for class readers. Of course, for students who are not interested in this kind of activity, they can easily be skipped over.
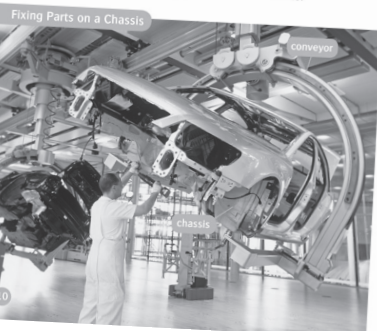
This is a very attractive series that should find a home in most ER libraries: the low level, short jumps between levels, wide range of topics, and engaging design means it can appeal to students that might be put off by more conventional readers. Well recommended.

A new Journal of Extensive Reading

We are very pleased to begin offering readers articles from our new peer-reviewed academic journal, the *Journal of Extensive Reading*!

In diverse learning settings all around the world, extensive reading (ER) programs and practices have grown to play a key role in the acquisition of language. In Japan, we have been fortunate to experience the spread of extensive reading together as a vibrant community of teachers, researchers, practitioners, publishers, and other enthusiasts.

The JALT Extensive Reading SIG has served as one hub of activity in the ER community. Since 2008, we have published *Extensive Reading in Japan (ERJ),* a journal that has highlighted best practices in ER, research, innovations, and of course books. *ERJ* serves an important purpose: it curates a variety of conversations about extensive reading that are of interest to a broad community of educators in Japan, and in other parts of the world. With this purpose in mind, *ERJ* editors work with authors to publish high quality articles that are highly readable and unencumbered by technical jargon that might intimidate some readers. As we all know from the main tenets of ER itself, when readers are overwhelmed by difficult vocabulary, texts lose their appeal and usefulness.

However, as we also know, different types of texts appeal to different types of readers, and serve different purposes. In 2011, the First World Congress in Extensive Reading in Kyoto highlighted the fact that an increasing number of teachers has begun researching and writing about ER with empirical methods consistent with the standards of the top academic journals in our field. The short papers in the First World Congress in Extensive Reading Proceedings showcased research that employed a variety of rigorous methodological approaches to explore and analyze the efficacy of extensive reading from many different angles. The goal of our new Journal of Extensive Reading is to provide an open platform for the publication of this type of research on an ongoing basis.

To create the *Journal of Extensive Reading*, or *JER*, we brought together an editorial board consisting of many of the top researchers in the field. Together, we crafted a call for papers that encourages research-based submissions that expand knowledge about ER's connection to language acquisition. We have also designed a blind peer-review system that ensures that submissions are fairly and rigorously vetted by experts in the field before being published.

We believe strongly in the open sharing of text that digital publishing now allows, and this is why *JER* will not employ a subscription system that uses a paywall to limit readership to paying customers or institutions. *ERJ* already serves as a subscription-based journal aimed mostly at our SIG's members in Japan. With *JER*, we are seeking a worldwide readership, and to do this we have decided to keep the journal free and open.

By leveraging the cognitive surplus of our dedicated ER community, articles can be reviewed, edited, and laid out with no real publishing costs. Also, our relationship with JALT, our parent organization, allows us to publish on the JALT publications server very cheaply. Consistent with this ethos, *JER*'s first article is an innovative piece by two leading scholars—Paul Nation and Laurence Anthony—that introduces a new free online repository of mid-frequency readers adapted from several high quality selections of English language literature.

Finally, you may notice that our first issue is actually just one article. This is by design: we believe that online publishing has the potential to shorten the lag time between academic article submission and publication, which is normally quite long. By publishing one article at a time rather than waiting for a whole issue to take form, we are hoping to guarantee a quick turnaround time while maintaining high standards of quality and academic rigor. Articles will thus appear here as they are available throughout the year, and one year's worth of articles will comprise a volume.

We hope that our new publication, the Journal of Extensive Reading, will serve an ever-growing ER community of teachers and researchers around the world. Happy reading!

JER's Founding Editors:

Thomas Bieri, Nanzan University

Mark Brierley, Shinshu University

Leslie Chivers, Ohka Gakuen University

Peter Hourdequin, Tokoha University

Sign up to help with the publication of *JER*, or to receive email notifications of new articles here: http://jalt-publications.org/jer.

Review: Beglar, D., Hunt, A., & Kite, Y. (2012).The effect of pleasure reading on Japanese university EFL learners' reading rate. *Language Learning, 62*(3). 665-703.

Stuart McLean

Temple University

At the first Extensive Reading World Congress in Kyoto, Richard Day stated that Beglar, Hunt & Kite's research "has brought the extensive reading research field forward a decade." Through presenting an example of effectively conducted and presented research, the authors assist readers in evaluating the conclusions of their research, and provide evidence that balanced EFL syllabi should include ER. It should be stated that the writer of this review is a student of David Beglar.

Literature review and research design

Beglar, Hunt and Kite explain how reading simplified material allows readers to read at a rapid pace, exposing them to greater amounts of text, which facilitates automatic word recognition, syntactic parsing and semantic parsing skills development and fluent reading.

Using Samuels's definition of fluency as "the ability to decode and to comprehend the text at the same time" (2006, p. 9), the authors appropriately posit that when measuring reading rate, the onus is on researchers to provide evidence of reading comprehension while reading speed increases. The authors also question whether sufficient reading took place in commonly cited research, considering the L2 reading literature claims that reading fluency develops from exposure to large amounts of text.

Importantly, research design should address the limitations of previous research. The authors accept reading comprehension research by Nuttall (2005) and Anderson (2008), establishing 75% correctly answered comprehension questions following the reading of a passage as evidence of comprehension. Then, when reading speeds increased while comprehension was sustained at above 75%, there is evidence that reading speed gains were not at the cost of comprehension.

The authors introduce to L2 reading research Carver's (1982) standard word, i.e. every six-character space in a written text, including punctuation and spaces between words. This is an improvement on the present use of words for measuring reading amount because actual words are of different lengths, and more difficult books usually have longer words than simpler books.

In addition, they apply the law of practice learning (Newell & Rosenbloom, 1981), which suggests that practice results in a task being conducted increasingly quickly. This is why sophisticated reading rate measurement does not include data collected from participants' first attempts at timed-reading. Participants practiced timed-reading twice with different passages before measuring reading rates, which reduced this threat to validity.

Presentation of findings and recognition of limitations

The authors clearly show that the more participants read simplified material, the more standard words were read and the more their reading rates increased. This provides evidence that if students read simplified texts, they will read more, and develop reading fluency. This was supported by a significant positive correlation between standard words read in simplified texts and reading rate gains, and a non-significant but negative correlation between standard words read in unsimplified texts and reading rate gains. The authors also accompany cognitive explanations for findings with qualitative motivation-based evidence to support the efficacy of ER.

Self-evaluation helps researchers in critically assessing research in general, and in improving future research. The authors state the following limitations. First, the quasi-experimental research design, in other words using intact classes rather than different treatment groups with randomly assigned participants. Second, a possible practice effect from the use of the same four passages on both pre- and post-tests.

There are also limitations that the authors do not state. First, the standard word unit is used exclusively, without explaining how to convert the number of standard words to the number of regular words. Second, the authors taught only the treatment groups and not the control group. Third, the absence of measurement of time on task weakens the causal

argument that ER is more efficacious than IR in increasing reading speed. It may be argued that students conducting ER spent more time studying, and this, rather than the ER treatment, led to greater reading rate gains.

Pedagogical Implications

The authors state that although gains in reading rate are relatively small (up to 16.85 standard words per minute per year), over a number of years, this can make a large difference, taking a non-native speaker from a reading speed of 100 wpm to 200 wpm over six years of ER. To gain native-like reading rates, non-native speakers need to read extensively for a number of years. Related to this is the importance of reading large amounts. ER group participants read between 136,000 and 200,000 standard words (between about 155,000 and 230,000 words). This strengthens the argument for starting ER at a young age, and conducting ER in universities at a departmental or institutional level. Students who conduct ER for only 28 weeks during an academic year may not experience the benefits of ER, which in turn reduces student and teacher support. A further implication is that students should read simplified material.

Conclusion

This paper responds to both strengths and limitations of previous research, and assists readers of ER research in evaluating the conclusions made by researchers. Importantly, the authors provide clear evidence of the efficacy of reading simplified material over unsimplified material.

References

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Newell, A., & Rosenbloom, P. S. (1981). Mechanisms of skill acquisition and the law of practice. In J. R. Anderson (Ed.), *Cognitive skills and their acquisition* (pp. 1–55). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

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ER Seminar 2013 plenary speaker: Kunihide Sakai

Kunihide Sakai taught English at Denki-Tsushin University in Chofu, Tokyo, for 36 years and retired as associate professor in 2011. He is now a director of a not-for-profit organisation, Tadoku Supporters 多言語多読 , which researches the possibilities of tadoku, roughly equivalent to extensive reading, for foreign language acquisition, and promotes tadoku through various projects and activities.

Sakai began his tadoku-related research about twenty-five years ago at Hitotsubashi University where he was teaching English as a Foreign Language. He published「快読１００万語　ペーパーバックへの道」 (*Reading One Million Words to Paperbacks*, Chikuma-Shobo) in June 2002. Around the same time, he also started spreading tadoku to the general public on the internet. With what seemed like solid successes in his own classroom and outside his university, he published「教室で読む英語１００万語」(*Reading One Million Words in the Classroom*, Chikuma-Shobo) in 2005. This triggered the spread of tadoku in many schools and universities around Japan. He was one of the founding members of the SSS group although later took a different path from the group, following a more hard-line approach on the teaching of grammar.

He attributes the success of tadoku so far to three elements: the availability of plenty of easy books in English, tadoku communities on and off the Internet, and his three golden rules. The three golden rules are: throw away the dictionaries, skip over difficult words and passages, and quit when the going gets tough.

Sakai travels widely around Japan visiting schools and universities, explaining the inexplicable and promoting the unpromotable.

ER Seminar presentations

Shinshu University, Matsumoto

Saturday June 1st

(ER Presentations at JALT CALL)

9:30
Scott Miles & Anders McCarthy, Praxis: Beyond flashcards: CALL/MALL vocabulary learning
Sponsored Presentaion. Room 26

Thomas Robb, Kyoto Sangyo Univeristy (Japan): Un-Moodling Moodle Reader -- A look at a more user-friendly version
Show and Tell. Room 23

10:20
Stuart McLean & Brandon Kramer, Temple University (Japan): The effectiveness of electronic paired-associate vocabulary learning
Paper: Room 23

11:20
Masami Yasuda, Kwansei Gakuin University (Japan): eBooks and text to speech tools on an iPad in EFL
Show and Tell. Room 23

13:10
Paul Riley, Oxford University Press: Next generation textbooks: The Oxford Learner's Bookshelf
Sponsored Presentaion. Room 12

Thomas Bieri, Nanzan University (Japan): Creating an interactive tool for the introduction of extensive reading
Show and Tell. Room 23

14:00
Mark Firth, McGraw-Hill Education: Teach Your Own Adventure
Sponsored Presentaion. Room 12

Norihito Kawana, Sapporo International University (Japan): Digital Books for Effective Learning
Show and Tell. Room 23

14:50
Hugh Graham-Marr, ABAX: Fiction in Action: Approaching Narrow Reading with Tasks
Sponsored Presentaion. Room 13

Kunitaro Mizuno, Fukuoka Prefectural University (Japan): From Reading Books to Sharing Books: Creating a Reciprocal Reading Community on the Internet
Workshop. Room 23

15:40
Donalyn MIller: Reading in the Wild: Learning from lifelong readers

Room 13

Sunday June 2nd

9:30
Joseph Poulshock, Tokyo Christian University (Japan): The three minute drill for big, easy reading.
Paper. Room 12

Kathleen Nickle, Toyo University (Japan): Breaking conventions: The use of extensive reading and non-fiction reading circles in TOEFL preparation
Show and Tell. Room 13

Eric Hagley, John Tennant & Thomas Robb, Muroran Institute of Technology (Japan): The Quiz Quality Assurance Project for Moodle Reader
Show and Tell. Room 20

Akito Sumi, Masaaki Niimura & Mark Brierley, Shinshu University (Japan): Online Placement Test の開発
Show and Tell. Room 23

John Paul Loucky, Seinan JoGakuin University (Japan): E-Reading research questions in need of more study
Workshop. Room 32

10:20
Mathew White & Sophie Muller, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, Department of English Language Teaching (Japan): Better Readers through Buddy Reading or Butter Readers through Beddy Reading?
Show and Tell. Room 12

Joseph Tomei, Kumamoto Gakuen University (Japan): Developing low cost readers for developing countries
Show and tell. Room 13

Junko Yamanaka, Aichi Gakuin University (Japan): Mieko's footprints—A hairdresser's ER practice
Paper. Room 20

Kunitaro Mizuno, Fukuoka Prefectural University (Japan): 多読によるインプットの質的・量的研究
Paper. Room 23

Stuart McLean, Temple University (Japan): Developing L2 reading self-efficacy and a reading habit: the role of targets, Moodle and weekly feedback
Paper. Room 26

Hitoshi Nishizawa & Takayoshi Yoshioka, Toyota National College of Technology (Japan): Three findings from a long-term ER program
Paper. Room 40

11:20-12:20

Kunihide Sakai: Extensive reading から tadoku へ

I will talk about some of the differences between extensive reading and tadoku, the Japanese counterpart of ER which has been devised and developed to accommodate Japanese learners of English. I am hoping to suggest an improvement to the way ER is practised in Japanese classrooms. Extensive Reading とTadoku の違いについてお話しします。多読は日本の学習者に合わせて考え出され、発展してきたものです。日本での Extensive Reading がさらによいものになることを願っています。

Plenary. Room 20

13:10

Myles Grogan, Momoyama Gakuin University (Japan): After SSR: The role of Read-Aloud in ER

Paper. Room 12

Matthew Claflin, Kyoto Sangyo University (Japan): Bridging the gap to native speaker books

Show and Tell. Room 13

Ching-Yi Tien & Yu-Miao Yang, I-Shou University (Taiwan): The implementation of extensive reading, reading speed and reading strategy in an EFL university reading course

Paper. Room 20

Masaaki Niimura, Mark Brierley, Akito Sumi & Rob Waring, Shinshu University; Notre Dame Seishin University (Japan): Trialling an extensive reading test

Paper. Room 23

Terry Fellner, Saga University (Japan): Effects of extensive reading on students reading scores

Paper. Room 24

Douglas Forster & Joseph Poulshock, Japan Women's University (Japan): Bringing web-based extensive reading into the EFL classroom

Poster. Room 25

Takayoshi Yoshioka & Hitoshi Nishizawa, Toyota National College of Technology (Japan): 社会人の英語多読学習を支援するコミュニケーションツールとしての Web サイト tadoku navi の紹介
(A Web Site for ER with computer mediated communication tools for encouraging adult English learners)

Poster. Room 25

Amanda Gillis-Furutaka, Kyoto Sangyo University (Japan): Extensive reading or extensive translation? When and why do learners translate into their first language?

Paper. Room 26

Brandon Kramer & Barrie Matte, Temple University (Japan): Generative vocabulary use in graded readers

Paper. Room 35

14:00

Donalyn Miller: Creating classrooms where readers flourish

Imagine a classroom where students read 40 books a year, improve their reading ability, and develop a love for books and reading that lasts long after the school year ends. Donalyn Miller shares the classroom conditions and instructional practices that inspire and motivate her middle school students to read and the traditional practices that may inhibit students' reading.

Plenary. Room 20

15:10

Eleanor Kane, University of Shimane (Japan): Reader response journals in EFL

Show and Tell. Room 12

Thomas Robb, Amanda Gillis-Furutaka & Matthew Claflin, Kyoto Sangyo University (Japan): Culling information about graded readers via a post-quiz questionnaire

Paper. Room 13

Rob Waring & Charlie Browne, Notre Dame Seishin University; Meiji Gakuin University (Japan): A free crowd-sourced online extensive reading and learning environment

Workshop. Room 20

Po-ting(Grace) Fang, I-Shou University (Taiwan): Read, think and speak! Innovative reading strategy in an applied Spanish course

Paper. Room 23

Andrew Atkins, Kinki University (Japan): Dimensions of L2 reading fluency: An investigation

Paper. Room 24

16:00

Lee Knowlton & Chuanning Huang, Kanazawa Technical College (Japan): Being the nail that keeps sticking up: Potential solutions for tough ER problems

Show and Tell. Room 12

Mark Brierley, Thomas Bieri & Leslie Chivers, JALT ER SIG (Japan): The Journal of Extensive Reading: Open meeting

Show and Tell. Room 24

Hossein Shakeri, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch (Iran): Reading strategies and reading comprehension: A case of Iranian EFL undergraduates

Paper. Room 26

See *ersig.org* or the confrence handbook and schedule for more details and final timing.

PanSIG2013 presentations

Nanzan University, Nagoya

See pansig2013.org for more details.

Saturday, 18th May, 2013

Room 42 (unless otherwise stated)

Introducing ER

11:40am Using a StAIR to introduce extensive reading
Bieri, Thomas E.

12:15pm The three-minute drill for ER
Poushock, Joseph

12:50pm What did and didn't work: Implementing and testing Extensive Reading
DiCello, Cheryl

Motivated readers

1:25pm Motivating students by talking about novels
Takahashi, Mamoru; Shucart, Stephen

2:00pm The potential of ER in lifelong learning: How a weekly ER class changed the learning of adult EFL learners
Nishizawa, Hitoshi; Yoshioka, Takayoshi

2:35pm Through their words: Learner reactions to extensive reading
Shearon, Ben

3:10pm Teach your own adventure (Sponsored by McGraw-Hill Education)
Benevides, Marcos

Fluency and reading rate

4:55pm Facilitating reading acquisition (Sponsored by McGraw-Hill Education)
Bushell, Brenda

5:30pm-6:30pm Developing transferable reading fluency skills
Rosszell, Rory

rm 62
6:05pm Add a little culture to your classroom! (Sponsored by Macmillan LanguageHouse)
Donaldson, Riaz

Sunday, 19th May, 2013

Room 49 (unless otherwise stated)

Listening, and reading technology

9:00am How and why to do extensive listening in the classroom
Wright, Alex Edward

9:35am A free crowd-sourced online extensive reading and learning environment
Waring, Rob; Browne, Charles

10:10am Flipping a first-year reading class
Stockwell, Michael

Readability

11:55am Graded reader readability: Some overlooked aspects
Gillis-Furutaka, Amanda

12:30pm Beyond the headword: the case for more holistic measures of readability
Benevides, Marcos

1:05pm Increasing learner reading rates with ER
McLean, Stuart John

ER TED THT Forum

1:40pm Stories of outreach: Extensive reading over there
Tomei, Joseph George; Jones, Brent; Cornwell, Steve;

White, Mathew; Ruddenklau, Chris; Muller, Sophie;

Knowles, Tim; Brown, Cherie

Posters
3rd Floor Lounge

Extensive reading: Principles & practice
Fuisting, Bjorn

Collaborative learning through extensive reading
Forster, Douglas E.; Poulshock, Joseph W.

In association with Gunma JALT, Mark Brierley will be speaking at
Gunma University, Maebashi
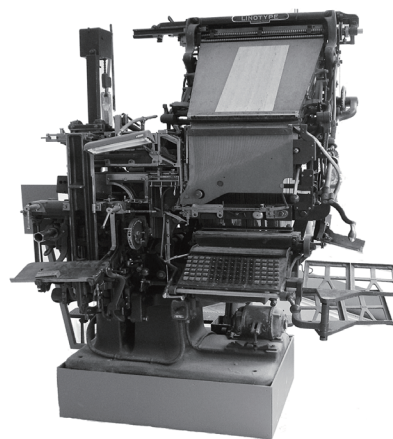Saturday, 20th July

Seven reasons for your students to do ER

www.ersig.org
www.jaltcall.org
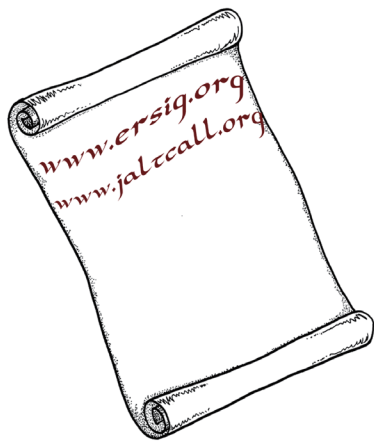
JALT

In collaboration with JALTCALL 2013

JALT CALL SIG

The 6th Annual Extensive Reading Seminar

presents

"Best Practices in CALL and ER"

KUNIHIDE SAKAI:
From Extensive Reading to Tadoku

DONALYN MILLER:
Reading in the Wild: Learning from Lifelong Readers

EXTENSIVE READING SIG

Shinshu University, Matsumoto, City, Nagano ~ June 1st and 2nd, 2013