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Delivered to ER SIG members by:



The ERJ is now in its tenth year.

Let me add a special thank you to Eleanor Kane, who is stepping down as *ERJ* copy editor due to extra work commitments.

Eleanor was instrumental in the creation of the ER SIG along with Daniel Stewart, Marc Helgesen and Barry Mateer. She was the first membership Chair, and helped start the *ERJ*. In her day job she has managed a large SSR programme of over 500 students at the University of Shimane, which must not be confused with Shimane University, and has also used graded readers to teach a literature class. She is involved in teacher-training courses for high school English teachers, and has set up ER programmes at local schools.

The quality of the *ERJ* has been lifted by Eleanor's insights and suggestions. Now we need a new copy editor! The job involves reading through articles that are sent to us, deciding whether they are appropriate for publication, and making any suggestions for improving the writing. Experience editing, and some knowledge of APA will be helpful, but if you don't have that, this would be an ideal place to get it.

As well as providing excellent professional and personal development, it's an opportunity to work with a great team. And you get to read *ERJ* articles before anyone else!

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Some officers of the ER SIG



Coordinator

Joanne Sato works at Toyo University. Joanne believes extensive reading can lead students towards developing a lifelong reading habit, which is beneficial for both language skills and self-fulfillment. She loves the

ocean and marine sports. She is reading *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt when she can find golden moments of peace.

Materials and Research Liaison

Jaime Morrish is from a small valleys town in south Wales. He loves music, sports and martial arts. He tries to integrate extensive reading into most of his university classes in an engaging and interactive way. He is currently reading 3 different books.



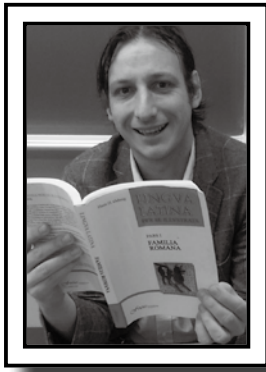
Program Chair

Barry Keith works at Gunma University and helps run a coordinated curriculum in which more than 1,000 students read extensively. Being a believer in "practicing what

you preach", Barry has read more than 1,000 graded readers and has also made quizzes for those books on Moodle Reader. In his free time, Barry reads extensively in other languages for pleasure and is the proud owner of one of the largest collections of graded readers in German in Japan.

Member at Large

Hudson Murrell teaches at Baiko Gakuin University. He believes that students need massive amounts of input in order to "meet" words enough times to properly learn them. ER is one perfect way to make this happen. He also believes that all of life is about balance, such as that between work and play, family and work, physical and mental. He is currently reading *The Flame Bearer* by Bernard Cornwell and *The Obesity Code* by Jason Fung.



Latin teachers embrace extensive reading

A report on some recent developments

Shaune Larder

Kansai Gaidai University

“Trouble the child with no grammar at all, but to have Latin, as English has been, without the perplexity of rules, talked into him; for if you will consider it, Latin is no more unknown to a child, when he comes into the world, than English: and yet he learns English without master, rule, or grammar; and so might he Latin too”

John Locke (1693)

Perhaps no language is more associated with the traditional Grammar-Translation method of language teaching than Latin. Many popular college-level Latin textbooks even to this day adopt the method. Grammar-Translation had become firmly entrenched by the 19th Century. Critics from the 17th Century right through to today have unsuccessfully tried to turn the tide back toward a vocabulary and text focused approach. Most recently a new breed of Latin teachers have been calling for more practice reading texts and advocating the use of extensive reading to build reading fluency.

The Grammar-Translation method, which is the name given to it by its future critics, was first designed for use in secondary schools in Prussia in the 17th Century. Before that, it was common for scholars to teach themselves a language by learning grammar and then reading large texts with a dictionary. As highly educated adults with good knowledge of grammatical categories, they were able to gain success. Notwithstanding how things turned out afterwards, Grammar-Translation was developed with good intentions of making language learning digestible and simple for secondary students (Howatt, 2004).

Grammar-Translation materials typically run along the following lines. Students are introduced to a grammatical rule explained in the L1. They are then asked to memorise some vocabulary or tables and then do a series of practice exercises to translate sentences to and from English and Latin. A relatively small vocabulary is acquired and then reading exercises of extracts of passages are decoded by the student with the aid of a dictionary or glossary. The side-effects are a reduction in the amount of exposure to the target language and an emphasis of analysis and decoding of the target language as opposed to fluent reading.

Furthermore, Grammar-Translation in its later stages came to stress accuracy and completeness of the translations to the point of obsession (Howatt, 2008). As the learner is introduced piecemeal to rules of grammar and things become more complex, the difficulty of decoding a sentence increases. This led William Dowling (n.d.) to write “the problem with

Latin is that you can study it for six years and never be able to understand a sentence”.

Some aspects of Latin grammar may mean it takes longer to attain reading fluency than other European languages. Latin is an inflected language. It means that word order is not used to indicate grammatical relations in a sentence. The form of the words is the indicator of relations. Take these two sentences.

Veronica Marcum amat (Veronica loves Marcus)

Marcus Veronicam amat (Marcus loves Veronica)

It doesn't really matter what order the words appear in Latin because the suffix indicates who is the subject and who is the object.

Marcum Veronica amat (Veronica loves Marcus)

Veronicam Marcus amat (Marcus loves Veronica)

In a Latin sentence, the subject is always given in what is called the indicative case and the object is given in what is called the accusative case. Gender is also encoded in morphology, so the -a suffix refers to the feminine gender in the indicative case and -m ending refers to the masculine ending in the indicative case. But these endings are again different for plurals and for other noun-cases. The suffix can also indicate a whole host of different relationships which are indicated in English by prepositions such as, “to”, “for” and “of”. There are five noun cases in Latin, but if you want to learn more about the grammar there

are plenty of sources online to find out! The point is that to get used to patterns and develop fluency in reading Latin a great deal of simple reading practice is necessary, arguably even more so than for SVO languages.

Early critics of the over emphasis on grammar were John Locke (1632-1704), who is quoted at the top of this article, and educator and businessman James Hamilton (1769–1831). Hamilton created a set of interlinear texts of classics such as *Caesar's Commentaries on the Gallic War* and emphasised learning which focused on the text rather than on the grammar. They both criticised the length of time and inefficiency of the grammar focused methods. As Blum (2008) observed, modern computer-based studies have now found that the amount of vocabulary required to comfortably read texts is much higher than what is contained in many language learning textbooks vindicating Hamilton and Locke's views.

Recently, Latin teachers who have YouTube channels online, such as Evan Millner and Dr. Joseph Conlon, have begun to echo Locke and Hamilton's criticism of traditional language education. Particularly, they emphasize the need for graded reading practice. They are calling for methods now used to teach modern languages, including an emphasis on extensive reading to build up reading fluency by reading and re-reading massive amounts of simple Latin. Dr. Joseph Conlon, who earned his Doctorate in Classics at Princeton, has taken to YouTube to advocate this as a different way to approach Latin as well as other languages..

His channel is called *Deka Glossai* and in the video *How to Read and Speak Latin Fluently*, he states "Grammar Translation creates good translators and philologists but only very rarely produces lifelong readers of Latin."

Conlon outlines a method of learning Latin which uses a series of textbooks which are written in Latin without any translation. *Lingua Latina Per Illustrata* (Hans Orberg, first published in 1956 and then reprinted in 1992 and in years since) is essentially a set of two illustrated graded readers, the first volume which starts with simple sentences such as *Roma in Italia est. Italia in Europa est. Italia et Graecia in Europa sunt*. The 35 chapters go on to provide 300 pages of Latin text with illustrations to support understanding of the text and covers the essential grammar with

practice exercises. Conlon suggests that the 300 pages of Latin in the first elementary text book is more text than some Latin majors would read in four years at college.

He emphasises the importance of re-reading and even listening to the text. After the two basic texts, he suggests the reading of assisted illustrated readers of Latin classics in the same style as *Lingua Latina*, which will be accessible at that point. Then he suggests some introductory readers of medieval Latin, which is simpler and easier to understand than Roman materials. In short, he suggests a massive amount of graded reading to build fluency. Finally he recommends reading Roman texts in bilingual translation. Please go and watch the video to get the full method!

Evan der Millner is another online Latin teacher who cited similar problems with the Grammar-Translation approach. He has utilised the internet, specifically the Internet archive and Google books. He resurrected long forgotten texts many of which were unavailable until digitised by Google. They offer an alternative or supplements to the Grammar-Translation approach. His youtube channel, *Evan der Millner* contains thousands of videos.

One text he resurrected was George Adler's *A Practical Grammar of the Latin Language* (1858). This text sought to teach Latin through what he termed "a Serial and Oral method". The way the text is utilised by Millner is similar to the Audio-Lingual method of the 1960s except explicit grammar instruction is also given. Millner argues that the method may not have been popular at the time because it required a teacher to conduct hours of question and response style drills which gradually introduced grammar and vocabulary. The book comes in at over 1000 pages long but is comprehensive. Millner spent two years recording the exercises into an audio format where a student can run the drills from an audio player.

He suggests the book be worked through whilst being supplemented with a large amount of easy extensive reading passages as well. Millner has also created playlists divided by level so that beginners looking for extensive reading or listening practice might find something from the archived books and get audio as well. Locke and Hamilton's interlinear readers are included in his collections. Like Conlon, he notes that traditional approaches do not contain

enough actual reading practice and he advocates massive amounts of reading and listening as well as oral practice drills.

Recently, some popular books have been published in Latin translation. Children's books including *Harry Potter*, *The Hobbit* and *Winnie the Pooh* give more options for students to improve their reading fluency. It is likely that more and more materials will be produced by Latin teachers and made available online as the trend catches on.

Latin may not be a popular language for study nowadays, particularly at university. However, it does seem to be seeing a new popularity among self-studiers who are embracing the methods and tools inspired by the latest research in language acquisition. Of course working through the materials still requires hard work and time to put into doing the reading but may lead to a more fun and digestible pathway to Latin than the mindbending gymnastics of going through a traditional Grammar-Translation based textbook. To find out more, please check out the YouTube channels mentioned in the reference list below.

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More ER SIG officers

Membership Chair

Shannon Kiyokawa teaches at Ohkagakuen University. She believes that extensive reading can help students to expand their world and provides a way for them to "fall in love" with (Okay, "begin to like") reading. She is currently reading *A Man Called OVE* by Fredrik Backman.



Membership Chair Assistant



Paul Dickinson works at Meijo University. Paul believes ER can help learners develop more positive attitudes to reading in an additional language and can also help

provide the linguistic input needed to improve language skills. He is currently reading *Divisadero* by Michael Ondaatje.

Publications Chair and Associate Member Liaison



Thomas E. Bieri teaches at Nanzan University and also wears several other hats in JALT. He owns well over 100 actual hats. He loves reading and wants to inspire others to read as well. He is reading *Tea Time for the Traditionally Built* by Alexander McCall Smith but by the time you are reading this he hopefully will have made time to work his way to the end of this series.

Website Chair and JER Layout Editor



Leslie Chivers teaches at Ohkagakuen University. She believes extensive reading is a wide open doorway to discovering the heights and depths of the human experience and builds confidence and a sense of success in language learners. She, like many officers also loves reading, and is currently reading *A Place of Greater Safety* by Hilary Mantel.

Counting Words for Longer Books

Ben Shearon

Tohoku University, Cambridge Academy

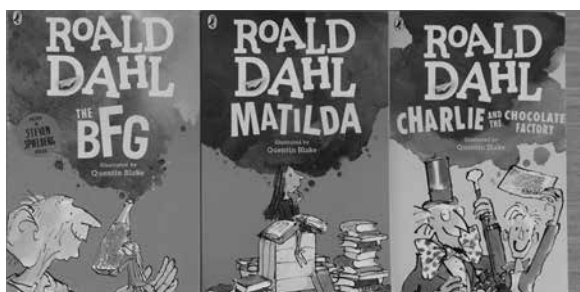


"When you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind"

William Thomson (Lord Kelvin)

Recently I've been buying 'real' books for the Academy program at the school I help out with and also at my university, not so much because we have lots of people who can read them, but more so that we have something to offer when we develop such readers.

They also look kind of cool on the shelves and



can be useful to encourage students to read more. These books do raise some issues though.

The first big problem is that there does not seem to be a lot of information out there in terms of word counts and *yomiyasusa level* (YL) for ordinary books.

Apparently Amazon used to provide word counts for ebooks, but they have now stopped doing so.

The second big problem is knowing the right thing to do.

I mean, is it even necessary to have word counts for novels? I can see the motivational aspect, but would it be as productive to just say a novel is about 80,000 words? This is actually a whole different topic that probably deserves its own article.

If we do need word counts, and it's impossible to get accurate information from a third party, what practical ways are there of generating them?

Now, the extreme version would be to take a novel, cut the spine off, feed it through a scanner, do OCR (optical character recognition) on the resulting image, then do a word count. This would be the least labour-intensive way of getting an accurate word count.

You'd have to destroy a book to get it though, and

the process would take a while, even after you got good at it. Once I am in control of a library and budget equivalent to SEG (Tokyo's Scientific Education Group) I will consider doing this for new books.

A less extreme version of this would be to buy the ebook and do a word count.

However, for now, we can also estimate word counts. I can think of the following methods, from easiest to the edge of practical:

1. Estimate the word count by guesstimating the number of words in the book (eyeball method)
2. Count one line then multiply by the number of lines on a page and the number of pages in the book (one-line method)
3. Count all the words on one page and multiply by the number of pages in the book (one-page method)
4. Count two pages, take an average, then multiply by the number of pages in the book (two-page method)
5. Do the same with three pages (three-page method)
6. Or five pages (five-page method)

Now, the amount of effort involved in the later methods may not be worth doing if the earlier ones are accurate enough.

In order to better think about this, I did some experiments. I took several books that I think I have accurate word counts for, and tried the first five methods above.

For page counts I used a click counter (available at 100-yen shops) and counted in tens, clicking the counter every time I reached ten. This allowed me to count around 300 words a minute.

The results can be seen in the following tables.



Click Counter

Method	Title				
	Double Helix	Solo Saxophone	BFG	BFG 66%	Prisoner of Azkaban
Eyeball	25,000	28,000	50,000	50,000	80,000
Words/line x lines x pages	33,600	34,320	82,784	54,912	151,380
Words/page x pages	33,354	28,496	53,531	35,508	117,450
Average words/2 pages x pages	33,303	30,108	55,919	37,092	107,227
Average words/3 pages x pages	33,796	29,813	51,806	34,364	107,300
Actual word count	31,714	29,629	36,928	36,928	107,253

Hmmm. The eyeball method for *The Double Helix* (Penguin Readers 6) was reasonable, and surprisingly the two-page average was more accurate than the three-page average. I guess I got lucky with the pages I randomly chose.

The Eyeball method was super-accurate for *Solo Saxophone* (Cambridge Readers 6) or I subconsciously remembered the word count from my countless hours labeling books. The three-page average was better this time.

The eyeball method was horrible for *The BFG* (Puffin Books), but also the closest to the actual word count! The one-line method was also completely off the mark.

One factor this quick experiment did not consider is also one that explains these results. *The BFG* has many more illustrations than the other books. This is the reason why the estimates are so far from the actual word count. In order to improve estimates for graphic-heavy books it would probably be worth trying to estimate the number of ‘full’ pages based on the frequency of graphics and shorter written pages. For *The BFG* this number may be as low as 66% of the full number of pages, giving us much better estimates. The one-line method is still way off, but the other methods are much closer. Once again, the two-page average wins.

The eyeball method was way too low for *The Prisoner of Azkaban* (Scholastic), the one-line way too high, but the two-page and three-page averages were frighteningly accurate.

Looking at the results, one thing is clear: I am not very good at eyeballing word counts for longer books.

I think it’s probably important to look at the range as well as the average accuracy. The eyeball method looks okay if you take its average accuracy as 96%, but less so when you realize that it is so far off above and below that the mistakes cancel each other out.

The one-line method seems to be the most commonly recommended online, but it appears to overstate the word count and is the least accurate method after eyeballing.

On the other hand, I was surprised to see counting one-page, two-page average, and three-page average yield similar results.

Method	Range	Accuracy
*Eyeball	75-135%	96%
Words/line x lines x pages	106-149%	128%
Words/page x pages	96-110%	102%
Average words/2 pages x pages	100-105%	102%
Average words/3 pages x pages	93-107%	100%
Actual word count	100%	100%

I would like to see more data on this, as counting one page takes one third of the time it does to count three and cuts out one step of the calculation.

This little exercise has been very useful for me. Clearly it is worth taking a bit more time to fully count a page, and it is also important to take into account illustrations when there are a significant number of them.

I’m inclined to use the two-page average method going forward, as it seems to offer a nice balance between ease of use and accuracy. How about you? Do you have a policy on word counts for longer books? Any better methods for counting words? Let me know at sendaiben@gmail.com or drop by the sendaiben.org blog.

"Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts."
Albert Einstein

The little things

Kevin Stein

Clark Memorial International High School



“It has long been an axiom of mine that the little things are infinitely the most important.”

Arthur Conan Doyle (Sherlock Holmes) *A Case of Identity*

I started an extensive reading program at my high school about five years ago. I had read some articles about ER and a teacher friend lent me a copy of Bamford and Day's (1998) *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom*, which convinced me that ER would provide the input that my students desperately needed in an EFL environment. As I stumbled through the beginning steps of implementing the program, I began to feel that trying to start an ER program based on the books and articles I had read was kind of like putting together a piece of IKEA furniture with those 'universal' picture instructions. I had a pretty good idea of how things should look at the end, but realized I would be making a lot of mistakes along the way.

In an effort to make the process a bit smoother, in the second year of the program, I began to meet with my students on a regular basis and kept a journal of these meetings as well as things I noticed happening in class. In this column, I hope to share some of those journal notes and how meeting with my students and observing class not only helped me to modify and grow our ER program but also to develop as a teacher. I do not know if these interactions and observations are novel, but I hope this column might give teachers a clearer idea of how the pieces fit together without having to tear things apart and start over again and encourage other teachers to introduce their 'small things'.

Journal entry, November 7

Individual meeting with Rio conducted in Japanese, third year student, weekly timed reading rate of 162 words per minute, typical book level pink (400 headwords)

In today's class, Rio had been reading a bunch of 300 headword yellow level books in class, slightly below his current level. I had thought about encouraging him to read something a bit more difficult, but instead just decided to wait and touch base with him after

class. While we were chatting, he told me that he likes to rotate between difficult and easy books. He said, "Pink is a little difficult for me. So I read a pink book and then I read a yellow book and it feels so easy to read. So I read pink to kind of study, then I read yellow for fun. After reading a pink book, I will go back and read a yellow book I read earlier in the year. It feels easy and fun and I also feel like I understand the story a lot better than when I read it the first time."

Reflection

Thank you Rio for reminding me that before I make a suggestion, it's better to just ask a student why they are doing what they are doing. As a teacher, I might think I know what a student should be reading, but, most of the time, that's just not the case. Usually students have their own good reasons for reading the book they are reading, and if I want to learn about how to make the program better, I need to find out those reasons before making any suggestions.

Journal entry, November 14

Individual meeting with Yuka, second year student, weekly timed reading rate of 169 words per minute, typical book level green (700 headwords)

During our meeting Yuka told me, "At first, when I read the Magic Key Series and read lower level books, I didn't feel anything. I just read a book and was done. But now, when I read a more difficult book like *Escape* and can understand it all, I feel really happy. It just looks like such a more difficult level book. Lately I also like to read manga style books. I know they don't look as difficult as a book with only words but I like how parts of the stories are in the boxes of the manga. I can see that the scene I am reading has an ending point so it is easier to read. I don't read manga in Japanese, but I do like manga in English. Not because there are pictures, but because the sections of the story are clearly broken up and I feel a sense of understanding

and accomplishment for each part I read.”

Reflection

I'm sometimes a little overly focused on numbers in the ER class. Probably because that is the easiest way to gauge how much input a student is getting in class and how much their reading skills are improving. But the emotional side to reading is also important, perhaps more important. We might not want our students to struggle their way through a higher level book, the whole idea of struggling being counter to the ER ethos in general, but I'm realizing that struggling with a book is also part of the process of becoming a reader. Being a reader means being able to judge when you are ready to struggle against the tide of unknown vocabulary, when you need to take a break and read something a bit easier. It means being able to regulate what you read so each time you set down a book, you have a sense of satisfaction. When I talk to my students, I need to find out what about their reading habits is helping them feel those moments of satisfaction, the sense of accomplishment that makes picking up the next book that much easier.

Class observation, September 24

Two students were reading a book together which a teacher at the school had enlarged onto a double sized piece of paper to use in her 4-skills class. One of the students mentioned to her friend that she wished we had more copies of books on large pieces of regular paper. It was easier to read a book together with a friend. Her friend agreed and said that, for some reason or another, it also felt easier to read a book which had been copied onto regular paper.

Reflection

Almost any small thing can have an impact on how much students enjoy reading. The physical size of

the book and even the type of paper on which it is printed, can make the reading experience more or less enjoyable. Having versions of a story with different physical properties is one more way for me to provide my students with choice in their reading.

At the moment, my ER program consists of two fifty-minute reading periods a week. The students have to read at least 75 books during the school year. They keep detailed reading journals which include the number of pages read, timed reading rates, and a list of unknown words they encounter during each reading session. Over the course of five years, the shape of the ER program has gradually come to resemble something similar to the programs you read about in journal articles or books on ER. But for the most part, I do not think it is the overall shape of the program which makes the program viable, rather it was the small stumbling changes I made along the way that gradually created a safe environment for students to do what they need to do, which is read. Knowing when to suggest a student might want to try a different level book and when to stay silent; paying attention to the physical characteristics of the materials in the ER library; helping students to celebrate moments of achievement on even the smallest scale, all of these small things I have control over as a teacher are examples of how, at least in my program, nut A eventually found its way to fit onto bolt B. I hope you will join me in future columns as I share more excerpts from my ER teaching journal. And if you have 'little things' to share from your own ER classes, I hope you will send them my way. Because unlike a set of wordless IKEA instructions, we have all the wisdom and experience of each other to make our ER programs work for all our students.

JALT NARA CHAPTER AND ER SIG PRESENT A DAY OF EXTENSIVE READING ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT ER!

Sunday 18th June 2018

Morning Session: 10:00 – 12:00 Afternoon Session: 13:00 – 14:30

Ann Mayeda (Konan Women's University) Paul Goldberg (Xreading)

Ann Flanagan (Ritsumeikan Junior & Senior High School) Mark Brierley (Shinshu University)

Please contact Nara JALT for more details.

A first year of extensive reading: Reflections on practice

Simon Bibby

Kobe Shoin Women's University



The present short paper offers reflection on a single aspect of professional practice, that of a newly implemented ER program, which was put in place in Academic Year 2016-17. Noting that the ER program is only a single year old, the regular formula of 'How we do it...' would exaggerate our duration and stability of practice. Instead, this paper is structured to describe aspects of our implementation, followed by critical reflections surrounding these areas.

Reflection was characterised by Dewey (1910/1997) as "a kind of thinking that consists in turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious thought" (p. 3). Professional reflection has subsequently been taken in different directions, for example with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, Schön's (1983) reflective practice and Argyris' (1976) double loop learning of instructional design. Kugel (1993) notes the necessity for university faculty to learn as teachers, while Grob (1984) asserts that a reflective problematising is essential to our very humanity.

Institutional setting

Kobe Shoin Women's University is a small (approximately 3500 students) single-sex private university in Kobe. There are two streams of entry, one with mandated study abroad for between four and nine months, the other without the study abroad component. In terms of academic and language level, the university looks to be similar to that described by Miller (2012) earlier within these pages, which is at a relatively lower academic level, as measured by the predominantly used *hensachi* score for Japanese university departments (see e.g., Hirai, 2014, for discussion of *hensachi* and English vocabulary levels). Students graduating from Kobe Shoin often enter the service industry.

Getting underway with ER

The university already had a sizeable bank of several hundred graded readers, held in two places - in the library, and in a self-study area called 'Peer Salon'. In the former case, students borrow as per any library, but in the latter regard, there is no formal means of checking out the books, instead relying on an honour system, which appears to invite book loss. Book resources were available, but there was no formal reading program in place.

A colleague, Frances Shiobara, proposed to

introduce extensive reading, using graded readers and MReader online software, at a department meeting. In brief questioning and discussion, colleagues appeared thrice reassured and happy that it would cost no money, that one of us had experience running the checking software as administrator, and that there was a course in which we could insert the extensive reading program. ER was thus approved by the faculty. Due to certain historical departmental quirks and scheduling issues, the only course we were able to attach ER to for all first-year students was 'Power Speaking' which is taught twice per week, on Tuesdays and Fridays, by the four part-time teachers sharing four classes.

Reflecting on making the best of things

Awkwardly bolting on reading to a speaking class is sub-optimal, plainly. An understandable and obvious desire is for reading to be underpinning a general reading course, perhaps also containing focused vocabulary study, speed reading, and with a modicum of intensive reading. However, this was the only course fully available to us, and we had to get ER underway somehow. Our reading program Rome would not be built in a day, but construction was underway.

Reflecting on situating ER with colleagues

Staff in English departments tend to be from differing academic backgrounds, and while some will be ESOL specialists, just as many will not, hailing variously from linguistics, literature and perhaps other areas. I believe that we missed an opportunity to explain more clearly about ER at the department meeting, and to situate this suggested ER program within our general understanding of TESOL pedagogies. Specifically, it would have been helpful to have explained ER as a means to provide the necessary curriculum 'strand' of massed input (Nation, 1997), and to have noted

the usefulness of ER in doing so, via brief exposition of the characteristics of ER, which would be readily accessible to non-specialists. Possible resources in this regard include the articles by Day & Bamford (2002), Robb (2015) and Waring (2006), and providing copies of these papers to colleagues would have been helpful.

Working out the details: Targets

The next step was for us to put this together in detail, thinking about course grading percentages and points totals. A volume of reading takes time, and requires considerable effort from students. This needs to be recognised within the syllabus, and rewarded with sufficient percentage quotient of the final course grade. We decided to allocate 30% of the course grade to ER, and opted for 60,000 MReader words/points as the target reading volume. The word target may appear relatively low to some readers, but my colleague and I were acutely aware of the awkwardness of attaching this to a seemingly regular 'speaking' class, and were further wary of setting too high a target and thereby risking a mass of students failing by falling too far short of the target.

Reflecting on targets

Noting the issues of a slow start to reading and of late cramming, I suggested, and my colleague concurred in this, to change from a single final target to three interim targets of 20,000 words each, with 10% of the grade for word counts in each of the three time periods. The interim targets were introduced to encourage students to spread their reading out more evenly. The aim is to have a focus on reading, and to provide a means of massed reading input, not to have a desperate and late numbers chase.

Explaining to part-time staff

My colleague Frances and I put together a brief information sheet for our part-time teachers who would be responsible for ER in classes, and sent this out prior to starting the first semester, explaining why extensive reading was being introduced, focusing on the clearer arguments in the literature in favour of ER, without getting bogged down in citing and referencing. We included a clear explanation of MReader usage, with screenshots. Teachers were also sent the Teacher Guide which is available on the MReader site for download. I provided my colleague Frances with both Teacher and Administrator Guides. For teachers who may have a deeper practical and/or theoretical interest, I added a lengthier eight-page

guide, with further explanation and some initial references.

There are various MReader software tools which can be made available by admin to teachers, to be able to change passwords, set timing limits between repeat tests, look at other classes and such like. At first, I gave teachers the bare minimum of tools on screen, and added tools periodically through the year that I thought they may find useful.

Reflecting on explaining

Where the opportunity exists, I would advocate a pre-semester training meeting, where this can be explained more fully, and questions can be taken. I attended several such meetings as a part-time teacher before, and it had always appeared helpful to have a new approach and program explained face-to-face. While email is of course convenient, one cannot guarantee that recipients do read and take on what is provided.

Offering new online software tools as users gain experience within the system is an approach learnt from gaming. A new player of a game may firstly be presented with the minimum on screen, and as experience and knowledge builds, more options and tools are added. Initial complexity on cluttered screens is not a helpful approach for the unfamiliar; instead, incrementally does it.

Using MReader

Many readers here will be already familiar with the MReader online software, which is a means to check that reading is actually occurring, verified by multiple choice general questions for each book (Cheetham et al., 2016; Demirci & Gobert, 2015; Robb, 2015). Points are awarded for answering sufficient questions, the points equating roughly to number of words read.

There are three levels of access, of administrator, teacher and student, which is a fairly standard hierarchy. Full-time colleague Frances was given administrator access in the second semester, having had time to experiment and familiarise as both student and teacher user. At a previous university, I had erroneously shared full admin access with all teachers, which had led to problems due to teachers fiddling with tools, and at one time caused full access breakdown.

MReader is available online, and is free to use. Teachers interested in using just need to contact Japan-based Professor Tom Robb, who created the software.

Prof. Robb then allows your institution and you into the system, providing an institutional domain within which all can be managed. As the admin, I set up the classes, created teacher accounts, and assigned logins and passwords in advance of semester. Logins and passwords were sent out to part-time staff in advance, with the ER information and explanation. Additionally, I also set up some extra dummy 'teacher' and 'student' accounts for department colleagues so they could have a quick look at MReader, from both sides of the virtual lectern, and see what we were implementing. At least three colleagues did have a look, and commented favourably. Site background can be changed, and I copied the university banner from our website, to add a 'home university' feel.

At semester start I entered student records individually by hand, as soon as records of the new intake were made available to our department, assigning students to their respective classes and teachers. I created logins by using the first three letters of the family name, then adding two digits. Logins and passwords were distributed at a student orientation, which we had chosen to give in a PC room. We directed students to record the login and password in their diary or smartphone. When directed to login, the majority did so on their smartphone, rather than on available PCs.

Frances explained to all new students, in Japanese, while I circulated with notebook PC in hand and MReader open, assisting students and checking. There were no login problems. The explanation comprised an explanation of purpose of ER, of graded readers and where to find them, then of MReader usage. My colleague briefly modelled what students were to do—find a book that looks interesting, read, find the publisher and book in the software, take the test, gain points, repeat.

Reflecting on MReader

Over the last three to four years of use, I have found MReader easy to use and students have reported very few problems. The software appears intuitive for students, and the navigation is straightforward. Student logins were set as the last five digits of their student ID numbers, the first of which was the same for all at '6', for 2016, the year of entry. The remaining were uniquely assigned. Regarding passwords, there is a balance to be struck in assigning, which is a trade off between security and ease of remembering. I opted

for the first three letters of the family name followed by two randomly typed digits. Assuming student ID cards are carried, and that they quickly remember their ID numbers, students thus only need to newly remember two numbers. This approach to passwords has worked well—I have had very few forgotten logins and passwords to deal with, and no queries from students about odd pass/fail numbers, which could occur through the unlikely intrusion of another student into an account.

Helping part-time teachers

I provided teachers with student scores at the start of the semester, for the first two or three weeks, and periodically throughout the semester, by email. I found it speediest to do so as screenshot images of each class spreadsheet, either embedded in the mail or attached to mail. Of course providing as spreadsheet .xls files also works. How often and how closely were teachers checking student reading progress, through MReader? Being outside the direct teaching involvement it is not possible to know, and is difficult to judge.

Reflection on managing staff

Looking back, yes, it is difficult to judge the extent of teacher involvement. Where administrators have the time, it appears better to make no assumptions, and provide as much as is possible to the staff responsible for delivering ER in classes, to facilitate a closer eye being kept on student reading progress. Ideally, this will be through weekly hard copies in mailboxes in addition to via email. In a perfect world, provided directly to the part-time teachers would be helpful. I see myself doing this more from April, in our second ER year.

Further support lies in providing teachers with pre-built spreadsheets to aid in calculating grades, to save time, and this has now been done for the forthcoming 2017-18 year. This is particularly helpful for when one has interim reading targets as we did, rather than a final target, and is likely to be appreciated by our staff. The more administrators can do to help students and to help teachers run things more smoothly is likely to be beneficial overall.

Student behaviour

Two particular issues were raised by teachers. Firstly, particularly in the first semester, a number of students repeatedly neglected to bring in their books. Two teachers queried separately how to manage such serial

'non-bringers'. We had requested that teachers set aside twenty minutes of reading time in each class for ER, so the lack of a reading text was problematic in terms of classroom management as well as learning. The second issue is that highlighted by the software as 'cheating', which is an excessive matching of books read, and of similar times for tests of the same text, on neighbouring hardware. Both of these issues are difficult, and I suspect are a common challenge.

Reflection on student behaviour

Firstly is to consider more generally. One student cheekily asked one part-time teacher if she could pass by just doing the speaking part, but with no reading. No, the numbers fall short, and that is a fail. It is possible that ER may be viewed by students as an unnecessary extra, due to the manner in which it is admittedly clunkily affixed to another course. Noting such an issue, I think that our students would have benefitted from a clearer explanation of ER - the reasons and benefits, and how ER fits in with other classes and skills. Give students clear and strong reasons to buy-in. Such an explanation will be provided for the next academic year.

Students are faced with information overload in the first week, and cannot be expected to retain much of what is thrust in their direction at that time. For the next academic year, we are moving the introduction later, putting students together in a single combined class to start with, at which stage they will be provided with written explanations and justifications, then a run-through of ER and using MReader.

Regarding errant behaviours, an approach that a colleague elsewhere has found effective for non-bringers is to build in 'bringing' to class attendance scores. Each class has three base points available: for being present and on time, for bringing all materials, and for participation. Thus, after the first orientation week, the fourteen weeks yields a maximum of forty-two points, which can then be fed into the overall grade at whatever percentage breakdowns you are working with. Students thus accrue for regular positive behaviours, which is a standard gamification approach (Figueroa, 2015; Kapp, 2012). Additionally, teachers are advised to bring a small selection of 'emergency' graded reader texts, for students to use for when students do, on occasion, neglect to bring.

Next is to consider dealing with what the software indicates to be nefarious behaviours -

'cheating'. Two issues are highlighted by MReader software - time correlation of test-taking, plus excessive matches between students of the books completed. We brought the students in to query the two matching types, and the explanation provided was that they were swapping books amongst friends. No explanation was given for time correlation. Careful to avoid any direct accusations, I explained clearly that books need to be self-chosen, showed that the software highlights the matches, and asked that students desist from swapping. The need for students to select their own reading should have been explained very clearly at the start of the program, and this is a lesson learned for next year.

Final thoughts

We have made a start in introducing extensive reading using graded readers, providing levelled massed input. However, clearly there are areas where we can seek to improve as the reflections indicate, particularly in terms of explaining to students more clearly at the start about ER, and how we suggest that this will benefit them as language learners. We can help part-time teachers manage more closely by providing more regular provision of MReader printouts. The awkward placement of our ER program is unhelpful, but there is a curriculum overview coming up in 2018, so we can hope to move the ER program to a more central location in the curriculum at that time, and build student language input around this key element.

Systematic, regular and candid reflection appears not just helpful but necessary, as a means to improve our professional practice. So, dear readers, how are you doing extensive reading, and how do you reflect on what is going well, and what could be going better...?

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New Graded Readers

Bjorn Fuisting

For those of you who would like to find new titles of graded readers, there are 12 new titles from Black Cat Publishing to a variety of their series such as *Reading & Training* and *Green Apple*. Also, Oxford University Press are continuing to add new titles with 33 new titles to series such as *Oxford Read and Imagine* and *Dominoes*.



World History Readers by Seed Learning

There is also an interesting brand new series being published by a relative newcomer on the scene: Seed Learning. They have teamed up with some well-known and experienced graded reader authors, headed by Rob Waring as series editor, to create a 6-level series starting at 800 headwords and going up to 2,500 headwords. All titles are non-fiction and a mixture of famous historical people, events and developments. There are 10 titles for each level with 60 titles in total. All titles include a CD. The series is specifically written for EFL learners and it is worthwhile taking a look at it and the other graded readers from Seed Learning.

The full list of new titles with levels, headwords and word counts can be found on the ER SIG website jalt.org/er.



MReader

As some *ER in Japan* readers might have noticed, we recently added whether or not the new titles have or will have an MReader quiz to the information we include about new titles. Thankfully most publishers in Japan support MReader and the ER Foundation in various ways. but not all publishers are able to produce quizzes for their new titles. This can make it cumbersome for ER teachers, and their students, who rely on MReader as part of their program. The ER SIG is trying to help rectify this by putting together a group of ER teachers who would be interested in developing quizzes for new titles. If you are interested in joining please contact me on bjornjalt@gmail.com.

Language Learner Literature Awards

Finalists 2017

Every year, the Extensive Reading Foundation recognizes the best new works of language learner literature in English. From books published in 2016, the ERF judges have selected sixteen titles of particular merit – the finalists. From these sixteen, the ERF will select one winner in each of six categories, taking into account the votes and comments of students and teachers of English worldwide.

Very Young Learners



The Bully
By Herbert Puchta and Gunter Gerngross
Illustrated by Lorenzo Sabbatini

Helbling Languages (The Thinking Train)

ISBN: 978-3-99045-404-6

“a story that all children can relate to”



I Can See You
By Paul Shipton
Illustrated by Steve Cox
Oxford University Press (Oxford Read

and Imagine)

ISBN: 978-0-19-470907-1

“interactive component will hold students’ attention”



The Animals of Kung Fu Panda
By Fiona Davis
Designed by Dawn Wilson
Scholastic (Popcorn ELT Readers)

ISBN: 978-1-910-17379-4

“an interesting way to blend storytelling with the real world”

Young Learners



Clunk's Brain
By Paul Shipton
Illustrated by Matteo Piana
Oxford University Press (Oxford Read and Imagine)

ISBN: 978-0-19-473697-8

“good balance of fantasy, reality and humanity”

The Emperor's New Clothes

By Hans Christian Andersen
Adapted by Mairi Mackinnon
Illustrated by Olga Demidova
Usborne English Readers

ISBN: 978-1-4749-2460-3

“a must-read classic story”



School Adventures 3
By Jason Wilburn and Casey Kim
Illustrated by Jaehwan Jung
e-future

ISBN: 979-11-5680-314-0

“engaging comic-style book”

Adolescents and Adults: Upper-intermediate and Advanced

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

By William Shakespeare
Adapted by Robert Hill
Illustrated by Paolo D'Altan
Black Cat

ISBN: 978-88-5301552-5

“beautiful illustrations ... high-quality writing”



The Merchant of Venice

By William Shakespeare
Adapted by Clare West
Illustrated by Thomas Girard
Oxford

University Press (Bookworms)

ISBN: 978-0-19-420971-7

“powerful, well-paced narrative”

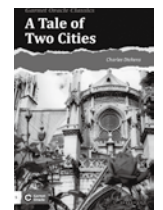


A Tale of Two Cities

By Charles Dickens
Adapted by Peter Viney
Illustrated by Gino D'Antonio
Garnet Education (Garnet Oracle Classics)

ISBN: 978-1-78260-312-2

“central themes maintained in accessible text”



How do you do it?

Please let us know how you use ER. Fill in the form:

tinyurl.com/how-do-you-use-ER

Adolescents and Adults: Intermediate



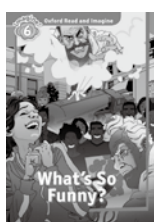
Rain, Rain, Go Away!

By Nicola Prentis
Illustrated by Franco Rivolli
Black Cat

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What's So Funny?

By Paul Shipton
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Teachers and students can vote for the finalists at: www.tiny.cc/erf17. If you haven't used the site before, you will need to create a new account.

Enrolment key: 2017votes

The closing date is June 30, 2017.

Write for the ERJ!

Send anything related to extensive reading or extensive listening, or of interest to members of the JALT ER SIG to erj@jalt.org. Back issues can be seen at jalt.org/er.

Use APA6 style, no footnotes, MSWord or text format. If you have any layout requests, send separately or consider the position of layout editor!

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

Headings and subheadings sentence-capitalised (only the first letter of the heading and the first letter of proper names capitalised)

Photos, graphs and graphics should be separate, clearly named files, with high Tables should be sent as data, not images.

Authors should prepare a photo, relatively close up, with good contrast and ideally reading something.



Article review: Jeon, E-Y. & Day, R. R. (2016) The effectiveness of ER on reading proficiency: A meta-analysis. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 28(2), 246-265.*

Jeremy D. Slogoski

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Extensive reading (ER) is a practice I learned about as an MA student, but never saw as part of a curriculum in my career. Most research (see references) continues to be published about the benefits of extensive reading. Through my correspondence with other English language program coordinators, I have learned that ER is implemented in some programs with great success. My English language program is in the developmental stages. It is an intensive English program in the United States with university-bound students across all proficiency levels. I have found that Jeon & Day's more recent article (2016)—a meta-analysis on the effectiveness of ER on reading proficiency—to be very helpful in that it provides evidence for the effectiveness of extensive reading on reading proficiency as well as guidelines for implementing an extensive reading program.

Introduction, research questions, & literature review

The article starts by defining extensive reading as “a way of learning a language through a great amount of reading for pleasure,” followed by listing its contribution to various aspects of language proficiency and its effect on the affective domain (p. 246). The purpose of the study is to investigate the overall effectiveness of extensive reading, and the following questions helped guide this purpose.

1. What is the overall effectiveness of ER on reading proficiency (reading comprehension, reading rate, and vocabulary) in ESL and EFL settings?
2. To what extent do identification (year of publication), context (age, ESL and EFL setting, library size), treatment (length, text type, ER form), and outcome (reading comprehension, reading rate, and vocabulary) variables affect the impact of ER?

The authors primarily reviewed three meta-analyses on extensive reading: Krashen's meta-analysis (2007) on extensive reading on EFL adolescents and young adults, Kim's (2012) on extensive reading encompassing the cognitive domain and affective domain, and Nakanishi's (2015) on the overall strength of extensive reading and how its effect differed depending on the participants' ages and periods of instruction. Jeon and Day (2016) found that each meta-analysis had weaknesses, such as poor design, not enough studies to qualify as a meta-analysis, and the inclusion of studies in non-ESL and non-EFL contexts. The review showed that extensive reading in practice is not exactly the same as it is in theory. It also found

gaps in the literature with few or no studies on the implementation of extensive reading, the setting, the size of the library, and the type of texts being used.

Method

To search for the literature, the authors conducted both online and manual bibliographical searches. The study used Day & Bamford's five characteristics of extensive reading (2002), experimental and quasi-experimental research designs, and publications dates from 1980 to 2014 as their criteria for inclusion. They found 51 samples from 32 studies that were experimental in design and 20 samples from 17 studies that used a pre-test post-test research design.

For coding, the authors used markers to identify the publication of each study, to determine which of their research questions were addressed, and to identify information in the study such as context, treatment, and outcomes. To calculate effect sizes, they used the Comprehensive Meta-Analysis Program (Cohen, 1977).

Results

Publication bias

“[T]he results of Fail-test N test revealed that unpublished studies reporting non-significant findings are unlikely to reverse the findings” (p. 252)

Overall effectiveness of ER

For the experimental studies, the overall effectiveness was 0.57, indicating “the superiority of the ER group over the intensive or traditional reading group on the immediate post-test” (p. 253)

For the pre-test post-test studies, the overall effectiveness was small to medium ($d=0.79$)

The moderator analyses

Table 5 (p. 256) shows the results of the moderator analyses for the experimental studies only. The pre-test post-test studies had small numbers of effect sizes. The purpose of the moderator analyses is to assess differences among different variables such as age, text type, or skill focus.

Discussion & results

Extensive reading has a small to medium effect on reading proficiency, which the authors interpret as “a promising outlook for practicing extensive reading in EFL settings” because most of these studies were in EFL contexts (p. 261).

The discussion and results section provided practical guidelines for teachers, administrators, and policy makers, such as

- 📖 Understand that it takes time to see the benefits. Results are not immediate.
- 📖 Implementation is easier when extensive reading is part of the curriculum.
- 📖 Extensive reading programs need systematic support from their schools or governments.
- 📖 Library costs can be alleviated by using computer reader programs, such as Moodle Reader, and using digital texts

This meta-analysis also found that there is a growing interest (such as in my case) and a developing expertise in extensive reading classroom implementation. In terms of students, the analysis found a higher effect with adults and lower effect with adolescents, likely due to cognitive and test-centeredness factors. Some students may not be ready to read extensively outside the classroom.

Additionally, the presence and size of a library had no significant influence on the impact of the extensive reading programs. Although technology can help reduce library costs, some students may not be comfortable using computer reader programs or digital texts for extensive reading purposes.

Limitations of this study were that most studies investigated extensive reading in Asia Pacific contexts. There were a small number of longitudinal studies, and studies on young learners.

Have you read anything good recently? Why not write a review for the ERJ?

Takeaways

Extensive reading works! This article provides further evidence for me that Richard R. Day is the leading expert in extensive reading in foreign languages. Many of the studies cited here come from the online journal *Reading in a Foreign Language* of which Dr. Day is co-editor.

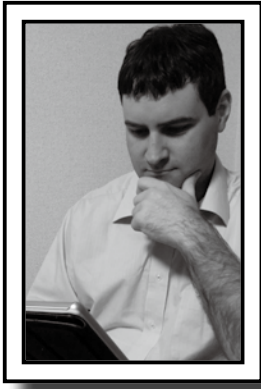
The discussion and conclusion sections provide a lot of helpful guidelines for schools to develop their extensive reading programs. From both a research and administrative point of view, I’m interested in future studies that look at:

- 📖 What programs have had success with extensive reading for 10+ years and how do they measure success?
- 📖 What programs have not had success with developing an extensive reading program and why? What were their major issues: logistics, personnel, curriculum, etc?
- 📖 What programs have no (immediate) intention of integrating extensive reading in their curriculum and why?
- 📖 What programs are in the process of redesigning their extensive reading programs?
- 📖 What pedagogical challenges do teachers face in an extensive reading program that the program considers successful?

This article first appeared in *ELT Research Bites*, a blog that “presents interesting and relevant language and education research in an easily digestible format,” at www.eltresearchbites.com.

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Recent research in extensive reading and listening

Compiled by G. Clint Denison

Brevik, L. M., Olsen, R. V., & Hellekjær, G. O. (2016). The complexity of second language reading: Investigating the L1-L2 relationship. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 28*(2), 161-182.

This article contributes to the field of reading assessment in English as a second language (L2). Few reading studies have been carried out at the upper secondary school level, and the present study provides insight into upper secondary school students' L2 reading proficiency. It examines whether such proficiency can be explained by reading proficiency in Norwegian as their first language (L1). The analysis uses data from two national reading tests, comprising a large sample of 16-year-old students (N=10,331), and it is the first time reading across these languages has been investigated at this level. The results show a significant and meaningful relationship between students' reading proficiency in the two languages. The results also reveal marked reading differences in reading proficiency in the two languages among poor readers.

Burrows, L., & Holsworth, M. (2016). The effects of explicit word recognition training on Japanese EFL learners. *The Reading Matrix, 16*(2), 81-97.

This study is a quantitative, quasi-experimental investigation focusing on the effects of word recognition training on word recognition fluency, reading speed, and reading comprehension for 151 Japanese university students at a lower-intermediate reading proficiency level. Four treatment groups were given training in orthographic, phonological, and/or semantic processing, while a control group engaged in sustained silent reading. Treatment materials included two texts of different readability levels. Results indicated the intervention positively impacted participants' reading speed for both reading passages. However, reading comprehension and word recognition fluency improved more convincingly when learners were faced with reading passages that were slightly beyond their linguistic competence. The results highlight the importance of including a phonological element in word recognition training for students in foreign language reading classes.

Carney, N. (2016). Gauging extensive reading's relationship with TOEIC reading score growth. *Journal of Extensive Reading, 4*, 69-86.

This paper reports on a study relating the extensive reading achievement of an intact group of EFL learners at a Japanese university to the change in their institutional TOEIC reading scores after a period of seven and a half months. Similarly to other studies using inferential statistics to determine how extensive reading affects or relates to TOEIC scores, this study found almost no statistically significant relationship between increased reading and improvement in TOEIC reading scores. Likewise, the extensive reading group did not have significantly higher TOEIC reading scores than other similar proficiency groups at the same university who were not doing extensive reading. In response to this and other studies' results, the paper includes an extended discussion regarding the plausibility of researching extensive reading's relationship with TOEIC scores and important considerations for such research if it is carried out. The paper concludes with a call for more widespread collaboration among extensive reading researchers.

Cheetham, C., Harper, A., Elliott, M., & Ito, M. (2016). Assessing student attitudes toward graded readers, MReader and the MReader Challenge. *The Reading Matrix, 16*(2), 1-19.

This paper describes a pilot study conducted with English as a foreign language (EFL) students at a private university in Japan who used graded readers and the MReader website in class or independently to enhance their English reading skills. Each semester students who read 100,000 words and pass MReader quizzes enter into the 'MReader Challenge', a reading contest that recognizes students for their achievement. The study focused specifically on the attitudes of thirty-six EFL students who successfully completed the Challenge in the 2015 spring semester using graded readers and MReader, and their motivation to continue using English in the future. The attitudes of these students were measured using their responses to statements on a Likert scaled survey. Follow-up semi-structured interviews were conducted with eleven students to gain additional insight into their opinions. The results from this study suggest that

reading graded readers in general promoted intrinsic motivation among a majority of the participants. This study is preliminary and needs to be expanded and continued to assess the lasting impact of the extensive reading program. Limitations and future directions of the study are also summarized and discussed.

Gascoigne, C., & Parnell, J. (2016). Returning to reading: An online course in French offers a snapshot of L2 reading habits and trends. *The Reading Matrix*, 16(2), 37-47.

With today's students spending increasing amounts of time involved in online activities, there is a growing need to study their online reading habits. Indeed, it is not only students' out-of-class engagement with electronic media that calls for increased attention to the reading skill, in general, and online reading, in particular, but it is also the explosion in the number of hybrid and online courses at both the secondary and post-secondary levels that begs for examination. While communicative competence may still reign, it is time for the profession to turn at least some of our attention back to the importance of the reading skill and increase our research specifically devoted to understanding the process of online reading in the L2. The following pages speak to this need by contributing information on the creation of an online post-secondary French course devoted to developing L2 reading skills, as well as a qualitative study of the students' reading habits both in print and online in both English (the L1) and in French (the L2). Findings from this pre- and post-course survey coupled with results from other studies begin to flesh out a portrait of online L2 reading behavior.

Jacobs, G. M., & Renandya, W. A. (2016). Using positive education to enliven the teaching of reading. *RELC Journal*, doi:10.1177/0033688216661258

Positive education is a relatively new, student centred approach which takes an optimistic view of learning, seeks to build on students' individual and collective strengths and encourages students to take responsibility for collaboratively interacting with peers for the benefit of themselves and others. This article begins by explaining some of the roots, research, principles and applications of positive education. Seven positive education principles are: connections with others, responsibility, gratitude, positivity, strengths, kindness and meaning. Next, the article considers how positive education can inform two approaches to the teaching of reading: dialogic

reading and extensive reading. Dialogic reading involves students interacting with teachers and peers about what they read. This interaction can include topics related to emotions and values. Extensive reading involves students in reading large quantities of text at and around students' current reading levels. Sometimes, students may do activities to share with others about what they read. The last part of the article provides ideas and examples of how dialogic reading and extensive reading might benefit from insights from positive education.

Jeon, E. Y., & Day, R. R. (2016). The effectiveness of ER on reading proficiency: A meta-analysis. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 28(2), 246-245.

(See review on page 18)

A meta-analysis was performed to investigate the impact of extensive reading (ER) on reading proficiency. This study gathered 71 unique samples from 49 primary studies published from 1980 to 2014 involving a total of 5,919 participants. Effect sizes were generated separately according to two different study designs: experimental-versus-control contrasts and pre-to-post-test contrasts. Small to medium effect was found in both study designs. Moderator analysis showed growing interest in ER in the field over the last 30 years. Also, a higher effect was found in the adults than in the children and adolescents group. English as a foreign language (EFL) settings showed a higher effect than English as a second language (ESL) settings; and web-based stories had a higher effect than paper books. Finally, ER as a part of curriculum showed the highest mean effect among ER types. Suggestions are made on how to implement ER in ESL and EFL settings effectively.

Mayora, C. A. (2017). Extensive listening in a Colombian university: Process, product, and perceptions. *HOW*, 24(1), 101-121.

The current paper reports an experience implementing a small-scale narrow listening scheme (one of the varieties of extensive listening) with intermediate learners of English as a foreign language in a Colombian university. The paper presents (a) how the scheme was designed and implemented, including materials and procedures (the process); (b) how the students performed in the different activities with an emphasis on time spent watching/listening and their perceptions of video difficulty and self-rated comprehension (the product); and (c) how the

students felt and viewed the experience (perception). Product and perceptions showed that the pedagogical implementation was positive which leads to a discussion of a number of implications for this context and similar ones.

McLean, S. (2017). Evidence for the adoption of the flemma as an appropriate word counting unit. *Applied Linguistics*, doi:10.1093/applin/amw050

An important gap in the field of second language vocabulary research concerns the ability of Asian learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to comprehend inflectional and derivational word family members. Japanese EFL learners (N = 279) were divided into three lexical proficiency groups, and their ability to comprehend inflectional and derivational English forms was measured with an English to Japanese translation test. A significant difference among the participants' ability to comprehend 12 base forms, associated inflected forms, and associated derived forms was found across the three proficiency groups, and even among participants who demonstrated mastery of the first 4,000 or 5,000 base forms of English. The flemma, a word's base form and associated inflectional forms, was found to be an appropriate word counting unit for most participants. Results are important because corpus research findings demonstrate that in cases where the word family provides 98 per cent coverage of texts, the flemma only provides 85 per cent coverage of the same texts. Thus, considering the detrimental impact to reading comprehension from only small decreases in the percentage of known tokens within a text, the results question the inferences made in word family-based research.

Mikami, A. (2016). Students' attitudes toward extensive reading in the Japanese EFL context. *TESOL Journal*, doi:10.1002/tesj.283

Although many studies state the benefits of extensive reading (ER) for language learning, this practice is not common in language classrooms. Because few studies have investigated the status of ER in second language classrooms, this study looks at past and current ER practice among Japanese students of English as a foreign language (EFL) and their motivation toward it. The researcher conducted a questionnaire survey using a mixed-methods design with 141 university students in Japan. Quantitative analysis showed that participants had little past or current practice of ER,

but many more participants felt like reading more English books than those who did not. Qualitative analysis indicated that their reasons for reading or not reading more English books fell into three attitudinal categories: negative (reasons for not reading), positive (reasons for reading), and ambivalent. Eight distinct negative reasons and six positive reasons were identified. Ambivalent reasons were not grouped, because each one was complex and unique. These results imply that the participants' motivation was not fixed or stable and that it was difficult for them to maintain positive motivation. Using students' responses to the survey, this study examines the educational implications for promoting English ER to help EFL teachers confront its unpopularity.

Renandya, W. A., & Jacobs, G. M. (2016). Extensive reading and listening in the language classrooms. In W. A. Renandya & H. P. Widodo (Eds.), *English Language Teaching Today: Linking Theory and Practice* (pp. 97-110). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

This chapter first looks at extensive reading (ER) and extensive listening (EL) separately, defining the terms and discussing the language learning benefits of the two approaches to language learning. It then discusses ways of implementing the two together in input-poor L2 contexts where the quantity and quality of the target language input tends to be rather limited. In these L2 learning contexts, the main source of input comes from the classroom teachers and the coursebooks, which, while useful, tend to have limited impact on L2 learning. By implementing both approaches, L2 learners could be exposed to far richer and greater quantity of language input, which in turn would have a more pronounced salutary effect on their L2 learning. The chapter ends by addressing problems and concerns (e.g., lack of resources, limited curriculum time and lack of support from school administrators) that L2 teachers often raise regarding the implementation ER and EL in schools.

Sugita, M. (2016). The effects of English learner's first language (L1) background content knowledge on guessing unknown words. *Journal of Extensive Reading*, 4, 1-20.

This study was an investigation of the effects that learners' first language (L1) background content knowledge has on guessing unknown or partially known words when reading a written text. Twenty-nine Japanese university students of English with similar English reading proficiency read a 1,387-

word narrative text in one of three L1 background knowledge conditions: reading an L1 summary before reading the English text, reading the L1 summary before reading the English text and having it available while reading the text, and reading the English text without reading the L1 summary. The participants were tested for their wordform recognition of 33 target words and they took a bilingual multiple-choice recognition test and two questionnaires immediately after reading. There was no systematic difference in guessing unknown words among the groups, as guessing the meaning of the target words occurred successfully across all groups. The qualitative results indicated that the participants believed that the L1 summary helped them comprehend a general idea of the text and guess the meaning of unknown words.

Tan, D. A. L., Pandian, A., & Jaganathan, P. (2016).

Encouraging ESL/EFL reading among lower proficiency students at the tertiary level: The use of graded readers. *The Reading Matrix*, 16(2), 20-36.

Malaysian tertiary students are reluctant readers of English texts, a condition which can impede the development of their English proficiency. In any ESL/EFL reading programme, particularly programmes for lower proficiency students, it is essential to provide materials that students can comprehend without difficulty. This paper discusses the respective roles of authentic and simplified texts in ESL/EFL settings, and observes students' perceptions towards the use of graded readers. 28 Malaysian undergraduates (remedial English language learners) read a series of graded readers from the Oxford Progressive English Readers collection, and questionnaires were utilised to record their perceptions. Primarily, it was found that: 1) perceptions regarding the graded readers were encouraging, and 2) using suitable reading materials can be beneficial, particularly in terms of developing a more positive attitude towards reading in English. The findings provide better direction for the implementation of reading programmes, and are relevant to both language teachers and course planners.

Yamashita, J., & Shiotsu, T. (2017). Comprehension and knowledge components that predict L2 reading: A latent-trait approach. *Applied Linguistics*, 38(1), 43-67.

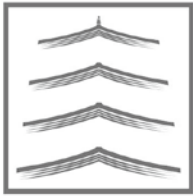
Among predictors of second language (L2) reading, both first language (L1) reading and L2 listening embody the complexities of comprehension ability in

their construct. Their contributions to L2 reading have rarely been examined together, probably because of the different theoretical frameworks in which they are postulated. Therefore, the field lacks evidence regarding how these two predictors concurrently explain variance in L2 reading. Employing two layers of latent-trait analyses, this study investigated L1 reading and L2 listening together with L2 knowledge, which is repeatedly shown to strongly predict L2 reading. Data from 325 L1-Japanese university students were first Rasch-analysed to obtain multiple latent indicators of criterion and predictor variables, which were then submitted to Structural Equation Modelling to evaluate the relative weights of the latent predictors. Over 90 per cent of the L2 reading variance was jointly explained by the predictors, with L2 listening and L2 knowledge accounting for most of the variance. A separate analysis of the higher proficiency subsample resulted in L2 knowledge showing the largest contribution, followed by L2 listening and finally by L1 reading.

Zhao, A., Guo, Y., Biales, C., & Olszewsk, A. (2016).

Exploring learner factors in second language (L2) incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 28(2), 224-245.

This study examined the predictive role of several learner factors in second language (L2) incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading: L2 proficiency, motivation, anxiety, and mastery of strategies. Participants were 129 English learners in a comprehensive university in China. Participants read two English texts and were given an unannounced vocabulary test to assess their incidental vocabulary acquisition. Their levels of motivation, anxiety, and mastery of strategies were measured by three specifically designed instruments that targeted incidental vocabulary acquisition. A multiple linear regression analysis revealed that L2 proficiency, anxiety, and mastery of strategies were positive and significant predictors of incidental vocabulary acquisition, although motivation was not. This confirms the role that learners' linguistic, affective, and cognitive features play in L2 incidental vocabulary acquisition.



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