

NUFS Workshop 2011

*Newsletter No. 8***Workshop in December**

(Part 1)

Date: December 10, 2011, 10:30-14:30

Venue: Nagoya NSC College, Room 52

Instructor: Rob Waring (Notre Dame Seishin University)

Title: “The How and Why of Extensive Reading”

Abstract: There will be two sessions. The first is 'How to fit Extensive Reading into the curriculum.' This session will look at why extensive reading should be an essential part of all curriculums. Then we will examine how to design an ER program to fit your own curriculum and answer many of the big questions about assessment, evaluation, amount of reading, aims and so forth. The second is 'How to implement Extensive Reading in Japanese classes.' This second session will explain the set up procedure, how to select materials, create a library and book checking systems.



The number of participants: 25

1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?

- I am trying to figure out how I can implement ER in the classes I teach. In my cross-cultural understanding class I think these readers display some of the scientific and everyday concepts we are learning about. I'd like to use some books to support of these concepts. Students actually asked to be given time for ER in class.
- The story about the balanced curriculum was really interesting and I would like to try to make a good balance of each category when I make a lesson plan.
- Reading one easy graded reader in class. The experience of reading one book in English would give students a big impact and enjoyment. I want students to know the enjoyment of reading books in English.
- I'm not in a position now to do ER, but hopefully will be in one year. I definitely would like to set up an ER lab in my community. I also hope to teach fellow teachers.
- I'd like to use extensive reading as winter vacation homework. It's hard for our school to buy so many graded readers, but I may be able to prepare something easy to read for my students. I would be happy if my students enjoyed reading.
- Today I learned a lot about not only ER but also language teaching. My English class was not concerned about input and output balance, because I didn't know about the difference between receptive and productive, language study and fluency practice. So I want to make a plan concerning about these things and I want to improve English class.



2. What you learned from today's workshop.

- I was persuaded by the data how we need ER. I think these data is going to be useful to persuade my co-workers. I've been failing introducing ER to my school because of lacking of budget. I hope I can start it with help of coworkers.
- Balance in Language Teaching helped me understand the importance of fluency input. Reading only the course books isn't enough for students to improve reading skills.
- Teacher's job is not to teach but to help students learn. In order to do that, we need "The Balanced" curriculum. Extensive Reading can greatly fit in receptive/fluency practice. I want to share this idea with my colleague teachers. I did feel guilty about not sharing the idea that ER is vital for students' learning.
- I learned about the dangers of jumping too fast into ER. I'd like to introduce ER, but as a foreigner and non-full-time teacher, I wonder what's the most effective way to implement ER.
- It was very interesting to see the data on exposure to vocabulary in Japanese English courses. The question of how many exposures to a grammatical form it takes to acquire was interesting for me because I have been thinking about that lately.
- Today's presentation gave me so many details that helped me understand the psychology and why it is useful in a Japanese context. It also helped me understand the early stages for starting a program.

3. Questions and Answers

Q (1): Is there a recommended ratio for the four boxes of the balanced curriculum?

A: No. It depends on the learners. Beginners will necessarily need 1 and 2 at first followed by some 3 (listening to teacher read) and read and repeat (2). 4 will come later. Elementary will have less 4. Intermediates and above will be balanced for all 4.

Q (2): Do your students do any follow-up work after extensive reading?

A: Yes, they write a report of their reading on a blog. All students comment on each other's' blog. They often read the same book in pairs and compare their impressions. They take Moodle reader quizzes, too.

Q (3): For my junior high school students, even ORT Level 1 has unknown words. What can I do for that?

A: You should read them before the students read, note down the words and pre-teach them through games.

Q (4): If we introduce ER as an extra-curricular activity, how should we evaluate students' achievement of ER?

A: No, it shouldn't be extra-curricular. It should be an essential part of the whole curriculum. There are many ways to evaluate them. Look at the ideas in the ERF Guide link I gave you.

http://erfoundation.org/ERF_Guide.pdf



Q (5): I teach junior high school students. Which grade do you think is best to start extensive reading?

A: I'd start them with a structured phonics course – help them to read by sounding out words. Then I'd start them with the first 5 levels of Oxford reading tree and then Foundations reading library

Q (6): Many junior high and high school libraries don't have many English books. Should we suggest to principle to prepare a new room and books for ER?

A: If possible, but it's not necessary to have a room. You can use the school library or have a trolley or cart to wheel books in and out of the classes. Book bags work well to. Get students to help carry them.



Q (7): I want to have a good orientation program for students. In the first class, how much information and reading should I introduce for the students who have never experienced ER?

A: As I mentioned in the workshop, it's best to start slow, with a class reader – 1 chapter a week for a few weeks, then introduce the graded readers – but don't let them see the hard books, only ones they can read easily. Don't be too enthusiastic or they'll fight back. Take it easy and slowly. This is not a race. You're trying to develop a lifelong reading habit.

Q (8): I wonder if some learners would like to read familiar stories as a first step. I wonder if there is a lack of familiarity of the culture involved in ER graded readers that turns learners off from the books. Would they like to start off with Japanese or Asian themes first?

A: I don't think it matters. It really depends on the learners. Why not show them books they may like and let them tell you.

Q (9): Students have been reading graded readers, but their reading skill hasn't improved. I think they misunderstand reading a book without a dictionary as skipping words they don't know. They are sophomores. Would it be too difficult for them to change their reading habit? Or start over? They also have problems with reading and understanding longer sentences. Will their grammar level becomes higher if they keep reading graded readers?

A: My guess the reason for this is that they are reading things which are too hard. If they use their dictionaries, then it's too hard. Ask them to read super-easy stuff. But understand that this is a long term thing, don't expect immediate results. It can take years to undo previous habits.

Q (10): You said 'real' children's books are not suitable for extensive reading, but some of my university students are interested in that kind of books. They prefer authentic English rather than controlled English of graded readers. Is it OK to allow them to read one they like?

A: Yes, they may be interested, but the long term aim is for them to read something at their age level so they should move off them soon.



(Part 2)

Date: December 10, 2011, 14:30-17:00

Venue: Nagoya NSC College

Advisors: Kazuyoshi Sato (NUFS), Robert Croker (Nanzan University)

Abstract: Monthly report on action research

The number of participants: 14



Workshop in January (Scheduled)

Date: January 21, 2012, 10:30-14:30 (Part 1), 14:30-17:00 (Part 2)

Venue: Nagoya NSC College

Instructor: Paul Crane (NUFS)

Title: “Introduction to Language Learning Strategies”

Please send an email to Chihaya ([chiha143\(at-mark\)nufs.ac.jp](mailto:chiha143@nufs.ac.jp)) to participate in this workshop.