

## NUFS Workshop 2012

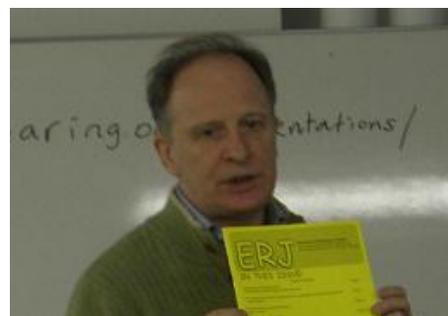
*Newsletter No. 8*Workshop in December

(Part 1)

**Date:** December 8, 2012, 10:30-14:30**Venue:** Nagoya NSC College**Instructor:** Rob Waring (Notre Dame Seishin University)

Bio.

Rob Waring is on the Executive Board of the Extensive Reading Foundation, is Vice-President of the Korean English Extensive Reading Association and is Co-Chair of the Second World Congress on Extensive Reading to be held at Yonsei University in September 2013. He has written or edited over 200 graded readers and has lectured in over 20 countries about Extensive Reading.

**Title:** "How to set up and run a successful Extensive Reading program"

**Abstract:** This presentation will outline the important steps when planning, developing, building, implementing and reviewing an Extensive Reading program. The presentation will be very practical and workshop in style. The presenter will also show how and why some ER programs fail and what can be done to avoid such instances. We will also discuss various ways to promote Extensive Reading so we can ensure a successful ER program is developed and maintained. Participants will be encouraged to share their experiences.

**The number of participants: 18****1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?**

- I'll use the color stickers to distinguish the levels. I like the idea of Gold stickers.
- Graded reading – there are 40 students in one class, and their English levels are all different. Graded reading must be useful for slow learners to enjoy reading English books, and also for fast learners to improve their reading speed and vocabularies.
- I really want to do extensive reading myself to learn Japanese. It is hard to find texts for this. I have focused that intensive reading texts work if one chooses texts that are several levels below ones current study reading level. Unfortunately it does not work because I spend more time looking for texts reading them.
- I'd like to use the editing program on er-central.com to make my reading activities less difficult. I use a lot of authentic material for my reading class, but sometimes students struggle with difficult vocabularies.
- Now I understand how important extensive reading is to consolidate what students learned, I want to introduce it to my future teaching.



- I have not time to have students try ER in the classes. So I'll try a special 'reading room'. I hope students will come to read books in the 'reading room' for fifteen minutes' rest.
- I'd like my students to make the words they don't know in the course textbook and know how much percent of the running words they don't know. I should notice the reality.

## 2. What you learned from today's workshop.

- I didn't know about Extensive Reading well so I came here today to learn how to do it. Now I know the difference between Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading and how to introduce ER into classes. Also I got a lot of useful information that I could use in my classes. I will definitely check your home page.
- ER I'm doing at my school is not systematic at all; I bring graded readers once in a while to class and have them read. If they are interested, they can bring the book home. Now only 5 students out of 152 keep coming to my after school to borrow graded readers. However, Rob told us ER is not one type. I am so encouraged by the words. I will ask these 5 students to write about the experience of ER so that other students or teachers can read.
- Before I took this workshop, I wondered how to evaluate students' progress in extensive reading. What I learned today about it was that teachers don't necessarily need to check students' understanding of the books because they had already chose the books they can understand.
- I realized why the ER programs at our school are failing this year. The ER program has become 'my thing'. Everyone should be involved in making programs, but I've already given up working together with my colleague teachers.
- I learned that teachers need to read many book in order to introduce students which books are enjoyable for each students. Also it's very important to ask students if the books are difficult or not.

## 3. Questions and Answers

**Q (1): How do you choose books for class readers that are “high comprehension”, “comfortable” and “fun” for all the students in a class? Do you aim for the lowest common denominator?**

**RW:** We have little choice. But not so low that it puts off some. You aren't going to win of course, so aim for the maximum impart. Ask some students to look at some sample choices privately before showing your choice to the whole class.

**Q (2): Is there data on learners better acquiring specific language pattern through ER?**

**RW:** No. There isn't any data sadly. This is a massive hole in the research. I spent a lot of time looking for research and didn't find any. The reason is that it is extremely messy research and very difficult to track a users' growth in knowledge of a grammatical feature or pattern over time. But if you want a phd, it's be a good place to try... That said, because there's no data doesn't mean it's probably not true. We know students can pick up words and collocations, even semi-fixed phrases, so it makes sense they can do this for lexico-grammatical items. This shows one needs massive exposure to items to pick things up. Direct instruction can help you notice something and ER can deepen that knowledge



**Q (3): What would be an ideal ratio of intensive to extensive reading provided we had a lot of time for both?**

**RW:** It depends on the level. Beginners can hardly decode text so ER is hard. Necessarily it has to be language work as they struggle to learn the alphabet and a few basic pieces of grammar, basic vocab etc. Once they get to low elementary they can start to read (probably slowly), but by intermediate level they probably have met all the most important grammar and need to do less of that in favour of more practice through communicative things like ER, chatting, writing essays etc.



**Q (4): What level or how many words should Japanese ordinary high school students read? Is there anything I need to consider to set goals?**

**RW:** I'd start them from the easiest reading levels you can find to build confidence, and a 'can read' attitude. Many of them are damaged goods who believe that the only valid form of reading is IR. You could try Foundations reading Library or Building Blocks Library from MPI publishers. As these series are easy, I recommend 2-3 books a week – say 1 hour a week at their level

**Q (5): You said that “motivation is more important than language”, but how can we motivate students who don't like reading?**

**RW:** Hard. Some will always hate reading, we can't avoid that. But we know what turns them off – stuff that's too hard, boring and often that chosen by others. Doing the opposite is likely to lead to success.

**Q (6): It is difficult to convince other teachers. You said that there are many researches which show that students perform better on tests if they are engaged in ER program. Would you tell me which research papers or books I should read?**

**RW:** Research by Beniko Mason ([benikomason.com](http://benikomason.com)) is a good place to start. [http://www.benikomason.com/articles/Mason\\_Tanaka\\_IJFLT\\_11-11.pdf](http://www.benikomason.com/articles/Mason_Tanaka_IJFLT_11-11.pdf)  
A study by Nishizawa et al in Nagoya is also good . It's in the Language teacher – about 2 years ago.

**Q (7): I have 'Extensive Reading/Listening' class to teach now. My students are supposed to read/listen to any material they like as homework and they keep records every week. During the class, I have my students read/listen to the same material that I choose and they sometimes use dictionary to check new words, but this might not be suitable for ER/L class. What activities should they do in class?**

**RW:** This depends on your aims. If your aims are to build language knowledge, then dictionary work with class readers is fine. As is learning form wordlists, flashcards, grammar study etc. But if your aim is to help them to understand text fluently or produce it fluently, then I'd have them do fluency tasks. For reading that would be reading graded readers or listening to them. However this can be done out of class to save time. Therefore, if your aim is fluency then I'd get them to write or talk about their stories and texts, make posters etc. They could even share words they didn't know from the texts.



(Part 2)

**Date:** December 8, 2012, 14:30-17:00

**Venue:** Nagoya NSC College

**Advisors:** Kazuyoshi Sato (NUFS), Nancy Mutoh (NUFS),

**Abstract:** Monthly report on action research

**The number of participants: 14**



### **Workshop in January (Scheduled)**

**Date:** January 12, 2013, 10:30-14:30 (Part 1), 14:30-17:00 (Part 2)

**Venue:** Nagoya NSC College

**Instructor:** Tom Kenny (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)

**Title:** “Building Fluency with Conversation Strategies”

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