ER101: Starting Strong with Extensive Reading

ERWC7
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Today's Talk

- Defining reading
- Intensive vs. extensive reading
- Does ER work?
- Getting students to do it
- Discussion

What is Reading?

Reading is a cognitive process that involves decoding symbols to arrive at meaning.

It is a process of making meaning from words.

Intensive and Extensive Reading

What is intensive reading?

What is extensive reading?

Intensive Reading

- Students work with short texts.

- Close guidance from the teacher.

- Detailed meaning from the text.

- Identify main ideas and text connectors.

- Develop vocabulary and grammar knowledge.

Extensive Reading

Read quickly and

Enjoyable

Adequate comprehension so they

Don't need a dictionary

- Content should be easy to understand.

- Students choose their own materials.

- Volume is more important than complete comprehension.

- Students internalize vocabulary and structures.

	Extensive reading	**Intensive reading**
Focus	Reading for enjoyment and comprehension.	Detailed analysis of short texts.
Goal	Develop fluency, passive vocabulary, and general proficiency through **repeated exposure**.	Deep understanding of grammar, syntax, vocabulary, etc.
Method	Reading fast and focusing on overall meaning with less emphasis on looking up new words.	Close reading, studying specific sentence structure, vocabulary, etc.
Purpose	To expose students to a lot of language exposure through reading.	To understand texts for specific learning goals.
Examples	Storybooks, blogs, graded readers.	Analyzing documents, forms, etc.
Skills developed	Reading fluency, passive vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension.	Analytical skills, grammar knowledge.

What kinds of materials are good for doing ER?

Extensive Reading materials

- Graded readers

- Youth readers

- Internet material

- Your own material

Graded Readers: Books written for or adapted to language levels.

- Controlled vocabulary and grammar

- Might have comprehension/discussion questions

- Often has a glossary of difficult words

Youth readers: books written for young people, not necessarily L2 learners.

- Themes connected to young people's lives

- Age appropriate language

- Engaging stories

- Learning and exploration

Internet sources: an unlimited amount of reading material.

- Often free

- Wide variety

- Possible copyright problems, quality issues, etc.

Other online reading resources

Song lyrics: https://www.azlyrics.com/

BBC Newsround:
https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround

Wikipedia in Simple English:
https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

ReadTheory: https://readtheory.org/

Your own material: a wide variety that showcases your creativity.

- Student or teacher created texts

- AI or other generative tools

- Topics can be tailored to student interests, class type, etc.

- Can be time consuming

Why should we do ER?

- Experience language in a more natural context.

- It builds vocabulary.

- It helps students learn to process language more automatically.

- It builds confidence.

- It's cheap.

But… Does it work? → Yes!

https://erfoundation.org/wordpress/evidence/

Where to start with ER

Get to know your students' reading habits.

Problem: Getting students to do it

Do your students read in their L1?

What do they like to read?

How much time per day or week do you spend reading?

In your L1

In your other languages

What my students say: Reading time

L1: It depends on the purpose, but usually 2-4 hours/week

Other languages: It depends on the time of year, where they are reading, etc.

What kinds of Reading do you Do?

In your L1

In your other languages

What my students say: L1

Textbooks

Social media

Manga (comic books)

Websites

What my students say: Other languages

Textbooks

Websites

Social media

Smartphone Apps

Emails

Subtitles

Problem: L1 reading

Research often tells us young people don't read in their L1.

A survey conducted in 2023 shows that 60% of young Japanese people read less than one <u>book</u> per month (Saito & Hamada, 2024).

We need to rethink what "reading" means and how we approach it.

The same survey found that 43.6% were spending more time on devices.

Problem 2: Getting students to do ER

What my students say about ER

- They don't understand the purpose

- They don't know how to select books/topics

- It's boring

Show students some role models

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QB6XGTIXVHk

Selecting materials: Finding the right level

Selecting materials: Guiding students

- Show students what's available.

- Have students discuss their interests.

- Have students choose some titles and guess the contents.

Set realistic goals

- My 1st year students must read a minimum of 21,000 words in semester 1 to get a "B" grade for ER.

- There are three reading goals in the 15 week term

Week 5: 7,000
Week 10: +7,000
Week 15: +7,000

Show the students their progress

Classes	Books Added	Books Passed	Words Read	Avg Xreading Level	Read Time (h:m:s)	Read Speed (Word/ Min)	Listen Time (h:m:s)	Quizzes Taken	Quizzes Passed	Quiz Avg
2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	22	15	19,420	7	03:44:26	86.5	03:13:00	18	15	70.0
2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	19	13	29,576	6	03:11:56	154.1	02:18:45	16	13	78.8
2024 R1-GCI-3, 2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	16	8	30,781	5	03:50:37	133.5	00:59:15	11	8	67.3
2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	27	7	21,810	7	02:14:17	162.4	00:13:30	12	9	66.7
2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	24	16	23,359	3	06:58:55	55.8	00:00:00	17	16	87.1
2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	16	9	20,254	3	04:38:39	72.7	00:00:00	13	9	69.2
2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	5	0	0	0	00:00:00	0	00:00:00	0	0	0.0
2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	7	3	21,645	6	01:53:08	191.3	00:42:45	5	4	60.0
2025 GCI 3a, **2025 R1-GCl3b**	9	6	23,381	5	04:11:42	92.9	03:06:30	8	6	65.0
2025 GCI 3a, **2025**										

If possible, let students choose other resources.

Give students SSR time in class

Lead by example

- Do SSR time with the students

- Talk about your own experience with ER

- Show students what you are reading

Make it interactive: Written reports

https://erfoundation.org/wordpress/useful-resources/ertoolkit/

Make it interactive: Spoken reports

Round table presentations allow students to practice speaking, learn about different books, and talk to a variety of classmates.

Get students to make/find materials

- Teach students narrative techniques and have them write stories for the class to read

- Give students a webquest project to find reading materials and make a class library

Questions and further discussion

Extensive Reading Foundation. (n.d.). *ER Toolkit.*
    https://erfoundation.org/wordpress/useful-resources/ertoolkit/

Grell, B. (2023). Reading definition, process, & strategies. *Study.com*.
    https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-reading-definition-process.html

Saito, B., Hamada, K. (2024, September 24). What is causing people in Japan, especially youth, to turn away from books? *The Mainichi*.
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Thank you for coming today.