

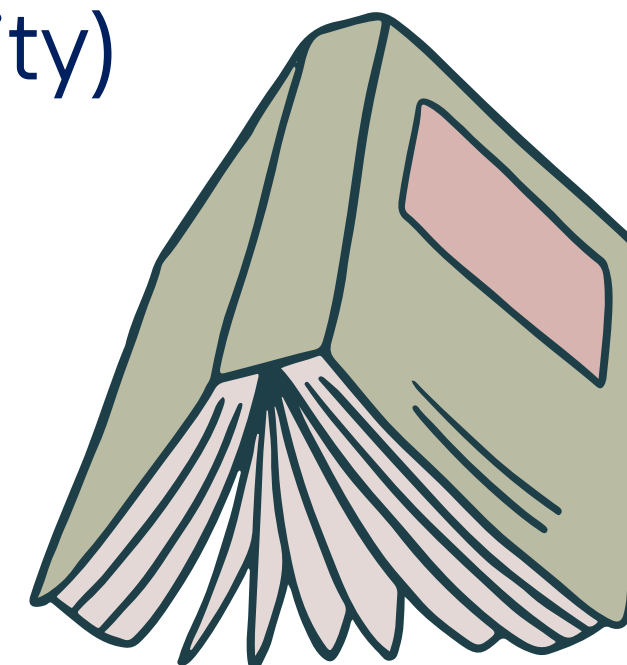


Does an Online Buddy Reading Community Encourage ER Among Adult Learners?



Satomi Shibata (Kinjo Gakuin University)
Emiko Rachi (Tokoha University)

ERWC @ Hokkaido, Japan
Sep. 7th, 2025



Abstract

Buddy reading is a collaborative reading experience where individuals read the same book and discuss it together. This presentation introduces an **online buddy reading community** that encourages extensive reading among **adults in Japan** as a form of lifelong learning.

Abstract

The presenters, one organizer and one participant, will share research findings focusing on how the community supports continuous language learning and fosters reading as a more social activity.

This community model highlights how digital platforms can bring readers together from diverse backgrounds to share insights, build connections, and support one another's learning journeys.

Satomi Shibata @Kinjo Gakuin University (Nagoya, Japan)

- Since 2010, I have been working on extensive reading thanks to my colleague, Emiko Rachi, who started it first and introduced it to me.
- I have a long history of working for the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology ([MEXT](#)), and in Shizuoka Prefecture with the [prefectural board of education](#), as well as in teaching.
- I am currently working at Kinjo Gakuin University, also still teaching a course [at Tokoha University Graduate School of Teaching](#).



Satomi Shibata @Kinjo Gakuin University (Nagoya, Japan)

- My research focuses on how to make learning **a habit**, increase the **amount** of learning, and help students acquire a **high level** of English proficiency.
- In my recent publications,
I suggest that using picture books
in and out of class will lead to
more extensive reading in the future.



Emiko Rachi @Tokoha University (Shizuoka, Japan)

At University and In Local Library

1. At University

- In 2008, I started ER as a small group.
- In 2010, I introduced ER into regular classes and since then I have collaborated with my colleague, Satomi Shibata, and engaged in ER in class and in the self-access center.
- At the university, we have continued to guide students with the goal of “reading one million words in a year.”

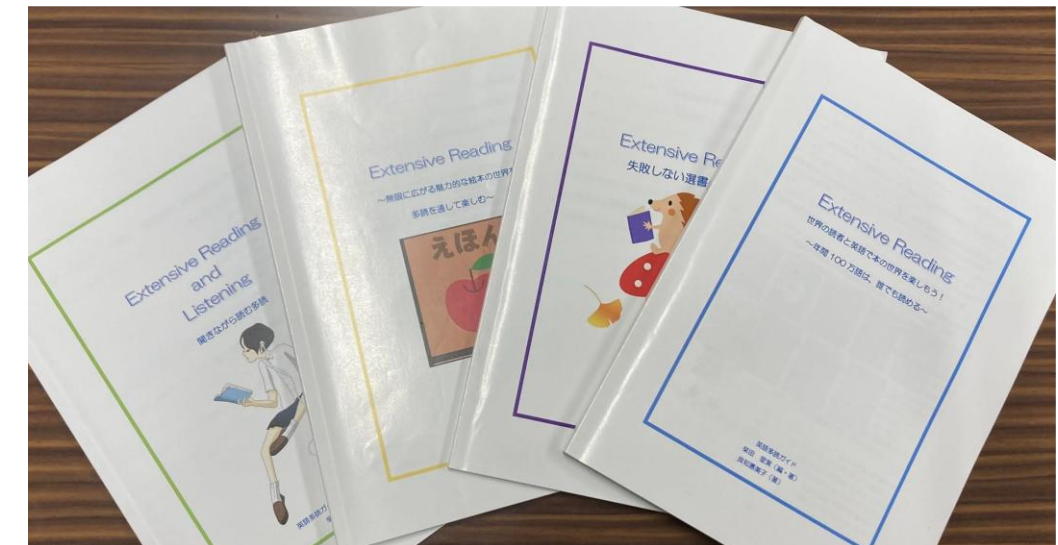
Emiko Rachi @Tokoha University (Shizuoka, Japan)

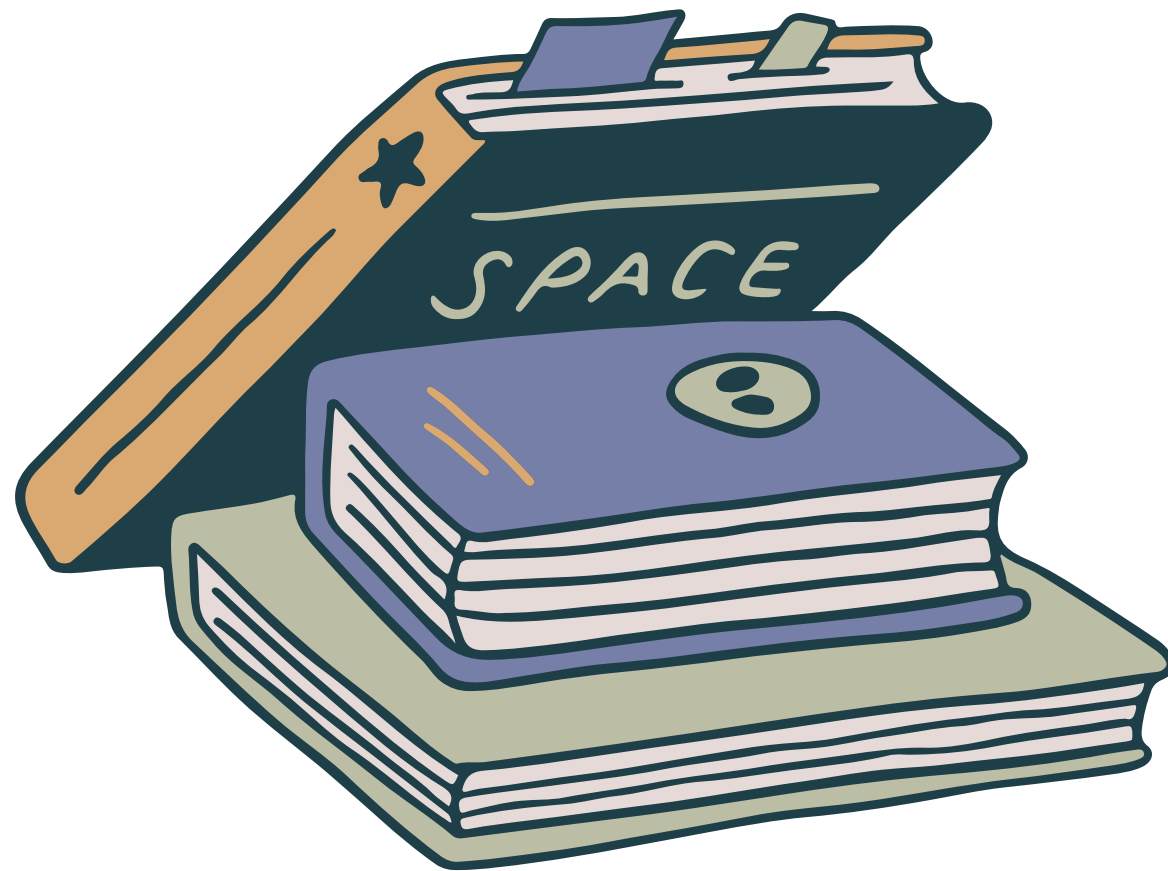
2. In Local Library

- In 2014, the director of Shizuoka City Northern Library invited me to select English books for their collection aiming at ER in English. This request was based on research materials regarding ER at Tokoha University.
- Since then, the library has secured a budget for ER books every year, and I have been in charge of the selection process.
- My current activities are centered on two pillars:
 - ① ER at the university
 - ② Community outreach, supporting lifelong learning through ER

Our publications

- Shibata (2015) : the importance of cultivating ER culture
- Shibata (2022) , Rachi and Shibata (2022)





Our ER journey

- ① ER at University
- ② ER at Local library
- ③ **Online buddy reading**

Extensive reading in this presentation

Reading books in English is more than just a method to improve English skills.

読書 (dokusho) ----reading for pleasure:

It's a gateway to knowledge, imagination, empathy, and personal growth. It can also be a powerful tool for lifelong learning and development.

OUR ER journey

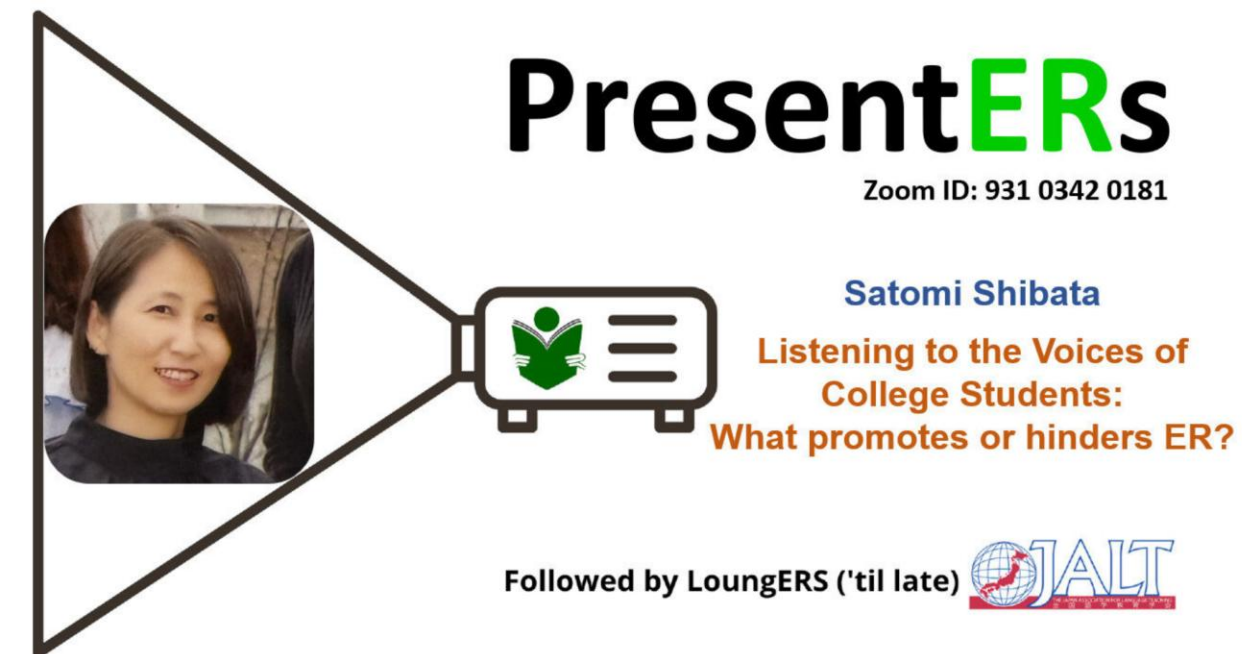
- ① ER at University with English majors

What we aimed at in our ER program... (English majors)

1. All first-year students read **one million words per year.**
2. Students continue reading **over multiple years.**
3. Students read **up to and beyond YA literature.**
4. Students **improve their overall English proficiency** to a level that allows them to proudly claim they majored in English.
5. Ideally, students **continue reading even after graduation.**

PresentERs – Listening to the Voices of College Students: What promotes or hinders ER?

August 31 @ 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

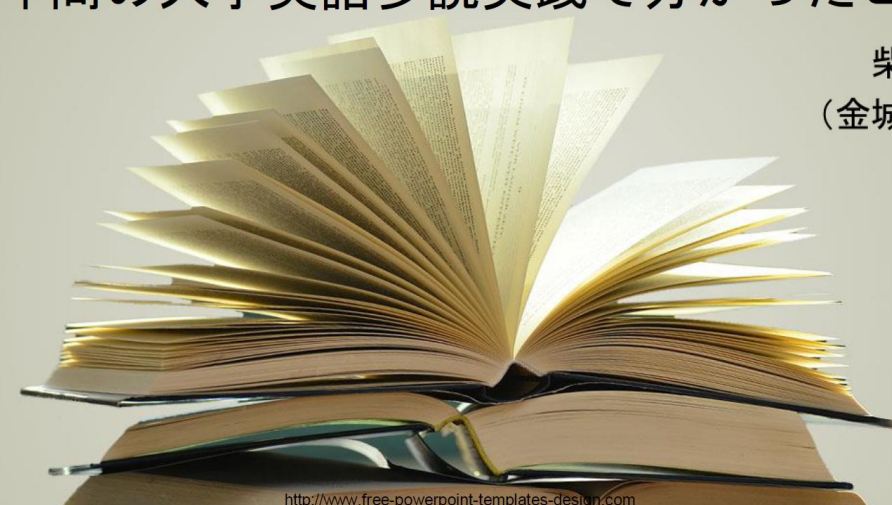
A graphic for the PresentERs event. It features a large black triangle on the left. Inside the triangle is a small photo of Satomi Shibata, a woman with short dark hair, smiling. To the right of the photo is a green icon of an open book with a person reading. Further right is a speech bubble icon with three horizontal lines. The text "PresentERs" is prominently displayed in the center, with "Present" in black and "ERs" in green. Below it, "Zoom ID: 931 0342 0181" is written. To the right of the speech bubble icon, the name "Satomi Shibata" is written in blue, followed by the event title "Listening to the Voices of College Students: What promotes or hinders ER?" in orange. At the bottom, it says "Followed by LoungERS ('til late)" and includes the JALT logo, which is a globe with the letters "JALT" and "JAPANESE ASIAN LINGUISTIC TEACHERS" written around it.

<https://youtu.be/FBiai8xTLh4?si=xpUICYBQiXmR1r21>

第 17 回 関西多読指導者セミナー
主催：日本多読学会
日時：2024年 2月 23 日（金）

YA 文学まで読ませる英語多読： 13 年間の大学英語多読実践で分かったこと

柴田里実
(金城学院大学)



<http://www.free-powerpoint-templates-design.com>



https://youtu.be/4O-y6Lv38tA?si=HoHKIXxBGip80HL_

OUR ER journey

② ER at Local library

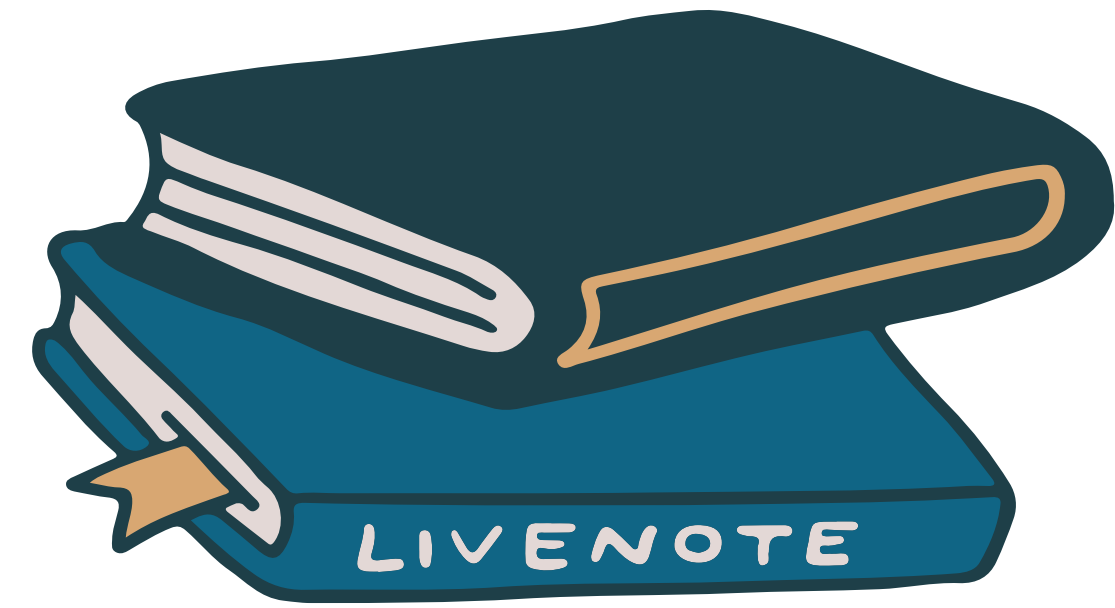
Process Leading to the Establishment of *Buddy Reading*

- Began with in-person reading sessions at the North Library (started in 2017).
- Held once a month, where participants discussed the books they were currently reading and shared challenges related to extensive reading.

Process Leading to the Establishment of *Buddy Reading*

- The number of participants steadily increased, and many were making good progress in their English proficiency through extensive reading.
- A new online reading group, *Buddy Reading*, was launched via Zoom, where members read the same book together.

OUR
ER
journey



③ ER with **online buddy reading**

Operation of *Buddy Reading*

- Platform: Information is shared through LINE.
A monthly session with Zoom
- Meeting time: held on the second Sunday of each month at 11:00 a.m.,
only Book 2 at 9:00 p.m. for an hour or an hour and a half
- Meeting content: Participants share impressions and questions

Data①: Basics

- July, 2023 – Aug. 2025 (Next: Sep 14, to be continued)

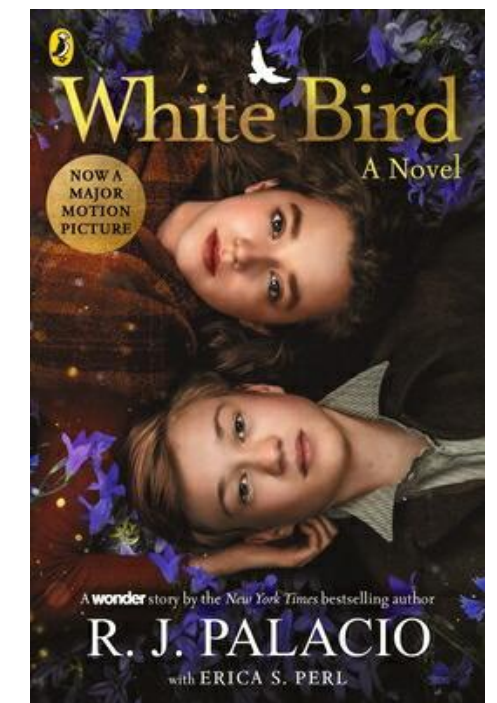
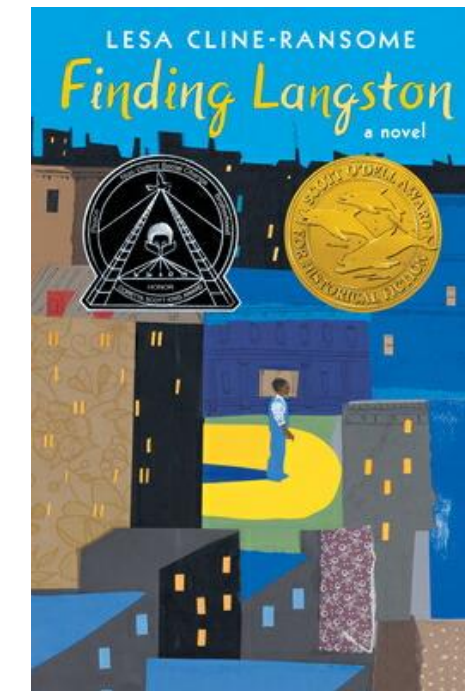
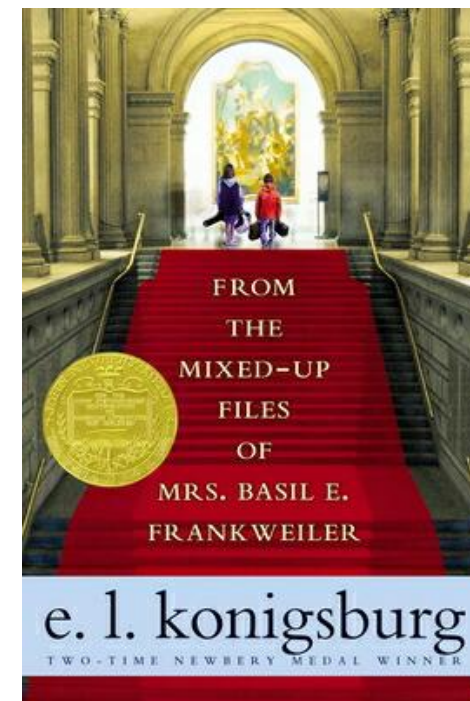
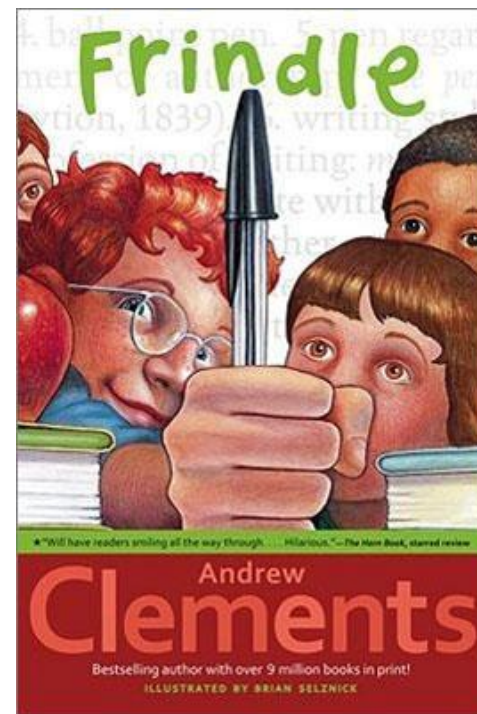
- 26 times (as of Aug, 2025)

Book 1: 7 times

Book 2: 11 times

Book 3: 4 times

Book 4: 4 times so far



- 27 registered as of Aug, 2025 (Only 3 left)

Data ②: LINE records

- Types of members: Possibly categorized into 5 categories
 1. Very active members: Read and attend every session
 2. Active members: Read and attend sometimes
 3. Passive active members: Read, not attend
 4. Passive members:
 5. Not sure

Data ③: Interviews

- Group interview: 5 participants
- With the organizer and the presenter

Voice: KMM

One of the biggest advantages of buddy reading, I think, is that it deepens our understanding of a book so much. Reading on your own and reading with others leads to completely different kinds of analysis. But when you compare those interpretations, it's not about being right or wrong—it's more like discovering, "Oh, there's another way to read it." That new perspective really deepens my understanding. That's the real benefit of buddy reading: everyone reads the same book and then discusses it together.

バディリーディングが圧倒的なメリットの一つは、読書の理解がすごい深まるということだと思っています...自分で読むのと、他人が読むのってというのは、解析が全然ちがうじゃないですか。でも、それを突き合わせることで、(その)自分が間違ってたんじゃないんですけど、(その)、こういう読み方もあるんだとかいう新しい視点が入ってきて、それによって(その)読書の理解が圧倒的に深まっていくっていうのが、すごいバディリーディングの、同じ本をみんなで読んで話し合っていることのメリットだと思います。

Voice: MKF1

Personally, I enjoy when we go more slowly, like with Frindle. I often find myself thinking, “Oh, so that’s another way to interpret it,” which helps me see beyond just following the story. For group reading, I actually think shorter texts and deeper discussion might be better than covering a large amount quickly.

なんかそういう読み方があるんだって気づかされることが多くて。ストーリーを追うだけじゃなくて。もっと違うところにも焦点を置くことができるようになったんで。個人的には。なんか短い、あまり多い量、読まずに、なんか中身、話し合いの内容を濃くした方がなんかみんなで読むのにはいいのかなって思いました。

Voice: MKF2

I feel the same way. With other books, I often just skim them. I might skip over parts I don't fully understand and keep reading. But with books chosen for buddy reading, I try to read them more carefully, sometimes going over them several times. Of course, I read them alongside other things, but with those books, I often go back and reread passages, moving forward and backward, and really try to read them more deeply.

あの他の本は、あの、まあざっと。一応、あの、なんていうんですか、こう軽く読む。軽くっていうか、あの、ちょっともうわからないところあっても、まあいいやって抜かして読んだりするけれども、そのバディリーディングで決めた本は、一応何回か繰り返し読んでみたり。あの、まあ、同時進行なんですけどね。あの、でもその、その本の場合は、ちょっとう、ページを何回かめくってみたりとか、戻ってみたりって言って、行ったり戻ったりしながら、こう、ちょっと深く読んだりします。

Voice: MKF3

With other library books I borrow, I sometimes just read quickly to get through more books, or skip what I don't get. But lately I've realized that my reading style changes depending on whether it's for buddy reading or not.

他の図書館で借りてきて、ぱっと、とにかく、数をこなしたいみたいなのは分からなくても読まないとか、あのわからなかったら読まないとか。あのさらっと読むとか。そんなので、読み方そのものが自分で変えているなって、最近は思いますね。

Voice: CE1

I've also told friends about this activity, even friends not involved in English learning, and invited them. Sometimes I introduce books that were recommended here to others. We even say things like, "Someday, it would be nice to do this together."

お友達にこういうことで読んでるとか、あと全然関係ない英語のお友達も誘ってみたり。あと、あの本をこちらで紹介してもらったものを紹介してあげたりっていうことも、実はしていて。いつか一緒にできたらいいねって。

Voice: CE2

And I know there are others who would like to join someday.
I also really appreciate the “brains” behind this, the people
who keep choosing the books and making this possible.

いつかは参加したい気持ちがある人がいるということと、あとうやうや本を決めてくださって
るっていう、このブレインですよ。ずっと続けてくださっている方がブレインで。

Keys to Success in our all three ERs

- 1 Careful book selection by skilled instructors
- 2 Guidance on reading pace for online buddy reading community and individual reading
- 3 Helping learners feel a sense of achievement (“I can read it!”)
- 4 Providing a space to be inspired by others
- 5 Having instructors read alongside participants
- 6 Fostering a culture of extensive reading
- 7 Always keeping beginners in mind

Keys to Success in Online Buddy Reading

- Children's literature: middle grade, upper grade

Considering the cost of purchasing books,
learners' proficiency levels of many Japanese learners of English
learners' amount of ER experience,
chances to encounter the books learners don't usually read, and
the possibility of deeper discussion,
children's literature may be the most suitable choice.

Conclusion

- Extensive reading is not just an individual activity—it is, in essence, a personal yet social practice that connects people.
- This is precisely why it has the potential to become a lifelong learning activity.