



Extensive Reading Materials in Public Libraries in Japan

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Outline

1. Introduction
2. Brief History of Extensive Reading at Public Libraries in Japan
3. Outline of Japan Public Library Survey
4. Results of Japan Public Library Survey
5. Analysis and Findings
6. Conclusions

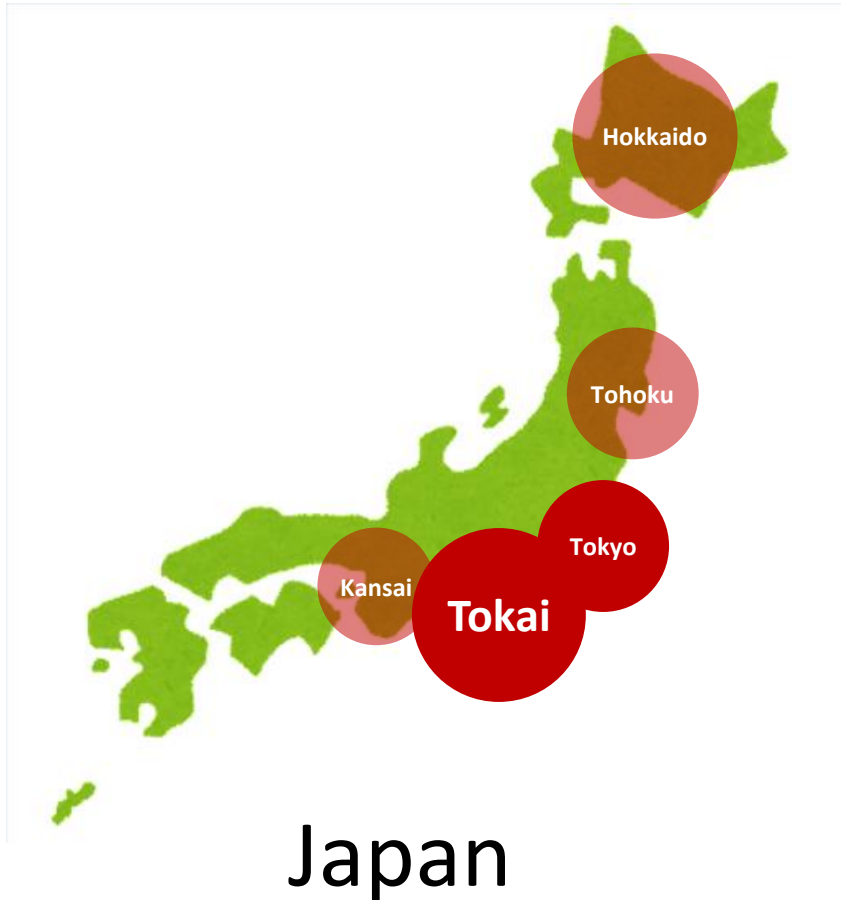
1. Introduction

1-1. Introduction

In Japan, some public libraries offer English books suitable for extensive reading (ER) to support **lifelong learning** among local residents.

Over the past 20 years, the number of such public libraries has been on the rise.

However, the actual situation nationwide in Japan was unknown except in certain regions, so the first national survey regarding extensive reading at public libraries in Japan was conducted in 2024.



1-2. Introduction

In 2004, a public library in the Tokai region of Japan set up an "English Extensive Reading Corner" that contained materials suitable for English extensive reading,

At present, over 40 libraries in the Tokai region provide ongoing support for English extensive reading.

In Tokyo, more than 10 libraries support English extensive reading for local residents.

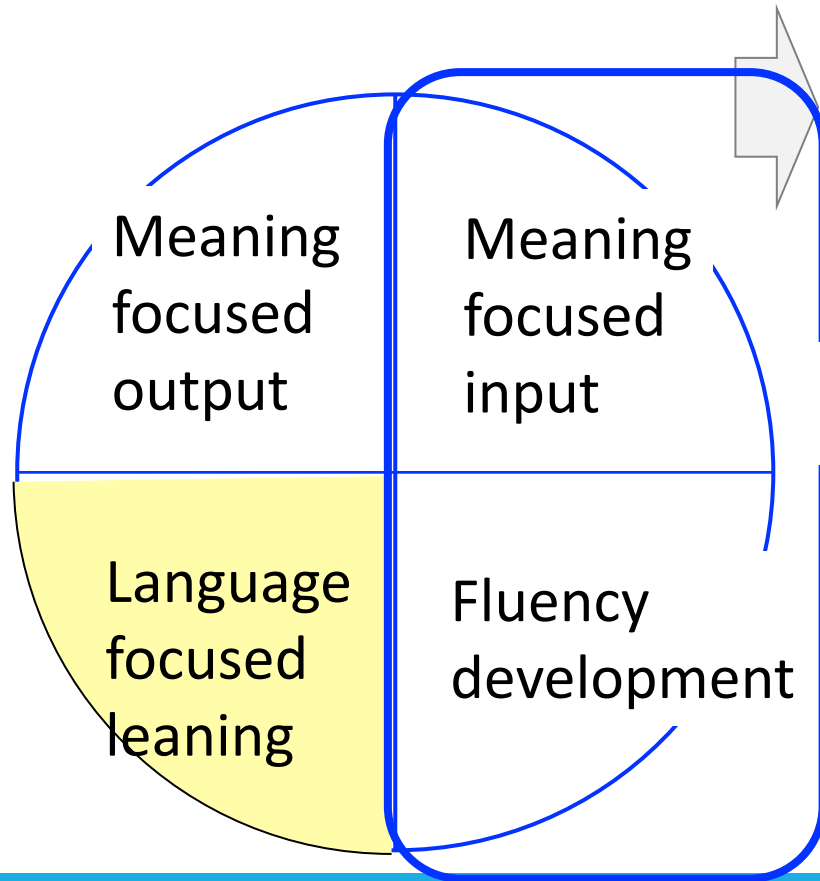
In areas outside of the Tokai region and Tokyo, the collection size and usage of English extensive reading materials at public libraries in Japan was unknown except for a small number of cases.

2. Brief History of Extensive Reading at Public Libraries in Japan

2. Brief History of Extensive Reading at Public Libraries

Japanese adult need ER

English has been for entrance exams. in Japan.



Adults can translate English texts but cannot read.

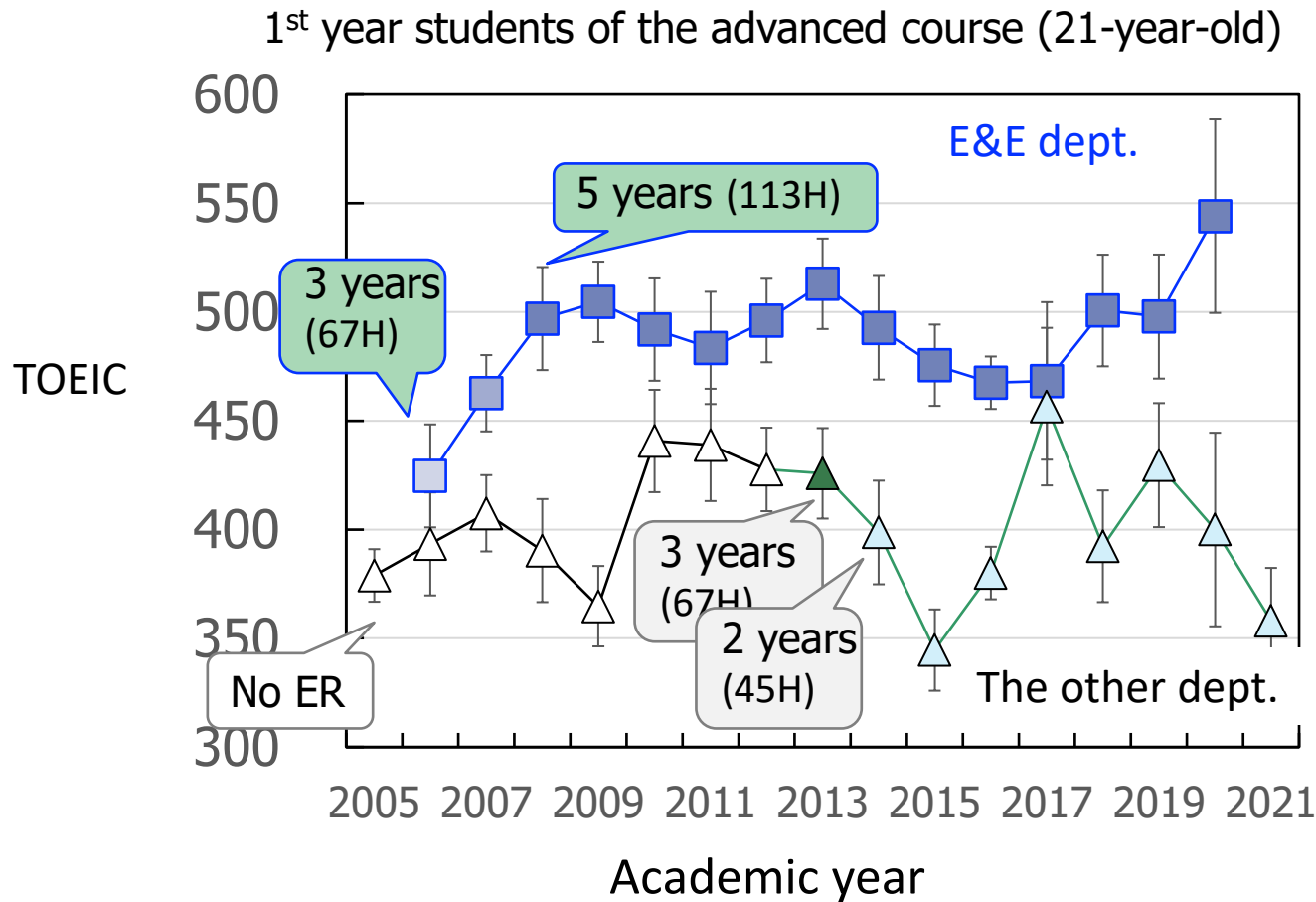
They don't know how to improve their skills.

Extensive Reading

They need to learn to read without translating and to improve fluency through comprehensible input.

The four strands (P. Nation, 2013, What Should Every EFL Teacher Know?)

The effect of ER on TOEIC average score



The students achieved higher TOEIC scores only after joining the ER program for **5 years**. The effect of ER program for 2-3 years is not recognizable.

Most ER programs have a shorter duration.

Nishizawa et al. (2022) How Much Exposure to the Language Is Necessary to Improve KOSEN students' English Skills?, J. of JSEE (in Japanese)

Japan has rich public libraries

Public libraries extend from metropolitan areas and cities to towns, and even to small villages throughout the country.

Every library has a special bookshelf for children to enjoy ER in Japanese.

The libraries serve as the foundation of intellectual activities and lifelong learning in the region.

The English books are not used

Some big libraries have large shelves of English books.

- Classic or contemporary novels and non-fiction books
- Famous picture books

They are rarely used because they are too difficult to read without translation.

Libraries need to add much easier-to-read books for EFL learners, such as graded readers for language learners and leveled readers for native English children.

Introduction of easy English books

In Tokai region

First wave (2004～)

Sakai (2002) Kaidoku 100-man-go.., SSS

Adults were fascinated the idea and started ER

Toyota KOSEN started ER program in college library (2004)

Some leaders of local government recognized the potential of ER books in libraries

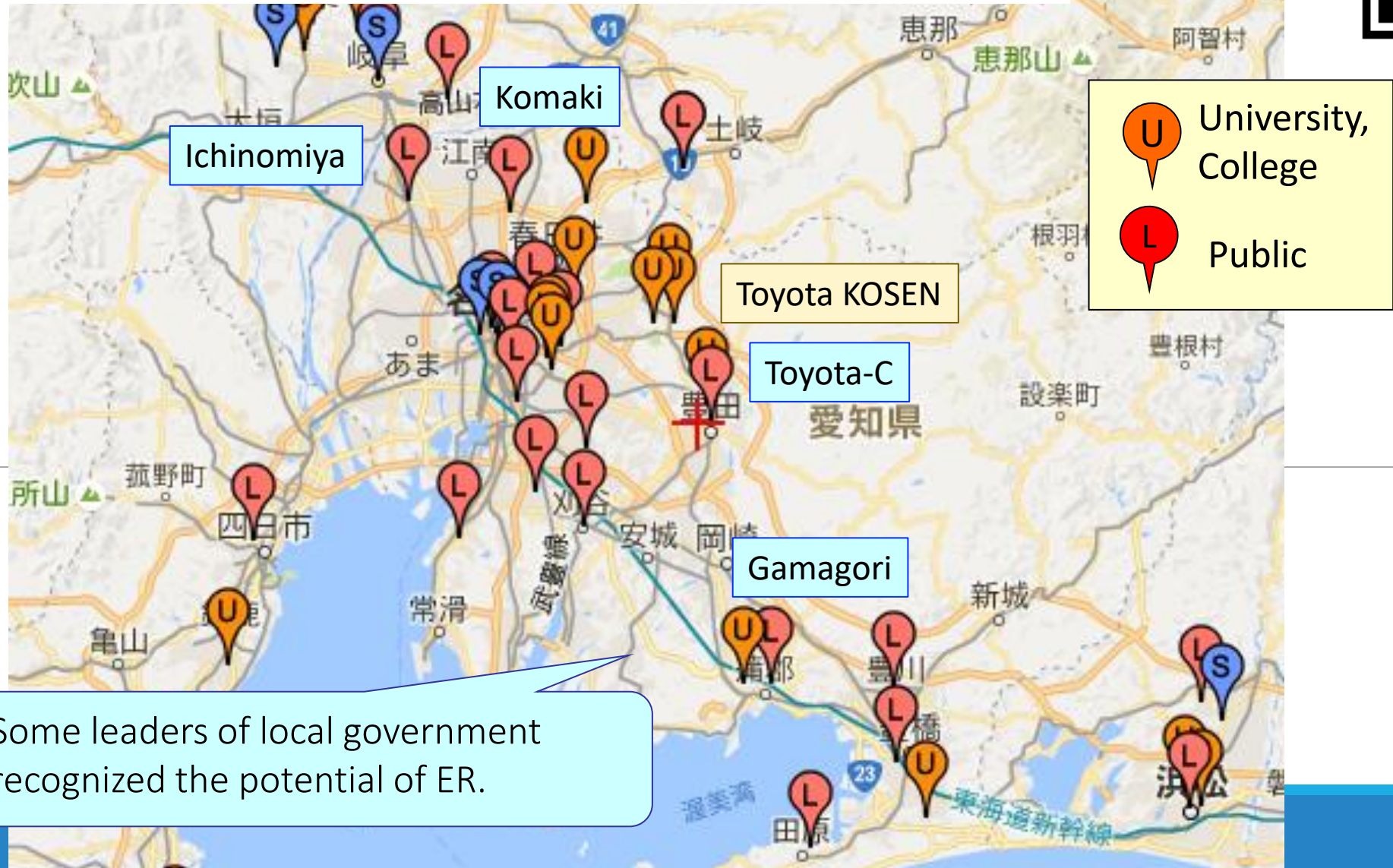


Library & Bookstore Map for ER readers

(<http://gemini.so.land.to/cgi-bin/rmap3/>)

2004~2007

Accessible only within Japan

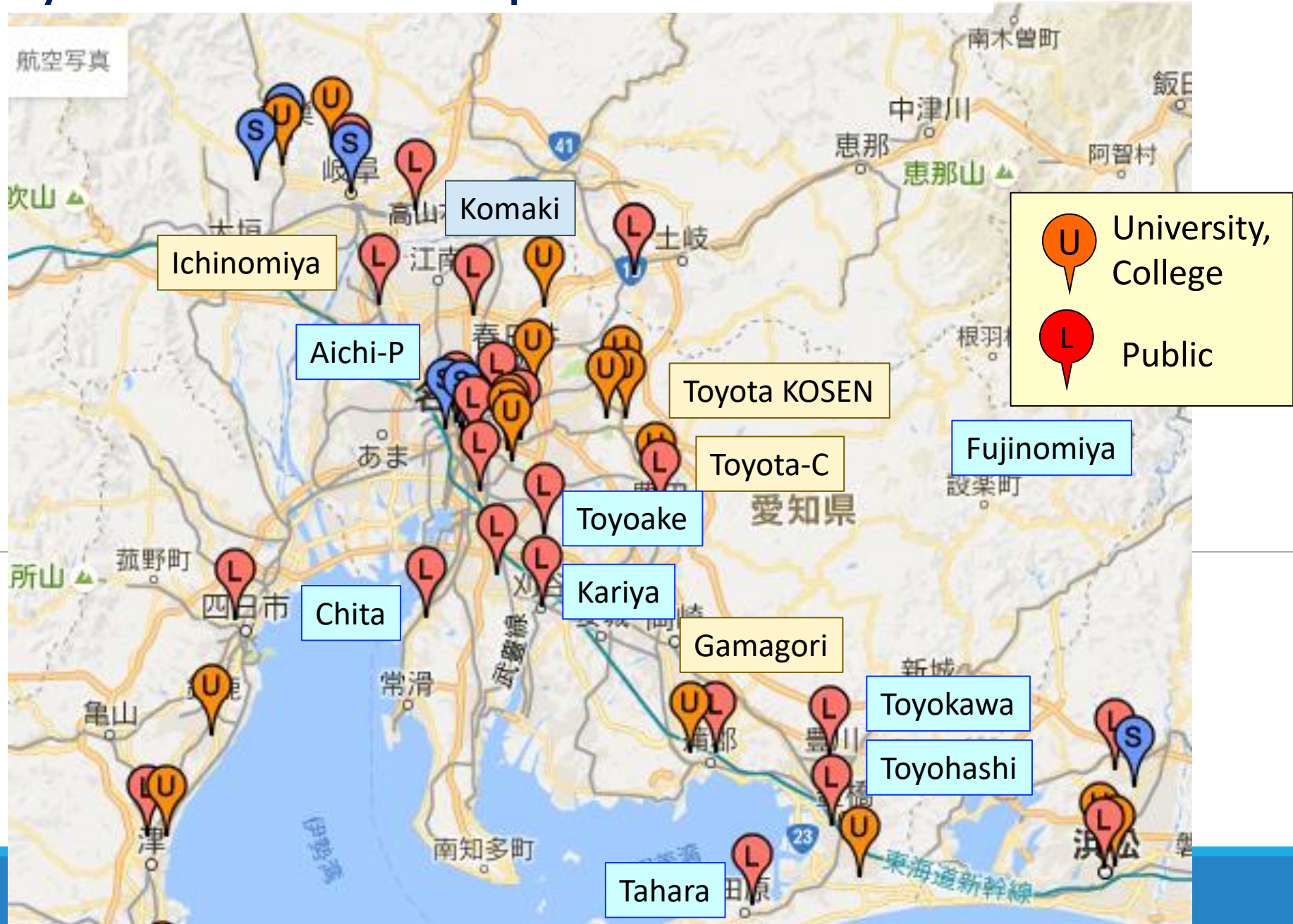


Some leaders of local government recognized the potential of ER.

Library & Bookstore Map for ER readers

4

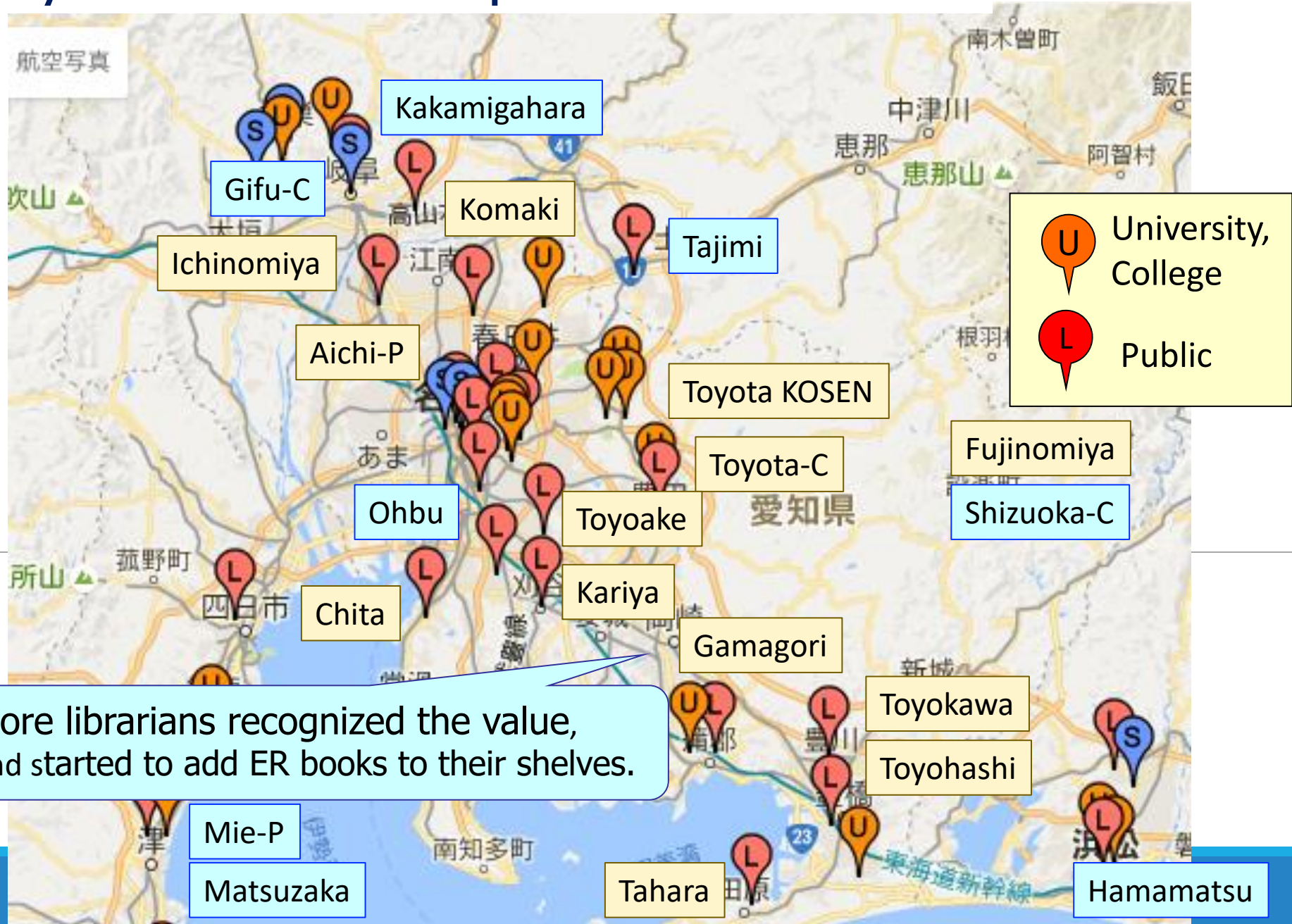
2008~2011



Library & Bookstore Map for ER readers

4

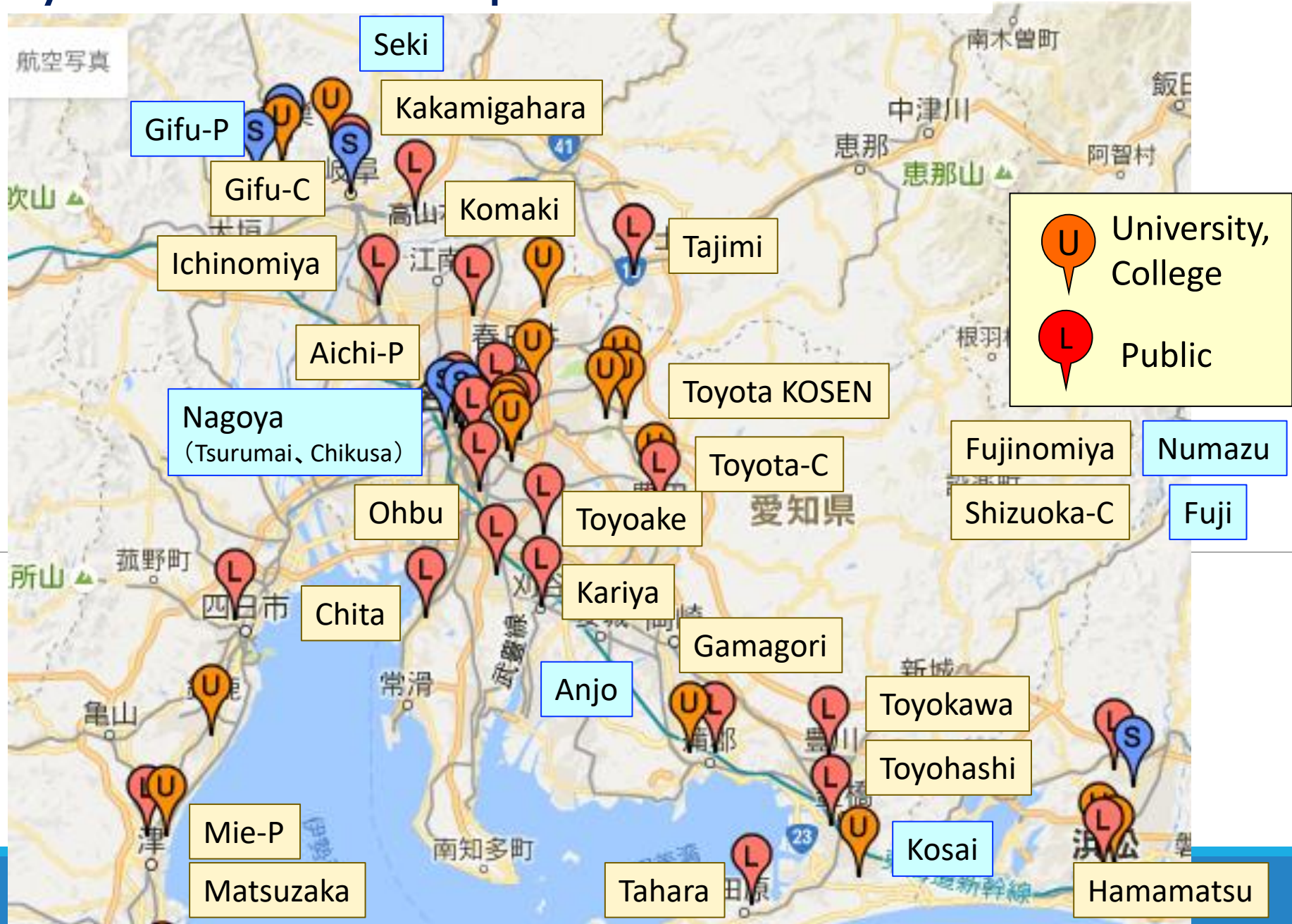
2014~2015



Library & Bookstore Map for ER readers

4

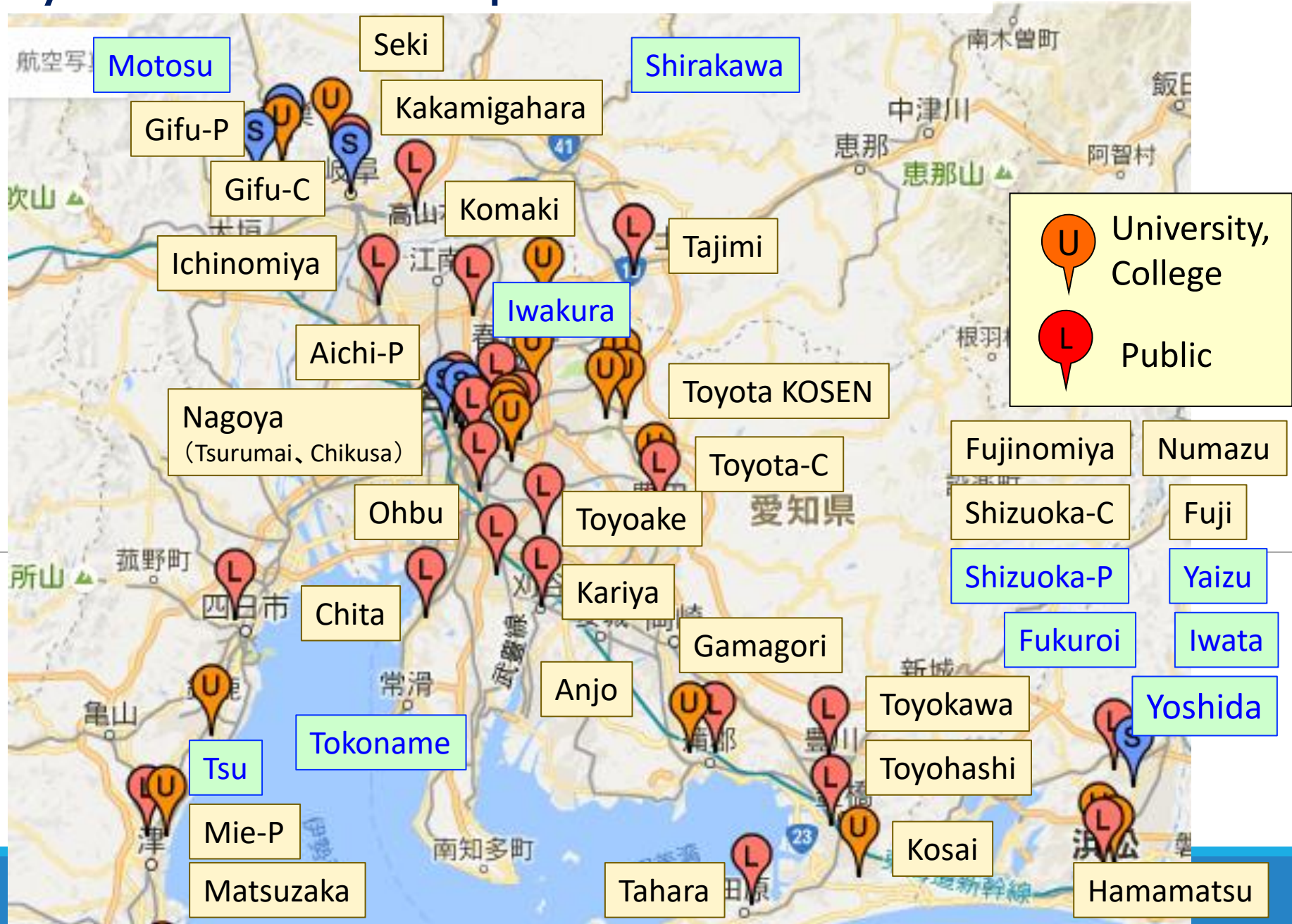
2016~2017



Library & Bookstore Map for ER readers

4

2018~2019



Steps the successful libraries took for introducing ER books

Learn how ER benefits EFL learners, and study the examples of leading libraries

Preparing ER books to support typical reading paths

- Graded readers for language learners
- Leveled readers for English speaking children

Provide reading information: readability levels, text lengths, and genres of the books

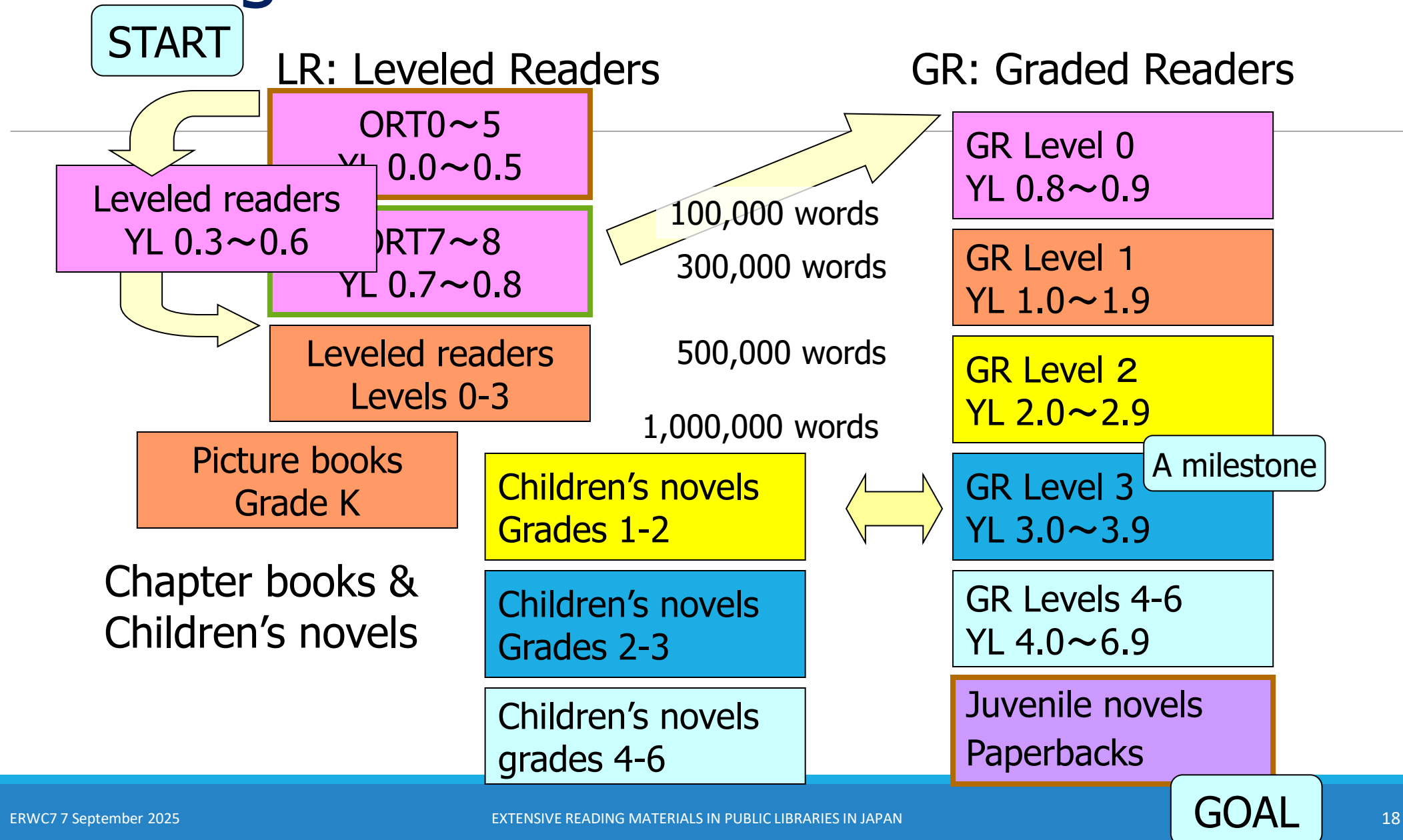
Organize introductory courses to ER

- Otherwise, adults ignore comprehensible input and stick to E-J translation

Help to build a user group for peer support

Reading Path for EFL Learners

3



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Reading information

英文多読

ページID : 0013934

英文多読

英文多読とは

インフォメーション ⓘ	今月の特集、イベントに関
	各シリーズのj

所蔵シリーズ

YL	略称	シリーズ名	CD	リスト
0.0-1.0	ORT	Oxford Reading Tree 更新		PDF
0.2-0.3	CGP	Curious George Curious About Phonics 更新		PDF
0.2-0.4	SPP	Step Into Reading Paw Patrol 更新		PDF
0.3	HKP	Hello Kitty PHONICS	一部	PDF
0.3-0.5	LTR	Learn to Read (Language Arts)	○	PDF
		Learn to Read (Math)		PDF
		Learn to Read (Social Studies)		PDF
		Learn to Read (Science)		PDF

Date	Level	Volume	Title	YL	words	evaluation	Memo
✓ 日付	レベル	巻号	タイトル	YL	語数	評価	メモ
	Stage 3 First Sentence (569語) ※6冊セット	19-1	The Duck Race	0.3-0.4	89		
		19-2	Sniff	0.3-0.4	124		
		19-3	Pond Dipping	0.3-0.4	82		
		19-4	The Ice Rink	0.3-0.4	90		
		19-5	The Mud Bath	0.3-0.4	90		
		19-6	The Steel Band	0.3-0.4	94		

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Preparing ER books to support typical reading paths

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Organize introductory lectures to ER

- Otherwise, adults ignore comprehensible input and stick to E-J translation

Help to build a user group for peer support

Introductory lectures at Toyota city library

オンライン講座

始めてみよう♪

英文多読

9月5日(木)午前10時より中央図書館ホームページで受付

開催日 10月13日 (日)	時間 午前 10時30分 ～正午	参加方法 Zoom (オンライン)
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《英文多読3原則》

- 1.辞書は引かない
- 2.分からないところは飛ばす
- 3.つまらなくなったらやめる

講師 にしざわ ひとし
西澤 一 氏
(豊田高専名誉教授)

対象 **中学3年生以上**
定員 **先着30名**

【問合せ】 住所：豊田市西町1-200 電話：0565-32-0717
HP：<https://www.library.toyota.aichi.jp>

HPIはこちら

【オンライン講座】

英文多読講座

3月10日 ステップアップ 編 (日)

留学や海外赴任のご予定がある方にもオススメ

時間：午前**10時30分**～正午

講師：にしざわ ひとし **西澤 一 氏** (豊田高専名誉教授)
*著書『図書館多読のすすめかた』他*コラム「多読多読マガジン」

場所：**Zoom(オンライン)** ※当日、現地開催なし

対象：中学3年生以上 定員：先着30名

申込み：**2月6日(火)10時から**
豊田市中央図書館ホームページで受付
※定員に達し次第受付終了

HPIはこちら

長年、英文多読を取り入れた授業を担当されてこられた西澤先生の、実践に基づいたお話が聞けます。
(多読をしてから留学した学生の成果や失敗談等)
質問タイムもあるので、参加者みなさんで疑問点やお悩みを共有しましょう。

英文多読 3 原則

1. 辞書はひかない
2. わからないところは飛ばす
3. つまらなくなったらやめる

おすすめの本は？

辞書を引かないと分からない単語が多くて・・・

【問合せ】 豊田市中央図書館 (0565)-32-0717

Steps the successful libraries took for introducing ER books

Learn how ER benefits EFL learners, and study the examples of leading libraries

Preparing ER books to support typical reading paths

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Provide reading information: readability levels, text lengths, and genres of the books

Organize introductory courses to ER

- Otherwise, adults ignore comprehensible input and stick to E-J translation

Help to build a user group for peer support

User groups for ER

Ebina, Kanagawa-P.



6/8 (日) 英語多読Fika@海老名市立中央図書館 報告

2025-06-17

6月8日(日)に海老名市立中央図書館で、「英語多読Fika」という集まりがありました。参加人数は5人。ファシリテーター...

Haneda, Ota-W., Tokyo



Tajimi, Gifu-P.

たじみ
多読を
楽しむ会

\ Join us ! /



たじみ多読を楽しむ会は、洋書読書を楽しむ仲間が集まる多読クラブです。
読んだ本の感想やおすすめの本を共有して交流することは楽しいです。
あなたもぜひ仲間と一緒に楽しみながら多読を続けませんか？

2025年度たじみ多読を楽しむ会 (TTT) スケジュール

日にち	毎月1回	日曜日
4月20日	※5月18日	6月15日

Toyohashi, Aichi-P.

英語多読クラブ豊橋 (タドックマWEB)

英語多読クラブ豊橋とは？

2008年3月、豊橋市中央図書館に対し、豊橋技術科学大学よりORTやOBWなどを寄贈され、その後「光をそそぐ交付金」により多読教材が約250冊を購入し、英語多読コーナーが設置されました。英語多読クラブ豊橋は、それらを利用して、毎週第4日曜日に中央図書館の一室を使って活動をしているクラブです。英語多読クラブ豊橋では、楽しむことを1番に考えることをモットーに活動を続けています。

3. Outline of Japan Public Library Survey

3-1. Outline of Japan Public Library Survey

2024 Japan Public Library Extensive Reading Material Survey

- **Purpose of Survey:** To clarify the current situation regarding English-language ER and Japanese-language ER at public libraries in Japan
- **Survey Target:** 1,023 public libraries in Japan

** Survey conducted by the non-profit organization NPO Tadoku Supporters under a grant from the Japan Foundation for Library Advancement

3-2. Outline of Japan Public Library Survey

- **Survey process:** Using a combination of questionnaire surveys and on-site surveys.

The questionnaire surveys requested responses from 1,023 central libraries among the 3,310 public libraries in Japan. These central libraries were requested to include information on any branch libraries in their library systems, as appropriate.

After compiling the questionnaire data, two public libraries with distinctive characteristics were selected for on-site surveys.

3-3. Outline of Japan Public Library Survey

- **Response collection:** For the questionnaire survey, respondents were asked to submit their survey responses through a designated Google form. If a respondent could not use the designated Google form, respondents were requested to submit their survey responses in a designated Microsoft Excel computer file and to return the computer file by e-mail.
- **Survey period:** From late August 2024 to the end of September 2024
- **Number of returned surveys:** 571 surveys in total (response rate: 56%)

3-4. Outline of Japan Public Library Survey

- **Survey content (main items in questionnaire survey)**
 1. Number of extensive reading materials in the library's collection
 2. Existence of “extensive reading corners” in the library
 3. Whether extensive reading-related events are conducted at the library
 4. Whether user exchange meetings are held at the library
 5. Problems and prospects related to library's extensive reading activities

4. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

4-1. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

1. Number of extensive reading materials in the library's collection [N=571]

Reader series	No ER collection	Less than 30 items	31-100 items	101-200 items	201 or more items
1. Oxford Reading Tree	402 (70.4)	49 (8.6)	25 (4.4)	34 (6.0)	61 (10.7)
2. I Can Read	311 (54.5)	199 (34.9)	34 (5.9)	17 (3.0)	10 (1.8)
3. Step Into Reading	464 (81.2)	76 (13.3)	20 (3.5)	7 (1.2)	4 (0.7)
4. Ready to Read	484 (84.8)	71 (12.4)	11 (1.9)	4 (0.7)	1 (0.2)

4-2. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

1. Number of extensive reading materials in the library's collection [N=571] %

Reader series	No ER collection	Less than 30 items	31-100 items	101-200 items	201 or more items
5. Oxford Bookworms	427 (74.8)	68 (11.9)	27 (4.7)	24 (4.2)	25 (4.4)
6. Penguin Readers *including current Pearson English Readers	418 (73.2)	85 (14.9)	32 (5.6)	19 (3.3)	17 (3.0)
7. Macmillan Readers	476 (83.3)	53 (9.3)	19 (3.3)	19 (3.3)	4 (0.7)
8. English translations of Japanese manga	395 (69.2)	136 (23.8)	24 (4.2)	10 (1.8)	6 (1.1)

4-3. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

2. Existence of “extensive reading corners” in the library [N=571]

Corner installation status	Number of responses	%
Provided	103	18
Not provided	452	79
Provided at a branch library	16	3
Total	571	100



Examples of English Extensive Reading "corners" located in Japan public libraries

4-4. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

3. Whether extensive reading-related events are conducted at the library [N=571]

Implementation results	Number of responses	%
Implemented	78	14
Not implemented	493	86
Total	571	100

Note: "Extensive reading-related events" are events such as lectures and workshops

4-5. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

4. Whether user exchange meetings are held at the library [N=571]

User exchange meetings	Number of responses	%
Meetings conducted	19	3
Meetings not conducted	552	97
Total	571	100

Note: “User exchange meetings” refer to periodic meetings held by clubs or study groups

4-6. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

5. Problems and prospects related to library's extensive reading activities [N=571]

Problems	Number of responses	%
Securing budget for purchasing extensive reading materials	355	62
Method for organizing extensive reading materials	226	40
Signage for extensive reading materials (level, word count display, etc.)	189	33
Information on extensive reading materials, book selection	412	72
Library staff interest	109	19
Skill level of library staff in handling English materials	364	64
Public relations to end-users	166	29
Planning and management of related events	132	23
Management of the reading exchange meetings	86	15
Others	27	5

4-7. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

5. Problems and prospects related to library's extensive reading activities [N=571]

Multiple answers allowed

Prospects	Number of responses	%
Lifelong learning support for users	427	75
Collaboration with School Education	324	57
Collaboration with other social education facilities (community centers, etc.)	73	13
Revitalization of local community activities	86	15
Multicultural Exchange Support	285	50

4-8. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

1. Number of extensive reading materials in the library's collection [N=571] %

Reader series	No ER collection	Less than 30 items	31-100 items	101-200 items	201 or more items
Nihongo Tadoku Books (Taishukan Japanese Readers)	528 (92.5)	14 (2.4)	28 (4.9)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)
Nihongo Yomu-Yomu Library (Japanese Graded Readers)	541 (94.7)	8 (1.4)	20 (3.5)	1 (0.2)	1 (0.2)

Examples of Books by Reading Level for Extensive Reading in Japanese



4-9. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

2. Existence of “extensive reading corners” in the library [N=571]

Corner installation status	Number of responses	%
Provided	12	2.1
Not provided	557	97.5
Provided at branch library	2	0.4
Total	571	100

4-10. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

3. Whether extensive reading-related events are conducted at the library [N=571]

Implementation results	Number of responses	%
Implemented	3	0.5
Not implemented	568	99.5
Total	571	100

Note: “Extensive reading-related events” are events such as lectures and workshops.

4-11. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

5. Problems and prospects related to library's extensive reading activities [N=571]

Multiple answers allowed

Problems	Number of responses	%
Securing budget for purchasing extensive reading materials	342	60
Method for organizing extensive reading materials	201	35
Information on extensive reading materials, book selection	384	67
How to use the materials	268	47
Public relations to end-users	206	36
Planning and management of related events	128	22
Others	26	5

4-12. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

5. Problems and prospects related to library's extensive reading activities [N=571]

Multiple answers allowed

Prospects	Number of responses	%
Support for Japanese language learning for non-Japanese residents	441	77
Support for Japanese educators (including volunteers)	191	33
Collaboration with school education	241	42
Collaboration with other social education facilities (community centers, etc.)	74	13
Promotion of local community activities	102	18
Library use by non-Japanese residents	406	71
Interactions between Japanese residents and non-Japanese residents	129	23

4-13. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

Eleven comments selected from 113 open-ended responses from library staff:

1. *"I was embarrassed to learn for the first time of (the existence of) "English Extensive Reading" and "Japanese Extensive Reading" learning methods and the learning materials related thereto."*
2. *"At our library, I learned for the first time about "extensive reading materials" through this questionnaire. It looks like it's going to take some time to fully explore (these materials)."*
3. *"As I rarely focused solely on extensive reading, I would like to reference the efforts of other libraries as well. In particular, I would like to look into collecting materials for "Japanese extensive reading" in the future."*

4-14. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

Eleven comments selected from 113 open-ended responses from library staff:

4. *“In responding to this survey, I was surprised to find that (our) library has almost no materials suitable for extensive reading. To start with, I would like to increase our extensive reading materials so that non-Japanese residents will also feel free to use (our) library.”*
5. *“With respect to Japanese extensive reading, a non-Japanese library patron once asked me, “Are there any books that are useful for learning Japanese?” If there are materials like the Japanese-language extensive reading series mentioned in this (questionnaire’s) question, I would consider the future purchase of Japanese extensive reading materials as such materials would meet the needs of our patrons.”*

4-15. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

Eleven comments selected from 113 open-ended responses from library staff:

6. *“To meet the needs of various (library) users, as well as from the perspectives of supporting lifelong learning and supporting child-rearing, I feel that it will be necessary to introduce (extensive reading materials).
Considering the increase in the number of non-Japanese-speaking residents in the future, it will be necessary (to introduce extensive reading materials), but there will be many issues to address, so I would be grateful if there were tools that I could reference.”*

4-16. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

Eleven comments selected from 113 open-ended responses from library staff:

7. *“I believe that extensive reading, which requires a large number of materials, is highly compatible with libraries. I also feel that by holding user social gatherings for extensive reading will have the benefit of encouraging more active interaction in the local community.”*

We have not yet worked on Japanese-language extensive reading (as a library), but as the number of non-Japan residents is on the rise, I think it will be necessary to look into (Japanese-language extensive reading).”

8. *“Globalization progresses, and libraries can play a role in multicultural societies. As other cities have examples (of this), I would like to reference the composition of their (book) collections and (types of library) events.”*

4-17. Results of Japan Public Library Survey

Eleven comments selected from 113 open-ended responses from library staff:

9. *"I believe that increasing opportunities to learn through extensive reading of English and Japanese will contribute to mutual understanding between people of different cultural backgrounds. As a library that provides information, we would like to use (the methodology of extensive reading) as a reference for future book selections and special features."*
10. *"(Extensive reading) will help to develop global human resources, which tends to lag behind in rural areas."*
11. *"I think both "English extensive reading" and "Japanese extensive reading" are useful ways to learn a language. I also think that holding meetings as events at libraries and other places can create opportunities to connect with people who want to learn the same language."*

5. Analysis and Findings

5-1. Analysis and Findings

- The term ‘extensive reading’ was not familiar to many librarians who work for public libraries. In general, their awareness of extensive reading and extensive reading materials was not high.
- Nevertheless, after learning about extensive reading, some librarians did show interest. This survey seemed to raise the awareness of extensive reading among the librarians who responded to the survey.

5-2. Analysis and Findings

- Although the number of libraries that collect and hold Japanese-language extensive reading materials is rather small, the librarians who responded to the survey showed greater interest in Japanese-language extensive reading materials than in English-language extensive reading materials.
- Of the 571 libraries that responded to the survey, about 20% have an “English Extensive Reading Corner,” but the composition of their extensive reading collections is thought to vary. In particular, there may be a lack of easy-to-read books, which play an important role in the extensive reading methodology of changing learners’ reading habit of mentally translating the English text into Japanese while reading English text.

6. Conclusions

6. Conclusions

- Although extensive reading support has not yet been established as a public library service in Japan, there is a certain amount of interest among public library librarians, so there is a possibility that extensive reading support in public libraries may become available in the future.
- Public library librarians interested in extensive reading are looking for further information on extensive reading to support local residents' pursuit of extensive reading.
- Further information and guidance on extensive reading should be provided to public library librarians in Japan.
- Public libraries can play a key role in supporting extensive reading, in both English and Japanese. By doing so, they support lifelong learning and community building.

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Tadoku Supporters Website (<https://www.tadoku.org/lib>)

Eigo-tadokusha muke Toshokan & Shoten Map [Library & Bookstore Map for ER readers] (<http://gemini.so.land.to/cgi-bin/rmap3/>)

Gamagori City Library (<https://www.city.gamagori.lg.jp/site/toshokan/tadoku.html>)

Toyota City Library (<https://www.library.toyota.aichi.jp/readings/>)

Tajimi City Library (<https://www.tajimi-bunka.or.jp/lib/extensive-reading/>)

Eigo-tadoku Club Toyohashi (<https://toyohashitadoku.hp.peraichi.com/top/>)