

ER and Reading Targets

An Investigation into the Rationale behind Teachers' Choices

Andre Parsons - Hokkaido University of Education
Hakodate Campus

Patrick Conaway - Shokei Gakuin University

Outline

- Background and rationale for the current study
 - Research method
 - Findings
 - Limitations of current study
 - Future directions
-
- Q&A - Following presentation in the breakout room

Background & Rationale for Current Study

- According to the literature:
 - Many forms of ER implementation (Waring & McLean, 2015)
 - Many methods of evaluation

However,

- Appears to be few studies presenting the rationale for those choices (See Bieri, 2015; Brierley, 2009)

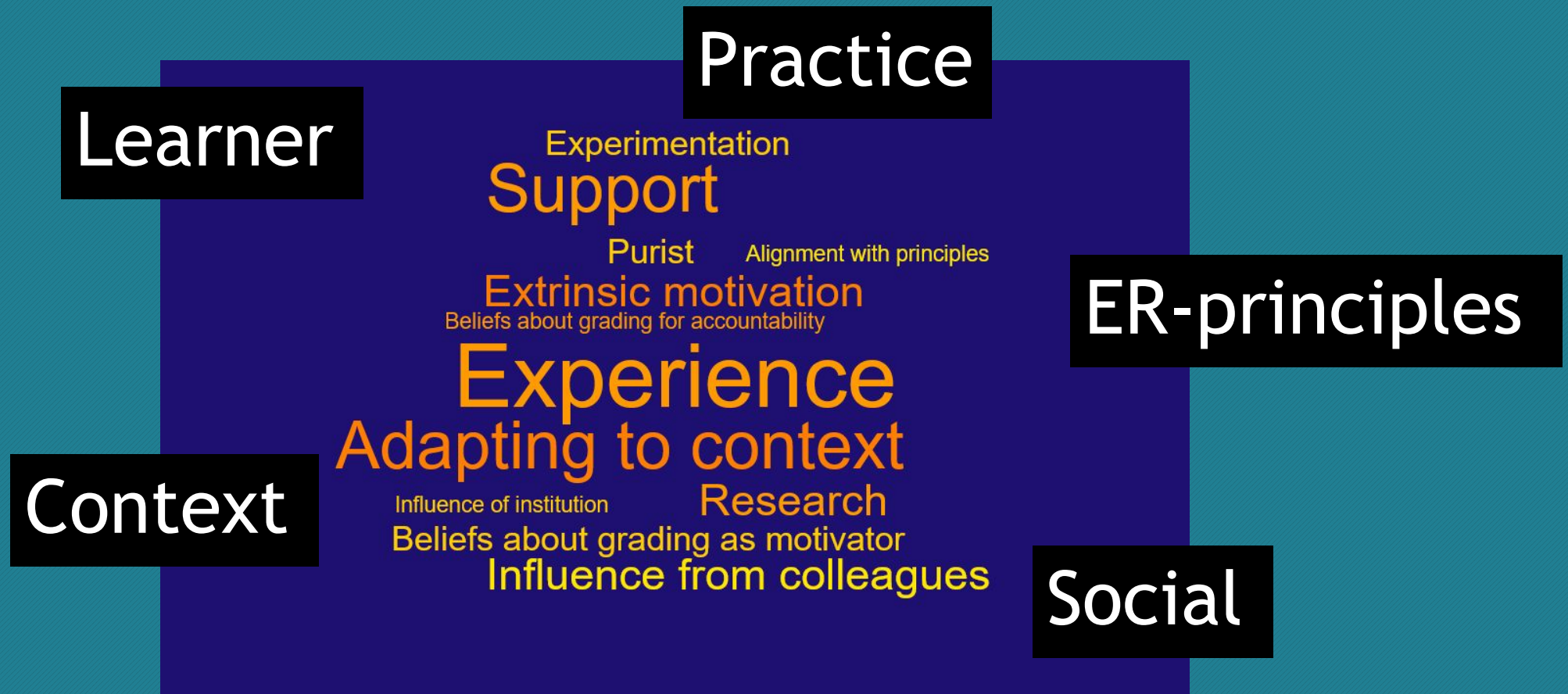
Research Method

- Survey included closed and open-response items
- Participants recruited from JALT ER SIG membership, ER facebook group
- Data selected for analysis based on:
 - control over implementation
 - teaching context in Japan
- Thematic analysis of open-response data collected (See Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Findings - ER Grading

Types	Term	Word count (semester)	Major
Book count	Week	Low 50,000 words	Low STEM majors
Word count	Quarter	High 180,000 words	High English majors
Reading time	Semester		

Findings - Grading Rationale



Theme - Learner-oriented



Theme - Learner-oriented

Promoting consistency in addition to quantity

- By grading on weekly benchmarks, I promote both volume and consistency.

Extrinsic motivation

- If we do not assign marks most students do not do it. If we only assign 10% of the grade to ER, students see that it is not worth the time.

Theme - Practice-oriented



Theme - Practice-oriented

Experimentation

- This is the first year I have been teaching ER as a full course, so I am seeing how some students test the system to read as little as possible and to see where students may need more support.

Experience

- Currently I have book discussions set to 20% of the total grade for the ER course, but this lets some students pass with less reading, so I am thinking about changing this next year so that it is not required...

Theme - Socially-oriented



Theme - Socially-oriented

Influence of colleagues

- Word goals were kept from my predecessor as they were based on extensive research he did in the area and match what I have seen in similar research.
- Also, [I have been influenced by] conference presentations and discussions at ER-based events such as the JALT ER SIG Seminars and the ERWC.

Theme - Contextually-oriented



Theme - Contextually-oriented 1

Adapting to ERT

- **Pre-COVID**, we used paper graded readers and Moodle Reader with a simple **end-of-semester word count target**. **During COVID**, we use XReading with **5 three-week blocks of time** that have itemized percentages for the total reading grade.

Theme - Contextually-oriented 2

Class sizes

- ...mreader is a convenient and efficient tool for checking students are reading at appropriate levels. There are of course deficiencies of this tool but **is efficient when checking the quantity of English read by so many students.**

School type

- **There are no grades in Eikaiwa schools, so I don't have the pressure to assess.** I do keep casual track of what the students are reading.

Theme - ER-principle-oriented



Theme - ER-principle-oriented

Reading a lot

- It reflects the **fundamental goal**, which is **reading as much as possible**.

Reading for pleasure

- My way of using ER comes from a mixture of trial and error and also believing in the idea of **extensive reading** should be something that **promotes reading for enjoyment rather than reading for assessment**.

Teacher support

- I can focus on **helping students select books better** and **develop reading routines** [using word counts].

Teacher takeaways

- Top Ten Principles for Teaching Extensive Reading (Day & Bamford, 2002) as **a framework for reflection**
 - How does this choice affect my ability to orientate the students?
 - To act as a role model?
- When asking for advice, **try to get the “story.”**
 - It is not always enough to ask “What did you do? Why did you do it?”
 - What was it like before you tried OOO?
- Need for a **place to share experiences** informally
 - Regular informal contact between ER practitioners

Limitations and Future Directions

- Findings based only on analysis of open-ended survey
- Most participants at post-secondary level
- Lack of Japanese ER practitioners



- Interviews for more depth in teacher experience and beliefs
- Wider range of teaching contexts
- More representation of Japanese practitioners

If you're interested,
please answer our questionnaire

<https://forms.gle/Utwx6QYsAtRtBu369>



Thank you and see you in the breakout room!

Andre Parsons

parsons.andre@h.hokkyodai.ac.jp

Pat Conway

p_conaway@shokei.ac.jp

References

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Bieri, T. (2015). Implementing M-Reader: Reflections and reactions. *Extensive Reading in Japan*, 8(2), 4-7.
- Brierley, M. (2009). Assessing extensive reading through written responses and comprehension tests. *Proceedings of the 8th Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference, Japan*, 45-53.
- Day, R. & Bamford, J. (2002). Top ten principles for teaching extensive reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 14(2).
- Waring, R. & McLean, S. (2015). Exploration of the core and variable dimensions of extensive reading research and pedagogy. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 27(1), 160-167.