

# Learners' Communities for Helping Lifelong ER among Adult EFL Learners

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## Introduction

Japanese adult EFL learners tend to lack fluency to process information in English even if they have sufficient knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar. That is because they do not have opportunities to actually use the language, and because their **strong habit of translation** prevent them from processing English information spontaneously.

As a remedy, we propose ER **as a lifelong learning** based on libraries with books for ER, provided guidance, and learners' communities.

National Institute of Technology,  
Toyota College Library



I feel improving my comprehension because of continuing ER.

I can't believe that I've read over 1,000 pages of English books. INCREDIBLE !

Toyota Tadoku Club

Foundation : January 2008

Purpose : Lifelong education through ER

Activities : Monthly Meeting

\*Exchange book-information, advice etc.

\*Book talk in Japanese or in English

We have meetings at NIT, Toyota College Library. It's easy for us to find books and we can borrow them for free!

We're happy to join such communities with vital role models for beginners and rich exchange of book-information.

I've known ER is effective for learning English, but I haven't understood how to proceed by myself. By learning with other people at the library, I am given many pieces of useful advice, It's fun and I can continue ER actively.

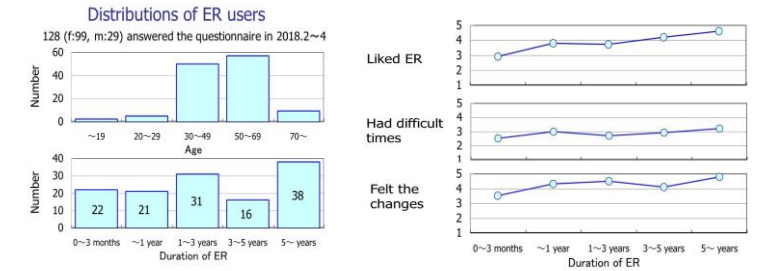


Our members show their book-experiences, then my reading-range is spreading.



## Methods and Results

128 library users (99 females and 29 males, aged mostly 30 – 69) answer the questionnaire on their ER experiences. Many of them report changes after extensive reading, and the types of changes scatter into five categories. Major category shows that beginners with less than three-month ER experience answer fewer negative feelings toward English. **With longer duration of ER, users answer improvement** in reading and listening as well. After five years of ER, 19% of users feel it easier to speak in English. (Nishizawa et al., 2019)



## Category of self-reported changes

Duration of ER	0~3 months	3 months ~ 1 year	1~3 years	3~5 years	5 years~
Number of Users	22	21	31	16	38
Fewer negative feelings	14%	21%	23%	6%	11%
Easier to listen	0%	16%	10%	24%	6%
Easier to read	5%	5%	26%	12%	17%
Increased fields of interest	0%	16%	6%	6%	28%
Easier to speak or use in work	0%	0%	0%	0%	19%

%: among users of the same duration

## Conclusions

- **Five years of ER** is generally required for Japanese EFL learners to feel distinct improvement.
- To avoid giving up ER, **building communities** of EFL learners is a practical solution.
- **Public libraries** can provide the environment to support the communities in the region.