

Opening Address

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Distinguished invited guests, honorable speakers, presenters, participants, ladies and gentlemen! Welcome to the Global Teachers Association 2011 Annual Conference. Today I am honored to give you an opening ceremony of the conference on the theme of "Extensive Reading and Listening: Why and What and How?"

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the speakers from various institutions and areas, particularly Dr. Thomas N. Robb from Japan for giving a plenary keynote speech on extensive reading and a concurrent presentation on extensive reading assessment.

Ladies and gentlemen. In some way, English teachers are like the pilgrims seeking the better ways of teaching and learning English in the earth. As for the context of English education, we can see tremendous efforts for higher quality standards of teaching and learning the language. Thus the timing seems right to have this kind of conference dealing with the approaches of growing interest in our professional fields for the betterment of our teaching. Today although a great number of books or articles on teaching English are available to us either in digital or traditional forms of media, the face-to-face conference like this can provide more direct challenges and real knowledge networks to its participants. I hope today all of you will share information on useful applications and implications of employing extensive approaches to reading and listening in English, actively joining the sessions.

Ladies and gentlemen. I suppose all of you came from 'there', your classrooms or institutions, to here, this venue, from far and near to share and get useful information for teaching and learning English. After this academic gathering, I hope you will go from here to 'there' with more needs and strategies for more effective extensive English reading or listening to improve the quality of English teaching or learning in the real fields. I wish this chance of meeting will be the guiding rope or node of a knowledge net among the English educators for extending their educational territories farther and deeper, eventually contributing to building a peaceful and prosperous globe.

Finally, I wish to thank all of you, participants, speakers, moderators and chairs, for taking time to participate in this event, particularly those coming from a distance. Thank you.