



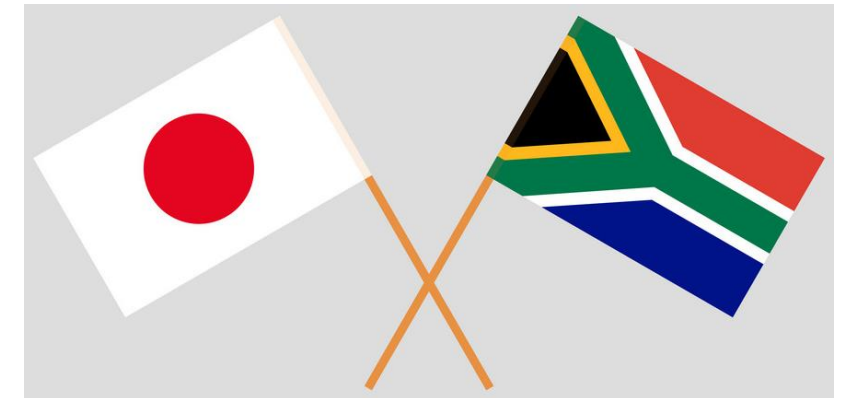
Reflecting on the authenticity of online extensive reading at university

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Reflecting on the authenticity of online extensive reading at university

1. Background to extensive reading and authenticity
2. Introduction to the study
3. Results from the study
4. Reflections



Background: Why extensive reading?



- Studies carried out in the late 1900s showed that students who engaged in extensive reading for a year or longer tended to perform as well or better in tests of reading comprehension, listening comprehension and even oral communication, than students who only experienced traditional teaching (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Lightbown et al., 2002; Spada & Lightbown, 1989).
- After reading a Nigerian English-language novel, the participants were able to incidentally acquire the meanings of just under half of the dialect words used in the novel (Pellicer-Sanchez & Schmitt, 2010).
- Studies using graded readers have also shown that incidental vocabulary learning occurs when doing extensive reading (Brown, Waring & Donkaewbua, 2008; Waring & Takaki, 2003).

Background: Why extensive reading?

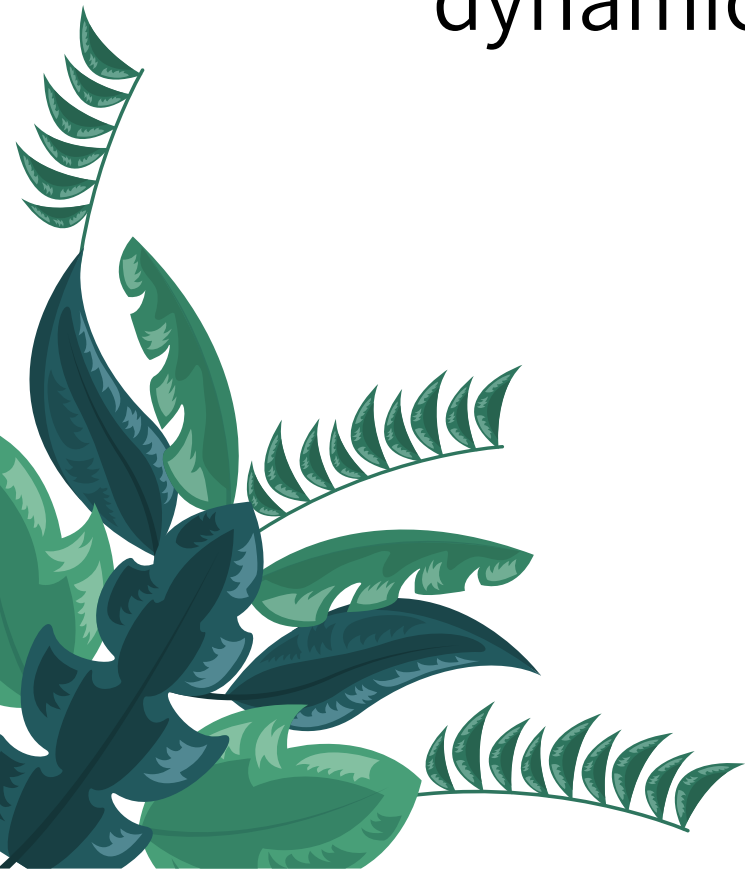


- Incidental vocabulary learning is best achieved when:
 1. the vast majority of the vocabulary in a text, around 95%, is comprehensible to the learner
 2. there are repeated opportunities for the learner to encounter the new vocabulary item throughout the text and over time (Leather & Uden, 2021).
- If learners do not repeatedly come across a new vocabulary item, incidentally-learned vocabulary knowledge may be lost (Waring & Takaki, 2003).
- Extensive reading is therefore most effective when it is done over a long period of time, such as a year or more.

Background: What is authenticity?



- More than just bringing newspapers into the classroom
- A perception of the relative authenticity of teaching materials, texts and language.
- This perception is context-dependent, individually constructed and dynamic.



Extensive reading, motivation & authenticity



- Learners that are not motivated to read in the second language are unlikely to engage in long-term independent reading.
- ‘Learners seldom find books in school libraries to be interesting’ and graded readers have in the past been criticized by learners and researchers for being uninteresting and demotivating (Leather & Uden, 2021, p. 7).
- Providing learners with the freedom to choose the materials they wish to read has a positive effect on motivation (Guthrie et. al, 2007; Leather & Uden, 2021; Nation & Waring, 2020).
- Freedom of choice allows learners to feel a sense of autonomy, which has been shown to have a positive impact on motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Extensive reading, motivation & authenticity



- No study to date on authentic material use specifically for extensive reading.
- Japanese university students tend to rate authentic materials as interesting and engage with the authentic materials significantly more than with traditional textbook materials (Peacock, 1997).
- Japanese university students using authentic materials out-performed students using textbook materials in several skill areas including receptive vocabulary and oral fluency, which the researcher attributed to positive appraisals of the materials by students which facilitated student noticing of language items (Gilmore, 2011).
- The greater students' perceptions of the authenticity of materials is, the higher their motivation tends to be (Terre Blanche, 2019).

Introduction to the study



Participants

7 undergraduate university students in Japan
(5 first-years, 1 second-year, 1 third-year)

Method

Participants were enrolled in an online reading course (April – July, 2020)

The reading course was aimed at preparing students for the IELTS test

Participants kept daily logs of their English reading in a reading journal

The daily journals counted toward the participants' final grade

Participants were interviewed 3 times over the course of the study



Reading journal prompt



Name


18 May 2020: 内容を書く

何かを読みましたか？

はい

いいえ

1. 何を読んだか詳しく説明してください。
 - タイトル
 - 著者・作者
 - どこで見つけたのか (URLとか)
2. 何でそれを選んだのかを詳しく説明してください。
3. 読んだ記事や作品についてどう思いましたか？
 - 読んだ後どういう印象を持ちましたか？
4. 読んだ後、自分の英語能力について何かを感じましたか？ (上がった・足りなかったとか)

1. なぜ読まなかったのかを詳しく説明してください。
(やる気・時間・忘れ)
2. 次に何を読むつもりかを詳しく説明してください。
 - テーマ・ジャンル
 - タイトル
 - 著者・作者
 - どうやって見つけるか 



Questions



What would Japanese university students read in English if given total freedom of choice?

What roles do authenticity and motivation play in extensive reading?



“I'm in English Literature... My major is English Literature, so basically, I read English every day... But because of the tasks... I think I read every day, but I forget to write the journal... I read English all the time, I think.”



Participant 6

All seven participants engaged in independent reading for a majority of the 72 days of the study.

Participant	Days L2 texts were read	Days no L2 texts were read	% days read
1	53	19	74%
2	70	2	97%
3	64	8	89%
4	65	7	90%
5	68	4	94%
6	56	16	78%
7	54	18	75%

Table 1. Number of days each participant engaged in and did not engage in independent reading in the L2 (Out of a total of 72 days)



Results: Motivation



Results: Motivation in their own words

What motivated participants to read?



- Study abroad (to improve English proficiency in general)
- Current and international events
- Their personal interests and hobbies.
- Texts that did not use lots of time i.e. short, simple texts; easily available texts.
- Video and songs
- The reading journal

reported in Terre Blanche (2021)



Results: Motivation in their own words

What motivated participants to read?



Figure 1. Top 50 frequent words when talking about motivation to read in English.

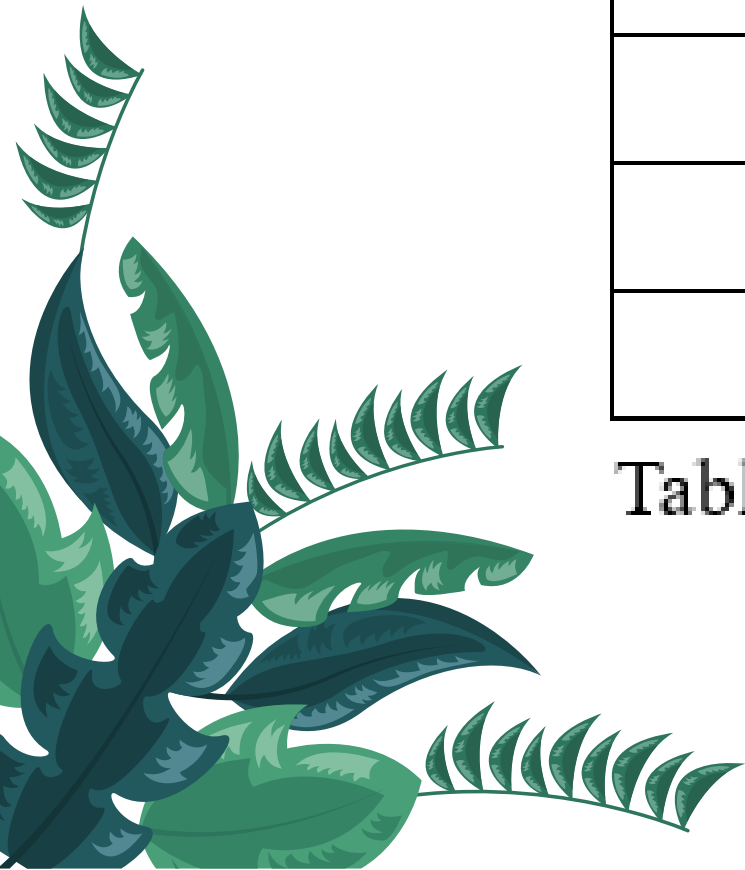


“Yes [my newspaper subscription motivates me]... [but] when the newspaper is not interested for me, any topics, and after that maybe I should search... on my phone and find out some interesting topic, but it takes a little time for me, so it's difficult”.



Participant	Percentage of texts that were online news articles	
1	74%	
2	100%	
3	91%	
4	13% (however 78% of texts were hardcopy news articles)	
5	100%	
6	0%	50% song lyrics
7	13%	38% vocab building practice texts (study series)

Table 1. Percentage of texts that were online news articles.



Results: What motivated participants to read? **TIME**



Time was frequently mentioned by the participants as an important factor when choosing a text to read. Some, like Participant 4, wished to spend as little time as possible finding a text. Others wished to read short or easy texts on days when they were particularly pressed for time. In these situations, participants 1, 6 and 7 frequently chose to read texts that were related to video or audio such as song lyrics or transcripts of television programs. Texts which were seen as time consuming, either to access or to read, tended to have a demotivating effect on participants' desire to read.



Results: What motivated participants to read? CONNECTIONS WITH OTHERS



“My motivation to read English has been increasing during this semester... there were opportunities to read classmate’s articles and summaries. It inspired me because I feel that my classmates have higher English reading skill than me... Our teacher gave us to communicate with her on Zoom. It made me think again about I should study harder to speak English frequently.”

Participant 5



Results: What motivated participants to read? **THEIR OWN INTERESTS**



“I often read magazine and book related to my favorite singer and movie, as [stated in] the reading journal. I was glad to get some new information of my preferences. Therefore, I increased my motivation to read.”

Participant 7 (reading journal)

“I simply enjoy reading English article. I always search article which I am interested in. It [this course] was also motivation to learn about what I was interested in.”

Participant 5 (reading journal)



Reflecting on the authenticity of extensive reading



In this study, despite many participants choosing to read relatively linguistically difficult texts (news articles), participants seem to have maintained their motivation to read in English outside of class.

The influence of the compulsory journal?

The motivating effect of complete freedom of choice outweighed the demotivating effect of the difficult texts?

Effect of explicit instructions from the teacher?

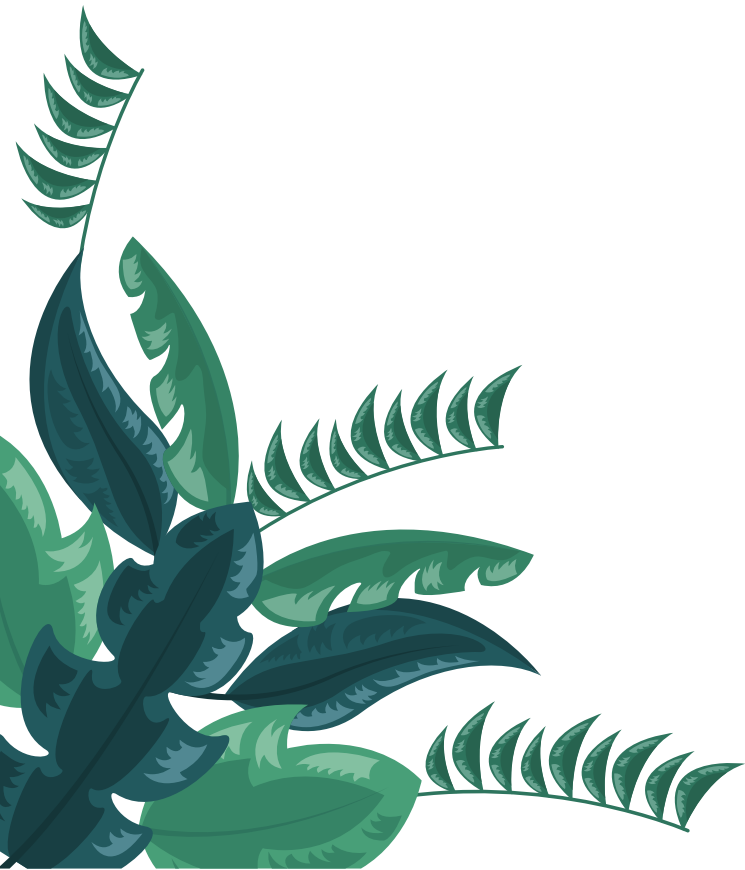


Future directions for inquiry

Access to graded readers in addition to authentic materials

Measuring participants' perceptions of the authenticity of the materials

Classroom observation once face-to-face classes have begun



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