

Engagement with the selection, reading and discussion of online graded readers: A comparison between individual and group selected conditions

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Introduction

Extensive reading (ER) can provide an excellent source of comprehensible input, but it is not yet widely practiced in EFL settings, which is something that could be aided by the reduced costs afforded by digital books (Jeon & Day, 2016). Like any classroom activity, ER can be implemented in several different ways, and research is needed to try to understand how student engagement is affected by different interpretations. The current study investigated how learners engaged with online graded readers when they were selected individually or as a group. Asking learners to choose a graded reader as a group takes some of the control away from them, but the shared experience of reading the same book as group members may have benefits. If students have a discussion about the book, they can discuss elements of the story such as the characters, plot and themes that they are all already familiar with.

This was an exploratory study, with the goals of aiding future course design in a communicative English course that met for three 90-minute classes per week. In these classes, much of the content is produced or chosen by the instructor to supplement a set coursebook. There was a secondary aim of improving the quantitative research knowledge of the researcher. Therefore, some of the statistical procedures followed in the study would not usually be appropriate for such a small sample size.

Literature Review

Extensive Reading (ER)

Extensive Reading (ER) is defined and applied in a number of ways. In an attempt to enable the field to share a common understanding of what constitutes ER, Waring and McClean (2015) suggest a set of core elements in ER programs:

- reading as meaning-focused input

- a large amount of material is read
- reading is done over an extended period
- texts are long enough to require discourse level comprehension

They also suggest the following variable elements:

- conducting ER in class or at home
- making ER compulsory or optional
- reading is enjoyable, monitored, and assessed (or not in each case)
- the teacher reads with the students, or not
- using texts that are graded or not graded and longer or shorter
- requiring students to start with the simplest material
- the degree of freedom of choice of books students have
- the use of follow-up activities, or not

Allowing learners to choose their own books is one of the top ten ER principles (Day & Bamford 2002). The freedom of choosing materials to match individual interests and level may be what makes ER engaging. That said, ER is not always done with self-selected readers. Using class readers, where everyone in the class reads the same book, can be beneficial for ER beginners, allowing the instructor to provide more support (Webb & Chang, 2015). Allowing learners to choose a reader as a group, is between these two options, taking some control away from graded reader selection, whilst having the option of peer support.

One challenge of using group or class readers is the availability of books. Even libraries with a large selection of graded readers may not have many copies of individual titles. Recently, there are several options for conducting ER using online materials, such as Xreading (www.xreading.com), where all members of a group or class can read the same text simultaneously. Xreading is an online service that allows subscribers to read an unlimited amount from a library of over 800 graded readers for a monthly subscription fee. The site includes graded readers from most of the major ELT publishers, and some smaller publishers. Users can read the books on computers, tablets or mobile devices and many of the books include audio and quizzes. The teacher can monitor which books students read, the amount of words read, reading speed and quiz scores in a built-in learner management system.

In their guide to ER, The Extensive Reading Foundation (2011) include a comprehensive list of suggested activities, including speaking, writing, reading fluency building, reading material selection, class reader and book sharing activities. Jacobs and

Renandya (2015) suggest that group discussions are one way to make ER more student centred as they can improve thinking skills, motivate students to read more, give students a chance to share reading recommendations, and reinforce understanding of stories. Group discussions also make ER more relevant to a wider range of classes, such as communicative English, as they provide a strong content basis for students to base discussions on.

Encouraging student-to-student cooperation may enhance ER whether graded readers are selected individually or as a group. Adding group activities may spread reading enthusiasm, encourage reading recommendations, allow collaboration between learners of different proficiency, and make reading more meaningful as participants share their opinions and feelings about graded readers (Jacobs & Gallo, 2002). Group discussions could give participants a deeper reason to read than completing quizzes, tests, and recording word counts.

Engagement

Engagement is a complex construct that can and has been defined in various ways, often the following conceptualizations are used:

- two-dimensional - behavioural and emotional
 - three-dimensional - behavioural, emotional and cognitive
 - four dimensional - academic, behavioural, cognitive and psychological
- (Fredricks & McCloskey, 2012)

Sub-constructs can be used to increase the accuracy of measurement of the abstract concept of engagement. For example, a two-dimensional behavioural/emotional conceptualization could be broken down further into three behavioural subconstructs (concentration, effort, and success) and three emotional subconstructs (interest, enjoyment, and challenge). Fredricks and McCloskey (2012) acknowledge that there are many variations in the measurement of engagement, and that researchers need to describe their definition in detail. The conceptualization of engagement in this study is discussed further in the methodology section.

The aim of this study was to answer the following research questions:

Research Question 1

How appropriate is the task of selecting, reading and discussing online graded readers for this group of learners?

Research Question 2

How does reader-selection method (individual-selected readers versus group selected readers) affect self-reported student engagement in the ER activity?

Methodology

Participants

The current study was conducted in Communicative English classes in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at a small private university in the Kansai region of Japan. Communicative English classes are elective and involve three 90-minute lessons per week. There were eight participants in the study aged 18 to 22 years old from 1st and 2nd year classes, who were expected to achieve an Eiken level of pre-2 or level 3. Six participants were male, and two were female. The sample size was reduced from 12 students, due to absence issues. Only students with a full data set over six weeks were included, and the four students whose data was not used all had three of four absences. The sample size was very small, and therefore the inferential analysis used in this study would usually not be appropriate. To achieve the goals of the study, an exploratory approach was taken.

The L1 of all participants was Japanese, they completed their compulsory school education in Japan, with only three students enrolled in extra-curricular English classes during that period, and no students had study-abroad experience for a period of more than three weeks. None of the participants had experience with extensive reading prior to this study.

Procedures

Data was collected over a 6-week period measuring engagement with the selection and reading of online graded readers, and post reading discussions. The participants of the study were given access to Xreading for a period of 6 months. In a designated 6-week period, the participants selected, read and discussed a graded reader once a week with their assigned group. For three of those weeks, the reader was selected individually, so all group members read a different book. For the remaining three weeks, the reader was selected as a group, so all members read the same book. The selection type (individual or group) was alternated each week.

The graded readers were selected in class, then the students were given ten minutes to read their chosen graded reader, and they finished the reading for homework. In the following lesson, a ten-minute group discussion about the week's book(s) was held.

Immediately after each stage of the activity, the participants completed a questionnaire reporting their engagement on a 6-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating higher engagement (see Appendix A). Each week, prompt questions were displayed to support the discussion (see Appendix B). Following the discussion, the cycle commenced again starting with the following week's graded reader selection.

The questionnaires were designed to measure two constructs, task appropriateness and reported engagement with each stage of the activity. Reported task appropriateness was broken down into two subconstructs. The first one was *success* to try to understand if the students felt they had completed all the set tasks and participated in them well. The second subconstruct was *challenge vs. skill* to measure student opinion on whether the tasks were balanced in a way that challenged them, whilst being at level that matched their linguistic capabilities.

Reported engagement was measured using four subconstructs: *interest, enjoyment, concentration, and effort*, and finally, the participants were asked directly about their overall engagement with that stage of the task. A different questionnaire was designed for each stage of the task; selection, reading and discussion, each containing 15 items (see Appendix A). Due to the range and inconsistency of instruments measuring *engagement*, the validity of any questionnaire in this field could be questioned, and the one used in this study is no different. However, it is hoped the two-dimensional measurement of engagement, broken down further into six subconstructs and the extensive nature of the weekly questionnaire captured an accurate portrayal of engagement. Initially, the questionnaires were completed online using Google Forms. However, as the selection and reading were also done online, the decision was made to switch to paper questionnaires in the third week of data collection. For this group of learners, completing paper questionnaires was quicker, using less class time.

Before the study commenced, the participants completed a level test, reading extracts from books at Xreading level 1 to 6. They chose the highest level they could read at comfortably, and in group selected weeks, aligned their choice with the lowest-level student. The Xreading library available to the participants was restricted to a maximum Xreading level of 6. Occasionally students were able to and did choose books above this level, but overall, the mean book level chosen by these students was 3.7 ($sd = 0.79$).

Analyses

The questionnaire data was initially input into Microsoft Excel, and then imported into PSPP, a free statistical analysis software application. Reverse order items were recoded, and new variables were created, combining items that measured the same subconstruct, for example *success*, or *concentration*. Descriptive statistics, specifically the mean and standard deviation, were calculated to measure task appropriateness to better understand how this group of learners responded to the activity. A paired t-test was conducted to compare reported engagement when graded readers were selected individually or as a group to inform future research. The *t*-test may not usually be appropriate for such a small sample size, but it was chosen for personal development reasons to build familiarity with a common statistical procedure. As a total of 15 *t*-tests were conducted, the critical level was adjusted to 0.0033, based on a Bonferroni correction

Results and Discussion

Task Appropriateness

How appropriate is the task of selecting, reading and discussing online graded readers for this group of learners?

The appropriateness of the task was measured by a 6-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating higher engagement, measuring two subconstructs, *control* and *challenge vs. skill*, for each stage of the activity. An abbreviated form of each item is displayed in the results tables (see Table 1).

Table 1: Task-Appropriateness: Selection

Dimension	Item	Individual		Group	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Success	Q17 Completed Task	4.8	1.0	5.0	0.9
	Q9 Looking Forward	5.1	0.8	5.1	0.7
Challenge/Skill	Q10R (Not) Challenging	3.5	1.5	3.3	1.2
	Q18 Sufficient English	3.7	1.1	3.4	0.8
	Q14 Easy to find	3.8	1.7	3.5	1.6
	Q20R Descriptions (Easy)	2.9	1.1	3.2	0.7

The reported scores on the *success* items in *Table 1* indicate these students felt they had moderate *success* when selecting graded readers. The *challenge vs. skill* items highlighted in grey had mean scores all below *agree*, with most being closer to *mildly disagree*. These results suggest that the task of selecting graded readers may have been too challenging for this group of learners. It may be that over time the selection process would get easier, or it could be that more support was necessary, possibly by restricting the library further and asking learners to choose from a smaller selection of graded readers.

Table 2: Task-Appropriateness: Reading

Dimension	Item	Individual		Group	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Success	Q12 Did Everything Assigned	4.0	1.2	3.8	1.1
	Q7 Read Whole Book	4.5	1.1	3.7	1.2
Challenge/Skill	Q20 Language Easy	4.3	0.8	3.6	0.8
	Q10 Steady Pace	4.0	0.7	3.7	0.9
	Q6R Plot (Not) Difficult	2.4	0.9	2.9	0.8
	Q17R (Didn't) Often Stop	3.7	1.4	4.4	1.0

In general, the reported *success* and *challenge vs. skill* items had mean scores close to *agree*, suggesting this stage of the activity was appropriate for this group of learners. However, the means were low in the *challenge vs. skill* item related to plot difficulty, falling between *mildly* and *moderately disagree*. It is difficult to know why this was the case, but it could be the books chosen by the learners were too difficult. As they had no experience with extensive reading, it may have been beneficial to ask the learners to choose books from lower levels. Choosing readers at an appropriate level can be difficult in extensive reading, as levels are not consistent across publishers. However, this problem could be alleviated if Xreading was used in the long term, as it has a universal level system incorporating multiple publishers' levels.

Table 3: Task-Appropriateness: Discussion

Dimension	Item	Individual		Group	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Success	Q14 Active Participant	4.6	0.7	4.7	1.0
	Q18 Good Ideas	3.7	1.2	3.9	0.9
Challenge/Skill	Q16R Express Ideas (Easy)	2.0	0.7	2.0	1.1
	Q19R (Easy) Understand Group	4.2	1.2	4.8	1.0
	Q8 English Ability	4.2	0.4	4.5	1.2
	Q10R (No) Trouble Adding Ideas	3.3	1.1	4.5	0.9

These results suggest that during the discussion, the participants felt they actively participated, could understand their group easily and their English ability was adequate. Most of the means relating to adding ideas were low and the reported mean score for the item asking students if they could express their ideas easily in the discussion was around *moderately disagree*.

Whilst the reason for this result is unclear, it could be due to a lack of experience talking about English books, or with English group discussion in general, or possibly that the questions or discussion framework given to the learners was lacking. It might be the topics the learners would discuss if they used their L1, were not linguistically achievable in an L2 discussion, which is entirely understandable, and could indicate that reassurances to the learners were necessary about the level of discussion expected.

Student engagement

How does reader-selection method (individual-selected readers versus group selected readers) affect self-reported student engagement in the ER activity?

The results of the remaining questionnaire items are shown below, measuring engagement in four subconstructs, *interest*, *enjoyment*, *concentration* and *effort*, plus a direct report of engagement. Again, higher scores indicated higher engagement on the 6-point Likert scale. The data was analysed from the perspective of the sample and inferential statistics were run despite the small sample size ($n=8$) to inform future research where a larger sample size could be used. The difference in engagement between individually and group selected readers was examined by a paired *t*-test.

Table 4: Selection Engagement

Dimension	Indv. Mean	Group Mean	Diff Mean	Diff SD	Std Err Mean	99% Lower	99% Upper	<i>t</i>	Sig	Effect Size
Interest	4.81	5.08	-.27	.33	.12	-.68	.14	-2.30	.055	-0.82
Enjoyment	5.00	5.17	-.17	.25	.09	-.48	.15	-1.87	.104	-0.68
Concentration	4.83	4.92	-.08	.60	.21	-.83	.66	-.39	.708	-0.13
Effort	4.79	4.58	.21	.64	.23	-.58	1.00	.92	.388	0.33
Engagement	5.08	4.88	.21	.64	.23	-.58	1.00	.92	.388	0.33

In the selection stage of the activity, the mean scores were all close to *moderately agree*, suggesting the students felt engaged when selecting graded readers. The difference in means was minimal, with slight preferences towards group selection in *interest* and *enjoyment*, and individual selection in *effort* and *engagement*.

Table 5: Reading Engagement

Dimension	Indv. Mean	Group Mean	Diff Mean	Diff SD	Std Err Mean	99% Lower	99% Upper	<i>t</i>	Sig	Effect Size
Interest	3.85	3.96	-.10	.48	.17	-.70	.49	-.61	.558	-0.21
Enjoyment	4.58	4.04	.54	1.00	.35	-.70	1.78	1.53	.170	0.54
Concentration	4.15	4.19	-.04	.66	.23	-.86	.77	-.18	.863	-0.06
Effort	4.10	3.65	.46	1.25	.44	-1.09	2.01	1.03	.335	0.37
Engagement	4.42	4.33	.08	.96	.34	-1.10	1.27	.25	.812	0.08

For the reading stage, the reported mean scores were close to *agree*. The scores in the *interest* subconstruct fell below *agree* in both selection conditions and below *agree* in the group selection condition of the *effort* subconstruct, where there was a difference of almost half a Likert scale point in favour of individual selection. There was also a difference of just over half a Likert scale point in favour of individual selection in the *enjoyment* subconstruct. This group of learners reported higher *enjoyment* and *effort* when reading individually selected books, this could be due to the nature of individual selection, as learners can choose books that specifically meet their own interests.

Table 6: Discussion Engagement

Dimension	Indv. Mean	Group Mean	Diff Mean	Diff SD	Std Err Mean	99% Lower	99% Upper	<i>t</i>	Sig	Effect Size
Interest	5.06	4.94	.13	.97	.34	-1.08	1.33	.36	.726	0.13
Enjoyment	5.17	4.98	.19	.98	.35	-1.03	1.40	.54	.606	0.19
Concentration	4.75	5.25	-.50	1.19	.42	-1.97	0.97	-1.19	.273	-0.42
Effort	4.85	5.00	-.15	.48	.17	-.74	0.45	-.85	.422	-0.31
Engagement	4.96	5.08	-.12	.78	.27	-1.08	0.83	-.46	.662	-0.15

In the group discussion of the activity, all the reported mean scores were around *moderately agree*. The difference in means was very similar in most subconstructs, except for *concentration*, which had a half-point Likert scale difference in favour of group selection. This group of learners may have concentrated more in group selected weeks, as listening to group members was more related to their own language production. In individually selected weeks, this was not the case, as the participants spent a long time describing the events of their story. In the discussion observations and research journal, it was noted that during individually selected weeks, the story retelling nature of the discussion seemed to be more suited to this group of learners. Therefore, higher reported engagement scores may have been expected in those weeks. However, this was not the case, possibly because in group selected weeks, the learners were able to immediately begin talking about characters, the plot and themes. The selection type affected the nature of the discussion, but it did not seem to affect student reported engagement.

Exploratory Analysis

To aid future research and to understand the effect of selection type on the engagement of learners, the data was explored in greater detail. It is acknowledged that any discussion in this section is exploratory is not generalizable.

In the *selection engagement* reported data, there was a difference in favour of group selected readers approaching significance, with a large effect size for interest ($p = 0.055$, $d = 0.82$, Diff Mean = 0.27) and medium effect size for enjoyment ($p = 0.104$, $d = 0.68$, Diff Mean = 0.17). However, the difference in means is so small that the practical significance appears to be limited. These results indicate that selecting readers

with group members was *slightly* more interesting and enjoyable than selecting readers individually. This could have been due to a preference for communication and collaboration in the selection phase. This may support the claim that extensive reading can still be enjoyable and interesting when some of the choice is taken away from the reader, which may offer encouragement for instructors considering the inclusion of group selected readers in extensive reading programs or research in this area.

In the *reading engagement* reported data, there was a difference in favour of individually selected readers with a medium effect size for enjoyment ($p = 0.170$, $d = 0.54$, Diff Mean = 0.54). Whilst there is a high probability this finding is down to chance, it could be the learners found reading individually selected books more enjoyable as they were more invested in the material they had selected themselves. The difference in means is around half a point on the 6-point Likert scale, but both means were above *mildly agree*. There is not enough evidence to suggest future implementation of this activity should only include individually selected readers.

There was not a statistically significant difference in the scores for individually selected and group selected readers in any stage of the graded reader activity. It is likely this was affected by the small size of the sample ($n = 8$). However, the additional evidence of a small difference in means and an overall even balance of means towards individual and group selected readers suggest the selection method, individual or group, does not affect self-reported student engagement with this extensive reading activity.

These self-reported results suggest that these learners were engaged when some of the control of selection was taken away from them, and they read the same book as fellow group members. Whilst some control is retained in group selection, a strict interpretation of Day and Bamford's (2002) freedom of choice principle may not be necessary. It would be interesting to further measure engagement in the same activity using class readers selected by the teacher, taking all of the freedom of choice away from the students.

Conclusion and Future Suggestions

The self-reported task appropriateness measures suggested the task of selection may have been overwhelming due to the amount of graded readers available to choose from, and the fact that descriptions were only available in English. If Japanese summaries of graded readers were available on Xreading, it would probably be useful for lower level learners, but this is not a variable that can be controlled by individual

instructors. For future courses, the library could be restricted further to include less books, or the instructor could recommend a small number of books from different genres. This may make the task of selection more appropriate for lower-level learners.

Limiting the books in the library to lower-level books may alleviate another perceived issue in this study, *following the plot of the story*. Some researchers suggest that *narrow reading* (Renandya, Krashen & Jacobs, 2018), where the learner reads several books in the same series or by the same author can make the plot easier to follow, as other aspects such as vocabulary and recurring character traits remain a constant throughout the series.

Regarding the post reading discussions, whilst the learners felt they could participate, understand group members and communicate in English, they reported having trouble expressing ideas. Assuming this was caused by the discussion format, future research could look at different ways of implementing post-reading discussions. One example of a different discussion type is *reading circles* (Furr, 2007), where students read a book or chapter with one specific purpose, such as looking for important vocabulary or phrases, summarizing the story, or finding connections between the text and the learners' real lives. They prepare for the discussion by taking notes in advance, allowing time to think about ideas. Reading circles are generally done with a group reader, but giving learners a specific purpose to read, when the book has been individually selected may also be an interesting avenue to pursue.

There are clear limitations to any conclusions drawn from this study, as the sample size was very small ($n=8$) and was made up of 1st and 2nd year students, despite the fact they had a similar Eiken level. There were no statistically significant findings suggesting self-reported engagement was higher whether online graded readers were selected individually or as a group. This was supported by overlapping confidence intervals and no clear overall balance of mean scores towards either selection condition. These results suggest that instructors should not be deterred from trying extensive reading with group-selected readers.

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Appendix A – Weekly Questionnaires

Strongly Disagree 全く当てはまらない	Moderately Disagree 少し当てはまらない	Mildly Disagree やや当てはまらない	Mildly Agree やや当てはまる	Moderately Agree 少し当てはまる	Strongly Agree とても当てはまる
1	2	3	4	5	6

選択のアンケート

Weekly Engagement Questionnaire: Selection

1. It was interesting to browse the readers while making a choice. _____
次に読む本を選ぶために幾つかの本に目を通すことは面白かった。
2. I was focused on finding a good reader during the selection time. _____
本を選ぶことに集中できた。
3. I feel I had little control over the choice of the reader. _____
本の選択に関し、自分の意思がほとんど反映できていないと感じた。
4. I felt irritated during the selection process. _____
本を選ぶ過程にいらいらした。
5. I am looking forward to reading this story. _____
この本を読むのを楽しみにしている。
6. Selecting the graded reader was a challenging task. _____
本を選ぶのが難しかった。
7. I found my mind wandering while choosing the reader. _____
本を選んでいるときに違うことを考えてしまった。
8. I tried hard to find a good reader. _____
いい本を選ぶよう努力した。
9. I felt bored while looking for a good reader. _____
本を探すことはつまらなかった。
10. It was easy to find a reader that I wanted to read. _____
読みたい本を探すのは簡単だった。
11. I was mostly interested in finishing the selection process
as quickly as possible. _____
できるだけ早く終われるように本を適当に選んだ。
12. My preferences were an important part of the selection process. _____
自分の好み通りに選ぶことができた。
13. I successfully completed the task of selecting the reader. _____
私はうまくこの本を選ぶ作業を完了した。
14. I felt I had sufficient English ability to successfully select the reader. _____
本をスムーズに選ぶ英語力が自分にはあると感じた。
15. I enjoyed the process of selecting this reader. _____
本を選ぶ過程が楽しかった。

16. I had troubles understanding the English descriptions of the stories. _____
本についての英語の説明を理解することは難しかった。
17. I felt engaged in the task of selecting a reader. _____
本を選ぶことに没頭した。

読書のアンケート

Weekly Engagement Questionnaire: Reading

1. The plot of the story was interesting. _____
話の筋は面白かった。
2. I feel good that I could read a whole book in English. _____
英語 1 冊の本を読み終わったことにたいして満足感がある。
3. I became immersed in the story while reading. _____
読みながら、段々話に入り込んだ。
4. The plot of the story was difficult to follow. _____
話の筋は分かりにくかった。
5. I could read at a steady pace. _____
一定の速度で読むことができた。
6. While I was reading, I stayed focused on the task. _____
読んでいる間ずっと話に集中した。
7. I did everything that I was assigned to do. _____
課題のタスクをすべて完了した。
8. I felt engaged in the reading activity. _____
読むことに没頭した。
9. I enjoyed reading the story. _____
読んでいて、楽しかった。
10. My mind was wandering while I was reading. _____
読みながら、ボーっとする時もあった。
11. I did my best to finish the reader by the deadline. _____
締め切りまでに読み終わろうと頑張った。
12. I often stopped for unknown words. _____
知らない単語を調べるために何度も止まった。
13. I felt bored while reading the story. _____
この本を読むのは退屈だった。

14. I put a lot of effort into this assignment. _____
今回の課題にかなり努力した。
15. The language was easy to understand. _____
この本の英語は分かりやすかった。

ディスカッションのアンケート

Weekly Engagement Questionnaire: Discussion

1. I tried hard to contribute to the discussion. _____
ディスカッションに貢献しようと頑張った。
2. My group's discussion was interesting. _____
私のグループのディスカッションは面白かった。
3. I had sufficient English ability to discuss the book with my group. _____
他のメンバーと本の内容に関して英語で十分にディスカッションできた。
4. I was focused on understanding what all of my group members were trying to say. _____
他のメンバーの話している内容を集中して聞き取ろうとした。
5. I had troubles finding opportunities to add my ideas to the discussion. _____
ディスカッション中に中々自分の意見を言い出せなかった。
6. It was fun to hear what other students in my group thought. _____
色々なグループメンバーの意見を聞いて楽しかった。
7. My mind was wandering during our discussion. _____
ディスカッション中はあまり集中できなかった。
8. I did my best to express my opinion about the reader. _____
本に関しての自分の意見を発言しようと努力した。
9. I was an active participant in the discussion. _____
私はディスカッションに積極的に参加することができた。
10. Overall, I enjoyed discussing the story. _____
全体として本の内容のディスカッションは楽しかった。
11. It was difficult to express my ideas in English. _____
ディスカッション中、英語で発言することは難しかった。
12. I felt bored during the discussion. _____
ディスカッションは退屈だった。
13. I brought some good ideas into our discussion. _____
私はディスカッション中、良い意見を発言できた。

14. It was difficult to understand what my group members were saying. _____
他人の話している内容をあまり理解できなかった。
15. I felt engaged in the discussion activity. _____
ディスカッションに没頭した。

Appendix B – Weekly Discussion Questions

Every week:

- How did you feel about the story?

Self-selection weeks:

- What happened in the story? (every time)
- What interesting foreign culture did you find in the story? (Week 1)
- Which group member would most enjoy the story? (Week 3)
- If you were making a movie of the book, who would you cast? (Week 5)

Group-selection weeks:

- Which character was the most interesting? Why? (Week 2)
- What probably happened next in the story? (Week 4)
- How could you change the ending to be more interesting? (Week 6)

Engagement with the selection, reading and discussion of online graded readers: A comparison between individual and group selected conditions

Christopher Robert Cooper

Abstract

The current study investigated the engagement of University EFL learners with online graded readers using the commercially available website Xreading (www.xreading.com). Three weekly self-report questionnaires were used to measure engagement with the selection, reading and discussion of the graded readers. Engagement was measured with three behavioural constructs (concentration, effort, and success) and three emotional constructs (interest, enjoyment and challenge). Two research questions were devised to investigate the appropriateness of the task and to evaluate how the selection method (individual-selected or group-selected) affected self-reported engagement. Whilst overall the task was deemed to be appropriate for this group of learners, several improvement areas were identified if this activity were to be implemented in the future. The data was analysed from the perspective of the sample and inferential statistics were run despite the small sample size ($n=8$) to inform future research where a larger sample size could be used. The mean reported scores were high in each stage of the activity, suggesting students were engaged. In the comparison of the individual and group selected self-reported engagement scores, there were no statistically significant results, suggesting the method of graded reader selection does not affect engagement with this activity. Whilst, the small sample size ($n=8$) is an issue, the results suggest that instructors should not rule out trying extensive reading with group selected readers.