

Epoch-Making Extensive and Intensive Reading Materials on the Web

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Abstract

An epoch-making reading material has been developed on the world wide web. It is the very effective, rare and unique material to students. 14 students finished this reading material. 8 students out of them took the TOEIC-IP twice as the pretest in April, 2015 and the posttest in April, 2016. The results of each student show the average, which is 90 points higher than the pretest. Especially, 7 sophomores, who got 5 points more than the pretest, show 102.9 points higher than the pretest as their averages. Extensive reading in English has become much more popular than ever in Japan. Facilitators recommend and promote their students to extensively read books in English, but it is very difficult for facilitators to monitor the following factors in their reading English books extensively such as; how much they learn new vocabularies, how much and correctly they learn the knowledge of grammar, and how well and correctly they understand the content of the whole story.

This paper does not only solve the above concerns with this new reading material on the web, but also shows you, how effectively it works for the students, how well they learn intensively in the same extensive reading material, how effectively the facilitators work in class for that sake, and how well they are satisfied with the program.

Thus, studying with the extensive and intensive reading material by themselves, the students have become highly motivated in this program. As they see their scores on the standardized posttest, they will build their own confidence with it. This research has been supported with the "Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research" (KAKENHI) (15K04531) of "Japan Society for the Promotion of Science" (JSPS).

1. Introduction

7 sophomores at NITNC (National Institute of Technology, Nara College) improved their TOEIC scores in a year. Their average score becomes 451.4 in 2016 from 348.6 in 2015. The difference between the pretest and the posttest goes up to more than 100 points. Although students have very limited learning time for English under their student life, the pilot version of a reading material on the web is assigned. Extensive Reading for English has become popular. However, facilitators find difficult to see the improvement of students' English ability, and evaluate them in class. Students tend to ignore unknown words, unfamiliar grammar rules and even the content of the story during the work. It is hard and time consuming for facilitators to prepare the material in both extensive and intensive reading on printed materials.

Solving these difficulties, a new epoch-making reading material is needed. Newton Press, a publisher in Tokyo, Japan, has been developing the reading material in both extensive and intensive way on the web with the effective reading system to introduce the reading system onto the Web. The relevance between their learning time on the web and their increasing points on the TOEIC is statistically vague since the number of students are limited. However, the distribution charts show the potentials of the program.

2. TOEIC Score Results at NITNC

7 sophomores took a standardized test, TOEIC, Test Of English for International Communication, twice in a year as the pretest in April, 2015 and the posttest in April, 2016. This "Figure 1" shows their results. A noteworthy issue is their TOEIC average score, which becomes 451.4. Comparing with the pretest average score, improves 102.9 points comparing with the pretest. Especially, their average score on the "Reading Part" becomes 198.6, 55.0 points higher than the pretest. Their "Listening Part" also grows 252.9 that is 47.9 points higher than the pretest.

Their learning time outside of my English class and its assignment is existing hardly [1]. They have 30 weeks annually; one class is 90 minutes. The assignment takes almost one hour per week. That means 75 hours a year available for studying English [2]. According to Saegusa's article in 1985 [3],

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you have to study English for 3 hours to gain one point. Effectiveness and efficiency can be seen in this result.

	2015			2016			2016-2015		
	L	R	T	L	R	T	L	R	T
Max	275	215	490	340	250	570	155	155	310
Min	115	85	210	135	140	305	-10	15	5
Avg	205	143.6	348.6	252.9	198.6	451.4	47.9	55	102.8
SD	61.9	41	95.9	63.9	40.6	93	54.6	45.2	98.2
	L	R	T	L	R	T	L	R	T
1	195	140	335	185	155	340	-10	15	5
2	270	190	460	340	230	570	70	40	110
3	275	215	490	275	250	525	0	35	35
4	260	120	380	275	140	415	15	20	35
5	125	85	210	280	240	520	155	155	310
6	195	125	320	280	205	485	85	80	165
7	115	130	245	135	170	305	20	40	60

(Figure 1. TOEIC Results)

A learning system introduced in class for students to practice extensive reading and grammar in class. They are separated in Group A and B. While each student in Group A has the first part of a short story with 50-80 words and reads aloud, each student in Group B tells the second part of the story including a 4 multiple choices of the ending part. Then both of them write down the choice on each answer sheet. After doing this for one set, they switch the roles. The facilitator provides meanings of unknown words or the grammar points without Japanese translations.

3. Epoch-making Extensive and Intensive Reading Material on Web

Although extensive reading is very popular in Japan, facilitators have difficulty to check the progress of how much each student has read. Also it never shows the process of learning meanings of unknown words, grammatical knowledge of each sentence, and how correctly they grasp the whole story. Therefore, it remains very difficult to evaluate each student, based on the volumes.

Newton Press has developed this system into the Web site. These students use this pilot version of the new epoch-making reading material on the web as the assignment. There are 30 units on this web reading material. Each unit has 4 stages. The first stage is for the extensive reading with a comprehension question. Students read the 100-150 word article in 60 seconds. After reading the article, they will have the 4 multiple-choice question, to show their understanding in the extensive reading. Even though you get a correct answer or wrong answer, you can get into the second stage.

They will read the same article intensively on the second stage. The computer reads the text sentence by sentence. After reading one sentence, they have to push the return key to make it read another sentence. They just put the cursor on the unknown word. Immediately they will get the exact meaning in Japanese, but they cannot get the whole sentence translation in Japanese. The system takes care of nurturing their interlanguage ability to accept the language ambiguity. The English grammar and written systems are far from the Japanese ones. Therefore, it is very rare that interlanguage happens in Japan. At the end of this part, they will have the same 4 multiple-choice question, then they will get the correct answer and explanation of the question.

On the third stage, they will see the same and whole article again. There are some tricks on the sentences. Students will get the meaning in Japanese of each English word when you put the cursor on. There are some places where you could see ○,i, and push this mark. You will have more grammatical explanations and some trivia. Once you click this mark, you will get one coin as the reward.



<p>1 e-Learning / TLT</p>	<p>2 e-Learning / TLT</p>	<p>3 e-Learning / TLT</p>
<p>List of Achievement</p>	<p>First Stage</p>	<p>Wrong Answer on First Stage</p>
<p>4 e-Learning / TLT</p>	<p>5 e-Learning / TLT</p>	<p>6 e-Learning / TLT</p>
<p>Second Stage</p>	<p>After clicking "Enter" once</p>	<p>Putting cursor on unknown word</p>
<p>7 e-Learning / TLT</p>	<p>8 e-Learning / TLT</p>	<p>9 e-Learning / TLT</p>
<p>Correct answer and explanation</p>	<p>Showing O, i on Third Stage</p>	<p>Showing trivia after clicking O, i</p>
<p>10 e-Learning / TLT</p>	<p>11 e-Learning / TLT</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>First Question on Final Stage</p>	<p>Final Question on Final Stage</p>	<p>Medal and Total Number of Coins after finishing First Unit</p>

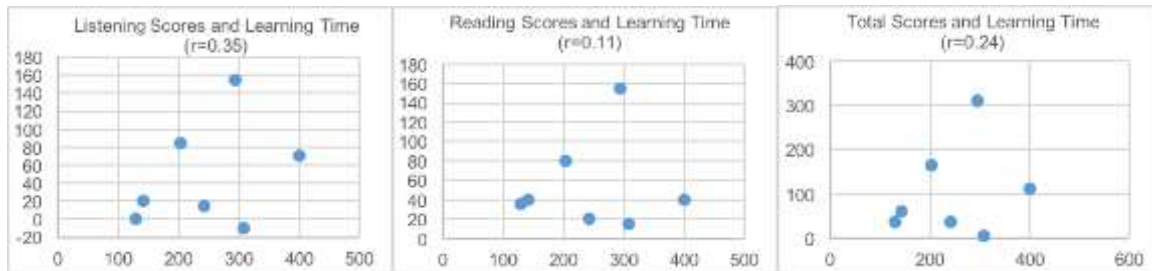
(Figure 2. Program of Unit 1 on Web)

On the final stage, the students have to recall the article. There are total 4 questions; 3 questions related to the article and one structure question to fill in the blank. If you made a wrong answer, you will get back to the third stage again automatically.

	L	R	T	L	R	T	L	R	T	Learning Time
1	195	140	335	185	155	340	-10	15	5	307m
2	270	190	460	340	230	570	70	40	110	400m
3	275	215	490	275	250	525	0	35	35	129m
4	260	120	380	275	140	415	15	20	35	242m
5	125	85	210	280	240	520	155	155	310	294m
6	195	125	320	280	205	485	85	80	165	203m
7	115	130	245	135	170	305	20	40	60	142m

(Figure 3. TOEIC Score Results with Learning Time)

All the students have finished 30 units by the end of February in 2016, just 2 months before the posttest. "Figure 3" shows their TOEIC scores and learning time. The relevance between their learning time and the differences of their both TOEIC scores are examined on "Figure 4."



(Figure 4. Score Distributions on Learning Time)

These results are unexpected on the correlation analysis. The analysis between "Listening Scores and Learning Time" shows a weak positive correlation, but the correlations between "Reading Scores and Learning Time" and between "Total Scores and Learning Time" are hardly observed. It naturally happens, because the number of students is too limited.

4. Questionnaire Results at Konan University

This pilot version is also introduced to Konan University in April, 2016. After 22 students have finished it, the questionnaire sheet was carried out to find out their satisfaction of this web reading material on "Figure 5." they are motivated to study English as to study in the US in the following semester.

Generally speaking, the students are highly satisfied with this web reading material. Especially, they consider this material is very effective for their reading and listening ability. Some of them feel it is helpful to build their vocabularies, but it is not for their speaking ability. They are going to the US, so they would like to improve their speaking skill. Therefore, they think it does not support to improve general English skills. To develop their English reading and listening skills, most of them highly recommend this material to others with their satisfaction.

	Opinions (n=22)	Yes	Neither	No
1	My reading ability has been developed with this material.	19 86.40%	3 13.60%	0 0%
2	My vocabulary has been improved with this material.	15 68.20%	7 31.80%	0 0%
3	My grammatical knowledge has been improved with this material.	5 22.70%	16 72.70%	1 4.60%
4	My listening ability has been developed with this material.	19 86.40%	3 13.60%	0 0%
5	My speaking ability has been developed with this material.	10 45.50%	12 54.50%	0 0%
6	My general English skills has been improved with this material.	6 27.30%	16 72.70%	0 0%
7	I will recommend other students this material.	21 95.40%	1 4.60%	0 0%

(Figure 5: Questionnaire Results of Web Reading Material)

5. Conclusion

Thus, comparing the TOEIC scores of 7 sophomores between the pretest and posttest at NITNC, the average total score in 2016 is 102.8 higher than the average total score in 2015. The difference in listening becomes 47.9 points higher than the pretest. In reading, the posttest average score goes up to 55.0 points higher than the pretest. It shows their effort in reading in class and the assignment. The assignment is very special and epoch-making. It is the web reading material. It is very rare to see the extensive and intensive reading on one material, but it comes possible on the web reading system. This reading system consists of 30 units. Each unit has 4 stages; 1: extensive reading with a comprehension question, 2: Interlanguage stage and the answer and comment of the question on the

first stage, 3: Intensive reading stage with grammar knowledge and some trivia, 4: Recall stage with 4 comprehension questions.

Unfortunately, the number of students is so limited that the relevance between their learning time on the web and their gaining points is so ambiguous statistically, but the distribution maps on "Figure 4" shows the possibility of this web system. Moreover, 22 sophomores at Konan University show their satisfaction to improve their listening and reading skills on this web reading material. In 2016, more than 200 students are trying this system now. They will have 70 more units this year. The results will be analyzed in Fall, 2017. The true efficacy of this web material will be clear soon.

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