Exploring a Placement Test for Extensive Reading Programs

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Abstract

The current study attempts to identify a test that can be utilized as a placement test in extensive reading (ER) programs. The presumably only test devised exclusively for this purpose, the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading Placement/Progress tests (EPER PPTs), is no longer available. It is desirable for learners to be aware of their starting reading level so that the effectiveness of ER can be maximized. In this study, 107 freshmen at a Japanese university who were about to start ER took the EPER PPT as well as the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) Bridge, the Test of English as a Foreign Language Institutional Test Program (TOEFL ITP) Level 2, the Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) and Productive VLT. They were divided into five EPER reading levels based on the EPER PPT results, and the mean scores of the total, listening and reading sections of the TOEIC Bridge, the total, listening comprehension, structure and written expression along with reading and vocabulary sections of TOEFL ITP, the VLT and Productive VLT scores were analyzed among the five groups. The results of a one-way analysis of variance with planned contrasts indicated that the total and listening scores of TOEIC Bridge could be used to place readers in appropriate reading levels in place of the EPER PPTs.

Keywords: extensive reading (ER), the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading Placement/Progress tests (EPER PPTs), TOEIC Bridge, TOEFL ITP, the Vocabulary Levels Tests (VLT)

Introduction

Imagine a university language classroom. The instructor comes in with English books for extensive reading(ER). Her lesson plan for the first 40 minutes of the day is to have students read an ER book of about 2,000 words long, have them share the story and ask questions about the books to each other. One student finishes reading in 7 minutes, while another is still half way through after 20 minutes has passed. When she tells them to explain the story to their study partner, some of them say that they did not understand the story well or they end their story in 1 minute.

Some interpretations are feasible of what is happening here. First, students do not know what ER is. Therefore, they are skimming only looking at words and sentences that are

understandable to them. Next, students are habitually translating everything. Finally, they are focusing on each sentence too much to capture the flow of the story. It can be said that these cases reflect on the way English or reading in English is taught in junior and senior high schools in Japan.

Generally speaking, reading in English is not actually "reading in English" in formal education in Japan. Since the grammar-translation method is still applied, students concentrate on sentence by sentence translation of everything into Japanese with a dictionary to show they have understood the grammar reinforced in each sentence. In this intensive reading instruction, students are not directed to pay attention to paragraphs and meaningful chunks of sentences even when they tackle a fairly long passage. Their top-down skills are hardly cultivated. Those who go to cram school after regular school to prepare for entrance exams may be instructed to scan and skim a text to answer multiple choice questions, a typical question type on tests.

The primary purpose for reading in English for Japanese students is also unique. English is a mandatory subject for six years at junior and senior high schools. It is a key subject that students feel they have to strive to get good grades in and pass exams.

These students are likely to face challenges when they start ER. Readers choose easy books of their interest and enjoy reading in large quantities at a good rate in ER (Day & Bamford, 1998). However, first of all, Japanese students do not have a notion of "easy" books, and they have trouble deciding how easy is easy. Most of them have never read an entire book in English, so the spectrum of easy to difficult books simply does not exist in their minds. They are so familiar with their proficiency measured in scores on exams that an explanation of "easy" books by Day (2018) as "material that is well within the learner's linguistic competency" (p. 2090) is not very helpful. After all, they are used to translating rather complicated passages that often appear on entrance exams with their dictionary. This experience deludes them into the proud feeling that they can "read" English that is actually beyond their linguistic competence. In fact, being able to translate does not necessarily guarantee sufficient comprehension.

Another difficulty concerns reading speed. Nuttall (1982) defined ER as reading for fluency as opposed to intensive reading for accuracy. Fluency is multifaceted, hence complex (Zwick, 2018). Researchers continually fail to sum it up into one concise explanation. Nevertheless, the term often means reading speed in EFL settings (Day, 2018). Japanese students are supposed to stop after each sentence, analyze it and translate it. They are allowed to take as much time as they need, and they never get fluency practice. Although fluency is interrelated with

comprehension (Anderson, 2008, cited in Zwick, 2018), fluency development is not regarded highly and has no place in early English education in Japan. Under this condition, if they are told to read fast, it is likely that they lapse into skimming ignoring unknown words and skipping indecipherable sentences. Comprehending just the gist inhibits readers from grasping the overall picture of a story. ER is unequal to skimming in nature, but it is plausible that students misunderstand skimming as ER.

Furthermore, "pleasure" part of ER may perplex students. As mentioned above, Japanese students read in English to get grades and to pass exams. It is torture rather than enjoyment. Besides, the majority of students do not even read in Japanese. Results of a survey initiated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology revealed that 51.4% of Japanese senior high school students read no books and 18.5 % read just one book in the past month (Hamagin Research Institute, 2015). Lack of reading experience in their native language may make it even harder for them to perceive the concept of reading for fun.

To lead these students to successful ER, it is deemed fundamental that instructors "orient students to the goals of the program, explain the methodology, keep track of what students read, and guide students in getting the most out of the program" (p. 9) as Day and Bamford (1998) suggest. To fulfill this duty, the first step that teachers should accomplish is, in the author's opinion, to place students in adequate reading levels so that students access easy enough material that they do not resort to translating and skimming.

The Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading Placement/Progress tests (EPER PPTs) are the only tests that were developed for this purpose to the author's knowledge. EPER was initiated in 1981 at the University of Edinburgh, mainly aiming at supporting schools to set up an ER program and designing materials for it (Hill, 1992). In the EPER approach, readers were encouraged to read from their starting level to higher levels according to the Extensive Reading Central (ER Central) website (2017). Accordingly, EPER PPTs were created. The tests had a correlation with EPER reading levels, and they were proven to measure general proficiency accurately (Hill, 1992).

EPER PPTs are cloze tests. Test takers read several passages with blanks that should be filled in with one English word. Syntactical and lexical knowledge is vital as well as contextual understanding (Takase, 2012). The tests are marked precisely based on the answer keys prepared by EPER. The score identifies which EPER level among 9 levels readers belong to, and learners can start from graded readers (GRs) in their reading levels (Hill, 1992).

When the project was terminated, all the materials and resources were donated to the Extensive Reading Foundation and ER Central (ER Central, 2017). However, EPER PPTs,

which were scheduled to be uploaded on the ER Central website in 2013 (ER Central, 2017), still have not been made available as of today. Thus, the research question posed for the present study is:

What existing test can be reasonably adopted to place first-time extensive readers into proper reading levels in place of EPER PPTs?

Methodology

Participants

Participants of this study were 107 freshmen who entered the English Department at a private Japanese university in April, 2019. They were to study English intensively in three main required courses Monday through Friday for two years. Two of the courses, content-based and skills-based respectively, met twice a week. The other, which was a once-a-week class, centered around ER. For this course, students were expected to read ER books and take quizzes for them outside the classroom on MReader, an online platform specifically designed for ER, to accumulate a certain number of words. These mandatory classes were conducted in six streamed groups.

Instruments

The test results of two tests administered by the university were utilized. Because the three core English courses were ability-grouped, students had to sit for the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) Bridge as a placement test before the entrance ceremony. The English department also directed students to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language Institutional Test Program (TOEFL ITP) so that their proficiency level at the beginning of their English study at the university could be recorded for program improvement. The level 2 test, the shorter and high-beginning to intermediate level version that was assumed more appropriate, was given.

In addition to these tests, students were asked to take three more tests: EPER PPT, the Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) and Productive VLT. As previously noted, EPER PPTs are believed to be the only tests that were devised specifically to place ER readers into appropriate reading levels. Consequently, it was employed as the benchmark. Two vocabulary tests were adopted as candidate placement measures since vocabulary tends to be associated with ER. The number of headwords often appears on the book covers of ER books to show their levels. A conclusion by Laufer (1989) that learners can enjoy reading when they know

95% of the vocabulary in a text (Cobb, 2009) also confirms the connection between word knowledge and ER. Besides, research suggests that lexical knowledge and reading comprehension correlate highly (Koda, 1989, cited in Koda, 2005).

EPER PPT Version A

EPER PPT Version A was selected as it is the most common (Takase, 2012). It consists of 12 passages with 141 blanks. It is supposed to be 60 minutes long. However, only 20 minutes was allocated in the current study due to a time restriction.

VLT Form A (the 2000-word level)

VLT is popularly used to assess vocabulary size (Read, 2000). It was developed by Nation in the early 1980s (Read, 2000), and revised by Schmitt, Schmitt and Clapham (Webb, Sasao & Balance, 2017). The newest version by Webb, Sasao and Balance (2017) was adapted in this study as current English from recent corpus studies was reflected in it. It is made up of ten groups of three definitions with six words from which the correct word should be matched with each meaning. Test takers are to write a check mark in the charts where the meaning and word meet. The 2000-word level was chosen since the first 2000 words are considered to be words of high frequency (Laufer & Nation, 1999). The cumulative coverage of the first 1000 and 2000 word levels accounts for about 80% (Laufer & Nation, 1999), and about 97% of words in ER books are from the first 2000 words (Webb & Macalister, 2012).

Productive VLT Form A (the 2000-word level)

Productive VLT was also designed to practically and reliably measure vocabulary knowledge (Laufer & Nation, 1999), especially in writing (Read, 2000). It is comprised of 18 sentences, in each of which one blank should be accurately filled in with one English word starting with a few letters that are already specified in the sentence. The number of letters before each blank is determined in the way that they only elicit the intended correct answer. As this test is based on VLT (Laufer & Nation, 1999), the same 2000-word level version was chosen for this study, and downloaded from the website managed by Cobb (Laufer & Nation, 2019).

Procedure

All of the five tests were given within two weeks at around the beginning of spring semester in 2019. One exception was one group that needed one more extra week. TOEIC

Bridge and TOEFL ITP were administered in late March and in the second week of the spring semester, respectively. The rest of the three tests were conducted in the required ER course for the first two to three weeks of the semester.

The results of the five tests were compiled in Excel, then transferred to SPSS (Version 21.0). Participants were first classified into 5 established EPER reading levels based on the results of EPER PPT A. Then, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to investigate if there was a statistically significant difference among 5 groups in the total scores of TOEIC Bridge, the scores of its listening and reading sections, the total scores of TOEFL ITP, the scores of its listening comprehension, structure and written expression as well as vocabulary and reading sections, the scores of VLT and Productive VLT. This was followed by planned contrasts to confirm that difference reached statistical significance between each pair of the 5 groups.

Results

Table 1 demonstrates the descriptive statistics of the 5 groups according to the Score Guide provided by EPER. The greatest number of participants, 38 students who scored 33 to 45 points, was placed in Group #3 (EPER level F). The second and third largest groups were #4 (EPER level E) with 34 participants whose points ranged from 46 to 59, and #2 (EPER level G) with 18 students whose mean score was 28, respectively. Group #1, the lowest EPER reading level H, is constituted of 8 students with the average score of 17.75, whereas 9 students who filled in 65 blanks correctly on average were at EPER reading level D (Group #5). There are 9 levels in EPER, but no participants scored high enough to be placed in levels C, B, A and X.

Table 1
The descriptive statistics of the five groups

Groups	EPER reading levels	N	EPER raw scores	M	*SD*
1	H	8	1 – 22	17.75	3.882
2	G	18	23 – 32	28.39	2.477
3	F	38	33 – 45	39.21	3.394
4	E	34	46 – 59	52.09	3.880
5	D	9	60 – 76	65.44	4.667
Total		107		42.08	13.049

Note. EPER reading levels and raw scores were adopted from the EPER Score Guide.

The outcomes of one-way ANOVA revealed that there was a statistically significant difference among these 5 reading levels in the total TOEIC Bridge scores, F (4, 26.260) =19.472, $p < .001$, the TOEIC Bridge listening scores, F (4, 101) =17.553, $p < .001$, the TOEIC Bridge reading scores, $F(4, 25.581)=10.922$, $p < .001$, the total TOEFL ITP scores, $F(4, 26.032)$ =11.139, $p < .001$, the TOEFL ITP listening comprehension scores, $F(4, 100)=18.012$, $p < .001$, the TOEFL ITP structure and written expression scores, F (4, 29.149) =11.321, $p < .001$, the TOEFL ITP vocabulary and reading scores, F (4, 25.800) =2.955, $p < .05$, and the scores of Productive VLT, F (4, 26.224) =4.119, $p < .01$. Only the mean scores of VLT were not significantly different between the 5 groups. Table 2 exhibits the results.

Table 2
The results of ANOVA

Scores		SS	df	MS	F
total TOEIC Bridge	Between Groups	9813.939	4	2453.485	19.472***
	Within Groups	8380.061	26.260		
	Total	18194.000			
TOEIC Bridge listening	Between Groups	2752.404	4	688.101	17.553***
	Within Groups	3959.332	101	39.201	
	Total	6711.736	105		
TOEIC Bridge reading	Between Groups	2417.336	4	604.334	10.922***
	Within Groups	2428.400	25.581		
	Total	4845.736			
total TOEFL	Between Groups	58536.257	4	14634.064	11.139***
	Within Groups	87579.705	26.032		
	Total	146115.962			
TOEFL listening comprehension	Between Groups	574.026	4	143.506	18.012***
	Within Groups	796.736	100	7.967	
	Total	1370.762	104		
TOEFL structure and written expression	Between Groups	993.960	4	248.490	11.321***
	Within Groups	2477.888	29.149		
	Total	3471.848			
TOEFL vocabulary and reading	Between Groups	485.354	4	121.339	2.955*
	Within Groups	1898.608	25.800		
	Total	2383.962			
Productive VLT	Between Groups	121.840	4	30.460	4.119*
	Within Groups	705.711	26.224		
	Total	827.551			

***= $p < .001$, * = $p < .05$
Note. For the groups that Levene's test suggested had unequal variance, degrees of freedom were adjusted and Welch's F was reported.

To further inspect between which groups a difference was observed, planned contrasts were carried out based on the scheme shown in Table 3. The results confirmed that the mean scores of the total TOEIC Bridge and the average TOEIC Bridge listening scores statistically significantly differed between each pair of groups (see Table 4). This indicates that the total TOEIC Bridge scores and its listening scores can be employed to place readers into the same reading proficiency levels as EPER PPTs do.

Table 3
Arrangement for planned contrasts

Contrasts	Groups
1	1 vs. 2
2	2 vs. 3
3	3 vs. 4
4	4 vs. 5

Table 4
The results of planned contrasts

Contrasts	total TOEIC Bridge	TOEIC Bridge listening
	t	*t*
1	-3.341**	-2.381*
2	-3.378**	-2.899**
3	-2.383*	-2.088*
4	-3.025*	-2.892**

** = $p < .01$, * = $p < .05$

Discussion

TOEIC Bridge scores as opposed to TOEFL scores

It is noteworthy that TOEIC Bridge scores, but not TOEFL scores, could be a substitute placement test for EPER PPTs. Since the *F*-value of the scores of the TOEIC Bridge reading section was not significant in the planned comparisons test, it is reasonable to assume that the scores of its listening section were influential. Thus, its characteristics were analyzed in contrast to those of the TOEFL listening comprehension section. First, the content of TOEIC Bridge is relevant to everyday life, while TOEFL is academically oriented according to Educational Testing Service (ETS) that has been developing and supervising these tests (2012; 2017). Narrative ER material often depicts people's ordinary life, and so do passages on EPER

PPTs. This may be one reason why TOEIC Bridge scores obtained the statistically significant *F*-value.

Secondly, TOEIC Bridge may have been more manageable than TOEFL for the participants of the present study. ETS (2012; 2017) states that TOEIC Bridge aims at assessing English proficiency of learners at the elementary level, whereas TOEFL at high-beginning to intermediate. Also, it is estimated from sample questions available on the official website of ETS (2019) and of Institute for International Business Communication (IIBC) (*n.d.*), the operating organization of TOEIC Bridge in Japan, that audio is played more slowly on TOEIC Bridge at 120 to 130 words per minute (wpm) than on TOEFL at 140 to 150 wpm. Moreover, the fact that 50 questions are asked in 25 minutes on TOEIC Bridge (ETC, 2012) in comparison to 30 questions in 22 minutes on TOEFL (ETS, 2017) suggests that TOEIC Bridge includes a greater number of relatively short passages. In fact, a sample passage in the final part of the TOEIC Bridge listening section was 65 words long (IIBC, *n.d.*), while its equivalent contained 150 words on the TOEFL (ETS, 2019). Furthermore, TOEIC Bridge test takers might be cognitively less burdened as the maximum number of questions asked after each rather short conversation or talk is only two. In ER, learners are supposed to read books that are not linguistically demanding (Day & Bamford, 1999). It is possible to speculate that the TOEIC Bridge listening section might be similar to passages on EPER PPTs and ER material in easiness.

Listening scores as opposed to reading scores

Likewise, the listening scores, not the scores in the reading section, could indicate which reading level learners should be placed in alternatively to EPER PPTs. ER is one mode of reading, so educators, when thinking about reading ability, are inclined to value reading scores more highly than listening scores. However, it should be pointed out that what the TOEIC Bridge reading and the TOEFL vocabulary and reading sections evaluate differs from what EPER PPTs do, although they all require knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Some reading comprehension questions on the TOEIC Bridge can be answered correctly just by scanning. Those on the TOEFL follow more academic, hence more difficult, reading passages with technical terminology and information, so test takers cannot help skimming. Besides, reading passages on these tests are rather short and are not what readers encounter in ER. EPER PPTs can be said to be different in quality from the reading sections of TOEIC Bridge and TOEFL.

Phonology is crucial even when learners read silently. This is explained in relation to how

memory works. Working memory is mostly constituted by the phonological loop, and this loop enables phonological input to be stored in working memory, then this phonological input can support future access to information in long-term memory (Gathecole & Baddeley, 1993, cited in Koda, 2005). This implies that readers can retrieve meanings of words more quickly when they know their pronunciations. Koda (2005) reports that fluent reading and ability to retrieve meanings of words quickly and effortlessly are inextricable. Phonology facilitates fluent reading. Thus, the listening scores might have correlated with the scores of EPER PPT in this study.

With the recoding of the TOEIC Bridge listening section, participants might have been experiencing extensive listening (EL). EL shares its purpose, enhancing fluency, with ER. Consequently, learners are encouraged to listen to easy texts. Waring (2010) advises Japanese students who want to engage in EL to choose listening material of two levels lower than reading material since their listening is slower than reading in speed. Listening passages on TOEIC Bridge, being shorter and slower than those on TOEFL, might have met this criterion. When students listen to easy texts on a test, they spontaneously listen to all the words and sentences. In other words, they could have a similar experience to ER, or possibly a more comfortable and enjoyable one than ER. Cognitive burden of decoding and processing is reduced because words in listening passages read aloud generally by native speakers are already segmented into groups of words that are semantically connected (Sakurai, 2018). It could be concluded that the TOEIC Bridge listening enabled participants of the current study to go through the process that was closer to ER than that with passages in the reading section.

Vocabulary tests

The way that Japanese students have learned vocabulary might have resulted in the statistical insignificance in the mean scores of the VLT. Vocabulary is manifold. Knowing a word entails more than knowing its meaning. Nation (2001) explains that word knowledge denotes form, meaning and use, and that these three are subcategorized into pronunciation, spelling, word parts, connection between spelling and meaning, general meaning, synonyms, grammar, collocations, and adequate use in particular situations. However, most Japanese junior and senior high school students focus predominantly on the main meaning of words because that is what they are usually tested on. They typically look at a list or book that displays English vocabulary on the left and its meanings in Japanese on the right, and try to memorize the meanings. Six years of this rote learning might have attributed to random

scores on the VLT.

While the VLT solely demands the knowledge of word meanings, test takers need to process words in the context orthographically and syntactically, not to mention semantically, in the Productive VLT. This might have yielded the significant outcome of the ANOVA. Yet, in the planned contrasts, a significant difference in the mean scores was not obtained between each pair of the 5 EPER reading levels. One reason can be sought in another characteristic way of Japanese students' lexical learning. When students try to memorize spelling, they are prone to invent a funny way of reading each word, completely ignoring its natural English pronunciation. This is their strategy to overcome the difficulty of mastering spelling caused by the distinctive English system where spelling does not correspond with sound. Lack of phonological knowledge impedes automatic recognition of words (Koda, 2005). Automaticity is vital in ER, however. A prominent element, phonology, is not involved in vocabulary study of Japanese students. This could be why the Productive VLT cannot measure reading proficiency as effectively as EPER PPTs.

Pedagogical Suggestions

Table 5 presents the average total TOEIC Bridge scores and the mean scores of its listening section for each reading level. As part of its project, EPER evaluated and classified GRs into its reading levels. However, its chart has not been updated and does not incorporate recent series and popular books widely distributed in Japan. In addition, a list for leveled readers (LRs) does not exist. Therefore, a new version based on the one produced by Hill (2001) has been created by the author with reference to *Yomiyasusa Levels* (Furukawa, Kanda, Mayuzumi, Miyashita, Hatanaka, Satoh & Nishizawa, 2013), the level of difficulty or readability judged by Japanese experienced extensive readers all over Japan, the length of books, the type of books (GRs, LRs, narrative, nonfiction) and author's own reading experience (see Appendix A).

Table 5 and Appendix A can be referred to when instructors orient their students to ER books to start with. When they receive TOEIC Bridge scores of their students prior to the start of ER, they can figure out which student belongs to which EPER reading level. Then, for example, if the majority of students are at EPER level G, they can teach their students how to do ER properly with Foundations Reading Library (FRL) level 1 books in class. After that, they can encourage their students to go to the library and continue with FRL level 1 onto level 2. For variety, the Oxford Classic Tales and Building Blocks Library series can also be

Table 5
The mean scores and standard deviations of the total TOEIC Bridge scores and TOEIC Bridge listening scores for each EPER reading level

Groups	EPER reading levels	total TOEIC Bridge scores		TOEIC Bridge listening scores	
		M	*SD*	M	*SD*
1	H	124.25	14.983	61.00	7.559
2	G	143.22	8.681	67.33	6.174
3	F	151.95	9.715	72.53	6.749
4	E	156.67	6.886	75.64	5.711
5	D	165.56	8.048	82.44	4.773

Notes. Means and standard deviations were calculated on 106 students as one student did not take the test. The total score ranges from 20 to 180, and the listening score from 10 to 90.

recommended. It is ideal that students choose their own books (Day & Bamford, 1998), but Japanese students who experience ER for the first time are not going to be able to be independent readers immediately. Hence, specifying adequate series and having them select books from them will be helpful.

Table 6
TOEFL, TOEIC and TOEIC Bridge scores for EPER reading levels

EPER reading levels	TOEFL	TOEIC	TOEIC Bridge
H			
G			
F			
E	350	150	
D	400	300	116
C	450	450	147
B	480	530	
A	530	650	

Note. TOEFL and TOEIC scores were adapted from Hill (1997) cited in ER Central (2017) and TOEIC Bridge scores from IIBC (2006).

It should be noted that a discrepancy is indicated in the mean total TOEIC Bridge scores for each reading level between EPER and the data observed in this study. Table 6 shows the relationship between EPER reading levels and scores of TOEFL and TOEIC (ER Central, 2017) with TOEIC Bridge scores estimated in reference to the official score comparison chart provided by ETS (IIBC, 2006) and added to the table by the author. The reading level suggested by EPER for students with the total TOEIC Bridge score of 147 is level C, whereas they should be at level G or H based on the outcomes of the current study. This finding coincides with the remark by Nishizawa (2019) that ER books suggested by EPER for each

EPER reading level are too difficult for Japanese students to enjoy ER. He then cautions that EPER reading levels, along with levels expressed in TOEIC scores labeling ER books at bookstores, are the levels that Japanese students can read when they translate, hence not the levels that they can read fluently. Instructors engaging in ER in Japan are urged to bear this in mind.

Conclusion

The research question of the present study asked what existing test can be utilized in ER programs to place readers in optimal reading levels as accurately as EPER PPTs. The results of ANOVA with planned contrasts confirmed that the total scores of TOEIC Bridge and the scores of its listening section statistically significantly correlated with EPER reading levels. It was speculated that topics dealt with in the TOEIC Bridge and features of its listening passages are similar to those of EPER PPTs and ER material. The role that phonology plays in fluent reading was additionally assumed to ascribe to the outcomes.

However, the answer to the research question, the use of the TOEIC Bridge, should be tentative. It was the first attempt to explore a placement test for ER programs, so the research needs to be replicated with different groups of students so that the findings can be validated. Also, another study to determine whether or not these reading levels are reasonable and suitable for first-time Japanese extensive readers should be conducted. Furthermore, no participants of this study were identified as at EPER levels C, B, A and X. Therefore, further investigation for these higher levels is necessary.

Nonetheless, it should be emphasized that it is essential that Japanese students be directed to start reading from books at the proper level as ER is new to most of them. Although it may not be appropriate for EPER reading and book levels to be applied exactly as they are in the Japanese context, the systematic implementation of ER programs that EPER was trying to accomplish should be respected since it has been the only well acknowledged project that contributed to the spread of ER all over the world. It is hoped that the results of this study will streamline ER programs that prompt pleasure reading of many Japanese students.

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Appendix A

EPER reading levels of GRs

Series	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	X
BBL		5/6/7	7/8/9	9					
BCG			0						
Cambridge Discovery Interactive				1/2	2				
CDR			0						
CER			0	1	2	3			
CPT				1/2/3/4	5	6/7			
CYR		1/2							
FF		11							
FPR				1					
FRL		1/2/3/4/5	4/5/6/7						
HBR				1/2					
IBC Ladder					1	1/2	2		
MMR		1		2	2	3			
OBF				1	2	3			
OBW		0	0	1	2	3			
OCT		1/2/3/4	3/4/5						
ODM			0	1					
PAR		0							
PGR		0	1	1	2	3			
PYR	1								

EPER reading levels of LRs

Series	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	X
AAR		2	2						
Cam Jansen					✓				
Dahl						✓			✓
ICR（Arthur）			2	2					
ICR（Little Bear）			1	1					
MTH					✓	✓			
Marvin Redpost					✓	✓			
Nate the Great			✓	✓					
ORT	3/4	5/6/7/8/9	8/9						
PCR		1/2							
PER（Amber）			3	3					
RTR（Henry & Mudge）		2	2						
SIR		3	3/4	4/5	5				
Walker			✓	✓					

Who was/is			✓
Winnie the Witch	✓	✓	

Note. Abbreviations of the series are adopted from *The Complete Guide Book for Extensive Reading* (Furukawa, et al., 2013).

BBL	Building Blocks Library
BCG	Black Cat Green Apples
CDR	Cambridge Discovery Readers
CER	Cambridge English Readers
CPT	Cengage Page Turners
CYR	Compass Young Learner's classics
FF	Fast Forward
FPR	Footprint Reading Library
FRL	Foundations Reading Library
HBR	Helbling Readers
MMR	Macmillan Readers
OBF	Oxford Bookworms Factfiles
OBW	Oxford Bookworms
OCT	Oxford Classic Tales
ODM	Oxford Dominoes
PAR	Penguin Active Reading
PGR	Penguin Readers
PYR	Penguin Young Readers
AAR	All Aboard Reading
ICR	I Can Read
MTH	Magic Tree House
ORT	Oxford Reading Tree
PCR	Primary Classic readers
PER	Puffin Easy to Read
RTR	Ready To Read
SIR	Step Into Reading

多読プログラム向けプレイスメントテストの探求

桜　井　延　子

要　旨

本稿では，既存の試験の中から多読プログラムでプレイスメントテストとして使用可能なものを探求する。この目的のために開発された唯一のテストと考えられるエジンバラ大学多読プロジェクトプレイスメントプログレステスト（イーパーテスト）は現在入手不可能となっている。しかし，多読の効果を最大限にするためには，学習者は多読開始時に自分のレベルを把握し，そのレベルの多読図書から読み始めることが望ましい。本研究では，多読学習を始める 107 名の大学 1 年次生がイーパーテスト，トーイックブリッジ，トーフル，ボキャブラリー・レベル・テストを受験し，イーパーテストの結果により分けられた 5 グループ間でのトーイックブリッジの総合点，リスニング点，リーディング点，トーフルの総合点，リスニング点，文法点，語彙リーディング点，ボキャブラリー・レベル・テスト受容語彙版の点数と発表語彙版の点数を分析した。一元配置分散分析の対比検定の結果により，トーイックブリッジの総合点とリスニング点がイーパーテストと同様のレベル分けに使用可能であることが示唆された。

キーワード：多読，エジンバラ大学多読プロジェクトプレイスメントプログレステスト，トーイックブリッジ，トーフル，ボキャブラリー・レベル・テスト