

Motivation and L2 Reading Behaviors of University Students in Japan and Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Although numerous studies (Wigfield, 1997; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997; Guthrie et al., 1999; Wang & Guthrie, 2000, 2004) have been done on motivation and L1 reading behaviors, there exists relatively little research on reading motivation in the field of L2 reading. Motivation theorists conceive of motivation as a multifaceted construct with different constituents. According to Grabe & Stoller (2002), students in both L1 and L2 reading contexts may possess different individual motivations for reading as well as differing sense of self-esteem, interest, involvement with reading and emotional responses to reading. Therefore, this article describes an investigation of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in L2 reading among 247 Japanese and Sri Lankan university students using a Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ), a background questionnaire, and a reading comprehension test. The relationship between motivational constructs and other variables was investigated using Pearson Correlation Analysis and Principal Component Analysis (CPA) in SPSS Version 13.0 in order to examine interrelationships among items in the MRQ. While the results show interesting findings, they provide evidence that L2 readers possess both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational goals simultaneously, as L1 research indicates. Moreover, results of the analysis suggest that motivation in L2 reading can be validly assessed using the intrinsic-extrinsic reading motivational model proposed by Wang & Guthrie (2004).

1. Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

A great deal of research on L2 learning motivation has been conducted based on a variety of theoretical approaches and traditions (Gardner, 1979, 1985, 2001; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002; Dörnyei, 1990, 2000, 2001; McIntyre et al., 1998; Weiner, 1992; Schumann, 1998, 1999, 2001; McCroarty, 2001; Julkunen, 2001). While Gardner's theory was grounded in social psychology, several influential cognitive motivation theories have been proposed in mainstream psychology in the 1990s. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is one such approach in which Deci and Ryan (1985) distinguish different types of motivation based on different reasons or goals that give rise to an action. The most basic distinction is between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which are theoretically

distinct from each other. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity which provides satisfaction, enjoyment, interest or challenge to the activity itself, while extrinsic motivation refers to participating in an activity because of external pressures, demands, or rewards.

According to this theoretical dichotomy between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, extrinsic reading motivation refers to an individual's enjoyment of reading activities engaged in free time and based on personal interest, whereas extrinsic reading motivation involves an individual's participation in reading activities based on external demands and values such as obtaining grades, meeting teachers' or parents' expectations, gaining recognition, or even the desire to avoid punishment.

Although much research has been undertaken in the field of L1 reading and motivation, research on L2 reading and motivation is meager. Mori (2002, 2004) investigated the constituents of 447 Japanese female university students' L2 reading motivation based on the theory of L1 reading motivation proposed by Wigfield & Guthrie (1995, 1997). The results suggest that foreign language reading motivation is multidimensional and closely resembles more general forms of motivation as laid out in Expectancy Value Theory (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles, Adler & Meece, 1984; Eccles, Lord & Midgley, 1991; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Wigfield, 1994; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992).

The theoretical perspective for present research rests on the theory of L1 reading motivation based on Intrinsic and Extrinsic Reading Motivation Model proposed by Wang & Guthrie (2004). On the basis of Deci and Ryan's (1985, 2000) theoretical distinctions between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as well as findings of earlier research (Gottfried, 1985, 1990; Guthrie et al., 1999; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997), the intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation model has been proposed by Wang & Guthrie (2004) to explain the variance in L1 text comprehension. In this model, it is hypothesized that the intrinsic factor consists of three constructs: curiosity, involvement and preference for challenge. Curiosity is the desire to read about a particular topic of personal interest; involvement refers to an individual's pleasure gained from absorbing in an interesting text; and preference for challenge involves the desire to assimilate complex ideas in a text. On the other hand, the extrinsic factor comprises five constructs: recognition, grades, social reading, competition and compliance. Reading for recognition refers to reading to be recognized as a competent reader among teachers, peers and others; reading for grades is reading to obtain a certain desired grade on an examination; social reading is the process of sharing the meanings gained from reading with peers and family; and competition refers to reading to outperform others in reading while compliance is the desire to read to meet an external goal or requirement.

Thus, reading motivation has been viewed as a multifaceted construct with multiple constituents. L1 research (Wentzel, 1996; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997; Guthrie et al., 1999; Guthrie, Wigfield & Von Secker, 2000; Wigfield et al., 2004; Guthrie et al., 2004) reports that students may possess both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational goals simultaneously to satisfy their own interests and school requirements; in this respect, all facets of motivation are activating but within an individual, some aspects of motivation are stronger than others. In L1 settings, the degree of intrinsic reading motivation strongly predicts reading comprehension abilities and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation also strongly predicts amount of enjoyment in reading (Anderson et al., 1988; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1991, 1997; Guthrie et al., 1999). Previous L1 research also found a positive relationship between motivation and reading achievement (Gottfried, 1985; Baker & Wigfield, 1999). Furthermore, L1 research suggests that reading motivation predicts children's amount of reading (Cox & Guthrie, 2001; Wang & Guthrie, 2000; Wigfield & Guthrie 1997) which, in turn, predicts text comprehension ability (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Elley 1992; Guthrie et al., 1999). Wigfield & Guthrie (1997) reported that children with higher intrinsic and extrinsic motivation increased more in amount of reading than students with lower intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Although these findings are from L1 reading contexts, no research has been undertaken so far in L2 contexts

regarding L2 text comprehension, amount of L1 and L2 reading and extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. English is taught and learnt as a foreign language in Japan and Sri Lanka and the findings of this study may vary according to different socio-cultural contexts in these two countries. Therefore, the present study examined to what extent the relationship among different motivational constructs between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in L2 reading behavior varied for Japanese and Sri Lankan university students related to their motivation, amount of L1 and L2 reading and L2 text comprehension.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The Sri Lankan sample included 123 Sri Lankan L2 students representing four universities in Sri Lanka, of whom 83 (67 %) were females and 40 (33%) were males. They were studying in the fields of arts and sciences with their ages ranging from 20-24. On the other hand, the Japanese sample consisted of 124 university undergraduates including 70 male (56%) and 54 female (44%) students studying in arts and sciences. Their ages ranged from 18- 23.

3. Instruments:

Three instruments were used in this study: a motivation for reading questionnaire (MRQ) and a background questionnaire, both translated into Sinhalese and Japanese, and a reading comprehension test. Students' motivation for reading was assessed by the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ). The eight-part structured motivation questionnaire with 47 motivational items (see the Appendix) was adapted from Wang and Guthrie's (2004) original MRQ with 45 items: curiosity (9 items), involvement (8 items), preference for challenge (4 items), recognition (6 items), grades (4 items), social reading (6 items), competition (6 items), and compliance (4 items). These eight scales cover the constituents of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation discussed above.

On the basis of Wang & Guthrie's measure, participants indicated, on a 5-point Likert scale from '*just like me*' to '*not like me*', the extent to which they could agree with the questionnaire items. To examine the amount of reading in both L1 and L2, students were asked how much time they allocated per a week in reading different kinds of materials such as fiction, lecture notes, reference materials, classroom reading, newspapers, magazines, journals, classics, and the internet. Also, spaces were given for the participants to write what other materials they read which were not mentioned in the questionnaire.

4. Data Analysis Procedure

Both the MRQ and the background questionnaire were administered after the students completed the 30 minutes reading comprehension test. Both groups were given the same procedure conducted during the regular class time in the respective universities.

The relationship between motivational constructs and other variables such as reading performance and amount of reading was investigated using SPSS Version 13.0 and Pearson Correlation Analysis. Regarding the internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire items, Cronbach's alpha was .95.

Principal Component Analysis (CPA) was used in order to examine the interrelationship among items in the MRQ in which eight scales explained above were attributed to components of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (See the Appendix). Originally there were 51 questionnaire items in the modified MRQ, but since four items were

loaded less than .40, indicating low correlations with the motivational variables, they were eliminated from the questionnaire. All other 47 items loaded at more than .42 and therefore, retained for the analysis. After Varimax rotation, an eight factor solution was chosen which accounted for 64.17% of the total variance in reading motivation.

5. Results

Table 1 presents correlations between measured variables while the mean scores and standard deviation are shown in Table 2. L2 text comprehension was positively correlated with the amount of reading in L2 ($r = .26, p < .01$) and negatively correlated with the amount of reading in L1 ($r = -.18, p < .05$) for Sri Lankan students. However, the amount of reading in both L1 and L2 was not correlated with text comprehension for Japanese students. The amount of reading was positively correlated with curiosity ($r = .31, p < .01$), involvement ($r = .32, p < .01$), recognition ($r = .28, p < .01$) and competition ($r = .22, p < .05$) for Sri Lankan students while for the Japanese students, the amount of reading in L2 was correlated positively with curiosity ($r = .31, p < .01$), involvement ($r = .23, p < .05$), preference for challenge ($r = .44, p < .01$), recognition ($r = .36, p < .01$), social reading ($r = .29, p < .01$), compliance ($r = .18, p < .05$). However, the amount of reading in L2 was not correlated with preference for challenge, grades, social reading and compliance for Sri Lankan students and grades and competition for Japanese students. While the amount of reading in L1 was not correlated with any of the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational constituents for Sri Lankan students, it was strongly correlated positively with the amount of reading in L2 ($r = .52, p < .01$), curiosity ($r = .45, p < .01$), involvement ($r = .39, p < .01$), preference for challenge ($r = .51, p < .01$), recognition ($r = .50, p < .01$), social reading ($r = .26, p < .01$) and compliance ($r = .33, p < .01$) for Japanese students. However, the amount of reading in L1 was not correlated with grades and competition for Japanese students. Moreover, L2 text comprehension was strongly correlated with curiosity ($r = .79, p < .01$),

Table 1: Intercorrelations Among Motivational Variables for Sri Lankan and Japanese Students

Variables	Intrinsic Motivational Variables					Extrinsic Motivational Variables					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Amount of Reading in L1	-----	.523(**)	.449(**)	.391(**)	.510(**)	.495(**)	.122	.260(**)	.334(**)	.132	.096
2. Amount of Reading in L2	.237(**)	----	.312(**)	.229(*)	.437(**)	.359(**)	.107	.294(**)	.176	.181(*)	.129
3. Curiosity	-.054	.311(**)	----	.802(**)	.742(**)	.943(**)	.416(**)	.477(**)	.625(**)	.475(**)	.224(*)
4. Involvement	-.044	.321(**)	.857(**)	----	.669(**)	.900(**)	.402(**)	.457(**)	.723(**)	.496(**)	.103
5. Preference for Challenge	-.016	.161	.642(**)	.689(**)	----	.880(**)	.282(**)	.406(**)	.582(**)	.404(**)	.179(*)
6. Recognition	-.04	.283(**)	.908(**)	.926(**)	.880(**)	----	.406(**)	.492(**)	.704(**)	.504(**)	.190(*)
7. Grades	-.017	.119	.290(**)	.359(**)	.262(**)	.332(**)	----	.553(**)	.499(**)	.732(**)	.187(*)
8. Social Reading	.02	.079	.114	.222(*)	.173	.187(*)	.550(**)	----	.450(**)	.584(**)	.071
9. Competition	.009	.223(*)	.708(**)	.750(**)	.592(**)	.749(**)	.454(**)	.426(**)	----	.629(**)	.17
10. Compliance	.008	.094	.273(**)	.348(**)	.302(**)	.340(**)	.498(**)	.471(**)	.449(**)	----	.172
11. Text Comprehension	-.182(*)	.257(**)	.786(**)	.769(**)	.602(**)	.787(**)	.281(**)	.15	.658(**)	.229(*)	----

Note: Correlations for Sri Lankan university students are shown in the lower left section while the upper right section shows correlations for Japanese university students.

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

involvement ($r = .77, p < .01$), preference for challenge ($r = .60, p < .01$), recognition ($r = .79, p < .01$), grades ($r = .28, p < .01$), competition ($r = .66, p < .01$), and compliance ($r = .23, p < .05$), except social reading for Sri Lankan students while for Japanese students, L2 text comprehension was weakly correlated with curiosity ($r = .22, p < .05$), preference for challenge ($r = .18, p < .05$), recognition ($r = .19, p < .05$), and grades ($r = .19, p < .05$). However, it was not correlated with involvement, social reading, competition and compliance for Japanese students.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for all variables for Sri Lankan and Japanese University Students

Variables	Sri Lanka		Japan	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Amount of Reading in L1 (hours in a week)	30.43	22.72	5.60	6.02
Amount of Reading in L2 (hours in a week)	15.01	13.24	2.26	3.21
Curiosity	2.70	0.76	2.29	0.88
Involvement	2.75	0.74	2.15	0.69
Preference for Challenge	2.79	0.94	1.83	0.72
Recognition	3.57	0.73	2.09	0.69
Grades	3.63	0.84	3.02	1.06
Social Reading	2.82	1.02	2.46	0.85
Competition	3.29	0.85	1.79	0.88
Compliance	3.12	1.00	2.45	0.96
Text Comprehension	8.00	3.29	9.55	2.77
Intrinsic Motivation	2.75	0.73	2.09	0.69
Extrinsic Motivation	3.29	0.83	2.49	0.69

Table 2 shows the mean scores of motivational constructs for both Sri Lankan and Japanese students. According to the results, significant differences were observed regarding both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational constructs. Both Sri Lankan and Japanese university students are more motivated extrinsically than intrinsically in L2 reading. However, Sri Lankan students as a whole are more motivated both extrinsically and intrinsically in L2 reading than Japanese students.

6. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine to what extent the relationship among different motivational constructs between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in L2 reading behavior varies for Japanese and Sri Lankan students in terms of their reading motivation, amount of L1 and L2 reading and L2 text comprehension. The results support the claim that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation has different relationships with text comprehension. The study found that amount of reading in both L1 and L2 was positively correlated with both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for both Sri Lankan and Japanese students.

Intrinsic motivation in this study was represented by three components: curiosity, involvement, and preference for challenge. Results suggest that these motivational constructs are likely to empower Sri Lankan students' cognitive engagement in understanding texts more strongly than that of Japanese students. It is interesting to find that the amount of reading in L2 predicted text comprehension for Sri Lankan students. This result was consistent with previous findings in L1 research (Anderson et al., 1988; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1991, 1997; Guthrie et al., 1999). It suggests that the common link between the amount of reading and text comprehension is intrinsic

motivation as suggested by Wang and Guthrie (2004). In other words, students who had less intrinsic motivation spent less time reading and were less likely to be successful in text comprehension. This explanation needs to be further validated in further research. On the other hand, the amount of reading in L2 did not predict text comprehension for Japanese students. This result was similar to the findings of Wang and Guthrie (2004) in L2 reading context. Moreover, the results showed that the amount of reading in L2 predicted neither grades nor competition for Japanese students and their means scores for L2 text comprehension were higher than those of Sri Lankan students. It suggests that though Japanese students do not read L2 texts for personal enjoyment or fun, they may use test-taking strategies to get good scores in the reading comprehension tests. In Japanese high schools, English lessons are targeted at university entrance examinations which are highly competitive, and students are trained to use test-taking strategies to answer the comprehension questions correctly. However, this explanation also needs to be further researched for validation. The study also found that the amount of reading in L1 had no significant effect on both intrinsic and extrinsic L2 reading motivation for Sri Lankan students; in contrast, for Japanese students the amount of reading in L1 strongly predicts their intrinsic motivation in L2 reading, and weakly predicted extrinsic motivation. It suggests that in Japanese contexts, reading in their mother tongue contributes to improve intrinsic motivation to read in L2.

This study indicated that extrinsic motivational constituents (recognition, grades, social reading, competition, and compliance) were counterproductive to the process of text comprehension for Japanese students to a lesser extent and to a larger extent for the Sri Lankan group. The Sri Lankan group expressed their interest in obtaining both good grades and recognition, competing with others and reading for an external goal. On the other hand, Japanese students showed their interest in achieving good grades and reading for an external goal. For both groups, the amount of reading in L2 did not predict grades. Both groups are extrinsically motivated and highly oriented to reading for external rewards such as getting a good grade or to meet parents' expectations or pleasing teachers. Wang & Guthrie (2004) show that children who rely on external rewards and social aspects of reading activities are most likely to score lower in tasks of text comprehension. Results of this study also show that competition and preference for challenge are least valued by Japanese students while the opposite is the case for Sri Lankan students. This may be adduced to cultural factors: in Sri Lanka, education is very competitive and there is a grading system throughout the school system and even the university system. In such a context, students have the biggest challenge to face the competition and obtain better grades in order to pursue their education and avoid retaining in the same grade or dropping out; but in Japan, competition is less encouraged in the classroom and therefore, they may not prefer challenge. It is interesting to find that both Japanese and Sri Lankan students may desire to be identified as competent readers.

The results of this study showed that intrinsic motivation was highly correlated with extrinsic motivation in both cultural groups. It seems that students in both groups are motivated to read for multiple reasons. They may read for their personal enjoyment and for external demands and rewards; they may read because they are interested in reading and want to acquire reading skills. They may read to obtain better grades in the examinations or enjoy sharing their reading with colleagues and family members. These intrinsic and extrinsic reasons may be connected as aspects of students' motivation for reading. Guthrie et al. (1999) showed that the combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation explained a larger proportion of variance in children's amount of reading in L1 than either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation alone. The results of this study support the view that L2 students' reading is influenced by the integration of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

7. Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study found that Sri Lankan and Japanese university students are motivated to read in L2 more extrinsically than intrinsically. Therefore, the findings of the study suggest some pedagogical implications for the classroom in order to improve students' L2 reading behavior intrinsically. Grabe (2007) suggests that teachers have a major role to play in student motivation for reading and students need effective motivational support from teachers and curriculum itself. It is a common fact that motivating students to read in their L2 is a serious dilemma and this rests with their attitudes toward reading. Therefore, the first implication is that the teachers could work with students to determine what motivates them and how to cultivate better attitudes since choice is motivating because it affords student control. Secondly, teachers could create many classroom opportunities for all types of reading in the class and out: in the classroom context, there should be free reading time, reading lab periods, or library reading and time for reading extended texts; teachers could integrate a range of instructional activities into L2 reading lessons to promote fluency and automaticity. The most common ways are through timed and paced reading activities, extensive reading, and word-recognition exercises of various types, read aloud in groups or pairs and a range of rereading activities. For this we need to have extended interesting and attractive reading materials suitable according to the level of the students. Also students should be provided an abundance of highly interesting texts which are personally significant and easy to comprehend. One of the major implications is to develop students' vocabulary: teachers can focus on the most common words as an essential foundation for word recognition automaticity and focus on vocabulary that is appropriate to specific topics and field of study. Another major implication is to help the students to become strategic readers; this requires a lot of practice over an extended period of time and a lot of exposure to reading. In this context, students are asked to transfer their L1 strategies to L2 reading; also, teachers can integrate strategy use and discussion about strategy use into every lesson. Furthermore, students' intrinsic motivation for reading and learning is closely connected to their feeling of social support in the classroom. When students have a caring teacher and a sense of belonging in the classroom, they are likely to be motivated for reading. Also teacher's knowledge of individual students, caring about their progress and pedagogical understanding how to foster active participation is more important. Providing praise and rewards for students' reading performance which makes students feel a sense of accomplishment and pride in their work is also essential.

This study unfolds a number of limitations and opens some avenues for further research. This study may be the first research done on L2 reading motivation based on Wang and Guthrie's intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivational model. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the generalizability of the findings to other types of language students and to replicate this study to determine the applicability of the theory to other contexts too. Also the selected sample Japanese subjects were taken only from one university. Therefore, a larger sample representing equal number of males and females and from other universities should be investigated. This study was carried out to investigate the relationship among different motivational constructs between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in L2 reading behavior for Japanese and Sri Lankan university students as a whole. However, the students in different text comprehension abilities may have different motivational attributes in L2 reading related to their motivation, amount of L1 and L2 reading and L2 text comprehension. Therefore, a larger sample in different text comprehension levels should be investigated in future research.

The results of the present study demonstrate that foreign language reading motivation is multidimensional and that it resembles the general motivational constructs proposed by L1 motivational theorists. Moreover, the results of the analysis suggest that motivation in L2 reading can be validly assessed using the intrinsic-extrinsic reading motivational model proposed by Wang & Guthrie (2004).

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Appendix

Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ)

Curiosity

1. I like to read in English because I always feel happy when I read things that are of interest to me.
2. If the teacher discusses something interesting I might read more about it in English.
3. I have favorite subjects that I like to read about in English.
4. I read in English about my hobbies to learn more about them.
5. I like to read in English about new things.
6. I enjoy reading English books about people in different countries.
7. I have an English book nearby and read it whenever time permits.
8. I read in English to learn new information about topics that interest me.
9. If I find a label, a booklet, an advertisement in English, I read them to improve my English language.

Involvement

10. I read English fiction.
11. I make pictures in my mind when I read in English.
12. I feel like I made friends with people in good English books.
13. I read English newspapers.
14. If there are reference materials in English on my specialized field, I read all those materials.
15. I read stories about fantasy and make believe.
16. If I am reading about an interesting topic in English, I sometimes lose track of time.
17. I read classical books, materials, journals etc in English.

Preference for Challenge

18. I like hard, challenging books in English.
19. I usually learn difficult things by reading in English.
20. If the English material is interesting, I can read difficult material.
21. I like it when the questions in English books make me think.

Recognition

22. I like having the teacher say I read well in English.
23. I like having my friends sometimes tell me I am a good English reader.
24. I like to get compliments for my reading in English.
25. I am happy when someone recognizes my reading in English.
26. I like having my parents often tell me what a good job I am doing in reading in English.

27. I like to be rewarded for the knowledge gained through my reading in English.

Grades

28. Grades are a good way to see how well I am doing in English reading.

29. I like to read English to improve my grades.

30. I look forward to finding out my reading grade.

31. I like my parents to ask me about my reading grade.

Social Reading

32. I like to visit the library often to read English books or borrow English books.

33. I like to talk to my friends about what I am reading in English.

34. I like to tell my family about what I am reading in English.

35. I often like to help my younger brother or sister in English reading.

36. My friends and I like to trade things to read in English.

37. I often like to read in English to my friends.

Competition

38. I try to get more answers right than my friends.

39. I like being the best at English reading.

40. I like to finish my English reading before other students.

41. I like being the only one who knows an answer in something we read in English.

42. It is important for me to see my name on a list of good English readers.

43. I am willing to work hard to read in English better than my friends.

Compliance

44. I always do my English reading work exactly as the teacher wants it.

45. I always try to finish my English reading on time.

46. I like to read English story books with many pictures.

47. Finishing every reading assignment is very important to me.