

Reading innovation may help young readers

November 5 2013

School students may be the next group of readers to benefit from the latest innovation in reading –sound tracks incorporated into e-books.

A research project is underway by the University of Auckland, to assess the impact of Booktrack with a large group of year 7-10 students recruited from several Auckland schools.

BookTrack is a new and engaging way to read by matching synchronised music, sound effects and ambient sound to the [text](#) of e-books. The technology automatically paces reading speed to the reading experience of the person.

The research is led by Dave Hithersay, head of Biology at Mt Roskill Grammar School and aims to investigate whether sound effects and music linked to a history text developed by Nick Hamilton, (the head of History at Mcleans College), enhances students' comprehension and engagement in reading.

The project is being co-ordinated by the University's School of Nursing with the research supervised by Professor Stuart McNaughton from the Faculty of Education. A group of 260 children are taking part in the six-month randomised controlled trial.

The Booktrack app is expected to increase engagement in reading, comprehension, enjoyment and information retention for [school](#) students and can be adapted to operate with school texts, and played on computers, mobile phones or tablets.

Researchers are also looking at testing the app on a smaller group of children with learning difficulties to see if it changes their experience and enhances their skills in reading. The trial involves [students](#) reading a history or other reading assessment text on a computer with or without the Booktrack sound track additions, depending on which group they are randomised to . They then answer multi-choice questions to test recall, memory and enjoyment.

The Booktrack app was developed by North Shore brothers, Paul and Mark Cameron, and is expected to spearhead the next revolution in reading. The app can enrich a reader's experience by providing synchronised background music and sound effects that carefully match the text.

State of the art software created in Auckland automatically adjusts pacing of the audio with the reader's reading speed.

Booktrack has already been marketed in the USA and recently won a 'Most Innovative Company' accolade from Times magazine and was received enthusiastically by both authors and people wanting to create audio tracks.

Provided by University of Auckland

Citation: Reading innovation may help young readers (2013, November 5) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-11-young-readers.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.