Supporting Life with Reading: 9 Patterns from A Pattern Language for Creative Reading

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In this paper, we present 9 patterns for "Tips for Reading" from A Pattern Language for Creative Reading, created for people to discuss about their own experiences of reading books and share their reading habits with others. The 9 patterns introduced in this paper were extracted from the experiences of 30 people who enjoy reading books, focusing on their reading process. They do not only solve the problems which are likely to occur when inexperienced people attempt to read books, but also show various ways of reading and using books. Therefore, they work as a trigger for people who do not regularly read books to jump into the world of literature, and also let people who are used to reading books think about their ways of reading and discover new ones as well. Since each pattern is expressed in a single vocabulary, the set of patterns together work as a common language. We expect this paper to provide readers with a view to using these patterns effectively in their practice of reading books.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In any age, book-lovers exist; however, others do not like to read books. People who do not read books tend to stay away from reading because they believe it to be a burdensome task. Reasons such as the "lack of patience to read a book word by word", or "not having time for reading" are some leading factors that keep people from picking up a book. However, such assumptions are often made simply because they do not know the effective, fun ways of reading. Once people are exposed to the ways in which book-lovers approach the reading process, they too may be able to better their relationship with reading. The difficulty here, however, is as explained below by Seigo Matsuoka, a renowned Japanese editor:

"The most difficult thing is that the process of reading is hard to peek at from outside. It can be described as Marcel Duchamp says, "I can see what people are watching but I can not hear what people are hearing," "I know what people are reading but I do not know how people read it."" (Matsuoka, 2009, p. 8)

As stated above, it is difficult for people to understand the practices of people who are able to enjoy reading. If people can easily share their different reading styles, it would not only allow people who usually don't read to learn how to read, but would also give book-lovers a chance to gain new ideas about ways of enjoying reading.

The pattern language method is a way in which peoples' processes of reading can be made explicit, we decided to use the methodology to put it into words. In this paper, we introduce the 9 patterns for "Tips for Reading" in detail, which are also positioned as the first category in A Pattern Language for Creative Reading (Iba et al., 2018).

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2. A PATTERN LANGUAGE FOR CREATIVE READING

In this paper, we introduce 9 patterns for "Tips for Reading". These 9 patterns were created with the intention of helping beginners, and contain some basic hints that help improve the reading process. The aim is that by using these patterns, those who do not usually enjoy reading, or those who are inexperienced with reading will feel more enthusiasm and confidence to pick up a book.

Fig.1. The list of 27 Patterns for Creative Reading

The Pattern Language for Creative Reading has two other categories, that each also consists of 9 patterns. The second category, "Ways to Enjoy Reading," contains patterns that encourages people to have fun with reading books in their daily lives, to deal with one of the key issues that keep people away from reading; lack of time. In the third category, "Ideas for Creative Reading," creative ways of reading books, which are strongly recommended for people in the coming Creative Society, are described. These patterns help people to utilize books as not only information media, but also creative media, which helps enhance their own creative activities.

The 27 patterns for Creative Reading were created using the Iba Laboratory's pattern language methodology (Iba, 2016; Iba & Isaku, 2016). The extracted patterns were found from interviews with around 30 people (selected with no relation to how frequently they read), where we asked interviewees about the ways in which they enjoy reading, as well as any unique reading habits they have.
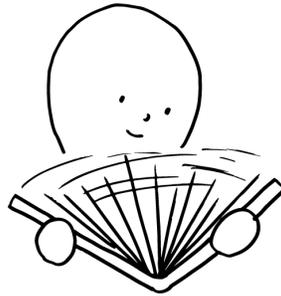
3. 9 PATTERNS FOR "TIPS FOR READING"

In this section, we present the 9 patterns for "Tips for Reading": ROUGH READING, NOTES ON PAGES, FREESTYLE READING, BOOK THE DATE, MEANING OF READING, READING PARTNERS, LINKS WITHIN BOOKS, SAME DEEP FEELING, and PERSONAL BOOKSHELF. These patterns are for people who do not like to read books to carry out better practices of reading. This set of patterns can be categorized as a pattern language for human actions, I.e. "Pattern Language 3.0" (Iba, 2011a; Iba, 2012b). Each pattern is written in short sentences that summarizes the Context, Problem and Solution, and has its own name. It can therefore be recognized and function as a vocabulary when communicating with others.

Rough Reading

Read on without focusing on the details.

You are trying to start reading a book.

▼In this context

If you try to read completely from the beginning to the end, you may get tired partway through; or you may not even be able to begin reading because you lack the confidence that you can finish it.

Forces:

- You think you must read a book from the beginning to the end completely.
- Reading the entire book takes a lot of time.
- Your motivation does not continue till the last page.

▼Therefore

Pick up phrases / sections that seem important as you read, grasping the overall flow of the book. Focus on the parts, which you feel, is important instead of getting caught up in the detail. You can reread the important parts later on, so focus on the parts that you think are important without worrying about the details.

For example:
- First of all, you flip through the book while focusing on section titles or bold words and choose where you read more.
- Read the table of contents, and grasp the keywords of the book.
- Before you read the contents of the book, you get tips from the afterword.

▼Consequently

You will be able to understand the overall content of the book even without stressing over detail.

Notes on Pages

Books are your notebook to write down your thoughts.

When reading, you may encounter new exciting ideas.

▼In this context

As such findings are often instantaneous, you may not get a chance to deepen those thoughts, or even forget them as time passes.

Forces:
- You cannot remember everything what you thought while reading.
- You cannot organize your thoughts.
- You can't sink into your thoughts and concentrate on reading at the same time.

▼Therefore

Make habit to have a pen any time you read and note your thought.

For example:
- Underline the sentences where you feel are important.
- Write summaries of what you read or your thoughts on the blank pages.
- Draw a diagram of your thoughts in the margins.

▼Consequently

By leaving a trace of your thoughts in the book, you will be able to organize and deepen your thoughts as you read. Furthermore, it will make it easier for you to quickly find important sections when you read the book again.

Freestyle Reading

Everyone has different reading styles.

You are sitting down and reading a book quietly.

▼In this context

There may be times when get tired or sleepy, inhibiting you from focusing on your reading.

Forces:
- You think you cannot read books without sitting quietly.
- Reading while sitting for a long time makes you tired.
- Reading styles in which one can concentrate varies between people and situations.

▼Therefore

By changing your posture or the environment in which you read, find for yourself a comfortable reading style.

For example:
- Instead of sitting still in a chair, try to read books standing up or lying down.
- Read books with background music which makes you more comfortable.
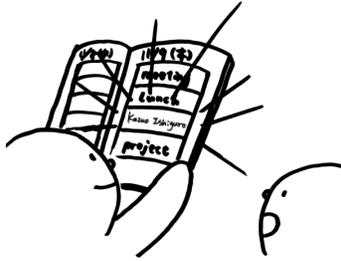- Read at your favorite places such as a habitual café and a bar.

▼Consequently

By gaining various reading styles, you will find more opportunities in your life to enjoy reading.

Book the Date

Make time to read and face books on the time.

You think about the time when you read books.

▼In this context

Even if you have a book that you want to read, other plans may get in the way.

Forces:
- You think you can read books at any time.
- Because of the busy schedule, the priority of reading decreases.
- When time passes, you may forget a feeling to want to read the book at that time.

▼Therefore

Build time to read into your schedule and write it in your planner.

For example:
- Write the name of author of the book on your calendar as if you have a date with your friends.
- As if you have a plan to visit to somewhere, write the book title on your planner.
- You read a book every week at a set hour like a school.

▼Consequently

By perceiving reading as one of your plans equal to other things you need to do, you can make time to read.

Meaning of Reading

Reading is shaping yourself.

You have a lot of things to do.

▼In this context

In a busy life where you are constantly facing task after task, reading can become something of low priority.

Forces:
- It is difficult to make a change after reading books.
- If you continue to neglect reading, you may lose a chance to learn and grow by yourself in the long run.
- Books build the foundation of generating new ideas.

▼Therefore

Secure time for reading with the mindset that it is an essential part of your personal growth.
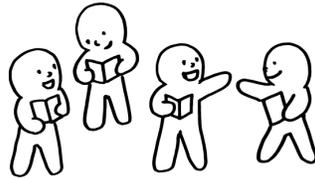
For example:
- Clarify the value of the book for you.
- Not read books at random but select valuable books for you and read them.
- Invest in your learning of books from a long-term perspective.

▼Consequently

You are able to identify for yourself how reading contributes to your long-term growth, and will naturally be able to make time for reading even amidst a busy schedule.

Reading Partners

Tackle the same book with everyone.

You want to cherish the time you read.

▼In this context

There are times when you cannot help but to prioritize other plans: especially if the book you are trying to read is challenging one, you may get frustrated and give up on it before you can gain any significant understanding.

Forces:
- You think reading is a work to tackle alone.
- It takes time to try to understand everything by yourself
- In a limited period of time, you cannot read everything what you want to read

▼Therefore

Search for people who are interested in similar topics as you, and make opportunities to read/discuss the book together.
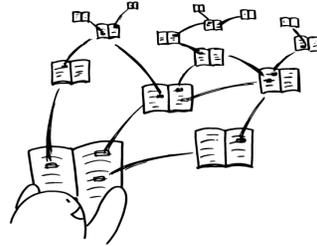
For example:
- Divide in chapters and assign each chapters for each person.
- Make a party to read together or post reading events where people who have same interest with you.
- Gather with people who read different books and share what they get from the books.

▼Consequently

By having other people to read/discuss the book with, it will be easier to establish and stick to a timeline to finish the book. Furthermore, having people to discuss with, allows you to understand the book through multiple angles, helping to deepen your understanding and clarify any points that you find difficult to understand.

Links Within Books

Find the next book to read from the book.

You are searching for the next book to read.

▼In this context

Amidst the vast number of books available to read, it can be difficult to find ones that will resonate with you.

Forces:
- Even in genres you are interested in, it is sometimes difficult to select the next book to read.
- When trying to read books in a filed which is unfamiliar to you, you need guidance where to start.
- You have no one who can recommend you the appropriate books for you.

▼Therefore

Search for works/authors referenced in or related to books that you have enjoyed in the past. In other words, looks for the "links within books".
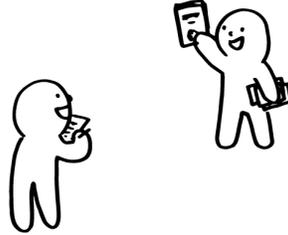
For example:
- Tackle all the books written by your author's favorite who you favorite.
- Pay attention to people who appeared on the book you read and find his books.
- Read the books which inspired to your author favorite.

▼Consequently

Through using information referenced in books that you enjoy, you will be able to discover works that are relevant to your interest and/or expand your interests.

Same Deep Feeling

Find people who have a similar sense of what is "interesting."

Looking for the next book to read.

▼In this context

It can be difficult to find one that suits your taste.

Forces:
- Popular books do not always suit you.
- Your favorite authors do not always write your favorite books.
- The number of pages does not necessarily represent the value of the book, because sometimes thick books do not explain things in detail.

▼Therefore

Find a person whose "wavelength" is similar to yours, and get book recommendations from them.

For example:
- Ask your family about the books they like.
- Choose books introduced by people you respect.
- Read popular books which have fans in your generations.

▼Consequently

This will make it easier to come across books that you can enjoy, and will allow you to encounter those you wouldn't have found on your own. Even if the topic of the book is something outside of your usual interest, you will most likely enjoy it if you and the person who recommended it share a similar deep feeling.

Personal Bookshelf

A place where you can always meet books.

You find a book that catches your interest.

▼In this context

You may purchase a book because you feel that you will not read it right away, and end up forgetting about it over time, or not be able to find it when you want it again.

Forces:
- As new books are on sale, old books will disappear from bookshops.
- If you forget the title or author of the book, you will not be able to search it.
- The motivation to read the book goes down, if it cannot be easily found.

▼Therefore

Try to purchase a book at the moment it catches your interest, and have it stashed in your bookshelf for later.

For example:
- If you have some books you want to read soon, put them on your bookshelf where you find them easily.
- Even if you think it is too early to read certain books, buy them and put them in your bookshelf so you can read them anytime.
- Make a corner named "want to read".

▼Consequently

Your bookshelf is not only a place to store books, which you have already read. It is also a place to keep books that you may read at some point in the future. By having such books stored in your bookshelf, your bookshelf will begin to resemble your interests in the past, present, and future.

4. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we presented the patterns for "Tips for Reading." The pattern language was created based on the belief that more people will be enticed to read once they are exposed to the ways in which book enthusiasts approach reading. However, simply creating the pattern language is not enough to actually influence people to read; we must also make efforts to deliver the patterns to our target user. However, such target users (I.e. people who do not enjoy reading), may find the patterns to be a burdensome reading material itself.

Therefore, we chose to present the patterns in the form of cards (Figure 2), so that they are easy to read/use. The card format allows for the patterns to be incorporated into daily life scenes; for instance, displayed around one's room as decoration, or used as a bookmark (Figure 3). By embedding the patterns into a tangible form, there will be more opportunity for the users to see and be reminded of the patterns, leading to a higher possibility that the patterns are executed (Iba et al., 2018).

This pattern language project is not at its end; we will actively continue making opportunities to open up the patterns to more people at workshops and so on, to promote its usage (Figure 2). In addition to the workshops we have already held, in which the patterns were used (Iba et al., 2018), we plan to continue to search further ways of utilizing the patterns to engage more people in the discussion of new ways of reading.

fig.2. Cards of Life with Reading Patterns

fig.3. Bookmarks of Life with Reading Patterns

Gabriel, Joseph Yoder, Mary Lynn Manns, Christian Kohls, Christian Köppe, Wolfgang Stark, Matt Griscom, Paul Salvador Inventado and other participants.

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