

**AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' USE OF  
STRATEGIES IN READING ENGLISH IN CHINA**

**Thesis submitted for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**at the University of Leicester**

**By**

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Wang Shuqin and Xu Shonglin, my mother-in-law, Zou Dui-Jiao and my husband, Joseph Arazi – my most loving supporters.

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**ABSTRACT****AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
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STRATEGIES IN READING ENGLISH IN CHINA****Sue Jinfeng Arazi**

China, recognising the importance of English literacy, has made English language teaching a major imperative in universities. Reading is the major aspect within the National College English Teaching Syllabus, but despite its importance and the large number of students studying English, little is known about how Chinese teachers and students perceive their reading or which reading strategies are currently used effectively.

This research provides an exploratory investigation into the relationship between Chinese teachers' and students' perceptions of English reading strategies through statistical analysis of questionnaires and follow-up questionnaires given to 115 teachers and 201 students in China and 100 students in Britain and interviews with 5 teachers and 5 students. The questionnaires were designed by incorporating reading strategies mainly from Grellet (1981) and Nuttall (1982) into Oxford's SILL Model (1990).

The literature review and data analysis suggested the complexity of the subject and raised many questions regarding whether reading strategies are useful and, if so, how they may be learned. The research was therefore extended to answer these questions by investigating the related learning process. Teaching reading strategies in an interactive approach was suggested and illustrated in a materials workshop to offer insights into the development of more dynamic language classes and a Spiral Model of Reading was developed to provide a representation of the learning process.

The main results suggest: a significant difference between teachers' and students' perceived strategy use; the importance of teachers' qualifications and training in teaching behaviour; and the suggestion that students' use of strategies, learning attitude and motivation are strongly correlated with their performance. Models were derived to represent the relationships, degrees and directions of factors that influence the use of strategies and the Spiral Model of Reading combines strategies with reading levels to show how knowledge is acquired within the learning process and how the act of linking facilitates reading. Yet, many questions still remain unanswered and suggestions for future research are made.

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**PART I – INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW**

Part I sets the scene for the research study. It discusses the importance of English in China, reviews current research and theories in the field of applied linguistics to determine reading strategies that most apply to learning English reading in Chinese universities and consolidates these into a theoretical model.

**Chapter 1**

*Introduction*  
*Research Aims and Objectives*  
*Plan of Study*

**Chapter 2**

*Literature Review on*  
*Teaching*  
*Learning*  
*Reading*

**Chapter 3**

*Review of models*  
*Formulation*  
*of a*  
*theoretical Model*

## **Chapter One**

### **INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PLAN**

#### **1.0 Introduction to the Research**

This chapter provides the background and context to the research. The first part of the chapter outlines the main reasons for undertaking the research. It considers the importance of reading English in China and identifies the general aims of the research, providing a clear indication of the primary research objectives. The second part briefly reviews ELT (English Language Teaching) in China from a historical perspective to provide a better understanding and appreciation of present day ELT and establish the context for the present study.

#### **1.1 Basis for the Study and Research Plan**

Reading in English is generally considered very important in China and there are probably more readers of English as a foreign language in China than in any other country. However, not very much research has, to date, been conducted in this area.

This study focuses on investigating university teachers' and students' perceptions of English reading strategies, with the intention of getting to know their opinions, experiences, beliefs and, more particularly, their ability to use and apply strategies. It is believed that such information is an essential prerequisite, as part of a broader spectrum of ELT knowledge, for improving English reading instruction and teaching methodology in China. It can be used to help develop future ELT policies, including the design of appropriate teaching materials and the development of applicable teacher training courses.

As a secondary consideration, it is hoped that, the research will raise Chinese teachers' and students' awareness of reading strategies and of the benefits to be gained from their use and application. Indeed, the very process of conducting the research, through a questionnaire survey and other related activities, may already have helped to raise the awareness of reading

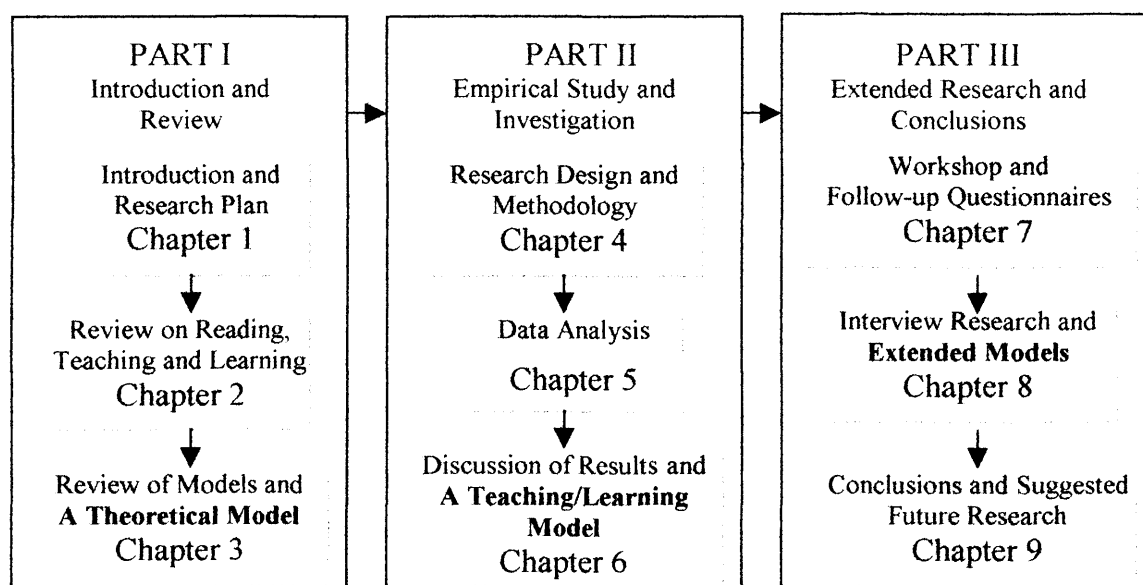


strategies among those who have had direct participation. Moreover, the research may be viewed as endeavouring to increase classroom teaching efficiency by enabling teachers and students to make the most efficient and effective use of their limited resources and time available.

A fundamental assumption is that students are not all the same. As individuals, they progress at different speeds and with different levels of attainment in the various aspects of language learning. It is generally accepted within educational circles that the conscious development of strategies and skills in learning are invaluable in enabling students achieve their goals, helping them to solve problems on their own when teachers are not available. Within the study, teaching and learning are viewed as reciprocal and complementary. The purpose of the research may, therefore, be summarised as providing an investigation into the effectiveness and applicability of both teaching and learning reading strategies in English in order to ascertain the most appropriate teaching and learning approach for Chinese ELT reading.

Before embarking on the research, however, it is imperative to outline the specific aims and objectives of the study and to determine how to achieve them through carefully controlled analytical research. A prerequisite is, therefore, a clear, precise and appropriate plan of study as given by Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Structure and plan of the thesis



## 1.2 Importance of English in China

The increasing importance of English in both trade and commerce has meant that English is now spoken throughout the world and has become, in many places, the dominant language in business and industry (Crystal, 1997). This is especially true for international business in which China, with its urgent need to increase foreign trade, has a particular interest.

The advent of new technology such as the use of computers, Internet, etc. has enabled people to communicate more readily and has advanced business methods. English is the main language for using new technology and in order to compete commercially within this fast changing and very competitive world, it is becoming essential to be able to communicate in English. China, like many other developing countries, has identified the importance of English and has made it a major subject within its educational curriculum. The tremendous rise experienced in the number of English teachers and learners (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996) makes this research particularly important and significant to China. By the 1990s, it was estimated that there were well over 57 million school and university students studying English (Zhu & Chen, 1991) and 150 million part time students learning the language (Dzau, 1990a). More conservative estimates suggest around 200 million users of English (Zhao & Campbell, 1995).

English in China covers many aspects of life and its importance is reviewed below from political, economic, technical and cultural viewpoints.

### *Politically*

China is a huge country, with a growing population, which currently exceeds 1,200 million people (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996), amounting to nearly a quarter of the total world population. As a result of its recent increase in international trade, China has developed diplomatic relations with over a hundred countries and is rapidly becoming an influential participant in the international political arena. One of the goals of the Chinese government is to make the country achieve a prominent position on the world's stage, which it considers appropriate to China's size and history. Currently, Chinese contacts with foreign countries are

predominantly in English and English is recognised and accepted by China as the most prevalent diplomatic language.

### *Economically*

Without a strong economy a country can never be truly powerful. The Chinese government, therefore, announced in the early 1980s that by the year 2000, China should achieve the ‘four modernisations’ (modernisation of agriculture, industry, national defence, science and technology) (Xu, 1985).

Agriculture is traditionally the main industry in China and has had to be modernised to increase production and combat natural disasters, which have, in the past, greatly affected production and caused intolerable hardship. It is recognised, however, that China cannot rely entirely on agriculture and that it needs to develop more industry within the country. Both the modernisation of its agriculture and the introduction of new industry require, by necessity, expertise. There is a saying in China that, ‘to learn from others is to perfect oneself’. The level of expertise required is, however, mainly found in the western world, where English is predominantly spoken.

Whether teaching and learning English on a wide scale can, in fact, be expected to assist economic development is debatable (Philippon, 1992), although it can, presumably, assist in international communication. However, official Chinese rhetoric since the 1980s has emphasised the importance of English in an economic context. Chinese authorities seem to accept this view, especially in relation to the prevailing Chinese ‘socialist market economy’ of the 1990s.

### *Technologically*

With the government’s aim to modernise industry, science and technology, compete commercially with developed countries and improve its national economic status, China has had to absorb advanced technology from developed countries and English has become a prerequisite for technology training. Training in technology is usually provided by, either, inviting western experts to China or by sending Chinese students to academic or commercial

institutions abroad. To achieve the level of English necessary to meet the growing need for technology in China, a good foundation of English reading needs to be established.

### *Culturally*

Xu (1985) points out that China's modernisation has experienced growth and adaptation. It became incorporated into a larger system of two cultures, a 'material culture' building on the four modernisations, and a culture of the 'socialist spirit', building on democracy, law, education, economic growth and so on. With the open-door policy of 1980s and the recent huge increase in English language learning, western culture is permeating Chinese society and many positive aspects are being absorbed such as the introduction of a more democratic outlook and changes in attitude and views relating to law and order. These developments have promoted an eagerness to read about western advances and have invoked a need to learn about western culture.

Because of the international nature of English, many U.K. experts and businessmen are attaining strong positions in developing countries, where western technology and expertise are needed. Whether foreign experts are used as partners in joint ventures or simply to provide specific expertise, there has been a very large influx and demand for western personnel by China. This has, in turn, provided the West with the potential to supply a great number of personnel, enabling these western suppliers to increase their invisible earnings. The promotion of English in China helps to promote U.K. business interests by placing English speaking countries in a preferential linguistic position. This has enabled the U.K. to establish new ventures in China where labour is viewed as being relatively inexpensive.

### 1.3 Reading and ELT in China Today

The importance of English has led to a large-scale resurgence of English learning and teaching in China. English is now taught in most primary schools, and is compulsory in middle and high schools and also at universities. Students spend at least ten years learning English: 3 years at junior middle school, 3 years at senior middle school and 4 years at university. Many western scholars and some Chinese scholars view Chinese students' reading

performance as generally unsatisfactory with regard to their speed of reading (Dzau, 1990c; Fan, 1991; Maley, 1983; Oatey, 1984; Scovel, 1983).

Studies of Chinese students' reading performance attribute students' 'flawed' methods of reading to the way they are taught to read (i.e., the intensive reading approach) (Fan, 1991). Little research, however, has been undertaken to explore the factors underlying Chinese approaches to teaching and learning to read (Hanci, 1995). This study attempts to redress this situation by investigating teaching and learning strategies in reading and provide possible solutions that can apply to ELT in China, which could, in future, enable Chinese students to master English reading more quickly and effectively. For detailed information about English language teaching in China, see Cortazzi and Jin (1996). For a better understanding of the factors underlying Chinese tradition and Chinese attitudes towards learning and reading, and Chinese students' tendency to a careful word-by-word analysis and memorisation of assigned texts, see Hanci (1995).

The increasing national concern to improve ELT in China and promote effective teaching to meet the new requirements prompted by the changing need of society is well recognised (Xu, 1985; Paine, 1992). In particular, however, it is important to determine what specific aspects should be taught and what effective methodologies should be used. Hao et al. (1990) advocate the urgent need for change in ELT methodologies in China. Zhao (1990) and Wang (1991) suggest developing Chinese theory and practice of English teaching by combining traditional methods with a communicative approach in order to guide teachers and, therefore, help students with their English studies. Many researchers suggest an *eclectic approach*, considering it to be the most appropriate method for teaching English in China (Sun, G. 1990; Sun, L. 1990; Li, 1993; Yang, 1997). Xue (1990), Wu (1992) and Su (1997) are among the few who discuss teaching reading at a discourse level.

Selecting the most appropriate approach, increasing the effectiveness and efficiency for ELT in China are, therefore, considered urgent issues. Xu (1992) suggests an integrated-skills approach, combining listening, reading and writing in a continuous and related sequence to develop such skills simultaneously.

Many English language courses are being introduced, and many foreign teachers and experts are being invited to work in China. English teachers are highly regarded. Yet many Chinese English teachers leave the profession because, in spite of recent imperatives, salaries are still low and working conditions remain poor (Paine, 1992; Cortazzi and Jin, 1996). It is, therefore, of paramount importance to attract more teachers by providing better teaching conditions.

Teaching reading is widely considered to be the most important aspect in ELT, enabling students to access knowledge and develop communication skills. This is re-emphasised in the National College English Teaching Syllabus set up by the State of Education of China (Section 1.6.4). From a student's viewpoint, more time is spent in class on English reading, often allied to grammar and vocabulary compared to other skills. Reading dominates English exams in schools and universities, providing the highest percentage mark (40%) in the Band Four Test (the national standard achievement test for students at the end of their first two years study of English at university).

A likely reason why reading is viewed as so important is that, although Chinese individuals may never have the opportunity to communicate directly with English speakers, they often come into contact with English texts in work and social environments. This thesis, therefore, investigates the social, linguistic and cognitive factors associated with English reading by determining and analysing Chinese university teachers' and students' perceptions of English reading strategies and their use of strategies in improving existing teaching methods and students' performance.

#### 1.4 Aims and Objectives

This research aims at making suggestions to improve classroom efficiency for teaching and learning English reading in China. The study relies on analysis of a questionnaire survey and supplementary analyses of follow-up questionnaires, a materials workshop and interviews. The specific aims and objectives are listed below.

## **Aims**

Before suggestions to achieve effective teaching and learning can be made, it is necessary to:

- a) Investigate Chinese teachers' and students' perceptions with regard to their use and application of reading strategies in English;
- b) Determine the current teaching methods being used and the patterns of teachers' and students' strategy use;
- c) Investigate the causes of any differences between the teachers and students perceived use of strategies;
- d) Establish whether students' performance relates to their claimed use of strategies;
- e) Ascertain how to improve teachers' and students' use of strategies, and students' performance.

## **Objectives**

Therefore, the objectives of the thesis are to:

- a) Set up research hypotheses to test questions related to the above and find answers or solutions;
- b) Derive a theoretical model based on a review of literature;
- c) Create a teaching/learning model from the research results, which describes the relationship between teaching and learning and the factors that influence the use of the strategies;
- d) Demonstrate a way of teaching English reading by using a materials workshop;
- e) Explore aspects and theories that can improve teaching, reading speed and comprehension;
- f) Provide final conclusions on the research and results obtained.

A general assumption is that within current Chinese classrooms, teaching is a more vital aspect than learning, since good learning practice is recognised only as a reflection of good teaching practice (Richards, K. 1994). The idea that the quality of teaching staff is of the utmost importance is also expressed by Yang (1997), quoting a Chinese proverb '*an accomplished disciple owes his accomplishments to his great teacher*'. This does not imply,

however, that students' learning attitudes, aptitude and degree of hard work do not also affect their performance.

This general assumption leads naturally to specific questions relating to teaching and learning, such as what are the factors that can affect teaching and learning behaviour? What are the relationships between students' use of strategies and their performance? Is there a correlation between learning attitude, motivation and performance? All these questions will be investigated in the study by reference to the research hypotheses given in Chapter 4.

### 1.5 Significance and Implications of the Study

The broad significance of the study stems from the potential benefits it provides to ELT in China and the fact that China probably has the largest single group of English language learners than any non-English speaking nation. Specifically, the study offers an insight into existing ELT in China, identifying strategies that participants believe influence successful reading. On this basis, it provides suggestions for future ELT development and it is intended that it will guide teachers and students in the use of teaching and learning strategies by suggesting an appropriate method to promote their use within ELT in China.

The proposed method should enable students to achieve greater communicative competence in reading English, both orally and verbally. It will help them to understand ideas and to acquire skills for analysing texts and applying reading strategies. As a result, students will be able to increase their knowledge base through linguistic discourse and enhance their social, cultural and political awareness.

### 1.6 General Review of ELT in China

This general review of ELT provides a macro perspective of its gradual development from traditional ways of language teaching to the present ever-changing Chinese ideologies about foreign language teaching and learning. The main focus for present day English teachers is to



train students in the skills not only of word-by-word reading and writing, but also expeditious reading, search reading and oral communication skills.

An outline of the historical development of ELT and how ELT contributes to the modernisation of the country is given below. This will provide a basis for understanding the traditional Chinese way of teaching/learning and an appreciation of the current context for researching the use of reading strategies in ELT.

#### 1.6.1 Historical periods of ELT development

ELT experienced different stages of historical development in China due to the political situation of the country and changing policies towards ELT. ELT was first introduced to China in the mid-1800s and early 1900s (Sui, 1992). At that time, the major features of English language activities were the teaching of the Bible, translating it into Chinese; editing some dictionaries; and translating some famous Chinese classical works into English. Reading and translating provided the major focus of ELT and to a certain extent this is still the case today.

In 1840, China's self-imposed closed-door policy was forced open by British gun-ships and China was turned into a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country. With many people arriving from the west, China needed interpreters and translators. Some intellectuals advocated the study and introduction of western technology in order to advance the country. As a result, the Capital Institute of Foreign Language was established. The students translated books and newspapers and took part in language related aspects of foreign affairs. Speaking started receiving some attention (ibid).

In the second period of ELT from 1903 to 1912, English was widely taught in colleges, schools and especially at universities that were mainly set up by western missionaries. English was even taught to children of the Royal family in the Forbidden City (ibid).

During the period of revolution (1911 to 1949), and the foundation of the People's Republic of China, a greater number of students were required to study English (ibid). English was even taught in some primary schools. Various textbooks were used, more English teaching methods were adopted and university departments were set up. Up to then, ELT had relied on grammar-translation methods. Students focused their attention on pronunciation, grammar and translation, or on the usage of the language rather than on its use (Widdowson, 1978).

By the fourth period (1949 to 1966) when the People's Republic of China was declared a socialist country, English was not given high priority because it was regarded as an imperialist language (Sui, 1992). Students preferred studying Russian and the teaching methods followed the Russian structuralist methodology.

However, from 1957-1965, due to a resurgence of trade and communication, English gradually regained priority over other foreign languages, but English language teaching remained mainly structuralist (ibid). Students with highly developed abilities for applying sentence structures could communicate in English to a certain level, but had difficulties in many situations.

The fifth period from 1966-1976 encompasses the 'Cultural Revolution'. During this period, there was serious disruption of education. The country was in chaos and the whole education system was in suspension. For much of this period, English teaching was at its lowest ebb.

In the sixth period from 1978 to the present (Xu, 1985), the government first re-established education and worked out a system for college and university enrolment. ELT now encompassed listening, speaking, reading and writing. Reading remained the major activity. New English teaching syllabuses were created for schools, many textbooks were published, and some foreign textbooks were introduced. Figure 1.2 summarises the six periods with their typical teaching approach(es).

Figure 1.2 Periods of development of ELT in China

1 <sup>st</sup> period	Mid 1800s to 1900s	Teaching of Bible and Translation	Grammar - Translation
2 <sup>nd</sup> period	1903 to 1912	English was taught in some schools, colleges and universities.	Grammar - Translation
3 <sup>rd</sup> period	1912 to 1949	English was taught even in primary school with various textbooks.	Grammar - Translation
4 <sup>th</sup> period	1949 to 1966 From 1957 to 1965	English lost its priority. Russian became popular. English regained its priority. English departments were set up.	Structuralism
5 <sup>th</sup> period	1966 to 1976	'Cultural Revolution' Education is at its lowest ebb	
6 <sup>th</sup> period	1978 to present	English became top priority. English teaching syllabuses are available with a variety of textbooks/Foreign textbooks. National Band Four test has been set up.	Grammar - Translation Audio-lingual Situational Communicative

Since 1978, tape-recorders have been used to help students practise listening and pronunciation. In the 1990s, language laboratories were established, so that large scale listening programmes could be provided. Students now have regular listening classes. Some have the opportunity to see films in foreign languages and more recently some video programmes and computer applications have been used to bring the language learning into real situations and make the classroom learning more vivid.

#### *Political aspect*

From the review of ELT development, it can be seen that the influence of politics has played a major role in English teaching. After 1972, following normal diplomatic relations with the United States and the U.K., English language teaching experienced a major resurgence. The influence of politics can also be seen in the changes of textbooks. In the 1800s, the Bible was the main textbook. After the Liberation in 1949, the small number of language textbooks used were full of socialist features and Mao Zedong's ideas and political slogans, such as 'the Three Red Flags' and 'A Big Leap Forward'.

Today, political and economic systems are changing. Many western ideas are being absorbed, some western English textbooks are being imported and new textbooks are being compiled to suit the needs of contemporary students. Some of these new books are jointly written by

British and Chinese authors and jointly published (e.g. 'Secondary English for China', published by Longman and the People's Education Press). The new textbooks are less influenced politically, but few teachers deviate from the textbooks, fearing political repercussions (Dzau, 1990b). If they were to introduce more western culture, they take the risk of being considered ideologically westernised, which is still not readily accepted. Due to the unstable political history of the country, teachers have remained conservative. Although they feel the need to increase students' knowledge of cultural aspects and they realise that culture is extremely important educationally, they find it very difficult to change. Few teachers feel free to bring into class reading materials, which differ from the approved textbooks.

### *Cultural aspect*

Within Chinese tradition, learning is considered very serious and even sacred. China, having been a feudal country for about two thousand years, has its own history and its own customs and methods of education. The system of education and attitudes towards learning were greatly influenced by the Confucian heritage (Hanci, 1995). Teachers dominated the class and students were mostly made to listen or read in chorus. This 'duck-stuffing' or 'cramming' methodology (Hao et al., 1990) was particularly prevalent in ELT. This was due to the typical Chinese conception that teachers are the symbol of knowledge (Paine, 1990), just as parents are the accepted symbol of power in a family. In class it is taken for granted that teachers should impart knowledge to students and Chinese classes tend to be teacher-centred (Cotton, 1990).

The different cultural orientations of China and the west generate their own distinct features. With regard to language teaching and learning, the culture inherent in England helps students learn the appropriate use of English. This is often considered more important to the native speaker than grammatical usage. If a grammatical mistake is made, a native speaker may forgive the learner so long as that person can be understood in context. But when learners make an improper use of the language, this might be regarded as rude, and may not be forgiven. So culture awareness tends to help reduce misunderstanding.

People of different cultures differ greatly in their behaviour, in social situations, in expressing ideas and in giving gifts (Zhang, J. 1990; Taylor and Chen, 1991; Gee, 1992). For instance, 'landlord' is a neutral word to English people, while it has a negative meaning to the Chinese. Obviously, there are completely different ways of expressing and interpreting things in different cultures.

As China has increasing contact with the west, aspects of western culture have merged into Chinese society and it is becoming increasingly important to promote co-operation and teach the differences in culture when teaching English (Jin and Cortazzi, 1993). Moreover, western teaching methods like pair/group work and games are merging into the Chinese academic culture (Li, 1991; Zhang, 1996). The more students know about the culture of the target country, the more at ease they feel when they are in contact with native speakers.

## 1.6.2 Traditional teaching methods

### 1.6.2.1 Teaching approaches

A major feature of ELT in China is that it is atomistic rather than holistic. Students are given lists of vocabulary items to memorise and memorisation is a major part of the learning characteristic of the Chinese students. Basic word formation is explained, which helps students learn to guess the meaning of new words, but the words are not taught in a communicative situation. Thus, students have difficulty re-using them. The traditional way of teaching vocabulary does not seem particularly effective or efficient and suggestions for improving vocabulary teaching in intensive reading are made by Zhang (1996).

Another example of the atomistic approach is the teaching of pattern drills. Although pattern drills may help students master a particular structure, as it appears in a reading text, they discourage the need to comprehend the gist of a text. With the structuralist theory, even though students' ability to apply sentence structure was highly developed, many felt at a loss in more complex communication situations (Sui, 1992).

Up to and throughout the 1950s, the Reading-Grammar-Translation approach still dominated ELT in China; even though the Aural-Oral approach was introduced in the 1960s and supplemented by Sentence–Text–Analysis (Sun, L. 1990). Conventional procedures for reading in class are composed of the following four teacher-centred steps (Xue, 1990):

- 1) Lead students to read new words;
- 2) Translate the text from English into Chinese;
- 3) Analyse the grammatical structures;
- 4) Check the answers to the exercises.

More detailed information on reading classes in China is given in Chapter 2. By reference to these conventional procedures, although Chinese students are not able to speak English at the level of native speakers, they often have a sound knowledge of grammar. Traditional teaching methods can be said to teach students about English, but not necessarily to speak (or read) English. The traditional methods neglect a very important point: language is not knowledge, but competence. To counter this problem, a communicative approach was suggested in the 1980s (Widdowson, 1978; Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Littlewood, 1981 and Nunan, 1991). The communicative approach has caught the attention of many English language teachers and of English curriculum syllabus designers, but it is still relatively new to China.

#### 1.6.2.2 Teacher's role

The Chinese language is especially rich in metaphors, and when describing teachers, metaphors abound. Teachers are described as ‘engineers of the human soul’, ‘gardeners of young minds’, ‘the ones holding the golden keys’, and the ‘developers of intellectual resources’ (Paine, 1990). These figurative descriptions may reveal the Chinese concept of teaching and how highly teachers are regarded.

The central aim of teaching in China is to provide knowledge to students. Teaching is an act of transmission of knowledge from teacher to student. The textbook is regarded as the source of knowledge and the teacher, as the presenter of that knowledge, is responsible for controlling the pace of the class (Paine, 1990). Since the textbook and teacher are

authoritative, reading the textbook and listening to the teacher become major imperatives for learning English. The video analysis presented later in this chapter gives an image of English teaching in China.

According to Chinese ideology, a good teacher is distinguished by possessing an exceptional amount of knowledge and of being able to communicate that knowledge to students (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a). In English language classes, teachers usually use ‘question and answer’ techniques to review materials, inspect students’ comprehension and train students in their speaking ability. But the teacher’s questions are rarely directed at finding out how students come to a particular understanding. Cotton (1990) views the teacher’s role as completely teacher-centred, with the teacher merely a provider of knowledge and information rather than any kind of ‘facilitator’ helping students to help themselves to learn. Therefore, there is no encouragement to use reading skills and the teaching method results in low efficiency (Hao et al., 1990).

Within a communicative approach, in contrast, teachers are regarded as:

- 1) Advisers, providing necessary language items;
- 2) Co-ordinators, maintaining constant links between pre-communicative and communicative activities in the course, each activity reinforcing and providing input to the other;
- 3) Monitors or supervisors, deciding on whether to exercise more immediate influence over the language used and whether particular errors should be corrected immediately (Littlewood, 1981).

In task-based learning, the teacher is not a dominator, but a participant in the activities and the teacher shows more interest in students’ process of solving problems rather than in their solutions (Guo, 1992). Therefore, the teachers’ roles may be seen as being different depending on the approaches they apply. Communicative, task based and learner centred approaches represent considerable challenges and changes in role for many Chinese teachers.

### 1.6.2.3 Students' role

In current critiques of the traditional Chinese way of teaching, students are regarded only as receivers of information. As listeners, they are usually only able to ask questions when their teachers permit them to do so. Students, therefore, seem passive even when they do not understand something. They appear obedient and totally reliant on their teacher, believing the teacher to be the font of all knowledge who can teach them everything. Students come to believe that learning a foreign language really means learning knowledge about the language. They are only mechanical note-takers like solitary robots (Hao et al., 1990). They seldom realise that their job is to acquire skills in communication. Students' preoccupation with knowledge of words and grammar often results in their inability to develop good reading skills. They are often unable to extract information and derive the true meaning of a text rapidly and efficiently. Students' tasks tend to be simply limited to memorising new words and grammatical rules and their focus and understanding of the target language is, therefore, only at a word or sentence level (Cotton, 1990).

If teaching is changed to a task-based or more a communicative approach (Hao et al., 1990; Sun, L. 1990; Guo, 1992), students are expected to become active participators of class activities, explorers of learning methods and strategies, problem-solvers and learners of language skills. However, the management of such change needs to take account of teachers' and students' current perceptions of reading, including those related to reading strategies.

### 1.6.3 A Video of an Audio-Visual English Programme

In order to obtain a clear image of Chinese English teaching and investigate the general teaching methodology, an *English Audio-Visual Programme* was reviewed. This reveals class arrangement, the way teachers present their lessons and how the students respond. This video was made in 1983, five years after the announcement of the open-door policy in China. The programme seems typical of classes in schools and universities of the 1980s and early 1990s. The type of audience, the programme's purpose, other than to teach English, and the reasons that an individual may watch the programme are unknown. However, the texts are from the



commonly used textbook for non-English university majors and, it is suggested, that the analysis of this teaching programme provides a reasonable insight into teaching English reading practices in China. The session comprises two parts with a ten-minute break (Figure 1.3). During the whole 105-minute video, the ‘student’ never appears on camera, although his voice is heard. The camera focuses only on the teacher.

Figure 1.3 Time allocation of video English Audio-Visual Programme

Periods	Total Time (minutes)	Activities	Time (minutes)
First Periods	45	a review of the previous lesson	15
		a new word study (reading, explaining new words)	15
		a text commentary (teacher reads the text/asks questions)	15
Break	10	A home-visit (a British couple visits another British couple)	
Second Periods	50	a Structured Study	35
		a Guided Writing	5
		a Reading Material exercise	8
		the assignment of homework	2

#### 1.6.3.1 Analysis of the video class

Classroom research, by definition, focuses on the classroom, the activities performed, the teaching and learning interactions, etc. (Allwright and Bailey, 1991). Jarvis made a number of very distinctive contributions to the field of systematic classroom observation in language classes, emphasising the necessity of devising an observational system that properly reflects the special characteristics of the language classroom. He thinks that classroom language is used both for ‘real’ and for ‘drill’ purposes (Allwright, 1988). Flanders (1970) earlier used direct observation to study teachers, and developed observation schedules – special lists of teacher categories and learner behaviour that were thought to be most closely related to successful teaching. Some other researchers involved in ELT observational research are Fanselow, Allen and Frohlich. Fanselow (1977) elaborated and made major modifications to Bellack’s pioneering analytical system and produced ‘FOCUS’ (Foci for Observing Communications Used in Settings). Allen et al. (1984) created the COLT system ‘Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching’ to distinguish communicative language teaching classrooms from those that are more teacher-centred and form-focused.

Since this videotape is not a video of real classroom teaching/learning, with only assumed ‘students’, it might be interpreted as having more emphasis on teaching than on showing an actual classroom situation. However, Chinese teachers of English who have seen the video agree that it is fairly typical of an English lesson at a Chinese university. It is, therefore, not feasible to analyse the transcript using ‘FOCUS’ or ‘COLT’. Instead, Sinclair’s and Coulthard’s (1975) IRF – the basic exchange structure is used because it suits the typical feature of the programme.

The abbreviations used for the analysis in the Figures are:

T – the teacher

S – the student

I – initiation (refers to the opening, or the beginning of a dialogue)

R – response (refers to the utterance of the participant who continues the dialogue)

F – feedback (refers to the acknowledgement or comments given during the task)

☞ – instruction (refers to the instruction the teacher gives to ask the student to do a task)

☞ in E – instruction given in English

☞ in C – instruction given in Chinese

☞ – reading a text or a sentence or new words

e.g. – examples quoted by the teacher

Act – activities (refers to the major activities during the class session)

☞ -- repeating what the previous person said or what was just said

☞t – translating what was just read

☞-- elaborating by repeating or reading a sentence or adding something

☞- explaining (refers to the explanations the teacher gives to certain questions or points)

↓ -- summary (refers to summary of an exercise, a grammar point, etc.)

↑ -- same as above

First Period:

Figure 1.4 Act 1 Review of the previous lesson – about 15 minutes

Sequence \ Turns	☞ in E	☞ in C	☞	I	R	F
Introduction of the lesson	T	☞				
Text			T T☞			
T/F questions- Sentence 1	T	☞	T	T	S	T(☞,☞ by reading the text)
Sentence 2			T	T	S	↑
Correct mistakes	T	☞	T	T	S	T(Good ☞, ☞)
State grammatical functions of ...	T	☞	T		S	T(☞,☞,☞ in E + in C)
↓	T	☞				

Note: There are three T/F questions; three Correct mistakes; four State grammatical functions.

Only one or two examples were used in the Figure since all the sequences of turn-taking/contents are the same.

Figure 1.5 Act 2 Studying of the new words in the text – about 15 minutes

Sequence \ Turns	in E	in C	□	◀	e.g.
Introduction to new words	T	☺			
List of new words			T S☺		
Explain a few new words	T	☺	T	T T☺in C	
e.g. with new words	T	☺	T S☺t in C T☺in C		
More e.g.	T	☺	T T☺t in C	T T☺in C	T S☺t in C T☺in C

Note: There are 32 new words and 3 phrases. 7 are explained with e.g. given.

Figure 1.6 Act 3 Studying the texts – about 15 minutes

Sequence \ Turns	in E	in C	□	◀	I	R	F
Commentary of the text	T	☺	T T☺ T☺	Pictures shown			
Exercise	T	☺		A table Shown	T	S	T☺ T☺t In C
The text	T	☺	T S☺				

Commentary text is the summary of the main text. One exercise was done on it.

The main text was only read.

Second Period:

Figure 1.7 Act 4 Structure study – about 35 minutes

Sequence \ Turns	in E	in C			e.g.		
Introduction of the exercises 'to be' as subject-compliment (2 e.g.)	T	☺	T S☺t in C T☺in C	T			
↓				T			
'that clause' as subject-compliment (2 e.g.)	T		T S☺t in C T☺in C				
↓				T T☺in C			
More e.g. of 'clauses as 'Subject-compliment'  (3 e.g.)	T		T S☺t in C T☺in C	T T☺in C T☺ T☺in C			
New grammar points 'Appositive' (3 e.g.)	T	☺	T	T T☺in C	T	T T☺in C	
More e.g. (2 e.g.)	T		T	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	
↓				T T☺in C			T
Definition – appositive clause (2 e.g.)				T T☺in C	T T☺t in C	T T☺in C	
↓			A table In C T☺in C T☺	T		T☺ T☺in C	
Conclusion (3 e.g.)					T		
Exercise (6 e.g.)	T	☺	T S☺t in C	T☺in C T☺			
↓	T	☺	T in C 5 points				

Figure 1.8 Act 5 Guided writing – about 5 minutes

Sequence \ Turns	in E	in C		
Introduction of the exercise 'probability'	T	☺	Tables Shown T☺	T
Examples (3 e.g.)	T		T T☺t in C/ S☺t in C☺☺ T☺in C	T

Figure 1.9 Act 6 Reading material A – about 7 minutes

Sequence \ Turns	in E	in C		e.g.	
Introduction of the exercise For Good or Evil	T	☺	T only the title		T T☺ in C T☺
Words and phrases (7 e.g.)			T T☺ in C	T T☺ in C	T T☺

Figure 1.10 Act 7 Homework Assignment – about 2 minutes

Sequence \ Turns	in E	in C
Homework assignment	T	☺
Announcement of class is over.	T	☺

### 1.6.3.2 Evaluation

#### *Teacher talk versus student talk*

The above analysis was given in a shortened form and reviewed only one or two examples from the exercise, since they all follow the same procedure. The analysis of the 7 major activities shows that the teacher dominates a great deal of class time. To illustrate the percentage of time allocated between the teacher and the student, each little box in the Figures is considered as a turn, or rather a move, excluding the instructions in Chinese. The results are that the teacher has 81 turns and the student (who only answers the questions or does what he is asked) 14 turns. In total, the teacher has 85% of the turns, which are long turns, meaning that the teacher nearly every time speaks or talks longer than the student and the student has only 15% of the turns, which are all short. The results demonstrate an extremely significant difference in the length of time between teacher talk and student talk.

#### *Teacher-centred versus student-centred*

The high percentage of teacher talk signifies a major feature of the video teaching programme, indicating that the programme is highly teacher-centred. The Figures above also present pictures of densely populated teacher talk (T in the Figures). In some Figures like Acts 5 and 6, in which the ‘student’ has not ‘participated’, the teacher completely dominates the activities and simply gives monologues. Many people may argue that this is because it is

a video programme and not real classroom teaching. The researcher contends, however, that it demonstrates to a large extent the current Chinese emphasis on the teacher.

#### *Grammar-Translation Method versus Communicative Approach*

The communicative approach emphasises the systematic attention to the functional as well as the structural aspects of the language, the actual use of the language in communication rather than the knowledge about the language and the problem-solving tasks and the fluency of the language rather than language accuracy. Although within the video there were some student tasks, like asking students to fill in a table, the actual task was no more than reciting or just reading some sentences from the text. There were no reasoning, analysing and figuring out procedures involved. In fact, the analysis reveals that the Grammar-Translation method dominated the class. This type of teaching is form-focused. The language points are overly explained by the teacher rather than moderately practised by students.

#### *Mastery of knowledge versus development of skills*

The video shows that Chinese teaching is largely about imparting knowledge of the language to the learner. This characteristic might be related to Chinese culture. However, it neglects the fact that language learning is different from other types of knowledge learning. As Cortazzi and Jin (1996a) point out, the Chinese culture of learning English is fundamentally concerned with mastery of knowledge, focusing on four centres (teacher, textbook, grammar and vocabulary).

This four-centred approach precisely describes the major features of the video:

1. Teacher-centredness – the teacher is the authority, the font of all knowledge;
2. Textbook-centredness – no other materials but the textbook is used;
3. Grammar-centredness – a grammar-translation approach is used and the teacher and textbook transmit the subject knowledge to students, with grammar studied in great detail;
4. Vocabulary-centredness – vocabulary is studied carefully and memorised by students.

Note that only the teacher reads the main text, not a single exercise is done on it and a Structured Study is emphasised in the ‘lesson’, occupying 35 minutes, the longest of any

single activity. By contrast, the predominant Western ELT culture of learning is fundamentally concerned with the development of language skills. It is sensitive to learners' needs, creative expression and contextual appropriateness and is more *learner-centred*, *task or problem-centred*, paying more attention to language functions and its uses: and many activities involve learners in classroom interaction (ibid).

#### 1.6.4 Summary of ELT in China

China has seen many rapid changes and major economic reforms. The country has set up new requirements in nearly every field and ELT now faces its most severe challenge because of the emphasis on learning foreign languages. The traditional Grammar-Translation Method is no longer adequate. Students not only need to read English materials, but also need to communicate with western people and understand their conversation. Nevertheless, reading comprehension remains central and is considered very important in exams.

##### ***New objectives for ELT***

The State Education Ministry has designed a new National College English Teaching Syllabus for university students. The requirements for non-English majors mainly focus on training students to achieve good reading ability, good understanding and an elementary writing and speaking competence.

When non-English majors finish their first two years study of English at university, they are supposed to reach at least Band Four level. The minimum requirements for level four are:

- correct pronunciation and intonation in reading aloud;
- a 4,000 word vocabulary and the ability to recognise new words, from basic understanding of structure;
- accurate use of grammar;
- a reading speed of 70-90 words per minute for an article with fewer than 2% of new words and 70% comprehension;
- the ability to follow classroom instructions in English;
- the ability to write an essay of up to 150 words in 30 minutes without any serious

grammatical errors; and

- the ability to take part in question and answer sessions in class and in simple social conversations (British Council, 1995).

The new standard requires students to improve their skills of English in many aspects, with an emphasis on reading. Although the Syllabus is set and the goals are clear, how to achieve these goals is currently left to the teachers. As mentioned earlier, Xu (1985) and Paine (1992) discussed the need for a new type of ELT in China. Others advocated an approach that combines traditional Chinese methods with new ELT methods, which most Chinese teachers call an *eclectic approach*. This is believed to be the most appropriate approach for ELT in China (Sun, G. 1990; Zhao, 1990; Wang, 1991 and Li, 1993). The *eclectic approach* is also called the *compromise method*, as ‘eclectic’ comes from Greek and is derived from ‘eklegein’ - to pick out or to choose out. It is not a single method but one which claims to make use of the best aspects from a number of methods and techniques (Gauntlett, 1957).

The advantage of applying the *eclectic approach* is that, since it is unlikely that a single method can suit all teaching aims, tasks and situations and since each method or approach has its own strong and weak points, teachers can search for an appropriate method according to the actual condition. The teacher can, therefore take advantage of the various approaches and use them to train students to acquire all the requirements set in the Syllabus.

At present, there is no immediate and entirely appropriate single method available to Chinese English teachers and teachers are encouraged to develop their own methods. Since the *eclectic approach* appears to be the most suitable for China and is currently widely promoted by Chinese researchers, this approach, combining different pedagogies, is proposed.

## 1.7 Conclusion

The significance of the current research may be viewed in relation to the large and increasing demand for ELT in China. By focusing on reading, this study addresses what is considered to be the most important aspect.



This chapter endeavoured to give the reader a background introduction and brief review of ELT in China by providing an insight into Chinese culture and ideology and indicating how they influence ELT teaching. It identified the predominant traditional ways of teaching and learning in China and the urgent need for change, touching on the requirements set by the Chinese ELT Syllabus. It is intended that this background knowledge gives a rationale for this research and the need to develop an approach that improves existing teaching methods and enables Chinese students to learn English reading more quickly and effectively.

To develop new ideas requires in-depth knowledge of the subject and the experience of previous researchers provides invaluable information that would otherwise take considerable time and effort to collect. By careful scrutiny of previous research results and experimentation, researchers can extract specific information that will help them achieve their own particular goals more quickly. The literature review, described in Chapter 2, serves such a purpose, considering issues on reading, learning, teaching and the factors that may influence them, giving special consideration to the strategies that can improve English reading ability.

## **Chapter Two**

### **REVIEW OF READING, TEACHING AND LEARNING**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature on reading and aspects that relate to its teaching and learning in order to provide a basis and theoretical context for the research. Theories and research results tested and generally accepted by educational circles are identified by the review and used to formulate a theoretical model of reading strategies appropriate to ELT in China. This model provides the basis for subsequent research activities into Chinese teachers' and students' perceptions of their application of these strategies.

#### **2.1 Review on Reading**

Before discussing and formulating any theories on the teaching and learning of reading strategies, pertinent issues relating to foreign language reading must first be clarified. This section will discuss eye movements, bottom-up, top-down and interactive approaches.

##### **2.1.1 Linguistic and psycho-linguistic approaches to reading**

What is 'reading'? Of the many definitions given, a dominant one is that reading is to decode by extracting information from a text. The process of extracting information involves eye movements, word recognition, sentence and text comprehension, as well as top-down and interactive activities. These actions are partly determined by the individual fixations of eye movements (Matin, 1974; Volkmann, 1976), but are also influenced by the distribution of fixations to different parts of the page. The efficiency of the reading process, therefore, depends, to some extent, on the control of eye movements. A good deal of attention has been paid to the nature of the

mechanisms by which this control is exercised (O'Regan, 1975; Haber, 1976; Rayner and McConkie, 1976).

Three kinds of *eye movement* control models are mentioned in Mitchell (1982): the Random Control model, Workload Control model and Stimulus Control model. The latter two models reveal a connection between reading and the control of eye movements. Kennedy (1978) suggests that semantic analysis of material in the periphery might identify potentially informative regions of the page, and that this more abstract information might be used to direct the eyes to the more important areas. By teaching this technique, therefore, students can increase their skimming ability.

*Word recognition* is also acknowledged as an important factor in reading comprehension. But reading is not a unitary act, it comprises several functions: word perception, comprehension of stated and implied meanings, critical and emotional reaction, and application of perceived ideas to behaviour (Tonjes and Zintz, 1981; Herber, 1970). Similar views are expressed in Dechant (1964: 375; Russell, 1960: 1100-1101). Within this context, the speed at which the reader interprets what is read also merits emphasis.

Gough's (1972) model of the first language reading process is a detailed description of how a reader processes text from the first moment of looking at the printed words until the time when meaning is derived from these words. His model is often cited as a bottom-up model. LaBerge and Samuels (1974) expand the notion of the bottom-up model of Gough (1972). They emphasise the role of attention in processing information and the importance of automaticity in the reading process. Like Gough, LaBerge and Samuels assume readers' understanding depends on what appears in the text, suggesting that readers perform two tasks when reading: decoding and comprehending.

Kirby (1984) distinguishes eight levels at which the reading-related process could occur, moving from the lowest to the highest level, these are: features, letters,

sounds, words, chunks, ideas, main ideas and themes. This description seems to imply that reading is hierarchical, but it is suggested that Kirby's summary of the reading process, although apparently moving from the lowest to the highest level, remains only at the literal level of text comprehension.

In contrast to the bottom-up approach, Goodman (1967) offers a very different kind of reading process. Goodman's original description (ibid: 108) is:

Reading is a selective process. It involves partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decisions are made that need to be confirmed, rejected or refined as reading progresses. More simply stated, reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game. It involves an interaction between thought and language. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time.

Goodman's 'guessing game' has flourished and was named the 'top-down' model, probably because it suggests a so-called inversion of the bottom-up process. Through the early to mid-1970s, a number of researchers and teacher trainers in ELT argued to increase the importance given to reading (e.g., Eskey, 1973; Saville-Troike, 1973). By the mid- to late 1970s, many researchers began to argue for a theory of reading based on work which emphasised the role of reading by Goodman (1967, 1968) and Smith (1994), whose *Understanding Reading* has been through five editions and provides a compendium of top-down ideas about reading. Conversely to the bottom-up model, in which readers look at the printed words to build up interpretations of a passage, the top-down model suggests readers sample a range of cues in the text to build up

mental pictures of general meaning. The cues can be titles, subtitles, pictures and tables/diagrams and readers may have to retrieve their previous knowledge of the topic in order to enhance the speed and comprehension of their reading. While reading, readers are making constant psycho-linguistic guesses by using their knowledge of syntax and semantics to reduce their dependence on the print and phonic of the text. Readers are, therefore, constantly creating an internal, ongoing cognitive representation of the text, which can be matched and compared to the external text, enabling them to 'repair' their internal version by adding additional details and information.

Good readers will automatically apply the top-down and bottom-up models at the same time. They interact with each other (Stanovich, 1980; Bernhardt, 1986). Although many researchers have promoted the virtues of one approach against the other, they are both considered important and, it is suggested that reading should be treated at a discourse level in which the bottom-up and top-down processes co-exist.

Hoey (1983) looks at discourse analysis from the coherence level: general information versus specific; the causes and effects of events; comparisons and contrasts in the passage; the problem-solution situation with regard to analysing the main and supporting ideas. By reading with such organising coherence relations in mind, an organised image appears instead of scattered sentences and the recall of the text and the reader's comprehension become much clearer than when reading with an empty mind. An organised mind enables readers to control the continual filing and re-filing of information gleaned from the text.

Simultaneously, good readers should bring and use existing knowledge to reading, predicting information, sampling the text, and confirming the prediction. Smith (1971) concurs with Goodman's arguments that reading is an imprecise, hypothesis-driven process. He further argues that sampling is effective because of the extensive redundancy built into natural language as well as the abilities of readers to make the necessary inferences from their background knowledge. In effect, according to Smith (and others), readers contribute more when reading than the visual symbols on the

page. This view, however, is considered by this research as too radical and it is, alternatively, suggested that readers' contribution is supplementary to the symbols on the page, which are regarded as the building blocks of reading.

Neither the bottom-up or top-down processing positions seem to be entirely satisfactory. Second language theorists have seen that a purely top-down concept of the reading process makes little sense for a reader who can be stymied by a text containing a large amount of unfamiliar vocabulary. Rumelhart et al. (1986), therefore, enrich Goodman's model by suggesting that new information should be integrated with old information and confirmed or rejected in reading. This is in line with Carroll's (1971) description of the reading process, which suggests that it is one in which newly extracted information is checked against one's own experience and previous knowledge. Block (1986) regards the searches and struggles for meaning as the core of reading comprehension, categorising strategies into two levels: those for general comprehension, and those for local, linguistic aspects. Similarly, Urquhart and Weir (1998) categorise reading into global and local levels.

*Interactive models* emerged as a result (Rumelhart, 1977). Interactive models of reading, which assume that bottom-up, or data-driven and top-down, or conceptually driven processes operate simultaneously or alternately. That is, in an interactive model, there is a synthesis of information for all levels of analysis, syntactic, semantic, lexical and orthographic during the reading process. Barnett (1989) suggests that higher-level processing stages influence lower-level stages. Reading involves both an array of lower level rapid, automatic identification skills and an array of higher level comprehension/interpretation skills (Rayner and Pollatsek, 1989; Samuels and Kamil, 1984). Second language researchers have lately paid more attention to interactive reading models, with the result that Bernhardt (1986) suggests creating a *paradigm shift* from a psycho-linguistic to a conceptually based perspective.

Reading in a first or second language (Wallace, 1992) is also viewed as an awareness of the way in which language is used: it is used for a purpose, and it only makes sense in a particular context, as part of a larger text or in a situation.

According to Alderson (1984), reading has three centres:

1. A centre on the reader;
2. A centre on the text;
3. A centre on the interaction of the reader and the text, in motion.

This implies a simplistic, but appropriate account, suggesting that reading is a matter that relates to and is affected by many factors. The same printed symbols might be interpreted differently, involving the knowledge that allows the reader to comprehend the text.

In addition, readers employ varying knowledge and strategies within the reading task, entering into a dialogue not only with the writer, but also with the reader's own knowledge and experience. The knowledge of reading theories and the relative aspects of how the mind works while reading should, therefore, be taught directly or indirectly to students (i.e. think aloud), enabling them to become aware of the process, the aspects concerned and the knowledge of interpretation.

In a technologically advanced society, the amount of reading required for success, or even survival, has grown rapidly (Tonjes, 1991). This implies a need for browsing information, therefore, speed must also be emphasised to Chinese students, who are known to be slow, word-by-word readers in English. A key research objective is, therefore, to ascertain how to improve students' reading speed, while, at the same time, ensuring their full comprehension. To conclude the review of reading theories, Eskey's (1986) interactive models can be quoted to give general and synthetic ideas between the relationship of eye movements, brain co-ordination and knowledge of form and knowledge of substance.

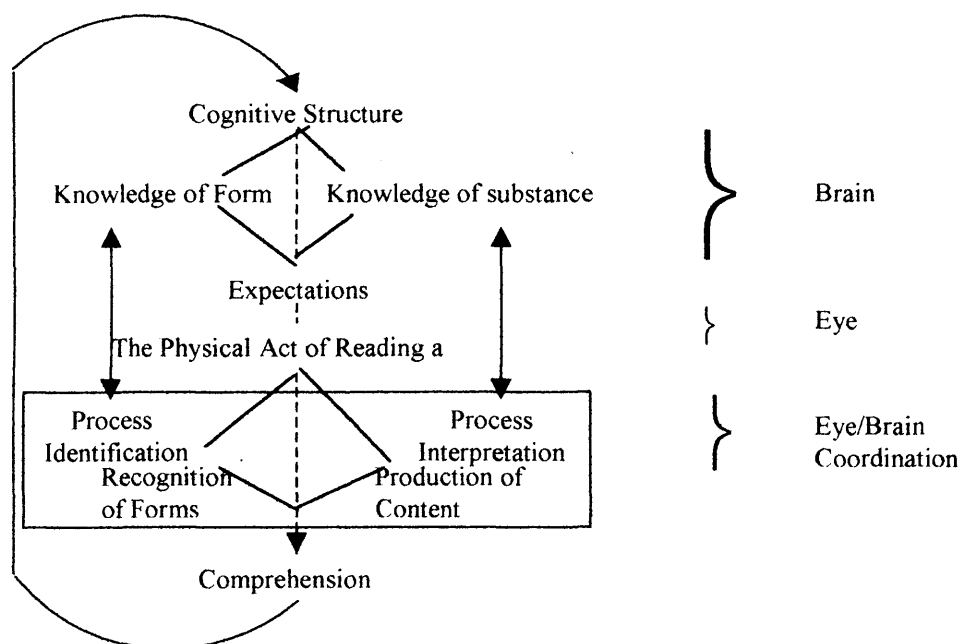


Diagram 2.1 Reading as Cognitive Behaviour: an Interactive Model (Eskey, 1986)

### 2.1.2 The relationship between L1 and L2 reading

In order to enable Chinese students increase their reading efficiency, the relationship between L1 and L2 reading and L2 knowledge must first be identified (Alderson, 1984; Clarke, 1979; Carrell, 1991; Jolly, 1978 and Coady, 1979; McDonough, 1995).

#### 2.1.2.1 Similarities between L1 and L2 reading

Fluency in both L1 and L2 reading requires a reasonably large vocabulary together with knowledge of grammar to provide understanding of the meanings conveyed by the author (Chomsky, 1964). Knowledge of syntax, conditions of expression, and mood represent the basics for reading comprehension, while knowledge of idioms and proverbs are also necessary to avoid inappropriate literal understanding. However, to promote the reading process, active involvement of the reader is also highly recommended because without personal motivation, reading can become boring.



Reading strategies (e.g. skimming, scanning) apply both to L1 and L2 reading. In general, readers must select the appropriate skill required to fulfil a particular task (Grellet, 1981) and must seek an implied meaning that is not always explicitly expressed.

Despite similarities, differences do exist between L1 and L2 reading, since L2 reading, not only engages L1 knowledge, but also the target language knowledge, its use and the cultural and social aspects of the target country

#### 2.1.2.2 Differences between L1 and L2 reading

One of the major differences between L1 and L2 reading is that unknown words are more difficult to guess in L2 due to the student's lack of linguistic, socio-linguistic, cultural and ideological experience of L2. Furthermore, a reader's ability to decode words in L2 may not be as good as in L1, especially when the two languages are different in orthographic systems as is the case with English and Chinese. It is generally admitted that the reading rate of a second language reader is 30% slower than that of a native speaker and that the reader also has less understanding (Alderson, 1984).

Eskey (1986) considers that the comprehension gap between L2 students and comparable educated native speakers, in relation to the language and the content of texts, causes the biggest reading difficulty. This gap varies from reader to reader and from text to text. Any second language reader who is not fully bilingual and bicultural, (clearly the vast majority), will suffer from particular deficiencies of knowledge in the major categories (linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural) required for the full, or at least native-like, comprehension of written texts. This explains why sometimes, even if students understand every single word, they still have difficulties in extracting the intended meaning and, therefore, seldom skim, fearing that they may not comprehend the text.

Another difference is that less experienced L2 readers may tend to translate words or sentences into L1. This process slows down their reading speed and should only be used for relatively few extremely complicated sentences or phrases. It is, however, a common feature of the traditional translation approach, which is still emphasised in many Chinese classrooms.

To reduce their comprehension gap and improve their reading, Chinese L2 readers must enlarge their knowledge by reading using more the expeditious type of reading described by Urquhart and Weir, (1998). They should also appreciate the application of reading strategies, be aware of their reading purpose and be highly motivated (Section 8.4.2.4).

#### 2.1.2.3 Reading in English and in Chinese

English and Chinese are from different language families. This aggravates the language difficulties experienced by students, who should, therefore, be trained, to recognise English words quickly and glance at large chunks of text. Urquhart and Weir (1998) advocate providing practice activities, promoting word recognition and decoding skills in reading classes. Stanovich (1991: 423) notes that research studies have indicated that ‘word recognition is a fundamental component of reading comprehension’.

A major difference between Chinese and English is syntax. Although there are similar structures like Subject + Predicate + Object, different references exist such as rhetorical questions (Krashen, 1982). Hence, interference of L1 syntax is a major source of syntactic error in adult L2 readers. In particular, English prepositions tend to cause difficulties, puzzling students because of their flexibility and apparent lack of rules.

Some people believe that success in reading a second language is directly related to the degree of proficiency in that language. But an alarming number of students have a great deal of proficiency in English, yet still read very slowly and with poor comprehension. This leads language researchers and theorists to ask what might be the most important causes of their

apparent inability to reach a sufficient level of reading comprehension in a foreign language. Where reading is concerned, ‘is it a reading problem or a language problem?’ (Alderson, 1984); ‘language competence or reading strategy?’ (Cziko, 1980); ‘reading ability or language proficiency?’ (Carrell, 1991); ‘psycho or linguistic?’ (Clarke, 1980). All the above questions can be subsumed into a more general one: Is reading in a foreign language more related to the level of L2 language proficiency, or to the level of L1 reading ability? If this question can be clarified, ELT teachers will better understand what approaches are appropriate to the level of their students and what to emphasise in their lessons.

#### 2.1.2.4 The relationship between L1 and L2 reading and L2 knowledge

Previous research suggests that there is a clear relationship between L1 and L2 reading in that:

- 1) Success in L2 reading largely depends on one’s L1 language reading ability rather than upon the student’s level of L2 reading, if that is at all identifiable (Jolly, 1978; Coady, 1979). They believe that reading in L2 requires the transference of old skills (in L1) to the learning of new ones. Students who fail to read adequately in L2, fail because they either do not process the ‘old skills’, or because they have failed to transfer them.
- 2) Reading problems that L2 learners have are largely due to an imperfect knowledge of the language (Yorio, 1971; Alderson, 1984) and to L1 interference in the reading process (Yorio, 1971). In Yorio’s view, reading involves four factors: knowledge of the language, ability to predict or guess in order to make correct choices, ability to remember previous cues and the ability to make the necessary associations between the different cues that have been selected.
- 3) Poor L2 reading is due to reading strategies in L1 not being properly employed in L2 because of inadequate knowledge of L2. Good first language readers will read well in L2 once they have passed a threshold of foreign language ability (Clarke, 1980).

These views appear somewhat contradictory implying that L1 knowledge both helps and interferes with second language reading. Clarke’s threshold theory offers some resolution to this apparent contradiction: before the threshold level, low L2 reading ability is mainly due to

the imperfect knowledge of that language; after the threshold level, L2 reading is related to L1 reading ability. For example, Hacquebord (1989) and Carrell (1991) refine the above hypotheses by demonstrating that there is a significant relationship between L1 and L2 reading for readers who have passed the initial stages of L2 acquisition. The study undertaken indicated that: at the first stages of learning, L2 reading ability is strongly related to L2 knowledge, and moderately related to L1 reading ability; while, at a later stage, L2 reading ability shows only a moderate relationship to the students' performance on the L2 vocabulary test. As McDonough (1995: 39) explains, given equal L2 proficiency, L2 reading performance correlates with L1 reading level. In particular, many reading processes are universal, or have universal aspects: word recognition, syntactic interpretation, assignment of meaning and interpretation of the message (McDonough, 1995).

It is, therefore, suggested that teachers should clearly emphasise the differences between L1 and L2 in order to enable students to avoid possible confusion and to benefit from their appropriate L1 reading knowledge and skills once they have passed their threshold level. More research into aspects that may help or hinder Chinese students in learning English reading is needed.

The above discussion concludes that reading in L2 is both a language and a reading problem. For lower levels, it is more a language problem than a reading problem, but, once learners have passed a threshold level, good first language readers will read well in L2, being more able to employ and transfer their reading strategies from L1 to L2.

### 2.1.3 The social approach to reading

In the ELT profession, the predominance of cognitive research on L2 reading makes it easy to forget that reading is a socially constructed phenomenon, not a naturally occurring psychological process. From a social perspective, reading is a communicative act in which readers and writers position one another in particular ways, drawing on conventions and resources provided by the culture and professional conventions. Texts do not arise directly

and naturally from thought but develop out of an interaction between writer and reader (even when the writer and the reader is the same person).

Awareness of genres is another aspect that students should appreciate. To familiarise students with different types of texts and their structures will help them predict subsequent text structures and to determine where to find certain information in the text. Genre, after Swales (1981, 1985 and 1990), is a recognisable communicative event characterised by a set of communicative purposes identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional and academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often, it is a highly structured, conventionalised communicative event with constraints on allowable contribution in terms of its intent, positioning, form and functional value. The expert members of the discourse community exploit these constraints to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognised purposes (Bhatia, 1993).

Genre and purpose are closely linked. A genre has social significance because its form has evolved as a way of organising meaning within a culture (Littlefair, 1990). Common types of genre styles are mentioned in Littlefair, such as literary, expository, procedural and reference genres. There are, however, many types of writing that do not fall clearly into a particular category. These normally have a general classification statement relating to the topic, which describe it in a broad sense, followed by a description, i.e. a series of organised statements usually in the present tense.

Gee (1990: 137), therefore, suggests that the focus of literacy studies should not be on language, or reading and writing per se, but rather on *social practices*. He views literacy as a relationship of learners to the world, as a form of cultural politics, and not merely a process of reproducing knowledge. Freire's (1987) approach, on the other hand, emphasises literacy's role in social as well as personal transformation.

If reading is a social construct, both shaped by and shaping culture, teachers and students should be aware of and learn a great deal about the language's culture and society. They should attend to the particular sets of values reflected in the way texts are constructed and in the ways literacy is used within those societies. If reading acquisition requires socialisation

into new practices, beliefs, values, attitudes and ways of thinking, it also *fosters* socialisation in L2 society. If reading, in part, constitutes learners' 'way of being', language learners who read with an awareness of the reading conventions particular to the language and culture will take significant steps toward becoming biliterate, bicultural thinkers.

The view that reading is not a uniform, monolithic entity but a collection of social practices that operate within particular discourses suggests that reading needs to be developed through multiple experiences, in multiple contexts, with multiple text genres, for multiple purposes. Moreover, attention must be paid to the *relationships* between the particular text types, particular purposes, and particular ways of reading in a given literacy practice.

Finally, if reading is not a passive acceptance of discourse conventions but a process involving critical examination of how language can be used for purposes of social control as well as for purposes of social change, readers need to be encouraged to take an active, critical stance to the texts and discourse conventions, since genre styles and any cues provided by texts help readers extract the main information about the texts more quickly.

It seems fair to conclude, based on the above, that social constructive and genre-based approaches to reading are not widely recognised in China.

#### 2.1.4 Reading for different purposes

Many authors follow generic patterns when writing to help them achieve their purpose and good writers write with a 'reader's eye'. As a reader, one reads with a particular purpose in mind, trying to understand the message from the writer. Readers should, therefore, conversely read with a 'writer's eye'.

The types, or the purposes of reading, for pleasure, for information, for knowledge and/or for communication affect the way people read and their approach to reading. Reading purpose is, therefore, tacitly assumed to be a lexical-grammatical discourse procedure. A noticeable

tendency in more traditional reading classes in China, however, is to treat all texts in much the same way, irrespective of genre, as if purposes were restricted, or single.

Reading should not, however, be considered an exact science, and comprehension is affected by many influences such as the context, the ordering of words, lexical density, grammar structure and readers' and writers' styles. Learning styles, also known as Strategies, have for some time been an important topic in Educational Psychology. Comprehension, skills, strategies and styles relate, in different ways, to reading activities and outcomes. The first three aspects, in particular, have been important foci of attention in pedagogically related studies of reading, while the fourth aspect, style, is likely to become of greater importance in future research (Urquhart and Weir, 1998).

#### 2.1.5 Reading in China

China is a nation where education is viewed as being extremely important and the utmost attention is paid to it, if not in terms of financial reward to its teachers, certainly in a cultural and psychological sense. Many parents start educating their children at home, including teaching their children basic Chinese characters before they begin their formal education.

Pre-school nursery education for children between two and six years old normally takes place during the day while parents are at work. This can start at 8:00am and finish at 5:00pm or later. Literacy, ideology and aesthetics lessons suitable for the children's age and understanding are included. Children are exposed to colourful cartoon books, magazines, storybooks and educational toys and are taught songs, riddles and basic reading, of around 100 characters.

After children begin primary school, generally at the age of six, they are given a lot of homework: reading and writing practice in Chinese. Parents are advised to buy extra books that are suitable for their children to read at home. This kind of after school reading continues until children finish their secondary education. It should be appreciated that learning to read and write Chinese, with its orthographic system, requires considerably more practice than is

normally needed for English and that reading is particularly emphasised throughout children's school education, with most Chinese classrooms being text-oriented (Jin and Cortazzi, 1998).

Many primary schools now teach English, which is often required as a foreign language for secondary level education. The recently increased availability of English reading materials, the number of English teachers and the improved learning conditions have all helped learners study English and, as a result, children's English proficiency has increased (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996). Continued improvement constitutes a primary goal for the future of ELT in China.

Reading has always been considered a very important academic skill not only in China, but also in other countries, as emphasised by the Year of Literacy in Britain (1998). Reading is an essential skill for Chinese students learning English, whether or not students desire to study abroad, reading is the most important skill to master (Carrell, 1989; Eskey, 1973; Lynch and Hudson, 1991; Oller, 1972). Various types of reading practice are included in the student questionnaires and respondents are asked how often they perform different types of reading. Teaching students how to utilise their first language knowledge, develop vocabulary skills, improve their reading comprehension, increase their reading speed, orchestrate their use of strategies, and monitor their own improvement (Anderson, 1994) are viewed as the focus of this research.

#### *Current English reading classes in China*

Reading in English at a tertiary education level (for the first two years) is generally divided into two types: *intensive* and *extensive*. 80% of class time is normally allocated to intensive reading and 20% to extensive reading (These percentages may be changing.). The actual allocation of time and how the teaching activity is performed is viewed as being of immense importance. The programme described in Chapter 1 provides some background information, although actual classroom observation would have been preferred.



*Intensive reading* as its name implies, comprises a careful scrutiny of a text and appears to have much in common with careful reading (Rayner and Pollatsek, 1989) discussed by Urquhart and Weir (1998).

In China, intensive reading is the most widely used teaching approach. Students are given a short text, which the teacher reads out loud. This is then followed by an analysis, which revolves around two goals. One is the expansion of vocabulary, by translation or paraphrasing new words and phrases, and by giving examples of synonyms or antonyms. The other is the expansion of grammatical knowledge by explanations, given by the teacher in Chinese and in English, of the new grammatical points and the typical lexical or semantic constraints of the new words.

*Extensive reading* means rapid reading of large quantities of text and is similar to Urquhart's and Weir's (1998) expedient reading. The difference between L1 and L2 readers is most marked in expeditious reading. In China, students are given a relatively longer text, which they must read as quickly as possible. The major skills involve skimming and scanning, reading for specific information and reading for main ideas. Students are then asked to answer questions on their comprehension of the text, which are normally answered by facts and understanding at a literal level. Difficult vocabulary on grammatical points and complex sentences are picked out and explained.

The purpose of such reading is to increase students' reading speed, enlarge and consolidate their grammatical, linguistic and general knowledge. As indicated by the video programme, such skills like use of reading strategies, activating prior knowledge, analysing, reasoning and transferring L1 reading skills to L2 reading are ignored. In general, therefore, it can be concluded that extensive reading based on the top-down approach is not often emphasised in Chinese reading classes. Although intensive and extensive reading are limited they form the basis of students' concepts of reading and any proposed innovations in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) reading programmes must, therefore, take such concepts into account.

*Cognitive dimensions of reading*

Huey (1908) and Thorndike (1917) acknowledge that reading requires more than perceptual and sensory-motor skills, it also demands the reader's active participation at a cognitive level. Reading purpose is, therefore, tacitly assured to be a lexical-grammatical discourse procedure. That is to say, reading is a *thinking* process through which readers must relate the written symbols they perceive to their knowledge of language, of texts, of content areas, and of the world in order to bring meaning to a text. Reading does more than establish links between words and referents; it requires prediction, inference, and synthesis of meaning. It requires elaboration of mental representations, and reconciliation of expectations with features of the text – all influenced by the reader's values, attitudes and beliefs. To some extent this view is taken into account in Chinese intensive reading, although with use of a limited range of activities.

The discussions given in this chapter lead to a number of questions: Are students in China taught with the necessary knowledge of how to deal with reading? Do they know the difference between L1 and L2 reading? Do they know they can use L1 reading skills in L2 reading? Do they know reading different genres with different purposes requires different reading techniques? Do students obtain the same level of achievement with or without applying reading techniques? Are reading techniques expected to be taught to students or is language teaching merely the teaching of vocabulary and grammar? It is hoped that this study will help to reveal answers to many of these questions.

## 2.2 Review on Teaching

This section focuses on teaching aspects, identifying how the study proposes to answer the questions posed above. Previous research suggests that more appropriate approaches or methods will help improve teaching efficiency and that effective teaching is important to help Chinese students master English more quickly.

### 2.2.1 Importance of the teacher

In China teachers play a vital role in pupils' learning process and in the whole educational system. Teachers' behaviour and organisation of class activities affect students' attitude, behaviour and the classroom environment. During the process of teaching strategies, the teacher can be viewed as being like a sports coach (Nisbet and Shucksmith, 1986). The speed, co-ordination and style of top athletes seem to result naturally from their fitness and agility, spontaneously, without a moment's hesitation or thought. But the art of coaching is to make the athletes more aware of their movements and strategies and thus to obtain better control and co-ordination. The newly acquired skills then have to be practised until they become intuitive; although they can always be retrieved into consciousness as and when needed. This can be compared to teachers whose responsibility is to train students to master reading strategies and to apply effective strategies when needed. The teacher's goal is to create an environment of independent, problem-solving readers who use and practise strategies for increased efficiency in reading and who can optimise their reading potential.

### 2.2.2 Effective teaching

Much classroom teaching in China is knowledge-oriented. According to widely held Chinese belief, an effective teacher is required to have a full knowledge of different teaching approaches and vast subject knowledge (Billie, 1984). Teachers should tailor classes to meet particular needs, enhance understanding of the various theoretical positions and apply appropriate methods according to their particular group of students (their levels, abilities and requirements). They should also know their students well, be familiar with their characteristics and be able to ascertain any special help that they may need. This may prove difficult for Chinese University teachers who have, on average, over 30 students to a class and often 50 or more. The time schedule for the course does not allow the teacher to spend much time on individuals and, therefore, teachers nearly always tend to address the whole class.

Researchers have suggested that teaching readers how to use strategies should be a prime consideration in reading classrooms (Barnett, 1989; Carrell et al., 1989; Cohen, 1990; Kern, 1989; Oxford, 1990; Swaffar et al., 1991). Teachers should provide frequent modelling or demonstration of the strategies by showing their students simple, explicit, basic steps that need to be performed, guiding them with suitable instructions of ‘what’, ‘when’ and ‘why’ strategies are used. Moreover, they should promote students’ feedback to enable their students to move towards self-independence, giving them the ability to judge the effectiveness of their own learning performance.

To conclude, it can be said that effective teachers systematically assess the needs of their students according to their level and interest, adjust their teaching activities to meet their particular needs and abilities and ensure good interaction between their approach and classroom practice, the key to dynamic teaching. The best teachers always take a few calculated risks by trying new activities. In China, teachers often add some extra materials that they think may be interesting and useful to their students. However, although many Chinese teachers are able to demonstrate reading strategies effectively, the range of strategies they model seems limited.

### 2.2.3 Teaching vocabulary

In ELT, vocabulary and grammar are two major items. Learners can often learn all English grammatical rules by heart, even including the exceptions, but they normally only learn and master a limited vocabulary and many second language readers cite ‘lack of adequate vocabulary... as one of the obstacles to text comprehension’ (Levine & Reves, 1990: 37).

The relationship between grammar and vocabulary is clearly expressed by Wilkins (1972): ‘without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed’. An increased interest is, therefore, being given to the role that vocabulary plays in the reading process (Coady, 1991; Cohen, 1987; Huckin et al., 1993; Koda, 1989; Levine & Reves, 1990; Nation, 1990). However, to obtain a sufficiently large vocabulary to cope with all aspects of reading appears to be very difficult. First of all, there are always some words that learners

have never met before. Secondly, it is extremely hard to remember the meanings and spellings of new words, especially when the target language is so different from the mother tongue. Thirdly, how to use new words is not obvious. The following sections explore some of these issues.

### 2.2.3.1 Types of vocabulary

In teaching vocabulary, especially the strategies for coping with new words, it is necessary to review the structures of vocabulary. Although there are numerous words, the vocabulary that makes up a language can be categorised into types. Fries (1945) identifies four different types of words: functional words, substitute words, words of negative/affirmative distribution and content words.

Nuttall (1982), in her consideration of teaching reading, divides vocabulary into three types according to their frequency of use:

1. *Active vocabulary*, which she thinks the learners must know well and use in an appropriate situation;
2. *Receptive vocabulary*, which the learners should know moderately well, but cannot use;
3. *Throwaway vocabulary*, which the learners should ignore because they are not important.

The third kind is, however, difficult to recognise in the Chinese text-centred approach.

Alternatively, vocabulary can be divided into core vocabularies and non-core vocabularies (Carter & McCarthy, 1988) according to their frequency of use and their subject area. Some vocabulary may be core vocabulary in a certain field, but not in another and students should be taught to judge whether or not they should spend time learning and remembering particular words.

By reference to this view, the research suggests that vocabulary can, therefore, be more appropriately classified in terms of the reader's needs:

1. *Basic words* that appear frequently and form part of common language - should be learnt by all readers;
2. *Specific words* that are particular to a subject area - should be learnt by readers interested in that subject;
3. *Uncommon words* that appear infrequently - can largely be ignored and, if necessary, guessed through context if and when encountered.

The knowledge of types of vocabulary enables teachers and learners to focus their attention. But many Chinese students seem to want to learn all 'new words', irrespective of type (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a).

*Lexical collocation* is another very important aspect of vocabulary learning/teaching (McCarthy, 1991). Not only do these associations assist the learner to commit words to memory, but they also aid in defining the semantic area of a word. 'Every useful collocation is another step towards understanding the concept of a word' (Brown, 1974), helping students infer meaning from context, increase reading speed, make correct expectations and read and assimilate a large chunk of text, instead of a single word.

Idioms and set phrases as part of lexical collocation are especially difficult to master and should be taught by vivid examples to enable students to learn and use them easily. These may need to be learnt by heart.

#### 2.2.3.2 Techniques of teaching vocabulary

Many researchers have been studying vocabulary teaching (Nunan, 1991; Carter and McCarthy, 1988; Haggard, 1982; Scheifer, 1985; Zhang, 1996) among others. In ELT there are two general principles of vocabulary learning/teaching, which are believed to apply to all situations: the general guessing model and techniques for remembering vocabulary.

*General guessing model*

In this model, students are encouraged to make an educated guess for an unknown word instead of checking it up in the dictionary. A ‘random guess’ is different from an ‘educated guess’ in that the latter is based on ‘valid’ speculations using the linguistic and non-linguistic contexts. In order to improve students’ guessing skills, they should, therefore, be taught the techniques of making an ‘educated guess’, through the use of *acquisition strategies* discussed in this study.

Clarke and Nation (1980) summarise five steps for guessing strategies. The first step is that the guess should be based on the student’s knowledge of the vocabulary, like the part of speech of the unknown word. This focuses the guess. The next step should be based on knowledge of linguistics, to provide more clues to the meaning of the word. The third and fourth steps are that the guess should take immediate and then wider context/discourse into consideration to see whether the guessed meaning fits the discourse. The fifth step is to check whether the guess is correct. The context or discourse knowledge and the prior knowledge of the subject in question can help by offering hints for the guess. Nattinger (1988) sums up three kinds of context clues: by topic, by the other words in the discourse and by grammatical structure.

It should be appreciated, however, that there is considerable risk associated with guessing, since an incorrect guess can divert the reader from the true meaning of the text, causing frustration and eventual loss of interest. Wu (1998) investigated successful and less successful strategies and surmised that strategies for compensating for missing linguistic knowledge often caused comprehension breakdown. The research, therefore, suggests that guessing, although useful and expedient, must not be used indiscriminately. Care must be taken to ensure that the guess is correct by continually reviewing it throughout the reading activity. If at all unsure, the reader should read carefully to try to achieve comprehension and, if all else fails, should finally revert to a dictionary. Chinese students are aware of some guessing strategies, but many use a bilingual dictionary as a first resort rather than using it only as a final resort (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a).

*Techniques for remembering vocabulary*

Apart from the strategies of guessing, students should be equipped with the techniques for remembering vocabulary through *retention strategies* (Section 2.4.2.1). Recall of a large vocabulary enables students to read more easily. Various artificial techniques have been suggested such as using loci (Neisser, 1976); paired associates (Curran, 1976); key words (Atkinson, 1975; Merry, 1980). Key words, which provide links to the new words and assist recall, can be invented by students or can be provided by teachers. Most of the processes depend on word associations either with other words or their relationship or with external criteria. Association as an aide to memory has been used since man first started learning and has been shown to be an excellent expedient.

Tulving and Thomson (1973) raise the issues of perception and action, which are basic processes that affect language acquisition. Asher creates the technique of total physical response (Asher, 1969; Asher, Kusodo and de la Torre, 1974). Craik and Lockhart create *Craik's cognitive depth* (1972).

Vocabulary items are usually taught in classrooms by *groupings*, *families* and *meanings*. It is by the form of vocabulary items that students usually try to remember a word. Therefore, exercises to enhance storage and recall should most often be centred on these forms; and, since associations of forms help students remember the forms themselves, teachers should gather words together so that these associations can be seen and can give mutual support (Nattinger, 1988). If this happens in China it is probably in relation only to a particular text. Another technique for enlarging vocabulary is using *morphological information* (prefixes, suffixes, stems, derivation and compound words). Such information gives students easy access and understanding of the meaning of many words and is often stressed by Chinese teachers (Cortazzi and Jin 1996a).

Nattinger (1988) discusses *situational sets*, which are cohesive chains of lexical relationships in discourse. They are groups of words that are associated because of the subject of the text, its purpose or its construction; they are words related to particular situations. Therefore, vocabulary can be taught or categorised under the title of 'At the Post Office', 'In the



Classroom', 'Meeting a friend', 'In a restaurant' and so on. This method can be used to remind students of the vocabulary they have learned, and to teach new related words. Situational sets may also be related to schemata (Carrell, Devine and Eskey, 1988).

Using *semantic sets* brings words together in situational sets so that their inferential associations are more obvious. Examples of *semantic sets* are synonyms, antonyms, collocates, super-ordinates and subordinates (ibid). These can be further subdivided along the lines suggested for synonyms. Another kind of semantic set has to do with stimulus-response pairs, such as *accident, car, and baby, mother*. There seems to be a great uniformity in people's responses to certain stimulus words (Richards, 1976), which ought to be exploited to help students form more effective associations and remember words in this way.

When students are at a slightly higher level, *metaphor sets* can be taught. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) show that the conceptual system, which structures how we perceive and what we remember, is largely metaphorical. These metaphors, which permit readers to understand something that often is abstract or mysterious in terms of something that is more concrete or familiar, exert a powerful influence on the ways learners think and the actions they take. Because of cross-cultural differences they can, however, be different for different languages. It is likely that few Chinese teachers are aware of conceptual metaphor sets.

The final technique is the *use of dictionaries*. Even though dictionaries for language learning have been largely ignored in the wealth of books and articles on language learning (Summers, 1988), they still provide an important source of information which can be used to assist language learning and are heavily used by Chinese students (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a). In recent years, ELT teachers have actively discouraged the use of dictionaries, particularly in class. Students have been encouraged to guess unknown words from the discourse context, to guess by using all sorts of clues possible. What would happen, however, if no available contextual clues existed or if available clues are misleading? Chinese students are rarely happy with a vague meaning of unknown words and when unknown words are encountered they form stumbling blocks to comprehension. In this and other situations, students should be allowed to turn to dictionaries for help. Even bright students reading serious literature, with

high density texts containing few clues to assist in guessing unknown words, would need to check the dictionary in order to grasp the meaning of the text and enable them to carry on reading.

A study on the use of Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) by intermediate students in Britain, Japan, Germany, the USA, Mexico and Nigeria indicate that the words that were looked up are not rare or technical, but are high frequency words, particularly abstract ones (Summers, 1988).

When students refer to a dictionary, they should pay attention to the grammatical information and the collocation. The examples given in a dictionary are typical and indicate the most common usage of a word with mini typical context, enabling students to gain information, which may prove useful later in subsequent applications of the word.

The strategies related to the guessing model and the techniques for remembering vocabulary are considered by this study as *acquisition* and *retention strategies*. They enable learners to solve reading difficulties and obtain and maintain the knowledge they have learned. These strategies include a variety of techniques to demonstrate meaning and emphasise the organisation of vocabulary through lexical relations, collocation and word formation. These strategies are included in the questionnaires to measure how and to what level Chinese teachers and students make use of them.

The popular Chinese approach to learning English vocabulary, however, seems fixed on the memorisation of lists of individual words (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a). This is reinforced by the syllabus and exam system at middle school and university level. Rote memorisation is emphasised by Chinese students: 'mechanical memorisation is the most efficient way of learning words', and is used most of the time. Further evidence of the Chinese approach can be found in Chang's (1990) study of 40 prominent Chinese professionals, who were reckoned to have mastered English. Two strategies dominated their accounts of how they had learned vocabulary: *extensive constant reading* and *memorising words*, either by noting new words in a vocabulary book or by learning words from review cards. Some professionals had learned

words directly from the dictionary (cited *ibid*). The present research aims at exploring ways of improving classroom teaching/learning, and therefore, popular methods of rote memorisation or memorising new words from cards are not included in the questionnaires.

#### 2.2.4 Schema theory

Schema refers to beliefs, concepts, expectations, processes – everything readers take from past experience (the declarative knowledge) to make sense of what they are reading. Therefore, in reading, apart from the words to be recognised, students should be encouraged to activate their knowledge of schemata (the existing knowledge), the central importance in cognitive dimensions of reading. Cognitive scientists commonly divide knowledge into two basic categories: *declarative* (knowledge that) and *procedural* (knowledge how) (Anderson, 1980). Declarative knowledge consists of the ideas, concepts, facts and definitions one can draw on to make sense of a text or to write about a particular topic. It is explicit that conscious knowledge can be verbally communicated. Procedural knowledge, on the other hand, has to do with one's ability to do things, like to drive a car, write a letter, or speak one's native language. It may be explicit or implicit, conscious or unconscious, verbally expressible or not.

In education discussions a recurrent theme is how individuals' declarative and procedural knowledge can be improved in order to make them better readers, in other words, how to utilise their knowledge of schema theory (Bartlett, 1932), to help remembering, relating and understanding things. The theory applies both to processing sensory data and to processing language.

Schema theory forms an indispensable part of an emerging overall theory of discourse, and has become firmly established as a contributory element in discourse analysis, a discipline that studies how people achieve meaning through texts. Schema theory has become further developed in applied linguistics, where schematic knowledge is seen as a crucial component of a language user's competence (Widdowson, 1983). Readers' knowledge of text structure is indicated to influence their reading comprehension (Carrell, 1984b, 1985). Carrell &

Connor's (1991) research examines ESL readers' ability to read descriptive, persuasive, and narrative texts. Their findings support the idea that knowledge of text structure influences reading comprehension (cited in Anderson, 1994). 'A reader's failure to activate an appropriate schema...during reading results in various degrees of incomprehension' (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983: 560) and is, therefore, of central importance in language acquisition (Skehan, 1989).

Carrell (1983; 1987) and Rumelhart (1975) distinguish types of schemata. Two types of schema are deployed by Carrell (1987): a *content schema*, or background knowledge a reader brings to a text, which is knowledge relative to the content domain of the text; a *formal schema*, or knowledge relative to the formal, rhetorical organisational structures of different types of text; and *cultural schema*, more general aspects of cultural knowledge shared by large sections of a cultural population. Carrell (1988a) also added *linguistic schema*. However, Urquhart and Weir (1998) prefer to use *background knowledge* for *content* and *cultural schema*, to use Bernhardt's 'literacy' component for *formal schema*, and to use *different areas of language* for *linguistic schema*. Similar classifications of schema can be found in Silberstein (1994).

Sadoski et al. (1991: 466) strongly dislike the term 'schema', considering it too definite and at the same time too sketchy. Some of their reasons are valid, such as the loose notions of the whole concept, but contrary to the views expressed, 'schema' should not be rejected simply because it is 'virtually synonymous with *background knowledge*' and the fact that it is dynamic and depends on cultural awareness does not make it invalid.

This study emphasises three types of schema, which are believed to affect reading ability: language schema, text schema and world schema.

#### 2.2.4.1 Language schema

Language is a very powerful instrument generally following norms of usage. When a deviation (or a linguistically marked use) occurs, it implies that the writer wishes the reader

to get another meaning, or at least wishes to alert the reader's attention and students should pay particular attention to these deviations when reading.

The knowledge of word formation and derivation, prefixes and suffixes, etc. helps students master vocabulary quicker and remember words better. This eventually helps students to increase their reading speed and comprehension. But since Chinese students only have a limited time with their teacher, it is the duty of the teacher to point out priorities and help learners become responsible for learning by themselves.

#### 2.2.4.2 Text schema

The fact that prior knowledge aids text comprehension has recently been studied under the rubric of schema theory. This theoretical framework (aptly termed by Grabe (1991), a 'theoretical metaphor') emphasises the role of pre-existing knowledge (a reader's 'schema') in providing the reader with information that is implicit in a text (Silberstein, 1994). By text schema, Cook (1994) means a typical ordering of facts in a real or fictional world. The typical ordering of functional units is described by his terminology as a 'discourse schema' and corresponds to the 'rhetorical schemata', which is also described by Carrell (1988b) or the 'formal schemata' described by Carrell and Eisterhold (1983), or the notion of genre as developed in Swales (1990). Text schema can be discussed from three aspects: genre (discussed in Section 2.1.4), structure and coherence (and cohesion).

Text structure is related to the genre on the one hand, and to cultural relationships on the other. For example, western writing is often relatively direct, while in Chinese writing, the reasons are often given first, and the conclusions come later, or, sometimes have to be inferred by the reader. The knowledge of likely structure schema across languages prepares the reader with an expectation of the development of an article.

Coherence and cohesion are two important terms with regard to text schema, cohesion to the linguistic text, and coherence to context text. Text interacts with 'context', which is a form of knowledge of the word and is the hidden/implied meaning written between the lines (Dascal,

1981; Cook 1990; Duranti and Goodman 1992). In practice the two are usually the same, yet there are times when the distinction is important.

According to Cook (1994), context in the broad sense consists of knowledge of:

1. Co-text;
2. Para-linguistic features;
3. Other texts (i.e. 'inter-text');
4. The physical situation;
5. The social and cultural situation;
6. Interlocutors and their schema (knowledge about other people's knowledge).

This quality of perceived purpose, meaning and connection is known as 'coherence', the logical consistency within the text. Coherence is also supported by 'cohesion', which can be defined as the formal linguistic realisation of semantic and pragmatic relations between clauses and sentences in a text (Quirk et al., 1985).

The advantage of using such knowledge for English students in China is to provide a thread in skimming or scanning. The knowledge of text, context and discourse enables readers to understand a text above the literal level to a fuller understanding of its social, cultural, psychological or political implications and to appreciate what is being implied. As emphasised by Grabe (1991), the role of pre-existing knowledge (a reader's 'schema') is providing the reader with information that is implicit in a text.

#### 2.2.4.3 World schema

World schema covers aspects that relate to English reading: previous knowledge of the world and cultural knowledge, which learners bring to the text in addition to their cognitive, linguistic and communicative abilities. When students are familiar with a subject, they read faster, understand better and answer more questions about the text. In the case of native-speaking readers from the same cultural background, Anderson et al. (1977) found that knowledge and interests of U.S. readers significantly influenced their perception of what the

text was about. In the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), as shown in Alderson & Urquhart (1983), readers with appropriate background knowledge of the subject had superior comprehension, a finding supported by Mohammed & Swales (1984), among others (cited in Williams and Moran, 1989). On the other hand, it is also said that prior knowledge affects the ability to make integrative inferences (Pearson et al., 1979; Wilson & Hammill, 1982).

It is suggested, therefore, that knowledge and interest/motivation directly relate and that readers interested in a particular subject are usually keen to read more about the subject to further expand their knowledge. This implies that knowledge can increase interest/motivation and vice-versa. Teachers should, therefore, motivate their students by including texts that are of particular interest to their students, although this may prove difficult in China, where the teaching activity is strictly controlled and textbooks are designed centrally.

Barnett (1989) suggests that teachers should prepare students to activate relevant language and utilise necessary strategies. Carton (1971) also points out that it is important that learners use what they know about the real world to predict what is said in a foreign communication. When reading a text, both bottom-up, text-based processing and top-down, knowledge-based, or conceptually driven information processing require the use of previous knowledge to decode the text and the related previous knowledge in order to make predictions about the data found in a text.

#### 2.2.4.4 Relationship between schema and language teaching and learning

Most texts contain many explicit clues to show relationships between ideas. Some knowledge of language cohesion schemata act as tools that can help students understand texts. But when such clues are missing, or the connectives are left out, readers have to infer them and work out the connection themselves. In these cases, the knowledge of discourse and coherence schemas as well as the knowledge of world schema can help.

Such cases are further illustrated by the results of the experiment (with two different groups of students of two different cultural backgrounds), investigating the simultaneous effects on ESL reading comprehension of both culture-specific content schemata and formal schemata, as well as any potential interaction between them reported by Carrell (1987). The results show the conditions that are expected to yield good reading comprehension (familiar content, familiar rhetorical form) and the conditions that are expected to yield poor reading comprehension (unfamiliar content, unfamiliar rhetorical form). More interestingly, the results for the 'mixed' conditions (familiar rhetorical form) indicate that content schemata affect reading comprehension to a greater extent than formal schemata (ibid).

Positive results in teaching students to use knowledge of text structure for L1 reading and organisational patterns have been reported by Meyer (1975). The knowledge of how certain types of texts are organised helps readers comprehend and recall the text (ibid; Carrell & Connor, 1991). Carrell (1988b) has argued that a lack of schema activation is one major source of processing difficulty with second language readers. This has been verified, not only through culture-specific text comparisons, but also in discipline-specific comparisons of readers with familiar and less familiar background knowledge (Alderson & Urquhart, 1988; Strother & Ulijin, 1987). Therefore, schemata have been called *interacting knowledge structures* (Rumelhart and Ortony, 1977:100).

Tonjes (1991) gives a summary of schema theory, stating that schema helps readers:

- (1) Assimilate new information;
- (2) See what is important;
- (3) Make inferences that elaborate;
- (4) Summarise by aiding in the separation of important ideas from less important ones;
- (5) Recall, as our schema influences text rather than the text itself that we will recall.

Schema first influences interpretation and when activated, helps later recall of what was read. Failure to understanding a text may happen because readers either do not possess the schema intended by the author, or have failed for some reason to activate a schema that they possess. To solve the first problem, students have to be asked to read a lot in order to enlarge their



knowledge. For the second problem, the teacher has to demonstrate to students, while reading, how to pause and use appropriate prior knowledge. Within these activities, it is important to appreciate the relationship between schema and interest/motivation. It is doubtful whether Chinese teachers in extensive reading classes do this sufficiently. Efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge. Hence teachers must ensure that students realise that good readers actively think about what they are reading and actively relate it to what they have already known or experienced. This helps them understand, remember and enjoy what they are reading.

### 2.2.5 Teaching grammar

As mentioned, Chinese 'intensive' reading classes emphasise grammar and vocabulary learning. In recent years one of the main controversies surrounding the teaching of grammar is how it should be taught. Raising the awareness of appropriate ways of teaching grammar enriches and enhances students' ideas and knowledge and makes the teaching of grammar rules more vivid. However:

- 1) Does a grammar class consist primarily of the formal explanation of grammatical rules using all the grammatical terminology necessary?; or
- 2) Is the teaching of grammar synonymous with practicing common grammatical patterns such as simple statements with the verb *to be* and *Wh-questions*?; or
- 3) Does the teaching of grammar mean providing students with opportunities to use English in a variety of realistic situations, enabling them to learn effective communication?

The Chinese video programme for teaching English fits into the first category. McKay (1985) examined the advantages and disadvantages of each of the views expressed on grammar teaching. To know the grammatical rules, although necessary, is not sufficient to enable English to be used effectively outside the classroom. The teaching of grammar should, therefore, focus on both the form and function of reading in order to allow students to communicate in an appropriate form according to the situation. This leaves the teacher with the task of educating students to link form and function within a text by using applicable techniques.

McKay (ibid) summarises a series of techniques and, based on the reading materials and grammatical features, such a method of teaching grammar creates a mini-communication situation that enables students learn both form and function. This situational and visual learning enhances memory and can be extended to the teaching of reading as a whole (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996c; Fry, 1981; Morris and Stewart-Dore, 1984; Lunzer et al., 1984; Davis and Greene, 1984; Mohan, 1986).

Certain features of grammar, like indefinite articles, definite articles and substitutions etc. are best taught in a discourse context. Problem-solving activities can also be used to attract students' attention and to arouse their interest, even to set them thinking. By giving students a task to work out, a real problem to solve, sentences to combine together and/or by asking them to distinguish the differences of formal or informal English, grammatical or textual knowledge is eventually introduced in a 'scaffolding', step by step manner. Within this context, McKay's approach to grammar teaching is strongly recommended for Chinese grammar teaching in a reading context.

#### 2.2.6 Teaching discourse

Discourse is the ultimate stage of communication, whether it is in a conversational form or in a written form (Brown and Yule, 1983). In a written text with no advantages of gestures and facial expressions, it is, normally, the topic or the title that sets the theme, and other textual clues like subtitles or pictures etc. that aid comprehension. Grabe (1988) points out that one of the important parts of reading is the recognition of text genres and distinguishes text types deliberately exploited by writers.

In relation to teaching reading discourse, it is believed that strategies can be divided into two types, macro and micro. For macro strategies, discourse is dealt with according to a more general approach such as by using top-down or knowledge-driven methods, while for micro strategies, discourse is dealt with in a more specific way, such as by using the bottom-up method or by analysing and linking semantic relations.

The micro strategies of discourse analysis help readers understand the details of the discourse, such as the cohesion and textuality of a discourse (McCarthy, 1991). McCarthy classifies the grammatical links under three broad types: reference, ellipsis/substitution, and conjunction (ibid; Halliday, 1985), which students need to make clear in their reading in order to enable a good flow of contextual discourse. Otherwise, they not only create difficulties for themselves in learning from what structural omissions/substitutions are permissible, but also do not appear to be able to readily use proficient learners' strategies in situations where native speakers naturally resort to them (Scarcella and Brunak, 1981). Anaphoric and cataphoric lexis are also important clues in reading a text, especially for guessing unknown words.

The techniques and strategies for teaching vocabulary, grammar and discourse and the reading theories and models discussed suggest ways to improve and raise the quality of teaching reading in China. The strategies related to these discussions are, therefore, all included in the questionnaire survey.

## 2.3 Review on Learning

Learners should know their own abilities and weaknesses to enable them to apply learning strategies that best suit themselves and that can help them to progress faster. Moreover, Chinese teachers of English should be aware of the particular difficulties experienced by their students so that they can emphasise the most appropriate strategies that can help them resolve their problems.

### 2.3.1 Types of learners

Teachers have long noticed that, although learners start from the same level and are taught by the same teachers, they progress at different speeds, and are good at different aspects of language acquisition. There are many factors that affect learning, such as learners' ability, personality and family background. These all play a vital role in learners' progress.

Studies in educational psychology suggest that people learning anything - including second or foreign languages - use at least two distinct strategies (Celce-Murica, 1988): Analytical and Holistic. *Analytical* learners form and test hypotheses, consciously or unconsciously, they extract paradigms and rules from examples. *Holistic* learners, on the other hand, learn best by doing little or no analysis. Instead, they learn by exposure to large chunks of language in meaningful context.

Nunan (1991) classifies four types of learners and their preference:

- Type 1: ‘concrete’ learners: These learners tend to like games, films, pictures, video, using cassettes, talking in pairs and practising English outside class.
- Type 2: ‘analytical’ learners: These learners like studying grammar, studying English books and reading newspaper, studying alone, finding their own mistakes and working on problems set by teachers.
- Type 3: ‘communicative’ learners: These learners like to learn by watching, listening to native speakers, talking to friends in English and watching television in English, using English out of class, in shops, trains, etc., learning new words by hearing them and learning by conversation.
- Type 4: ‘authority oriented’ learners: These learners prefer teachers to explain everything, like to have their own textbooks, to write everything in a notebook, to study grammar, learn by reading, and learn new words by seeing them.

Although it is a fact that learners are of different types, what is of particular interest is to find out *what are the good or successful language learner characteristics*. Rubin (1975) proposes seven strategies and Stern (1975) ten strategies that relate to good language learners. The knowledge of types of learners and good language learners helps teachers to become aware of different learner situations and the possible and practical teaching strategies to apply. Chinese students, however, tend to be authority oriented and to some extent analytic learners (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996b) and teachers should, therefore, relate their lessons to this particular type of student audience.

### 2.3.1.1 Attitudes and Motivation

Attitudes and motivation play important roles in learning. As Carroll (1962) suggests, second language achievement varies as a function of three learner characteristics: aptitude, general intelligence and motivation.

Language aptitude and intelligence imply innate differences, individual differences in the task performed in terms of level of achievement and in the speed of acquisition. Obviously, measures of language aptitude are dependent upon acquired knowledge. So are the measures of intelligence, which depend largely on the individual. Some people have a talent for languages, while others have to spend more time to attain the same level of ability. Because of the differences, some individuals are good at short-term memory, some at long term memory. Their in-born character determines the types of learners they are. This character may be changed, but it is extremely difficult to do so. The above characteristics are viewed as *intrinsic*.

However, the students' attitude towards reading and their degree of diligence can be controlled by the students themselves and are often affected by many of the *extrinsic* factors like the students' mood, physical condition and the surrounding community as well as his social group. Therefore, students' attitudes and motivation should be thoroughly studied, so that attention can be directed to developing reading capacity as much and as early as possible.

Ellis (1985) discusses the use of attitude and motivation in foreign language learning (also Brown, 1988; Gardner, 1985) and concludes that there is no general agreement about what precisely 'motivation' or 'attitudes' consist of, nor about the relationship between the two. For the present discussion, the two terms are used interchangeably. This is appropriate in language teaching and learning, because, students' attitude produces drives which create motivation. The discussion focuses on two types of attitude and motivation: integrative and instrumental (Gardner, 1985).

*Integrative attitude* is the ability to integrate with people and a given culture or society with the intention to know them well. *Instrumental attitude* is the ability to use the language as a tool to read books, to get a better job, to achieve higher status and with higher education to gain greater respect. In particular, attitudes are self-oriented and individual. They may be assumed for vocational reasons, status, achievement, personal success, self-enhancement, or basic security and survival.

McDonough (1981: 159) found that the performance of learners in Britain and European schools was not affected by integrative motives, although Gardner and Lambert (1959: p.271) conclude that ‘integrative oriented students are generally more successful in acquiring French than those who are instrumentally oriented’. Gordon (1980) also found that students with integrative attitude tended to have more favourable attitudes to second language learning. Integrative attitude may both be the cause and effect of becoming or staying bilingual (Gardner, 1985). A person may possess the two attitudes at the same time and may be motivated in varying degrees by both orientations.

In general, Chinese students tend to demonstrate both attitudes. They learn a foreign language (compulsory in the universities) in order to get a better job and gain greater respect and a better salary, but also seek the opportunity to travel abroad either to study, work or simply to meet people of different cultures. As a result, Chinese students tend to be hard working and highly motivated. The higher motivated the students are, the more they read. The more they read, the more capable they become at reading.

The teachers’ role is to foster students’ interest, increase their motivation and provide them with advice and suggestions that can help them achieve their goals and meet their reading purposes. Irwin (1991) summarises work by Dulin (1978) by proposing the following model:

$$\text{Motivation} = \frac{\text{expected reward}}{\text{expected effort}}$$

Irwin (1991: 145) (Figure 2.1) emphasises that ‘motivation can be increased by increasing the expected reward or by decreasing the expected effort or, more especially, by doing both of

these things'. Her suggestions, which can provide Chinese teachers with ideas on how to increase students' motivation, are given in Figure 2.1. Some of the suggestions, listed under decreasing expected effort, are discussed further within this thesis.

Figure 2.1 Selected sample procedures for increasing motivation (Irwin, 1991)

Increasing expected reward	Decreasing expected effort
Provide regular praise	Provide background information
Provide interesting activities	Give specific purpose
Write fair tests	Preview assignment
Provide high-success tasks	Preview vocabulary
Involve student in purpose setting	Discuss reading strategies
Involve students in questioning	Use high-success materials
Use meaningful reading tasks	Divide long chapters into shorter assignments
Give students choices	

Irwin and Baker (1989: 58) (Figure 2.2) provide 10 suggestions for motivating students on specific assignments.

Figure 2.2 General suggestions for motivation on specific assignments (Irwin & Baker, 1989)

- (1) Never give a reading assignment without thinking about how to motivate students.
- (2) Never present reading as a chore or a punishment.
- (3) As much as possible, increase the reward and decrease the effort (see Figure 2.1).
- (4) Give students some control over what and why they read.
- (5) Follow reading assignments with activities that allow the students to use what they learned while reading.
- (6) Make all reading assignments relevant, meaningful, and useful by giving the students an increasing purpose for reading.
- (7) When possible, use reading materials that are related to the students' interests.
- (8) When possible, show the students how the material might be useful to them in the future.
- (9) Show that you are also interested in the material.
- (10) Make sure that each student has a chance to succeed.

In addition to the accepted ideas for motivating students' interest, earlier discussions have also indicated the close association between schema and motivation. It is, therefore, proposed that Chinese teachers should not only follow the suggestions given in Figure 2.2 but should also be concerned with the particular interests of their students. In particular, they should promote an actual desire to read English and a wish to increase their competence beyond the confines of the classroom, encouraging their students to become self sufficient and self confident. It is known that self-confidence (with a concomitant absence of situational

anxiety) develops as a result of positive competence in the context of second language learning (Oxford, 1990).

### 2.3.2 Learning Strategies

Apart from attitude and motivation, the usage of learning strategies also has direct impact on students' performance (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). In their longitudinal study of learning strategies used by foreign language students for different learning tasks, both groups, Russians and Spanish, contained effective and ineffective students. They found that, in general, effective students used a greater variety of strategies and used them in ways that helped them complete their language tasks successfully. Less effective students not only had fewer strategy types in their repertoires, but also frequently used strategies that were inappropriate to the task at hand or that did not lead to successful task completion. The analyses revealed that effective foreign language students were much more purposeful in their approach to a task. They were more able to monitor their comprehension and actions for achieving overall meaning and used their prior and linguistic knowledge effectively while working on a task.

Similar to O'Malley's and Chamot's findings are the results of Wongbiasaj and Chaikitmongkol (1995). Their findings of successful and unsuccessful Thai university students showed that successful students were more able to monitor their comprehension, production and purpose to an approach, more sensitive to feedback and more flexible in their use of strategies for overall meaningfulness while working on a task. Successful students seemed to prefer strategies of an association or linking nature and more abstract 'deeper' strategies. They showed more willingness and eagerness to use the language in real situations and demonstrated more systematic thinking.

## 2.4 Review Summary

This section reviews and brings together the key issues arising from the theories considered in this chapter in order to establish the most relevant aspects that appertain to this study.



### 2.4.1 Teaching/learning approaches and methods to reading

There has been much theorising and dialogue on the bottom-up and top-down approaches to reading. This thesis makes no judgement on their relative merits, but suggests that both approaches should co-exist within the reading process; believing that the top-down approach will not work without text data, while the bottom-up approach will not work efficiently without top-down knowledge. The thesis is in agreement with Eskey (1986) who proposes an interactive approach.

Within this context, the thesis may seem to promote the top-down approach. This should, however, only be viewed as an attempt to redress the current situation in Chinese ELT, which relies heavily on a bottom-up approach. The study appreciates the benefits of both approaches, and the strategies reviewed are, therefore, not confined to any particular method, but encompass the intrinsic processes associated with both approaches.

By comparison to the interactive approach (Eskey, 1986) and the Chinese eclectic approach (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a), this study proposes a **Teaching Reading Strategies in an Interactive Approach (TRSIA)**. This approach emphasises teaching reading strategies by using an eclectic method that interactively combines the top-down and bottom-up processes to provide problem-solving techniques and higher levels of reading comprehension that can improve ELT reading in China. Since the eclectic approach is already familiar to many Chinese ELT teachers, it is felt that **TRSIA** is likely to be accepted and will enable Chinese teachers to select and emphasise applicable reading strategies according to a particular situation.

It is intended that the approach should provide an interrelated discipline with psycholinguistics, socio-linguistics and linguistics for teachers, enabling them to teach students effectively how to use the language, in a manner that avoids boredom and tedium. Students should enjoy learning the imparted knowledge and skills and appreciate how to apply the strategies to their own learning.

Nuttall (1982) tends to discount intensive reading, by describing it as a vicious circle and suggesting that it slows down the reading process. She presents a virtuous reading circle to promote the use of extensive reading. Despite the partial truth expressed by Nuttall, this research suggests that intensive and extensive reading are both important and that they should be inter-related by students when reading. As students become confident they can apply the top down skills (the macro strategies), using the bottom up skills (the micro strategies) only to concentrate on key information. This will enable students to read quickly, while, at the same time, still achieving good comprehension. By contrast to Nuttall's vicious and virtuous circles, the research, therefore, presents a dual reading cycle (Chapter 8), which represents two inter-linking spirals to demonstrate how students should readily transfer from extensive reading to intensive reading and vice-versa within their reading depending on their purpose.

A constant theme within previous discussions is the benefits that can be achieved through the use of reading strategies. The previous discussion has illustrated the importance of strategies in second language acquisition and an emphasis on strategy teaching is considered particularly relevant to China where, because of its history and its educational culture, traditional non-strategy based methods still persist.

Recent research has suggested that there has been too much theorising and not sufficient practical application with regard to the strategies (Williams and Moran, 1989). Guessing models have been criticised as confusing students (Urquhart and Weir, 1998). This implies that teachers should take care when teaching strategies. Strategies are only a means of acquiring language knowledge, not an end in themselves and a minimal level of vocabulary and grammatical rules must first be learnt before successful reading can be achieved.

Indiscriminate use of strategies can divert students from the true meanings of words or texts, causing frustration and eventual loss of self-confidence. Students must be taught that the use of strategies is not a panacea. In an uncontrolled environment, clues may prove contradictory or confusing. Strategies must, therefore, be used appropriately. Otherwise, students may experience a breakdown of comprehension. When used in an appropriate manner, strategies

aid acquisition and retention of language knowledge and enhance students' performance, optimising students' potential to read well.

Strategies are particularly useful in a controlled environment such as in the classroom, where the teacher can explicitly describe **what** the strategies consist of, **how**, **when**, and **why** they might be used, and how their effectiveness can be evaluated (Carrell, 1996 cited in Cohen, 1998), promoting learner autonomy and learner self-direction. In order to determine their long-term effects, strategy training is being undertaken at the University of Minnesota (Cohen, 1998). Part of the training is to insert strategies into language textbooks and integrate strategies into foreign language instruction. Urquhart and Weir (1998) suggest, not only introducing them into textbooks, but also into language tests. They have designed tests to monitor students' use of strategies during expeditious and careful reading. Most of the strategies mentioned in AERT (Advance English Reading Test) (ibid) are included in the questionnaire survey conducted by this research (Appendix D).

#### 2.4.2 Categorisation of strategies

By categorising strategies and identifying their relative levels within the learning process from basic to advanced, it is hoped to indicate at which stage the strategies should be taught and learned (see also Chapter 9). There are difficulties, however, in categorisation since it is recognised that the nature of strategy categorisation may depend heavily on the student's level and reading purpose.

##### 2.4.2.1 Strategy types/categories

Although this chapter has tried to give some insight into language learning, how to teach students efficient ways of mastering reading, working out the meaning of unknown words and grammatical rules and ensuring that students retain learnt knowledge remains a problem for language teachers. In order to address the problem this study categorises strategies into three types:

*1. Metacognitive strategies* that organise the learning process;

2. *Acquisition strategies* that assist students to guess the meaning of unknown words, predict information and acquire understanding;
3. *Retention strategies* that enable students to retain learnt vocabulary and knowledge.

### *Metacognitive Strategies*

Metacognitive strategies (also discussed in Chapter 3) may be viewed as managing, organising and centring the students' use of strategies. For this reason they may be considered at a higher hierarchical level. Strategies within this category organise the learning process and ensure that strategies are activated within an efficient environment. They help Chinese students plan their learning process and manage their use of strategies, enabling them to learn in an effective and efficient manner and ultimately to become self-sufficient learners, which, because of the relatively large class size, is especially important in China.

### *Acquisition Strategies*

Acquisition strategies assist students in understanding the meaning of unknown words and learning new grammatical rules and enlarging knowledge. Their use is more prevalent at an early stage of learning when students need to acquire a large amount of new knowledge quickly and effectively. They are particularly important in as much as they can reduce the time taken for students to become reasonably fluent readers, ensuring that their interest and motivation are retained and they do not become frustrated or bored. Teaching students to use acquisition strategies may, however, prove difficult in China, where students often feel more comfortable with the traditional Chinese learning method, such as checking up a dictionary for unknown words and may, therefore, be resilient to change.

### *Retention Strategies*

Retention strategies ensure students retain learnt knowledge and often rely on memorisation techniques, such as word grouping. By contrast to acquisition strategies they become more prevalent at later stages of learning when a relatively large amount of vocabulary and knowledge related to reading needs to be retained. Many retention strategies fit in with the traditional Chinese learning methods that emphasise word learning but may be more elaborate, taking students to a deeper learning level.

#### 2.4.2.2 Reading and strategy levels

Attempting to define reading/understanding within levels of learning has been the subject of many theorists and researchers. In conjunction with the categorisation given in the previous section, this study suggests five levels of reading ability (ref: Diagram 9.1 in Chapter 9). These levels can be compared to the six levels suggested by Bloom et al. (1956) and the four levels suggested by Tonjes and Zintz (1981).

They imply a hierarchical structure of reading/understanding, interwoven with the use of basic to advanced strategies:

- 1) Literal: an act of decoding words - the basic level of reading;
- 2) Implicational: interpretation of stated or implied meanings by applying readers' linguistic or discourse knowledge to fully comprehend the text - the normal level of reading;
- 3) Personal: a critical and emotional reaction, reading with personal judgement and social experience - the evaluative level of reading;
- 4) Content: linking topic, especially subject areas and world knowledge for better understanding - the advanced level of reading;
- 5) Creative: an application of perceived ideas/knowledge to behaviour, putting theories and principles into practice - the creative level of reading.

By reference to the above levels of learning/reading, it is possible to relate the levels to particular strategies. It has already been mentioned that metacognitive strategies may be viewed at a higher level than acquisition and retention strategies and in a similar manner advanced strategies are at a higher level than basic strategies (Appendix K). Strategies can, therefore, be considered hierarchical, although, because of the subjective nature of language learning and a dependence on the nature and purpose of the reading, the hierarchy is not well defined. It can be seen that reading not only involves linguistic, but also cognitive, social, psychological and sociological dimensions. It is, therefore, important to realise that reading ability may be influenced by many factors and the use and application of reading strategies,

in accordance with the five levels (from basic to advanced) suggested by this research, enable students to increase both their reading speed and comprehension.

## 2.5 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed current theories and aspects of reading and of teaching/learning reading that have been developed over many years of experimentation. The review considered linguistic, psycho-linguistic, cognitive and social approaches to reading, revealing many important aspects. It concluded that reading is an act of processing information on a word, discourse and schema level. It also revealed that to achieve faster reading and better understanding, reading methods combining top-down, bottom-up and interactive approaches should be applied and, at the same time, interwoven with successful reading strategies reviewed in this research. Readers should link all their knowledge to interpret the text, taking into consideration their reading purpose, their schemata knowledge and any cultural differences between their world and the world described in the text. By reference to Chinese ELT, **TRISA** was proposed to emphasise teaching English reading strategies using an eclectic method within an interactive approach. The validity of this approach is reviewed by a materials workshop discussed in Chapter 7.

Previous discussions established the benefit of motivation and its relationship with schema. This suggests that lessons and teaching materials should be designed to promote students' interest. Within this context, textbooks and tests should use and appreciate how and where strategies apply, providing applicable clues to aid students with their reading within a controlled environment. The materials workshop described in Chapter 7 presents a good example. It should be appreciated, however, that because of centralisation, any changes to existing Chinese educational methods would need to be accomplished through applicable educational authorities.

From the review of previous research and theories and an analysis of sophisticated relationships between the various aspects of reading, three strategy categories: metacognitive, acquisition and retention and five levels of reading (from lower to higher) were proposed.

The categorisation facilitates the teaching process by identifying the purpose for which particular strategies may be used and the stage at which they should be used, with a view of attaining the highest level of reading. This level of reading can be achieved through the careful and controlled use and application of reading strategies, the tools of learning, which should be emphasised in language teaching and learning, so that students can apply them to guide their own learning and reading and become more self-sufficient. As Nuttall (1982) said, ‘Conscious development of reading skills is important because it is obviously impossible for us to familiarise our students with every text they will ever want to read. Instead, we must give them techniques for approaching texts of various kinds, to be read for various purposes’.

The review considered aspects of reading, teaching and learning to determine strategies that would increase teaching and learning efficiency and effectiveness. Having considered these aspects, Chapter 3 studies teaching and learning models in order to surmise key aspects and strategies that would be most suitable and beneficial for Chinese ELT and to provide the basis for production of a theoretical model (described in the following chapter). This theoretical model presents a visual diagrammatic representation of the strategies and techniques that should be considered for inclusion in future Chinese English reading curriculum. Whether and how they are included depends to a large part on Chinese students’ and teachers’ perceptions of current strategy use, which provides the focus of the study.

## Chapter Three

### REVIEW OF MODELS

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews teaching and learning models in ELT and presents a theoretical model, which combines teaching and learning strategies derived from the literature review. This model is considered most suitable for teaching and learning English reading in China. The model comprises two parts: a teaching part, divided into three stages, and a learning part, divided into five stages, indicating the relationships between the two parts.

Before discussing the model, however, it is necessary to review what a model is. Husen and Postlethwaite (1994: 3865-3872) summarise four points a model should fulfil. The theoretical model, proposed by this chapter, seems to meet all the requirements. First of all, it predicts what would happen by predicting classroom teaching and learning. Secondly, it shows that there is a cause-effect relationship by describing the relationship between teaching and learning in ELT, indicating that teaching is a prerequisite for good learning. Thirdly, it provides the basis for future study by acting as the basis for a questionnaire survey and for formulation of a new model, the teaching/learning model presented in Chapter 6. Lastly, it contains structural relationships such as layers, parts, stages and categories of strategies that reveal something about the form of the relationship.

Therefore, the theoretical model may be viewed as the reduction of a complex system to a simpler and more accurately determinable state of affairs, with the intention of facilitating deduction of further consequences, which can then be tentatively re-applied to the more complex and elusive real system. It makes the intangible classroom teaching and learning more tangible, more regulated and more strategy featured, as later demonstrated in Chapter 7 by the materials workshop for **Teaching Reading Strategies in an Interactive Approach (TRSIA)**.



### 3.1 Exploration

This section concentrates on a few models of learning and reading strategies, such as O'Malley's and Chamot's (1990), and Oxford's (1990) and reading skills from Grellet (1981), Nuttall (1982) and Carrell, Devine and Eskey (1988) among others to identify the most suitable up-to-date teaching/learning reading model for China.

#### 3.1.1 Teaching and learning reading strategies revisited

McDonough (1995: 4) states that the term 'strategies' is currently enjoying a vogue in language-learning circles, with a variety of implications. Indeed, teaching and learning strategies have been described under different terms like 'techniques', 'tactics', 'potentially conscious plans', 'consciously employed operations', 'learning/basic or functional skills', 'cognitive abilities' (Wenden, 1987). Tarone (1980) defines language learning strategies as an attempt to develop linguistic and socio-linguistic competence in the target language.

McDonough (1995: 2-6) gives a clear distinction for the three commonly used terms in language teaching: process, skills and strategies. He interprets 'process' as the *mechanism* or *procedure* by which an action is performed, 'skills' as the *subconscious ability*, to perform the action and 'strategies' as the *conscious means* of acquiring the 'skills' and achieving the 'process'. This implies that strategies provide the building blocks to good reading. In a language learning context, these definitions agree with Williams and Moran (1989: 223) who describe skills as an ability which has been automatised and operates largely subconsciously, whereas a strategy is a conscious procedure carried out in order to solve a problem. Urquhart and Weir (1998: 89) support such a distinction.

This raises the question of whether proficient readers who read automatically without conscious thought of how they read, use strategies or skills and whether the readers even realise they are using strategies or skills? In the field of language teaching the two terms are, therefore, often used interchangeably. For example, Grellet (Developing Reading Skills, 1981) and Nuttall (Teaching Reading Skills in a foreign language, 1996) discuss strategies,

but call them skills. A possible reason for this confusion is that it is, sometimes, difficult to distinguish between a strategy and a skill in language learning, since the conscious use of reading strategies become reading skills when they can be used subconsciously.

More specifically, reading strategies refer to the mental operations involved when readers purposefully approach a text to make sense of what they read. Strategies are those specific ‘attacks’ that are made on a given reading problem, or as a way to fulfil a specific reading purpose. They are the moment by moment techniques that readers employ to get meaning from a text. Using particular learning strategies, according to Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986), involves planning ahead, monitoring one’s performance to identify sources of difficulty, checking, estimating, revising and self-testing. They point out that one commonly used technical definition suggests that learning strategies are operations employed by learners to aid their acquisition, storage, retrieval and use of information. It is useful to expand this definition by saying that learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations (Oxford, 1990).

Wenden and Rubin (1987) also give similar definitions, but they use the term ‘learner strategies’ to define a broader concept. In their view, learner strategies include any set of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate access, storage, retrieval and use of information on the basis that these processes are used by learners to learn and to regulate their learning. According to Urquhart and Weir (1998: 88), ‘A reading skill can be described roughly as a cognitive ability, which a person is able to use when interacting with written texts. ...., skills are seen as part of the generalised reading process’. As reviewed in Section 2.4.2.2, reading levels/processes are interwoven with reading strategies/skills.

Therefore, since readers use strategies to derive meaning where a text is unclear to them, their use may resolve many reading difficulties. Readers use strategies in varying ways: to activate appropriate schemata, to guess the meaning of unknown words, to analyse complicated structures and/or to decide what to glean from texts. Several empirical investigations have

been conducted into reading strategies and their relationships to successful and unsuccessful second language reading (Hosenfeld, 1977; Sarig, 1987; Block, 1986).

It is therefore, the teacher's (essential) task to indicate *how*, *when* and *what* strategies students should employ to enhance their reading process, using scaffolding, as necessary, on the basis of knowledge of students' current strategy uses. The application of appropriate reading strategies is a key to greater autonomy and more successful reading comprehension.

Therefore, arguably the most important aspect of teaching reading is to teach reading strategies, as they enable students to learn by themselves and become independent readers. Initially, it is necessary to focus on metacognitive strategies, which are concerned with thinking about the reading experience itself and are seen to involve '..... an awareness of what one is doing and the strategies one is employing, as well as knowledge about the actual process of learning. ... an ability to manage and regulate consciously the use of appropriate learning strategies for different situations....an awareness of one's own mental processes and an ability to reflect on how one learns, in other words, knowing about one's knowing' (Williams and Burden, 1997: 148).

### 3.1.2 Teachability

McDonough (1995: 97) asks 1) whether strategies can be taught; 2) whether students use strategies; 3) whether students who use strategies perform better. Previous research indicates that strategies can be taught. This research (Chapter 7) provides a demonstration of one way of teaching strategies. Answers to whether students use strategies and whether such use affects their performance might be revealed by questionnaire survey conducted in this study (Chapters 5 and 6).

Strategy training is thought to guide and teach learners to become more conscious of strategy use and more adept at employing appropriate strategies. Williams and Burden (1997: 156-66) offer sound advice on how best to go about this task (see also Cohen, 1998: ch. 4). They

present (p. 158-9) a strategic teaching model developed by Jones et al. (1987), which has the following guidelines:

- (1) Assess strategy use (through think aloud, interview, questionnaire).
- (2) Explain strategy use by naming or telling how to use it, step by step.
- (3) Model strategy use by demonstration or verbalisation of own thought processes while using them.
- (4) Scaffold instruction by providing support while students practise; adjusting support to suit students' needs; phasing out support to encourage autonomous strategy use.
- (5) Develop motivation by providing successful experiences; relating strategy use to improved performance.

The present study focuses on the first and second steps, in relation to Chinese readers, by using questionnaire surveys and interviews and a demonstration of how strategies may be taught.

Cohen (1998: ch. 4) offers a comprehensive discussion of the various forms that strategy training can take. He also provides an informed consideration of the extended role that teachers can play, that is, as learner trainers as well as language instructors (p.97). The teacher's role is seen as one of gradual withdrawal with the objective that, by the end of the course, the student should be able to apply the strategies independently. Urquhart and Weir (1998) adopt the now conventional distinction between *pre-reading* (planning) strategies, *while-reading* (monitoring) strategies and *post-reading* (evaluation) strategies. So the language teachers' role is to help each student gain self-awareness of how he or she learns and how to develop the means to optimise their learning experiences, both inside and outside the language classroom.

### 3.2 Teaching English Reading Strategies in China

The teaching part of the theoretical model comprises three types of strategies: *hierarchy strategies*, *teaching strategies* and *practice strategies*.

### 3.2.1 Stage 1: Hierarchy strategies

Hierarchy strategies are related to the teaching activities of organising, monitoring and evaluating and represent a higher level of thinking and decision-making. The three most important elements of effective teaching are *planning*, *pedagogy* and *sense of humour*.

#### 3.2.1.1 Planning

Two levels of planning are involved: macro-plans and micro-plans (Richards, J. 1994). Macro-plans are overall goals targeted for a course or a class and, for Chinese teaching, the macro-plan is normally considered the goal of reaching Band Four Test standards. In particular, the course objectives, or rather the standards required for English reading can help teachers plan and organise their teaching.

Micro-plans are defined as day-to-day teaching requirements and consist mainly of lesson plans that help teachers organise their lessons efficiently and effectively. These plans usually include a description of the immediate aims and objectives of the lesson, a general allocation of time, questions to raise in class, activities in which students participate, time needed to perform each required task, any teaching aids to be used, and how to teach strategies.

#### 3.2.1.2 Pedagogy

Pedagogy has a long history and has been a long-standing topic of interest to teachers and researchers. There is an abundance of literature on teaching effects that consistently shows high correlation between student scores and classroom processes. Brophy and Good (1985) give a useful summary of the teaching skills that have repeatedly been found to relate to student achievement. For example, Rosenshine (1971) and Pedersen and Faucher (1978) found that students achieve highly when their teachers emphasise academic goals, make them explicit, and have high student expectations.

Moreover, students will generally achieve more when their teachers: carefully organise and sequence their curriculum experiences, by:

- clearly setting out the learning objectives;
- frequently asking direct and specific questions to monitor their students' progress and check their understanding;
- providing students with ample opportunity to practice, by giving prompts and feedback which allow students to practice a skill until it becomes second nature;
- regularly reviewing students and holding them accountable for their work.

Second language pedagogy has similarly received enormous attention and discussion, and the question of teaching methods has been very carefully examined, over long periods according to Kelly (1969) and Howatt (1984). The central focus of each different approach aims at achieving successful teaching and learning of the target language.

Amongst the many teaching approaches and methods, the four major methods are Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-Lingual/Situational Approach and Communicative Approach. Each method has dominated the history of second language teaching over a considerable period of time, has emphasised certain aspects of language teaching and learning and has been derived from certain beliefs or circumstances (Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Larsen-Freeman, 1986). A large number of authors have delineated the distinguishing characteristics of particular approaches to second language teaching and advocate one approach over another on the basis of a conceptual comparison and an empirical or quantitative study (Woods, 1996). The most favoured approach largely depends on one's subjective view of the approach and of its practical value.

As already reviewed in Chapter 2, Chinese English teachers strongly advocate combining the traditional Chinese way of teaching with a communicative approach. They claim that this *eclectic approach*, which is a mixture of the Direct Method, Grammar-Translation Method, Audio-Lingual Approach and the Communicative Approach, is the most suitable for Chinese teaching of English reading. This eclectic approach remains largely based on traditional

teacher/text centred methods plus selected aspects of communicative approaches (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a). It implies that emphasis should be placed on good teacher training programmes to ensure effective teaching.

In particular, training must enable teachers to select the most effective method for each lesson according to the content, and to adjust the methods according to the actual classroom situation, students' interests and mood. Within this context, the teacher must be able to offer several different methods to ensure that students are provided with refreshing tasks so that their interest is retained. Quality teaching is more than the use of day-to-day teaching skills. As Hopkins (1993) states, teachers promote student learning by being active in planning and organising their teaching, suggesting learning goals, arranging occasions for guided practice, monitoring progress, providing feedback, and, generally, helping students understand and accomplish their work.

Furthermore, Joyce et al. (1987) claim that research clearly suggests the effectiveness of a variety of innovative teaching practices, particularly, when teachers use co-operative learning approaches, which includes peer teaching, ability grouping and democratic grouping. It appears that the more complex the approach (i.e. involving higher order thinking, problem-solving, social skills and attitudes), the greater is their effect.

Arguably, therefore, effective and successful teaching practice is related to the teacher. Rubin (1985) comments on the quality of classrooms where the purposes are clear, the goals sensible, and an unmistakable feeling of well-being prevails, where the students are caught up in learning; excitement abounds; and playfulness and seriousness blend easily together. This is one of the reasons why Chinese teachers were included in the questionnaire survey.

The summary below from Haigh and Katterns (1984: 24) suggests that effective teachers should:

- (1) Draw on knowledge from a wide repertoire of teaching modes and associated skills and be able to plan and create learning environments that are appropriate to different kinds of learning outcomes;

- (2) Be capable of flexible control of a repertoire of strategies and tactical skills that, either as originally planned or according to responsive moves, are suitably matched to teaching requirements and pupils learning behaviour;
- (3) Be sensitive to cues in teaching-learning situations that signal the suitability of sustaining or modifying planned teaching goals and patterns of teaching behaviour.

### 3.2.1.3 Classroom teaching behaviour

The classroom is the teachers' arena, enabling teachers to demonstrate their full repertoire of academic skills, knowledge, organisational ability, personality and flexibility. Teachers must control their input and the activities they assign students. In particular, teachers should decide the proportion of time for teacher-talk and student-talk by the objectives of a lesson, and where the lesson fits within the overall scheme of the course.

Nunan (1991) argues that in many foreign language classrooms, teacher-talk is important in providing learners with the only substantial live target language input they are likely to receive. Teacher talk is even more valuable when it can answer/explain misunderstandings and problems students may encounter. But, how often should the teacher talk, since it is clearly important that students should be allowed to participate and practise in language learning class? In most Chinese classrooms, there is obviously too much teacher talk and too little student talk.

The second element is a sense of humour, which is a very important factor for quality teaching (Ramsay and Oliver, 1995). Many teachers have the capacity to see the humorous side of things and to develop fun situations in their classroom. This capacity helps the classroom process to become more fun, increasing the motivation of students.

### 3.2.2 Stage 2: Teaching strategies

Aspects that relate to *teaching strategies* are *cultural knowledge*, *prior knowledge*, *linguistic* and *discourse knowledge* and *reading strategies*. These aspects together with applicable



teaching strategies are presented in the theoretical model (Section 3.2.2.1) and are included in the questionnaire survey.

### 3.2.2.1 Cultural knowledge

Language learning requires plenty of practice, and involves the knowledge of two different cultures. Oxford and Anderson (1995) point out that different learning styles arise because of cultural differences. Cultural awareness between the two countries (mother country and any target country) has been raised as an issue in bridging communication and understanding (W. Zhang, 1990; Taylor and Chen, 1991; Jin and Cortazzi, 1993). The culture into which the students are socialised affects the way they learn. Chinese students are good at memorising new words and grammatical rules. When teachers fail to recognise cultural differences, students react in negative ways to the instructions given (Ortiz & Garcia, 1988). This is especially prevalent in the case of a language classroom with a mixed cultural background, but is not usually the case in Chinese universities, which normally contain only Chinese students.

It is important to emphasise the cultural values behind English usage in order to avoid misunderstanding. For example, ‘propaganda’ in English, evokes a negative emotion and sounds pejorative having an association with dishonesty and fraud (Zhang, J. 1990). In Chinese culture, however, ‘propaganda’ (xuanchuan) is an appreciated term, bearing a positive tone.

Cultural differences can even arise in scientific or literary written texts (Taylor and Chen, 1991; Gee, 1992). Students should, therefore, be taught to use cultural knowledge when they read (Carrell, 1984b; Pritchard, 1990; Steffenson & Joag-Dev, 1984) to enable them to achieve more from their existing academic studies (and possible studies abroad). As suggested by W. Zhang, (1990), cultural awareness must be made one of the goals in EFL teaching/learning and curriculum designers of all colleges and departments concerned should take cultural content courses into consideration. Courses such as Culture & Society, and

History should be included in the curriculum and EFL teachers should strive to be bicultural, or at least familiar with target cultures.

#### 3.2.2.2 Reading strategies

The use of reading strategies can greatly improve students' performance and, therefore, it is important that readers actively infer, connect, summarise, elaborate, and select strategies. Grellett (1981) and Nuttall (1982) study the various reading skills of inferring, predicting, previewing, anticipating, skimming, scanning and analysing. Koda (1989) shows by experimental results that in the L1-L2 cognition process, transfer takes place in L2 reading and that students, therefore, need to learn how to transfer L1 reading skills to L2 reading.

In reading, use of culture and schema knowledge can be viewed as a top-down method, use of linguistic knowledge as a bottom-up method and use of discourse knowledge and reading strategies as integrative methods. To optimise learning, readers need to combine all the various methods together.

#### 3.2.3 Stage 3: Practice strategies

Practice makes perfect. There are two main types of practice: in-class and after-class. In-class practice should be organised to maximise learning and the use of time. The teacher should remember that group teaching through activities is often more interesting and entertaining than mere explanation. Activities such as role-play and group/pair work train students' communicative and co-operative skills.

After teaching students how to combine and use top-down and bottom-up methods interactively, the teacher should model the 'think aloud procedure'. This technique is normally considered a research technique, and can be used by the teacher or students to demonstrate strategy use and make students more aware of key strategies.

It is also necessary to ensure that students read more after class and the teacher should, therefore, assign homework. Homework tasks can help students focus consciously on certain strategies. When homework reading tasks are checked in class, students can be asked to report on their individual reading by summarising what they have read, indicating useful expressions they have learned, and identifying how they used different reading strategies. Haggard's lesson (1982) begins with an assignment that requires each student and the teacher to bring a word that he or she believes the entire class should learn. During the lesson they should justify the source of the word, identify its context-derived definition and suggest why the word is worth learning. The class, therefore, becomes a window for learning materials, in which strategies are constantly on display.

### 3.3 Learning English Reading Strategies in China

This section discusses the learning part of the theoretical model, comprising five stages: *metacognitive strategies*, *cognitive strategies*, *social strategies*, *compensation strategies* and *practice strategies*. This learning part is mainly based upon Oxford's (1990) model and on reading skills from (Grellet, 1981; Nuttall, 1982). Before embarking on discussions of the five strategies, two types of strategy first need to be mentioned: cognitive and metacognitive strategies (see also Section 3.1.1).

#### 3.3.1 Explanation of terminology

Cognition consists of those processes or strategies through which an individual obtains knowledge or conceptual understanding. Cognitive strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials (Nisbet and Shucksmith, 1986).

Metacognition (Flavell, 1976) is described as knowledge concerning one's own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them, e.g. learning relevant properties of information. Metacognition refers, among other things, to the active monitoring and the

consequent regulation and orchestration of these processes in relation to the cognitive objects on which they apply, usually in the service of some concrete goal or objective.

### 3.3.2 Learning models

When students use appropriate language learning strategies, they improve their proficiency and achieve greater self-confidence (Oxford, 1990). This section will compare a few learning models, concentrating on Oxford's model, as it provides the basic structure of the theoretical model presented by this research.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) explore the concepts of declarative and procedural knowledge drawing on Anderson's (1983, 1985) distinction between what we know *about*, or 'static' information in memory, and what we know *how to do*, or 'dynamic' information in memory. The first is *declarative knowledge*, and the second is *procedural knowledge*. They also investigate learning strategies and suggest that they can be described and classified. Rubin (1975), Stern (1975) and Naiman et al. (1978) give a list of classifications of learning strategies in second language acquisition derived from interviews with good language learners.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) point out that Anderson does not distinguish learning strategies from other cognitive processes, because his theory focuses on describing how information is stored and retrieved, not on how learning can be enhanced. However, they argue that if one's purpose is to facilitate learning and teaching, there are advantages in isolating component mental processes that can be imparted to learners as ways to make learning more effective.

From research in cognitive psychology based on interviews with experts and novices on psychological tasks and from theoretical analysis of reading comprehension and problem solving, O'Malley and Chamot (ibid) summarise three types of strategies: metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective. These are also included in Oxford's (1990) model.

### **Oxford's Model**

Oxford (1990) points out that developing language learning strategies can encourage greater overall learner self-direction. This self-direction gradually increases, as learners become more comfortable with the idea of their own responsibility. Self-directed students gradually gain greater confidence, involvement, and proficiency. Oxford presented a system of classification, which provided the basis for production of a Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). A potential problem, however, exists for the present study: learners' strategies are fundamentally learner-centred or learning-centred, but as noted earlier, most Chinese ELT classrooms are considered teacher-centred. This will be further discussed later.

The involvement is more than just cognition because language learning strategies are not only restricted to cognitive functions. The strategies also include metacognitive functions like planning, evaluating, and arranging one's own learning; and emotional (affective), social, as well as other functions. But affective and social strategies, according to Oxford, were not given enough attention in the past. Therefore, she devised a more inclusive model of language learning strategies.

This strategy system differs in several ways from earlier attempts to classify strategies. It is more comprehensive and detailed; it is more systematic in linking individual strategies, as well as strategy groups, with each of the four language skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing); and it uses less technical terminology. It is therefore teacher-friendly, which is an important point when educational change is considered.

Appendix A presents a general overview of the Oxford system of language learning strategies. Strategies are divided into two major classes: direct and indirect, then subdivided into a total of six groups (memory, cognitive, and compensation under the direct class; metacognitive, affective, and social under the indirect class) of 62 learning strategies comprising the complete system (Appendix B). The model indicates that direct and indirect strategies support each other, and that each strategy group is capable of connecting with and assisting every other strategy group.

Oxford's model has been influential among teachers. This research agrees with Graham's (1993) emphasis that the major strengths of Oxford (1990) are its comprehensive overview of language learning strategies, its clear organisation, its lists of suggestions for teachers seeking to teach learning strategies, and its extensive research background. Most activities mentioned deal with actual practices that language learners might use, providing a good practical guide and useful resource for language teachers. There may be some disadvantages: the model does not implicitly emphasise the combination, sequencing and embedding of strategies, one with another, or several together. Moreover, the model describes a general learning situation and, therefore, needs to be modified to take the particular aspects of Chinese ELT reading into consideration.

The theoretical model, described below, is based on Oxford, yet, in terms of content, it is quite different from her model. The rationale used for its production is different and its contents are specifically related to the requirements for ELT in China and provide the basis for the questionnaire survey (Chapters 4 and 5).

### 3.3.2.1 Similarities of the learning models

The study of the models by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Oxford (1990) of learning strategies reveals that the three categories of strategies, metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective, are considered the fundamental types in both models. They also appear in other discussions on learning strategies, such as O'Malley et al. (1985), and similar ideas expressed in Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986), Kirby (1984), Rubin (1975) and Naiman et al. (1978).

Rubin & Thompson (1981) and Oxford (1990) start with the same kinds of category: direct and indirect strategies. Rubin includes strategies that directly affect learning, items like clarification/verification, monitoring, memorising, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning and practice. She suggests that strategies that contribute indirectly to learning create opportunities for practice and production.

### 3.3.2.2 Differences between the learning models

*The first difference is the way of grouping strategies.*

The social/affective strategies are put together in O'Malley's and Chamot's model, but are separated in Oxford's model. O'Malley's and Chamot's model begins with three categories of strategies: metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective, while Oxford starts with direct and indirect strategies and follows with sub-categorisations of these.

*The second major difference is the actual categorisation.*

O'Malley and Chamot have three categories comprising the generic strategies mentioned earlier, while Oxford has six: memory, cognitive and compensation, metacognitive, affective and social. Oxford also has two more categories in her memory and compensation strategies, which are not mentioned in O'Malley's and Chamot's model.

*The third difference is that Oxford's model includes memory strategies, compensation strategies and affective strategies.*

Although the term of affective strategies is used in O'Malley's and Chamot's model, it refers to quite different content. O'Malley's and Chamot's social/affective strategies are more similar to social strategies in Oxford's model, while affective strategies in Oxford's model are similar to self-talk strategies in O'Malley's and Chamot's model.

Therefore, it is safe to say that nearly all the strategies in O'Malley's and Chamot's model are included in Oxford's model, except selective attention. Some strategies are categorised under different classification; imagery in cognitive strategies in O'Malley's and Chamot's model is put in the memory strategies category in Oxford's model. But how the strategies are categorised is not as important as whether they are included. The ways the strategies are grouped only show the direction/angle assumed by the researcher, in which they apply.

The important difference between the two models is that in O'Malley's and Chamot's model, the strategies are at a broader level, with definitions of the strategies given separately. But in Oxford's model the strategies are arranged in a hierarchical order, subdivided and sub-

subdivided into clearer and more concrete sub-subcategories. In addition, Oxford's model is better organised and classified and comprises more categories of strategies and a lot more detailed sub-categories of strategies that are not found in previous models or lists of learning strategies. Her learning model, therefore, provides the most suitable basis for the theoretical model given in this chapter.

The theoretical model proposed in this study, although similar in format to Oxford's model, makes no distinction between direct and indirect strategies, has separate layers for teaching and learning to indicate the relationship between them and categorises the strategies into three stages for teachers and five stages for students.

### 3.3.3 Reading strategies revisited

Many factors are involved in reading as described in Chapter 2: the purpose of reading, the genres of the text, the knowledge of the reader and of the subject, the interaction and understanding between the writer and the reader, the internal text readability and the external social and cultural aspects involved in the text. The benefit that students gain in obtaining such knowledge is that it helps them understand the reading process and the nature of the text better and, therefore, makes reading easier. Students' background knowledge provides them with a general direction they should follow, and the use of appropriate reading strategies are the ways by which they can reach their required destination and obtain good reading comprehension.

Wallace (1992) mainly deploys the aspects of reading: the explanation – the nature of reading and its demonstration – teaching approaches and material, exploring reading in the classroom. A series of tasks are designed to teach reading strategies. The widely accepted common divisions into pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading enable teachers to organise teaching, but the actual detailed strategies are not given as a full list. It might, therefore, be difficult for students to attempt to use these strategies to aid their reading.



Nuttall (1982) discusses four different aspects of reading skills: to utilize non-text information, word-attack skills, text-attack skills (1) and text-attack skills (2). Compared with Wallace (1992), students can more easily grasp the use of these strategies in reading. They are more specific and are, therefore, included in the present model. Hosenfeld et al. (1981) gives a list of reading strategies that good/successful language readers use according to some protocol. The list is useful and specific, but still does not encompass enough strategies required for reading.

Grellet (1981) presents a careful study of reading skills. She divides reading into a number of aspects:

- 1) Sensitising: The skills mentioned include *inference* through context and through word-formation, training students *to understand relations within the sentence* and to *link sentences and ideas by means of recognising references and link-words; improving reading speed* through developing word-recognition and *comprehension speed*.
- 2) Skimming to scanning: Five skills are introduced: *predicting, previewing, anticipating, skimming* and *scanning*.
- 3) Organising: This is very helpful for comprehension and includes the basic reading skills students should acquire like *recognising main ideas and supporting details, chronological sequence, description, analogy and contrast, classification and argumentative and logical organisation*.
- 4) Thematising: This trains students to recognise how the arrangement of information in the passage can determine word order in sentences.

These skills are so important, especially for Chinese learners, in achieving reading comprehension that it becomes the teachers' task to emphasise the strategies and to demonstrate the relationships between parts of a text in order to help students find out how the text and paragraphs are organised. Grellet discusses the strategies and their use. Many of these are quoted in the theoretical model and described below.

### 3.3.4 Stage 1: Metacognitive strategies

Within metacognitive strategies, apart from the three aspects, *centering your learning*, *arranging and planning your learning* and *evaluating your learning*, discussed by Oxford, *encouraging yourself*, categorised under 'affective strategies' in Oxford's model, is also placed in this category because it appears to be at the same hierarchical level, dealing with mental status.

### 3.3.5 Stage 2: Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies are also mainly from Oxford's model, but practise strategy in Oxford's model is taken out and placed within the last stage of this part of the model. Reading strategies have been added into the cognitive strategies since the model is concerned with reading in English. The reading strategies are those previously discussed and are considered the main strategies teachers should teach their students, and which students should be encouraged to use when they are reading.

### 3.3.6 Stage 3: Social strategies

The classroom is the place where students communicate with their teacher and peer groups. Besides the techniques of *asking questions*, *co-operating* and *empathising with others* given by Oxford, the skills of *self-expression* and *group discussion* have been added on the assumption that pair and group discussion tasks will become part of any current approach to developing classroom reading. This may, however, be problematic in large Chinese classes.

### 3.3.7 Stage 4: Compensation strategies

*Guessing intelligently* from Oxford's model is kept, but *overcoming limitations in speaking and writing* is removed because the present model focuses on reading strategies. However, the skills of *using cultural knowledge, prior knowledge, linguistic knowledge and discourse knowledge* are added because activating such knowledge is widely believed to help students overcome difficulties in reading and should be taught to students. These are included within both the teaching and learning parts of the theoretical model.

### 3.3.8 Stage 5: Practice strategies

The most effective way of mastering the strategies and skills is to place students in a situation where they are required to use them. Practice strategies are divided into *in-class* and *after-class* practice. In-class practice includes the activities of *role-play, pair/group work, individual work* or *think aloud modeling*, while, for after-class practice, students are required to *do homework carefully and read extensively* using all the strategies they have learnt in class.

To conclude the discussion a representation of the theoretical model for teaching and learning reading, comprising three diagrams, is given below.

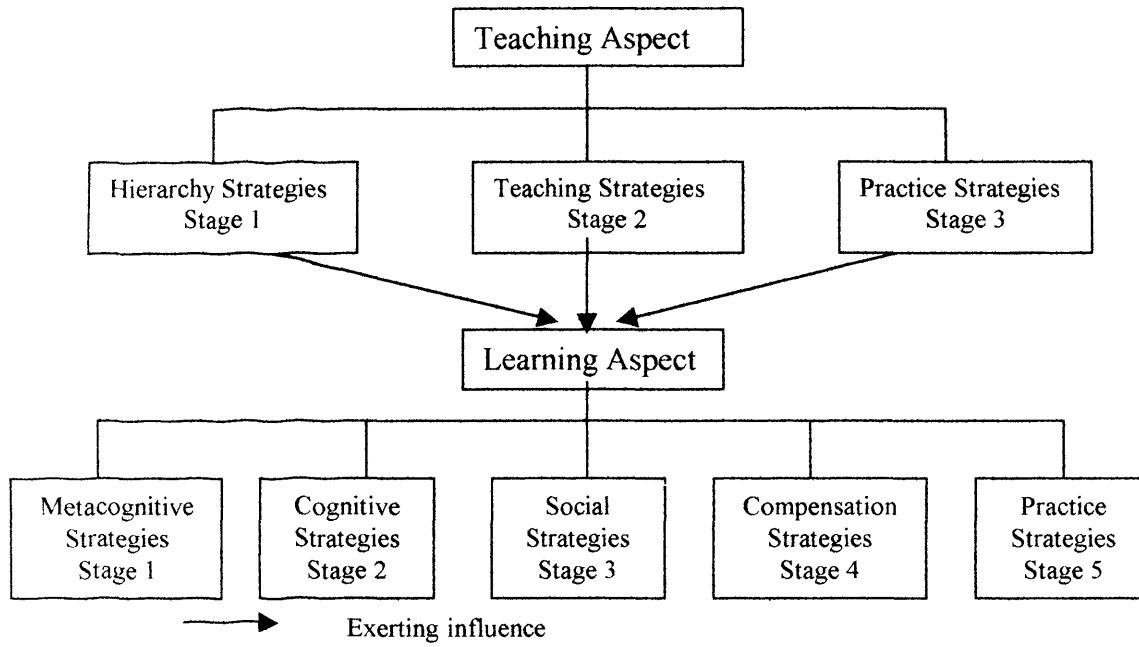
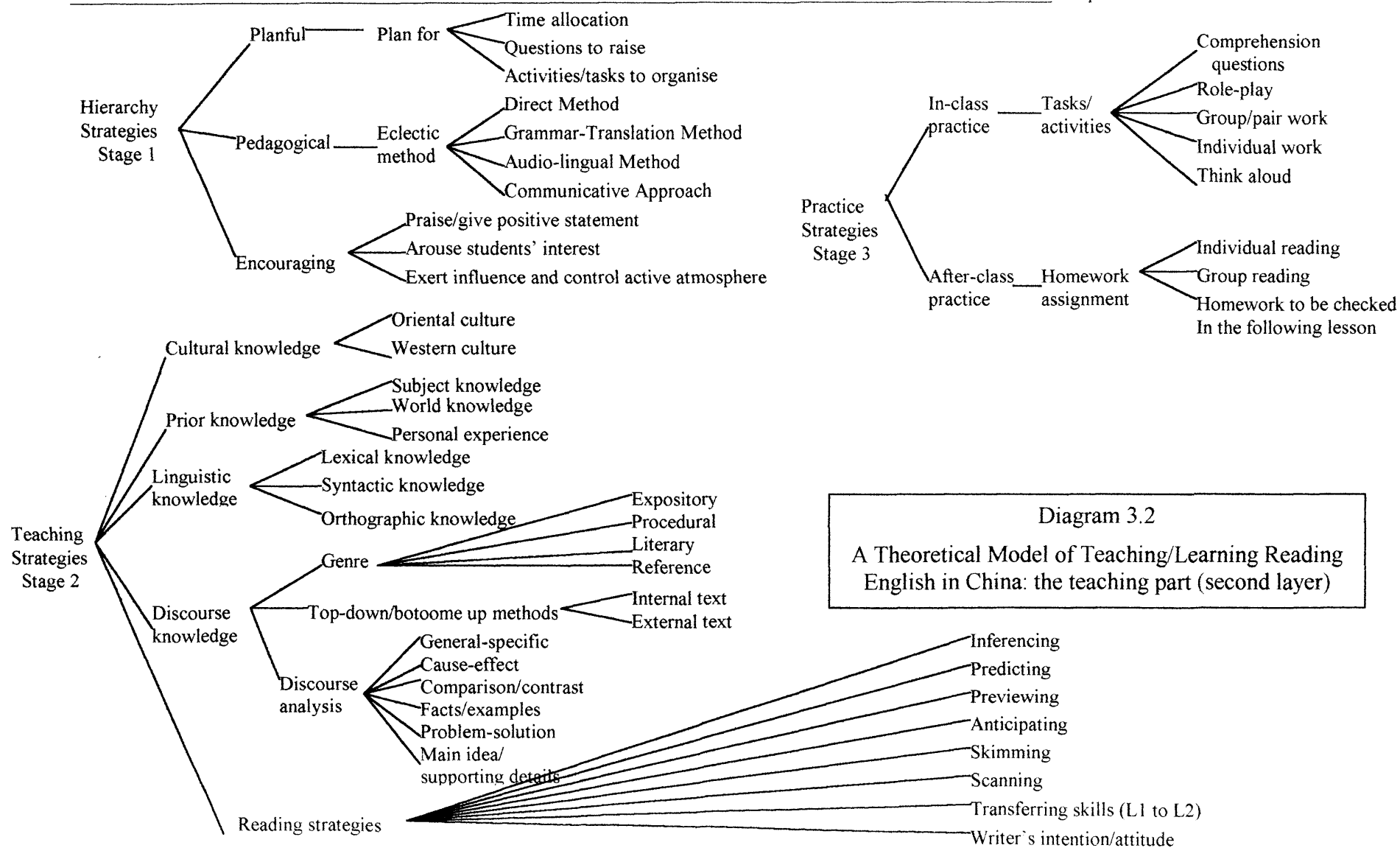


Diagram 3.1  
A Theoretical Model of Teaching/Learning Reading English in  
China: the relationship between teaching and learning (first layer)



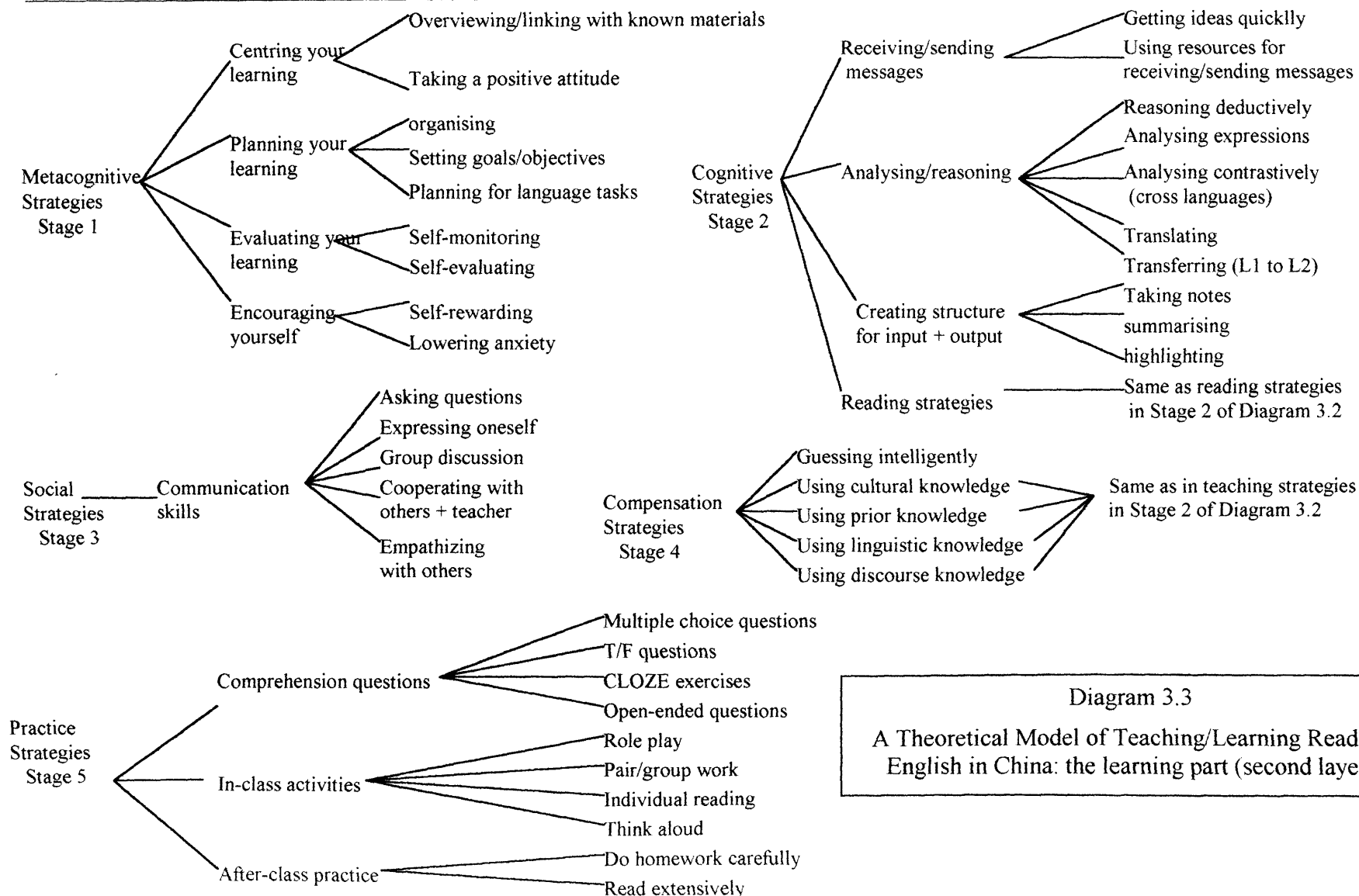


Diagram 3.3  
A Theoretical Model of Teaching/Learning Reading English in China: the learning part (second layer)

### 3.4 Solutions

Before applying the model, it is necessary to determine teachers' and students' knowledge about teaching and learning reading strategies in order to identify aspects that need to be improved, factors that cause problems and resulting implications. Questionnaires were, therefore, designed based on the theoretical model and sent to Chinese teachers and students together with profiles of teaching and learning strategy results. Included with the student questionnaires, were worksheets to enable respondents to evaluate their scores on their use of learning reading strategies.

In order to show teachers how to apply the strategies, a materials workshop based on classroom teaching and learning, as part of TRSIA, was included. The purpose of the workshop was not only to raise awareness of the strategies, but also to model their use and make the theoretical model less abstract. It was hoped that when teachers had answered the questionnaires, read the workshop and tried the TRSIA, they would wish to test the ideas and apply the theoretical model within their own classroom teaching.

### 3.5 Researcher's Commentary

The main aim of this study is to explore ways of improving English language teaching and learning in China by looking at methods of enhancing the use and application of reading strategies. Reading has been selected as the focus of the study because of its wide applicability to Chinese students wishing to pursue academic studies in the many subjects where reading in English is considered important if not essential.

Part I of the research provides the foundation for the study. It identifies the need for the research and reviews salient literature in order to ascertain those strategies that have been shown to improve reading ability and which, therefore, provide the basis for subsequent data analysis.

The study into the teaching approaches, theories of reading strategies and the various existing models of teaching/learning strategies led to the formulation of the theoretical model of teaching and learning reading English in China. The three-stage teaching and five-stage learning model describes detailed aspects of classroom teaching/learning, from hierarchical strategies for organising a lesson, planning and centring students' learning to detailed strategy application of word- or text-attack skills. The model indicates the relationships between teaching and learning, the inter-relationship between strategies and provides the basis for production of a questionnaire survey. The purpose of the questionnaires is to assess teachers' and students' perceptions of their use of these strategies. The frequency of their claimed strategy use and the relationship between the use of different categorised strategies and performance are expected to offer an insight into the complicated factors that influence teaching and learning behaviour. The results of this study, which will be reported later, therefore, relate to what teachers and students say about their reading. The results will most likely have some relation to actual behaviour, but this relation is not specified in the current study. However, it is clear that teachers' and learners' ideas and perceptions must have an important role in teaching and learning, even if this may be indirect. The current investigation into claimed behaviour and perceptions of strategies is, therefore, a key element in teaching and learning to read in English in China and is well worth investigating. Therefore, this questionnaire survey constitutes the main research activity and the model can be viewed as the foundation for subsequent data analysis and statistical results obtained from the research.

### 3.5.1 Progress of the Quest

The need for this research was expressed by the researcher's own experiences of ELT in China and by various Chinese teachers and students living in the UK. The educational system in China was considered in terms of its historical development and, perceived limitations in the current system were discussed. The review suggested that, because of previous closed-door policies, English had not until the 1980s been emphasised in the school and college curriculum. Although English is now generally regarded as a key subject in



Chinese education, many teachers who were brought up within previous regimes are now influencing teaching in China and may still be using traditional teaching methods.

It is generally accepted that the nature of ELT is extremely diverse and complex and a great deal of wide-ranging research may be found on the teaching/learning of reading and the use of strategies. The literature review performed within the study mainly covers the period to 1996, but includes a number of more recent articles. In general, this reveals that, although the topic of reading strategies is important and currently well-established, there is relatively little research in ELT on Chinese students' reading strategies. As a result of the review a 'theoretical model' was produced. This indicates the relationship between teaching and learning and categorises the various strategies that may be deployed by teachers and students in a reading class.

### 3.5.2 The Main Concepts

The real world of ELT is not as simple as may first be imagined and many very basic questions relating to the study do not have simple answers, such as: What is the nature of reading? Does good teaching necessarily result in good learning? If strategies are well taught, will students use them? Because teaching and learning involve many factors and reading is a complex mental process, careful consideration has to be given when reviewing issues related to the subject. The literature review indicates that there are many diverse and differing views regarding both the process of reading and the benefits of strategies within this process. In this respect the review raised more questions than answers and it may, therefore, be best to return to basics and review the definition of reading and strategies before continuing the study.

#### Reading

Apart from the definitions of reading given in Chapter 2, that is decoding, extracting information, recognising word perception, comprehending stated and implied meanings, bringing critical and emotional reaction, applying perceived ideas to behaviour, reading is also described as externally guided thinking (Neisser, 1976). Underwood and Batt (1994)

comment that reading in this sense is equivalent to reasoning, and Neisser's definition helps readers go beyond word meaning to the understanding of sentences and texts, or in other words, from words to propositions and inferences. So skilled reading may be viewed as constructive reading in the sense established by constructivist theorists. The constructivist emphasises on the learner actively building up knowledge and concepts through social interaction and activity. This theory derives from the work of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner, and has been strongly applied to reading (e.g. Chan et al., 1992; Moshman, 1982 and Pressley, Harris and Marks, 1992). It tends to suggest that readers use mental models when gaining understanding from texts. The essential feature of a mental model is that it represents the reader's own reconstruction of ideas given in the text rather than a simple reproduction of the text message in the reader's mind. Such models can be seen to have close affinities with Bartlett's (1932) notion of schema.

Goodman (1996) similarly describes authentic English texts as being organised according to three basic levels: the graphophonic, the lexico-grammatical and the semantic-pragmatic. Readers transact with the text to make their own sense of it, and use information from all three levels simultaneously. Therefore, readers construct both structure and meaning, and when something goes wrong, must first reconstruct the text held in their head before achieving meaning. Readers' miscues and self-corrections are evidence for this process of construction and reconstruction, indicating that reading is an active process in which readers use powerful prediction strategies and the available information both in their mind and on the page in their pursuit of meaning. Different models of reading (top-down, bottom-up and interactive) have been discussed previously but more recent models stress the reciprocal and integrated nature of these processes and social constructive aspects. Ruddell and Ruddell and Singer (1994) view reading as a meaning-construction process which is conceptualised as a sociocognitive interactive model that explains the reading process in the instructional context of the classroom: the reader, text, classroom and teacher. Such schema-constructive models of reading have been applied to reading in a foreign language and are widely taught in EFL teacher training courses in Europe and North America (Barnett 1988; Carrell, Devine and Eskey 1998; Bernhardt 1991). They are, however, relatively new in ELT in China and have, as yet, not had a deep impact on the classroom practices of many teachers.

The social aspects of literacy have been much stressed recently and current views of literacy as a social practice, which has been fine-tuned to local cultures, lends support to the general significance of studies into reading strategies, that may be differently emphasised by members of different cultural communities. Thus ‘literacy’ is increasingly pluralised into ‘literaries’ (Lankshear, 1977) or ‘multiliteraries’ (The New London Group, 1996) as researchers bring out the need for a contextualised understanding of local configurations of literacy practices. The shift, then, is from what reading is, towards what reading does, towards looking at the social contexts of literacy and the ideologies of social and cultural constructions that participants have about reading (Baynham, 1995; Street, 1995). This has been seen as the ‘ecology of literacy’ (Barton, 1994) and has led to detailed ethnographic studies of local literacy practices (Barton and Hamilton, 1998). It has also led to studies of school literacies, through which, researchers argue that knowledge is socially constructed (Hasan and Williams, 1996). This is also increasingly seen in terms of developing readers’ critical approaches towards texts to achieve more social empowerment (Lankshear, 1997; Street, 1995) that is often related to Australian genre-based models of text (Hasan and Williams, 1996). The movement for examining readers’ strategies can be readily interpreted as being in the same reader-centred, socially or culturally located development.

Since this research investigates ELT reading, factors like L1 and L2 reading ability and knowledge must also be considered. Some researchers believe that there is a strong relationship between L1 and L2 reading ability, while others believe that reading ability is more related to L2 knowledge (for detailed discussion, see Chapter 2: 35-36). More recent research (McDonough, 1995) suggests that the relationship depends on the level of L2 proficiency. Given equal L2 proficiency, L2 reading performance correlates with the L1 reading level, but before a threshold level of equality is reached, L2 knowledge plays a more important role.

It is seen that many factors influence reading: threshold level; social, cultural and family background; the study environment; attitudes and reading habits; interest, purpose, motivation and intelligence; readers’ general knowledge and existing schemata; and the

readability of the text; plus many uncontrollable variables. Mathewson (1994) fully discusses the attitude model that influences reading, indicating the cyclical character of the model. Cornerstone concepts and persuasive communications influence attitudes toward reading, in so far as attitude influences intention, intention influences reading, and reading gives rise to ideas, feelings, and internal emotions. Teachers should not only recognise the factors that influence reading, but should also know how to activate and motivate learners to enable them to better achieve their full potential. Education may, therefore, be viewed as enlarging learners' knowledge of the subject and of the world itself, enabling students to master skills and strategies that will allow them to achieve their full potential through independent and self-reliant learning.

## Strategies

### 1) *Definitions of strategies*

Various definitions of strategies were given in Chapters 2 and 3. Strategies were described as 'techniques', 'tactics', 'conscious plans' and 'cognitive abilities' (Wenden, 1987), as 'steps and specific actions taken by the learner ...' (Oxford, 1990), as 'an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language' (Tarone, 1980) and as '... mental processes' (Chamot and Rubin, 1994). McDonough (1995) points out that the term 'strategies' has at least four senses: a guiding principle, a heuristic estimation, a compensation mechanism, and a plan for action. In short, strategies are mental processes, organised means and enabling devices that learners use consciously to solve problems. Increasingly, researchers are trying to ascertain how reading and other skill strategies are differently emphasised by different cultural groups (Talbot, 1997; Goh and Foong, 1997; Bremner, 1998). However, despite the very large numbers of Chinese learners of English and the cultural significance of Chinese learners as a group, there is relatively little research on their reading strategies.

### 2) *Strategy beliefs and training*

There are generally speaking two contradictory views on whether strategy training will help learners in their use of strategies and improve their reading ability. One view suggests that strategies are teachable (Oxford, 1990), useful and should be emphasised in teaching, while

the other view raises doubts as to whether strategies can be taught and whether they can help improve learners' performance (Rees-Miller, 1993). Riding and Rayner (1998) suggest that cognitive styles are in built and are an automatic way of responding to information and situations. Although the use of strategies may be considered an inherent talent, it is contended, in accordance with Hamblin (1981, cited in Riding and Rayner, 1998), that students can still be trained to learn the study methods, use the strategies more efficiently and effectively to enable them to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge (a major purpose of education). Learning to use strategies may, therefore, be compared to improving a natural sporting talent or to improving one's driving skill, with training and practice, competence can be improved. Although students may be able to learn strategies on their own, systematic and organised instructed training, which takes into consideration the individuality of students, would enable them to master a large quantity of knowledge and become familiar with and be able to use a more extensive, comprehensive repertoire of strategies. Strategy training is, therefore, considered to be viable and is further discussed in more detail below.

### 3) *Questions on strategies*

Rees-Miller (1993) raises a number of important questions regarding the use and application of reading strategies and how to teach and learn them, these include:

- 1) Does the use of a particular strategy cause more efficient learning?
- 2) Can a particular strategy be translated into a specific teachable behaviour?
- 3) Will that behaviour prove useful for all language learners or only for some?
- 4) Are students ready and willing to try the strategy?
- 5) What factors and variables influence the effectiveness of learner training in general and in specific instances?
- 6) Have they been taken into account in planning the training?

Chamot and Rubin (1994) provide evidence from their own and other researchers' experimental results that strategy instruction improves students' listening and speaking ability (eg. Chamot, 1993; Cohen 1990; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Rubin, 1990b; Thompson and Rubin, 1993). See also, Chamot, 1993, Chamot, Robbins and El-Dinary, 1993; Cohen, 1990; Cohen and Aphek, 1981; Hosenfeld, et al. 1981; O'Malley et al (1985), Rost and Ross

(1991); Rubin (1990b); Rubin et al. (1988); Thompson and Rubin (1993). Results of a large survey by Gu and Johnson (1996) suggest that Chinese students do not value rote learning as highly as other strategies, and that they tend to deploy a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies. Such research implies that students benefit more if they aim at learning language skills rather than at just remembering English word equivalents.

#### *4) Factors influencing the use of strategies*

Previous research does not provide evidence to show that any particular group of strategies leads to performance improvement. Politzer and McGroarty (1985) warn that strategies should not be considered inherently good, but that benefit from their use is dependent on the context in which they are used. Strategies are most useful when used effectively together in combinations or in clusters so that success depends not just on the use of an individual strategy, but on the effective management of a repertoire of strategies within a recognised context. Many variables affect the usefulness of a particular strategy: proficiency level, task text, language modality, background knowledge, context of learning, target language learner characteristics and culture (Abraham and Vann, 1987; Chamot and O'Malley 1994b; O'Malley and Chamot 1993; Oxford and Nyikos 1989; Rost and Ross 1991; Rubin and Henze 1981; Vandergrift 1992; Vann and Abraham 1990; Wenden 1991; Bedell and Oxford 1996). Motivation drives learners to seek ways to solve problems, and the learners' attitudes and cultural background affect the way they learn. Bedell and Oxford (1996) review 36 strategy studies to depict the frequency of strategy use and the types of strategies preferably deployed by certain types of students. Even though students may improve at different rates and may respond in different ways to different teaching methods, teachers need to co-ordinate their teaching to encompass as many types of learners as possible, enabling students to increase their repertoire of strategies and use them to achieve their full potential. This indicates the complexity that is inherent in the study and the fact that teaching ELT and, in particular, developing the use of reading strategies is dependent on numerous factors, many of which cannot be controlled. For example, some strategies may be well taught and demonstrated, but for some unknown reasons, the students do not use them, or, on the other hand, may use some of the strategies, which may not be taught in class by their teachers. For these reasons, research into reading strategies cannot be regarded as absolutely precise,

especially in such contexts as China where data gathering is not easy and where research traditions for this kind of study is as yet not well developed.

*5) Relationship between the use of strategies and performance*

The relationship between learners' awareness of strategies and the use of strategies and their performance (i.e. 'good learners' are more aware of their learning, use more a greater variety of strategies than 'poor learners') was reported by Jones, et al. 1987; Nunan, 1991; O'Malley and Chamot, 1991. Green and Oxford (1995) look at patterns formed by the variation of strategy use by students at different levels of proficiency. They found a significant relationship between strategy use and language learning success, suggesting that readers who use effective strategies have better comprehension (Barnett, 1988). Carrell (1989) reports that 'some of the confidence and repair strategies emerge as significantly related to reading performance' (p25).

Successful learners may also use strategies not approved by the 'good language learner model' or may become successful readers without using recommended strategies (Rees-Miller, 1993). Politzer and McGroarty (1985) found that out of a total of 51 supposed good language learning behaviours, 80% did not correlate with higher gains in proficiency when related to grammar and communicative competence. Where correlation does emerge (Bremner, 1998), it is not clear whether the strategies cause proficiency or whether high proficiency leads to better or broader strategy development, since correlation does not necessarily imply causation. In a self-reported questionnaire administered to Spanish-speaking and Asian-language ESL students, the Spanish speakers scored higher than the Asian-language speakers on all behaviours associated with 'the good language learner'. However, comparison of pre- and post-course tests of grammar and oral skills revealed that the Asian-language speakers had made greater gains in these two areas.

In her longitudinal study of children learning ESL, Wong Fillmore's (1983) objectives were to discover which language learning techniques and social styles were associated with success in language learning. Although, as predicted, some of the good language learners

were outgoing and eager to communicate, others were very quiet and introvert, after two years of extensive data collection, Wong Fillmore concluded, 'there is no single way to characterise either the good or the poor learners' (p. 161). In the study by O'Malley et al (1985), the experimental group who received training performed less successfully on tests of recall than the control group; this result was noted especially for Asian-language speakers, who had their own well-developed strategies for rote memorisation. Thus it is possible that the effect of some strategy training may be filtered by learners' existing strategies, especially (as seems likely in this case) where existing strategies are deeply embedded in social-cultural practices. Moreover, a study by Schmitt et al. (in press cited in Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997:202) shows that learners from different culture groups sometimes have quite different opinions regarding the usefulness of vocabulary learning strategies. Similarly, Cortazzi and Jin (1996) found that students sometimes gave negative evaluations about the usefulness of some of their own frequently used vocabulary learning strategies and, conversely, gave positive evaluations to some strategies which they know about but which, for some reason, they do not use. This implies that cultural perspectives might influence students with regard to both their evaluations of strategies and their actual use of strategies: frequency of actual use is not the same as frequency of positive perception of usefulness.

Nunan (1997) investigates the effect of strategy training on four key aspects of the learning process and suggests that there is no significant difference in the area of deployment, i.e. the experimental subjects with strategy training did not use more strategies than the control group. On the other hand, Aliweh (1989 cited in Bedell and Oxford 1996), reporting on the videotaped observation of communication strategies of 30 Egyptian English majors, suggests that after strategy training, the students used a slightly wider variety of strategies. Yet, Shih Lo (1990 cited in Bedell and Oxford 1996) reports that, although strategy training had a significant effect on strategy use, it did not significantly influence reading comprehension or conceptual ability.

Carrell (1989) points out that more empirical research in the area of perceived strategy use is important for the field of pedagogy because 'if a reader is aware of what is needed to perform effectively, then it is possible to take steps to meet the demands of a reading situation more



effectively. Baker and Brown (1984), Flavell (1979) support this, but, as pointed out above, students do not necessarily practise the strategies they believe are useful.

McIntyre (1994: 188) stresses that proficiency influences the choice of strategies and also strategy choice is a sign of proficiency level. Skehan (1989) states: ‘One can ... argue that learner strategies do not determine proficiency, but *are permitted by it*’ (his emphasis). Goh and Kwah (1997: 48), studying variation among learners of different levels of proficiency, appear to be clear about where the direction of causality lies: they suggest that raising the proficiency level of students helps students to use strategies more frequently. Green and Oxford (1995) nevertheless propose that a causal relationship does exist between strategy use and proficiency level, and that ‘this relationship is best visualised not as a one-way arrow leading from cause to effect, but rather as an ascending spiral in which active use strategies helps students attain higher proficiency, which in turn makes it more likely that students will select these active use strategies’. This view appears logical and it seems, therefore, that encouraging strategy use to increase language proficiency constitutes an appropriate aim.

Bremner (1998: 83) suggests that the ultimate goal of any research trying to establish connections between strategy use and learning success should be to establish the extent to which strategy use contributes to the learning process. Bremner raises three strong points which are worth considering: 1) If strategies are not causes but features of proficiency, then they are not worth investigating – they are simply outcomes of increased proficiency, an increase that has to be accounted for in other ways. 2) If strategies are contributory factors towards increased proficiency, then they do warrant further investigation. 3) The significant associations which do not represent much more than an encouragement to practise more is hardly a great advance to suggest that practice helps.

This present research attempts to meet the particular demands for pedagogy in China and, in order not to limit the study, a wide range of strategies, mainly based on Oxford (1990), Grellet (1981), Nuttall (1982) were included in the ‘Theoretical Model’. However, it should be noted that, if learners are not aware of their own limitations nor of the complexity of the

task at hand, then taking preventative measures to anticipate or recover from failed comprehension can hardly be expected (Carrell, 1989).

### 3.5.3 Research Methods

As a result of the apparent complexity in learning and teaching reading strategies, it was decided to review a large range of strategies. A questionnaire survey was therefore adopted as the main research method, since such breadth of investigation may not be easy to achieve using other research methods. The questionnaires were designed to ascertain the relationship between teaching and learning by enabling teachers' use of strategies to be compared to that of their own students. However, because the researcher could not administer the questionnaires personally, the investigation of this aspect became impossible and only a general relationship between teaching and learning could be achieved.

Classroom observation was planned as a subsidiary activity in order to show how actual teaching and learning English reading is performed and to provide an insight into real Chinese classrooms. It was intended that this would facilitate analysis and comment on class arrangements, on the interactions between the teachers and their students and between the students themselves, on how class time for reading is used, on teacher talk and student talk and on the strategies teachers and students deploy.

Because of personal constraints caused by difficulties in travel to China, classroom observation could not be carried out as planned. Instead, a video of English teaching on Chinese television was obtained and analysed to give background information of English teaching in China. Although the video programme was not very recent, many Chinese teachers and students in Britain who saw it agreed that it closely reflected present day English classes. However, in order to provide more qualitative personal information, teacher and student interviews were planned to follow up the main questionnaire survey. Explanations would be sought on why interviewees use or do not use certain strategies. Such questions were originally designed in the questionnaires, but cut out because of the length. Interviewees were asked on how well they know the strategies, how they learnt them and their personal

views regarding the value of both this type of research and of English reading classes. Again, because of travel problems, interviews could not be carried out in China and only a small number of interviews could, therefore, be conducted in Britain. In spite of the given limitations, the results yielded valuable information. An attempt was, however, made to supplement the weaknesses of the research design (as they became apparent) by additionally conducting a remote workshop.

#### 3.5.4 Interpretation of Results

The literature review suggested that reading is a very complex, individual mental process, which:

- is learnt in different ways and to different levels of competence;
- is inter-dependent on many factors and variables, many of which cannot be controlled and which include factors that may be specific to China;
- may be improved by use of strategies only if used within a correct and controlled context;
- makes use of strategies only as an inherent activity and can be improved only through methods that improve the student's natural ability;
- is dependent on the use of a repertoire of strategies that should be designed to suit a particular group of students; and
- may be improved only by using a wide range of different teaching methods.

It is also suggested that generally there is:

- no consensus on whether or not to teach reading strategies;
- disagreement on the nature of reading strategies;
- disagreement on whether strategies are effective and if so to what level;
- no definitive method for teaching reading strategies;
- no consensus on the definitions of various strategies;
- no agreement on an overall, hierarchically organised LLS taxonomy or typology;
- no definitive way of delimiting or defining a given strategy or cluster of strategies.

### 3.5.5 Personal Reflection

Prior to starting the study, it was felt that strategies could be used to improve L2 language acquisition and that the literature review would support this premise and indicate those strategies that would prove most effective. However, as a result of the contradictory views expressed by previous researchers, the complex nature of strategies and the fact that their use can be influenced by many factors and variables, many of which cannot be controlled, no definitive conclusions could be obtained. Moreover, it was not clear from the review whether strategy use was the cause of language proficiency or its effect (Bremner, 1998) and there was even a strong suggestion that guessing models can often be counter productive and can cause confusion to the language learner (Urquhart and Weir, 1998). This implied the inherent complexity of the current study and the difficulty in determining whether particular strategies or groups of strategies can actually improve language proficiency.

Notwithstanding, the abundance of literature that supports the view that there is a close relationship between strategy use and language proficiency suggests that the current study remains important. However, because the review was unable to provide a specific direction for limiting the research, the investigation continued on the basis of an analysis of a large range of strategies and included an analysis of some of the many factors and variables that can influence their use. The strategy system used was based on Oxford's SILL because it was felt that her model provides the most comprehensive and suitable range of strategies and this was modified to accommodate the special circumstances that apply to Chinese ELT.

The 'Theoretical Model' was then produced and the various strategies and variables given in the model were included in a questionnaire survey. However, because of the apparent confusion with regard to the teachability of strategies, emphasis was placed on the learning process and on how the various factors and variables may influence the student's ability to learn these strategies. But, because of the large number of factors and variables that affect strategy use, the study was only able to investigate the more obvious items. These were investigated together with general perceptions of strategy use and performance within the empirical study and investigation described in Par II of the thesis.

## PART II – EMPIRICAL STUDY AND INVESTIGATION

Part II describes a questionnaire survey to Chinese teachers and students, as the main research activity undertaken by the study. Results are analysed using statistical methods. These are used to support or reject the research hypotheses and to develop a teaching/learning model, which shows how strategies influence teaching and learning English reading in China, indicating those factors that have been found to affect the quality of teaching and students' performance.

### Chapter 4

*Research Design*  
*Research Hypotheses*  
*Questionnaire Survey*



### Chapter 5

*Data Analysis*  
*Influence of Strategies*  
*Effect of Factors*



### Chapter 6

*Results and Solutions*  
*A Teaching/Learning Model*

## **Chapter Four**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter sets out the research hypotheses used to determine if there are any differences between the groups of teachers' and students' perceived use of English reading strategies and teaching/learning effectiveness and provides an overview of the design and research methodologies adopted for data analysis of the questionnaire survey.

'Research' refers to 'the procedure governing the process of seeking answers to questions in an organised, controlled manner' (Kuschmman, 1970: 279). Radford (1964: 6) defines educational research as 'the procedure adopted in asking questions about some aspect of the educational system and collecting facts to answer those questions'. While 'methodology' has been defined as 'the study of science as a cognitive activity that involves production (practice) and thought, logical structure of knowledge' (Popkewitz, 1984: 66). Both concepts are important in defining and directing the construct that focuses a study. The design has to be made precise and concise to provide a clear direction for the study.

This research investigates the usage and effectiveness of teaching/learning reading strategies amongst English teachers and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year non-English majors at Chinese universities, the majority of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students learning English. Although the study concentrates on teachers and students working and studying in China, a group of Chinese 'successful' students in Britain was also included to supplement and support results and provide information on factors that may possibly influence better learners. The study was conducted according to three phases of study: Pilot Study, Main Study and Follow-up Questionnaire Survey and Interviews.

## 4.1 Research Hypotheses

Chapter 1 indicated the general research assumption that in classroom teaching and learning, teaching is the more important aspect since good learning practice is only a reflection of good teaching practice. This assumption leads naturally to specific questions relating to teaching and learning. These are described by the research hypotheses.

The following hypotheses relate and refer only to claimed application of reading strategies and teaching/learning behaviour, since actual observation was not possible. Many researchers focus on null hypotheses, considering the rejection of such hypotheses as supporting their research, but without explicitly demonstrating support. As this study does not involve experimental or quasi-experimental research, the study deals directly with the research hypotheses to avoid unnecessary duplication.

The general research hypothesis predicts that **there will be a difference between teachers and students in their self-perceived use of strategies because of the present teaching methods. The strategies are believed not being emphasised.** Therefore, students end up not using or not knowing how to use the strategies, which their teachers believe they have been taught.

The literature review shows that there is a general dissatisfaction with ELT reading achievement in China and that strategies are apparently not widely taught or only a limited range of strategies are taught.

In terms of teachers' perceptions of whether and how they teach the strategies:

**There will be a difference for:**

- higher and lower qualified teachers;
- teachers within different age groups; and/or
- teachers with longer and shorter teaching experience.

**There will be no difference for:**

- teachers from different universities.

It is expected that:

- 1) **Higher qualified teachers will teach more strategies.**
- 2) **Older teachers will teach more strategies.**
- 3) **Teachers with longer teaching experience will teach more strategies.**
- 4) **Chinese English teachers tend to use the same teaching approach and similar strategies.**

In terms of students' performance,

**There will be a difference for students who:**

- use the strategies and those who do not;
- have a better learning attitude and those who do not;
- study hard and those who do not;
- have a higher self-assessment of their general English learning behaviour and those who do not;
- are active in class and those who are not;
- are good at reading strategies and those who are not;
- practise reading a lot and those who do not; and/or
- come from different universities.

It is expected that **students will perform better who:**

- 1) **Use more strategies.**
- 2) **Have a better learning attitude/motivation.**
- 3) **Study hard.**
- 4) **Have a higher self-assessment of their general English learning.**
- 5) **Are active in class.**
- 6) **Are good at reading strategies.**
- 7) **Practise a lot.**



## 8) **Come from key universities.**

### 4.2 Background of the Respondents

#### 4.2.1 The Chinese English teachers

The English teachers in the Chinese universities were of differing ages, and had different qualifications, although all had, at least, a Bachelor degree, the minimum qualification required for teaching at university. In general, the teachers differed in respect of the type of education they received and, therefore, their concept and knowledge of teaching methodologies, but they were all presumably influenced by the same classroom syllabus, similar textbooks and exams and other teaching styles prevalent in China.

#### 4.2.2 Students in China

Before entering university, each student had completed junior and senior middle schooling for six years. They had all studied English as a compulsory subject according to SEdC (The State Education Commission), which lays down the curriculum, its direction and the syllabus (English Language Teaching Profile of the People's Republic of China, 1995).

The objectives of SEdC are to:

- \* teach or expand students' knowledge of English and communicative ability;
- \* stimulate students' interest in learning English;
- \* help students establish good learning habits in order to build a solid foundation for further studies; and
- \* develop students' logic, memory and self-study skills.

Students had, therefore, already covered major aspects of listening, speaking, reading, writing, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar (ibid). In their first year of senior school, students normally spend five hours per week in the classroom learning English (i.e. a total of 170 hours of contact time over 34 weeks), plus additional time for homework. In their second

year, the curriculum allows for four hours of contact time over the same teaching period of 34 weeks, equivalent to 136 hours. Final year students spend 24 weeks on syllabus work, with the weekly contact time increasing again to five hours per week. At the end of senior middle school, students will have covered all the grammatical points of English and learnt a vocabulary of about 3,000 words.

To enter university, all students have to pass university entrance exams, which includes knowledge of English. At university, all students study a foreign language, usually English, for at least two years. Failure in a language examination can jeopardise the award of a final degree.

The curriculum for English as a non-English major course has been developed and published under the auspices of SedC (English Language Teaching Profile of the People's Republic of China, 1995). Students work their way through College English Bands, of which there are six. All first year students sit the English Placement Test (EPT) to determine their entry level, and are expected to complete at least Band Four level by the end of their fourth term. Every student receives four hours of tuition each week, equivalent to 70 hours per term. The minimum requirements for level four are given in Section 1.6.4. All band levels include tests on reading comprehension. Non-English majors also take specialist reading courses in their third and fourth years to enable them to read their own particular subject matter in English.

#### 4.2.3 Chinese students in the U.K

Although the research focuses on ELT in China, Chinese students in Britain were also included in order to obtain additional insight into learner factors. The group of Chinese students in Britain had, however, a more complicated background than the group in China. They had different qualifications, different work experience, and had spent different periods of time in Britain. In particular, many had higher qualifications either Masters degrees or Ph.D. degrees and some were teaching at British universities, or working in other fields. However, they were all once university students in China and had studied a two-year general English course, even if they did so before the Band Four Test was instituted. As respondents,

they were asked to recall their experiences and choose the choices that could best describe their behaviour when they were university students in China.

It can be questioned whether these two groups (students in China and in Britain) are comparable. Reasons for posing this question might be:

- 1) Difference in time. Students in China are answering the questionnaires from their current experiences, while the U.K. group is responding retrospectively, for periods of up to ten years. The teaching might possibly have changed.
- 2) Distortion in memory and perception. The teaching may be the same, but the students' memory might be distorted because of the time lag. Their memory and perception now may not truly reflect what was happening then.
- 3) Better quality students. The teaching may be the same, and the students' memory may be accurate, but because the U.K. group is generally thought to be more successful – usually only the best students go abroad, having achieved high scores in TOEFL, IELTS or other recognised standard English tests, they may be more highly motivated, intelligent and hard working. Notwithstanding, it is suggested that, by studying and comparing their use and application of learning strategies with the group in China, some insight into learner factors can be obtained.

#### 4.3 The Framework of the Research Design

The main research study is based on a questionnaire survey. A good questionnaire should be built on theory and previous research, which not only helps improve the quality of instruments but allows researchers to relate the findings of similar studies to one another (Johnson, 1992). The research questionnaires are based on the theoretical model described in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, which was developed from the literature review. Sudman and Bradburn (1982) suggest that questionnaires should be subjected to a series of related tests and revisions, involving criticisms from experienced peers.

Such steps are designed to detect any serious problems and permit re-formulation and retesting of the questions before using them in the survey itself. With this in mind, this study

followed three major phases: Pilot Study, Main Study and Follow-up questionnaire survey and interviews.

#### 4.3.1 Phase I -- Pilot Study

The pilot study was carried out informally because the researcher was not able to travel to China. This consisted of showing the questionnaires to friends, colleagues and tutors for review. Their comments related mainly to the students' questionnaire and were to reduce its length, condense some items, redesign it into two versions and/or to pilot test it.

Although all the criticisms were considered, it was felt that the questionnaires should not be changed. The arguments for not altering the questionnaires were:

- 1) *to reduce the length* Reduction of the length may affect the quality of the questionnaires, dilute the information obtained and negate the ability of finding out respondents' scores relating to their use of teaching and learning reading strategies;
- 2) *to condense the questions* To condense the questions first, then generate more answers from one question is generally not considered as good as or as accurate as keeping them as they are;
- 3) *to keep as it is, but to design it into two versions* This suggestion sounds reasonable if it is possible to ensure that the same student answers two versions at two different times. Unfortunately, this was not possible. If two students were to answer two different parts of the questionnaires, then it would hinder the discussion and comparison of results;
- 4) *to cut similar questions* It was suggested to cut out similar questions, but the results from similar questions can be used to test the reliability of answers given (Chapter 6).

#### 4.3.2 Phase II -- Main Study

The final format of the survey comprised three questionnaires, which were designed and sent to:

1. Chinese English teachers in China (Questionnaire 1, Q1).
2. Chinese English students in China (Questionnaire 2, Q2).

## 3. Chinese English students in Britain (Questionnaire 3, Q3).

*Administration of the questionnaires*

Q1 and Q2 were administered through correspondence. The following tables summarise the number of questionnaires sent out and returned.

Table 4.1 Numbers of questionnaires sent out and returned

No. of Q1 sent out (No. of Uni)	No of Rtn Q1 (No. of Uni)	No. of Q2 sent out (No. of Uni)	No. of Rtn Q2 (No. of Uni)	No. of Q3 sent out	No. of Rtn Q3
155(8)	<b>115 (4)</b>	660 (8)	<b>201(4)</b>	160 +e-mail	<b>100</b>

Table 4.2 Record of the universities which returned the questionnaires

Q1			Q2			Q3		
Uni	Copies Sent out	Copies Rtned (%)	Uni	Copies Sent out	Copies Rtned (%)	Types of Q	Copies Sent out	Copies Rtned
A	30	30 (100%)	A	45	42 (93.3%)	Q2 format	100	47
B	40	35 (87.5%)	B	70	55 (78.6%)	e-mail format	X	18
C	35	30 (85.7%)	C	70	69 (98.6%)	e-mail format handed out	60	35
D	20	20 (100%)	D	40	35 (87.5%)			
Total	125	115 (92%)	Total	225	201 (89.3%)	Total	160+ e-mail	100

*Return rate of the questionnaires*

The total return rate for teacher questionnaires was viewed as being satisfactory for postal questionnaires, 115 out of 155, 74.2%; while the total return rate for student questionnaires, 201 out of 660, 30.5% was not so satisfactory. However, if only the 4 universities (from 4 different provinces) that responded are considered (out of the total 8 universities canvassed), the actual number returned is quite high: 115 out of 125 (92%) for the teachers' and 201 out of 225 (89.3%) for the students'. Over 100 copies of Q2 were also sent to Chinese students in Britain.

In addition, Q3 was produced by changing the personal background of Q2 and e-mailed to all known Chinese students in Britain. This e-mail format (Q3) was also given out personally to about 60 students, either by post or by hand. Figure 4.1 shows the contents of the

questionnaires. More detailed discussion about the questionnaire design is given in later sections of this chapter.

Figure 4.1 Contents of the questionnaires

Q1 contains:	Q2 contains:	Q3 contains:
A cover letter to the teachers	Questionnaire 2	Questionnaire 3
Questionnaire 1	Answer Sheet (to be returned)	Answer Sheet (to be returned)
Answer Sheet (to be returned)	Worksheet	Worksheet
Profile for teaching strategies	Profile for learning strategies	Profile for learning strategies
A materials workshop		

### *E-Mail Transmission*

Only 18 students replied to the e-mail. It was felt that the impersonal aspect of the computer affected the return rate. Because the questionnaire was rather long, it would appear that most people simply deleted it from their computer without even reading it. When the researcher informed some respondents (friends) that it was her research questionnaire, they quickly apologised, asked for other copies, completed and returned them.

### 4.3.3 Phase III -- Follow-up questionnaires and Interviews

Two or three weeks after the main study, a follow-up questionnaire survey was carried out. The teacher questionnaires contained 9 questions and the student questionnaires contained 10 questions. They were designed to obtain the opinions of the respondents about their use of strategies and of the value of the research itself. All of the 115 copies of Q1a (teachers) and 200 of the 201 copies of Q2a (students in China) and 85 of the 100 Q3a (students in Britain) were returned.

In order to obtain more in-depth information on the answers given by the questionnaire and follow-up questionnaire surveys, semi-structured interviews were also conducted. The interviewees comprised a small number of selected teachers and students in Britain.

#### 4.4 Questionnaire Construction -- A Miniature of the Whole Questionnaire Research

A Likert scale, the most widely used scaling technique in attitude and behaviour measurement, was adopted to analyse data from the questionnaires. Likert scales have 5, sometimes 7 (or even 9) fixed alternative expressions, with such labels as ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘uncertain’, ‘disagree’, and ‘strongly disagree. These are each respectively assigned weights or measured values of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

##### 4.4.1. Format of questionnaires

A brief introduction was written for all three questionnaires to enable respondents, mainly through correspondence, to complete them. A covering letter was included with the teacher questionnaires, together with brief instructions on how to administer the questionnaires. Answer sheets (to reduce the return postage weight) were also provided. Respondents were asked to keep the questionnaires for later reference. The questionnaires and supplementary materials are given in Appendices C and D.

##### 4.4.2 A materials workshop

After teachers had answered the questionnaires and read the profile for teaching strategies they were given a materials workshop. This materials workshop shows the teachers how to apply the strategies mentioned in the questionnaires by using a text taken from College English, a widely used Chinese University textbook. It is believed that by applying the strategies to this text the teachers’ interest in **TRISA** would be motivated. Details of the materials workshop are presented in Chapter 7.

##### 4.4.3 Research Design

The investigation into the use of reading strategies by Chinese teachers and students was based mainly on a questionnaire survey and a small number of interviews, although other alternative methods for information collection were also considered.

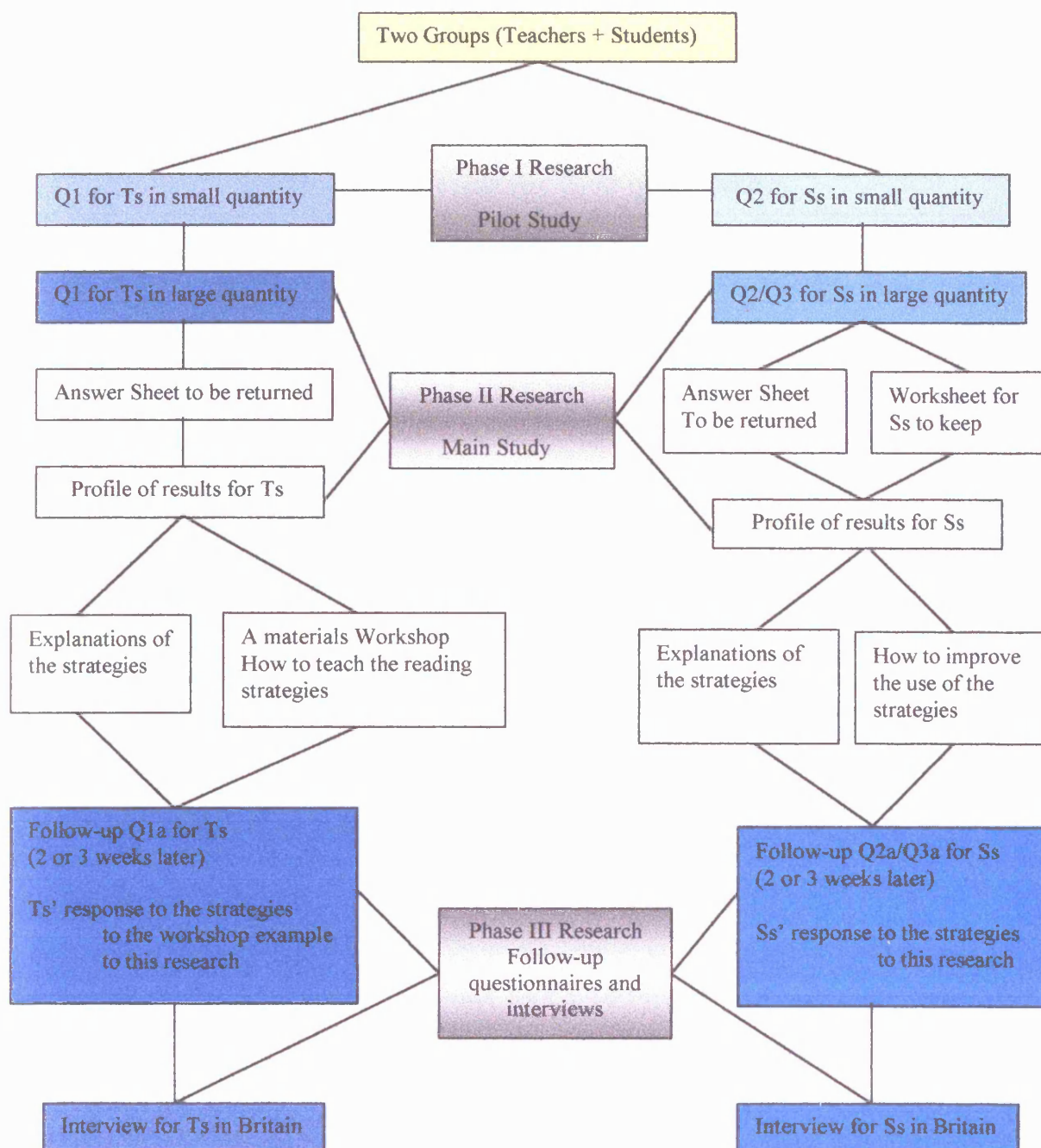
Cohen (1998, Chapter 3) suggests six methods: interviews; observation; verbal reporting; diaries and dialogue, recollection studies and computer tracking. Due to the inability of the researcher to travel to China, actual classroom observation was not possible. Instead an audio video programme of a Chinese television lesson was obtained. Although not ideal, it provided some insight into actual teaching methods in China and the interviews conducted within the study supported the view that the programme closely reflected present day teaching methods.

Verbal reporting (think aloud) is viewed, usually, as part of classroom research, either the teacher or the good students model their thinking procedure, or a comparison is made of good and poor readers' thinking processes, ways of tackling problems and application of the strategies. It does not normally provide information on a broad spectrum of strategies and is limited by the given text. It was, therefore, not considered appropriate for this study. Teacher and learner diaries and dialogue were also limited by the physical constraints encountered by this study. As for computer tracking, computers are still relatively infrequently used in China and rarely, if at all, in the classroom.

The study was, therefore, undertaken mainly through questionnaires and interviews, focusing on determining teachers and students perceived use of reading strategies and the relationships between and correlation of their reported strategy use and performance and can be viewed as a recollection study. The research design is represented by Diagram 4.1.



## RESEARCH DESIGN



Keys: Ts = Teachers  
Ss = Students

Diagram 4.1 Research Design

#### 4.4.4 Issues relating to the questionnaires

##### *The structure of the questionnaires*

The questionnaires were designed in relatively clear-cut sections. See Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2 The structure of the questionnaires

Q1	Q2 and Q3
Personal background of the teachers	Personal background of the students
Classroom teaching behaviour <sup>①</sup>	Learning attitude <sup>④</sup> Classroom learning behaviour <sup>①</sup>
Strategies in teaching vocabulary <sup>①</sup>	Strategies in learning vocabulary <sup>①</sup>
Strategies used in teaching reading <sup>①</sup>	Strategies used in learning reading <sup>①</sup>
Teachers' assessment of their students <sup>②</sup>	Students' assessment of their English teachers <sup>③</sup> English reading class <sup>③</sup> Themselves <sup>③</sup>
	Practice strategies <sup>①</sup>
Teachers' opinions about reading English in China <sup>④</sup>	Students' opinions about reading English in China <sup>④</sup>

① strategies answered from '1 to 5', 'never' to 'always'. High values imply strong agreement.

② assessment from '1 to 5', 'very good' to 'very poor'. High values imply teachers' poor assessment of students' strategy use.

③ assessment from '1 to 7', 'strongly positive' to 'strongly negative'. High values imply students' poor assessment.

④ opinions from '1 to 5', 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. High values imply strong disagreement.

In short, all the questions relating to the strategy use are marked by ①, higher values imply higher frequency use of the strategy. All the rest of the questions relate to assessment and opinions marked ②, ③ and ④, high values imply poor assessment or strong disagreement.

##### *Types of questions*

The majority of the questions in the teacher questionnaires are of a closed 5 point Likert scale type. Closed questions are considered useful for the survey due to their low cost, relatively little difficulty in coding, and their suitability for statistical manipulation (Dillon, 1990). Two questions are open-ended to enable teachers to express their more subjective opinions. All the questions in the student questionnaires are closed.

##### *Wording*

Wording refers to vocabulary, form, structure and phrasing of questions. Questions should be written in clear, non-technical language, which is easy to understand by anyone in the

respondent sample. They should also contain only one idea per question. In the questionnaires, technical terms or jargon are avoided. An explanation or paraphrase is given to certain items that are believed to be difficult to understand. Some Chinese character translation of certain phrases is given in the student questionnaires. Since all students had entered university and were all assumed to be reasonably competent in English, the questionnaires were given in English. Questionnaires were generally completed in the English classroom; English teachers were present and could clarify terms, if and where necessary.

#### *Other considerations*

Respondents regularly fail to exhibit the optimum attention, interest, understanding, knowledge, memory, motivation, ability and willingness to answer as asked (Johnson, 1992; Robson, 1993).

For this research this might not be the case. English teaching has become very important and English teachers are under considerable pressure to succeed. Following the introduction of the Band Four Test, teachers' performance is now evaluated by reference to their students' pass rates. Teachers are, therefore, especially keen to find ways of improving their teaching so as to ensure that their students perform well in the test. As a result, they greatly appreciated the likely benefit of the research and were pleased to complete the questionnaires. Students were also believed to be highly motivated and interested in completing the questionnaires. It is thought that they were keen to determine their scores on their use and application of strategies and to find solutions to their English reading problems through completing the questionnaires.

It is generally acknowledged that what people say in a survey and what they actually do is not always related. Hanson (1980) found that 20 out of 46 students he reviewed did not demonstrate a positive relationship between attitudes and behaviour. A way to resolve this problem is to actually observe the situation. In relation to this research, it was intended to video a number of English reading classes in China, to see how teachers and students behave and how they use the strategies. However, because of difficulties in travelling to China, it was

only possible to have a video of a Chinese televised English teaching program as shown in Section 1.6.3.

#### 4.5 The Development of Questionnaire Questions --- A Detailed Description

This section provides details of the questionnaires.

##### 4.5.1 Questionnaire 1

*Classroom teaching behaviour* There are 20 questions described under five group headings.

Figure 4.3 Types of questions on teaching behaviour

Focus of items      No. of questions      Question number in Q1      Sources

Attitude	1 question	Q7	Gardner & Lambert (1959)
Classroom activities	5 questions	Q8, 9, 10, 17, 18	Wallace (1991) Loxterman et al. (1994)
Type of exercises	11 questions	Q11a, 11b, 11c, 12a, 12b, 13a, 13b, 14a, 14b, 15, 16	Lunzer et al. (1984) Nuttall (1982)
Extra materials	1 question	Q19	
Teaching approach	1 question	Q20	Larsen-Freeman (1986) Prabhu (1987)

*Teaching vocabulary* There are 14 questions categorised below.

Figure 4.4 Questions on teaching vocabulary

Focus of items      No. of questions      Question number in Q1      Sources

Word association	7 questions	q21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29	Nattinger (1988) Nuttall (1982)
Applying new words	1 question	q24	Nattinger (1988) Oxford (1990)
Use of dictionary	1 question	q28	Summers (1988) Nuttall (1982)
Knack of guessing new words	5 questions	q301, 30b, 30c, 30d, 30e	Clarke and Nation (1980)

*Teaching reading strategies* 34 questions were asked, divided into nine groups.

Figure 4.5 Questions on reading strategies

Focus of items	No. of questions	Question number in Q1	Sources
Linguistic knowledge	8 questions	Q31,33,34,44,45,47,48,58	Halliday (1985) McCarthy (1991) Grellet (1981)
Predicting skills	2 questions	Q32, 37	Goodman (1967, 1968)
Non-linguistic aide	1 question	Q35	Nuttall (1982) Grellet (1981)
Distinction of general idea from specific	4 questions	Q38, 41, 42, 57	Grellet (1981)
Logical structure	4 questions	Q36, 39, 49, 43	Littlefair (1990) Hoey (1983) Grellet (1981) Hatch (1992)
Different strategies if necessary	7 questions	Q46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 56	Grellet (1981) Cunningham (1987)
Guess by educated knowledge	4 questions	Q59, 69, 61, 62	Oxford (1990)
Summarising skills	1 question	Q55	Grellet (1981)
Analysing strategy	2 questions	Q63, 64	Grellet (1981)

*Teachers' knowledge of their students* By knowing the merits and weaknesses of their students, teachers can, therefore, know what best to emphasise. Teachers were, therefore, asked 12 questions to assess their students' abilities on vocabulary and reading strategies.

*Teachers' opinions about ELT in reading and its future development* Teachers were asked on their opinions about teaching materials, teacher training and their future focus on their English reading class, etc.

Figure 4.6 Questions on teachers' opinions

Focus of items	No. of questions	Question number in Q2
Teachers' beliefs and opinions about English teaching/reading	13 closed-questions 2 open-questions	q77 to 89 q90 to 91

#### 4.5.2 Questionnaire 2

*Students' attitude, motivation and beliefs about learning English* 15 questions were asked relating to the students' general attitude towards learning English.

Figure 4.7 Questions on learning attitude

Focus of items	No. of questions	Question number in Q2	Sources
Positive attitude	1 question	Q8	
Instrumental motivation	3 questions	Q9, 10, 11	Gardner & Lambert (1959) Gardner (1985)
Integrative motivation	1 question	Q12	Gardner & Lambert (1959) Gardner (1985)
Negative attitude	3 questions	Q13, 14, 15	
Self-esteem	2 questions	Q16, 17	
Opinions about English learning reading	5 questions	Q18, 19, 20, 21, 22	

*Students' assessments.* Students gave assessments about their English teachers, English course and themselves. The idea of this kind of assessment was taken from Gardner (1985), as are questions 23, 24 and 25.

Figure 4.8 Questions on students' assessment of their general English learning

Focus of items	No. of questions	Question number in Q2
Students' assessment of their English reading class teachers	11 questions	q23a to 23k
Students' assessment of their English reading class	6 questions	q24a to 24g
Students' assessment of themselves	18 questions	q25a to 25r

*Categorised strategies* The rest of the questionnaires contain items on students' learning styles: classroom learning behaviour, vocabulary and reading strategies, practice strategies and students' beliefs and opinions about learning English in China. Students' learning behaviour is categorised into five types of strategies: metacognitive, cognitive, social, compensation and practice strategies.

Figure 4.9 Questions on students learning behaviour

Focus of items	No. of questions	Question number in Q2	Sources
Metacognitive Strategies	19 question	Q26 to 40	Oxford (1990) and O'Malley and Chamot (1990)
Cognitive Strategies	14 questions* (Vocabulary) 40 questions** (Reading)	Q41 to 49, 50a to 50e  Q51 to 90	Souse: check Figure 4.5
Social Strategies	9 question	Q28a to 29, 32, 37 and 40	Oxford (1990)
Compensation Strategies	13 questions	q50a to 50e, 77 to 79, and 86 to 90	Oxford (1990)
Practice Strategies	12 questions	q91 to 102	

\*14 vocabulary strategies are asked to teachers from the angle of how often they teach these strategies.

\*\*Among the 40 reading strategies, 34 (except q77, q86 to q90) are asked to teachers from the angle of how often they teach these reading strategies.

Figure 4.10 Questions on students' opinions

Focus of items	No. of questions	Question number in Q2
Students' beliefs and opinions about English learning	7 questions	Q103 to 109

### 4.5.3 Questionnaire 3

Q3 is the same as Q2 except for the first part (personal background) and the instructions in each part. Instead of asking students to describe their learning/reading strategies, they were asked to recall and put down the choices that best describe their learning behaviour when they were university students in China.

### 4.5.4 Follow-up questionnaires

The follow-up questionnaires were designed (9 questions to teachers, 10 to students) to supplement the questionnaire survey and determine teachers'/students' knowledge of strategies and their opinions about the research and their use and application of strategies.

## 4.6 Characterising This Research

### 4.6.1 Definition and types of research

McDonough and McDonough (1997) differentiate between pure (basic) and applied research, defining pure research as the advancement of theory without necessarily any clear purpose and applied research as the application of research to provide real benefit. The results of this study are intended to provide relevant information for improving ELT in China and may, therefore, be considered applied research within these definitions.

Cohen and Manion (1994) define research according to its functions. The major types of research are: descriptive, exploratory, theoretical, correlational, evaluation, action research and experimental research.

*Descriptive research:* Its prime purpose is to describe a particular situation, or event. Purely descriptive research does not involve attempts to understand or explain the situation or to predict what it might be in the future or how it might be changed. Descriptive research is useful both for the picture it gives us of how the world is now, and for the insights it can offer into what it might be and how to accomplish change (Reaves, 1992). The present research is descriptive in that it describes the teaching and learning strategies used by Chinese teachers and students. But it is not purely descriptive because it also analyses the results and explains the situation to predict what changes should be considered.

*Exploratory research:* The purpose of 'exploratory' research is to investigate phenomena or situations that are not familiar. When conducting exploratory research, the information sought after is rich and complex, not specific and predictable. It is important to approach exploratory research with as open a mind as possible, free of preconceived ideas or expectations about what is to be found (ibid). This research is not exploratory since it is not investigating unfamiliar phenomena or situations. It does not intend to discover something totally new. Yet it can, in some way, be considered exploratory as it aims to explore the



relationship between the strategies used by teachers and students, between the high-score and low-score students and between students in China and in Britain in order to discover what influences students' performance. In the absence of previous research on this topic in China, this is viewed as important.

*Theoretical research:* Where exploratory research generates theories about some new field of interest, Theoretical (or basic) research tests and evaluates theories by finding causal relationships among variables. Specifically, theoretical research is about causes (ibid). This study is not considered to be theoretical research.

*Correlational research:* One of the primary purposes of science, as it is traditionally conceived, is to discover relationships between phenomena with a view to predicting, and in some situations, controlling their occurrence. Educational research is concerned with establishing inter-relationships between variables (Cohen and Manion, 1994). This research is correlational in that it tries to discover relationships between the phenomena with a view to predicting future trends in teaching and learning English.

*Evaluation Research:* Evaluation research is concerned mainly with establishing relationships and testing theories. It is quite rigorous in its application of the conditions, studying a large number of cases, establishing control over variables, using precise sampling techniques, and includes a serious concern with generalising its findings to comparable situations. Evaluation research is aimed at solving real world problems or making practical decisions about actions in actual situations. This type of research focuses on the effectiveness of determining how a program is working or how it can be improved (Reaves, 1992). This research can be regarded as evaluation research in so far as, by focusing on the effectiveness of teaching and learning, it aims at establishing relationships and making practical decisions about actions in actual situations. But it is not totally evaluation research because it does not apply a theory to practice and test it out. However, by including a materials workshop and proposing **TRISA**, the researcher has, to some extent, tried to apply the suggested theories and strategies in practice.

*Action research:* This by contrast, interprets scientific methods much more loosely because it focuses on a specific problem in a specific situation/setting. The emphasis is not so much on obtaining generalised scientific knowledge as to obtaining precise knowledge on a particular situation and purpose (Cohen and Manion, 1994). The prime feature is an on the spot procedure designed to deal with a concrete problem located in an immediate situation. This means that the step-by-step process is constantly monitored over time and by a variety of mechanisms (questionnaires, diaries, interviews and case studies). This ensures that feedback may be translated into modifications, adjustments, directional changes and re-definitions to bring about lasting benefit to the ongoing process itself rather than to some future occasion. Action research relies chiefly on observation and behavioural data (ibid). This study is not considered to be action research.

*Experimental Research:* This is distinguished from non-experimental research by the critical features of manipulation and control of variables that determine cause and effect relationships. Researchers select and manipulate independent variables to observe the effect they have on dependent variables (ibid). This research is not considered to be experimental research, although it can provide the foundation for experimental research. Control and experimental groups can be used to **TRISA** and compare results of students' performance in relation to the teaching methods used.

Figure 4.11 summarises the characteristics of the present research.

Figure 4.11 Characteristics of this research

Research Types	Yes	No	It can be if time and conditions permit.
Descriptive Research	√		
Exploratory Research	√ (X)		
Theoretical Research		X	
Correlational Research	√		
Applied Research	√ (X)		√
Action Research		X	
Experimental Research		X	√

#### 4.6.2 Interview research

As a supplementary activity, interviews were performed (Chapter 8) to identify the respondents' more individual views on teaching and learning reading strategies and their opinions about the questionnaires and this research study. The interviews gave respondents the opportunity to express what they wanted about these issues.

#### 4.7. Statistical Tests in Social Science

##### 4.7.1. Parametric versus nonparametric tests

There are two major types to statistical tests in social science, parametric and non-parametric (Siegel and Castellan, 1988). A parametric statistical test specifies certain conditions about the distribution of responses in the population from which the research sample was drawn. Since these conditions are not ordinarily tested, they are assumed to hold. The meaningfulness of the results of a parametric test depends on the validity of these assumptions. Interpretation of parametric tests based on a normal distribution assumes that the scores being analysed result from measurement on an interval scale (ibid, 1988; Ferguson, 1976; Hinton, 1995). If it is a *t*-test, the model underlying a *t*-test assumes that the data have been derived from normal distribution with equal variance, and are of equal (or near equal) size. Should a preliminary exploration of the data indicate that the assumptions of a *t*-test model have been seriously violated, an alternative test should be chosen from the portfolio of non-parametric tests (Kinnear and Gray, 1997).

A non-parametric statistical test is based on a model that specifies only very general conditions and one regarding the specific form of the distribution from which the sample was drawn. Certain assumptions are associated with most non-parametric statistical tests, namely, that the observations are independent and perhaps that the variable under study has underlying continuity. These assumptions are fewer and weaker than those associated with parametric tests because non-parametric tests do not use, or make assumptions about, the

characteristics of populations. Moreover, non-parametric procedures often test different hypotheses about the population. Finally, unlike parametric tests, there are non-parametric tests that may be applied appropriately to data measured in an ordinal scale, and others to data in a nominal or categorical scale (Siegel and Castellan, 1988).

Data associated with this research is non-parametric, because the study did not use or make assumptions about the characteristics of the sample population, did not control respondents, and used a relatively large sample size.

#### 4.7.2. Advantages and disadvantages of nonparametric statistical tests

Siegel and Castellan (1988) summarise the advantages and disadvantages of non-parametric test by stating:

The advantages of non-parametric tests are

- a) They make fewer assumptions about the data and may be more relevant to a particular situation.
- b) They are available to analyse data, which is inherently in ranks as well as data whose seemingly numerical scores have the strength of ranks.
- c) Non-parametric methods are available to treat data which is simply classificatory or categorical, i.e. are measured in a nominal scale.
- d) There are suitable non-parametric tests for treating samples made up of observations from several different populations.
- e) Non-parametric tests are typically much easier to learn and to apply than parametric tests. In addition, their interpretations are often more direct, because they do not require the sample to meet the assumptions or requirements of parametric tests.

The disadvantages are:

- a) If all the assumptions of a parametric model are, in fact, met in the data, and the research hypotheses could be tested by parametric tests, then non-parametric tests are wasteful.

- b) Another objection to non-parametric tests is that they are not systematic, whereas parametric tests have been systematised, and different tests are simply variations on a central theme. Although this is partly true, it does not seem that the value of systematic approaches justifies the cost. Moreover, careful examination of non-parametric tests reveals common themes - the tests for categorical data are systematic, as are many of the tests applied with ordered data.
- c) Further objection to non-parametric tests has to do with convenience. Tables necessary to implement non-parametric tests are scattered widely and appear in different formats. The same, however, may also be true of many parametric tests.

#### 4.7.3. The tests used in the present research

Taking account of the advantages/disadvantages of non-parametric test and the characteristics of this research and that ordinal measurement has been achieved for the variables being studied, Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney and the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analyses of variance have been used to analyse the data. The Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test is one of the most powerful non-parametric tests, and is a very useful alternative to the parametric *t*-test when the researcher wishes to avoid *t*-test assumptions or when the measurement in research is weaker than interval scaling (Hinton, 1995). The Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test is used to test whether two independent groups have been drawn from the same population, while the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks is an extremely useful test for deciding whether *K* independent samples are from different populations. Sample values almost invariably differ somewhat, and the question is whether the differences among the samples signify genuine population differences or whether they represent merely the kind of variations that are to be expected among random samples from the same population.

ANOVA (one way analysis of variance) is used to compare the numerous conditions that affect students' use of strategies. Pearson's *r* and Spearman's *Rho* are used to correlate, where necessary, and to see the association or relationship between variables, especially students' achievement with their use of strategies. More detailed discussions of ANOVA,

correlation can be found in Chapter 5. Figure 4.12 lists the statistical tests used in the study and their purposes.

Figure 4.12 Statistical tests used in this research

Statistical test used	Purposes	See Tables
Mann-Whitney U	Compare the differences between means of two groups	Tables 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.5a, 6.5
Kruskal-Wallis K	Compare the differences between means of more than three groups	Tables 5.1, 5.2
ANOVA	Compare the differences of many variables	Tables 5.3b, 5.3c, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.10, 5.12, 5.16, 5.23, 6.2, 6.4, 6.6
Pearson's r	Correlate two test scores	Tables 5.20, 6.3
Spearman's rho	Correlate several variables with different scores	Tables 5.21, 5.22, 6.3
Kendall's tau	Correlate several variables with the mean of total strategy use, correlate two similar variables	Tables 5.27, 6.1, 6.3
Correlation of bivariate	Correlation of two variables	Appendices H and I
Chi-Square	Compare the association of variables	Tables 5.9, 5.11

#### 4.8 Conclusion

This chapter described the research hypotheses and the steps undertaken for the three phases of study. A general overview of the questionnaires, the categories, the structure of the questionnaires and the types of questions were described. A large amount of data was obtained from the questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire survey. Finally, interviews were also planned and conducted to enable respondents to express their more personal views regarding the strategies, the proposed approach and the research in order to clarify and supplement results from the questionnaire analyses.

The questionnaires were specifically designed for the purpose of finding out teachers'/students' perceptions of their use of strategies to determine possible relationships that may exist between behaviour/performance and strategy use. Because of the type and the nature of this research, the main statistical tests used are Mann-Whitney, Kruskal-Wallis, ANOVA and correlation analyses. Having determined the research design and methodology, the following chapter discusses the data analysis performed on these questionnaires, explores the research hypotheses and attempts to answer questions raised by this research.

## **Chapter Five**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### 5.0 Introduction

The analysis of the questionnaire survey to determine Chinese English teachers' and students' perceptions on reading strategies is discussed within this chapter. This analysis was performed using systematic statistical methods based on SPSS (the Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The chapter identifies the steps taken to ensure the reliability and validity of test results, and indicates how various factors influence the use and application of reading strategies in order to determine those factors that can help promote effective English teaching in China and improve students' performance.

#### 5.1 Statistical Tests and p-Values

Results of the statistical tests provide probability values (p-values). By convention in educational research p-values that are less than 0.05 are generally regarded as statistically significant. When results are said to be significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ , this implies that the conditional probability of obtaining such results simply by chance is less than or equal to 1 in 20 (or 5 in 100 – 5%). In education, odds of 1 in 20 ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) or 1 in 100 ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) are used as the basis for rejecting a hypothesis (Kinnear and Gray, 1997). In this analysis, if  $p \leq 0.05$ , the result is considered 'significant',  $p \leq 0.01$ , 'very significant',  $p \leq 0.001$ , 'extremely significant'. These terms are used throughout the following discussions.

#### 5.2 Quantitative Analysis

The analysis was performed separately on the three sets of questionnaires and the results were then compared. It mainly focused on Q1 and Q2, with Q3 considered supplementary to compare results obtained from Q2. Frequency counts were taken for all the questions, which were grouped into categories and then compared.

### 5.2.1 Questionnaire 1

*Independent factors* The 115 respondent teachers were grouped and analysed according to four independent factors:

- 1) Qualifications - three levels of qualifications;
- 2) Age groups - three age groups;
- 3) Teaching experience - three levels of teaching experience;
- 4) Universities - four universities.

There are 67 variables representing teaching strategies in the questionnaire. These variables are grouped into three categories, as follows:

- 1) Classroom teaching behaviour (q7 to q19, 19 variables);
- 2) Vocabulary teaching (q21 to q30e, 14 variables);
- 3) Reading strategies (q31 to q64, 34 variables).

For each variable, Kruskal-Wallis tests were carried out using the following four grouping factors: University, Age, Qualification and Teaching Experience. Thus, a total of  $67 \times 4 = 268$  tests were carried out. Table 5.1 shows the numbers of significant effects resulting from these tests, arranged according to the category of teaching strategies.

Table 5.1 Numbers of significant effects of teaching strategies for Chinese English teachers

Grouped variables Factors	Teaching Behaviour 19 variables				Vocabulary Teaching 14 variables				Reading Strategies 34 variables				Total 67 variables			
	TS	*	***	***	TS	*	**	***	TS	*	**	***	TS	*	**	***
Universities	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	3	5	1	12	6	5	1 (18%)
Age groups	7	3	2	2	5	1	2	2	15	4	4	7	27	8	8	11 (40%)
Qualifications	13	7	4	2	10	3	3	4	22	9	7	6	45	19	14	12 (67%)
Teaching Experiences	7	4	2	1	4	2	1	1	12	5	4	3	23	11	7	5 (34%)
Total %	30 (out of 76) 39%				19 (out of 56) 34%				58 (out of 136) 43%							

Notes: TS = total number of significance \* significant number of variables at  $p \leq 0.05$   
 \*\* very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$  \*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$



These results show that:

*Qualifications* have the most effect on teachers' use of strategies, 67% significance level, but *which qualification group* uses the most or the least strategies is unknown at this stage. This will be revealed by further analysis.

The *university factor* has little influence on the teachers' use of strategies. This **confirms** the hypothesis that **there will be no difference among teachers from different universities in their use of the strategies** and that **the Chinese English teachers in this sample tend to use the same teaching approach and similar strategies**.

With regard to the three categorised variables, *reading strategies* has the highest significant percentage, 43%, with *teaching behaviour*, having 39% and *vocabulary strategies*, 34%. These results indicate that there is a bigger difference amongst teachers in their use of teaching reading strategies than in their use of vocabulary strategies.

### 5.2.2 Questionnaire 2

201 respondent students were categorised under 7 different headings (7 independent factors): *universities, age group, gender, academic years, university English entrance scores, end of 1<sup>st</sup> year English scores* and *attitude towards learning English*. 90 questions were grouped under 5 headings: *learning attitude/motivation, classroom learning behaviour, vocabulary learning, reading strategies* and *practice strategies*. Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis were used where appropriate. The overall results of numbers of significant differences across variables are displayed in Chart 5.1 and Table 5.2.

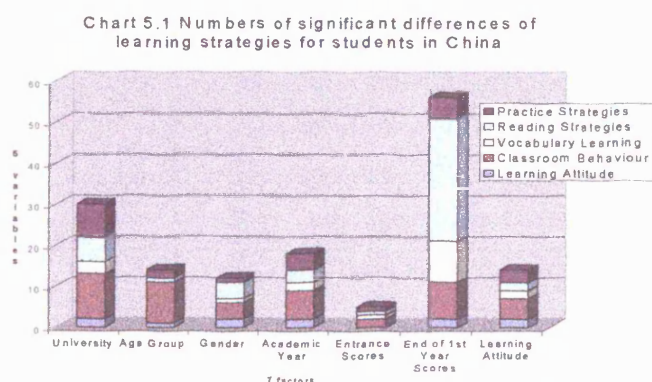


Table 5.2 Numbers of significant differences of learning strategies for Chinese students in China

Grouped variables Factors	Learning Attitude TV: 5 variables TS * ** ***	Classroom Behaviour TV: 19 variables TS * ** ***	Vocabulary Learning TV: 14 variables TS * ** ***	Reading Strategies TV: 40 variable TS * ** ***	Practice Strategies TV: 12 variables TS * ** ***	Total number of Significance TV: 90 variables TS * ** ***
University	2 0 1 1	11 4 4 3	3 2 0 1	6 2 3 1	8 1 3 4	30 9 11 10 (33%)
Age Group	1 0 1 0	10 4 6 0	0 0 0 0	1 1 0 0	2 1 0 1	14 6 7 1 (16%)
Gender	2 2 0 0	4 1 1 2	1 1 0 0	4 2 1 1	1 1 0 0	12 7 2 3 (13%)
Academic year	2 0 1 1	7 1 5 1	2 2 0 0	3 3 0 0	4 2 1 1	18 8 7 3 (20%)
Entrance scores	0 0 0 0	2 2 0 0	1 1 0 0	1 1 0 0	1 1 0 0	5 5 0 0 (6%)
End of 1 <sup>st</sup> year scores	2 1 0 1	9 1 5 3	10 2 4 4	30 8 11 11	5 3 0 2	56 15 20 21 (62%)
Learning attitude	2 1 0 1	5 3 2 0	2 1 0 1	2 0 2 0	3 2 1 0	14 7 5 2 (16%)
TOTALS	11(out of 35) 31%	48 (out of 133) 36%	19 (out of 98) 19%	47(out of 280) 17%	24 (out of 84) 29%	

Notes: TV = Total Variables

TS = Total Significant number of variables

\* Significant number of variables at  $p \leq 0.05$ \*\* Very Significant number of variables at  $p \leq 0.01$ \*\*\* Extremely Significant number of variables at  $p \leq 0.001$

Table 5.2 indicates that when comparing the students' use of strategies the *end of 1<sup>st</sup> year scores* has the highest percentage of total significant variables, 62%, *University* has 33% total significant variables and *English entrance scores* 6%. This implies that the end of 1<sup>st</sup> year score is most affected by the use of strategies.

The results of the 5 categorised variables show that *classroom behaviour* has the highest significant percentage, 36%. This suggests that classroom behaviour influences the use of strategies more than any other factor, although learning attitude is also a major influence with 31%.

The results of variables like *classroom learning behaviour*, *learning attitude* and *practice strategies* show high total of significant variables, while vocabulary and reading strategies indicate lower totals. This phenomenon can be interpreted as no matter how hard students try to learn and how much they practice, they need to be taught how to use appropriate strategies and be taught in an appropriate manner to enable them to understand and master the strategies. This raises an important issue of how to teach the strategies effectively and efficiently and allow students to benefit from their use at an early stage of study (Section 3.2).

### 5.2.3 Comparison of Q1 and Q2 in vocabulary and reading strategies

This section compares the teachers' and students' use of teaching and learning strategies (valued from 'never' to 'always', so that a high mean score signifies that the strategy is frequently used) in vocabulary and reading and constitutes the main research focus. The results are shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Significant differences between teachers and students in vocabulary and reading strategies

Variables	T-means	S-means	2-Tailed P	Sig.
Grouping words	3.896	3.209	.0000	***
Using paired associates	3.734	3.458	.0094	**
Putting words to context	3.896	3.475	.0002	***
Using semantic sets	3.817	3.055	.0000	***
Using a dictionary	3.296	3.895	.0000	*** (-)
Predicting from titles	4.104	3.741	.0008	***
Predicting content	3.870	3.348	.0000	***
Paying attention to punctuation	3.270	2.940	.0317	*
Paying attention to pictures	3.113	3.488	.0005	*** (-)
Distinguishing general from specific information	4.000	3.425	.0000	***
Paying attention to cause and effect relation	3.957	3.498	.0000	***
Paying attention to topic sentence	4.235	3.687	.0000	***
Distinguishing main ideas from details	4.621	3.665	.0000	***
Paying attention to coherence	3.843	3.255	.0000	***
Paying attention to sentence markers	4.104	3.677	.0006	***
Paying attention to organisation of text	4.070	3.109	.0000	***
Paying attention to reference	4.043	3.415	.0000	***
Paying attention to ellipsis	4.130	3.348	.0000	***
Paying attention to substitution	4.113	3.353	.0000	***
Paying attention to inference	4.009	3.417	.0000	***
Scanning	3.048	3.428	.0000	*** (-)
Reading in blocks	4.270	3.398	.0000	***
Same way as reading L1	3.226	2.910	.0425	*
Using translating skill	3.851	3.295	.0000	***
Using summarising skill	4.061	3.050	.0000	***
Adjusting speed	3.852	3.393	.0000	***
Focusing on general meaning	3.948	3.483	.0000	***
Guessing by prefix etc.	4.313	3.550	.0000	***
Guessing by forward/backward clues	4.183	3.881	.0004	***
Guessing by topic knowledge	3.920	3.551	.0005	***
Using cultural knowledge	3.704	3.210	.0000	***
Analysing complicated sentences	4.104	3.164	.0000	***
Analysing the writer's intention	4.078	3.463	.0000	***

Note: 'High means' imply 'high frequency use of the strategy'.

(-) means 'students use more often of those strategies than the teachers'.

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ .

\*\* Very Significant at  $p \leq 0.01$ .

\*\*\* Extremely Significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ .

Results in Table 5.3 reveal that in general, teachers say that they teach more of the given strategies than students claim they use. The exceptions are those strategies with a minus sign. A summary is given in Table 5.3a.

Table 5.3a Results of teaching/learning in vocabulary and reading strategies

Grouped variables Factors	Vocabulary Strategies 14 strategies TS: 5 (36%) * ** ***	Reading Strategies 34 strategies TS: 28 (82%) * ** ***	Total 48 strategies TS: 33 (69%) * ** ***
Teachers vs Student	0 1 4	2 0 26	2 1 30

Notes: TS = Total Significant number of variables

\* Significant number of variables at  $p \leq 0.05$

\*\* Very significant number of variables at  $p \leq 0.01$

\*\*\* Extremely significant number of variables at  $p \leq 0.001$

These results **confirm** the hypothesis that **there will be a difference between teachers and students in their self-perceived use of strategies** (Section 4.1), especially for reading strategies, which make up 82% of the total number of significantly different strategies (Table 5.3b). A more detailed commentary is given later.

Table 5.3b ANOVA in vocabulary and reading strategies by teachers and students  
48 strategies in total (14 vocabulary + 34 reading strategies)

Groups	Cases	Mean	Std Dev	Sum of square
Teachers	115	3.7926	.4399	22.0581
Students	201	3.4223	.3821	29.2055

	Sum of square	Mean of square	d.f.	F.	Sig.
Between Groups	10.0308	10.0308	1	61.4410	.0000 ***
Within Groups	51.2636	.1633			

\*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

Table 5.3c ANOVA in vocabulary strategies by teachers and students  
14 vocabulary strategies

Groups	Cases	Mean	Std Dev	Sum of square
Teachers	115	3.6012	.4790	26.1529
Students	201	3.4590	.4479	40.1234

	Sum of square	Mean of square	d.f.	F.	Sig.
Between Groups	1.2801	1.2801	1	6.0649	.0143 *
Within Groups	66.2763	.2111			

\* very significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

Table 5.3d ANOVA in reading strategies by teachers and students

34 reading strategies

Groups	Cases	Mean	Std Dev	Sum of square
Teachers	115	3.8714	.4676	24.9227
Students	201	3.4030	.4030	32.4800

	Sum of square	Mean of square	d.f.	F.	Sig.
Between Groups	16.0511	16.0514	1	87.8030	.0000 ***
Within Groups	57.4027	.1828			

\*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ 

### 5.2.3.1 A general summary for the comparisons

The total of significantly different variables is 69% in Table 5.3a between teachers and students in their perceived use of strategies. This is the highest by far of all the comparison analysis results, even when cross-group examination is considered. Cross-group examination refers to the comparison results of other groups, such as qualifications, 67% in Table 5.1 the highest of the teacher factors and the end of 1<sup>st</sup> year scores, 62% the highest of the student factors. If only ‘*reading strategies*’ are considered for the teacher/student comparison, the total of significantly different variables is 82%.

Moreover, of the 33 significantly different strategies out of 48, 90% (30 out of 33) fall into extremely significant groups (\*\*\*). This again is the highest figure: by comparison to 27% extreme significance for teachers’ qualifications (Table 5.1; 12 out of 45), and 38% extreme significance for students’ end of 1<sup>st</sup> year score (Table 5.2; 21 out of 56).

Only 3 out of 48 strategies (6%) are significantly higher for students. It can be concluded that in nearly every case, teachers’ perception of strategy use is higher than that of students. An extremely significant difference is shown in Table 5.3b for the total comparison (vocabulary and reading), in Table 5.3d for comparison of reading strategies and Table 5.3c for comparison of vocabulary. Therefore, there is evidence to **support** the research hypothesis that **there will be a difference between teachers and students in their self-perceived use of strategies**.

### 5.2.3.2 Interpretations of the results

These results might imply any of the following, or a combination of them:

- 1) Teachers are more aware of and knowledgeable about strategies and, therefore, say they teach more strategies;
- 2) When teaching strategies, teachers may not label the strategies explicitly, or may not teach them thoroughly. This would result in students being less aware of and, hence, less able to make use of the strategies;
- 3) Whether or not teachers actually teach the strategies, which is still uncertain as the questionnaires are based only on teachers' self-assessment, it may be that teachers consider the strategies important and should be taught, so they simply ticked them on the basis that they occasionally teach them;
- 4) Students are not aware of the strategies even if they actually use them. In this alternative explanation, the questionnaires may be assessing awareness rather than actual use.

In summary the results so far suggest that teachers are either:

- teaching the strategies, but students do not appreciate them;
- simply not teaching the strategies properly; or
- teachers have a more heightened awareness of the strategies.

This latter point raises the question of why teachers have apparently not been successful in raising students' awareness of strategies, which they clearly believe to be important (Section 5.2.3, Tables 5.3b and 5.3d).

### 5.2.3.3 Discussion of the strategies which are extremely significant

Table 5.4 is a measurement table, showing three general categories regarding use of the strategies: high, medium and low as compared to Oxford (1990), who subdivided strategy use into five categories. The mean scores in the table indicate the categories in which the strategies fall into, from *never* to *always*.

Table 5.4 Measurement of categories for strategy use

Measurement	Five categories of strategy use	Means (M)
High	Always or almost always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Generally used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
Low	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

The types of questions and the systems of scaling used in the questionnaires are distinguished in Figure 4.2 (Chapter 4, p.108), a reiteration is given here:

**For the use of strategies,** 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always. ‘High means’ imply strong agreement, high use of the strategies.

**For questions relating to opinions,** 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = uncertain, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree. ‘High means’ imply strong disagreement.

**For items relating to assessment,** the Likert scale goes from ‘1 to 7’, from ‘extremely positive to extremely negative’. ‘High means’ imply extremely negative assessment.

#### *Distinguishing main ideas from details*

Teachers claim that they almost always teach this strategy (M=4.621), the highest among all 48 strategies in Table 5.3). This shows the importance of the strategy from a teacher’s point of view. The students’ mean for this strategy is also very high, 3.665, but still there is an extremely significant difference of nearly 1 point between the means. Although, students recognise its importance, they may find it difficult to use and, therefore do not claim to use it as often as teachers consider it should be used. Teachers also use more *distinguishing from general to specific information* and *paying attention to topic sentence* than students, presumably for similar reasons.



*Grouping words and using semantic sets*

These two strategies seem not to be too difficult, yet extremely significant differences still occur. Teachers' means are 3.896 and 3.817, while students' are 3.209 and 3.055. It might be that students are too lazy to group words they have learned, or they do not know enough words to use the semantic sets to group words into synonyms or antonyms, or they tend to learn words on a word by word basis, seldom putting words into context.

*Predicting skills*

Two strategies are about predicting skills, *predicting from titles* and *predicting content*. For *predicting from titles*, the teachers' mean is 4.104 and the students' is 3.741. Although there is an extremely significant difference between the two means, they both fall into the category of 'generally used'. For *predicting content*, the teachers' mean is 3.870, the students' is 3.348, again an extremely significant difference. The strategy is 'generally used' by teachers, while only 'sometimes' used by students. The reason might be that *predicting from titles* may be relatively easier than *predicting content*. The former is more general, the latter is more specific. Therefore, since it is difficult to be specific and students may not often get their predictions right, they do not use predicting content so often.

*Paying attention to coherence, organisation of the text, reference and inference*

The four strategies involving understanding and tackling a text, not only show extremely significant differences in use between the teachers and the students (Table 5.3), but also fall into two different categories, 'generally used' by the teachers and 'sometimes used' by the students. The teachers' means for *organisation*, *reference* and *inference* are all above 4, *coherence* is 3.843, which is also very high, while the students' for the four strategies are just above 3. Why is there such a big difference? Is the students' stated lack of use related to the fact that the strategies are so difficult to master, or are they advanced levels of strategies, which require more effort to learn and to use, and the students, therefore, think it too difficult to try? The fact is that these strategies are related to reasoning, analysing and higher levels of thinking, similar to *paying attention to cause and effect relationships* in the text, *analysing complicated sentences* and *analysing the writer's intention*. For all these there is again an

extremely significant difference in favour of the teachers. The reasons, however, remain uncertain.

#### *Paying attention to ellipsis and substitution*

These two strategies involving grammar and structure are highly scored by the teachers, over 4, but only moderately scored by the students 3.3, an extremely significant difference (see Table 5.3). They are not very high level strategies and are not too difficult to master. Surprisingly, there is still a large gap in scores. Why? Maybe the students think they are not that important and ignore them. However, occasionally according to context they can be important; some pronouns can cause confusion if the substitution is not clear. Or maybe they are *linking skills*, which students are not good at, especially the poor students who do not treat texts at discourse level, but at a word by word, or sentence by sentence level.

#### *Using translating skill*

The teachers' mean for *translation skills* is 3.851, the students' is 3.295. Once more this difference is extremely significant (Table 5.3). Perhaps the students would be expected to use more *translation skills* than the teachers. However, the teachers may appreciate that the use of this strategy increases students' comprehension, while their students may be using this strategy subconsciously for difficult sentences, which they cannot understand.

#### *Adjusting speed*

This is a very important strategy for reading, for example to read slowly or twice for important paragraphs or particular points, but glance through unimportant parts, similar to *reading in blocks* ( $M_t=4.270$ ,  $M_s=3.398$ ). The teachers' mean is 3.852; the students' 3.393. Both differences are extremely significant (Table 5.3). The likely reason for the difference is that students may worry about being unable to understand texts.

#### *Using cultural knowledge*

The teachers' mean is 3.704, the students', 3.210. The teachers' score may be expected to be higher because teachers are bound to know more or have studied more about western cultures. Their score is not as high as many others, probably, because even teachers have a

limited knowledge of different cultures. However, these differences are once more extremely significant (Table 5.3).

#### *Using summarising skill*

The teachers use this strategy a lot more ( $M_t=4.061$ ,  $M_s=3.050$ ). This is yet another extremely significant difference. Possibly because teachers believe it is important to summarise the reading to understand the major points and to list new words or grammatical points just learnt. Maybe this is too much effort for students.

#### *Guessing skills*

Three questions: *guessing by prefix/suffix, by forward/backward clues and by topic knowledge*) are all scored extremely significantly higher by the teachers, but they are all generally used by both groups (Table 5.3). This may illustrate that although teachers may encourage students to use the guessing strategies, students do not claim to use them as often as their teachers.

The strategies that the students seem really comfortable with, and claim to use a lot of are listed below.

#### *Using a dictionary*

The students' mean for this strategy is extremely significantly higher than the teachers' ( $3.895 > 3.296$ ). It appears that the students use a dictionary a lot more than other means for solving lexical problems, maybe because it is easier than to guess the meaning of a word (the mean here is higher than the three student guessing means).

#### *Paying attention to pictures*

The students' mean is 3.488, extremely significantly higher than the teachers' mean of 3.113. This implies that the students tend to like to use visuals, which can again be viewed as easily accessible support.

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*Scanning*

The students use *scanning* extremely significantly more than the teachers ( $3.428 > 3.048$ ). The teachers' mean for *scanning* is the lowest among all the vocabulary and reading strategies, maybe because the teachers think it is easy to teach this strategy and once they have taught the technique, they do not stress it again. Perhaps the students that have learnt the strategy think it important and useful and use it whenever they need to scan for information. They can obtain information quickly without taking the trouble of reading the whole text and, therefore, like to use this strategy.

The general picture of the two groups is that the teachers claim to teach more strategies that require the skills of organising, predicting, thinking and analysing, while the students claim to use more strategies that are easier and quicker to use.

This suggests that the strategies that require the skills of distinguishing main ideas from details, predicting and analysing etc. and that are more crucial for reading speed and comprehension comprise the major teaching issue. It appears that the students do not claim to use the strategies as often as the teachers, possibly because they are complicated and difficult to apply and may not have been clearly taught and demonstrated. It is suggested that the teachers are teaching reading (such as emphasising vocabulary and grammar, often the case in China), but not necessarily reading skills and strategies. As a foreign language learner, however, it is important to know and appreciate the strategies used in tackling reading difficulties. It is known that cognitive awareness helps students judge and choose the proper methods to resolve particular reading problems.

Although the answers to the questionnaires provide reasonable analytical results, a general limitation to this type of questionnaire is that the respondents are merely recognising answers from a given list. Also subjects rarely choose 'never' or 'always'. Although they tick the strategies, if they are asked in an open question what strategies they use, they can only name a few. Yet, even if the tendency is for respondents to give middle scores, it is felt that this would not greatly affect the analysis and the results would still imply a gap between the teachers' and the students' perceived use and application of strategies.

#### 5.2.4 Comparison of Q2 and Q3

The reason for making comparisons within a group and across groups is to see the effects relating to the factors and the use of strategies in order to determine:

- (1) *Which strategies* show significant differences across the groups;
- (2) *Whether there is a relationship* between the variables in a particular group or between the groups;
- (3) *What relationships* exist and can they be identified by the study;
- (4) *What implications* can be drawn from the analysis to help diagnose existing problems in Chinese ELT and provide suggestions for improving future teaching and learning?

Table 5.5 shows the comparison of strategy use between Chinese students in China and in Britain. This research shows that students in Britain use more strategies. If the opposite is found, a minus sign (-) is given. . These are discussed in 5.2.4.1 and 5.2.4.2.

Table 5.5 Mean scores of learning strategies between students in China and in Britain

Variables	Groups	Ss in China Means	Ss in UK Means	Mann-Whitney 2 – Tailed P	Sig.
Asking teacher to paraphrase		2.672	2.915	.0096	**
Asking teacher to explain		2.995	3.310	.0370	*
Using appropriate strategies		3.322	3.639	.0132	*
Checking progress		2.160	2.494	.0370	*
Being active in class		2.825	3.506	.0000	***
Taking notes		3.935	3.675	.0332	* (-)
Co-operating with teacher		2.815	3.506	.0000	***
Grouping words		3.209	3.495	.0331	*
Paying attention to metaphor sets		3.392	3.010	.0006	*** (-)
Predicting content		3.348	3.727	.0021	**
Paying attention to pictures etc.		3.488	3.755	.0127	*
Paying attention to the type of text		3.403	3.694	.0170	*
Distinguishing main ideas from details		3.665	3.969	.0038	**
Paying attention to coherence		3.255	3.680	.0001	***
Paying attention to organisation of text		3.109	3.520	.0016	**
Paying attention to substitution		3.353	3.206	.0396	* (-)
Scanning		3.428	3.832	.0004	***
Reading in blocks		3.398	3.732	.0026	**
Same as reading L1		2.910	3.378	.0002	***
Translating skills		3.295	2.887	.0001	*** (-)
Adjusting speed		3.393	3.755	.0018	**
Focusing on general meaning		3.483	3.763	.0163	*
Guessing by prefix etc.		3.550	3.847	.0035	**
Guessing by topic knowledge		3.557	3.959	.0001	***
Analysing complicated sentences		3.162	3.520	.0041	**
Paying attention to graphs etc.		3.260	3.541	.0085	**
Paying attention to teacher's tone of voice etc.		3.463	3.103	.0002	*** (-)
Doing exercises carefully		3.851	4.398	.0249	*
Reading newspaper		2.398	3.474	.0000	***
Reading magazines		2.383	3.143	.0000	***
Using additional textbooks		2.985	3.557	.0000	***
Reading journals in English		2.363	3.316	.0000	***
Reading technical books in English		2.299	3.500	.0000	***
Doing TOEFL exercises		1.701	3.216	.0000	***
Doing multiple choice exercises		2.841	3.378	.0004	***
Doing exercises with T/F questions		2.836	3.265	.0032	**

Keys: \* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$  \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$  \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

'High means' imply high frequency use of the strategies and strong agreement.

(-) means students in China claim to use more of the strategy than students in Britain.

Ss = students S1= students in China S2= students in Britain

85 strategies (classroom learning behaviour, vocabulary, reading and practice strategies) were compared. 5 strategies were scored significantly higher by the students in China, 15% marked by a minus sign (-), while 31 were scored significantly higher by students in Britain, 37%.

This indicates that, in general, Chinese students in Britain have a higher perception of using strategies. This can be explained by the fact that students in Britain have a better knowledge and understanding of English as L2 learners. Detailed discussions are in the coming sections. Table 5.5a shows the mean scores in learning attitude and beliefs.

Table 5.5a Mean scores in learning beliefs between students in China and in Britain

Variables \ Groups	Ss in China Means	Ss in UK Means	Mann-Whitney 2 – Tailed P	Sig.
study for job	1.458	1.812	.0006	***
for study abroad	3.189	2.447	.0000	***
Having integrative motivation	3.363	3.012	.0228	*
Believe learn well if studying hard	1.547	1.800	.0005	***
It Is important to practice reading.	1.448	1.847	.0370	*
It is important to learn vocabulary.	1.685	2.012	.0001	***
It is important to learn grammar.	2.615	2.353	.0298	*

Notes: \* Significant at  $p \leq 0.5$  \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$  \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

The Likert scale for these questions is:

1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Uncertain 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree

'High means' imply strong disagreement.

Ss = students S1= students in China S2= students in Britain

#### 5.2.4.1 Discussion of extremely significant results

Within the following discussions, Ms1=means scored by students in China, Ms2=means scored by students in Britain. The significant results are discussed using A, B and C categories.

##### A. Learning attitude and beliefs (Table 5.5a)

Four statements show extremely significant differences between the two student groups: *studying for a job*, *to study abroad*, *believing that performance improves if they study hard*, and *the importance of learning vocabulary*.

##### *Studying for a job*

Students in China have a higher perception of this attitude, Ms1=1.458, Ms2=1.812. Although both groups agree with the statement, the result implies that students in China are more interested in getting a better job and achieving a higher social status, which appears to be very important in China.

*To study abroad*

Students in Britain agree with this statement ( $M_s2=2.447$ ), while students in China are less certain ( $M_s1=3.189$ ). This suggests that the desire to study abroad is less strong for students in China. This is natural, since students in Britain have already left China and have obviously demonstrated a stronger motivation to study abroad.

*Believing that performance improves if they study hard*

Both groups agree with this statement, but students in China tend more toward ‘strongly agree’ ( $M_s1=1.547$  v  $M_s2=1.800$ ), maybe because the Chinese attitude for hard work is extremely strong in China.

*It is important to learn vocabulary*

Again, both groups think vocabulary is important, with the Chinese group tending more towards ‘strongly agree’ ( $M_s1=1.685$  v  $M_s2= 2.012$ ). Perhaps this is because students in Britain have already attained a reasonably large vocabulary and, therefore, do not feel the same necessity or urgency.

## B. Learning strategies (Table 5.5)

*Being active in class and co-operating with the teacher*

Students in Britain demonstrated very significantly higher means for these two strategies (3.506 and 3.506) than students in China (2.825 and 2.8125). This implies that students in Britain tend to be better at social strategies, are more outgoing and perceive the use of these strategies as an opportunity to practise their oral skills.

*Paying attention to metaphor sets*

Although students in China scored very significantly higher ( $3.392>3.010$ ), it is difficult to determine a reason why they might pay more attention to metaphors unless this is simply part of giving more importance to vocabulary (Table 5.5a).

*Paying attention to coherence, scanning, same as reading L1, guessing by topic knowledge*

For all these strategies, students in Britain scored very significantly higher. This may be because they tend to be better students and are also probably better L1 readers. It is likely that



they use more L1 reading skills to help them in L2 reading, such as *guessing by topic knowledge* (3.959>3.557). Note, however, that the mean for students in China (3.557) is also very high.

#### *Translating skills*

Students in China used this strategy very significantly higher (3.295>2.887). Actually the mean for students in Britain (2.887) is the second lowest score for the group. This may suggest that because students in Britain are reasonably good at understanding English, as expected, they use many L1 reading strategies, and do not need to translate as much for comprehension.

#### *Paying attention to teacher's tone of voice, etc.*

Students in China used this strategy very significantly more than students in Britain (3.463>3.103). This might indicate that students in China are more used to teacher centred expositions.

#### C. Practice strategies (see also Table 5.5)

9 out of 12 *practice strategies* are found to be significantly higher for the U.K. group (7 extremely significant, 1 very significant and 1 significant). These results indicate that students in Britain make frequent use of practice strategies. '*Doing exercises carefully*' is treated fairly seriously by both groups of students; the mean scores for this strategy are the highest, 'generally used' by both groups. The ones 'generally used' by U.K. students are *reading newspapers*, *using additional textbooks* and *reading technical books* in English and *doing TOEFL exercises*.

#### *Doing TOEFL exercises*

This strategy shows an extremely significant difference in means between the two groups ( $M_s1=1.701$ ,  $M_s2=3.216$ ). The mean of 1.701 is the lowest of all the strategies for students in China. Acceptable English scores on TOEFL is a prerequisite for university entrance and for studying abroad and students with such intention perform TOEFL practice exercises to

achieve higher scores. The results for this strategy agree with the previous analysis on motivation, which found that students in China are less certain that they wish to study abroad.

#### 5.2.4.2 The rank order of the top four strategies scored by both groups

A surprising result is that the rank order of the means of the top four strategies are the same for the two groups:

- The highest strategy is *doing exercises carefully* (Ms1=3.851 v Ms2=4.398);
- The second highest is *distinguishing main ideas from details* (Ms1=3.665 v Ms2=3.969);
- The third highest is *guessing by topic knowledge* (Ms1=3.557 v Ms2=3.959);
- The fourth highest is *guessing by forward and backward clues* (Ms1=3.55 v Ms2=3.847).

The results show a similarity between the individual use of strategies by both groups of students, indicating that these strategies are viewed by both sets of students as so important that all students claim to use them very often. Table 5.6 offers comparisons by ANOVA for the two groups in terms of their perception of their use of categorised strategies: *metacognitive*, *cognitive* (vocabulary and reading strategies), *social*, *compensation* and *practice* strategies. This analysis was performed to provide further information about the two groups.

The results show that between the two groups there is a significant difference in their claimed use of *metacognitive* and *reading* strategies; a very significant difference in their use of *social* strategies and an extremely significant difference in their use of *practice* strategies. Because students in Britain tend to be better students, it can be interpreted that practice is an important factor in improving performance.

In general, students in Britain are better at oral/spoken English and claim a higher use of the related strategies. This suggests that for language learning, oral skills are also important in influencing a learner's performance and that the use of reading and metacognitive strategies helps students attain a better reading ability and understanding. It, therefore, suggests that students, particularly students in China, need to improve these strategy skills in order to optimise their potential for English reading.

Table 5.6 ANOVA of learning strategies in categorised strategies for the students in China and in Britain

Variables	Groups	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev	Sum of square	Source	Sum of Square	Mean of square	d.f.	F.	Sig.
Metacognitive strategies	Ss in China	200	2.9979	.5014	50.0285	Between Groups	1.2760	1.2760	1	4.1335	.0430 *
	Ss in UK	85	3.1442	.6667	37.3319	Within Groups	87.3605	.3087			
Cognitive Strategies (Vocabulary)	Ss in China	201	3.4690	.4479	40.1234	Between Groups	.2612	.2612	1	.8902	.3462
	Ss in UK	99	3.4062	.6949	47.3212	Within Groups	87.4446	.2934			
Cognitive Strategies (Reading)	Ss in China	201	3.4094	.3867	29.9070	Between Groups	1.3019	1.3019	1	5.9052	.0157 *
	Ss in UK	99	3.5495	.6043	35.7901	Within Groups	65.6971	.2205			
Social Strategies	Ss in China	200	2.7330	.6125	74.6544	Between Groups	4.2714	4.2714	1	10.8929	.0011 **
	Ss in UK	85	3.0006	.6576	36.3208	Within Groups	110.9722	.3921			
Compensation Strategies	Ss in China	201	3.5910	.3832	29.3675	Between Groups	.0012	.0012	1	.0047	.9454
	Ss in UK	99	3.5953	.6861	46.1337	Within Groups	75.5012	.2534			
Practice Strategies	Ss in China	201	2.7844	.4466	39.8939	Between Groups	27.3340	27.3340	1	88.6597	.0000 ***
	Ss in UK	98	3.4285	.7299	51.6720	Within Groups	91.5659	.3083			

'High means' imply high frequency use of the strategies. \* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$  \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$  \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

### 5.2.5 Summary of the quantitative analysis

The above quantitative analysis presents a general picture showing the level of usage of strategies by teachers and students. Many questions have been included in the questionnaires in order to provide an in depth study and to investigate many related aspects. It should be noted, however, that when a particular factor shows a significant difference with respect to a particular group, it means that it is relatively significant by comparison to the percentages identified for the other groups.

The major results discovered so far are:

- 1) Teachers' qualification appears to be the most important factor for increasing their perceived strategy use, thereafter, possibly their capability for ELT;
- 2) For students, it appears that the end of 1<sup>st</sup> year English scores have the greatest bearing on the use of learning strategies;
- 3) For teachers-students comparison, it seems teachers claim to teach strategies significantly more than students claim to use them, particularly strategies that require high levels of thinking, analysing, organising, reasoning and predicting; students tending to use more strategies that are easy and quicker to apply;
- 4) For cross-groups comparison, it is found that students in Britain practise their English reading far more than students in China, are better at oral/spoken English and social strategies and claim to use more reading and metacognitive strategies.
- 5) Students' learning behaviour (i.e. use of strategies) is connected with their learning attitude and purposes. For example, students in China do not have a strong desire to study abroad, therefore, do less TOEFL exercises.

The above results from quantitative analysis help to build a picture, which is refined through further analysis.

### 5.3 Further Analysis

As stated, the purpose of the research is not only to reveal pictures of phenomena, but also to go deeper beyond the basic phenomena to find out the relationships between the results obtained and attempt to provide appropriate explanations.

#### 5.3.1 Questionnaire 1

##### 5.3.1.1 Teachers' qualifications

The teachers were divided into three groups:

- 6) *Graduate* Teachers who had completed four years university degree (a Bachelor degree), normally majoring in English (except for some older teachers who had transferred from teaching Russian).
- 7) *Post-graduate or equivalent* Teachers who had obtained a Master degree or who had studied the course for a master degree, but without necessarily obtaining the certificate.
- 8) *Graduates with some training experience* Teachers with Bachelor degrees who had attended either a short or a one-year training programme.

The aim was to investigate which group uses the strategies more often and to determine whether the results obtained verify the hypothesis that the higher the teachers' qualifications, the more strategies they claim to use. See Chart 5.2 and Table 5.7.

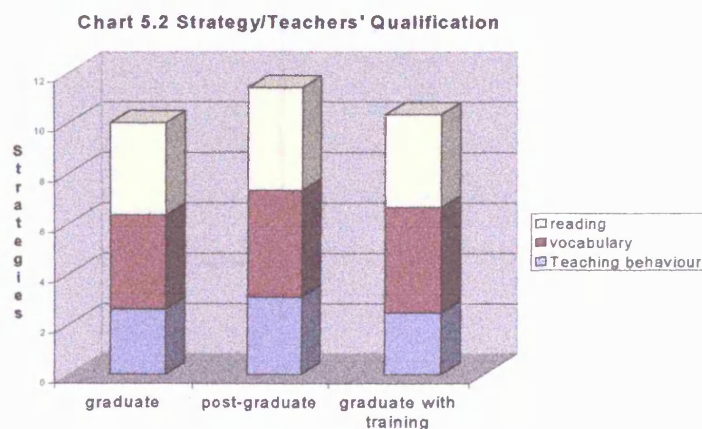


Table 5.7 Teaching strategies with respect to teachers' qualifications

	Groups	Cases	Means	Std Dev	Sum of Square	Source	Sum of squares	d.f.	Mean square	F	Sig.
Classroom Teaching Behaviour	1 2 3	39 58 15	2.8143 3.2518 2.8781	.3137 .4013 .2146	3.7388 9.1782 .6449	Between Groups Within Groups	4.1476 13.5619	2 109	2.0738 .1244	16.6676	.0000 ***
Vocabulary Teaching	1 2 3	39 58 15	3.3143 3.8571 3.3663	.4239 .4045 .3590	6.8284 9.3878 1.8041	Between Groups Within Groups	7.1691 18.0202	2 109	3.5846 .1653	21.6822	.0000 ***
Reading Strategies	1 2 3	39 58 15	3.6882 4.0171 3.7647	.4201 .4685 .4420	6.7074 12.5098 2.7353	Between Groups Within Groups	2.7098 21.9525	2 109	1.3549 .2014	6.7275	.0014 **

Group 1 = graduates      Group 2 = postgraduates or equivalent      Group 3 = graduates with further training  
 \*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$   
 'High means' imply high frequency use of the strategies.

The results above are all very significant. They clearly show that teachers' qualifications demonstrate a significantly higher mean in all three teaching aspects (*classroom teaching behaviour, vocabulary and reading strategies*). This implies that teachers with higher qualifications, being better educated, have probably learnt more about strategies and are, therefore, better able to teach them. It identifies the importance of improving teachers' qualifications and, therefore presumably the quality of teaching and **supports** the hypothesis that **the higher qualified teachers will teach more strategies**.

With regard to the three types of teaching strategies, classroom teaching behaviour is, generally speaking, low for all the three groups ( $M1=2.8443$ ,  $M2=3.2518$  and  $M3=2.8781$ ). This category of strategies is 'sometimes' used. This implies that *classroom teaching behaviour* needs to be greatly improved. *Vocabulary strategies* is 'generally used' by the postgraduate group and 'sometimes used' by the other two groups. *Reading strategies* are 'generally used' by all three groups. But surprisingly, reading strategies have the lowest significant number of differences in variables (17% in Table 5.2) among the students, and 82% of the total significant differences between teachers and students (Table 5.3a), indicating that whether students are good or poor, highly motivated or not, they claim to use more or less the same amount of reading strategies. The results suggest that teachers should improve their *classroom teaching behaviour* and *vocabulary teaching* and should also **improve their reading strategy teaching**, if not to increase the claimed frequency of strategy use (Table 5.7), then to improve the teaching manner and approach (Table 5.3d). This implies that a big improvement is needed to resolve the implied deficiencies in teaching.

#### 5.3.1.2 Age groups

Teachers' age groups and experience demonstrate the next level of significance. Teachers were divided into three age groups to identify which group claims to use most strategies (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8 Teaching strategies with respect to teachers' age groups

Variables	Groups	Cases	Means	Std Dev	Sum of Square	Source	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
Classroom Teaching Behaviour	1	55	2.9857	.3599	6.9943	Between Groups	2.4643	2	1.2322	8.5034	.0004 ***
	2	40	3.2677	.4325	7.2940	Within Groups	16.0844	111	.1449		
	3	19	2.9061	.3159	1.7962	Between Groups	1.2493	2	.6246	2.8011	.0650
Vocabulary Teaching	2	40	3.7446	.4367	7.4376	Within Groups	24.7526	111	.2230		
	3	19	3.4887	.3378	2.0537	Between Groups	1.1711	2	.5856	2.7440	.0687
Reading Strategies	1	55	3.7767	.3999	8.6357	Within Groups	23.6867	111	.2134		
	2	40	4.0013	.5690	12.6273	Between Groups					
	3	19	3.8854	.3669	2.4237	Within Groups					

Group 1 = younger teachers (20-30 years old) Group 2 = middle age teachers (31- 45 years old) Group 3 = older teachers (over 46 years old)

\*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

'High means' imply high frequency use of the strategies.



The results indicate that group 2, the middle age teachers, claims the highest significant use for every type of teaching strategy (*teaching behaviour, vocabulary and reading*), although vocabulary and reading are not significantly high. An extremely significant difference is shown in teaching behaviour between middle age teachers and the other two groups. Younger teachers showed slightly higher means in teaching behaviour and vocabulary than the older teachers (2.9857 and 3.5429 v 2.9061 and 3.4887) and older teachers showed slightly higher means in reading strategies than younger teachers (3.8854 v 3.7767).

The results were further analysed by Chi-Square analysis to ascertain whether teachers' age is related to qualifications or teaching experience, and to establish any possible relationship.

Table 5.9 Chi-Square analysis of teachers' qualification by age

Count Exp Val	Group 1 20-30 years	Group 2 31-45 years	Group 3 Over 46 years	Row Total
Group 1	25	10	4	39
Graduate	18.8	13.6	6.6	34.8%
Group 2	26	29	3	58
Postgraduate or =	28.0	20.2	9.8	51.8%
Group 3	3	0	12	15
Graduate with training	7.2	5.2	2.5	13.4%
Column Total	54	39	19	112
Total Pct	48.2%	34.5%	17.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	55.58363	4	.00000
Missing cases: 3			

The results show an extremely significant value 55.58363 ( $p \leq 0.0000$ ). This suggests a strong relationship between age and qualifications, indicating that the higher qualified teachers fall into the middle age group (29 against an expected 20.2).

Table 5.9 also gives further information about older teachers. This indicates that there are not as many highly qualified teachers in this group as expected (4 against an expected 6.6 for the graduate group, 3 against an expected 9.8 for the postgraduate group), but that more older teachers have been to a training course than expected (12 against an expected 2.5). The

opposite is true of younger teachers (3 against an expected 7.2). This is understandable because younger teachers would not have served long enough to have attended many training courses.

Exactly half the postgraduate teachers fall into the middle age group (29 out of a total 58). This helps to explain why teachers (in age group 31 to 45) claim a higher significant use of teaching strategies. A possible explanation lies in the history of English teaching and the ten years of ‘Cultural Revolution’ in China. After the ‘Cultural Revolution’ when English became popular, many teachers of Russian, who now form the majority of the older age teachers, had to change to teach English. Their English teaching can, therefore, be considered as having been coloured by their previous experience of Russian teaching.

These results **reject** the research hypothesis that **older teachers will teach more strategies**, but tend to **support** the hypothesis that **better qualified teachers teach more strategies**.

#### 5.3.1.3 Teaching experience

Respondents were divided into three groups: group 1=1-10 years of teaching experience, group 2=11-20 years, group 3 =over 21 years (Table 5.10).

Group 2 (11-20 years) gives the highest mean for every teaching strategy although *vocabulary* and *reading strategies* are again not so significantly high. A significant difference was also shown in respect of *teaching behaviour*. This can be rationalised by reference to the above discussion, which suggested that the teaching by older age English teachers is, in general, coloured by previous experiences of Russian language teaching.

Table 5.10 Teaching strategies with respect to teaching experience

Variables	Groups	Cases	Means	Std Dev	Sum of Square	Source	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
Classroom Teaching Behaviour	1	72	3.0623	.3787	10.1836	Between Groups	1.0892	2	.5446	3.6105	.0303 *
	2	21	3.2345	.4724	4.4624	Within Groups	16.4422	109	.1508		
	3	19	2.9061	.3159	1.7962	Between Groups	.4450	2	.2225	.9801	.3786
Vocabulary Teaching	1	72	3.6190	.5187	19.1020	Between Groups	.4450	2	.2225	.9801	.3786
	2	21	3.6973	.4237	3.5909	Within Groups	24.7466	109	.2270		
	3	19	3.4887	.3378	2.0537	Between Groups	.8880	2	.4440	2.0255	.1369
Reading Strategies	1	72	3.8146	.4448	14.0464	Between Groups	.8880	2	.4440	2.0255	.1369
	2	21	4.0476	.6092	7.4230	Within Groups	23.8931	109	.2192		
	3	19	3.8854	.3669	2.4237	Within Groups					

Notes: Group 1 = 1-10 years      Group 2 = 11-20 years      Group 3 = over 21 years

\* significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

'High means' imply high frequency use of the strategies.

Chi-Square analysis was again used to determine the relationship between teaching experience and qualification.

Table 5.11 Chi-Square analysis of teaching experience by qualification

Count Exp Val	Group 1 1-10years	Group 2 11-20years	Group 3 Over 21years	Row Total
Group 1	33	2	4	39
Graduate	24.9	7.4	6.7	35.1%
Group 2	35	19	3	57
Postgraduate or =	36.5	10.8	9.8	51.4%
Group 3	3	0	12	15
Graduate with training	9.6	2.8	2.6	13.5%
Column Total	71	39	21	111
Total Pct	64.0%	34.5%	18.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	60.61310	4	.00000
Missing case:	4		

Table 5.11 indicates an extremely significant relationship between teaching experience and qualifications. A large number of postgraduate respondents fall into the teaching experience Group 2 (19 to 10.8 expected) and an almost equal number fall into Group 1 (35 to 36.5 expected). By comparison, Group 3 (over 21 years) shows a higher count for graduates with training than expected (12 to 2.6). These results help to explain why Group 1 (1-10 years) has a higher total mean than Group 3 (over 21 years), indicating that the use of strategies is more related to teachers' qualifications than teaching experience. This **contradicts** the research hypothesis that **teachers with longer teaching experience will teach more strategies**. This hypothesis is, therefore, **rejected**.

The results indicate that qualifications are more crucial than teaching experience in terms of affecting teaching behaviour and that teachers are less likely to use the strategies if they themselves do not know them, and are unlikely to teach the strategies properly if they do not know them very well. The analysis demonstrates that teachers with higher qualifications claim to use teaching strategies more often and that teachers with higher qualifications

mainly fall in the age range between 31-45 years old with a teaching experience of 11-20 years.

#### 5.3.1.4 Universities

Four universities participated in the research. To maintain confidentiality and for convenience the universities are referred to as A, B, C and D. There was little difference identified in the use of teaching strategies between the four universities. The results of ANOVA are shown in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12 Comparison of teaching strategies for the four universities

University	Case	Mean	Std Dev	Sum of Square
A	30	3.6273	.5214	7.8832
B	35	3.5727	.4043	5.5580
C	30	3.6156	.3319	3.1947
D	20	3.6313	.2791	1.4801

	Sum of Square	Mean of Square	d.f.	F.	Sig.
Between Groups	.0674	.0225	3	.1377	.9373
Within Group	18.1160	.1632			

The **non-significant result** has a very important **implication**. It means that teachers from the four universities are generally consistent in their use of strategies and that the university factor has little effect on their strategy use. This allows the respondent teacher, no matter where they teach, to be treated equally in the research analysis of their strategy teaching. The result also **supports** the research hypothesis that **the Chinese English teachers in this sample tend to use the same teaching approach and similar strategies** as far as different institutions are concerned. The comparison of teaching approaches received (q4) and being used (q20) provides further information on which teaching approach the majority of teachers apply.

Table 5.13 Teaching approaches received and being used

Approaches	DM	GTM	AA	CA	MIXTURE
Received	3.6%	27.9%	5.4%	4.5%	58.6%
Being used	4.6%	5.6%	7.4%	9.3%	73.1%

Notes: DM = Direct Method GTM = Grammar – Translation Method  
 AA = Audio-lingual Approach CA = Communicative Approach  
 Mixture = Mixture of any of the above methods

This indicates that the majority of the teachers (58.6%) were taught a mixed approach, 27.9% were taught GTM. This so called eclectic approach is a mixture of different approaches and methods discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, which appear to dominate present teaching in China (73.1%), with all the other four approaches each under 10%. The popularity of the mixed approach might suggest that teachers taught a mixed approach tend to still teach in this way, while teachers, mainly aged over 45, with over 21 years teaching experience, who learnt the more traditional Grammar-Translation Method, may have changed their teaching approach to a Mixed Approach.

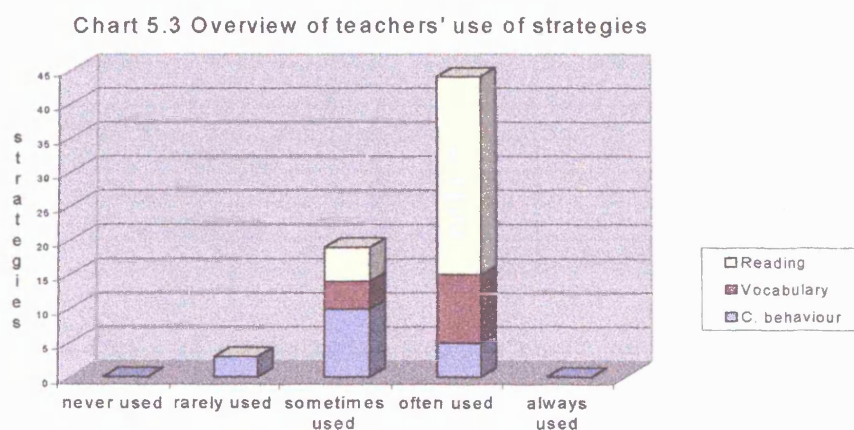
#### 5.3.1.5 Teachers' claimed strategy teaching

Table 5.14 shows the results of teaching strategies measured and rounded according to Oxford (1990).

Table 5.14 Strategy teaching by teachers

Variables \ Strategy categories	Never Used M= 1.0-1.4	Rarely Used M= 1.5-2.4	Sometime Used M= 2.5-3.4	Often Used M= 3.5-4.4	Always Used M= 4.5-5.0
Classroom Teaching Behaviour (19 strategies)	0	3	10	6	0
Vocabulary Teaching (14 strategies)	0	0	4	10	0
Reading Strategies (34 strategies)	0	0	5	29	0
Total in use (67 strategies)	0	3	19	44	0
% in use	0%	5%	28.80%	66.70%	0%

Table 5.14 indicates that the teachers claim that 66.7% of strategies are often used, 28.8% of strategies are sometimes used and that 5% are rarely used, but no strategies are either *never used* or *always used*. Chart 5.3 shows a visual image of the results.



## 5.4 Questionnaire 2

### 5.4.1 The use of strategies by students

The same method is used for the students' strategy use. See Table 5.15 and Chart 5.4, but different strategy category names are used to differentiate between the teachers and the students to avoid confusion. The student categories are used to enable the study to determine the variables that influence students' learning.

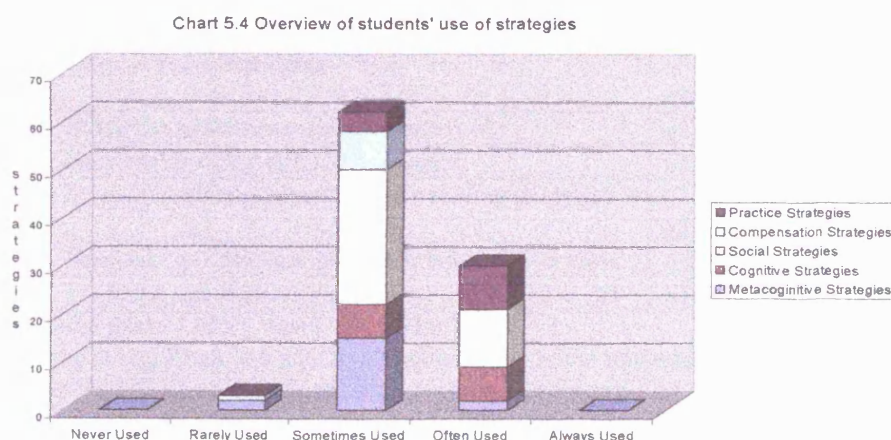


Table 5.15 The use of the strategies by students in China

Variables \ Strategy categories	Never Used M= 1-1.4	Rarely Used M= 1.5-2.4	Sometimes Used M= 2.4-3.4	Often Used M= 3.5-4.4	Always Used M= 4.5-5.0
Metacognitive strategies (19 strategies)	0	2	15	2	0
Cognitive strategies –vocabulary (14 strategies)	0	0	7	7	0
Cognitive strategies -reading (40 strategies)	0	0	28	12	0
Social strategies (9 strategies)	0	1	8	0	0
Compensation strategies (13 strategies)	0	0	4	9	0
Practice strategies (12 strategies)	0	5	5	2	0
Total strategies in use (107 strategies)	0	8	67	32	0
% in use	0%	7.5%	62.6%	29.9%	0%

Similar to the results in Table 5.14, the students claim they never '*never use*' nor '*always use*' the strategies investigated. The difference lies in the claimed frequency of the strategy use by teachers and students: a higher percentage of students claim they '*sometimes use strategies*' and a higher percentage of teachers claim they '*often use strategies*'. For further analysis the strategies and variables are grouped together. See Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1 Grouping of categorised variables/strategies

Categorised variables/strategies	Descriptions	Questions in Q2
Qtm①	The mean of total strategies	q26 to q102
Qmean1①	Classroom behaviour (metacognitive strategies)	q26 to q30
Qmean2①	Vocabulary learning (cognitive strategies)	q41 to q50e
Qmean3①	Reading strategies (cognitive strategies)	q51 to q90
Qmean4①	Practice strategies	q91 to q102
Qsocial①	Social strategies	q28a to q29, q32, q37 and q40
Qcompensation①	Compensation strategies	q50a to q50e, q77 to q79, q86 to q90
self-assessment③	Students' self-assessment of themselves	q25a to q25r
Attitude/motivation③	Students' learning attitude/motivation	q25c, q25d, q25k
Be good at reading strategies③	Students' self-assessment of their reading strategies	q25n, q25o, q25p, q25q, q25r
Be active in class③	Students' self-assessment of their behaviour in class	q25e, q25f
Hard-working④	Students' opinions of whether they work hard or not	q10, q11, q12

Notes: ①strategies answered from '1 to 5', 'never' to 'always'.

'High values' imply strong agreement and high frequency use of the strategies.

③assessment from '1 to 7', 'extremely positive' to 'extremely negative'.

'High values' imply poor assessment.

④opinions from '1 to 5', 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

'High values' imply strong disagreement.



Is the students' use of strategies affected by variables like learning attitude/motivation and independent factors like gender? For these answers see the results of ANOVA in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16 clearly contrasts categorised variables and independent factors: the categorised variables, *be active in class*, *learning attitude/motivation*, *hard working* and *self-assessment* have an extremely significant influence on students' use of strategies, while the independent factors, *university*, *age*, *gender* and *academic year*, have no significant effect.

Table 5.16 ANOVA of categorised variables and independent factors with students' (in China) use of strategies

Mean of total strategy use (qtm)						
Variables/ Factors	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F.	Sig.
Be active in class	Between groups	3.2448	4	.8112	7.6243	.0000 ***
	Within groups	19.8961	187	.1064		
	Total	23.1410	191			
Attitude/ Motivation	Between groups	5.2893	5	1.0579	10.1438	.0000 ***
	Within groups	20.0230	192	.1043		
	Total	25.3123	197			
Hard working	Between groups	5.8364	5	1.1673	10.9506	.0000 ***
	Within groups	20.7862	195	.1066		
	Total	26.6226	200			
Self assessment	Between groups	6.1803	5	1.2361	12.4560	.0000 ***
	Within groups	19.2524	194	.0992		
	Total	25.4330	199			
University	Between groups	.2692	3	.0897	.6708	.5709
	Within groups	26.3534	197	.1338		
	Total	26.6226	200			
Age	Between groups	.4502	4	.1126	.8316	.5065
	Within groups	26.1209	193	.1353		
	Total	26.5711	197			
Sex	Between groups	.2565	1	.2565	1.8719	.1729
	Within groups	25.8977	189	.1370		
	Total	26.1542	190			
Academic Year	Between groups	.1307	1	.1307	.9249	.3376
	Within groups	23.7488	168	.1414		
	Total	23.8795	169			

\*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

#### 5.4.2 Universities and end of 1<sup>st</sup> year English scores

Unlike the teachers' strategy use, for which the 'university' factor shows the lowest significance rate, 'university' factor has the second highest significance rate for the student

questionnaire analysis (Table 5.2). A comparative study of the university variable is presented below.

Table 5.17 Means of learning strategies for the four universities

Variables \ Universities	MeansUni Uni- A	Means Uni- B	Means Uni- C	Means Uni- D	Mean Total in rows
Classroom behaviour	2.9350	3.2380	3.0027	3.1091	3.0712
Vocabulary strategies	3.7008	3.4045	3.4155	3.6952	3.5540
Reading strategies	3.2421	3.1909	3.0485	3.2150	2.8567
Practice strategies	3.1399	3.1205	2.8188	3.0929	3.1821
Total means of each university	3.1535 (3)	3.2108 (1)	3.0828 (4)	3.2073 (2)	

(1)– (4) shows the score sequence for the use of strategies.

The higher the means, the more strategies the students claim to use.

University B has the highest mean for strategy use, while University C the lowest. The ranking of the use of strategies is viewed in relation to the ranking of the exam scores. The English entrance scores and the end of 1<sup>st</sup> year scores are compared. The English entrance exam is marked externally using standardised scores, with 150 points representing the top mark attainable. This has been converted to 100 points to enable comparison with the 1<sup>st</sup> year scores and to allow the calculation of improvement scores (i.e. end of 1<sup>st</sup> year scores minus entrance scores). The results are shown in Table 5.18.

Table 5.18 Comparison of English entrance scores and the end of year scores among the four universities

By universities	Uni- A	Uni- B	Uni-C	Uni- D
Entrance scores (full mark: 100)	74.60(3)	78.86 (2)	81.02 (1)	61.20 (4)
End of 1 <sup>st</sup> year scores (full mark: 100)	75.50 (4)	81.65 (1)	80.30 (2)	78.25 (3)

(1)–(4) shows the positions of the universities in the exams.

- 1) University A has the third highest entrance score (74.60), the lowest end of 1<sup>st</sup> year score (75.50), an improvement of (0.9) and the third highest mean for strategy use (3.1535).
- 2) University B has the second highest entrance score (78.86), the highest end of 1<sup>st</sup> year score (81.65), an improvement of (2.79) and the highest mean for strategy use (3.2108)

- 3) University C has the highest entrance score (81.02), the second highest end of 1<sup>st</sup> year score (80.30), the lowest improvement, (a drop of 0.72) and the lowest mean for strategy use (3.0828).
- 4) University D has the lowest entrance score (61.20), the third highest 1<sup>st</sup> year score (78.25), an improvement of (17.05) and the second highest mean for strategy use (3.2073).

By reference to universities B and D, it can be seen that the more strategies students use, the better their improvement will be. This result is analysed further below.

#### 5.4.3 Correlation of Examination Scores, the Strategies and the Variables

Within this section, correlation is used to compare the variables to see whether there is an association or correlation between the English entrance, 1<sup>st</sup> year and the improvement scores with categorised strategies and variables. Correlation is primarily concerned with describing the strength, or degree and direction (positive or negative) of a relationship between two or more variables or whether a change in one variable causes a change in the other (Hinton, 1995).

The strength and direction of the relationship can be expressed by means of a correlation coefficient. A correlation coefficient can take on values that range from  $-1$ , indicating a perfect negative relationship, through  $0$ , indicating no relationship, to  $+1$ , indicating a perfect positive relationship. The size of the correlation coefficient indicates the strength of the relationship. The closer the correlation coefficient is to  $-1$  or  $+1$ , and the farther away from  $0$ , the stronger the relationship (Kinnear and Gray, 1997).

Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1997) points out that there are three types of correlation which are most widely used. They are: Cramer's  $V$  for looking at the association between nominal variables; Spearman's rank-order correlation for capturing the relationship between ordinal variables and Pearson's product moment correlation for examining linkages between

interval/and or ratio-scales. The most familiar correlation coefficient is the Pearson correlation ( $r$ ). The Pearson correlation is a measure of a supposed linear relationship between two variables; and the supposition of linearity must be confirmed by inspection of the scatterplot.

#### 5.4.3.1 Measures of association strength for ordinal data

The term ordinal data includes both ranks and assignments to ordered categories. The Spearman rank correlation or Kendall's tau statistics are usually used. Kendall's tau is always used with small samples. For wider ranges of variables, Spearman's rho is the ranking technique for ordered versions on ranking of data (Hinton, 1995). In this research, because of the size and nature of the data, Spearman's rho was used as the main measure of association strength.

Results of the correlation of the two scores, English entrance scores and end of 1<sup>st</sup> year English scores, are given by Table 5.19 using Pearson's  $r$  correlation method.

Table5.19 Correlation of English entrance and end of 1<sup>st</sup> year scores

Pearson's r		Year scores	Entrance scores
Correlation Coefficient	Year scores	1.0000	.1508
	Entrance scores	.1508	1.0000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Year scores	.	.058
	Entrance scores	.058	.
N cases	Year scores	182	159
	Entrance scores	159	167

Correlation is not significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result shows no significant connection between the two scores. This suggests that students who did well in their entrance exams did not necessarily do well in their 1<sup>st</sup> year exam at university.

Table 5.20 Correlation of English entrance scores, the end of year scores and the improvement scores with the categorised strategies and the categorised variables

Spearman's *Rho*

		Mean of total Strategy use	Metacognitive Strategies	Cog. (Voc.) Strategies	Cog. (Reading) Strategies	Practice Strategies	Social Strategies	Compensation Strategies	
Correlation Coefficient	Entrance Scores Number of cases	.0640 ( 167)	.0461 ( 166)	.0701 ( 167)	.0797 ( 167)	.1082 ( 167)	.0120 ( 166)	.0605 ( 167)	
Sig. (2-tailed)		.411	.555	.368	.306	.164	.878	.473	
	Year Scores Number of cases	.5965 ( 182)	.4668 ( 181)	.4809 ( 182)	.5498 ( 182)	.4022 ( 182)	.3546 ( 181)	.5123 ( 182)	
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	
	Improvement scores Number of cases	.5992 ( 159)	.3759 ( 158)	.5136 ( 159)	.5821 ( 159)	.4404 ( 159)	.3143 ( 158)	.5192 ( 159)	
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	
		Hard-working③	Be good at reading strategies③	Be active in class③	Self-Assessment③	Attitude/ Motivation③	Age	Gender	Academic year
Correlation Coefficient	Entrance Scores N cases	-.0504 ( 166)	-.0916 ( 166)	-.1906 ( 166)	-.1303 ( 166)	.0255 ( 162)	-.1772 (167)	.0701 (163)	-.1333 (152)
Sig. (2-tailed)		.519	.240	.014 *	.096	.747	.022 *	.374	.101
	Year Scores N cases	-.3008 ( 181)	-.3608 ( 181)	-.3737 ( 181)	-.4254 ( 181)	-.3410 ( 175)	.1405 (180)	-.1737 (172)	-.2794 (169)
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.000 ***	.060	.023 *	.000 ***
	Improvement scores N cases	-.2120 ( 158)	-.2694 ( 158)	-.1447 ( 158)	-.2760 ( 158)	-1.2652 ( 154)	.0290 (159)	-.1761 (155)	-.1493 (148)
Sig. (2-tailed)		.007 **	.001 ***	.070	.000 ***	.001 ***	.717	.028 *	.070

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$     \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$     \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

③ students' self-assessment of related variables, scaling from '1 to 7', 'extremely positive' to 'extremely negative'.

'Negative correlation', therefore, actually implies high self-assessment.

Table 5.20 shows the results of correlation, by Spearman, of the 3 scores (entrance score, year score and improvement score) with the *categorised strategies* and *categorised variables*. There is no significant correlation between the entrance scores and the use of learning strategies, categorised variables and the independent factors except for ‘*be active in class*’ and ‘*age*’. However, there is an extremely strong correlation between the 1<sup>st</sup> year scores and improvement scores and the use of individual categorised strategies. Correlation is found for nearly all the categorised variables and for one independent factor, *academic year*.

No significant correlation with the entrance score can be interpreted as the fact that the entrance scores are achieved as a result of pre-university study for which knowledge and use of strategies is very limited and, therefore, does not significantly affect the results obtained. The learning model of Senior Middle Schools is different from that of universities, as found out by Cortazzi and Jin (1996a) in students’ vocabulary learning. At universities, students adopt many more ways of increasing their vocabulary.

#### 5.4.3.2 Categorised strategies

All *categorised strategies* show extremely strong correlation with 1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement scores, **supporting** the hypothesis that **students who use more strategies will perform better**. However, on the evidence above, this is not clear-cut since correlation does not necessarily imply association. It may be that students who perform well (for some other reason) also learn to use more strategies in their performance.

#### 5.4.3.3 Categorised variables

Four categorised variables, ‘*hard-working*’, ‘*be good at reading strategies*’, ‘*self-assessment*’ and ‘*attitude/motivation*’, are extremely correlated with the 1<sup>st</sup> year scores and the improvement scores. Therefore, the results indicate the following specific hypotheses are valid: **students will perform better who; study hard, are good at reading strategies, have**

**higher self-assessment of their general English learning and have better learning attitude/motivation.** Results from Tables 5.6 and Table 5.20 suggest that **students who practice a lot will also perform better.** '*Be active in class*' is not, however, significant in terms of the improvement scores, but is extremely significant in terms of the 1<sup>st</sup> year scores. The possible explanations are given in Section 6.2.2 in Chapter 6.

The resulting minus coefficient may give an impression that the higher scores students achieve, the less strategies they use. However, the above *categorised variables* are valued from extremely positive (1) to extremely negative (7) and the minus signs in 1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement scores, therefore, imply positive correlation, **confirming the above variables have extremely strong positive correlation with students' performance.**

#### 5.4.3.4 The independent factors

The independent factors, '*age*', '*gender*' and '*academic year*' are, in general, not significantly correlated with students' performance as compared with categorised learning strategies and variables, where more consistent and more significant correlation is identified. '*Gender*' shows significant correlation in 1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement scores, with male students using more strategies and performing better. Extremely strong positive correlation is obtained in the 1<sup>st</sup> year scores, showing that first year students use more strategies and do better at exams. This group of students are from a key university, therefore, supporting the hypothesis that **students from key universities will perform better.**

#### 5.4.4 Individual strategy in correlation with year and improvement scores

To make a scrutiny of the correlation between each individual strategy with the end of 1<sup>st</sup> year scores and the improvement scores, Spearman's rho was used. The results are presented in Appendices G for and H respectively. Since nearly all the correlations of entrance scores with the categorised strategies and variables are not significant, further scrutiny of this factor is ignored.

### 5.4.5 Extremely significant strategies

A study of Appendices G and H derived a group of strategies (Appendix I), which are either extremely significant or extremely non-significant by comparison to both scores (1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement), or with one of the scores. The extremely significant strategies can be summarised into nine general types: *linking skills*, *analysing ability*, *predicting skills*, *guessing strategies*, *skimming*, *scanning*, *practice strategies*, *social strategies* and *metacognitive strategies* presented in Figure 5.2. The purpose of Figure 5.2 is to raise teachers' and students' awareness of the strategies that are highly correlated with students' performance. In total, 30 strategies out of 85 have an extremely significant effect on both scores: 2 out of 19 are metacognitive strategies, 6 out of 14 are vocabulary strategies, 18 out of 40 are reading strategies and 4 out of 12 are practice strategies.

Figure 5.2 Categorical extremely significant strategies in year and improvement scores

Linking skills	Link when preview, use mental linkage, use paired associates, use imagined map, use semantic sets, use vocabulary,	put words to context, use immediate context, use wider context, use sentence markers, refer, infer,	pay attention to coherence, pay attention to ellipsis/substitution, check guess/understanding, , read in blocks, summarise,
Analysing skills	Summarise, analyse complicated sentences,  analyses writer's intention	pay attention to topic sentence, pay attention to the organization of the text,	Distinguish general ideas from specific, Analysing cause and effect, Distinguish main ideas from details,
Predicting skills	predict from the title,	predict content,	Predict and adjust prediction
Guessing skills	guess by prefix etc.,	guess by experience, guess by using cultural knowledge,	guess by forward/backward clues,
Skimming	skim		
Scanning	scan		
Practice strategies	do exercises carefully,	do homework carefully	read magazines/stores
Social strategies	ask teacher to explain,	be active in class	
Metacognitive strategies	lower anxiety		



Linking skills apply to all the cognitive vocabulary strategies and to the majority of cognitive reading strategies. For example, predicting skills, analysing skills, paying attention to coherence, ellipsis and substitution etc., even using cultural knowledge and guessing skills are all kinds of linking skills.

Learning/reading can be seen as linking/processing information, working in the way that schema theory is described in the book *Dynamic Memory* (Schank, 1982). In Schank's view, according to Cook (1994), schemata are in constant flux: schema, which is used in processing but also changed by processing. This represents how learners learn by enlarging their knowledge, although, it must not be forgotten that, within the language learning process, practice is also important.

Strategies investigated by this research can be categorised into *basic* and *advanced*, thus, facilitating teaching by suggesting at which stage the particular strategies should be taught. Some of the strategies are, however, put into both categories, implying that these strategies should be taught at a basic level at an early stage, and should continue to be taught to an advanced level. Notwithstanding, it should be appreciated that all strategies once taught should continue to be demonstrated and used until the students have fully mastered them. See Appendix K for the two categories of strategies.

### 5.5 Questionnaire 3

A range of analysis and comparisons were performed on questionnaires to Chinese students in Britain. These were used to ascertain which strategies and variables best improve students' performance in order to verify whether the results support the previous analysis performed on students in China and the research hypothesis. The positive results agree with the previous analysis and support the hypothesis: **the more strategies students use, the better they will perform**, therefore, achieving higher exam scores (Table 5.21).

Table 5.21 Spearman's correlation of TOEFL and IELTS with strategy use

Total strategy use	TOEFL scores	IELTS scores
Coefficient	.6973	.7203
Number of cases	31	14
Significance	.000 ***	.004 **

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

\*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$

\*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

The results of the correlation show that there is an extremely strong correlation between strategy use and students' scores for TOEFL and a very strong correlation with scores for IELTS. This again **supports** the research hypothesis that **the more strategies students use, the better they will perform**. A note of caution needs to be added, however, which is that more research is required to ascertain causal relationships, if any (i.e. as to whether increased strategy use leads to higher scores).

## 5.6 Extreme cases

In this section, the research focuses on a few individual cases that either dramatically improve or decrease students' performance. Two groups of extreme cases were identified. 10 points were used as an arbitrary measurement to provide a way of categorising students. Students who scored 10 points less in the year score than their entrance scores were placed into group 1 as a decreased group, and those that scored 10 points more into group 2 as an improved group. 7 cases were found as decreased, and 40 as improved. Categorised learning strategies and students' self-assessment of learning variables were compared by using ANOVA (Table 5.22).

The results indicate that, in general, *the use of strategies* is associated with improved performance ( $p \leq 0.0000$ ). By looking at each categorised strategy individually, extremely high significance is shown for *cognitive strategies (both for vocabulary and reading) and compensation strategies*. This may indicate that these strategies have the greatest effect on students' performance and, together with *practice strategies*, which also show extremely significant difference, are the most important strategies to teach.

*Metacognitive* and *social strategies* did not show a significant difference between the two extreme groups. The reasons remain unclear.

There is very significant difference in students' *self-assessment* ( $p=0.0052$ ) between the two extreme groups, where the improved group has higher and better self-assessment and in *be active in class* ( $p=0.0108$ ), which is in agreement with the results of the previous analysis (Table 5.16). Significant difference is also found in all the categorised variables, where the improved group is highly motivated, works harder and believes they are better at reading strategies.

Table 5.22 Comparison of the improved and decreased groups by ANOVA

Variables	Groups	Cases	Means	Std Dev	Sum of Square	Source	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
Metacognitive strategies	1	7	2.9231	.5793	2.0136	Between Groups	.6887	1	.6887	2.2463	.1409
	2	40	3.2632	.5497	11.7839	Within Groups	13.7975	45	.3066		
Vocabulary Strategies	1	7	2.9714	.4352	1.1365	Between Groups	3.1789	1	3.1789	16.7325	.0002 ***
	2	40	3.7019	.4360	7.4126	Within Groups	8.5492	45	.1900		
Reading Strategies	1	7	2.8606	.3785	.8697	Between Groups	4.7780	1	4.7780	29.7142	.0000 ***
	2	40	3.7562	.4043	6.3763	Within Groups	7.2360	45	.1608		
Compensation Strategies	1	7	3.1868	.5061	1.5368	Between Groups	3.0629	1	3.0629	23.3587	.0000 ***
	2	40	3.9038	.3345	4.3639	Within Groups	5.9007	45	.1311		
Social Strategies	1	7	2.6984	.5582	1.8695	Between Groups	.6463	1	.6463	1.4321	.2377
	2	40	3.0278	.6876	18.4383	Within Groups	20.3078	45	.4513		
Practice Strategies	1	7	2.5714	.5620	1.8945	Between Groups	1.6908	1	1.6908	7.8915	.0073 **
	2	40	3.1042	.4457	7.7465	Within Groups	9.6414	45	.2143		
Mean of total strategies	1	7	2.8723	.3983	.9521	Between Groups	2.8177	1	2.8177	21.8026	.0000 ***
	2	40	3.5600	.3531	4.8636	Within Groups	5.8157	45	.1292		
Attitude/Motivation <sup>3</sup>	1	7	3.0000	1.8708	21.0000	Between Groups	6.1073	1	6.1073	5.2106	.0272 *
	2	40	1.9875	.9022	31.7438	Within Groups	52.7438	45	1.1721		
Hard-working <sup>3</sup>	1	7	2.7857	1.2027	8.6786	Between Groups	3.9357	1	3.9357	5.7228	.0210 *
	2	40	1.9729	.7557	22.2693	Within Groups	30.9478	45	.6877		
Be active in Class <sup>3</sup>	1	7	4.4286	1.6439	16.2143	Between Groups	12.8047	1	12.8047	7.0781	.0108 **
	2	40	2.9625	1.2929	65.1938	Within Groups	81.4080	45	1.8091		
Good at reading Strategies <sup>3</sup>	1	7	3.9429	1.3843	11.4971	Between Groups	6.6039	1	6.6039	5.9947	.0183 *
	2	40	2.8900	.9881	38.0760	Within Groups	49.5731	45	1.1016		
Self-assessment <sup>3</sup>	1	7	3.8730	1.1914	8.5168	Between Groups	7.5696	1	7.5696	8.6426	.0052 **
	2	40	2.7458	.8901	30.8960	Within Groups	39.4128	45	.8758		

1 = decreased group 2 = improved group \* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$  \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$  \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

<sup>3</sup> students' self-assessment of related variables, scaling from '1 to 7', 'extremely positive' to 'extremely negative'.

'High means' imply strong disagreement.

After completing the analysis above, a further question arises: Is there any association between students' self-assessment and their means of total strategy use? This is answered by Table 5.23.

Table 5.23 Kendall's tau correlation of students' self-assessment with the mean of total strategy use

		Students in China	Mean of total Strategy use
Kendall's Tau	Correlation Coefficient	Self-assessment Number of cases	-.2483 ( 200)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000 ***

\*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

③ students' self-assessment, scaling from extremely positive to extremely negative.

'Negative sign' shows positive correlation.

An extremely strong positive correlation is found between self-assessment and total strategy use. The higher or the more positively students assessed themselves, the more strategies they claimed to use. Maybe both apply to these students. A more cynical interpretation is that some students simply make high claims for themselves on both counts, even in this interpretation, however, there may be some link between performance and strategy use.

In future, therefore, besides teaching the actual reading and learning strategies, teachers should also find ways to raise students' awareness of learning efficiency, motivation, organisation skills, and other aspects of self-assessment so as to help them obtain greater benefit from classroom teaching and learning.

## 5.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the quantitative analysis performed on teacher and student questionnaires. The initial analyses gave a general picture of where the significant differences lie within the analysed population samples. This suggests that teachers with higher qualification teach more strategies (Table 5.7) and that the students' end of 1<sup>st</sup> year and

improvement scores are strongly associated with their claimed use of strategies (Table 5.20). Moreover, there appears to be a large difference between teachers' and students' perception of their strategy use, with teachers claiming to teach far more strategies than students claim to use (Tables 5.3 and 5.3b). Finally, the results suggest that students in Britain claim to use far more *metacognitive, reading, social and practice strategies* than students in China (Table 5.6).

The further analyses provided more detailed information about the groups, establishing the relationship between the categorised variables/independent factors and students' use of strategies (Table 5.16), the categorised strategies/variables, independent factors and students' performance (Table 5.20). The strong correlations found, respectively, in TOEFL and IELTS scores of U.K. students (Table 5.21) with respect to their use of strategies are in agreement with the results obtained from students in China (Table 5.20). Finally, the study of extreme cases indicated a strong correlation between students' performance and their strategy use (Table 5.22) and self-assessment (Table 5.23).

This chapter described the data analysis performed on completed questionnaires received from respondent teachers and students. The significant results determined from this data analysis are reviewed in more detail in the following chapter to provide an indication of the perceptions of Chinese teachers and students regarding the use of reading strategies. In particular, this is intended to identify the relative merits of the various reading strategies analysed and to indicate those factors that may influence their use and which may affect their learning process.

## **Chapter Six**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND A TEACHING/LEARNING MODEL**

#### **6.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the results of the data analysis, with special emphasis placed on findings that directly or indirectly support or reject the research hypotheses. It identifies the level of strategies used by teachers and students and ascertains the degree by which the use of these strategies improves students' performance. Relationships and implications of significant results are investigated to create a teaching/learning model. This model shows the relationship between teaching and learning together with the degree by which variables/factors affect teachers'/students' strategy use, and categorised strategies/variables affect students' performance.

#### **6.1 Reliability and Validity of the Research Method**

This study makes no particular claim that the results (about teachers' and students' perceptions) are valid in terms of actual teaching and learning behaviour in the reading classroom, although, clearly, there is some connection between perceptions and actual behaviour. Some classic studies on the topic in linguistics (Labov, 1972) indicate a self-perception – behaviour gap, yet research using questionnaires assume that respondents are telling the truth (Dean and Whyte, 1958). In this study this issue does not affect its validity, since the study claims to be only about subjects' perceptions. Before presenting the final research results, however, it is first necessary to be assured that the research methods used are both reliable and valid.

##### *Reliability*

Reliability refers to how reliable, or consistent a measurement is. A variety of different techniques are designed for such purposes, and all of them rely on the extent by which one version of the measure is related to another version of that measure (Dane, 1990). Dane (ibid)

summarises five types of reliability: interrater, test-retest, alternate forms, split-half and item-total. The questionnaires bear the feature of *item-total reliability* although *test-retest* and *split-half* could also apply. Item-total reliability is *an estimate of the consistency of one item with respect to other items on a measure* (ibid). The method used to measure the reliability of this questionnaire survey is to correlate similar questions asked within the questionnaires and ensure that, for the same respondent, no significant differences exist in the answers received (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Kendall's tau correlation on reliability

Variables	Q8 v q14 Like English <sup>②</sup> Versus Dislike English <sup>②</sup>	Q42 v q57 in Q1 Distinguish main ideas from details	q55 v q85 pay attention to pictures, charts and diagrams	q62 v 83 distinguish main ideas from details	q80 v 87 use cultural knowledge
Kandall's tau	-0.3725 (Q2)	0.2875 (Q1)	0.1449 (Q2)	0.1272 (Q2)	0.4232 (Q2)
(N)	(197)	(115)	(200)	(200)	(200)
Sig.	0.000 ***	0.001 ***	0.019 *	0.39	0.000 ***
Kandall's tau	-0.5678 (Q3)		0.3109 (Q3)	0.4455 (Q3)	0.4845 (Q3)
(N)	(84)		(98)	(97)	(98)
Sig.	0.000 ***		0.000 ***	0.000 ***	0.000 ***

\* significant at  $p \leq 0.05$  \*\* significant at  $p \leq 0.01$  \*\*\* significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

② For q8 and q14, the scale is: 1 strongly agree 2 agree 3 uncertain 4 disagree 5 strongly disagree

q8 (I like and enjoy learning English.)

q14 (I think that learning English is boring.)

The results show that, for the same respondent, similar questions are highly correlated in the questionnaires, that is respondents were consistent in their answers to similar questions. This was especially true for Chinese students in Britain (Q3). All the four pairs were highly positively correlated ( $p < 0.000$ ), although q8 versus q14 produced a very negative correlation, as expected. For the students in China (Q2) this correlation was either significant or extremely significant ( $P < 0.05$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ). The one pair compared for teachers (Q1) was also extremely significant ( $p = 0.001$ ). These results support the reliability of the answers given to those questions verified and it is assumed that they can be extrapolated to apply to all other questions given by the questionnaires, thereby supporting the reliability of the questionnaire survey as a whole.



### Validity

Validity refers to the extent by which a measure actually measures what it is supposed to measure (Dane, 1990). Validity is determined through face validity, concurrent, predictive and/or construct validity. The research questionnaires aim to investigate teachers' and students' perceptions of their use of teaching/learning reading strategies and teachers and students were, therefore, asked relevant questions to determine to what extent they use the strategies. By asking teachers and students to answer questions on their perceived use of strategies, the focus of the study, and by analysing the results to determine their perceptions, the questionnaire survey represents both face and construct validity. In addition, interviews described in Chapter 8, were conducted to obtain the personal views of respondents regarding their use of strategies in order to further support the validity of the results obtained from the questionnaire survey.

## 6.2 Major Findings of the Data Analysis

### 6.2.1 Teachers' qualification and training versus age and teaching experience

'Qualifications' have an extremely significant influence ( $p < 0.0000$ ) (Table 6.2) on teaching strategies. In general, higher qualified teachers say they use more strategies and teachers with additional *training* also tend to claim to use more strategies. Although the results relating to teacher training are not so significant, it is felt that with further data, a significant result might be obtained (Table 5.7). In general, the results **support** the research hypothesis that **higher qualified teachers will teach more strategies**.

Table 6.2 ANOVA of teachers qualification with the means of the strategy use

Qualification	Case	Means	Std Dev	Sum of Square	Source	d.f.	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
1	39	3.4137	.3474	3.7316	Between	2	1.8658	14.1106	.0000
2	58	3.7841	.3863	14.4126	Groups				***
3	15	3.4328	.3071	18.1442	Within	109	.1322		
					Groups				

'High means' imply strong agreement and high frequency use of the strategies.

\*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.0000$

1=graduates 2=post-graduates 3=graduates with further training

'Age' seems to have a significant effect on teachers' use of teaching strategies ( $p=0.0120$  in Table 6.3), but with the middle age group between 31-45 having the highest mean ( $M=3.7581$ ). The Chi-Square analysis of qualification by age (Table 5.9) produced an extremely significant level of  $p<0.0000$  with the middle age group having the highest number of observed qualifications (29 against an expected 20.2). As interpreted in Chapter 5, it is assumed to be the teachers' *qualification* rather than *age* that affects teachers' use of strategies. Therefore, the results **reject** the research hypothesis that **older teachers will teach more strategies**, but **support** the hypothesis that **teachers with higher qualifications will teach more strategies**.

Table 6.3 ANOVA of teachers' age groups with the means of the strategy use

Ages	Cases	Means	Std Dev	Sum of Square	Source	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
20-30	55	3.5220	.3676	7.2960	Between Groups	1.3694	2	.6847	4.5259	.0120 *
31-45	40	3.7581	.4539	8.0335						
over 46	19	3.5500	.2851	1.4631		16.7926	111	.1513		
					Within Groups					

'High means' imply strong agreement and high frequency use of the strategies.

\* significant at  $p\leq 0.05$

'Teaching experience' shows no significant influence ( $p=0.1568$ ) on teachers' use of strategies even though one may have assumed it would do so (Table 6.4). Therefore, the results **reject** the research hypothesis that **teachers with longer teaching experience will teach more strategies**.

Table 6.4 ANOVA of teaching experience with the means of the strategy use

Teaching Period	Cases	Means	Std Dev	Sum of Square	Source	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
1-10yr	72	3.5804	.3967	11.17490	Between Groups	.6070	2	.3035	1.8848	.1568
11-20yr	21	3.7605	.4957	4.9140						
over 21yr	19	3.5500	.2851	1.4631		17.5520	109	.1610		
					Within Groups					

'High means' imply high agreement and high frequency use of the strategies.

The 'university' factor ( $p=0.9373$ ) shows no significant difference on teachers' claimed teaching strategies (Table 5.12). The non-significant result **supports** the research hypothesis that **the Chinese English teachers tend to use the same teaching approach and similar**

**strategies.** The results given by Table 5.13 further confirm that the teaching approach most Chinese English teachers are currently using is a mixture of different approaches, that is, an eclectic method (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a).

### 6.2.2 Results of the analysis for students

1) *An increasing improvement in exam scores with increasingly claimed use of strategies*  
Results from the students' questionnaires indicate a difference, but not a significant one, between the use of strategies amongst the students from the four different universities. The results do, however, imply an increasing improvement in exam scores through students' increased use of strategies (Tables 5.18 and 5.17).

2) *The use of strategies has a strong positive correlation with students' performance*  
The results in Table 5.19 show that **there is a significant difference between higher and lower score students in their use of strategies.** This applies to all categorised strategies, except social strategies and self-assessment in students' improvement scores, indicating that the lower score students should improve their strategies use in general.

The very strong positive correlation ( $p < 0.000$ ) identified between the use of categorised strategies and the students' 1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement scores (Table 5.20) supports the hypothesis that **the more strategies students use, the better they will perform.** A significant positive correlation is also observed in the students' 1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement scores for all the categorised variables except for *be active in class* (not significant in the improvement scores) (Table 5.20). It may seem strange that *be active in class* is significant in ANOVA, but not in the correlation test. But since there is no specific relationship between the two tests, there is no reason that they should necessarily be the same. ANOVA differentiates the significance by calculating the sum of squares and the mean squares, while the correlation test emphasises the tendency of one variable to cause a change in the other. Other reasons may be that some students failed to report their scores if they were unsatisfactory and that 'be active in class' could have a different connotation in China (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996b), where students often feel that by paying attention to their teacher,

they are active in class. This second reason suggests that developing students' strategy use may be particularly important in Chinese classroom teaching.

The results of the comparison analysis between improved and decreased groups of students (Table 5.22) **support** the research belief that students who use more strategies will perform better. The correlation of strategy use and test scores identified for Chinese students in Britain further **supports** this hypothesis, i.e. the correlation coefficient for TOEFL scores is  $p=0.000$  and  $p=0.004$  for IELTS (Table 5.21).

3) *Hard-working, good learning attitude/motivation facilitate good performance*

The categorised strategies, which influence students' achievement significantly, and show positive correlation with the students' 1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement scores, the categorised variables like *hard-working*, and *good learning attitude/motivation* ( $p<0.0000$ ) (Table 5.20) affect students' performance significantly. Moreover, they indicate that students possessing a more positive attitude attain better results and achieve higher academic standards. Therefore, the research hypotheses that **students who study hard, have better learning attitude/motivation will perform better** are supported.

4) *Self-assessment and being good at reading strategies correlate to students' performance*

The results of students' self-assessment show an extremely significant positive correlation ( $p<0.000$ ) when compared to students' 1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement scores (Table 5.20). Probably because these students have confidence in themselves, they are more active in class. Being active in class has an extremely strong correlation for the 1<sup>st</sup> year scores as indicated by correlation analysis ( $p<0.000$ ) (Table 5.20). The results provided by this research analysis **imply** that students who have higher self-assessment and who are active in class perform better in their achievement tests.

5) *Reading strategies plays an important part in students' performance*

Students' self-assessment of being good at reading strategies shows an extremely significant correlation in the 1<sup>st</sup> year and improvement scores by Spearman's correlation (Table 5.20).

The results, therefore, **support** the hypothesis that **students who are good at reading strategy will perform better**.

### 6.2.3 Results of the analysis between teachers and students

Considering the efforts the Chinese students spend and their apparent slow progress in English reading, it is speculated that a teaching problem exists in China. This research suggests that applicable reading strategies are either not taught, or, are not taught properly. In either case, students end up not using, or not knowing how to use many of the strategies. ANOVA analysis reveals an extremely significant difference ( $p < 0.0000$ ) between teachers and students in their perceived strategy use (Table 5.3b), especially in relation to their use and application of reading strategies (Table 5.3d).

Although the research has only investigated perceptions and claims by teachers and students regarding their strategy use rather than basing results on actual observation, these results can still be accepted as **supporting** the research hypothesis that **there will be a difference between teachers and students in their self-perceived use of strategies**.

What causes the problem? Is it due to ineffective or improper teaching? Or is it that the teachers only say they teach the strategies, but actually do not? Further research is needed to answer such questions.

### 6.2.4 Results of the analysis between Chinese students in China and in Britain

There was a significant difference found in the use of metacognitive strategies ( $p = 0.0430$ ) and reading ( $p = 0.0157$ ) strategies between the two groups, with Chinese students in Britain claiming to use more strategies (Table 5.6).

A very significant difference was found in the use of social strategies ( $p = 0.0011$ ), with students in Britain again claiming to use more social strategies (Table 5.6). This finding is in agreement with Wongbiasaj's and Chaikitmongkol's (1995) results of successful Thai

university students, who showed more willingness and eagerness to use the language in real situations, were more willing to take risks and to experiment with new language and seemed to be more persistent.

An extremely significant difference was found between the two groups of students in the use of practice strategies ( $p=0.0000$ ), with students in Britain using a lot more practice strategies (Table 5.6). This **supports** the research hypothesis that **students who practise a lot will perform better**.

A very significant difference in self-assessment was also found ( $p=0.0144$ ) with students in Britain having a higher level of self-assessment (Table 5.6). Similar results were also obtained from the analysis of extreme groups, which showed that the improved group of students demonstrates a higher self-assessment than the decreased group (Table 5.22). This suggests that the students in Britain and the improved group tend to be better students and that their learning is *more efficient, organised, and independent*. They are probably more *motivated, hard-working, confident, and willing to surpass the others*. In class, they are, probably, more *active/attentive, sensitive and willing to take risks* and, in general, they are *better at reading strategies* and more *satisfied with themselves*. These results are in line with some of the findings from Wongbiasaj and Chaikitmongkol (1995) that successful students are more sensitive to feedback, and more flexible and effective in their use of strategies.

### 6.3 Relationships between the Identified Results

This section focuses on drawing relationships from the observed results in order to find the key factors influencing students' performance.

#### *Teachers' versus students' use of the strategies*

As shown and discussed so far, there is an extremely significant difference/gap ( $p<0.0000$ ) in teachers' and students' self-perceived strategy use, with teachers claiming they teach strategies much more often than students.

*Independent factors versus learning strategies*

The relationship between independent factors and the use of learning strategies can help to reveal the factors that positively affect the use of strategies by students. Investigation of the 5 independent factors: ‘*university*’, ‘*age*’, ‘*gender*’, ‘*learning attitude*’ and ‘*academic year*’ reveals that only ‘*learning attitude*’ produces an extremely significant difference ( $p=0.0010$ ) (Table 6.5).

Table 6.5 ANOVA of use of strategies with the factors

Factors	d.f.	F	Sig.
University	3	.6708	.5709
Age	4	.8316	.5065
Gender	1	1.8719	.1729
Academic year	2	.9372	.3937
Attitude toward English	4	4.8093	.0010 ***

\*\*\* significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

The students who like and enjoy learning English, on average, claim to use strategies to a much higher degree than those who think learning English is boring (Mean of positive students’ strategy use is 3.401238 versus Mean of negative students’ strategy use, 2.894118). This could be taken to show that learning attitude is crucial to learning behaviour. But it is also possible to interpret these results as showing that the greater use of strategies leads to greater enjoyment or motivation for learning English, perhaps because greater strategy use leads to higher achievement and, therefore, greater satisfaction. It is felt that both alternatives are likely and are probably self-perpetuating.

*Learning behaviour versus academic achievement*

Learning behaviour, in this context, when measured by the students’ claimed use of categorised strategies (metacognitive, cognitive, compensation, social and practice strategies) has an extremely significant strong positive correlation with students’ performance ( $p < 0.000$ ) (Table 5.20). This is further supported by the analysis of categorised variables (*hard-working, attitude motivation and self-assessment*).

## 6.4 Implications of the Results

### 1) *Improvements in teaching*

The far greater percentage of claimed strategy use by teachers and the suggestion that increased use of strategies improves students' performance imply that students' awareness of the strategies and their use must be increased. .

### 2) *Improve teachers' qualification to improve the quality of teaching*

Research results (Tables 5.7, 5.9, and 5.11) repeatedly showed a high correlation between claimed strategy teaching and teachers' qualifications. This study has concluded that having better qualifications leads to more strategy teaching. Strictly, of course, the correlation results alone do not entirely warrant such a causative conclusion. However, to assume the opposite, that increased strategy use leads to higher qualification, while possible, seems unlikely in a Chinese context of fairly focused, conservative and traditional exams and selection procedures which lead to opportunities to obtain higher qualifications. It seems far more likely, in this context, that better qualifications are a factor which leads to increased strategy use. To increase the teachers' knowledge and ability to teach strategies and, therefore, reduce the identified gap between teachers' and students' perceived use of strategies, the quality of teaching, by improving teachers' qualification is the most important aspect to focus on. It is suggested that, to improve strategy teaching, strategy training or awareness raising should be incorporated in English teachers' courses and teacher-training programmes.

### 3) *Attitude and motivation affect learning*

The non-significant results in Table 6.5 show that the Chinese students' learning behaviour (in this study) is not influenced by independent factors such as university, age, gender or academic year. The analysis suggests, however, that students who like and enjoy learning English, study hard, are motivated and active in class and have high self-assessment claim to use more strategies (Table 5.16) and that enabling students to use more strategies is the first step towards successful and independent learning (Table 5.20). Therefore, the research suggests that, apart from ensuring students learn and use appropriate strategies, teachers must



also encourage their students to be highly motivated, hard working and have greater self-confidence.

4) *The use of strategies enhances performance*

The significant results (Table 5.20) indicate that students who claim to use more strategies perform better in exams. This may, alternatively, imply, however, that better students (as evidenced by exam performance) use or appreciate more the learning strategies. Which is cause or effect, use of strategies or performance is not totally clear. However, it is suggested that, logically, both must apply with students who use more strategies performing better and students who perform better using more strategies in a self-perpetuating cycle.

5) *Chinese students in Britain use more strategies than students in China*

Chinese students in Britain outperformed students in China in respect of their self-perceived strategy use in nearly every strategy category (Tables 5.5 and 5.6). The results imply that practice is extremely important, particularly to students in China, who also need to improve their social, metacognitive and cognitive strategies, especially, their self-assessment and their use of reading strategies.

Having reviewed all the findings, a teaching/learning model was created to identify the relationships between the use of strategies by teachers and students, their implications and the degree by which the various factors/variables influence reading English as a foreign language.

## 6.5 A Teaching/Learning Model

Previous sections reviewed and discussed the research findings. In general, the review indicated a close relationship between teaching and learning reading strategies and the factors that influence them. On the basis of obtained results, a model for teaching and learning reading English as a foreign language in China was formulated. This model was developed to provide a picture of present day English language teaching and learning in China, focusing on reading. It indicates the degree by which factors and variables influence reading in English,

identifies where emphasis should be placed on future teaching/learning activities and, thereby, provides the foundation for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of existing teaching/learning methods relating to ELT reading skills.

The purposes of the model are to:

- 1) Provide an outline of the relationships between teaching and learning; and within this outline, to show the important factors relating to teaching and learning reading.
- 2) Indicate particular factors and strategies that should be emphasised within future language teaching and learning activities.
- 3) Serve as a reference guide, by identifying the relative importance of strategies within the different categories.

The model consists of five layers:

1. Teaching-learning relationship (Diagram 6.1),
2. Degree of influence by which factors affect teaching and learning reading strategies (Diagram 6.1),
3. Degree by which particular strategies are used by teachers and students (Diagram 6.2),
4. Categorised strategies/variables that bear significant positive correlation with students' performance (Diagram 6.1),
5. Significant strategies in relation to particular factors or variables (Appendix K).

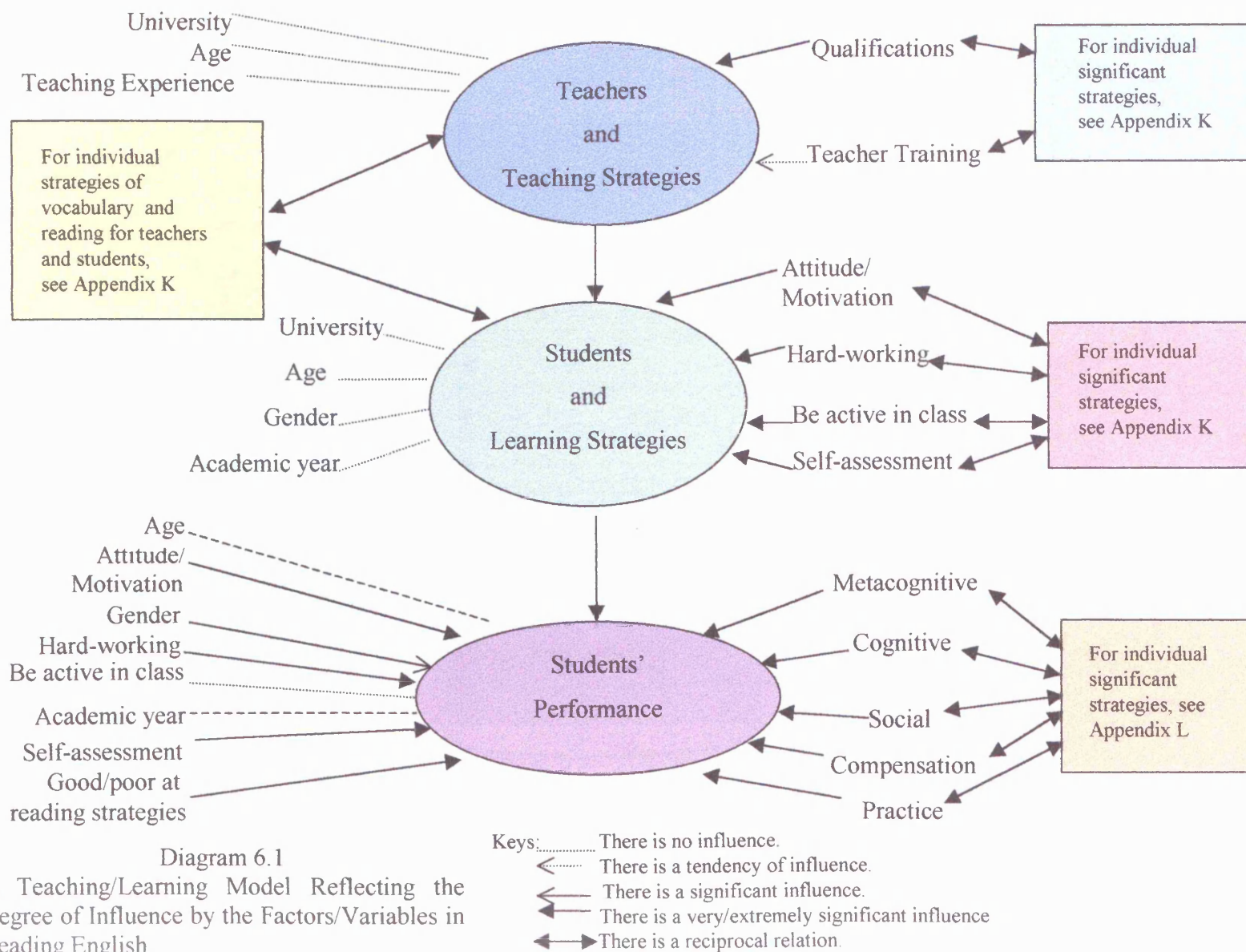
In the model, arrows or dotted lines show the degree of influence of the various factors affecting teaching or learning behaviour and learning performance.

- 1) Thick arrows indicate an extremely significant influence on teaching or learning strategies/performance;
- 2) Thin arrows indicate significant influence on teaching or learning strategies/performance;
- 3) Dotted lines with arrows indicate a tendency towards a significant influence on teaching or learning strategies/performance;
- 4) Dotted lines indicate no significant influence on teaching or learning strategies/performance;

- 5) Arrows from ‘Teachers and Teaching Strategies’ to ‘Students and Learning Strategies’ to ‘Students’ Performance’ mean that teachers should teach these strategies to students in an appropriate manner, since the use of these strategies by students can greatly affect their performance.

Diagram 6.2 shows individual strategies in vocabulary and reading, either shared by both teachers and students, or significantly used by either teachers or students. The insignificant strategies are under the category T-S and not in bold. The strategies significantly used either by teachers or students are under the category of TEACHERS or STUDENTS. The bold type shows extremely significant strategies. The significance level is given in the Keys.

The final layer of the model shows the individual strategies that influence teaching/learning significantly. See Appendix K for the significant strategies in relation to the variables investigated.



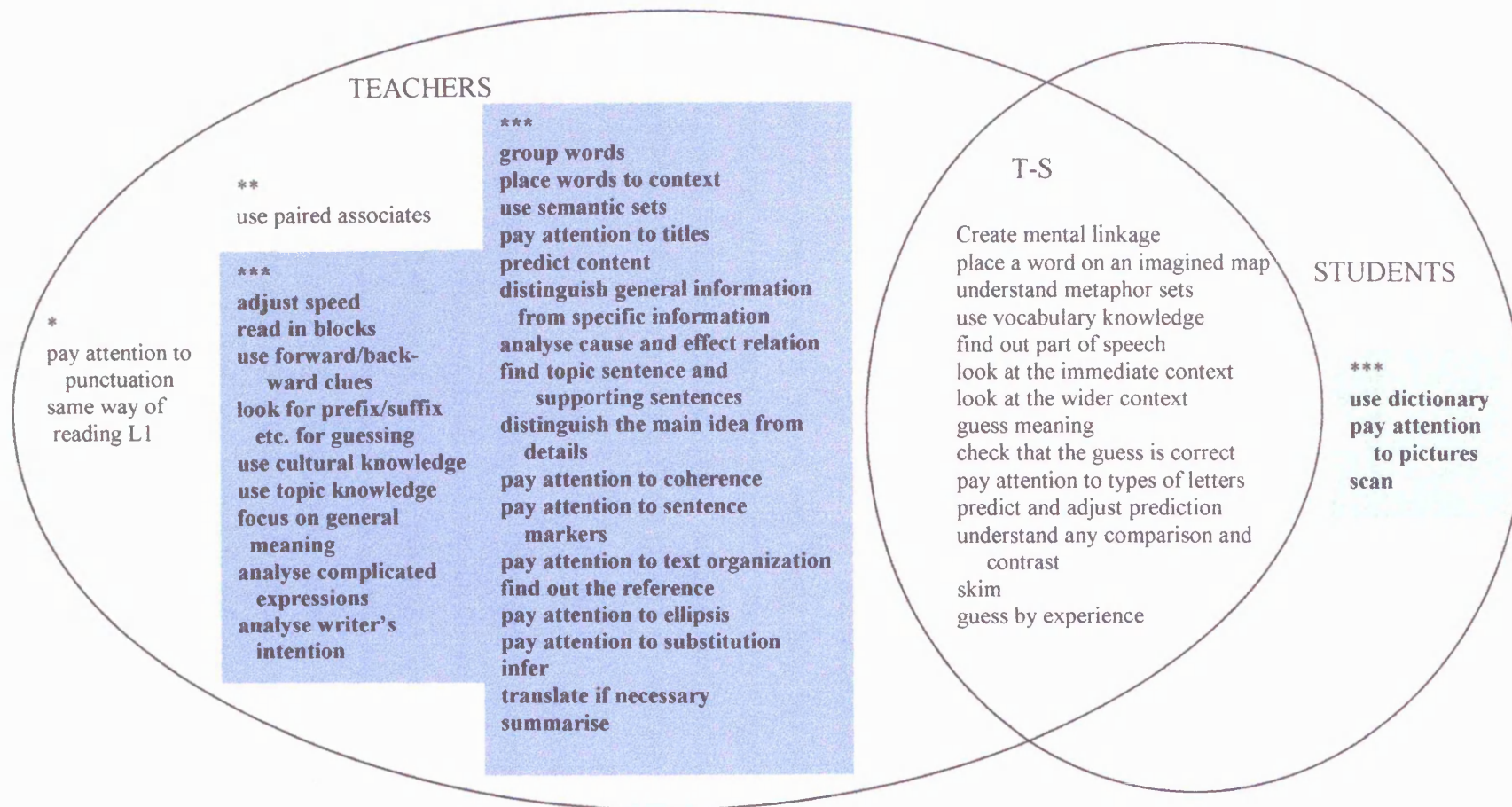


Diagram 6.2  
A Teaching/Learning Model Reflecting the Degree of Influence by the Factors/Variables in Reading English as a Foreign Language

Keys:

\*  $p \leq 0.05$

\*\*  $P \leq 0.01$

\*\*\*  $P \leq 0.001$

T-S = teachers and students

Strategies under T-S are not significant, used more or less the same by both teachers and students.

## 6.6 Researcher's Commentary

The second part of the thesis describes the data analysis performed on completed questionnaires sent to Chinese teachers' and students' in China and the UK. These questionnaires were specifically designed to deduce any patterns inherent in teachers' and students' strategy use, indicate the factors and variables that affect their use and identify those strategies that may improve students' performance. Tests were performed to show the difference in usage between Chinese teachers and students, high score and low score students and between students now living in China and in the UK, so that suggestions may be made for possible future research on teaching and learning reading strategies within Chinese ELT. In order to carry out the research, a number of hypotheses were proposed. These were tested using statistical research methods.

This research has drawn attention to a general recognition that existing teaching methods for reading in ELT in China are not fully effective. This is possibly due to the history of English teaching in China as reviewed in Chapter 1, the fact that western culture was not acceptable for a long period of time and that, during that period, teachers were not appropriately qualified in English language teaching.

Bearing in mind the qualifying comments on strategy training (section 3.5.2), the data analysis suggests that the teaching of English reading in China can be improved by ensuring that:

- 1) Teachers teach strategies in an effective manner so that they can be more readily understood and assimilated by their students.
- 2) Students appreciate the benefits that can be achieved by learning the strategies and can use them to the best effect.
- 3) Students are encouraged to work hard and enjoy learning English so that they can demonstrate a good attitude towards their studies.
- 4) Teachers are persuaded to attend training courses in teaching and learning reading strategies.

The teaching/learning model, given in this chapter, brings together some identified factors that affect teachers' and students' abilities, indicating their relative importance to teachers' teaching behaviour and to students' performance. It is hoped that this model might, therefore, be used as a basis for improving future ELT reading in China.

It is suggested that the model offers the advantage of:

- 1) A diagrammatic representation of all the important results obtained by the questionnaire survey undertaken within this research in an easy to read consolidated format.
- 2) A development tool that can be used in practice to improve and optimise existing teaching and learning strategies.
- 3) A working model for ELT that enables teachers to identify relationships between teaching and learning, the factors, variables and strategies that influence, or greatly influence teaching and students' performance and to pay special attention to influential teaching and learning aspects.

#### 6.6.1 Progress of the Quest

The theoretical model presented in Chapter 3 gives an indication of the relationship between teaching and learning and defines reading strategies taken from the literature review that teachers and students should consider using. But the purpose of this research was not only to present a theoretical model, but also to investigate the relationship between the use of strategies and teaching and learning behaviour, indicating the level by which external factors may influence their use. Strategies were, therefore, categorised into appropriate groups and included within the questionnaires, together with any variables and factors that were believed to influence their use. Certain questions were repeated in order to test the reliability of answers given by the respondents and a small number of open questions were included where it was thought that more subjective information would prove useful. Results obtained through statistical data analysis were presented in the form of tables and charts and then summarised into a teaching/learning model. This model depicts in visual form the patterns of strategy use between the various groups of respondents, indicating the relationship between strategy use



and students' performance and the degree by which variables and factors influence the use of strategies and performance.

### 6.6.2 The Main Concepts

#### 1) *Teaching influences learning*

It is generally recognised that teaching and learning are reciprocal, yet literature reviews and research also suggest that teaching methodologies can play an important role in education, i.e. with different teaching approaches, learners improve at different rates (Hamp-Lyons, 1985).

Since teaching and learning are complicated issues, involving many factors, a simple generalisation that good teaching will result in good learning is, however, not sufficiently persuasive to depict the solution to the problem. Whilst performing suggested research into pedagogy, learners' factors must also be taken into consideration so as to determine the different variables that influence learning and, thus, enable teachers to become more aware of them and become better able to activate and motivate their students. One such learner factor, addressed by this study, is the students' perceptions of reading strategies.

#### 2) *Teachers' qualifications and knowledge influence their teaching approaches*

The researcher believes that the teaching approaches and methods teachers deploy largely depend on what teachers know and how well they were taught and that teachers who pursue higher education will be better able to apply new ideas and teaching approaches to the benefit of their students. Tests were therefore performed to identify the difference in strategy use between teachers with different qualifications. This confirmed that the perception of strategy use by better qualified teachers is higher and that, at least by implication, their students perform better. This supports the view that teachers' qualification is important, implying a need to improve teacher training. However, the extent of raising teachers' awareness of the strategy research and of including learners' strategy training into the teachers' courses is not so clear. Although a correlation was established between the level of teachers' qualifications and their perception of strategy use, how this affects classroom practices remains unclear. In retrospect, this relationship appears problematic because in Chinese cultures of learning



(Cortazzi and Jin 1996b) the teachers' knowledge is emphasised, and if teachers know about strategies, they will be more knowledgeable on this aspect and will feel that they are better teachers because of their knowledge. It may, however, be contended that knowing does not mean teaching and in the case of students' knowledge, knowing and valuing strategies does not guarantee the use of those strategies (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a). Thus, even in China, the view that knowing means teaching or learning cannot be assumed.

3) *Successful students are believed to use more strategies*

Many researchers suggest that successful learners use more strategies and also a greater range of strategies. Completed questionnaires were therefore analysed to look at perceived strategy use by high score students and by Chinese students living in the UK (who were thought to be more successful). The results strongly supported the view that higher strategy use tends to correlate with better student performance. However, as pointed out, correlation is not necessarily causation, so it is unclear, without further investigation, whether high strategy use leads to higher proficiency.

4) *Success lies in the effective management of a repertoire of strategies and students who have a higher self-assessment of their general English learning behaviour perform better.*

As complicated mental processes, reading and the use of reading strategies are not easy to investigate. Strategies were categorised under metacognitive, cognitive, social, compensation and practice strategies and tests were performed to reveal the particular types of strategies that contribute to a greater extent to the success of Chinese students, indicating their relationship with the various variables and factors that influence their use. A weakness in the present study is, however, that the questionnaire design, in common with SILL (Oxford, 1990) and other survey instruments for investigating strategies, only ascertains teachers'/students' opinions on strategies in isolation.

### 6.6.3 Research Methods

#### 1) *Setting up hypotheses*

Before analysing the data, general and specific hypotheses (Chapter 4) were set up to enable the research to focus on particular aspects to be investigated. These hypotheses were intended to test the main concepts presented above.

#### 2) *SPSS statistical testing*

The statistical computer package SPSS was used to perform the analysis of data from the questionnaire survey. Analytical tests were used according to the nature of the data. Data was placed on a Likert scale and analysed using tests based on ANOVA, Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis. In addition, Kendall's tau correlation was used to test the reliability of data by ensuring that answers to similar questions were significantly correlated with each other and Chi-Square analysis was used to determine the relationship between variables in terms of expected and count frequencies to reveal salient features that other tests could not show.

Differences in strategy use between groups, such as the strategy used by high score and low score students were also analysed. But if an association between strategy use and performance was also to be sought, correlation tests were applied. Because of the size and type of data, Pearson's  $r$ , Spearman's  $Rho$  and Kendall's  $tau$  were used for different analyses. The results indicate the patterns of teachers and students in their perceived application of strategies and the correlation between strategy use and performance. The significant results obtained were used to test the research hypotheses and draw implications for possible future research. As discussed, however, correlation does not necessarily imply causation and the results can only provide an initial basis for further research.

### 6.6.4 Interpretation of the Results

#### 1) *Teachers claim to teach more strategies*

The results of the questionnaire analysis indicate that, in general, teachers have a higher perception of strategy use than their students. The results of ANOVA analysis on vocabulary

(14 strategies) and reading (34 strategies) show that there is an extremely significant difference between the strategies teachers claim to teach and those that students claim to use, with teachers claiming to teach more strategies. It might be argued that this is to be expected, since teachers use more strategies simply because they know more strategies and know better how to use them. Notwithstanding, it still should remain the task of teachers to transfer such knowledge and skills of strategies to their students, especially if strategies are believed to improve performance. Therefore, although teachers may appreciate the benefit of teaching strategies, the analysis suggests that teachers have not enabled their students to use the strategies as much or as often as they believe they should:

- (1) Is it because teachers do not teach strategies well?
- (1) Is it because teachers teach them, but do not label them clearly?
- (2) Is it because students have forgotten them? Or
- (3) Is it because students know them, but are not motivated to use them?

With reference to the difference in perceived use of strategies between teachers and students, the results may suggest that although strategies may be taught well, students may not use them because they are not sufficiently motivated to do so. In order to investigate this suggestion further, follow-up questionnaires and interviews were used to cover certain aspects that the questionnaire survey was unable to investigate. Further research on teachers' approach to strategy training is however also recommended.

## 2) *Factors and categorised variables that influence students' use of strategies*

The data analysis reveals that factors like *university, age, sex, and academic year* do not significantly influence students' use of strategies. This may be due to the similarity in student age and teaching approach. However, tests performed indicate that the factors that greatly influence strategy use is the students' *self-assessment of their general English learning behaviour*, which showed a strong correlation with their performance. If students reported that they possessed *a good attitude* towards language learning, that is they were *highly motivated, confident, active in class, willing to take a risk and appreciated the use of strategies* they tended to use more strategies. This suggests that it is probably the students' behaviour that has most influence on their use of strategies. However, it may have little to do

with strategy training and may be more a reflection that conscientious students naturally do well.

### *3) Strategy use and performance*

The data analysis shows that high score students, students in the UK and the improved group of students are perceived to use significantly more strategies (Tables 5.16, 5.6 and 5.23). These results support the research hypothesis that successful students use more strategies and that the use of strategies correlates positively with students' performance. But, since it is difficult to prove that the strategies which students deployed were all taught by their teachers, it does not prove any relationship between teaching and learning with regard to strategy use. All that has been shown is an implied relationship, which supports the assumption that the use of strategies improves performance and suggests that this should, therefore, be further researched.

### *4) Highly qualified teachers teach more strategies*

The analysis revealed that teachers with higher qualifications and further training tend to teach more strategies. This either implies that teaching is highly related to the teachers' level of knowledge or that teachers with higher qualifications possess a higher regard for strategies. Either way, further study should be initiated to determine whether the differences are due to teachers' lack of knowledge, a lack of teaching ability or some other reason. As commented upon earlier, the issue of how knowledge affects practice is, however, problematic both for the Chinese teachers and the Chinese students, since knowledge of strategies does not necessarily imply their use.

### *5) Nine types of extremely significant strategies*

The data analysis generated valuable information regarding the frequency of strategy use and the relationship between strategy use and performance. It revealed nine types of strategies: *linking skills, analysing ability, predicting skills, guessing strategies, skimming, scanning, practice strategies, social strategies and metacognitive strategies* that appear to significantly influence students' behaviour. However, in common with other research (e.g. Oxford, 1990), there was no investigation on whether strategies were combined, sequenced or treated in

clusters and therefore the results might be criticised as being somewhat atomistic as they treat strategies individually.

#### 6.6.5 Personal Reflection

Numerous studies on the relationship between L2 language proficiency and the use of strategies have been performed (Green and Oxford, 1995; Goh and Kwah, 1997; Bremner, 1998). These studies have investigated the relationship using a number of data collection methods: observation and interviews (Numain et al 1978); student self-reporting and diaries (Rubin, 1980); self-reporting through questionnaires (Poltzer, 1983, Oxford 1990); and interviews (Wenden, 1987). To encompass a large range of strategies and reduce limitations in the study a questionnaire survey was used as the main research method.

Even though it was accepted that self reporting studies suffer from the disadvantages that they are prone to reflect general intelligence, a desire to give the ‘right’ answer or to please the researcher (Poltzer and McGroarty, 1985, p.118), the results of the data analysis implied that higher perceived use of strategies correlates with increased L2 language proficiency. It suggested that nine strategies are particularly significant in improving proficiency (Chapter 5). This suggested that, in accordance with the Chinese teaching philosophy, learning should be flexible and that linking skills may, therefore, be considered as the core of learning. This, in turn, implied that the learning process for L2 reading might takes the form of an upward linked spiral. This is discussed in Section 5.4.6 and considered in more detail within Part III of this thesis. In accordance with Wongbiasaj and Chaikitmongkol (1995), practice strategies were also identified as extremely important. Green and Oxford (1995) and Gu and Johnson (1996) suggest that successful readers not only believe in actively seeking opportunities to use English outside and beyond the classroom environment, but are also successful in doing so. To some extent, this belief fits current models of reading, which emphasise social constructivist aspects (See Researcher’s Commentary in Part I). The results obtained were similar to and may be compared with related studies in Hong Kong (Nunan, 1997, Yong, 1996), Singapore (Goh and Kwah, 1997), Taiwan (Klassen, 1994; Yang, 1993a and 1993b cited in Bedell and Oxford 1996) and China (Yang, 1994, Gu and Johnson, 1996).

In summary, results of the data analysis implied that:

- 1) The use of reading strategies can improve students' performance.
- 2) Teachers' qualifications and training is important in improving teaching performance and students' abilities.
- 3) Teaching and learning will be improved if they are flexible and do not depend on only one method.
- 4) Students react individually and should therefore be taught a range of different reading strategies.
- 5) Linking is the core of learning and suggests the form taken by the learning process.

Whether the use of strategies is the cause or effect of proficiency or whether both apply concurrently, however, still remains unclear (Bremner, 1998). This suggests a need for more research into the **learning process**, in order to provide a better understanding of how strategies are learnt, as a prerequisite before embarking on research on the strategies themselves. The study was therefore extended to investigate this aspect, as it was considered as the key to providing an insight into better learning methods into L2 reading, whether or not these methods should be viewed as the use of strategies.

It is felt that such further research may help to determine how students learn English and how this process may relate to the use of reading strategies. In particular, by identifying the learning process, much valuable information may be obtained on methods for improving L2 language reading. Whether or not these methods should be defined as the use of reading strategies is not important, since the ultimate aim of the study is to improve L2 reading proficiency. For convenience such methods are, however, considered, within this study, as the use of reading strategies.

Although the results of the data analysis support the views of Gu and Johnson (1996) that students benefit more if they aim at learning the language skills rather than at just remembering English equivalents of all Chinese words, and the view of Green and Oxford

(1995) that practice improves performance, many crucial questions and aspects must be considered within the further research:

- (1) Do teachers and students appreciate the use of reading strategies?
- (2) Can reading strategies be taught? And, if so, how should they be taught?
- (3) How do the different forms of reading affect the learning process?
- (4) What is the actual form of the learning process that relates to strategy use?

An attempt to answer these questions was provided through a follow-up questionnaire survey, a materials workshop, focusing on teaching reading strategies in an interactive approach (**TRSlA**), and teacher and student interviews. These are described in Part III to provide an insight into the learning process related to L2 reading and bring the study to a further level of detail.

**PART III – EXTENDED RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS**

Part III demonstrates how reading strategies may be taught by **Teaching Reading Strategies in an Interactive Approach (TRSIA)** through a workshop and concludes the research by describing results obtained from additional study, consolidating them into extended models that highlight aspects that can improve teaching/learning reading English in China.

**Chapter 7**

*A Materials Workshop*  
*Follow-up Questionnaires*  
*Respondents Opinions*



**Chapter 8**

*Interview Research*  
*A Teaching Model*  
*A Dual Reading Cycle*



**Chapter 9**

*Conclusions*  
*Linking in Reading*  
*A Spiral Learning Model*



## Chapter Seven

### MATERIALS WORKSHOP AND FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRES

#### 7.0 Introduction

The previous chapter evaluated the results of the research, diagnosing the existing teaching problems and establishing a teaching/learning model to describe the relationship between factors and variables that affect the teaching and learning of reading strategies. In conjunction with the empirical research, **Teaching Reading Strategies in an Interactive Approach (TRSIA)** (Section 2.4) was proposed to show how strategies may be taught in practice through a materials workshop, which addresses nearly all the strategies contained in the questionnaires, demonstrating that learning strategies can be taught (Oxford, 1990).

The workshop, containing a teaching unit example and profiles for teaching, was given to teachers who had previously answered the questionnaires. Ideally, the workshop should have been delivered personally and monitored over a period of time, with plenty of examples given to demonstrate **TRSIA**. Teachers' and students' feedback might then have been collected and any problems encountered reviewed. A personal, face to face workshop is believed to be far better than the given 'pen and paper' materials workshop in which teachers merely read the teaching notes. Notwithstanding this limitation, it is hoped that respondent teachers were able to use the example in their lessons, although this could not be verified.

#### 7.1 The Materials Workshop

The materials workshop is based on one of the texts from College English, a widely used university textbook in China, which was specifically designed to meet the new National College English Teaching Syllabus, on which the Band Four Test is based. The materials workshop demonstrates how nearly all strategies can be taught from virtually any text taken from a common basic textbook and the application of **TRSIA** implies that the theoretical model (Chapter 3) can be applied to improve teaching efficiency.

## 7.1.1 The original text

## Unit Two

## TEXT

*At sixty-five Francis Chichester set out to sail single-handed round the world. This is the story of that adventure.*

## SAILING ROUND THE WORLD

Before he sailed round the world single-handed, Francis Chichester had already surprised his friends several times. In 1931 he had tried to fly round the world, but failed.

The years passed. He gave up flying and began sailing. He enjoyed it greatly. Chichester was already 58 years old when he won the first solo transatlantic sailing race. His old dream of going round the world came back, but this time he would sail. His friends and doctors did not think he could do it, as he had lung cancer. But Chichester was determined to carry out his plan.



In August 1966, at the age of sixty-five, an age when many men retire, he began the greatest voyage of his life. Soon he was away in his 16-metre boat Gypsy Moth.

Chichester followed the route of the great nineteenth century clipper ships. But the clippers had had plenty of crew. Chichester did it all by himself, even after the main steering device had been damaged by gales. Chichester covered 14,100 miles before stopping in Sydney, Australia. This was more than twice the distance anyone had previously sailed alone.

He arrived in Australia on 12 December, just 107 days out from England. He received a warm welcome from the Australians and from his family who had flown to meet him. On shore, Chichester could not walk without help. Everybody said the same thing, he had done enough, he must not go further. But he did not listen. After resting in Sydney for a few weeks, Chichester set off once more in spite of his friends' attempts to dissuade him. The second half of his voyage was by far the more dangerous part, during which he sailed round the treacherous Cape Horn.

On 29 January he left Australia. The next night, the blackest he had ever known, the sea became so rough that the boat almost turned over. Food, clothes and broken glass were all mixed together. Fortunately, the damage to the boat was not too serious. Chichester calmly got into bed and went to sleep. When he woke up, the sea had become calm again. Still he could not help thinking that if anything should happen, the nearest person he could contact by radio, unless there was a ship nearby, would be on an island 885 miles away. After succeeding in sailing round Cape Horn, Chichester sent the following radio message to London: 'I feel as if I had wakened from a nightmare. Wild horses would not drag me down to Cape Horn and that sinister Southern Ocean again.'

Just before 9 o'clock on Sunday evening 28 May, 1967, he arrived back in England, where a quarter of a million people were waiting to welcome him. Queen Elizabeth II knighted him with the very sword that Queen Elizabeth I had used almost 400 years earlier to knight Sir Francis Drake after he had sailed round the world for the first time. The whole voyage from England and back had covered 28,500 miles. It had taken him nine months, of which the sailing time was 226 days. He had done what he wanted to accomplish.

Like many other adventurers, Chichester had experienced fear and conquered it. In doing so, he had undoubtedly learnt something about himself. Moreover, in the modern age when human beings depend so much on machines, he had given men throughout the world new pride.

### 7.1.2 Demonstration

With the materials workshop teachers were given a profile for teaching strategies (Appendix M), summarising the teaching aspects and strategies according to the theoretical model. This workshop provides a step by step illustration of how reading strategies can be taught to students to enable them to read at a higher level.

*Everybody who can read reads differently. Here 'differently' implies reading at a different speed, comprehending at different levels and using the knowledge from reading to a different extent.*

*One may ask 'how is reading processed? Are there any skills that can help one read faster and better? Are there any strategies that can help one cope with difficult points in reading? Can reading strategies be taught and learned? The answers to all these questions seem to be in the affirmative.*

*Reading is not only the understanding of the surface meaning of the literal words, but the implications transferred by the message. Apart from that, each reader also brings his/her own personal experience and subject knowledge for comprehension. Such a reader is classified as "an active reader". "A passive reader's" eyes run through the words without mental response.*

*From a teacher's point of view, in order to develop students' reading strategies, the most important aspect is to train students to be active readers. That is, having looked at the title or pictures provided in the text, the reader should try to activate the subject knowledge, the world knowledge and the prior knowledge related to the text. By doing so, the reader is creating an immediate simple schema framework (or pattern of knowledge) out of the schema framework at the back of the mind. Some researchers call this method a '**Top-down**' method or '**knowledge-based**' method.*

*As the student reads along, the written information in the text will fill in the simple schema framework or alter the framework, if the reader makes a 'wrong' prediction. This process is called a '**Bottom-up**' or '**text-driven**' method. In this method, reading for detailed information is emphasised.*

*To be an active reader, one must integrate these two methods while reading. To anticipate before the reading starts is to lay the groundwork or prepare for the reading on the one hand and to check and adjust the reading on the other hand, staying loyal to the text. More generally, the reader should try to comprehend as much and as exactly as possible by actively reading the text.*

*As to the detailed technical strategies in reading, the teacher should ask students to pay attention to two main aspects: one is the linguistic aspect (the major aspect), the other is the non-linguistic aspect (the complementary aspect). In linguistic aspects, strategies that should be developed are consciousness of the type of text when reading. This helps students to choose the appropriate reading methods and cultivates discourse analysis skills, helping students process the text, and improve their reading strategies like inferring, predicting, skimming, scanning, understanding metaphors and using all the knowledge and clues available. If necessary, analysing a complicated structure or translating it into the mother tongue may also be needed.*

*The non-linguistic aspect refers to the pictures, diagrams and tables, charts or figures provided with the text. These help students understand the text better.*

An example of teaching reading strategies mentioned in Q1

**Step 1.** *Before going into the text, students can be divided into groups to brainstorm what content they think the text may include from the short illustration at the beginning and the title of the text as well as from the picture. (Ask the students to cover the text.)*

*Then a spokes-person from each group can report to the class what they have predicted about the text, and how they have come to such predictions. This would be achieved from any linguistic clues provided in the part just read, from their prior knowledge related to the subject of the text, or from any articles or novels they have previously read about the sailing adventure.*

*Afterwards, the teacher can give a short summary of the reports from students.*

*(Note: This activity may be less effective if students have already read the text in advance. However, what the teacher should emphasise is, if that is the case, to ask students to recall the status or the process of thinking when they first started reading the text. Whether the title or the picture or a particular word set them to a particular way of thinking about the text or predicting what would happen.)*

**Step 2.** *Skimming/scanning activity: Divide students into different groups to create 'A COMPETITION ON SKIMMING/SCANNING'. The teacher can draw a grid on the blackboard, marking say Groups 1 to 5. Tell students to find out answers to questions as quickly as possible. The questions should be repeated twice. Whoever gets/finds the answer should shout quickly, the first correct shout will score one point for the group. At the end, add up all the scores to see which group wins. The winning group can be rewarded in one way or another, like offering a Red Flag (usually a reward given in kindergartens) to make students laugh, (Learning is carried out in a relaxed atmosphere.) a sign of 'WINNER' or a chance to read aloud in class etc.*

Figure 7.1 Competition on Skimming/Scanning

<i>GROUPS</i>	<i>G 1</i>	<i>G 2</i>	<i>G 3</i>	<i>G 4</i>	<i>G 5</i>
<i>SCORES</i>					
<i>Total Scores</i>					

*The questions can be:*

- 1. What happened to Francis Chichester in 1931? (Clue: Scan for 1931 first. Then the answer can be found from the previous sentence.)*

2. *How old was he when he started his voyage round the world? (Clue: When answering for how old, scan/look for a number.)*
3. *Please find out the name of the boat. The length of the boat. (Clue: Look for a name of something, look for Capital Letters; for length, again look for a number.)*
4. *Find the number 14,100, on which line is it? The word Queen Elizabeth I, on which line? etc. (Clue: Same skills as Question 3, involving scanning for numbers and names.)*

*Basically, the questions in exercise III in the textbook can be used as skimming/scanning questions. Of course, as a teacher, you can alter the questions, or you can add or design your own questions.*

**Step 3.** *Teacher's demonstration of how to predict both from linguistic clues and subject as well as from prior knowledge aspects.*

*Linguistic aspect: At the very beginning the sailor's name and age are given (65 years old). This is consistent with the man in the picture (a picture of an old man: non-verbal support for reading). To sail single-handed round the world gives more information about the sailing activity. It is a crew of one man, not several. This again is consistent with the picture (a picture of one man, not several people: again non-verbal support for the reading). Notice the metaphoric use of 'single-handed'. If in doubt of its meaning, the picture can confirm that it does not mean physically single-handed, that is the sailor has only one hand. (Again reading both linguistically and non-linguistically, considering the discourse information, constantly comparing and processing information and knowledge received, and linking what you've just read with what you read in the previous paragraph/s or with even your prior knowledge, if possible.) Therefore, the teacher should emphasise the metaphoric meaning of 'single-handed'. The last linguistic clue from this part is the word 'adventure', which implies a difficult journey, full of dangers.*

**Step 4.** *Talking about the word 'adventure', the teacher can ask the students to consciously or subconsciously raise questions about the kind of adventure Francis met. How did he overcome the difficulties? Or even ask the students to think of any adventure involving a sea*

*journey. It does not matter whether the students' prediction matches with the adventure mentioned in the text. It is the students' involvement and engagement with the activity, which is more important. Later on, as the students read along the text, they can adjust their prediction: confirm the correct guesses, alter the ones that do not match.*

**Step 5.** *Teacher's explanation of subject and prior knowledge: The subject and prior knowledge aspects are to bring what one knows about sailing to the present: to compare whether the type of adventure one read before has happened here in this text. To activate students' subject and prior knowledge, the teacher can ask students to fill in the table:*

Figure 7.2 SAILING ADVENTURE

Something You Know:	1. Novels you read or films you remember about sailing: Main Characters: Types of adventure: 2. Adventure Problems you can think of when sailing:	_____ _____ _____ _____
Something You Predict:	1. Things might be mentioned in this text: 2. Adventure you predict in this text:	_____ _____

**Step 6.** *Going through the text: Tell students that when they start reading, they will notice that this is a narrative story. Therefore, they should pay attention to the topic and order of events, time, place and characters etc. (Technique: knowing the type of text in order to choose the reading method.)*

*In the first paragraph, comparison and contrast are introduced: flying (failed), but sailing (succeeded).*

*In the second paragraph, notice the important sentence linkers like 'but', which brings a comparison and contrast in ideas: his friends and doctors did not think he could do it, because ---, but he was determined to do it. Another functional word 'as' containing the meaning of 'because' can be figured out from the context: why they (friends and doctors) thought he could not do it, because he had lung cancer. And here 'as' is not used as the*



meaning of 'when, while or at the same time'. You can ask students to give some examples of 'as' used as 'when, while, at the same time'.

Another point to notice in this paragraph is the word 'race'. 'Race' here means 'competition, match'. It also has the meaning of 'large group of people related by common descent'. Ask students which meaning is in this sentence? Why do they think so? (Clue: guess from context.) One more example can be given is the word 'knight', which will appear later with detailed explanation. At the same time, the teacher can introduce the knowledge that in English, some words have different meanings. Which meaning to choose depends on the meaning of the sentence (guess by looking at the immediate context) or sometimes the meaning of the previous or coming sentences (guess by looking at the wider context. The latter example is given later. Some words have the same pronunciation, but different spelling and different meaning, such as 'knight' (appeared in this text) and 'night'. Some have the same pronunciation, same spelling, but different meaning, such as 'Sir' (capital 's') in this text and sir. 'Sir' means 'title of a knight or baronet' (in capital letter) or 'polite form of address to a man'. But pay attention to the capital letter 'Sir' and the small letter 'sir', to distinguish the different meanings, (the clue is to pay attention to the types of letters). Note also the usage of 'Sir', which is always used in front of either a full name, or a first name, never a surname. When somebody is knighted, the person becomes Sir. The 'Sir' title is only given to a few people, selected, each year who have made a great contribution to the country and knighted by the Queen with a sword by touching each shoulder twice in turn in a special ceremony (Teaching students cultural knowledge). Also indicate that a knight has the more common meaning of 'a person who rides a horse'.

'Knight' when paired with 'night' is also an example of a word with the same pronunciation, but different spelling and different meaning. All the students know 'night'; although 'knight' and 'night' are completely unconnected. In order to remember 'knight', we can connect them and make memorisation a lot easier by linking with a word students know, by just putting a 'k' at the beginning of the known word. Also the way to make the linking meaningful is to associate the new word with something students know. 'K' in playing cards (which all students know) is the highest or biggest among the sequence numbers, so here link the

meaning of 'high' with a high position or a high title in ranking. Again 'K' in playing cards is under 'A', and 'knight' title is under 'baronet'. A baronet is also called Sir----, but a 'baronet' is from a noble family, and the title is passed from father to son. Yet a 'Knight' can be an ordinary person. So another word can be taught in a somehow connected way. (Clue" creating imaginative mental linkage/association can help students remember words.)

In the next paragraph, an unknown word can be worked out by comparing the immediate context: 'But the clipper had had plenty of crew. Chichester did it all by himself, even after --- --'. To work out the meaning of 'crew', firstly by the functional word 'but', which introduces a contrast within these two sentences. The second clue (the forward clue) is the phrase 'Chichester did it all by himself'. Because they (the previous sailing, clippers and the present sailing, Chichester) are being compared, he did it all by himself, they must have done it by more than one person. So 'crew' may mean 'a group of people'. The last word of this paragraph 'sailed alone', repeats the concept 'sailing single-handed', '... did it all by himself'. So they can be considered, in a way, as being synonyms. Supposing students do not know the meaning of 'sail single-handed', they should be able to figure it out by now.

One more example of guessing unfamiliar or unknown words or phrases is in the sentence: 'After resting in Sydney for a few weeks, Chichester set off once more in spite of his friends' attempts to dissuade him.' The phrase 'in spite of' and the words 'attempts' and 'dissuade' are new to students. Let's see how they can be figured out from the context. The previous paragraph talks about how he was warmly welcomed by Australians and by his family. 'They all tried to stop him from sailing any further thinking that he had done enough. But he did not listen'. So the following paragraph shows that after resting, he set off again 'in spite of his friends' attempts to dissuade him'. So 'in spite of' may mean 'although, not taking notice of' his friends' 'try, trying' (attempts) to 'stop him from sailing' (dissuade him). 'Dissuade' might be really difficult to guess. But to ask students to guess the part of speech for this word first. 'Obviously a verb'. A verb will involve an action, either a physical action, a mental action, or a verbal action. But what kind of action is it here? We need to refer to wider context.

*The end of the previous paragraph talks about what everybody said. What 'everybody said' is 'he must not go any further', that is to stop him from sailing any further, stop/finish the journey up to where he had done, 'but he did not listen'. Therefore, probably we can assume that 'dissuade' (a verbal action) means 'to stop somebody from doing something'. What has come out so far is only a guess. To confirm whether the guess is correct or not, we need to carry on with the text a bit further. The following sentence begins 'The second half of his voyage .....'. So that means he did not stop, he carried on sailing. Also the following paragraph 'On 29 January he left Australia', the word 'left' confirms he did not stop, but started sailing again. 'Left' can also help to confirm the guess of the phrase 'set off' in the previous paragraph. So we can use the context to check whether our guess is correct.*

*Another way of training students to constantly predict what is coming up is to stop at a certain point part of the text and ask students to cover the rest. The students would be asked to predict what they think will be talked about in the coming paragraph and to indicate why they should think so, giving their reasons/clues. Two examples can be given from the text.*

*One is to stop at the end of paragraph 3: 'Chichester covered 14,100 miles before stopping in Sydney, Australia. This .....alone'. The clue for predicting something about in Australia is the words '..... before stopping in Sydney, Australia.' So it is likely to talk about happenings when he stopped there. The teacher can even ask students to guess what will be discussed and mentioned. Some easy guess is meeting the Australians arriving in Australia, but whether he would meet his family might be a bit difficult to think of. The teacher can give some indications to direct students' thinking and guessing. 'Before' can be considered as a hint of the direction of the text development, similar to discourse markers, such as 'on the contrary', which gives the reader listener a hint of changing direction of something being talked about. Therefore, ask students to pay attention to discourse markers, which can help them follow up understand the reading better.*

*The other example is to stop at the end of paragraph 4: 'Everybody ..... But he did not listen.' So it is easy to guess/predict the following paragraph will talk about his sailing off. Or to stop at the end of paragraph 5: 'The second ..... Cape Horn.' and guess about paragraph 6.*

*In paragraph 5, the last sentence implied the dangerous situation in Cape Horn, and this sentence also serves as the topic sentence, with the first two sentences in the coming paragraph as supporting sentences.*

*This kind of exercise is intended to train students to actively predict what is coming up all the time, to get the mind involved not only at the level of understanding the meaning of each coming word, but the content and events of the story. The best way to do this kind of predicting exercise is to use photocopy materials with some paragraphs missing and then to ask students to predict and give the missing paragraphs. Alternatively, write a short extract on the blackboard, or use an overhead projector, so that students can only see and read one section and must predict the content of the next one.*

*Another example the teacher should ask students to pay attention to is 'Wild horses could not drag me down to the Cape Horn and that sinister Southern Ocean again.' Ask the students to explain 'wild horses'. Are they really 'horses'? Or are they used metaphorically? Ask the students to infer the meaning of 'wild horses'. What do they refer to? And 'drag me down to ...', what does that mean? (Meaning 'drawn'. But why the author did not use the word 'drawn'?) (Clue: coherent corresponding to the previous 'wild horses'. So here the teacher should stress the consistency in style and the vivid and metaphoric use of vocabulary. The reader should follow the writer's imaginative mind and appreciate the style.) Why did he say, '... and that sinister Southern Ocean again.' What does that imply? (Refer his first solo transatlantic sailing race, which he won.) The word 'sinister' in the sentence may be unknown to students. Ask the students who do not know the meaning of 'sinister', whether their understanding of that sentence is affected or not. This is an example of ignoring unimportant unknown words. 'Sinister' is not a very frequently used word. So tell students they do not need to spend too much time to memorise it. This word can be regarded as 'throw-away' vocabulary.*

*The sentence 'Queen Elizabeth II knighted him with the very sword that Queen Elizabeth I had used almost 400 years earlier to knight Sir Francis Drake after he had sailed round the world for the first time.' can be analysed and translated into Chinese because it is long and*

complicated. Also ask the students to work out the two pronouns 'he', each refers to whom? (Clues: analysing structure, translating from L2 to L1, finding out reference, substitution.)

**Step 7. Chronological chart/Time chart:** The teacher can give students a jigsaw chronological chart to fill in. This will train students the skills of skimming/scanning information and for drawing inferences like '1959, sailing across the Atlantic'. The time, 1959, is not explicitly stated.

Figure 7.3 Chronological chart/Time chart

Chart for teacher		Chart for students	
DATE	EVENT	DATE	EVENT
1931	Flying	1931	
1959	Sailing across the Atlantic		Sailing across the Atlantic
Aug. 1966	Start sailing around the world		start sailing around the world
Dec. 1966	Arrived in Australia	Dec. 1966	
Jan. 1967	Leaving Australia		leaving Australia
May, 1967	Arrived back in England and knighted by the Queen with the very sword	May, 1967	

**Step 8. Categorising/grouping/summarising:** Ask students to fill in two columns of categories.

Figure 7.4 Categorising/grouping/summarising

Negative side: like difficulties/problems, etc.	Positive side: like rewards/recognition, etc.
steering device damaged couldn't walk without help (too tired, exhausted) friends' dissuade him not to carry on rough sea boat nearly turned over food, clothes and broken glass mixed together gales	a warm welcome from Australians, family resting for a few weeks boat damage not serious calmly got into bed and went to sleep he got a radio, still working a quarter of a million people wait to welcome him pride he was knighted with the sword by the Queen succeeded in what he wanted to do

**Step 9. Reading for implication:** Ask some questions that require students to infer from the given information.

1. Was Francis Chichester ill when he was sailing around the world?

(Yes. He had lung cancer.)

2. Why did so many people wait for him when he was back in England?

*(Because he gave people new pride throughout the world.)*

3. Was he afraid when he was sailing?

*(Yes. Chichester had experienced fear and conquered it.)*

4. When did Francis Drake sail around the world?

*(About 1566. Clue: Queen Elizabeth II knighted him (Chichester) with the sword that Queen Elizabeth I had used almost 400 years earlier to knight Sir Francis Drake after he had sailed round the world for the first time.)*

5. What is the route that the nineteenth century clipper ships took when they sailed round the world? How do you know/how do you work out (what clue did you use to help you find it out)?

*(The same route Chichester took, from West to East. Clue: Chichester followed their route.)*

6. Did Chichester sail the same route that Drake sailed?

*(No. Clues: It would have been mentioned in the text.)*

7. Did Drake sail on his own? How do you know?

*(No. Clue: End of paragraph mentions the distance 14,100 miles before Chichester stopped in Australia. The distance is **more than twice the distance anyone had previously sailed alone**. So obviously Drake did not sail alone.)*

8. Did Chichester sail from West to East, or from East to West? How do you know?

*(West to East. Clues: He stopped in Australia, then sailed on. Cape Horn is in his second voyage. So it must be from W-E.) By asking this question, we can review geographical knowledge.*

**Step 10.** *Generalising, summarising, distinguishing main ideas from details: The teacher can again divide the students into groups to ask them to summarise the main ideas, the intention of the writer and what they have learned from Francis Chichester?*

Figure 7.5 Summarising main ideas

Main ideas	<i>At 65 Chichester succeeded sailing round the world on his own within 9 months and covered 28, 500 miles. He conquered all sorts of difficulties, difficulties from outside like damaged steering device, rough sea and broken glass and wet clothes and the cold, difficulties from inside, such as poor health (lung cancer) and psychological fear of the sea. He was given a very high honour: welcomed by a quarter of a million people and the Queen, Elizabeth II, knighted him with the sword. He had showed the power of human beings throughout the world</i>
writer's intention	<i>To show how important a man's determination is and how powerful human being is.</i>
what students learn	<i>To learn from his will, his determination and his courage to overcome difficulties and achieve his goal.</i>

*The above approach to teaching reading strategies creates a real task situation for students to use their brain, to use their world knowledge and their vocabulary and grammar knowledge. In order to solve the problems, students need all these kinds of knowledge to organise proper sentences to express their ideas and thoughts. Students are always put in a Problem-Solving situation, but they are guided all the time. A solution is always given in the end, so students are not left in the dark, feeling frustrated. But to make them work for the solution is our aim, and to help them master the knowledge and skills is our goal. We want our students to be able to use whatever they have learned today from this text in another situation when they are reading another text, using the same multi-level skills to read, comprehend, analyse and interpret a text. The knowledge they have learned is alive (they can re-use it again), not dead (we do not want it to remain at the level of the text). Therefore, these activities promote a more active and interpretative approach to reading than exercises that just simply require repeating the facts or the sentences in the text.*

*Another advantage of this way of teaching is the knowledge and skills students learn are activated at several different levels. Sometimes it is not that students do not have the knowledge or skills, it is they do not know how to use them. They need somebody to enlighten them, giving them some inspiration, direction and instructions.*

*So, instead of just teaching students the meaning of new words, set phrases, grammar structures and the verbal meaning of translation or understanding of the text, we are offering students a situation to apply their knowledge to solve problems. This involves their previous*

*knowledge, and their skills of applying this knowledge. By repeated application of all kinds of knowledge, the knowledge or the skills are enhanced. With the higher-level of questions like why questions or reading for implication questions, students' abilities to analyse and to read actively are promoted. All the strategies that students learn can be re-used in another situation. It is the re-use of the strategies and knowledge that ultimately really counts.*

*This way of teaching reading can even help students improve, or at least practise their reading skills in their native language. At the same time, they can also see the similarities between reading their native language and a foreign language. They can try to apply the skills of L1 reading to L2 if they have developed effective L1 reading skill; or can use the skills they have learned from L2 reading to L1, if they have not properly learnt to apply such skills in L1 reading.*

*The above is just an example of how to apply teaching reading strategies mentioned in the questionnaire to the text. It is interesting that in such a relatively short text, nearly all the strategies (99%) are covered. The ideas and strategies can therefore be easily applied to other texts which may be more applicable to the particular set of students and which can be used in a similar manner to improve their reading abilities.*

### 7.1.3 Profile of results on the strategy inventory for reading (SIFOR)

Apart from the profile for teachers, students were also provided with a profile for learning the strategies. This profile summarises the results on SIFOR and the kinds of strategies taught (see below for details). To complete this profile, students were asked to transfer average scores for each part and some of the overlapping parts of the SIFOR, and, then, for the whole SIFOR, work out the scores from the worksheet.



Figure 7.6 Explanation of the five types of learning strategies

<i>Part</i>	<i>What Strategies Are Covered</i>	<i>Your Average</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>Metacognitive Strategies: This is about the student's knowledge of reading strategies. Knowledge about how you centre learning, how to arrange and plan your learning, how to evaluate your learning and how to encourage yourself, lower anxiety and organise learning.</i>	_____
<i>B</i>	<i>Cognitive Strategies(1): Using mental processes to learn vocabulary. Associating; grouping; placing new words into context; classifying; understanding words used metaphorically and guessing</i>	_____
<i>C</i>	<i>Cognitive Strategies(2): Using mental processes in reading. Paying attention to linguistic and nonlinguistic aspects, such as titles, types of letters, punctuation and pictures, tables and diagrams; paying attention to content: type of text, purpose of the article, attitude of the writer; reading for the gist main ideas, topic sentence and general information; understanding through technical aids like comparison or contrast, cause and effect, functional words that link ideas and give indication of directions for the development of the article; reading by using the appropriate strategies like skimming or scanning; adjusting reading speed; constantly predicting what will come next as you read along and correcting your prediction. Finally it is important to link what you already know with what is being read. This implies the use of subject knowledge, world knowledge, cultural knowledge, linguistic knowledge and even personal experience, i.e. using all the clues possible to understand the text. This approach not only helps comprehension, but also knowledge retention.</i>	_____
<i>D</i>	<i>Social Strategies: Using communication skills: asking questions for clarification; expressing yourself; engaging in group discussions and co-operating with others; becoming aware of other's thoughts and feelings.</i>	_____
<i>E</i>	<i>Compensation Strategies: Compensating for missing knowledge: using all possible clues to guess the meaning of what is heard or read in the target language; trying to understand the overall meaning and not necessarily every single word.</i>	_____
<i>F</i>	<i>Practice Strategies: Practice makes perfect. Engaging actively in in-class and after-class practice; reading as much as possible with the effective strategies; deliberately training your reading speed and comprehension using the strategies introduced in this questionnaire.</i>	_____
<i>YOUR OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE</i>		_____

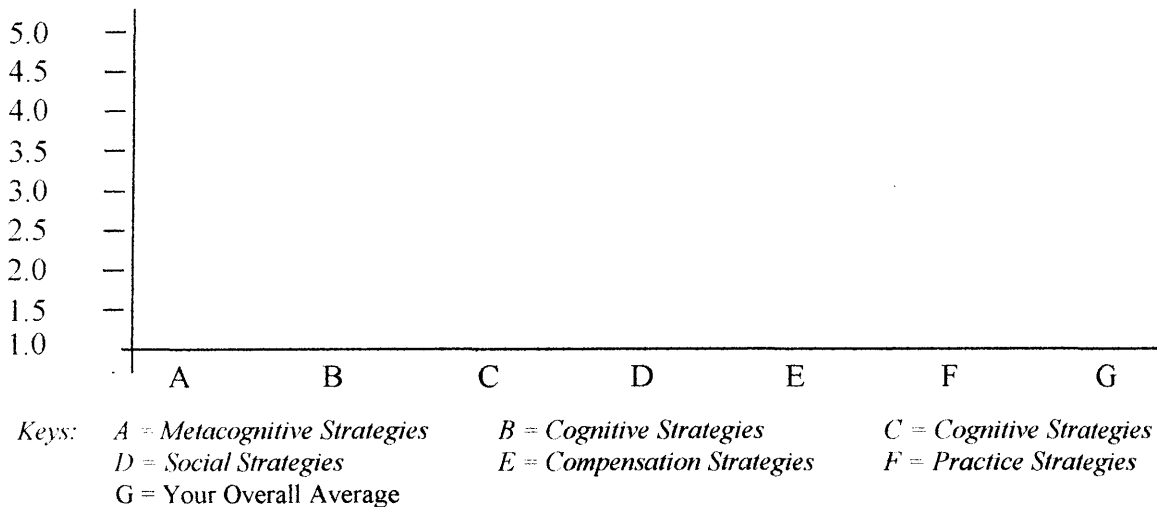
### Formula and chart of the measurement

Students were given keys to measure their own scores for learning strategies.

Chart 7.1 Graph Your Averages Here

*If you want, you can make a graph of your SIFOR averages. What does this graph tell you?*

*Are you very high or very low on any part?*



#### *Understanding the strategies and their relationships*

Students were not only provided with a worksheet, in which the categorised types of strategies were grouped together and put in sequence, and shown how to calculate the scores of the strategies, but were also advised of the implications and relationships of these strategies.

#### *What These Averages Mean to You*

*The overall average indicates how frequently you use learning strategies in the English reading class. The averages for each part of the SIFOR show which groups of strategies you tend to use the most in English reading. You might find that the averages for each part of the SIFOR are more useful than your overall average. The best use of strategies depends on your attitude, motivation, personality and knowledge.*

*If you have a very low average on one or more parts of the SIFOR, you should ask yourself whether this has something to do with your attitude, motivation or personality, or maybe it is because of your lack of such knowledge. There is a saying in Chinese, 'The most valuable characteristic of a person is that one knows oneself best.'*

*If your low score on a certain part results from a resentful attitude towards reading, you should try to change your attitude, and try to think of the entertaining aspect of reading and make reading more enjoyable.*

*If your low score results from the fact that you are not sufficiently motivated, you should set a realistic goal and give yourself some incentive for increasing your score.*

*If your low score has something to do with your personality, although it is hard to change one's character, you should still try to activate yourself in the areas where you are weak. Deliberate and conscious training will help you to improve.*

*If your low score results from your lack of strategy knowledge, after answering this set of SIFOR, try to apply the strategies to your reading.*

*If you are already good at certain strategies, keep up the good work, but improve where you are weak.*

*The last piece of advice to give is that learning is a complicated process that involves or is affected by many factors. Therefore, try to take learning as a whole by looking at your attitude and motivation to start with, your classroom behaviour, your cognitive learning styles, your compensation and your application of social and practice strategies. All these aspects are inter-related in a way and are influenced by each other. So try to deliberately train yourself with these good and effective reading strategies so as to improve your performance in every aspect.*

## 7.2 Follow-up questionnaires

Two types of follow-up questionnaires were carried out, one for teachers (Appendix E) and one for students (in China and in Britain) (Appendix F).

### 7.2.1 Analysis and discussion of teachers' follow-up questionnaires

Table 7.1 summarises the results of the analysis. The results show that over 76% of teachers believe they understand over 80% of the strategies (q1). Apparently, it is not that teachers do not know the strategies, but that they may not appreciate their importance, may not actually teach them, may not know how to teach them and/or may not activate their students' to use them.

Over 80% of the teachers admit the usefulness of the strategies (q2). Nearly 70% agree that the workshop is very helpful in enriching their ideas of teaching (q4). If respondents are put into 3 groups: 1=positive, 2=negative, 3= in the middle, the results of q2, q3, and q4 are extremely significant ( $p < 0.0000$ ) based on a Kruskal-Wallis H non-parametric test analysis, indicating that most respondents greatly appreciated the use of strategies and the materials workshop.

But as to how often they teach these strategies (q5), the percentage of *teaching the strategies all the time* is very low (1.9%). From the responses, it can be argued that the percentages of teaching the strategies all the time should be increased in order to encourage students to form a good habit of using them.

Q6 shows that over 77% of teachers like the proposed TRSIA, and believe the majority of students also like it.

But what restricts them from teaching it? Possible reasons given are:

- 1) Teachers are too used to the traditional way of teaching (43.5%).
- 2) Teachers are worried that it would take too much time (37.4%).
- 3) They think strategies are not emphasised, nor tested in the Band Four Test (16.5%).

This implies that teaching approaches seem strongly influenced by traditional ways of teaching.

It is agreed that it does take time and effort to initially prepare a lesson, especially when teachers are not familiar with the suggested way of teaching. However, the research results show that the use of strategies is highly positively correlated with students' performance (Table 5.21) and **TRSIA** can therefore be seen to considerably speed up students' progress, making the effort expended worthwhile.

Possible ways of facilitating the preparation of strategy-based lessons are to show teaching points in Teacher's Manuals, compile textbooks with features that teach the use of strategies and include strategy skills within tests, ensuring that both teachers and students pay special attention to them. Some of the above ideas are being tested by a group of reading experts at Reading University in the UK. They have designed reading tests for undergraduates at Chinese universities to determine students' reading skills and use of strategies during both careful and expeditious reading, evaluating their local and global levels of comprehension (Urquhart and Weir, 1998).

Table 7.1 Percentage and Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova of teachers' follow-up questionnaires

Variables	Cases	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	Mean	Std Dev	Chi-Square	d.f.	2-tailed P
% of strategies understood (q1)	114	100% 27.2%	80% 49.1%	60% 21.1%	40% 1.8%	20% 0.9%	2.000	0.798			
Opinions about the strategies (q2)	115	(a) Very useful 28.7%	(b) Useful 59.1%	(c) OK 11.3%	(d) Not very useful 0.9%	(e) Not useful at all 0%	1.843	0.643	47.6543	2	.0000 ***
Opinions about the WORKSHOP (q3)	115	(a) Very helpful 33%	(b) Helpful 46.1%	(c) OK 19.1%	(d) Not very helpful 1.7%	(e) Not helpful at all 0%	1.896	0.765	66.0236	2	.0000 ***
The WORKSHOP enriches ideas of teaching (q4)	115	(a) very much 20.9%	(b) a lot 48.7%	(c) some-what 27.8%	(d) a little 2.6%	(e) not at all 0%	2.122	0.763	85.6843	2	.0000 ***
Try the strategies in teaching (q5)	106	Yes, all the time 1.9%	Yes, many times 38.7%	Yes, quite often 36.8%	Yes, occasionally 20.8%	No, not at all 1.9%	2.821	0.848			
Attitude toward this way of teaching (q6)	115	(a) I like it very much. 17.4%	(b) I like it. 60%	(c) I think it is all right. 20.9%	(d) I don't like it. 1.7%	(e) I really dislike it. 0%	2.070	0.672	78.1152	2	.0000 ***
Response of majority of students to the strategies (q7)	115	(a) My Ss like it very much. 11.3%	(b) My Ss like it. 60%	(c) My Ss think it is all right. 26.1%	(d) My Ss don't like it. 1.7%	(e) My Ss really dislike it. 0.9%	2.209	0.695	92.3714	2	.0000 ***
Reasons for not liking this approach (q8)	115	Used to traditional teaching 43.5%	Worried it takes time 37.4%	Not tested in Band Four 16.5%	No chance to try, but 2.6%	Teachers do not know them 0%	1.783	0.814			
The strategies should be made known to every teacher. (q9)	115	(a) strongly agree 27.8%	(b) agree 66.1%	(c) uncertain 5.2%	(d) disagree 0%	(e) strongly disagree 0.9%	1.800	0.610	28.3606	2	.0000 ***

(a) = extremely positive (b) = positive (c) = uncertain or in between the two ends (d) = negative (e) = extremely negative

Where Chi-Square comparison is carried out, respondents are put into three groups: (a) + (b) = 1, (d) + (e) = 2, (c) = 3.

\*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

### 7.2.2 Interpretations of the results

6 out of 9 questions, relating to respondents' opinions on the use of strategies, demonstrate extreme significance ( $p < 0.0000$ ) in Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova Chi-Square comparison. The percentage of positive answers given to these questions are all from 70% to 94%, indicating that the majority of teachers are in favour of **TRISA** and about 94% think that strategies should be taught to every teacher.

When considering the results, it should be appreciated that since questions were presented in a positive form, Chinese teachers may, because of their culture, have found it difficult to disagree with the views expressed. Especially if they believe (even wrongly) that the questionnaire comes from an authoritative source. However, even allowing for some tendency to agree, the extent of the agreement is very high – surely too high for such a tendency to be the major explanation.

The high percentage of positive comments suggests that respondents consider the research valuable and believe that the ideas presented can be used to help and enrich their future teaching activities. In particular, most expressed a need for all teachers to be made aware of the different strategies and to learn how they can help students improve their English reading.

### 7.2.3 Analyses and discussion of students' follow-up questionnaires

There are two levels of analysis, one to analyse the ten questions within each group (students in Britain and in China) (Table 7.2), the other to compare the responses between the two groups to see whether there are any significant differences (Table 7.3).

#### 1) *Percentage of the strategies understood*

More Chinese students in Britain (92.7%) than in China (77.1%) claim they know over 80% of the strategies. However, a higher percentage of students in China claim to know 100% of the strategies.

This somewhat contradictory percentage might, at first sight, be a surprise. However, a possible reason is that, although students in Britain may have a better general understanding of strategies, students in China are still learning English, and some students may, therefore, have a clearer impression of all the strategies because of the ‘recency’ effect. Moreover, because ELT has greatly improved in China over the past ten years, more western teaching materials may have been adopted and new strategies may now be included in textbooks, which students in Britain may never have been exposed to when they were students in China.

2) *Opinions about the strategies*

Most students in China and Britain believe that strategies are useful or very useful and only a small number of students think they are not very useful. No students said that they are not useful at all. Again the possible counter-interpretation of the Chinese tendency to agree with positive statements does not seem sufficient to account for the high degree of agreement.

3) *Attitude motivation and self-assessment of students general English learning*

The majority of students from both groups agree that learning attitude/motivation and self-assessment are important. The research results also revealed a high correlation between attitude/motivation and strategy use and performance (Tables 5.16 and 5.20).

4) *The questionnaires enrich the ideas of learning*

The majority of students from both groups believe they have learned a lot from participating in this research and that the questionnaires have enriched their ideas of learning/reading.

5) *Whether students have tried the strategies in their reading*

A few students try to use the strategies all the time. The majority of students (especially those in Britain) have tried to use them many times or quite often. A higher percentage of students in China claim they use the strategies occasionally. The results suggest that students (as well as teachers) should be taught to use strategies more.



Table 7.2 Percentage and Kruskal-Wallis 1-way ANOVA of students' follow-up questionnaires

Variables	G	No.	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	Mean	Std Dev	Chi-Square	d.f.	2-tailed P
% of strategies understood	1	201	100%	80%	60%	40%	20%	2.114	.769			
	2	82	16.9%	60.2%	19.4%	1.5%	2.0%	2.061	.934			
Opinions about the strategies	1	201	(a) Very useful	(b) Useful	(c) OK	(d) Not very useful	(e) Not useful at all	2.134	.712	147.6581	2	.0000 ***
	2	82	15.9%	58.2%	22.4%	3.5%	0%	1.573	.721	20.8664	2	.0000 ***
Realisation of importance of attitude, motivation	1	199	(a) strongly agree	(b) agree	(c) uncertain	(d) disagree	(e) strongly disagree	1.935	.704	101.4280	2	.0000 ***
	2	82	25.1%	59.3%	12.6%	3.0%	0%	2.000	.416	39.7377	2	.0000 ***
The questionnaire enriches ideas of learning	1	197	(a) very much	(b) a lot	(c) somewhat	(d) a little	(e) not at all	2.447	.847	178.1421	2	.0000 ***
	2	82	11.2%	43.1%	37.6%	6.1%	2.0%	1.915	1.199	38.2781	2	.0000 ***
Try the strategies in reading	1	189	Yes, all the time	Yes, many times	Yes, quite often	Yes, occasionally	No, not at all	3.026	.931			
	2	82	6.9%	19.6%	39.2%	32.8%	1.6%	2.720	.906			
Attitude toward the strategies	1	199	(a) I like it very much.	(b) I like it.	(c) I think it is all right.	(d) I don't like it.	(e) I really dislike it.	2.347	.868	175.2474	2	.0000 ***
	2	82	18.6%	34.2%	42.7%	3.0%	1.5%	1.866	1.538	23.4424	2	.0000 ***
Reasons for not liking this approach	1	199	used to old way of reading	not tested in Band Four T	No chance to try, but ...	not know them so well	Others	1.794	1.001			
	2	81	52.8%	22.6%	19.1%	3.5%	2.0%	1.634	1.117			
Strategies help read faster, understand better	1	201	(a) Strongly agree	(b) agree	(c) uncertain	(d) disagree	(e) Strongly disagree	2.085	.706	139.9644	2	.0000 ***
	2	82	18.4%	57.2%	21.9%	2.5%	0%	1.902	.512	25.7154	2	.0000 ***
I know better now how to guess new Words.	1	201	(a) strongly agree	(b) agree	(c) uncertain	(d) disagree	(e) strongly disagree	2.239	.763	163.0435	2	.0000 ***
	2	82	14.4%	52.7%	27.4%	5.5%	0%	2.024	.521	44.9179	2	.0000 ***
The strategies should be made known to Ss.	1	201	(a) strongly agree	(b) agree	(c) uncertain	(d) disagree	(e) strongly disagree	2.010	.800	122.6429	2	.0000 ***
	2	82	25.9%	52.7%	15.9%	5.5%	0%	1.415	.587	15.8143	2	.0001 ***

G=group Group 1=students in China Group 2=students in UK –

(a)=extremely positive

(b)=positive

(c)=uncertain or in between the two ends

(d)=negative

(e)=extremely negative -

Where Chi-Square comparison is carried out, respondents were put into three groups: (a)+(b)=1, (d)+(e)=2, (c)=3.

\*\*\* extremely significant at  $P \leq 0.0$

6) *Students' attitude towards the strategies*

More students in Britain said that they like reading strategies very much, while more students in China think they are all right. This suggests that students in Britain tend to appreciate strategies more. This may be because they read more or because they have better learning habits. Whatever the reason, it indicates that there is a strong need to raise the awareness of strategies of students in China.

7) *Possible reasons for not liking the strategies*

Possible reasons for apparently not liking strategies are (from the highest to the lowest percentage):

- a. Students are too used to traditional ways of learning or reading.
- b. Only a narrow range of reading skills are tested in the Band Four Test.
- c. Some students had not yet had the chance to try a wide range of strategies, but said that they may like them if they did.
- d. Some students do not know about or did not know how to use the strategies sufficiently well.

A few students gave other reasons (as quoted from the students' original questionnaires):

- 1) Because it is hard for students to get rid of old reading habits. Some students are too lazy. Although they want to try the strategies, they often forget them while reading.
- 2) Students try to use the strategies, but sometimes it does not help.
- 3) Students may be very anxious when they have a test and, as a result, they forget all the approaches. They are too nervous to try.
- 4) Because students are unable to translate the ideas expressed by Chinese tradition into English and know very little about English culture.
- 5) Because students do not have enough time to learn the strategies.

To summarise:

- 1) Students say they like the strategies, but do not always use them and think it takes time to learn them. This implies that there is a problem in learning to use strategies. If students

were taught the strategies and could master them relatively quickly, their usage would become second nature.

- 2) Students are so used to traditional reading methods that it is difficult to establish new reading habits. This again shows the need to teach strategies at an early stage and continuously refer to the strategies until students have formed the habit of using them. It is indicated, however, that this might not be easy.
- 3) Obviously, students realise that cultural differences exist and feel they know very little about English traditions. This highlights the additional need to teach English-speaking cultures within future teaching activities.

8) *Strategies help students read faster.*

An overwhelming majority of students agree that using strategies would help them read faster. This suggests that, whatever their problems are in using them, strategies are considered helpful. It might also suggest that it takes time (or practice) before the effect of strategy training has an impact on reading speed. This aspect of reading speed may seem relatively less important, but it should be recalled that timed reading is tested for the College English Band levels in China.

9) *I know better now how to guess unknown words.*

The vast majority of students agree that, after participating in the research, they appreciate better how to guess unknown words. This might be regarded as an immediate benefit of the research.

10) *The strategies should be made known to every student.*

A very high percentage of students agree that strategies should be made known to every student. This expresses the students' desire to improve their learning/reading efficiency.

In Table 7.2 all the Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova Chi-Square analyses show extremely significant results ( $p < 0.0000$ ) indicating the strong support demonstrated by students to the study and their agreement of the benefit of using strategies (in line with teachers). Another

noticeable feature is that Chinese students in Britain nearly always have a higher positive view about the use of strategies than students in China. Table 7.3 shows the results obtained.

Table 7.3 Comparison of Chinese students in China and in Britain  
on the follow-up questions

Variables	Gp	Case	d.f.	Means	Std Dev	Source	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Opinions about the strategies (q2)	1	201	1	2.1343	.7119	Between Groups	18.3397	18.3397	35.9292	.0000 ***
	2	82	281	1.5732	.7206	Within Groups	143.4341	.5104		
Realisation of importance of attitude etc. (q3)	1	199	1	1.9347	.7041	Between Groups	.2478	.2478	.6165	.4330
	2	82	279	2.0000	.4157	Within Groups	112.1508	.4020		
Q enriches ideas of learning strategies (q4)	1	197	1	2.4467	.8472	Between Groups	22.0316	22.0316	29.4793	.0000 ***
	2	81	276	1.8272	.9054	Within Groups	206.2706	.7474		
Attitude toward this way of teaching (q6)	1	199	1	2.3467	.8677	Between Groups	31.9622	31.9622	48.4400	.0000 ***
	2	79	176	1.5949	.6508	Within Groups	182.1134	.6598		
Strategies help read faster (qq8)	1	201	1	2.0846	.7056	Between Groups	1.9321	1.9321	4.4950	.0349 *
	2	82	281	1.9024	.5118	Within Groups	120.7817	.4298		
Know better now how to guess unknown word (q9)	1	201	1	2.2388	.7633	Between Groups	2.6775	2.6775	5.4329	.0205 *
	2	82	281	2.0244	.5206	Within Groups	138.4885	.4928		
Strategies should be made known to every student (q10)	1	201	1	2.0100	.7999	Between Groups	20.6404	20.6404	37.2073	.0000 ***
	2	82	281	1.4146	.5869	Within Groups	155.8825	.5547		

Gp=Group      Group 1 = students in China      Group 2 = students in Britain

(a) = extremely positive    (b) = positive    (c) = uncertain or in between the two ends

(d) = negative                (e) = extremely negative

\* significant at  $p \leq 0.05$  \*\* very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$  \*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

### 7.2.4 Interpretations of the results for student follow-up questionnaires

7 out of 10 questions requiring students to give their opinions on the research and strategies are all extremely significant ( $p < 0.0000$ ). This might be interpreted as:

- 1) The majority of students accept the usefulness of strategies, the importance of learning attitude/motivation and the benefit they have achieved from answering the questionnaires, such as using the suggested techniques to guess unknown words. This shows the research has achieved part of its purpose, which is to make students more aware of, and to gain better knowledge of the strategies in order to benefit their own learning/reading.
- 2) 88% of the U.K. group and 53% of the China group confirm that they like the strategies. This implies that if the strategies were better taught, students would use them and benefit from their use, assisting them to read faster and gain better understanding.
- 3) The strong desire expressed by students to make the strategies known to every student indicates the perceived benefits of this type of research and highlights the significance of the present study.
- 4) The high percentage of students that consider 'being used to the traditional way of reading' as the main problem to using strategies is in accordance with the teachers' view. This suggests that the way teachers teach students to form reading habits using strategies is crucial in language classrooms, confirming the importance of improving the quality of teaching.

The above discussion mainly focuses on an evaluation of the feedback obtained from students. The four extremely significant results in Table 7.3 (q2, q4, q6 and q10) indicate that, in general, the Chinese students in Britain appreciate the use of strategies more than students in China as they claim to use more strategies shown by this research (Tables 5.5 and 5.6). They strongly recommend that the strategies should be made known to every student. The experiences they have had in Britain and their present high level of exposure to English may account for this difference.

### 7.3 Conclusion

The materials workshop can be considered as an example of potentially applying the proposed **TRSIA** within the classroom, enabling the research to move to a more practical level. Additional research on the application and systematic monitoring of the use of the workshop may, however, be needed to promote and improve **TRSIA**, for example, by applying **TRSIA** to other texts and by using it in the classroom under controlled conditions.

Teachers should form the habit of teaching and demonstrating the strategies and should tailor texts to the needs of their particular students. The materials workshop also presented teaching and learning strategy profiles, helping teachers and students to clarify and categorise the strategies and understand their relationship. In conjunction with the workshop, students should be asked to either, write examples themselves to show that they understand the strategies, or demonstrate their use of strategies by reading and telling the class how they recognise particular words, phrases and how they solve their reading difficulties.

Through the questionnaire survey, the respondents were able to enrich their ideas of reading strategies and expressed their desire to make the strategies known to every teacher and student. Their positive comments on the strategies and the conclusions, while appreciating the Chinese tendency to give positive replies in such context, underline their appreciation regarding the use of strategies and the benefit they have obtained from the study.

Analysis of their answers did not, however, provide sufficient details into their personal feelings about the proposed **TRSIA**, or their experiences of reading and teaching/learning. Instead, the study has raised many questions. This chapter has tried to indicate, by proposing **TRSIA**, that the use of strategies, although possibly an inherent talent, can be improved through appropriate teaching methods. However, in order to investigate unanswered questions, such as: how different forms of reading relate and interact; what is the learning process related to reading and the use of reading strategies, further research activities were conducted. These were intended to provide a broader and deeper insight into teaching/learning English reading in China and are described in the following chapter.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **INTERVIEW RESEARCH AND EXTENDED MODELS**

#### **8.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter illustrated proposals for **Teaching Reading Strategies in an Interactive Approach (TRSIA)** (described in section 2.4) by using a materials workshop to demonstrate an appropriate method of teaching strategies and discussed the feedback obtained from respondent teachers and students on their use of strategies and on the research.

This chapter aims to evaluate the research from a broader perspective and a deeper level by reporting on the analysis of respondent teacher and student interviews. These interviews are intended to supplement the questionnaire data by eliciting aspects that the interviewees consider important. This chapter contains four major sections: a brief review of interview techniques, an analysis/discussion of the interviews, some practical suggestions and a presentation of extended models that represent the results of the extended research.

#### **8.1 Interview Research**

A research interview is defined as a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer to obtain research-relevant information. It focuses on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation (Cannell and Kahn, 1968).

Drever (1995) comments that semi-structured interviews can be used to gain greater depth of understanding than one might expect from a questionnaire. Interviews may, therefore, extend results from the questionnaire survey by eliciting respondents' more subjective feedback and opinions about the research and about their perceived use of language teaching/learning and reading strategies.

### 8.1.1 Three purposes of interview research

As a distinctive research technique, an interview may serve three purposes (Cohen and Manion, 1994):

- as a principal means of gathering information on the research objectives;
- test hypotheses, suggest new hypotheses or help identify variables and relationships; and
- in conjunction with other research methods, test results previously obtained, follow-up unexpected results, validate other methods or go deeper into the motivations of respondents.

In this research, the interviews were not used for the first two purposes, but were used in conjunction with the research questionnaires for the third purpose.

### 8.1.2 Advantages and disadvantages

With questionnaires, a researcher can gain a view of research questions by coding and counting the answers to the questions, and can draw conclusions from relevant statistical calculations. With interviews, the advantage is that they allow greater depth than is normally the case with other methods of data collection (Cohen and Manion, 1994). The researcher can get respondents to explain their answers at length, and can then draw on these statements to identify common features across the range of interviews. However, interviewers are prone to subjectivity and bias (ibid). Therefore, it is often considered useful to use interviews with a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire survey allows selection of important issues that can then be followed up to a deeper level by interviews.

### 8.1.3 Four kinds of interview

There are four types of interview: structured, unstructured, non-directive and focused interviews (Cohen and Manion, 1994). A structured interview is organised beforehand by the researcher with questions and answers already made available against which respondents give simple answers. An unstructured (or semi-structured) interview is also organised beforehand



by the researcher, but the respondents are allowed to elaborate on their answers. In non-directive interviews respondents are free to talk about anything they like. Focused interviews focus on respondents' subjective responses to known situations in which they have been involved, that have been previously analysed by the interviewer and which may be used to investigate previously formulated hypotheses (ibid).

The present interviews were semi-structured and focused. The respondents were asked questions, but were also given the freedom to elaborate on issues that they had previously experienced. All interviews were tape-recorded.

#### 8.1.4 Respondents to be interviewed

Chinese respondent teachers and students in Britain were interviewed although the questionnaires for Chinese teachers in Britain were not included in the data analysis due to the sample size being too small. Since the teachers and students in Britain were not currently teaching or studying at the time, it is expected that the interview comments may show more what they were thinking, on reflection, about their past in China, rather than what they currently were doing or thinking. The interview comments, therefore, have some retrospective elements within them.

In general, the teacher and student groups were fairly representative of Chinese teachers and students in Britain. The students came from various fields, either studying (not necessarily English) or working (not necessarily in teaching) in Britain. The teachers were either taking postgraduate degrees or were visiting scholars in Britain. None of them were teaching at the time, but they were all once university students and teachers in China, and had all previously participated in the questionnaire survey.

The fact that the interviewees recalled past recollections of previous work or activities, rather than what they were currently engaged in, entails some risk. Their present views, probably broader in range than simply involvement in education, may have influenced their opinions or memories of their studies and teaching in China. This might mean that their current use of

English reading strategies in Britain could have influenced their opinions about strategies that they believed they had used as students/teachers of English in China. Despite the disadvantages, the interviews had a major advantage in that the interviewees could provide extra insight into the need for English reading skills from having worked and lived in Britain. It is envisaged, therefore, that the results from the interviews yield relevant and valid advice for future course design.

Five Chinese English teachers sequenced T1 to T5 and five Chinese English students sequenced S1 to S5 were interviewed.

## 8.2 Analysis and Discussion of the Interviews

In this analysis, each interview is handled according to three levels: the questions asked, the topics covered and the complete discourse. The interviewees' comments are quoted largely in their own words to present not only their views, but also their voices.

### 8.2.1 Analysis of interviews for teachers

#### 8.2.1.1 Analysis according to the questions

*Occupation:* Three teachers were visiting scholars, two were studying for their Ph.D. degrees. Some teachers clearly stated the number of years they had been teaching, some did not, but as government-sponsored students in Britain, all must have had a minimum of four years teaching experience. From their qualifications and teaching experience, all the teachers could be regarded as experts.

#### *Teachers' opinion about reading*

In general, all the teachers believe that reading is 'very important' (T2, T5); or 'the most important' (T1, T3). T4 added 'reading is very necessary to enable students to gain information, since many technical books are only available in English'.

The reasons why they think reading is important are as follows:

- a) Reading occupies more learning hours and the Syllabus emphasises reading (T1, T2).
- b) Reading contributes the largest percentage mark to the Band Four Test.
- c) After graduation, the majority of students stay in China, working in different fields and they need the ability to read and understand English (T3, T5).

### *Teaching method*

All the teachers clearly stated that they use a mixture of different teaching approaches, that is an 'eclectic approach', which supports the questionnaire results (q20).

The reasons for using an 'eclectic method' are:

- to suit students needs and to suit the type of texts (T2);
- because no single method is perfect, and can apply to all situations or to all levels (T2) - there is merit in each approach (T3);
- because a wide range of strategies may suit a group of students. Some students may react better to more traditional methods of learning, while others may learn better through games (T4); and
- because it depends on how difficult or easy the text is and to the style of the text (T5).

T1 explained her teaching method. She suggested that teachers should ask students to preview the text and should check the preview by asking questions. The teacher should then explain the text and give students a chance to raise questions and practice vocabulary or grammar. After reading the complete text, the teacher should lead students to do the exercises in the Unit, covering all the points given in the Teacher's Manual; because T1 felt 'they are considered important and must be taught to all students'. These comments closely match the picture of Chinese reading classes described in Chapters 1 and 2.

### *Major problems in teaching reading*

T1 lamented the fact that there were no suitable textbooks in China for teaching strategies by saying 'In my opinion, it is because we teach according to the designated textbooks'. T1

suggested compiling a new set of textbooks, which emphasise teaching strategies and train students with predicting and thinking habits and the ability to analyse and solve problems.

Major problems pointed out are:

- vocabulary (T2, T4 and T5);
- reading speed – students read too slowly, word by word (T2, T3);
- sentence structure (T5);
- background information (T2 and T5);
- prepositions (T4);
- difficulties in how to teach the use of strategies properly and flexibly, or how to choose the right type of strategies to use for certain types of text (T5); and
- difficulties in teaching how to pick out main ideas and ignore unimportant words (T3).

*Teachers' questionnaire comments given in Q1 (q90) are inserted here to further amplify Chinese teachers' perceptions about teaching reading.*

- 1) Teaching reading is regarded as *'quite difficult'*; and *'reading purposes'* should be involved. Yet *'the intensive reading course is a mixture of everything'*. *'Teachers sometimes have to switch their original plans for one reason or another. They still do not know how to take advantage of examinations'*.
- 2) *'In order to improve students' reading comprehension, teachers should focus on reading strategies'*. But *'the strategies for teaching reading are usually not available.'* Therefore, *'more suitable materials are needed'* because *'good and interesting reading materials still remain unavailable'*.
- 3) *'In addition, students should read more after class'*, but the problem is *'students do not have much incentive or motivation for extensive reading and very few of them apply their reading skills.'* *'Reading strategies are useful only when they are applied in extensive reading.'* The problem is that *'students rarely practice them by reading extensively after class. They take them as being merely theoretical knowledge'*.
- 4) In teaching reading, *'first, teachers should grasp the theme of the reading material; second, read between the lines.'* *'Students should not only be taught how to use a certain word, the literary meaning of a sentence, but also how to read for implied meanings'*.

- 5) *'The reading comprehension of Band Four CET is not well and scientifically designed. They cannot fully evaluate students' reading ability'.*
- 6) Some teachers think *'vocabulary is the biggest headache to their students when they teach reading comprehension'.*

#### *Teacher's opinions about the strategies mentioned in Q1*

In general, teachers *'like the strategies very much'* and think *'they are very good, useful and helpful.'* Three teachers out of five who wrote comments think Q1 is *'well logically-organised, categorised and presented.'* *'It is scientific.'* Two believe that *'the strategies are in sufficient detail to enable teachers to appreciate their use and to facilitate teaching them.'* Also *'It is practical to give the method of working out teachers' own strategy scores.'* They believe that *'the questionnaires have enlarged their knowledge,'* provided *'a guidance for teachers enabling them to refer to the strategies.'* But they also think *'the questionnaire is a bit too long'.*

#### *Teachers' opinions about the workshop*

In general, teachers commended the workshop. They *'like it very much';* think *'it is very useful'* and think *'it provides an excellent working example. This teaching approach can gradually make students form a method of dealing with and analysing an article correctly'.*

Another advantage of the workshop that interviewees praised is *'the demonstration of the teaching strategies (all in one text), is presented in a natural, easy to understand way'.* One interviewee said, *'The workshop set me thinking. There are a lot of advantages in this way of teaching and I would like the work to be read widely'.*

One interviewee expressed a slightly different view on the first and last step of the group activities. He thought *'the temporary group work does not give a good result. On one hand, some students rely on others. On the other hand, it takes a bit too much time. If students were told in advance to prepare for the work, got together to exchange opinions, then the results would be different.'* He also said *'without the temporary group work, the tasks and*

*requirements mentioned in the steps can still all be achieved, and achieved more naturally’.* He added *‘Of course, this is only my opinion. Maybe it is biased.’*

*Respondents’ comments about the research questionnaires (q91 from Q1)*

38 out of 115 respondent teachers wrote comments like *‘Very good’*, *‘Well-designed’*, *‘Scientifically-designed’*, *‘Comprehensive and instructive’*, *‘It is very helpful’*. Some teachers wrote: *‘This questionnaire is quite good. I, as a teacher of English, have learned a lot from it’*. *‘This questionnaire is good and will make us think a lot’*. *‘It helps to clarify some misconceptions of teaching strategies. It’s not this one or the other, but an integrated one. Well-designed. I’ve learned a lot from it. Thank you.’* *‘It has provided me with a wide range of teaching methods. Some of them are quite new to me. Thanks’*.

One teacher wrote, *‘It’s OK, but it could be more specific, which would make it more useful to Chinese teachers of English’*. Another complained, *‘There are too many questions. We have taken the trouble to complete the questionnaire, even though we are very busy as it is. You’ll learn something from it. Yet I know nothing about you. It’s unfair’*.

The above represents the analysis of interviews according to the questions and two open questions from Q1. During the interviews, the interviewees raised a number of points, which will be discussed in the following section.

#### 8.2.1.2 Analysis according to the topics

*Interviewer’s impression on the interviewees*

All the interviewees were knowledgeable scholars. They were enthusiastic and talkative. They treated the interviews very seriously and contributed ideas concerning textbook compilation, further research in the area of teaching reading, improving speaking ability through question-answer exercises and group/pair work or activities.

T1 suggested that teachers work very hard to improve students’ reading ability. The problem is that some teachers rely too heavily on the Teacher’s Manual for their teaching points,

because they are not trained to teach any other way due to their qualifications, experience and/or knowledge. Therefore, textbooks that include strategy training should be designed to make it easier for the teachers to prepare for the lesson and enable strategies to be taught appropriately. Students will then, gradually, become more familiar with the suggested way of thinking and using predicting and analysing skills. T3 expressed similar views. In general, the interviewees wanted to see the research published so that more people can have the opportunity to follow the suggested way of teaching.

For increasing reading speed and enlarging background information, T1 thought students should first be asked to increase their vocabulary by any methods or strategies they wished to use and that more in-class and after class speed-reading and comprehension exercises should be assigned. Relevant information about the article to be read should always be included to enlarge the students' knowledge and, above all, students should be encouraged to read more.

T2 believed the teacher is the key person, dominating the class and deciding on the teaching methods and approaches. He felt that the teachers' ability is crucial in improving the quality of teaching, and the performance of their students. This opinion is in agreement with the belief that teachers' qualifications affect their teaching behaviour and methods and effectively influence learning as shown in the data analysis (Chapters 5 and 6).

T3 raised the point that reading methods depend on reading materials and the purpose of reading (T5 expressed similar views). It is important to train students to be able to pick out important ideas contained in the text and to ignore unimportant words.

This method of teaching will successively lead to:

- the ability to read more – improve reading skills – increase knowledge through more reading – facilitate understanding and gain background information – the ability to read more.

While, word by word reading will eventually lead to:

- reading – checking new words – carry on reading – look up in the dictionary for the meaning of new words – frustration – carry on reading – check meaning for new words – boredom – give up reading.

T3 praised the advantages of the proposed way of teaching (**TRSIA**), as demonstrated in the materials workshop. He said ‘if all teachers concentrate on teaching skills and strategies, on using a variety of activities, and on adopting the most suitable approaches to a particular text or situation, students will gain the greatest improvement in their reading ability, in their use of strategies, in spoken English, in their communication skills (T3 emphasised) and, also, in their inter-personal skills’.

T4 also stressed speaking ability. He seemed to have a difficult time when he first came to England and believed that listening and speaking are important in order to be able to communicate.

T5 thought the difficulties in reading are related to new words and a lack of background information, believing that these problems can kill students’ interest in reading. T5 suggested encouraging students to enlarge their reading knowledge by asking them to memorise as many new words as possible. The method he suggested was to use word formation (although it does not always help), study hard, be diligent and memorise by heart, by rote learning. T5 sequenced the importance of English skills in China as reading, listening, writing and speaking.

#### 8.2.1.3 Interpretations of the interview results

All participants agreed that reading is very important and that speaking is also important and the interviewees suggested that good speaking could be achieved by **TRSIA**. Further research in this area is, therefore, strongly recommended.



In order to increase reading speed and comprehension, teachers believed that it is important to first enlarge the students' vocabulary and background knowledge and that this will always remain the focus of future English language teaching.

The interviews identified that teachers rely heavily on Teacher's Manuals and textbooks for their teaching. This emphasises the importance of textbooks and manuals in directing what to teach and how to teach.

Reciting and rote learning, the traditional method of learning in China, is still greatly appreciated and advocated by the teachers. This agrees with the opinions given by some Chinese researchers reviewed in Chapter 2.

Since teachers are generally accepted as the key persons within Chinese classrooms in deciding and choosing the approaches and strategies to teach, it is suggested that improving the quality of teachers must be considered a major objective. This is in agreement with the data analysis (Tables 5.3a, 5.7, 5.9 and 5.11).

In general, the teachers praised the strategies featured in the questionnaires. Perhaps there is an element of complimenting a person's work, which is part of Chinese culture: one praises or appreciates others' effort first, then points out shortcomings, such as the questionnaire being a bit too long. However, the strong commendations indicate that they believe in the use of strategies and the benefits of this research.

## 8.2.2 Analysis of interviews with students

### 8.2.2.1 Analysis according to the questions

#### *Occupation*

There were a greater variety of occupations among the interviewee students: a shop assistant, a housewife, a researcher, a Ph.D. student and a senior university lecturer. They were all either university graduates, or postgraduates and S2, a housewife, had achieved a TOFEL

score of 600. They could be considered an elite group.

#### *Importance of reading in English*

All five interviewees thought *reading is extremely important, very important, or the most important because of its percentage mark in exams.*

#### *Leisure reading*

Four students *read newspapers, two read magazines. S2 read novels to practise reading. She clearly stated that she read novels not as a hobby or leisure, but purely for the sake of practising her reading.*

#### *The most difficult problem in reading*

Three students *believed vocabulary to be the most difficult; and believed background information to be problematic. One also thought that grammar is sometimes difficult.*

#### *Approaches to reading*

S1 suggested that *she guesses what an article is about from its title to decide whether or not to read it.*

S2 said that *if she had time, she would read word by word. To practise for exams (TOFEL), she had to read very quickly. In class reading, she would follow her teacher's instructions. In daily life reading, when she was reading simple letters, she did not need to use any particular strategy.*

S3 said that *normally he would look at the title. If it was interesting, he would read on. During reading, he focused on the general meaning of the text, predicting all the time. But the actual approaches he used were flexible depending on the type and purpose of reading.*

S4 commented that *for leisure reading he focused on the general meaning, or the events happening in the text. He seldom read word by word. But if he read books in his particular*

*subject area, computing textile, he tended to read more carefully, chewing over the words and the meaning of a paragraph and trying to digest the information read.*

*S5 said that he would guess first, adjust the guess as he was reading along. If some new word appeared many times, he would have already given a guessed meaning to it. Although he was reasonably sure of his guess, he still could not give an exact version in Chinese and he would check it up in the dictionary to get the exact definition in Chinese, if he thought the word might be useful.*

#### *Opinions about the questionnaires and the profile of results for learning*

*In general, the students regarded the questionnaire survey was a very good piece of work. They believed they had learnt a lot from answering the questionnaires. S1 and S2 clearly stated that they think the strategies were very useful. S4 said the questionnaire was a bit too long.*

*With regard to the profile of results, the interviewees believed that it summarises the strategies into groups and explains the relationships between them very well. It gives a clear indication of how the strategies are inter-related with each other, and advises what to do if students are good or bad at certain strategies. S3 said he had not only learnt the actual strategies in learning and reading, but also the functions of the different types of strategies.*

#### *How to improve reading speed and comprehension*

*Two students thought students should use the strategies mentioned in Q2 and apply them in practice. S4 suggested that the strategies should be mastered and students should read as much as possible with the strategies. S3 and S5 thought that intensive and extensive reading should be combined in order to improve comprehension and reading speed. S2 simply felt that students should enlarge their vocabulary and read a lot more.*

*Reciting texts*

This question was not originally included in the interview. But, since one of the students mentioned the idea of reciting texts (T5 also mentioned the idea of rote learning, reciting vocabulary etc.), this question was pursued.

S1 thought *reciting is useful at the beginning stages of learning, but not necessary at a later stage*. S2 and S3 suggested *students could gain a feel of the language by the rhythm of a sentence and more easily learn structures and sentences read in the text. If they want to say a similar thing, the sentences would be already in their memory*. S3 also mentioned *another advantage is to practise pronunciation while reciting*. But he also emphasised *reading for understanding. Simply speaking, one could not recite everything*. Therefore, he suggested *that students should be creative in expressing ideas*. Similar views were shared by S4, who stated that *everything has two sides. The good thing about reciting is that it enables the reader to store common phrases and sentences for use as and when necessary, but a problem is whether these sentences can be used properly and correctly in other situations*. S5 thought *the advantage is not only to master something, but also to lay a good foundation for students' listening and speaking ability*.

#### 8.2.2.2 Analysis according to the topics

*Interviewer's impression on interviewee students*

Most of the students interviewed had high TOFEL scores to enable them to go abroad. S2 contributed many ideas to learning and the use of strategies. She appeared to be very knowledgeable. She attributed this to the original English books she used at university. This supports the idea of textbook compilation. S5 seemed to stress that speaking and listening are particularly important to improve communication. Perhaps due to his experience in Britain and his friendship with a British student who could speak fluent Mandarin Chinese, but could not read Mandarin.

All the students recommended that the strategies should be taught to help students guess unknown words. S1 believed that new words should be checked only when they appear

several times and when they cause communication break down. She suggested that lack of background information prohibits reading.

S2 confirmed that students tend to rely heavily on their teachers to tell them what strategies to use, but expected that students should determine strategies that suit them best and then keep using them until they became habitual. She thought that guessing should only be done under certain circumstances and that it is very important to foster students' interest in reading, which, she felt, is the responsibility of the teachers. Finally, she suggested that it is best to read original works written by native speakers, such as the English textbooks she had used.

S3, S4 and S5 expressed the idea that the approaches and strategies to be used should be flexible depending on the purposes of reading. S3 also stated that cultural awareness plays an important part in reading.

S4 and S5 raised the point that reading in English is similar to reading in Chinese. S4 felt that it is very important to practise reading. This idea/suggestion is supported by the questionnaire research, which reveals the relative weakness of students in China, who do not practise reading as much as Chinese students in Britain.

#### 8.2.2.3 Interpretations of the major results

All participants agreed that reading is very important. They suggested that the most difficult problems in reading are vocabulary and background information. By comparison to teachers, who said they use a mixture of teaching approaches depending on circumstances, the students suggested that their approach to reading is flexible depending on the type and purpose of reading. In general, all the students thought that the questionnaires and the profile of results for learning were useful and that they had learnt a lot from them.

Similarly to teachers who suggested asking students to learn by heart, several students, surprisingly, expressed their liking of reciting texts. This shows the deep and strong feelings towards traditional Chinese way of learning.

Just as teachers rely heavily on the teacher's manuals, students largely depend on their teachers and their textbooks to tell them what strategies to use for reading. An important factor is how teachers can foster students' interest in learning reading. One of the students suggested that it is best to use textbooks, written by native speakers, with interesting and knowledgeable articles.

Both teachers and students interviewed considered speaking and listening important and suggested that intensive and extensive reading should be combined together to teach students different skills.

### 8.3. Opinions about ELT in China

In the questionnaires, respondents were asked to give their opinions about English language teaching/learning in China so that their views may be considered when suggesting improvements for ELT in China. The results are presented in Table 8.1. 13 questions were asked to teachers, of which 7 were also asked to students (in China and Britain). Nearly all the respondents answered the questions. A 5-point scale 'from strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' was used. All the questions were analysed: within each group and between the groups, where applicable.

Mann-Whitney U 2-tailed test was applied for the within group comparison, where respondents were divided into two groups: agree and strongly agree (1), disagree or strongly disagree (2) (uncertain respondents were ignored). All 13 questions asked to the teacher group, except one (q7 originally q83) showed an extreme significance. This indicates a strong tendency for agreeing with the statements and the issues raised in the questionnaires. The highest consensus is to *increase cultural awareness*. This can be interpreted as indicating that teachers strongly agreed that cultural awareness plays an important role in language learning. Another point for which there was significant agreement was that *teacher training should be offered to all teachers*. This expresses teachers' strong desire to improve their qualification, enlarge their knowledge and, therefore, improve their teaching. In line with this desire was their strong agreement to *improve learning facilities*. Obviously, the teachers felt a need to

improve learning conditions and provide better facilities for successful learning. The other two points for which agreement was expressed are *exams should test skills and abilities* and *teaching should focus more on strategies than on language forms*. These two points are linked in so far as exams should test what is taught and teachers should teach what is tested in exams. This suggests that items tested influence the method and content of teaching.

The other points the majority of teachers agreed upon are:

- 1) *The teaching of reading in English is based on designated written textbooks. Teachers cannot elaborate on their own ideas of teaching* (q1, originally q77).

This implies that teachers mainly rely on teaching the content of the textbook. What is written and how it is designed matter a great deal. (Refer to the video analysis in Chapter 1 - The teacher goes through part by part according to the Unit adding some explanations in each part. If the strategies had been part of the Unit, they would also have been taught).

- 2) *Using either pair work or group work to develop reading skills is still problematic* (q2, originally q78).

There might be many reasons for this response: the traditional way of teaching, in which imparting knowledge rather than teaching skills is emphasised; the design of textbooks in which pair/group work is not included; the class sizes (q6), which are usually large (between 31-35 number of students, shown by data analysis) and difficult to manage and/or the limited class time, which may make teachers believe that it is difficult to cope with pair work. Maybe all these apply to some extent.

- 3) *Training in teaching reading strategies is rare* (q3, originally q79).

Although the importance of reading is fully appreciated, it is not fully known how to teach reading effectively and how to promote the strategies to help improve reading skills and comprehension.

- 4) *Authentic English books are limited* (q4, originally q80); *Books about reading strategies are scarce* (q5, originally q81).

This indicates the relative lack of appropriate resources in China.

- 5) *The future emphasis of the English reading class should be on building up learners' confidence in their skills in guessing meanings (q6, originally q82) and there is a need to treat a reading text as meaning first, syntax etc. second, explaining new words and idioms only if they interfere with meaning (q8, originally q84).*

The suggested need for emphasis indicates the direction that future development should take.

The only point for which there was no significant agreement was '*The English class should focus on speeding up the transition from conscious to unconscious use of grammatical and contextual clues to meaning (q7, originally q83).*' The reason for this might be because of the way the question was phrased, which may have made it difficult to understand.

For convenience, the questions about teachers' and students' opinions remain sequenced from q1 to q13. Students in China (S1) indicated extreme significant agreement with all 7 questions, while the U.K. group indicated extreme significant agreement with regard to 4 questions, very significant agreement with 1 question and significant agreement with 2 questions.

The second level of analysis was to compare the views between the groups: teachers and students in China, teachers in China and students in Britain, students in China and in Britain. There was complete agreement between teachers and students on 2 questions. *There is a need to treat a reading text as meaning first, syntax second, explaining new words and idioms only if they interfere with that meaning. When teaching reading, we should focus on teaching reading strategies to help students develop good reading habits rather than on the language form itself.* This shows how much teachers and students appreciate the use of strategies.

The extremely significant difference, indicated by Table 8.1, between teachers and students suggests the importance of *increasing cultural awareness in language learning (q10); teacher training to be offered to all teachers (q11) and exams to test skills and ability (q12).* For all three questions teachers demonstrated far higher agreement than students, and much closer agreement with students in Britain than with students in China. The reason might be because



of the greater experience of the students in Britain with western culture and the English language.

In conclusion, there are many similar opinions expressed by teachers and students. This implies consistency between the two groups and indicates that points raised by the research are generally accepted. These points are used to extend the teaching/learning model for reading established in Chapter 6.

Table 8.1 Teachers' and students' opinions about reading in English in China

Variables	Gps	Cases	Missing	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%	Mean	Std ID	2-tailed P within Gps	Sig	2-tailed P between Gps	Sig
Textbook limits idea of teaching (q1)	T=114	115	1	5.3	34.2	28.1	28.9	3.5	2.912	.992	.0000	***		
Pair/group work problematic (q2)	T=115	115	0	1.7	64.3	20.9	10.4	2.6	2.478	.809	.0000	***		
Training in teaching reading strategies is rare (q3)	T=115	115	0	7.0	46.1	24.3	18.3	4.3	2.670	.998	.0000	***		
Authentic Eng. Books are limited (q4)	T=115	115	0	25.2	37.4	26.1	10.4	0.9	2.243	.979	.0000	***		
Books about reading strategies are scarce (q5)	T=115	115	0	15.7	60.0	18.3	5.2	0.9	2.157	.779	.0000	***		
Emphasis on building up Ss' confidence in guessing skills (q6)	T=114	115	1	7.9	48.2	23.7	20.2	0	2.561	.903	T= .0000	***	1) .0062	**
	S1=201	201	0	17.9	51.2	16.4	12.9	1.5	2.289	.957	S1= .0000	***	2) .0207	*
	S2=98	100	2	16.3	50.0	25.5	7.1	1.0	2.265	.859	S2= .0000	***	3) .7668	
Emphasis on use of contextual clues to meaning (q7)	T=114	115	1	16.7	64.0	14.0	4.4	0.9	2.088	.747	.2060			
Need to treat a reading text as meaning first, syntax second (q8)	T=114	115	1	15.8	71.1	5.3	7.9	0	2.053	.727	T= .0000	***	1) .0991	
	S1=201	201	0	17.4	55.7	14.4	10.9	1.5	2.234	.917	S1= .0000	***	2) .9270	
	S2=98	100	2	17.3	68.4	7.1	7.1	0	2.041	.731	S2= .0000	***	3) .1021	
Focus on strategies than on language forms (q9)	T=114	115	1	37.7	49.1	7.9	5.3	0	1.807	.797	T= .0000	***	1) .7705	
	S1=201	201	0	39.3	48.3	7.5	4.5	0.5	1.786	.806	S1= .0000	***	2) .2715	
	S2=98	100	2	48.0	36.7	13.3	1.0	1.0	1.704	.815	S2= .0056	**	3) .3797	
Increase cultural awareness (q10)	T=115	115	0	71.3	22.6	3.5	1.7	0.9	1.383	.720	T= .0001	***	1) .0000	***
	S1=201	201	0	29.4	51.2	13.9	4.5	1.0	1.965	.839	S1= .0000	***	2) .0000	***
	S2=97	100	3	38.1	50.5	10.3	0	1.0	1.753	.722	S2= .0472	*	3) .0407	*
Teacher training should be offered to all teachers (q11)	T=114	115	1	64.0	29.8	6.1	0	0	1.421	.608	T= .0000	***	1) .0000	***
	S1=201	201	0	30.8	39.8	22.4	7.0	0	2.055	.901	S1= .0000	***	2) .0074	**
	S2=98	100	2	45.9	43.9	4.1	6.1	0	1.704	.815	S2= .0000	***	3) .0009	***
Exams on skills and ability (q12)	T=115	115	0	60.0	32.2	5.2	0.9	1.7	1.522	.787	T= .0005	***	1) .0000	***
	S1=201	201	0	28.9	50.7	12.9	7.5	0	1.990	.848	S1= .0000	***	2) .0200	*
	S2=98	100	2	42.9	46.9	9.2	1.0	0	1.684	.683	S2= .0490	*	3) .0049	**
Improve learning facilities (q13)	T=115	115	0	61.7	33.9	4.3	0	0	1.426	.578	T= .0000	***	1) .0467	*
	S1=201	201	0	49.8	45.3	2.5	1.5	1.0	1.587	.710	S1= .0000	***	2) .3217	
	S2=98	100	2	56.1	35.7	8.2	0	0	1.520	.646	S2= .0000	***	3) .5092	

Keys: T = English teachers in China  
 S1 = students in China  
 S2 = Chinese students in UK  
 Gps = groups

SA = 1) strongly agree  
 A = 2) agree  
 U = 3) uncertain  
 D = 4) disagree  
 SD = 5) strongly disagree

1) = results of T and S1 \* significant at  $p \leq 0.05$   
 2) = results of T and S2 \*\* very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$   
 3) = results of S1 and S2 \*\*\* extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

## 8.4 Extension of the Teaching/Learning Model

The teaching/learning model established in Chapter 6 identifies the degree by which factors affect teaching/learning behaviour, indicating their inter-relationships. However, following the extended research, additional information emerged. This was used to create two extended models. Issues raised relating to teaching and learning that emerged from the extended research are discussed below.

### 8.4.1. Issues relating to teaching

The teaching part of the teaching/learning model (Diagram 6.1) is based on the various teaching factors reviewed by the research (i.e. university, age and qualifications), and reveals the degree by which these factors influence teachers' strategy use. This part of the research offers suggestions, explanations and solutions to the existing teaching problems. It identifies that the main issues to successful teaching are the quality of teachers, textbook design and the content of the Band Four Test.

#### 8.4.1.1 Continuing professional development

The interviews revealed that some of the teachers would be unable to use the proposed **TRSIA** because they do not know how. 43.5% of teachers (Table 7.1) thought that they were too used to traditional ways of teaching and did not wish to change because strategy skills are not tested in the Band Four Tests. It is clear, therefore, that much work needs to be done to ensure that teachers appreciate the need for change.

Courses should be available to teachers, in the form of either long or short-term in-service training with the aim of enlarging teachers' working knowledge by introducing them to new ideas of teaching pedagogy and new developments in the profession. The following are a few aspects that may help language teachers improve classroom teaching behaviour.

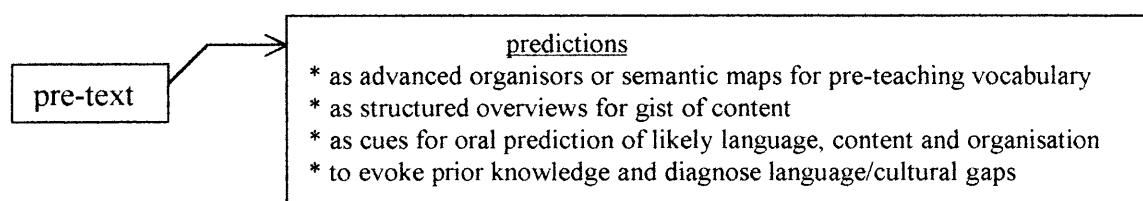
1) *Activating prior knowledge*

In teaching reading, activating prior knowledge is very important. Several classroom activities can be developed to facilitate the activation of prior knowledge, such as pre-reading discussions/activities (called ‘anticipated guides’ by Dubin and Bycina, 1991). In teaching reading comprehension, readers can be asked to identify what they do not comprehend and the classroom activities can then be organised to discuss their problems. Finally, students can be asked to summarise a reading passage. The purpose of this is to enable students to distinguish between different levels of importance in the text: main ideas, supporting ideas, and details. An effective summary demonstrates that readers can distinguish among these different levels and can place emphasis at the proper level (Anderson, 1994).

Cortazzi and Jin (1996c) use the now conventional terms of pre / in / post – text distinction to elaborate the functions of visuals for each type of reading activity.

Pre-text activities are mainly for predictions. See Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1 Pre-text reading activities



Cortazzi and Jin (1996c: p.75)

2) *Cultivating metacognitive cognitive and linguistic knowledge*

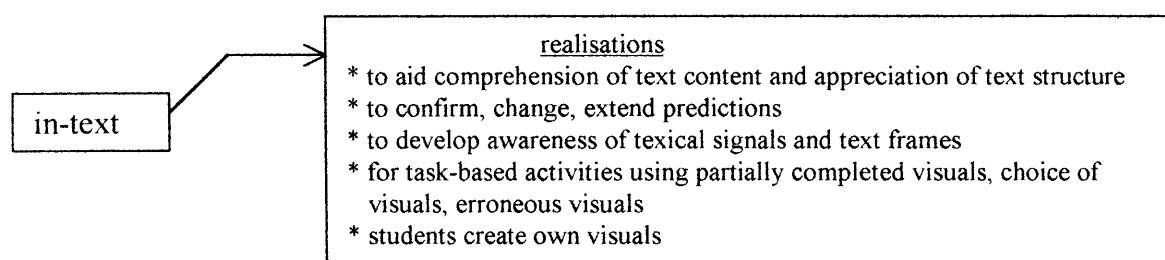
In during-reading activities, Winograd and Hare (1988) think that to allow readers to become more aware of what they actually do while reading is extremely beneficial. Therefore, the application of verbal reports to the L2 classroom provides an opportunity for teaching metacognitive awareness strategies in all language skills (Anderson, 1994).

Anderson (ibid: 187-188) cites 10 steps in adapting this research tool to the reading classroom (Davey, 1983; Irwin, 1991). They are summarised in this chapter to offer insights

for language teachers, showing them how to cultivate the metacognitive, cognitive and linguistic knowledge of their students by demonstrating the think-aloud procedure, encouraging students to verbally report as they read or others read, working in groups or alone for practice. By using this technique in reading classes, students can be taught how to become more aware of what they are doing while they are reading and to see what other readers do when they encounter difficulties. Many of the examples that students come up with, during their verbal reports in class, provide points of discussion about what good readers do when they read.

Cortazzi and Jin (1996c) emphasise that in-text activities, through linguistic and visual means, help students understand the reading, creating visuals from their reading. See Figure 8.2.

Figure 8.2 In-text reading activities

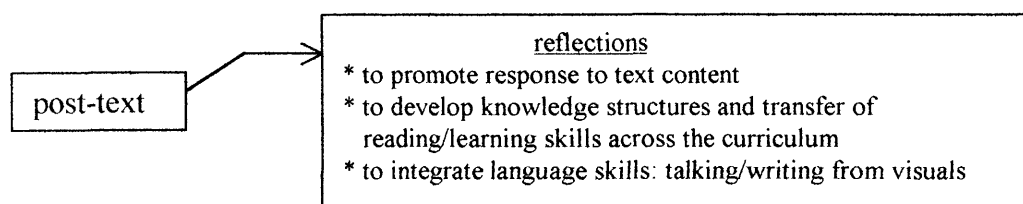


Cortazzi and Jin (1996c: p.75)

### 3) *Evaluating the reading knowledge*

Teachers should organise classroom activities in a manner that leads students to review learnt knowledge in order to consolidate it; for instance, by using post-reading activities. Cortazzi and Jin (1996c) describe the advantages such activities can bring to students. See Figure 8. 3.

Figure 8.3 Post-reading activities



Cortazzi and Jin (1996c: p. 75)

#### 4) *Increasing reading rate*

Weir (1983) shows that there has been evidence from survey data that L2 readers found particular difficulty in reading quickly and efficiently in the target language. It is recognised that explicit instruction in rapid reading is an area that is often neglected in the classroom. The consequence of such neglect and lack of teaching reading strategies results in the ‘vicious circle of the weak reader’ (Nuttall, 1982:167). Readers who do not understand often slow down their reading rate and then do not enjoy reading because it takes so much time. Therefore, they do not read much. This accords with student interviewee comments. Nuttall suggests getting the reader into the ‘virtuous circle of the good reader’. By reading faster, readers are encouraged to read more and, with more reading, their comprehension improves.

The two cycles described by Nuttall are similar to the dual reading cycle discussed in this chapter (see Diagram 8.2). Where Nuttall suggests that students should concentrate on the virtuous cycle of speed reading, the dual reading cycle given in this thesis suggests that the two reading cycles are inter-related, should be used concurrently. Grabe (1991: 378) states that ‘fluent reading has to be rapid; the reader needs to maintain the flow of information at a sufficient rate to make connections and inferences vital to comprehension’.

Anderson (1994) proposes four reading rate activities to increase students reading speed:

- (1) *Rate buildup reading*. Students are given 60 seconds to read as much material as they can and this is repeated to build up their reading speed.
- (2) *Repeated reading*. Students read a short passage over and over again until they achieve criterion levels of reading rate and comprehension.

- (3) *Class paced reading*. The activity depends on achieving a minimal reading rate and determining how much material is read to meet the given criterion.
- (4) *Self-paced reading*. Similarly, during another reading rate activity the students determine their own reading rate goal and how much material needs to be read in a 60 seconds period to meet their objective.

Additional activities can be reading passages with multiple choice comprehension questions. Students can be encouraged during these readings to work towards reading at 200 words per minute with at least 70% comprehension, in accordance with Band Four requirements. As discussed earlier, ‘good L2 reading is characterised by fast automatic word processing’. During some rate building exercises, teachers may need to emphasise reading rate over reading comprehension.

The practice strategies for reading mentioned in Q2 are a guide to the kinds of materials students should read in their leisure time to automaticise their word recognition, familiarise sentence structures and gain reading speed.

5) *Promoting teaching reading strategies*

It is suggested that reading strategies are the ways of achieving reading speed. The role of ‘teacher explanation’ is an integral part of success in learning how to verify strategy use. Winograd and Hare (1988) propose five elements that should be included in teacher explanations about strategy use: what the strategy is, why it should be learned, how to use it, when and where it is to be used and how to evaluate its use.

A cognitive understanding of what should be done is not enough to guarantee success while reading. The reader must also understand how to apply the use of a given strategy (cited in Anderson, 1994). Refer to the materials workshop in Chapter 7 for the application of individual strategies.

6) *Other relevant aspects*

Other aspects like cultural knowledge and the psychology of learning should also be included. Cultural knowledge can fill teachers' possible lack of background knowledge, and enable them to introduce more cultural knowledge to their students. The psychology of learning allows teachers to know their students better and helps confidence building.

The English teacher-training courses that are currently held at Chinese universities are mainly the Advanced Teacher Training Course sponsored by the British Council and other one-year courses. More such courses are needed, even if they are simply short vacation courses. Another possibility is to ask foreign teachers working at Chinese universities to offer regular weekly-based sessions on methodology, so that Chinese English teachers can be offered the chance to improve their English. English teachers are also advised to continue self-study and self-improvement.

8.4.1.2 Teaching materials

**TRISA**, as demonstrated by the materials workshop, might be circulated and appropriate textbooks and Teachers' Manuals produced, focusing on teaching strategies. These should be based on features drawn from the 'Requirements for selecting texts for AERT' (Urquhart and Weir, 1998), enabling examinations to test what is learnt.

The number of authentic English books is currently limited in China. In order to improve the quality of teaching and the performance of students, learning conditions have to be improved and suitable resources (English books, newspapers, magazines and videos) made available.

8.4.1.3 Band Four Test

The fact that strategies are not tested in Band Four tests is one reason given by teachers for not teaching the strategies (16.5 % of teachers, Table 7.1). Band Four tests can influence teaching/learning because the pass rate is used to evaluate the proficiency of students and,



effectively, to vicariously evaluate the professional success of their teachers. Chinese students (22.6% in China, 35.1% in Britain, Table 7.3) hold similar views. The research shows that respondents realise how useful and helpful strategies can be and how testing strategies in Band Four tests can improve the teaching/learning process. Examinations should test students' language ability and skills rather than merely the language form itself. This is strongly advocated by teachers and might soon be possible based on the requirements for selecting texts for AERT, which, although still in its early stage, has already been designed (Urquhart and Weir, 1998).

#### 8.4.1.4 A proposed teaching model of reading in English

This section describes the extension to the teaching/learning model of reading in English formulated at the end of Part II of the thesis. It is hoped that this extension will suggest solutions to existing English reading problems in China. The proposed teaching model formulated from results of the interview data previously described, indicates the aspects that affect teaching English reading in China and therefore, identifies important activities that can influence teaching efficiency.

In particular, it shows **TRSIA** as the central focus. Once the strategy skills are taught and tested, teachers and students will pay more attention to them. A snowball effect might emerge, enabling teachers and students to become increasingly competent in teaching/using reading strategies. See Diagram 8.1 for the proposed teaching model.

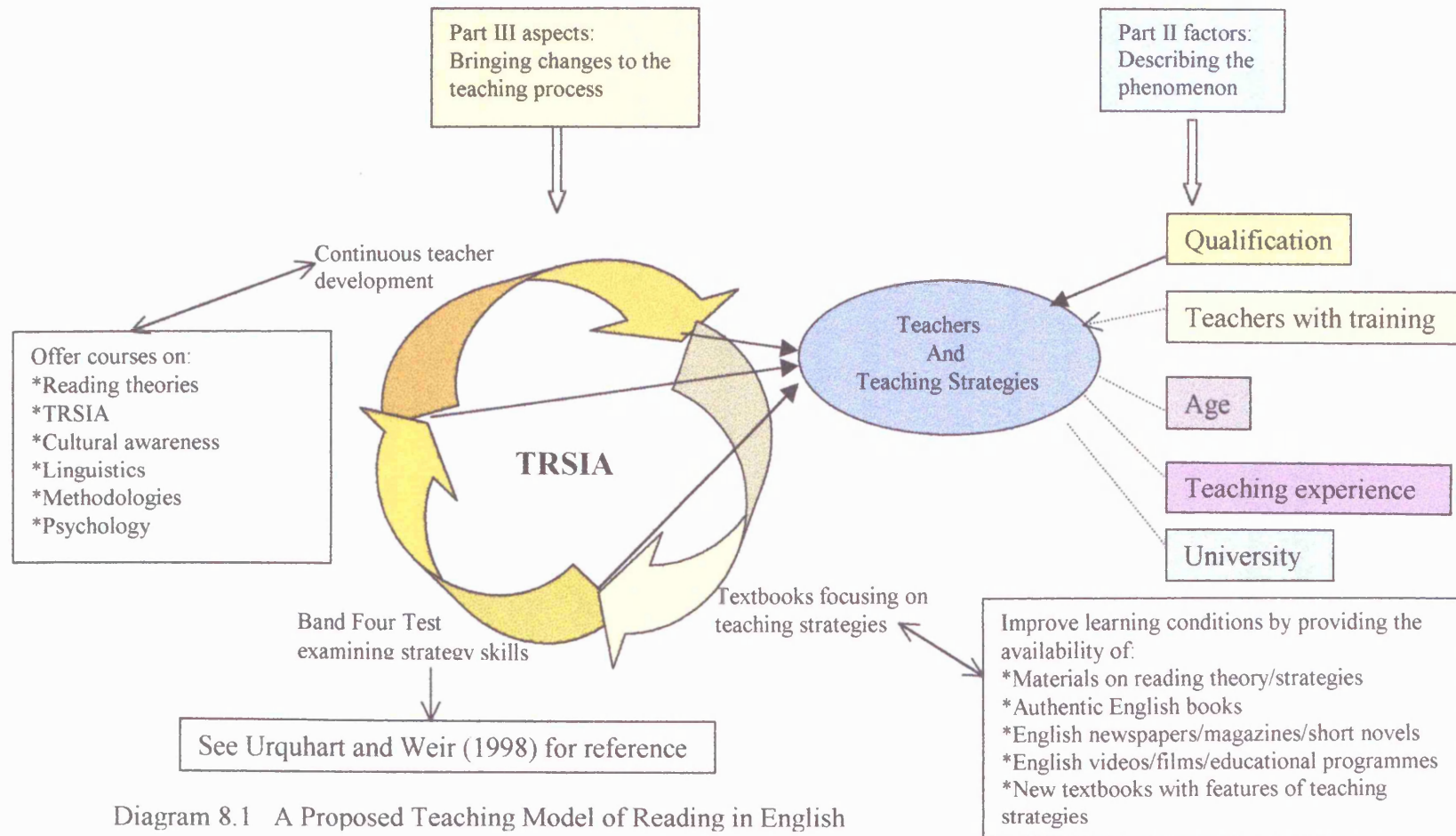


Diagram 8.1 A Proposed Teaching Model of Reading in English

### 8.4.2 Issues related to learning reading

The experiences of Chinese students in Britain on how to master English might serve as a guide to direct students learning English reading in China. The major results from the student interviewees can be summarised as: mastery of strategies; improving reading speed and comprehension; avoidance of frustration and retention of interest and motivation.

#### 8.4.2.1 Mastery of the strategies

The strategies mentioned in Q2 are helpful tools in solving reading difficulties. As interviewee S2 said, students should be encouraged to keep trying the strategies until they become second nature, since, only then can one be said to have fully mastered them.

#### 8.4.2.2 Improving reading speed and comprehension

Reading speed and comprehension are two inseparable key factors that apply to reading. To gain both reading speed and comprehension, students are advised to apply the strategies to their reading and to try to enlarge their vocabulary by using the strategies or techniques introduced in the questionnaires. They should then continually practise their reading through extensive reading, preferably of publications written by native speakers.

In addition, students should also learn how to tackle unknown words. The interview research shows that interviewees believe that they should: ignore unknown words until they have appeared several times, or until comprehension has broken down; guess the unknown words by using all the clues possible and activate the subject knowledge for better understanding of the text.

In agreement with the interviewees, students should combine intensive and extensive reading and endeavour to achieve a centrifugal practice cycle (as presented in this chapter) by reading as much as possible.

#### 8.4.2.3 Avoidance of frustration

The above has summarised interviewees' ideas about techniques of how to master the strategies and how to improve reading speed and comprehension. It is believed that students can easily get frustrated when encountering difficulties. As one of the interviewees suggested, teachers should try to foster students' reading interest and students should also try to do this for themselves. This is particularly crucial when starting to read. Reading strategies help students tackle difficulties, making reading easier and enabling students to enjoy and gain more information from their reading.

#### 8.4.2.4 A dual reading cycle

Having analysed the data on learning reading strategies, including the learning approaches of the Chinese student interviewees in Britain, and having compared the results with the existing typical Chinese way of reading, two reading cycle patterns emerged. These two reading cycles demonstrate how Chinese students should utilise reading strategies such as browse reading, reading in blocks, reading for global understanding and reading for main ideas to gain better and quicker comprehension of the text and faster reading speed. Although it promotes increasing reading speed for Chinese students, it also indicates how they can use strategies such as reading for details to enable them to read carefully and gain full comprehension.

##### *Centripetal reading cycle*

The first is the reading cycle, which is typical to Chinese students, called the '*centripetal reading cycle*'. It is more lexico-grammar focused. Students concentrate on each individual word and sentence. The main ideas and discourse level of understanding are often ignored.

This type of centripetal reading cycle is much like intensive reading and includes the scrutiny of every single word and sentence. The point is not that intensive reading is not inappropriate and should not be used at all. It is how it is used in China that matters. It should not be seen

as an exclusive approach as so often occurs in Chinese classrooms and the reading should focus on more than just vocabulary and grammar.

The features of centripetal reading are:

- 1) The reader starts with an interest to read an article, but is stopped by encountering an unknown word.
- 2) In his second phase of reading, another new word appears.
- 3) The reader stops to look it up in the dictionary and checks the meaning of it before carrying on. The cycle continues. Soon the reader becomes bored. Although the reader reads on, he gradually loses interest and eventually gives up.

#### *Centrifugal reading cycle*

The second proposed reading cycle is called the '*centrifugal reading cycle*'. It is very much like extensive reading. It uses reading strategies and broadens schema development.

The features of centrifugal reading are:

- 1) The reader starts with an interest to read an article, meets an unknown word, guesses its meaning by any means possible. The reader carries on reading for main ideas, ignoring unimportant new words so long as the communication is not broken down and the general idea remains clear.
- 2) The reader reads with interest and reads for understanding by applying a wide range of strategies. Unknown words are ignored or, if absolutely necessary, checked. More reading is achieved within a shorter period of time compared to the '*centripetal reading cycle*'.
- 3) Reading using the centrifugal cycle is not just a question of gathering a collection of new words, but promotes reading for information, reading for knowledge and reading for enjoyment.
- 4) The more interest one has in reading, the more one wants to read. The more one reads, the more chance one has to practise all the strategies. The more knowledge one gains through reading, the more one can build the schemata framework at the back of one's mind. The more knowledge one has, the fewer difficulties with background information one will have and the easier it is to understand the text. Once one finds reading enjoyable and not

difficult, one will read a lot more. With enhanced reading strategies, an enlarged knowledge about the world is achieved and reading speed and comprehension improve naturally.

### *Interrelationship*

The two reading cycles are not separable. Just as intensive and extensive reading cannot be explicitly distinguished from one another. The duality of the model stresses how the two cycles compliment and inter-relate to each other. It is important for the teacher or learner to judge the type and the purpose of the reading to decide which reading cycle is appropriate to either the whole text, or certain parts of the text. Centripetal reading is for in-depth reading, digesting the meaning of each word, while centrifugal is more for a broad understanding of the text, to gather a large amount of information quickly. A diagram of the dual reading model is shown in Diagram 8.2

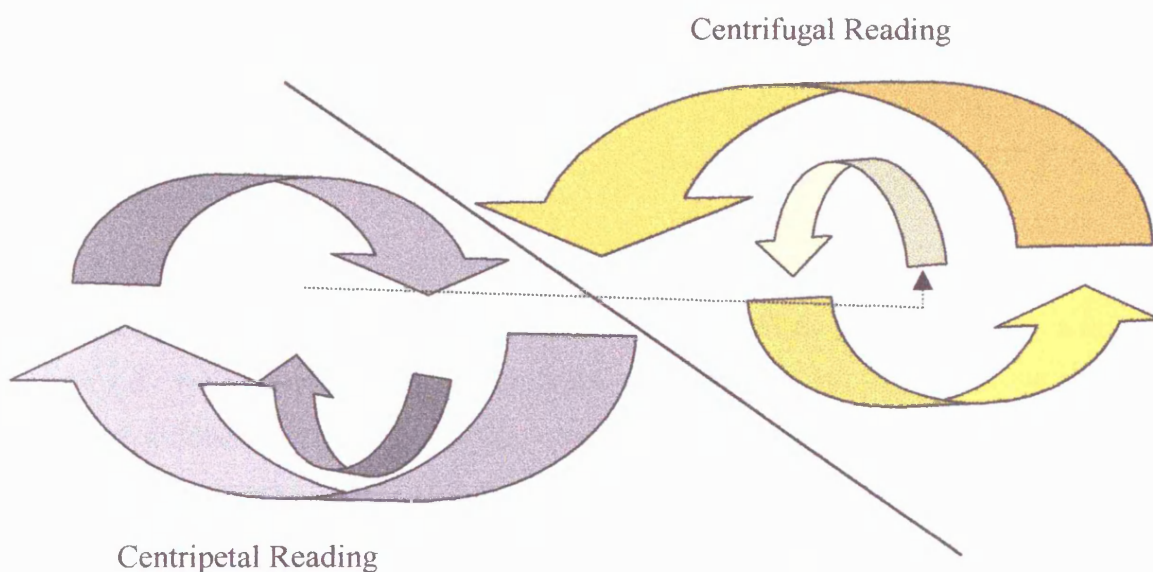


Diagram 8.2 A Dual Reading Cycle Model

## 8.5 Conclusion

The interview research reveals that both teachers and students think that reading is very important and that the most difficult problems encountered by teachers and students are vocabulary and prior knowledge. It has broadened the study from simply recognising the factors that influence teaching behaviour to knowing how to bring improvements to teaching. The dual reading cycle contrasts the types and purposes of reading and the advantages and disadvantages of each type so that students can choose the right type of reading cycle according to their purpose, and can systematically relate one cycle to another.

In general, the respondents think that the questionnaires are carefully designed and useful. They like the strategies and **TRSIA** shown in the materials workshop. Part III of the thesis yielded valuable results, which suggest solutions to existing teaching/learning problems and extends the teaching/learning model of English reading. The proposed model of English reading indicates the steps that should be emphasised to improve existing teaching methods and conditions. The dual reading cycle distinguishes clearly the functions and purposes related to each type of reading, directing students to select an appropriate cycle to apply. The two extended models are intended to suggest a way forward for ELT in China.

To conclude, the further research described within this chapter provided much valuable information. This information is reviewed within the next chapter to provide conclusions regarding the learning process related to reading and consolidate results determined from this study. The following chapter concludes the research, and, although it is intended to show the importance of reading strategies within the learning process, it can only be viewed as providing a starting point for recommended further research into Chinese ELT.

## Chapter Nine

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTED FUTURE RESEARCH

#### 9.0 Introduction

The previous chapters described the reasons for this study, the research methodology and the data analysis. Models were produced to consolidate and summarise results and to show the relationship between factors affecting English reading, the use of strategies and students' performance. This chapter summarises the research as a whole, indicating limitations encountered and suggesting recommendations for future research.

The aim of the study was to show ways of improving Chinese teachers' and students' efficiency in teaching/learning English reading by determining their perceptions on their use of strategies in order to suggest ways of overcoming existing teaching/learning deficiencies through an increased use of applicable strategies. Although it is accepted that what teachers and students perceive may not be the actual situation (as observed in classrooms), it is nevertheless essential to understand such perceptions, since any new proposals or introduction of new procedures must take these perceptions into consideration.

#### 9.1 Research Summary

The study began by reviewing existing literature on teaching, learning and reading in ELT to ascertain theories and ideas that best apply to China. Applicable reading strategies, mainly taken from Grellet (1981), Nuttall (1982) were adapted into Oxford's model (1990) and consolidated into a **theoretical model**, on which a questionnaire survey was based. The model, which represents an ideal teaching/learning situation, can be used as a guide to show what teachers/students are supposed to do in English reading classes.



In order to make the research more meaningful, a materials workshop to demonstrate **Teaching Reading Strategies in an Interactive Approach (TRSIA)** was established to show how applicable strategies could be taught in practice. Finally, follow-up questionnaires and interviews were used to supplement results and provide further insight into teachers' and students' opinions about the use of strategies and the benefits of this research.

### 9.1.1 Research Models

Following the data analysis, a teaching/learning model was derived from the theoretical model to address the perceptions of Chinese teachers' and students' reading strategy use. This does not mean, however, that the theoretical model no longer applies. It still provides valuable information on the broad variety of strategies that teachers should, ideally, endeavour to teach. The teaching/learning model offers a different perspective by providing teachers and educational authorities with information on the relationship of the strategies, factors and variables with teaching and learning English reading in China and their possible effect on students' performance. Based on the teaching/learning model and the qualitative interview research, a proposed teaching model and a dual reading cycle were also produced. The proposed teaching model suggests ways of improving ELT in China through **TRSIA** and the dual reading cycle indicates the two different types of reading that students may perform. The teaching/learning model (Section 6.5), the proposed teaching model (Section 8.4.1) and the dual reading cycle (Section 8.4.2) represent major results of the study and are described briefly below:

The **Teaching/Learning Model** (Chapter 6) reflects the relationship between teaching and learning reading and identifies the degree by which factors and strategies influence behaviour, suggesting that teachers' qualifications and students' use of strategies and learning attitude/motivation affect students' performance. The model indicates that without proper teaching, it is difficult for students to master the use of strategies. The model shows strategies used by teachers, by students and by both parties, indicating the strategies that teachers say they use, but that do not appear to be used to the same extent by students. All the strategies,

but especially those used significantly less by students, should be reviewed and taught in a way that will enable students to fully master them.

The **Proposed Teaching Model** ascertains what measures should be taken to improve strategy teaching (such as pre-reading, in-reading and post-reading and the 10 steps mentioned in Chapter 8). It also suggests ways to improve the quality of teaching by focusing on TRSIA with improvements on teacher training programmes, designing new textbooks that emphasise how to teach strategies and modifying Band Four tests to include reading strategies.

The **Dual Reading Cycle** (Chapter 8) describes a centripetal and centrifugal dual inter-related reading cycle to distinguish how, depending on the reading purpose, readers may switch from one cycle to another (for intensive and extensive reading) to improve their ability and increase their reading speed and comprehension.

#### 9.1.2 Demonstration of **TRSIA**

The gap between the teachers' perceptions of reading strategies taught and the students' perceptions of reading strategies learnt is shown by data analysis as being extremely significant (Tables 5.3b). This implies the need to more effectively teach strategies in Chinese universities. In order to encompass and combine current interactive methods of teaching strategies with recognised and accepted Chinese eclectic teaching methods **TRSIA** was proposed.

The suggested **TRSIA** was demonstrated by use of a materials workshop (Chapter 7), which attempts to show how nearly all the strategies defined in this study can be taught using a text taken from a textbook that is currently widely used in China. **TRSIA** is not considered an ideal example of a strategy approach to approach a class reading text. Rather it illustrates, in a fairly conservative manner, some possible approaches, which are thought to fit the present Chinese context. The generally positive responses to the workshop indicate that the

approaches demonstrated do, in fact, seem to meet at least some of the needs for a broader, more informed approach in Chinese universities.

## 9.2 Review of Research Hypotheses

There is evidence that, in China, conceptions of learning are largely dependent on teaching (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996; Jin and Cortazzi, 1998). This assumption may, however, seem at variance with current learner-centred approaches (Nunan, 1988). Yet in China where a more learner-centred approach is adopted, this seems to be on the basis of teachers providing learner training, which can be called a learning-trained approach (Jin and Cortazzi, 1998) and be considered teacher-dependent.

In order to make students teacher-independent, students can be taught to develop strategy skills that enable them to improve their reading on their own. The way to ascertain whether students have mastered strategies is to determine whether they use them to the level taught by their teachers. This suggests the general research hypothesis that **‘There will be a difference between teachers and students in their self-perceived use of strategies if the strategies are not taught properly’**. Results of the data analysis **support** this hypothesis and indicate a large gap between teachers’ and students’ perceptions of their claimed strategy use (Tables 5.3, 5.3a and 5.3b). Perhaps there is always such a gap in language teaching, as indicated by the popularised conception of comprehensible input ( $i+1$ ) of Krashen (1982, 1985) and the increasingly recognised zone of proximal development (Vygotsky 1978, 1986). However, the present results indicate such a large gap that, if subjects’ claims are accurate, the teaching of strategies in Chinese reading classrooms is substantially outside such a zone, or incomprehensible, in Vygotsky and Krashen’s terms.

In order to diagnose what causes this gap and determine what affects teachers’ and students’ behaviour in their use of strategies, specific research hypotheses were formulated (ref: Chapter 4). The results obtained are:

*For Teaching:*

- 1) Chinese English teachers tend to use the same teaching approach and similar strategies.  
This was found for the four universities in different provinces surveyed (Tables 5.12 and 5.13).
- 2) Higher qualified teachers will teach more strategies (Tables 5.1 and 5.7).
- 3) Teachers with further training claim to teach more strategies (Table 5.7).
- 4) Older teachers will teach more strategies was not supported (Tables 5.8 and 6.3).
- 5) Teachers with longer teaching experience will teach more strategies was not supported (Tables 5.10 and 6.4).

These results imply that teachers' ability to teach strategies depends largely on their qualification or more accurately on their knowledge. Therefore, in order to increase the level of teaching English reading in China, teachers' strategy knowledge must first be improved.

*For learning*

- 1) Students who use more strategies will perform better (Table 5.20).
- 2) Students who have a better learning attitude/motivation, who study hard, who are active in class, who have a higher self-assessment of their general English learning and who practise a lot will perform better (Tables 5.20).
- 3) The independent factors (university, age, gender and academic year) have no significant effect on students' perceived use of strategies (Table 5.16).

In particular, the above results very significantly tend to confirm that **the more strategies students use, the better they perform and the higher scores they can achieve in exams.** The corollary – that success in exams leads to greater strategy awareness and use – also seems likely, since it is accepted that a higher ability in learning English (resulting in higher exam scores) leads to greater strategy use. It is thought, therefore, that better use of strategies leads to a self-perpetuating cycle that continually helps students improve their performance.

The comparative analysis of the two groups of Chinese students (students in China and in Britain) indicates that students in China claim to use far less strategies, particularly practice, social, metacognitive and reading strategies (Table 5.6).

This suggests that students in China especially need to improve their:

- reading practice;
- use of English in a social environment;
- application of metacognitive strategies; and
- general use of reading strategies.

The significant difference encountered by the two groups with reference to social and practice strategies suggests that language learning is different from learning other subjects (Table 5.6). **It needs to be practised.** Students should use the target language in real life to help them improve and master it, as evidenced by successful Thai students (Wongbiasaj and Chaikitmongkol, 1995).

The difference in strategy use and apparent lack of practice differentiate the two groups of students. The fact that use and practice is important is due to the very nature of reading. Reading is a complicated act, which involves word perception, comprehension of stated and implied meanings, critical and emotional reaction, and application of perceived ideas to behaviour. To practise the language is a kind of application of perceived knowledge and ideas, but practice is arguably most effective in social interaction. Therefore, to use it in social life is to assist learning, assimilating the learnt knowledge through application. The more students use the language, the more able they are to operate the language; the more rehearsal they have, the more consolidated is their ability. Therefore, the more co-ordinated use of the different parts of the language they will achieve, such as selection of vocabulary, grammar tenses and ideas conveyed in the sentence. This attitude and idea of teaching/learning is fundamental in Vygotskian approaches to learning: that knowledge and concepts are constructed in the mind of the learner in a social or cultural context (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986 and 1987).

### 9.3 Idea of Linking and the Model of Spiral Learning in Reading

In order to identify the manner in which reading strategies should be taught within the suggested **TRSIA**, the idea of linking was developed. Within this approach, the strategies were categorised under metacognitive, acquisition and retention strategies according to their function in the learning process and a formula was derived to suggest how students learn reading and what steps teachers should take to optimise the classroom learning activity. In addition, a spiral learning reading model was developed to expand on the categorisation and indicate at which student level of learning the strategies apply. This model describes five levels of learning and shows the manner in which students can learn by using basic to advanced reading strategies as their knowledge expands. Within this study, the strategies could not, however, be specifically placed into the various categories or levels of learning, as this would require extensive further research. The study does, however, suggest possible ways of categorisation that could be used for such research.

#### 9.3.1 Idea of linking

The results of the study tend to the speculation that the kernel of the learning reading process appears to be **an act of linking**:

- 1) Linking words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs and paragraphs into texts.
- 2) Linking what is written with what is implied to get an idea or gist of the meaning of the text.
- 3) Linking what one is reading with either personal judgement or social experience to help process, or assimilate new words and new information.
- 4) Linking what one is learning/reading with what one has already known in the subject area for better understanding.
- 5) Linking ideas, knowledge and experiences together to create a higher level of understanding, that links knowledge/theory with practice.
- 6) Linking all the above elements with each other in a classroom context of social interaction.

The significant feature of linking in learning reading strategies was revealed in Chapter 5, which discussed the extremely significant differences encountered in the use of strategies between the two groups of Chinese students.

### 9.3.2 Spiral learning model in reading

The **Spiral Learning Model** (Diagram 9.1) demonstrates the way that learning reading is perceived to increase, through inter-linked spiral loops, representing five reading levels, from basic to advanced, by continuous acquisition and loss of retained knowledge.

Students first start by attaining a basic knowledge and then, as they progress, move on to attain more advanced knowledge. As their knowledge increases they become better able to use more advanced strategies. In other words, although most students can usually use basic strategies, only the more advanced, better or more successful students are able to use advanced strategies (Wongbiasaj and Chaikitmongkol, 1995).

The model of spiral learning can be contrasted to:

1. Bloom's taxonomy on 'cognitive goals' of education (Bloom et al., 1956), which suggests a pyramid of six levels of knowledge acquisition.
2. Krashen's  $i+1$  formula (Krashen, 1985), which suggests that as students gain more knowledge they become better able to progress to the next level of knowledge acquisition if the next knowledge level is not too far ahead of the present level. This is similar to Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (1978).
3. Tonjes' and Zintz' (1981) cognitive levels of thinking in comprehending texts.

**Learning is a natural process of progression and regression.** It is generally known that most learners are continually gaining knowledge, while, at same time losing some of their previously learnt knowledge. This may become apparent under conditions of stress or testing (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988). This loss and increase of knowledge is aptly demonstrated by the spiral loops which are continually going backwards and then moving forward to create larger loops as learners attain greater knowledge. The spiral as a model, therefore, provides a

good representation of the learning cycle, not only showing the various levels of reading/learning, but also the way learners increase their knowledge base.

In order to demonstrate the continual increase and loss of knowledge, the following formulae are proposed:

$$K_n = K_{n-1} + A_n - L_n \quad \text{or more generally:} \quad K = \sum A_n - \sum L_n$$

where  $K_n$  = Current knowledge;  $K_{n-1}$  = previous knowledge;

$A_n$  = Acquired Knowledge;  $L_n$  = Lost Knowledge

These formulae suggest that successful teaching should maximise knowledge acquisition  $A_n$ , while, at the same time minimising loss of retained knowledge  $L_n$ . An appreciation of the formula can, therefore, assist classroom teaching and the application of appropriate strategies. Strategies can be categorised as helping the retention of knowledge, the acquisition of new knowledge or both retention and acquisition and can be taught accordingly.

In particular, the suggested spiral learning model offers five reading/learning levels, with basic/advanced strategies included at each level. These levels are compared below to the six levels given by Bloom's taxonomy (1956) and the four levels given by Tonjes and Zintz (1981).

Students start at a basic literal level, learning facts as they are met. As students progress, they become more able to derive implied meaning from the knowledge gained, then to relate it to social experience and personal judgement/criteria. As they become more advanced, they are able to start analysing and synthesising the knowledge they have attained and finally to evaluate it in an academic way and to use the knowledge creatively.

Tonjes and Zintz (1981) conceive literal level skills as reading *on* the lines; higher level comprehension means reading *between* the lines, going beyond what is stated, making inferences, applying information, analysing, synthesising, and evaluating what is read. Where reading strategies are concerned, basic simple strategies (Appendix J) should be first taught at



an earlier stage, and more advanced strategies should then be introduced gradually as students' level gets higher. But repeated demonstration of both basic and advanced strategies is always necessary until students can master the strategies and use them automatically. However, it should be noted that basic strategies do not only apply at basic levels and advanced strategies do not only apply at advanced levels. Although fewer advanced strategies may apply at basic levels of reading, both types are interwoven within each learning level.

The learning/reading process is similar to the schemata in constant flux (Schank, 1982), that is each schema is used in processing but is also changed by processing. Each new experience creates a new combination through the bringing together of MOP (Memory Organisation Packages), but this very process creates new schemata which are then filed away under new MOPs (Cook, 1994). So connections, reading at higher levels and the use of advanced reading strategies provide the greatest potential for schema change.

The secret of successful teaching may be seen as maximising the factors and uses of strategies that improve students' performance and minimising those factors that hinder the learning process or allow students to forget previously learnt knowledge. The *learning/reading* and *practice* strategies considered in this study can be divided into three types: *acquisition* strategies, *retention* strategies and *metacognitive* strategies as shown in Diagram 9.1. *Acquisition strategies* are those that help students acquire new knowledge, overcome difficulties in reading and facilitate learning. *Retention strategies* are those that help students retain learnt knowledge, remember words, grammatical rules and vocabulary etc. *Metacognitive strategies* are those that help students be aware of what they are doing, organise themselves, arrange their learning and centre their attention. All three types of strategies apply to every level of the spiral learning reading model.

In the formula  $K_n = K_{n-1} + A_n - L_n$ , acquisition strategies will maximise  $A_n$ , retention strategies will minimise  $L_n$  and the metacognitive strategies will provide the environment for learning, affecting both  $A_n$  and  $L_n$ , therefore, maximising  $(A_n - L_n)$ . If students are good at all strategies then  $K_n$ , the current knowledge base will be maximised, so will be the knowledge to be gained from each individual lesson.

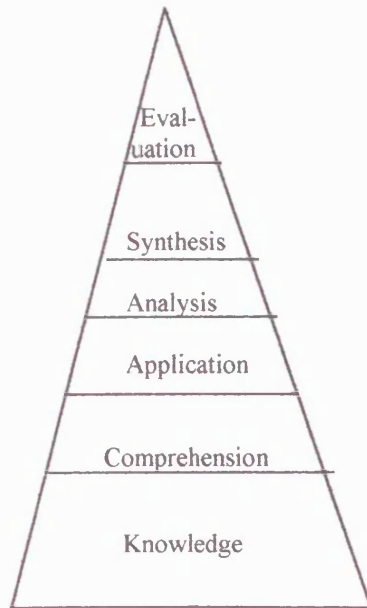


Figure 9.1  
Bloom's Taxonomy  
of cognitive goals (1956)

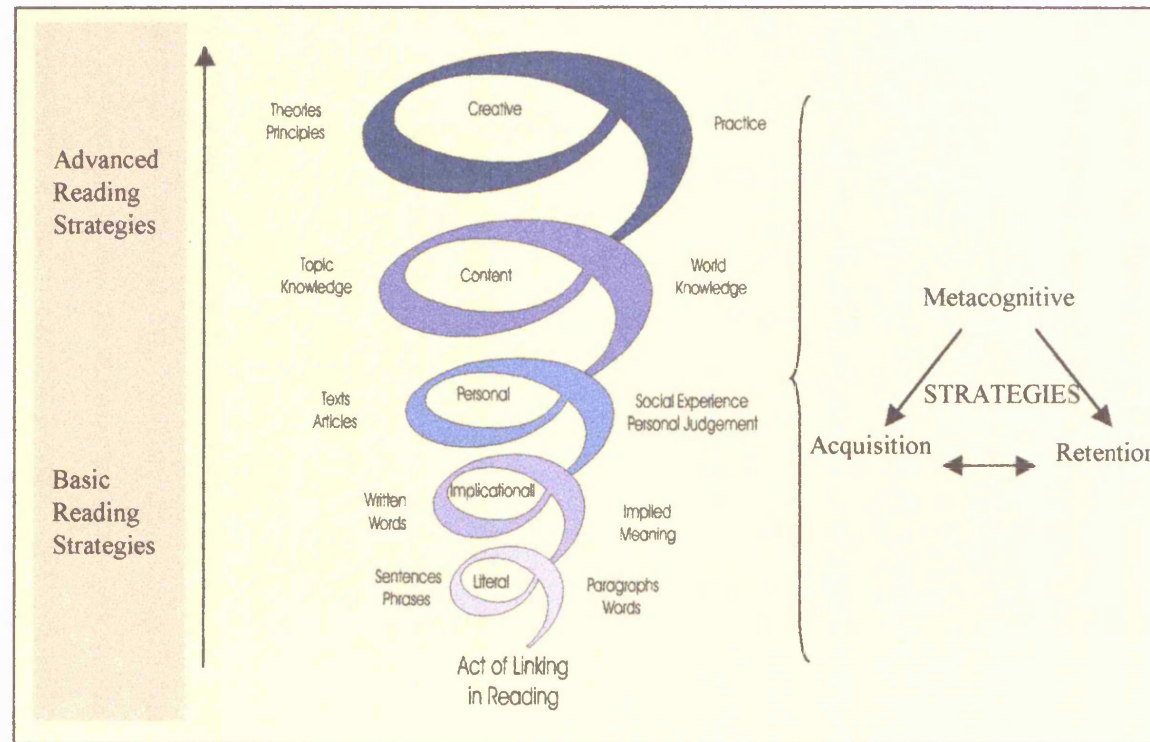


Diagram 9.1 A Spiral Learning Model in Reading

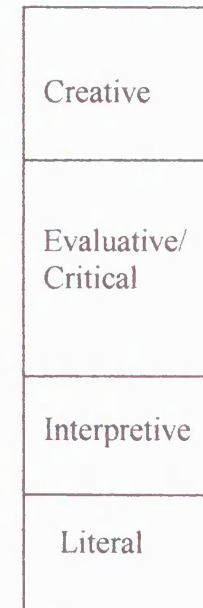


Figure 9.2  
Tonjes' and Zintz'  
Cognitive levels of  
Thinking (1981)

### 9.3.3 Acquisition, retention and metacognitive strategies

All the strategies considered in this research can be placed in one of the above categories. Most of the reading strategies mentioned in the questionnaires may be regarded as acquisition strategies. The retention strategies are mainly found within the vocabulary strategies, such as mental linkage, grouping, placing new words into context and so on. Social and practice strategies can also be regarded as retention strategies where they promote retention. Linking skills can be treated as both acquisition and retention strategies. The metacognitive strategies affect both acquisition and retention and are considered as operating at a higher level. These relate mainly to students' learning style, such as how they arrange and plan each lesson, assess and monitor their progress etc. See Appendix M for details of the three categories of strategies.

## 9.4 Implications of the Research

The implications resulting from this research are reviewed within this section under six headings:

1. Classroom teaching and learning.
2. Strategy levels.
3. Teacher training.
4. The national English textbooks.
5. Chinese educational policy of ELT.
6. ELT in non-English speaking countries.

### 9.4.1 Classroom teaching and learning

This research provided an idealised theoretical model of teaching/learning for reading English in Chinese classrooms. The relationships between teaching and learning were defined in Diagram 3.1, and supported in Diagram 6.1. The importance and effectiveness of teaching reading strategies is shown in Barnett (1988). This indicates that working with experimental readers (an experimental group receiving special reading training) had a continuing positive

effect on the students' reading skill. The problems in teaching and learning revealed by the data analysis imply that teaching the strategies, especially reading skills, must be strongly emphasised in the classrooms, and taught in an appropriate manner, as demonstrated by **TRSIA**, so that students can appreciate and use them more.

The significant differences found between the two groups of students in relation to their use of categorised strategies and variables indicate that both teachers and students should concentrate on training and practising strategies, particularly those that showed extreme differences. The supplementary analysis of Chinese students in England further revealed a priority for emphasising *practice* and *social* strategies to the Chinese group of students. The degree of significance on the categorised variables, such as learning attitude, motivation and students' self-assessment, indicates that teachers should not only focus on teaching the reading strategies, but should also concentrate on social interactive aspects: organising lessons, co-ordinating the class atmosphere, arousing and maintaining students' interest. Students should evaluate their own learning attitude and motivation and try to improve their use of strategies, particularly those in which they are weak.

This research underlines the importance of teachers within the Chinese educational system. The aim is, however, to create greater efficiency in both teaching and learning and, ultimately, improve the performance of Chinese students in English language reading.

#### 9.4.2 The school levels

This study focuses on tertiary level education. It does not mean, however, that **TRSIA** is not applicable to other educational levels of English teaching/learning. In fact, it is suggested that other educational levels could adopt the principal ideas by varying the strategies taught according to the particular educational level. It is likely that the earlier students are taught problem-solving skills, the better they will perform, the more strategies they will learn and the easier they will find English reading. Generally, the earlier such strategies are introduced, the better.

The curriculum for Chinese junior and senior students states two objectives: to help students establish good learning habits in order to build a solid foundation for further studies; to develop students' logic, memory and self-study skills. This implies that teaching strategies should start at an early stage of school education so as to enable students to form the suggested learning habits.

This picture is, however, more complex in so far as the foundation for reading strategies used by students at universities is likely to be laid at junior and senior middle school, with university level results being influenced by the students' previous educational level. However, this needs to be modified by a second consideration. Cortazzi and Jin (1996a) suggest that, for English vocabulary learning strategies, at least, the range of strategies broadens when Chinese students make the transition from senior middle school to university. These opposing considerations need to be reconciled.

The results of this research indicate that there is no significant difference in the use of strategies between high and low score students in their English entrance exams. This tends to agree with the findings of Cortazzi and Jin, although it is possible that the type of tests in senior middle school do not require a wide range of reading strategy skills. It must be borne in mind, however, that the research has repeatedly shown that the more reading strategies students claim to use, the better is their performance.

Teaching and testing reading strategies and learning skills should therefore start at an early stage of learning (say at junior middle school) and students should be taught step by step, gradually throughout their senior middle school and university education.

#### 9.4.3 Teacher training

Barnett (1988) states that in order to deliver the best teaching possible, we must train teaching assistants and student teachers as well as we realistically can. To implement **TRSIA** on a wider scale will require special attention to teacher training. The importance of teaching strategies should be emphasised and training should be oriented towards a more strategy-

based view of reading, particularly with regard to teaching problem-solving skills. What is important is to lay a strong foundation of basic understanding of such elements as: reading theories, L1 and L2 reading, reading strategies, interactive classroom teaching behaviour (such as pair or group work, use of diagrams, tables or charts, questions and answers) techniques for teaching vocabulary, grammar and discourse. Within this approach, the materials workshop may be potentially useful to help formulate an appropriate method for training teachers within either in-service or pre-service courses.

The training program should take into consideration the ideas of scaffolding and social interaction and should be considered a collaborative process in which the trainer provides needed information and demonstration at a level just beyond that of learners' current competence the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky 1978, 1986). With the help of relevant scaffolding, the trainer can extend the trainees' ability to the point of effectively handing over the training initiative to them and then simply monitoring their performance until full independence is reached. Even after independence, as Tharp and Gallimore (1988) show, there may be a need for assistance and intervention when trainees are under conditions of stress.

#### 9.4.4 The national English textbooks

The text used in the materials workshop is from a textbook that is widely used in China. Chinese teachers tend to rely on their textbooks and the Teacher's Manuals. Some of the interviewed teachers stated that they liked the workshop and **TRSIA**, but felt that they could not teach in this way because of their lack of knowledge. Interactive strategies are not, at present, emphasised in the teachers' books for College English and so, given the tendency among Chinese English teachers to follow textbooks (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a), it is not surprising that teachers currently do not use them and/or are unaware of them. If, however, strategy teaching is woven into each lesson in the textbook, the teacher will teach them naturally in the course of following the book. If textbooks were compiled with features of classroom activities and emphasised strategies, training students would be facilitated and students would be better able to use the strategies.

#### 9.4.5 The Chinese educational policy of ELT

The Chinese national educational policy for ELT currently places great emphasis on reading speed and comprehension (see the Syllabus in Chapter 1). It also stresses students' ability to recognise new words and the ability to guess unknown words. However, it ignores the broader range of guessing skills, strategies and techniques that will help realise the requirements set by the syllabus (NETS).

It is suggested that the present research may provide solutions to the above problems. The dual reading cycle indicates the steps students should take to increase their speed and comprehension, and when and why they should choose a particular reading cycle; the guessing skills/strategies are mentioned in the questionnaires and one way to teach them is demonstrated by the materials workshop. Furthermore, the study offers a wide range of learning/reading strategies, relationships, cycles and models that suggest possible ways of increasing learning efficiency, indicating how learning/reading variables/strategies influence performance.

However, developing new learning habits and promoting a natural use of successful learning strategies is not a short-term project. It requires time, effort and a well-arranged curriculum with proper teaching materials. Teaching the strategies that are suggested by the 'upward spiral' through the various strategy levels is the ultimate goal. This can only be achieved when a curriculum (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974) seriously considers including the necessary elements that call for such a goal to be implemented by the curriculum subscribers. Teachers, as subscribers, textbook designers and the decision-makers, should be able to interpret the 'hopes and wishes' of the curriculum in their classroom presentations. This can only be realised when a clear method or pedagogical system is outlined in line with the aims and objectives of the curriculum.

The study highlights some major problems in teaching ELT in China and has proposed **TRISA**. The basis for this approach is an eclectic method, which, it is believed, the majority

of the Chinese teachers use. It is hoped that the results of the study will raise the awareness of the Chinese educational authorities, enabling new policies to be introduced that promote the use of a broader range of strategies in reading English and improve teaching efficiency, helping Chinese students achieve the NETS requirements.

#### 9.4.6 Non-English speaking countries

This study also has important implications to other non-English speaking countries, since many similarities with China exist in those countries' requirements for ELT. The ideal theoretical model set up by this research (Chapter 3) might apply to other countries and may provide a guide to improving reading strategy use. The teaching and learning relationship, the factors and variables that influence teaching/learning, such as teacher's qualification, learning strategies, attitude, motivation revealed by this research might be considered as reference points.

The materials workshop (Chapter 7) may prove a useful guide to teaching students from other non-English speaking countries and, it is thought that the dual reading cycle (Chapter 8) would still remain valid, as representing the two types of reading that may be undertaken by English students. The principles revealed by the research, the teaching/learning model and the proposed teaching and reading models might act as references for foreign teachers/students, and might be considered when discussing ELT and developing school syllabuses by their educational authorities. The model of spiral learning in reading, the different levels of reading strategies and the idea of linking learning/reading are considered to be the kernel within the philosophy of English reading as a foreign language, guiding curriculum design, textbook compilation and day-to-day classroom teaching practices.

#### 9.5 Practicality of the Present Research

The present research has endeavoured to establish the most appropriate approach for ELT reading in China. It has identified some factors and aspects (i.e. qualifications, learning attitude and categorised strategies and variables) that affect the effective use of strategies,



indicating how to promote these factors and aspects. In addition, the research has defined **TRSIA** to meet the requirements set by the syllabus (NETS), has introduced a materials workshop to demonstrate a method of applying the approach in a practical way and has proposed a teaching model that may help teachers become competent in teaching strategies.

Because of the high demand for English, the Chinese government has targeted knowledge of English language as a strategic requirement to improve the status of China as a world economic centre. China has introduced a policy to increase the ability of teachers in order to improve students' performance in English. This research attempts to help meet this demand by identifying weaknesses in the present teaching methods for reading English and by suggesting ways in which these weaknesses may be overcome.

#### 9.6 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

In any study of this nature there are certain limitations which the researcher cannot entirely control. The difficulties experienced in the course of this study are even greater because of the researcher's inability to visit China. This precluded an in-depth study of actual classroom teaching, which could have enabled the researcher to gain first hand knowledge of English reading methods.

The problem of travel also hindered the fieldwork, preventing the researcher from monitoring and processing the distribution and return of questionnaires and the workshop, which had to be administered vicariously by post or through friends. Although, the help of these friends and relatives was very much appreciated, they could not be expected to pursue the respondents and record the full details needed for data analysis. As a result, many more questionnaires had to be distributed in order to obtain acceptable sample sizes for statistical analysis (Chapter 5). The following limitations are further constraints in this study.

### 9.6.1 Fieldwork and Classroom Observation

In the pilot study teachers and students in England commented and made a few suggestions about the questionnaires but, because of time constraints, the questionnaires were kept in their initial format.

Initially, the questionnaires were designed to compare answers received from teachers with those received from their respective students. However, because the researcher could not be present, matching questionnaires completed by teachers with those completed by their particular students became impossible. The answers to questions (q65-q76 in Q1) designed for teachers to comment on their students, and (q23a-q23k in Q2) to obtain students' assessment of their teachers could not be examined. Such an examination should, however, be carried out by future research.

Classroom observation is vital in revealing classroom teaching events relating to teaching/learning reading strategies. It can provide first-hand knowledge of existing problems and weaknesses, while, at the same time identifying particular advantages and disadvantages of current teaching methods in China. Regrettably, however, classroom observation was not possible in China. The researcher was only able to review an audio-visual video teaching programme as a background discussion to give some idea of teaching English in China (Chapter 1). The programme was not ideal, but it indicated the type and method of classroom English teaching in China and its limitations.

With reference to teachers' and students' strategy use, the present study could only rely on responses to a questionnaire survey. Although the results may truly reflect what teachers teach and what students use in reading, they may be biased, due to differences in understanding and to the manner in which respondents completed questionnaires. The present results are, therefore constrained, relying mainly on *perceptions* of strategy usage rather than on *practices*; depending on respondents' *claimed practices* rather than on *independently observed practices*. In order to ascertain actual observation rather than mere perceptions, a classroom study into the teaching of reading strategies is strongly recommended.

### 9.6.2 Materials workshop

Because of the researchers' inability to travel, instead of being performed on a face-to-face basis, the workshop had to be written and delivered by post. The researcher was, therefore, unable to personally demonstrate **TRSIA** and to monitor responses. The respondent teachers could only read the workshop as an example of what could be accomplished and, as a result, the workshop may be considered a vicarious materials workshop.

The inability to run the workshop on a face-to-face basis is viewed as a major limitation. However, the response to the materials workshop provides some indication of the benefits to be gained from the proposed method of teaching/learning strategies and of the likely response by teachers and students to a real workshop. It is hoped that future research might include a face-to-face workshop on **TRSIA**, which could then form part of a teacher-training course, among pre-service or in-service teachers.

### 9.6.3 Interview research

Because teachers and students in China were not available for interviews and the researcher was unable to travel to China, only respondent Chinese teachers and students living in Britain were interviewed and, as a result, the number of interviewees was admittedly small. Their interview responses relied heavily on their impressions and memories of past studies in China. It is clearly possible that such memories were influenced by time lapses between past events and present recall and by subsequent experiences in Britain, or even by the contextual factor that interviews were held in Britain, somewhat remotely from the location of their experiences. A significant advantage of using teachers and students in Britain for the interviews is, however, that their views and opinions reflect their studies abroad and, because the respondents were generally considered better English readers, provide an insight into their presumed better learning methods. Although the researcher was aware of the disadvantages, it is felt that the Chinese teachers and students were generally consistent in attitudes and responses to questions.

## 9.7 Areas of Recommended Future Research

Four areas of further research are recommended to promote the application of **TRSIA**: introduction of teacher training programmes, textbook evaluation and design and of English Band Four testing.

### 9.7.1 Longitudinal study

Some of the limitations might be overcome by a longitudinal study of in-service teachers and university students. A longitudinal study would allow the researcher to monitor the use of strategies between control and experimental groups by maintaining records of students' English entrance scores, term scores and end of year scores within the first two years of their university course (Band 1, 2, 3, and 4). The same questionnaire survey as used in this study could then be carried out twice on the same students, according to a pre and post study; at the beginning of the course, when students have just entered university and at the end of the course. Both the control and experimental groups would be asked to answer both SIFOR (the Strategies Inventory for Reading) and the questionnaires, although additional data may need to be obtained from students reaching the end of their course. A comparison of results could then be made. See Figure 9.4 below:

Figure 9.3 Proposed research design of a longitudinal study on SIFOR

CLASS 1 (CONTROL GROUP) TRADITIONAL							CLASS 2 (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP) TRSIA						
Ss	Entrance	Score1	Score2	Score3	Score4	Q Q1	Ss	Entrance	Score1	Score2	Score3	Score4	Q Q1
	Score							Score					
S1							S1						
S2							S2						
...							...						
Sn							Sn						

Keys: Ss = students      Scores1 - 4 = Band Four Tests 1 - 4

Q = questionnaire answered for the first time (when Ss have just entered the university)

Q1 = the same questionnaire answered for the second time (when Ss have finished the two-year course)

The comparison of results between Class 1 and Class 2 would establish whether different teaching approaches affect students' performance. Results could be compared to see whether

students use more strategies at the end of their course, and/or whether Class 2 students use more strategies than those of Class 1.

#### 9.7.2 Teacher training programmes

In order to modernise China, Deng called upon educators to devote their efforts to four main areas:

- 1) Raising the quality of education.
- 2) Restoring order and discipline in schools.
- 3) Reforming education to meet the needs of national economic development.
- 4) Raising the quality and status of teachers (Billie, 1984).

Since then, every measure has been geared towards raising the quality of education in terms of academic achievement. The importance of teachers is indicated by this research (Chapters 5 and 6) and the emphasis on ‘quality’ in education, therefore, implies that teachers have to be trained with necessary knowledge.

*In order to enhance the quality of teaching, it is recommended that special emphasis should be placed on teacher-training programmes, at all levels, but, particularly for those low quality teachers recruited as a result of the recent dramatic demand caused by the changing need and economic reform in China (Gu, 1981). A survey made by the Ministry of Education revealed that 60% of the nation’s secondary and primary school teachers need refresher courses (Billie, 1984). This indicates a special need to increase the percentages of qualified teachers in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools (ibid).*

To improve the quality of teaching, the quality of teacher training at each level should be improved with the more able students continuing to a higher level of teacher training. By increasing the quality of teacher training, teachers will gain more knowledge and will attain a higher level, creating better teachers who can provide better teaching to new trainees. This positive teaching cycle provides the way forward, towards a higher quality of teachers and teacher training in China.

With regard to English language reading education, it is recommended that the objectives should include:

- a) Providing trainees with the opportunity to examine and develop their awareness of teaching/learning processes, by reference to the proposed teaching model (Diagram 8.1 in Chapter 8).
- b) Equipping trainees with a fluent and responsive grasp of classroom skills and techniques, with emphasis on **TRSA**.
- c) Guiding trainees in changing their attitude to teaching by providing them with actual classroom examples of how to teach the strategies.

The above objectives should be targeted not only in formal pre-service teacher training, but also informal in-service training. This will help the development of a corps of highly qualified teachers, which is required to meet the need for educational development in China and the fulfilment of the four modernisations.

### 9.7.3 Textbook evaluation and design

This study did not evaluate existing Chinese English reading textbooks, but it is indicated that textbooks are the basic tools of both Chinese teachers and students. It is important, therefore, that future research should address this issue. Evaluation of existing textbooks is strongly recommended, in order to ascertain which reading strategies are included. When compiling new textbooks, the merits of the present textbooks should be retained and missing aspects, such as the requirements for teaching strategies, should be added, in accordance with any suggestions and requirements for new tests (ref: Urquhart and Weir, 1998).

In the present context, items relating to the availability of strategies, the approach of presenting the strategies and the types of comprehension questions (factual, literal, referral, inferring, analysing, synthesising and evaluative etc.) should be added. Comprehension questions should make students think, analyse, infer, deduce or use rationale to justify conclusions or answers (ref: comprehension questions in the materials workshop in Chapter

7). Only when the merits and weakness of the present textbooks are made clear can the directions and measures for future textbook compilation be taken. The central goal of successful teaching reading is to train students to use higher-order thinking skills to question, judge, comment and evaluate the reading as well as to put the theories and principles into practice.

#### 9.7.4 English Band Four testing

This section concentrates mainly on the reading parts of the Band Four Test. Band Four testing is different from placement testing, progress testing or proficiency testing, and is considered to be achievement testing. As discussed earlier, both teachers and students assess how well they have done according to the Band Four test results, which are used as the measurement of teaching/learning performance and criteria whether or not students graduate. It is a general requirement that Chinese graduates should pass at least four levels of the test and this test, therefore, indirectly dominates classroom teaching/learning.

The most recent development in testing Chinese University students' strategy skills is the newly designed requirements for selecting texts for AERT (Urquhart and Weir, 1998). Although it is not in full operation, it covers a variety of strategies and skills testing, involving careful and expeditious reading, bottom-up and top-down methods and macro structural and micro structural understanding. Although it is meant for third and fourth year university students, this research suggests that similar tests according to the students' level should be designed to enable teachers to emphasise relevant aspects in reading.

#### 9.8 Researcher's Commentary

Research is an on-going process in which answers found to questions often merely raise more questions. Part III is intended to bring the study to a further level of detail by investigating possible answers to some of the questions previously raised and to determine the learning process related to the use of reading strategies. Because reading is such a complex and extensive subject and because of the limitations imposed on the research, results obtained

from this study should, however, only be considered as suggestions and starting points that would need to be tested through further research.

Although it is acknowledged that learners can attack a particular learning difficulty from different angles and arrive at their destination from various routes, it has been shown that the linking skills and the use of strategies in reading English as a foreign language are the most important aspects in the development of learners' internal and external competence for mastery of different cognitive levels of reading (from literal to creative). Linking skills encompass the use and application of knowledge, ideas, learning/reading strategies, the development of information processing skills for acquiring and retaining knowledge and the development of interaction between the multiple sources in other fields of learning or research. Using these skills and ideas could lead to a rapid expansion of reading speed and comprehension and an increase in knowledge.

This research has achieved its prime objectives. But it only provides a start in the complex and wide field of improving ELT reading in China. As with all research, the final statement reveals areas where there are more questions than answers. This research has identified major weaknesses in existing Chinese ELT practices and in learning behaviour regarding teaching and learning reading strategies that must be addressed and has suggested ways for improvement.

Relevant future research areas have been recommended in order to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in teaching/learning approaches for English reading and the use of applicable strategies in the classroom. Some of the main questions and methods have been outlined, yet there is still much more to be done in investigating the linking skills, the role of strategies, the role of L1 at various stages in the process, the contribution of information, the need to understand the interaction between teachers and students, between the different types of strategies and their correlation with performance and to design textbooks and tests, focusing on the reading processes.



### 9.8.1 Progress of the Quest

Part III of the study is intended to provide answers to the main questions previously raised by the study:

- 1) What are the respondents' opinions on reading strategies?
- 2) Can reading strategies be taught?
- 3) How are the different strategies learnt?
- 4) How are the different forms of reading related?
- 5) What form does the reading process take?

#### *1) What are the respondents' opinions on reading strategies?*

The main questionnaires revealed the frequency of perceived or claimed strategy use by teachers and students, yet how do they value the strategies? What causes them to use or not use the strategies? These questions were further investigated through a follow-up questionnaire survey and respondent interviews. The results suggested that both teachers and students greatly value the use of strategies. Further research activities also supported the view that teachers can play an important part in helping students use the strategies and achieving effective learning.

#### *2) Can reading strategies be taught?*

Since the literature review could not reveal any consensus regarding teaching methodology and the data analysis suggested that no single group of reading strategies could improve the performance of students, **TRSIA** (Teaching Reading Strategies in an Interactive Approach) was proposed. This conforms to the current Chinese eclectic teaching philosophy and could provide China with a flexible, less constrained method of teaching. Before the method could be recommended, however, it was necessary to demonstrate that this approach could be used within a Chinese classroom. A materials workshop was, therefore, developed. This workshop described in Chapter 7 showed that, according to the responding Chinese teachers, over 90% of the strategies included within the theoretical model could be taught in a Chinese classroom using the proposed **TRSIA**. Even though this workshop was not tested and personally demonstrated in an actual teaching situation, the supportive views expressed by the

respondent teachers suggest that it may prove an acceptable and efficient method for teaching reading strategies. At least, that seems to be the opinion of respondents but there are clear limitations of evidence here and further classroom-based research is needed on this point.

### *3) How are the different strategies learnt?*

The major research questionnaire (Q2) addressed the different types of reading strategy that may be learned in a classroom environment: metacognitive, cognitive, social, compensation and practice. Although many strategies were covered, the answers to the questionnaire did not reflect how the strategies were learned. Interviews were therefore undertaken in order to reveal the nature of reading and to identify how learners apply strategies within their reading. The indication was that readers deploy many strategies and apply many ways of learning; by doing things, observing, experiencing, talking, listening, questioning, reasoning and so on. The interviews suggested the importance of motivation and how the use of strategies and practice provide the most effective ways to improve performance. They also provided an indication of how learners learn through a continuous cycle of retention and loss of information.

### *4) How are the different forms of reading related?*

The literature review indicated that in one current classification (Urquhart and Weir, 1998) there were two main ways of reading: careful reading through word by word access and expeditious reading in which the reader skims a text to get a general meaning. Results from the extended research suggest that both careful and expeditious reading are of equal importance and should be used interchangeably depending on the purpose of reading. Therefore, a dual reading cycle (Chapter 8) was developed to provide a visual representation of how the two different types of reading may interact within the teaching and learning process. This should however be viewed in relation to the researcher's commentary given in Part I, which shows that there are social, cultural, constructivist aspects of literacy and the notions of ecological literacy, multiliteracies and literacies as social practices in recent literature, which are under-represented in the dual reading cycle, revealing a limitation in the present study.

5) *What form does the reading process take?*

Information on the learning process gleaned from the study was consolidated in Chapter 9. This established that learning is a continuous and cyclic process of gaining new information (information acquisition), discarding information that is not considered important or relevant (information rejection), retaining required knowledge and information (information retention) and forgetting some information (information loss). This was represented by a formula for learning reading (Chapter 9) and a model was developed to show this process. This model was produced in the form of an upward spiral to illustrate the importance of linking, viewed as the kernel of learning and to show how learners may move from a basic level of reading through various intermediate levels to more advanced levels. Again, as revealed by the researcher's commentary given in Part 1, some current notions of literacy are not fully taken into account in this model, indicating a further limitation in this study.

#### 9.8.2 The Main Concepts

Although the study was limited only to investigating the perceptions and relationship of Chinese teachers and students in their strategy use and could not be monitored or controlled personally or observed in actual classroom situation, a great deal of information was obtained.

The main concepts deduced from the study may be viewed as:

- 1) There is strong evidence to show that reading strategies are closely related to students' performance.
- 2) Successful students tend to use strategies more often and to apply a larger repertoire of strategies.
- 3) Successful students have learnt to deploy both careful and expeditious reading process interchangeably.
- 4) Students can be trained to improve their use of reading strategies, whether or not their use is viewed as a natural talent.
- 5) Teacher qualifications and training are key elements in improving teaching reading strategy training.

- 6) The proposed **TRSIA** model may possibly provide the basis for developing an appropriate method for teaching reading strategies.
- 7) Linking may be proposed as the kernel of reading and learning.
- 8) Learning may be viewed as a continual process of retaining and losing information.
- 9) The learning process may be viewed as comprising several inter-related levels of competence from basic to advanced.

### 9.8.3 Research Methods

In order to demonstrate how the reading strategies defined by the theoretical model may be taught and show how the theoretical results of the study may be tested in practice a materials workshop was developed (Chapter 7). As a result of this workshop, Chinese teachers claimed that over 90% of the strategies included within the theoretical model given in Chapter 3 can be taught using **TRSIA** from a simple text taken from the nationally used ‘College English’ textbook in China. The materials workshop was sent to Chinese teachers in China and the UK and their views on the proposed method of teaching were obtained through follow-up questionnaires and interviews.

Although the general view expressed was that reading strategies are useful and can be taught, the workshop was only given as a pen and paper example. It may be argued that the strategies are only useful in theory and that, in practice, students would not so easily make correct guesses using the given strategies. Further classroom-based research into this type of learning activity is, therefore, required before any conclusions can be assumed.

### 9.8.4 Interpretation of Results

Although the results may be viewed as significant, they only provide a starting point for further research into the complex and changing world of ELT in China and although many answers to questions raised have been suggested, more research needs to be performed to determine:

- 1) Whether strategies improve performance, can they be taught in practice and does **TRSIA** provide an appropriate method for teaching strategies.

- 2) How strategy training can be improved within the classroom.
- 3) The nature of reading and the learning process and how to optimise this process.

*1) Can strategies be taught?*

Although the materials workshop suggested that strategies could be taught using **TRISA**, actual classroom sessions, using both control and experimental groups, should be organised to demonstrate that the use of strategies can be learned in an actual class situation and that strategies can actually improve students' performance. Such research should be conducted as a longitudinal study and the use of strategies should be monitored over a period of time to determine the level by which particular strategies improve performance. Such a study was performed by Hamp-Lyons (1985), but this was not sufficient to provide any firm conclusion.

*2) How can strategy training be improved?*

The data analysis revealed that there was a large difference between the perceived use of strategies of teachers and students. However, the follow-up questionnaire survey revealed that a greater percentage of students (92.7%) against teachers (76.3%) claimed to know 80% or more of the strategies and that 92.6% of students against 87.8% of teachers reported that they appreciated the use of strategies. This may be difficult to explain. Maybe students know and appreciate strategies but they do not use them because they lack a good attitude, are not used to them, are not sufficiently motivated to use them or are not well taught. Since the follow-up research claimed that 94% of the students appreciate the importance of attitude and motivation and 83% claimed that the questionnaires enriched their ideas of learning, the results suggest that existing teaching methods may need to be improved. This was supported by the data analysis, which indicated that teacher-training can significantly influence strategy use, implying that more and better strategy training should be introduced into future teacher courses.

*3) The nature of reading*

The research suggested that reading is an extremely complicated process using the inherent talents of the reader and that it can be affected by many factors. The research also suggested a possible spiral image of the reading process, which moves from a basic level to more

advanced levels of reading. The proposed longitudinal research should therefore also include think-aloud study to investigate the learning process relating to reading and determine how this knowledge should be used to improve proposed teaching methods.

#### 9.8.5 Personal Reflection

The aims of the study were to seek relationships between strategy use and performance by investigating Chinese teachers' and students' perceptions of English reading strategies. The study started by reviewing the history of Chinese English language teaching to identify any possible weakness in current teaching methods. As a result, it was suggested that weaknesses in Chinese ELT did exist, but the nature of these weaknesses was not clear. In particular, it was not clear to what level English reading strategies were taught and learnt. Relevant literature on reading English as a foreign language was therefore reviewed to ascertain reading strategies that were believed to improve English reading and these strategies were listed in the 'theoretical model' for inclusion within a questionnaire survey to Chinese teachers and students. The data analysis of completed questionnaires suggested that there were discrepancies between the perceived use of strategies of teachers and students. This raised several questions, which had also been previously suggested by the literature review: What is the nature of reading strategies? Can strategies be taught? What form does the process of learning reading strategies take?

The study was therefore extended to investigate these questions and to determine the learning process in relation to L2 reading acquisition. Due to the apparent confusion relating to the teachability and benefit of reading strategies, investigating the associated learning process was considered to be a more useful and fruitful exercise in providing information that may be used to improve ELT learning in China. A **TRSIA** method of teaching strategies was therefore proposed. This method was selected because it was not constrained to one specific approach, could meet the individual needs of students and conformed to the current eclectic Chinese method of teaching. This was tested by using a materials workshop and reviewed through a follow-up questionnaire survey and interviews.

The results of the additional research activities implied that it should be possible to teach strategies and that the teacher's ability is the key to the success of this activity. The results also suggested that linking is the kernel of learning and that students learn through a process of retaining and losing knowledge through different levels of learning, represented by an upward 'spiral model'.

However, although the study provides valuable information on teaching reading strategies within Chinese ELT, much of this information still remains at a level of teachers' and students' perceptions rather than at the level of observed classroom practices. As such it can only be considered as providing a starting point for further study into this important and complex subject. In particular, the study, by determining respondents' perceptions, was unable to review any causal effect that may have been revealed through actual classroom observation. Although there was some support for these results and for the interpretations and extrapolations suggested by them, as given within this chapter and summarised under section 9.6.2, they would need to be reviewed through research involving actual classroom observation before they can be viewed as being truly meaningful.

Moreover, although the Spiral Model may provide a reasonable representation of the process relating to learning reading strategies, it also leaves the research with a number of important basic questions that still need to be answered:

- 1) If better and more comprehensive use of reading strategies is related to reading proficiency – how should teachers teach them to their students?
- 2) If learning strategies is an inherent process – how can students be encouraged to promote their own natural abilities to the best effect?
- 3) If reading strategies are learnt through an upward increasing spiral from a basic level to more advanced level strategies as proficiency increases – how can students be encouraged to increase their proficiency and reach these higher levels more quickly?
- 4) If students learn by a continuous cycle of acquisition, retention and loss of knowledge - how can acquisition and retention of knowledge be increased and loss of knowledge reduced?

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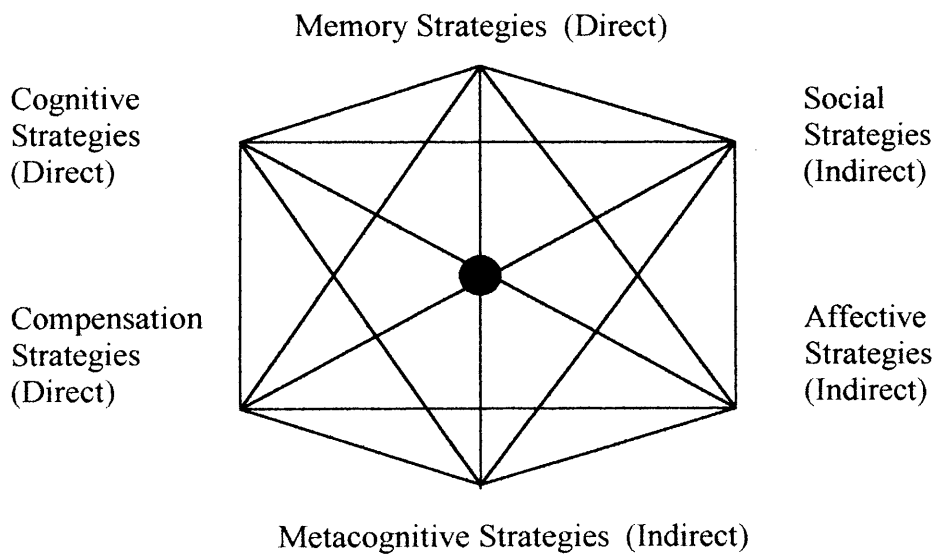


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## APPENDICES

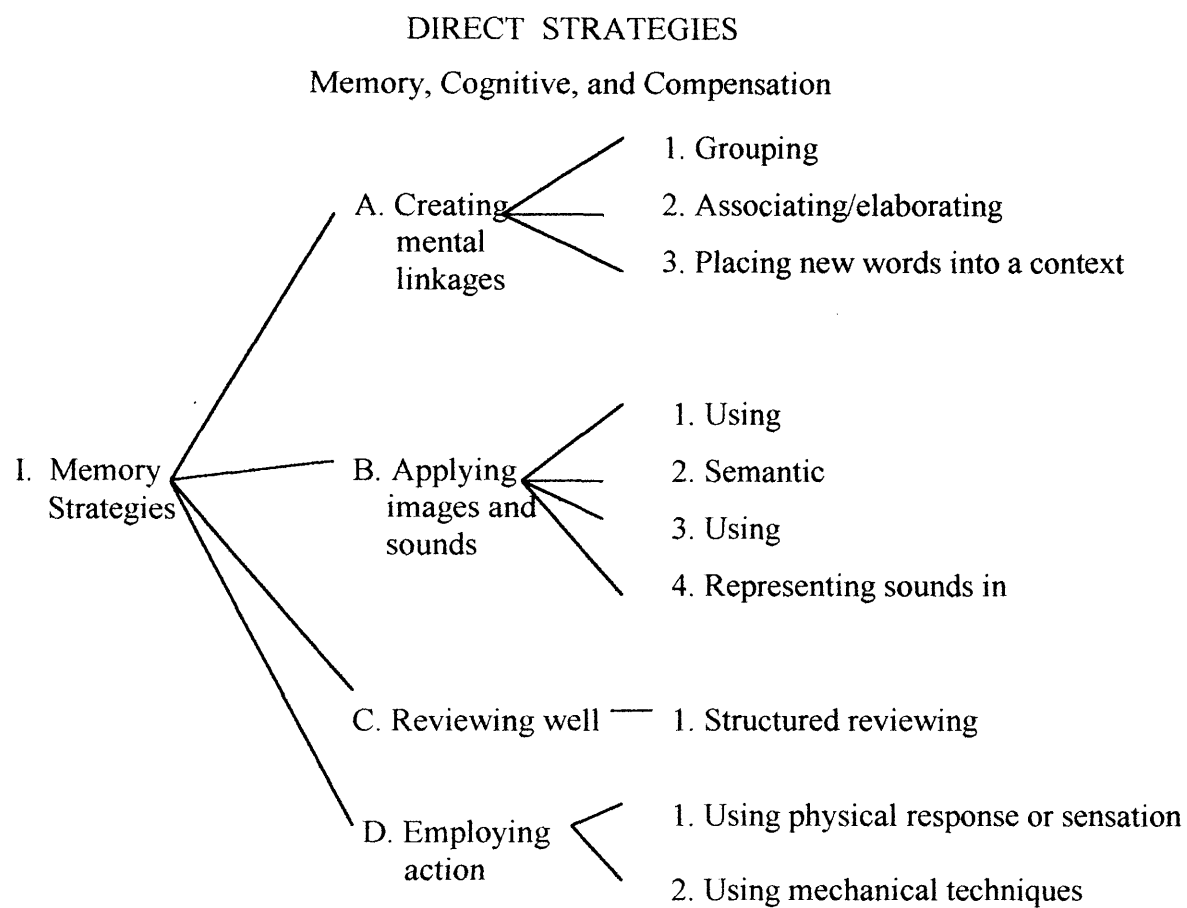
### Appendix A

Interrelationships between Direct and Indirect Strategies  
among the Six Strategy Groups. (Oxford, 1990)



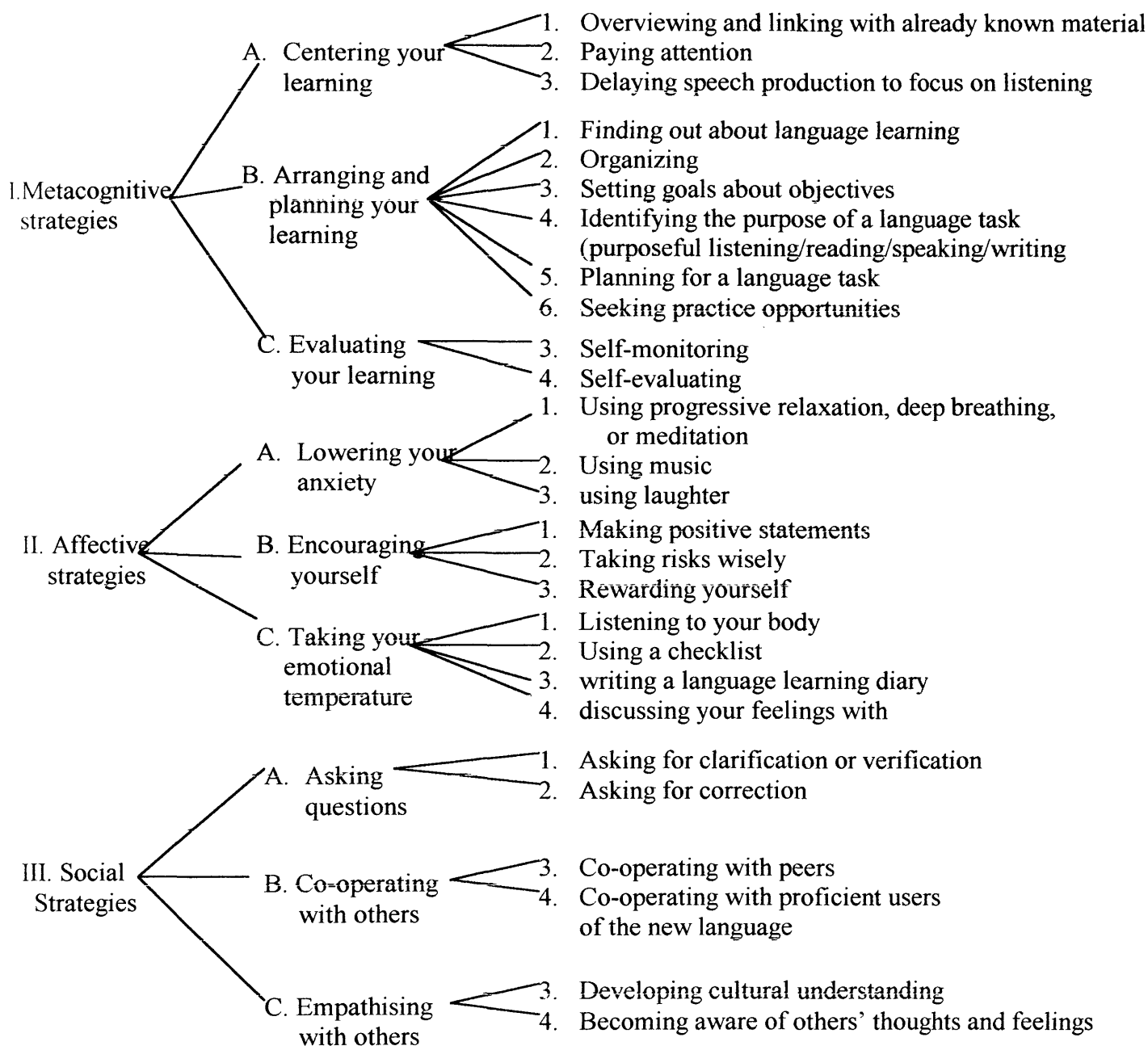
Appendix B

The Entire Learning Strategy System, including 62 Strategies (Oxford, 1990)





## INDIRECT STRATEGIES



## Appendix C

## Materials for the Teachers Questionnaires

## Appendix C1 The Cover Letter

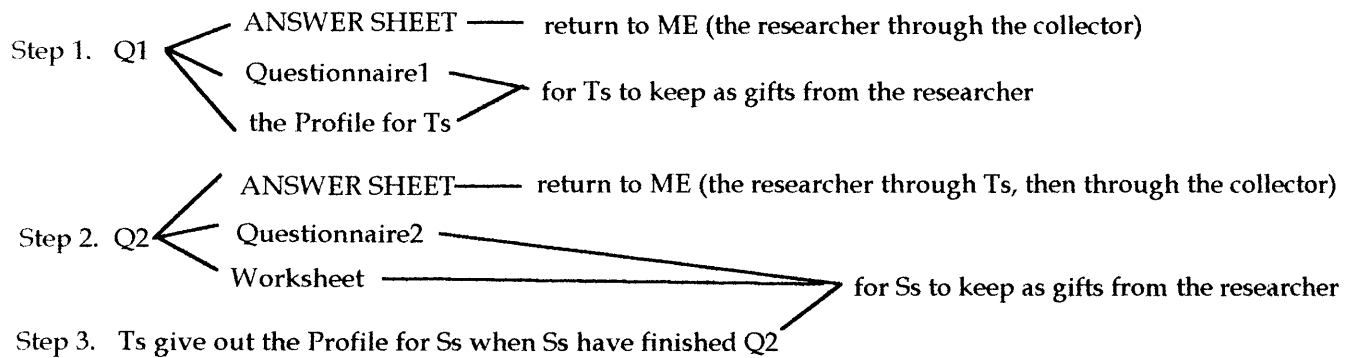
**To the Teacher:**

I'd like to introduce myself. I am a Ph.D. student in the UK, doing research on teaching and learning strategies for reading in TEFL. The enclosed questionnaires will be given to non-English majors at the university level. Two sets of questionnaires have been designed: *Q1 for English teachers who teach reading classes, Q2 for students of non-English majors in the universities.*

Firstly, I'd like to ask for your help by answering Q1 yourself, and distributing Q2 to your students. I know answering the questionnaires will take some time, yet there are some advantages in doing them. For example, answering the questionnaire will be reading practice for your students because they are written in English. Another advantage is by answering the questionnaires, both the teachers (Ts) and students (Ss) are introduced to the strategies. We all know how important reading is in the Band Four Test. So, both the teachers and students can benefit from raising their awareness of reading strategies through the questionnaires. Also the questionnaires will help teachers and students reflect on their teaching and learning. The third advantage is when I have received the returned Answer Sheets from Q1 and Q2, you can get an immediate reward. Another promise I can give (a later reward) is to send you a report of the analysis of the questionnaires, so that you will get something back from this research. Please give me your ADDRESS together with the two sets of ANSWER SHEETS if you would like to receive a report of this research. Now let me give you some instructions of how to handle the questionnaires.

Materials: Q1 + ANSWER SHEET + the Profile for teachers

Q2 + ANSWER SHEET + Worksheet + the Profile for students



When I have received the returned ANSWER SHEETS for Q1 and Q2, I will give you an immediate reward by sending you a free package of An Extended Version of the Workshop about Application of Teaching Strategies mentioned in Q1.

Finally, I'd like to express my thanks once more by offering help whatever I can provide for you. You can contact me at this address:

Jinfeng Xu  
52 Clarendon Park Rd  
Leicester LE2 3AD  
U. K.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Jinfeng Xu

## Appendix C2

## Questionnaire 1 to Chinese English Teachers in China

This questionnaire is designed purely for academic research, with the intention of investigating the teaching methods being used by Chinese teacher trainers, their knowledge of teaching and learning strategies, their knowledge of their students and their opinions about the future of the teaching of reading in English in China. Therefore, this questionnaire is used for this research ONLY, and is absolutely confidential. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BASED ON YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE.

**PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING THE CHOICES ON THE ANSWER SHEET.**

**PART A: PERSONAL BACKGROUND** *Please read and choose one of the choices on the ANSWER SHEET.*

**PART B. TEACHING BEHAVIOUR(1)**

*Please circle one of the choices below on the ANSWER SHEET.*

*Please remember the sequence:*

**1. never                      2. rarely                      3. sometimes                      4. often                      5. always**

7. I try to arouse and maintain students' interests and motivation by either telling jokes, giving short comments on the lesson, sharing my own personal experience or giving examples from other colleagues.

**How often do you do the following in your reading class?**

8. use role play in reading

9. use pair work in reading

10. use group work in reading

**text completion** (similar to CLOZE exercise)

11a. word completion (selected words deleted from text)

11b. phrase completion (selected phrases/clauses deleted from text)

11c. sentence completion (selected sentences deleted from text)

**sequencing in reading**



12a. scrambled segments of text arranged in logical/time sequence (text cut into segments representing steps/events etc.)

12b. segments of text classified (texts cut into segments representing certain categories of information)

**table completion**

13a. students fill in a table using rows and columns headings and text as source of information (teacher provides row and column headings)

13b. students devise row and column headings using texts and cells of matrix as sources of information (teacher or other students fill in cells)

**diagram completion**

14a. completing a diagram by adding labels, using the text and diagram as sources of information (selected labels deleted from diagrams)

14b. finishing an incomplete diagram, using the text and partly complete diagram as sources of information (teacher constructs original diagram: flow diagram, branching tree, network)

15. use multiple choice exercises in reading

16. use True and False question exercises in reading

17. set students reading silently

18. ask good student to think aloud, so that others can see the process of reasoning in reading

19. use extra materials apart from the textbook

19a. If you do use extra reading materials, where are they from? Please circle one or more of the choices below:

a. magazines

b. newspapers

c. literature books

d. other text-books

e. brochures

f. leaflets

g. advertisements

h. Chinese materials that I find useful and interesting, which I translate into English

i. Or please specify \_\_\_\_\_

20. Please circle the one which is true of your teaching of reading. My teaching approach is mainly
- Direct Method.
  - Grammar - Translation Method.
  - Audiolingual Approach.
  - Communicative Approach.
  - a mixture of the above methods. I choose the methods according to the teaching content. So my teaching approach is flexible (State the main mixture of methods).
  - Or some other method. (State which, please)

### PART C: TEACHING BEHAVIOUR(2)

*Please circle one of the choices below on the ANSWER SHEET.*

*Please remember the sequence:*

1. never                      2. rarely                      3. sometimes                      4. Often                      5. always

*SECTION 1: Vocabulary teaching: When you teach vocabulary, how often do you teach the following techniques?*

- creating **mental linkage** by association (link a new word with any kind of framework in the mind in order to aid memory)
- grouping** words together (classify words into same types of nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives or with the same prefix or suffix or stems etc.)
- paired associates** (link two words of similar sounds and meanings)
- placing new words into context**
- forming a visual image and placing the word on an **imagined map**
- semantic sets** (synonyms or antonyms)
- metaphor sets** (when words are used metaphorically)
- how to find the right meaning from a **dictionary**
- the usefulness of different kinds of words like **active** vocabulary, **receptive** vocabulary and **throw-away** vocabulary

**When meeting an unknown word, do you teach students to try to**

- find out **the part of speech** of the unknown word
- look at **the immediate context** of the unknown word and simplify this context if necessary

30c. look at **the wider context** of the unknown word. This means looking at the relationship between the clause containing the unknown word and surrounding clauses and sentences.

30d. **guess the meaning** of the unknown word

30e. **check that the guess is correct** (to see whether your guess fits in the immediate and wider context)

### *SECTION 2: Teaching reading strategies*

**I try to teach reading strategies as much as possible by asking students :**

31. to pay attention to the titles and subtitles

32. to anticipate or predict content in a general way

33. to pay attention to the types of letters (Capital letters or small letters)

34. to pay attention to punctuation

35. to pay attention to the pictures, charts and diagrams related to the reading

36. to pay attention to the type of genre (type of text) when reading

37. to constantly predict and adjust their prediction

38. to distinguish general information from specific information

39. to analyse cause and effect mentioned in the text

40. to make an explicit comparison and contrast with given information in the text

41. to find the topic sentence and supporting sentences

42. to distinguish the main ideas and details

43. to pay attention to coherence, that is consistency and logic in ideas

44. to pay attention to sentence markers, such as *but, so, as a result, on the contrary* etc.

45. to pay attention to the text development, how the text is organised and developed, especially the transitional words that link the paragraphs together

46. to find out reference (what a particular word refers to)

47. to pay attention to ellipsis in order not to get confused

48. to pay attention to substitutions in order to find out the relation between words

49. to infer, that is to read between the lines for inferences

50. to skim the text

51. to scan the text

52. to read in a block of meaning (to read by phrases or sentences instead of individual words)

53. to use the same way of reading that would be used for reading Chinese
54. to translate if necessary
55. to summarise
56. to adjust reading speed
57. to learn to focus on the general meaning in reading rather than on details
58. to guess meaning by using lexical knowledge such as prefixes, suffixes or word stems etc.
59. to guess meaning by using forward or backward clues
60. to guess meaning by using general knowledge of the topic
61. to guess meaning by using personal experience
62. to use cultural knowledge of English-speakers for comprehension
63. to analyse the language of complicated expressions or structures
64. to analyse the writer's intention/opinion/attitude etc.

#### **PART D: TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR STUDENTS**

*Please circle one of the choices below on the ANSWER SHEET. Please remember the sequence:*

**a. very good    b. good    c. OK    d. poor    e. very poor**

In respect of reading strategies, in general,

65. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at skimming
66. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at scanning
67. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at predicting
68. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at previewing
69. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at inferring
70. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at adjusting their reading speed
71. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at transferring skills (L1 to L2)
72. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at using cultural knowledge
73. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at using general knowledge to solve problems in their reading
74. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at guessing unknown words from context
75. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at using discourse knowledge for interpreting/understanding texts
76. my students are \_\_\_\_\_ at memorising vocabulary

#### **PART E: TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT ELT IN READING AND THEIR VIEW OF ITS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

*Please circle one of the choices below on the ANSWER SHEET. Please remember the sequence:*

**a. strongly agree    b. agree    c. uncertain    d disagree    e. strongly disagree**

77. The teaching of reading in English is based on studying a designated textbook. Teachers can not elaborate on it with their own ideas of teaching.
78. Using either pair work or group work to develop reading skills is still problematic.
79. Systematic training in teaching reading strategies in a second language teaching is rare.
80. Authentic English books available to the general public appear to be limited in China.
81. Books and journals for English teachers about reading strategies are scarce in China.
82. The future emphasis of the English reading class should be on building up learners' confidence in their skills in guessing meanings.
83. The English class should focus on speeding up the transition from conscious to unconscious use of grammatical and contextual clues to meaning.
84. There is a need to treat a reading text as meaning first, syntax etc. second, explaining new words and idioms only if they interfere with that meaning.
85. In the teaching of reading, we should focus on teaching reading strategies to help students develop good reading habits rather than on the language form itself.
86. Language learning involves culture, so it is important to increase cultural awareness in reading in English.
87. In order to cope with ELT, teacher training should be offered to all the teachers, so that they have the knowledge of new ideas, new methodologies and new teaching strategies.
88. Exams should be made to test students' global learning and reading skills, students' abilities of reasoning and analysing problems, not to test memorisation.
89. The facilities that will aid students to learn English should be improved, like having English materials, newspapers, magazines, interesting reading books and educational programmes and films and so on.
90. Do you have any other comments about teaching reading? Please write your comments on the ANSWER SHEET.
91. Do you have any comments about this questionnaire? Please write your comments on the ANSWER SHEET.

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.**

## Appendix C3 Answer Sheet for Questionnaire 1 to Chinese English Teachers in China

Before you go to the questions, please give the information of **NAME OF THE UNIVERSITY** in which you are teaching (both in English and in Chinese)

The department your students are in \_\_\_\_\_ Class Number (Example: Class 2, or Class 3) \_\_\_\_\_

If you teach more than one class, and cross more than one department, please give the rest of the information here:

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Class Number \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Class Number \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Class Number \_\_\_\_\_

**PART A: PERSONAL BACKGROUND** Please choose one of the choices below :

1. The age group you are in    a. 20 - 30      b. 31 - 45      c. over 46
2. The type of education you have received
  - a. graduate
  - b. postgraduate
  - c. equivalent of postgraduate
  - d. graduate plus short teacher training course(s)
  - e. graduate plus one year or more teacher training course(s)
3. The length of your teaching experience
  - a. 1 -- 5 years    b. 6-- 10 years    c. 11 -- 15 years    d. 16 --20 years    e. over 20 years
4. The main approaches you were taught when you learned English as a university student
  - a. Direct Method
  - b. Grammar - Translation Method
  - c. Audiolingual Approach
  - d. Communicative Approach
  - e. Mixture of any of the above methods. State which please? \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Or any other method. Name the method, please. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The type of students you are teaching

- a. 1st year undergraduate non-English majors  
 b. 2nd year undergraduate non-English majors
6. The average number of students in your classes
- a. Less than 20      b. 20-25      c. 26-30      d. 31-35      e. over 35

## PART B. TEACHING BEHAVIOUR(1)

*Please circle one of the choices below . Please remember the sequence:*

- | 1. never |    |    |    |    | 2. rarely |      |    |    |    | 3. sometimes |    |      |    |    | 4. often |    |    |       |                | 5. always |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |  |
|----------|----|----|----|----|-----------|------|----|----|----|--------------|----|------|----|----|----------|----|----|-------|----------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|--|--|--|--|
| 7.       | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 11c. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 14b. | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | 19a.  | a.             | b.        | c. | d. | e. | f. | g. | h. | i. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8.       | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 12a. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 15.  | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | 20.   | a.             | b.        | c. | d. |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9.       | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 12b. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 16.  | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | e.    | Which methods? |           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10.      | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 13a. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 17.  | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | _____ |                |           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11a.     | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 13b. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 18.  | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | f.    | Which method?  |           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11b.     | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 14a. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 19.  | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | _____ |                |           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |  |

**\* Note 19a. and 20.** To answer these two questions, please read the instructions carefully on the questionnaire.

## PART C: TEACHING BEHAVIOUR(2)

*Please circle one of the choices below . Please remember the sequence:*

1. never      2. rarely      3. sometimes      4. often      5. always

*SECTION 1: Vocabulary teaching: When you teach vocabulary, how often do you teach the following techniques?*

- |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 21. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 25. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 29.  | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 30d. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. |
| 22. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 26. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 30a. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 30e. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. |
| 23. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 27. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 30b. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. |      |    |    |    |    |    |
| 24. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 28. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 30c. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. |      |    |    |    |    |    |

*SECTION 2: Teaching reading strategies: Please remember the sequence:*

- | 1. never |    |    |    |    | 2. rarely |     |    |    |    | 3. sometimes |    |     |    |    | 4. often |    |    |     |    | 5. always |    |    |    |  |
|----------|----|----|----|----|-----------|-----|----|----|----|--------------|----|-----|----|----|----------|----|----|-----|----|-----------|----|----|----|--|
| 31.      | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 40. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 49. | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | 58. | 1. | 2.        | 3. | 4. | 5. |  |
| 32.      | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 41. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 50. | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | 59. | 1. | 2.        | 3. | 4. | 5. |  |
| 33.      | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 42. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 51. | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | 60. | 1. | 2.        | 3. | 4. | 5. |  |
| 34.      | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.        | 43. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4.           | 5. | 52. | 1. | 2. | 3.       | 4. | 5. | 61. | 1. | 2.        | 3. | 4. | 5. |  |

35. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 44. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 53. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 62. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  
 36. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 45. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 54. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 63. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  
 37. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 46. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 55. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 64. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  
 38. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 47. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 56. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  
 39. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 48. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 57. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

## PART D: TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR STUDENTS

*Please circle one of the choices below.*

**a. very good (VG)    b. good (G)    c. OK    d. poor (P)    e. very poor (VP)**

65. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 68. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 71. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 74. VG. G. OK. P. VP.  
 66. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 69. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 72. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 75. VG. G. OK. P. VP.  
 67. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 70. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 73. VG. G. OK. P. VP. 76. VG. G. OK. P. VP.

## PART E: TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT ELT IN READING AND THEIR VIEW OF ITS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

*Please circle one of the choices below. Please remember the sequence:*

**a. strongly agree (SA)    b. agree (A)    c. uncertain (U)    d disagree (D)    e. strongly disagree (SD)**

77. SA. A. U. D. SD. 80. SA. A. U. D. SD. 83. SA. A. U. D. SD. 86. SA. A. U. D. SD.  
 78. SA. A. U. D. SD. 81. SA. A. U. D. SD. 84. SA. A. U. D. SD. 87. SA. A. U. D. SD.  
 79. SA. A. U. D. SD. 82. SA. A. U. D. SD. 85. SA. A. U. D. SD. 88. SA. A. U. D. SD.  
 89. SA. A. U. D. SD

90. Do you have any comments about teaching reading? Please write your comments here.

91. Do you have any comments about this questionnaire? Please write your comments here.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.



## Appendix D

## Materials for the Students Questionnaires

## Appendix D1 Questionnaires 2 to Students in China

Do you want to find out your score for learning strategies (学习方法, 技巧) and enlarge your knowledge of learning strategies in order to improve your English quickly? This questionnaire will broaden your horizon (开阔你的视野) of English learning, especially in the area of reading, which is a vital (very important) part in the Band Four Test in China. When you have completed this questionnaire, you can work out your score for reading strategies. The way of working out the score will be explained later. **First, just focus on answering the questions HONESTLY, so that you will know your real score of reading strategies.** This questionnaire is **absolutely confidential** (绝对保密) and is designed purely for academic research (学术研究). Notice: you should answer all the questions on the Worksheet as well, which will be *kept* by you to work out your score for classroom learning strategies. A profile of the results and explanations of the strategies will be given to you by your teacher when you have finished answering all the questions. That is the gift from me to thank you for completing the questionnaire.

By looking at your learning attitude, motivation and your beliefs, you will probably find out where your problems are. And the solution to the problems is hidden in this questionnaire. YOU WILL FIND THE ANSWER BY FILLING IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE. PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS HONESTLY BASED ON YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND YOUR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. THANK YOU.

**PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING THE CHOICES ON THE ANSWER SHEET.**

**PART A: PERSONAL BACKGROUND**

*Please read and answer the questions of this part on the ANSWER SHEET.*

## **PART B: STUDENTS' ATTITUDES, MOTIVATION AND BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING ENGLISH**

*Section 1: Please circle one of the choices below on the ANSWER SHEET.*

*Please remember the sequence:*

**a. strongly agree    b. agree    c. uncertain    d. disagree    e. strongly disagree**

8. I like and enjoy learning English.
9. Studying English is important because it will be useful someday in getting a good job.
10. I spend a lot of time studying English in order to get a good result in the exams.
11. I spend a lot of time studying English in order to pass the TOEFL test and study abroad.
12. I spend a lot of time studying English in order to settle down abroad if possible.
13. I study English because it is one of the compulsory courses, otherwise I wouldn't study it.
14. I think that learning English is boring.
15. I do not spend too much time on English as long as I can pass the exams.
16. I believe that I can learn English well if I try hard.
17. I have a special ability for learning English.
18. It is important to practise reading in order to increase reading speed and comprehension.
19. A very important part of reading in English is learning vocabulary.
20. A very important part of reading in English is learning grammar.
21. A very important part of reading in English is learning to find and understand the main ideas.
22. A very important part of reading in English is relating what you read to what you already know.

*Section 2: Students' ideas and impressions about their teachers, English course and themselves*

*Please read the following carefully:*

23 - 25 are your assessments of your English teacher, English course and yourself in learning English. To do this part, please follow the instructions CAREFULLY. You may need to read the instructions TWICE.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The purpose of this part of the questionnaire is to determine your ideas and impressions about your teachers, your course and yourself. In answering this section, you will be asked to rate various concepts on a number of scales. You are to rate each concept on each of the scales in order. This is how you are to use the scales (EXAMPLES):

If the word at either end of the scale **very strongly describes** your ideas and impressions about the concept at the top of the page, you would place your check-mark as shown below:

friendly **X** : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unfriendly

**Or**

friendly \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : **X** unfriendly

If the word at either end of the scale **describes somewhat** your ideas and impressions about the concept (but not strongly so), you would place your check-mark as follows:

dangerous \_\_\_\_ : **X** : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ safe

**Or**

dangerous \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : **X** : \_\_\_\_ safe

If the word at either end of the scale **only slightly describes** your ideas and impressions about the concept, you would place your check-mark as follows:

fast \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : **X** : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ slow

**Or**

fast \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : **X** : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ slow

If the word at either end of the scale **doesn't seem to be at all related to** your ideas and impressions about the concept, you would place your check-mark as follows:

useful \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : **X** : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ useless

For example, 'SNAKE' can be rated like the following:

***Snake***

friendly \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : **X** : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unfriendly

dangerous **X** : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ safe

fast \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : **X** : \_\_\_\_ slow

useful \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : **X** : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ useless

In this example, "snake" is seen as slightly unfriendly, extremely dangerous, somewhat slow, and neither useful nor useless. There are no right or wrong answers. We want you to indicate your own ideas and impressions. If you have any questions, please ask the teacher to explain

to you again. In answering this part of the questionnaire, work quickly and don't stop to think too much about each scale. It is your immediate impressions which count.

*So please remember the describing scale, read and answer on the ANSWER SHEET.*

### **PART C: STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLES (1)**

*Please circle one of the choices below both on the ANSWER SHEET and the Worksheet.*

*Please remember the sequence:*

**1. never                      2. rarely                      3. sometimes                      4 often                      5. always**

26. I link the lesson with what I already know when I preview it.

27. I arrange and plan each lesson by setting a goal or objective for myself, such as how much I expect to understand.

28. If I do not understand any points in reading class, I ask the teacher

28a. to repeat

28b. to paraphrase

28c. to explain

28d. to slow down

28e. to give examples

29. If my reading difficulties are not solved in class, I discuss them with other students after class to sort out my problem.

30. Whenever I am given a reading task, I use the appropriate strategies to finish the task.

31. I assess my reading proficiency by keeping a record of my reading speed and the percentage of comprehension.

32. I check whether I am making progress in reading. If not, I talk with my teacher or with classmates to find out why.

33. Whenever I make some progress, I give myself a reward, for example, by having a nice meal.

34. Whenever I am asked to answer questions in reading class, I try to lower my anxiety by thinking that whether I can answer them correctly or not, at least I have got the chance to speak English in front of everyone. It is a chance to practise.

35. When I am practising speed reading in class, I try not to worry about the speed, for the more I worry about the speed, the less I understand, so I have to re-read again in order to make sense.
36. When I do skimming or scanning in reading, I make guesses about what will come next, and correct any misinterpretation as I move along.
37. I take an active part in class reading activities by joining in as much as possible.
38. I take notes during reading class.
39. I highlight important points by using techniques like underlining, or circling, or ticking etc.
40. I co-operate with the teacher and my classmates to make the reading class atmosphere lively.

## PART D: STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLES (2)

*Please answer this part both on the ANSWER SHEET and the Worksheet.*

*Section 1: Vocabulary learning: Circle one that best describes your behaviour.*

*Please remember the sequence:*

**1. never                  2. rarely          3. sometimes          4 often                  5. always**

Regarding vocabulary learning, I try to use the techniques of:

41. creating **mental linkage** by associations (linking a new word with ideas in my mind in order to aid memory)
42. **grouping** words together (classifying words into same types of nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives or with the same prefix or suffix or stem etc.)
43. **paired associates** (link two words of similar sounds and meanings)
44. **placing new words into context**
45. forming a visual image and placing the word on an **imagined map**
46. **semantic sets** (using **synonyms** or **antonyms** for the target word)
47. **metaphor sets** (understanding when words are used metaphorically)
48. finding the right meaning from a **dictionary**, that is to pick out a meaning to see whether it fits in that context
49. the usefulness of vocabulary knowledge (like thinking whether a new word is an **active** vocabulary, a **receptive** vocabulary or a **throw-away** vocabulary, therefore to decide how much time to spend on learning it)

---

**50. When meeting an unknown word, I try to**

- 50a. find out the **part of speech** of the unknown word
- 50b. look at the **immediate context** of the unknown word in its sentence and simplify this context if necessary
- 50c. look at the **wider context** of the unknown word. This means looking at the relationship between the clause containing the unknown word and surrounding clauses and sentences.
- 50d. **guess the meaning** of the unknown word
- 50e. **check that the guess is correct** by putting the guessed meaning into context to see whether the meaning is right in that context

*Section 2: Reading strategies***In reading I try:**

- 51. to pay attention to the titles and subtitles
- 52. to anticipate or predict content in a general way
- 53. to pay attention to the types of letters (Capital letters or small letters)
- 54. to pay attention to punctuation
- 55. to pay attention to the pictures, charts and diagrams related to the reading
- 56. to pay attention to the type of text when reading (like narrative, expository, scientific or reference, etc.)
- 57. to constantly predict and adjust my prediction
- 58. to distinguish general information from specific information
- 59. to analyse cause and effect mentioned in the text
- 60. to understand any comparison or contrast with given information in the text
- 61. to find the topic sentence and supporting sentences
- 62. to distinguish the main ideas and details
- 63. to pay attention to coherence, that is consistency and logic in ideas
- 64. to pay attention to sentence markers, such as *but, so, as a result, on the contrary* etc.
- 65. to pay attention to the text development, how the text is organised and developed, especially the transitional words that link the paragraphs together
- 66. to find out the reference (what a particular word refers to)
- 67. to pay attention to ellipsis in order not to get confused

- 68. to pay attention to substitutions in order to find out the relation between words
- 69. to infer, that is to read between the lines for information
- 70. to skim the text, that is to read through quickly for the general/main information
- 71. to scan the text, that is to search for a particular information from a text

**I also use the following strategies in reading:**

- 72. to use the same way of reading that I use when I read Chinese
- 73. to translate if necessary
- 74. to summarise
- 75. to adjust my reading speed according to the particular text or the purpose of the reading
- 76. to read in a block of meaning (to read by phrases or sentences instead of individual words)
- 77. to ignore words or parts I do not understand if I think they are not important

**When I meet an unknown word in reading,**

- 78. I look for forward or backward clues provided in the text, which might give me a general clue to guess the word.
- 79. I look for prefixes, suffixes, or word families to help me figure out the meaning of the unknown word.

**In reading, I also:**

- 80. use cultural knowledge of English-speakers for comprehension.
- 81. use my background knowledge of the topic to help me comprehend the text.
- 82. I also use my personal experience, if possible, to help me understand the reading
- 83. I learn to focus on the general meaning in reading rather than on details.
- 84. I use analysing strategies in reading, such as analysing complicated expressions/structures.
- 85. I try to analyse the writer's intention/opinion/attitude etc.

**When I can't figure out a difficult point in reading with linguistic knowledge, I refer to the following clues, if possible, for a solution:**

- 86. graphs, pictures, tables, or appendices
- 87. my knowledge of the cultures of English speakers
- 88. associating new information with what I already know
- 89. The teacher's facial expression or gestures help me understand.

90. The teacher's tone of voice, repetition of the words/phrases, or the emphasis helps me to guess the important points.

## PART E: PRACTICE STRATEGIES

*Please answer this part both on the ANSWER SHEET and the Worksheet.*

*In and after class activities and how students behave towards them.*

*Please circle one of the choices below. Please remember the sequence:*

**1. never                      2. rarely                      3. sometimes                      4 often                      5. always**

91. I do in-class reading exercises very carefully.

**For reading English after class,**

92. I read English newspapers.  
93. I read English magazines.  
94. I read short stories in English.  
95. I read other English textbooks.  
96. I read journals in English.  
97. I read technical books of my subject in English.  
98. I do TOEFL test exercises.  
99. I do multiple choice exercises from the English materials I can find.  
100. I do CLOZE exercises in reading from the materials available.  
101. I practise speed-reading by answering True or False questions.  
102. I do reading homework assignments carefully.

## PART F: STUDENTS' BELIEFS AND OPINIONS ABOUT LEARNING ENGLISH IN CHINA

*Please circle one of the choices below on the ANSWER SHEET. Please remember the sequence:*

**a. strongly agree                      b. agree                      c. uncertain                      d disagree                      e. strongly disagree**

103. The future emphasis of the English reading class should be on building up learners' confidence in guessing meaning.  
104. In future, there is a need to treat reading as meaning first, grammar second, explaining new words and idioms only if they interfere with that meaning.



105. In future, reading teachers should focus on teaching reading strategies to make students develop good reading habits rather than mainly focus on the language form.
106. Language learning involves culture, so it is important to increase Chinese learners' cultural awareness of English speakers.
107. In order to improve English teaching, teacher training should be offered to all English teachers, so that they know about new ideas and new methods to teach students.
108. The exams must be made to test students' global learning and reading skills, students abilities to reason and analyse problems, not memory skills.
109. There should be more authentic English materials, such as newspapers, magazines and interesting books.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

**NOW PLEASE GIVE THE ANSWER SHEET TO YOUR TEACHER. THANK YOU!**

## Appendix D2

## Answer Sheet for Questionnaire 2 to Students in China

Before you go to the questions, please give the information of :

**NAME OF YOUR UNIVERSITY** (Both in Chinese and in English)

: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your department** (Both in Chinese and in English) :

\_\_\_\_\_

**Class Number** (Example: Class 2 or Class 3): \_\_\_\_\_

### PART A: PERSONAL BACKGROUND

1. Your name in Chinese (or you may leave this blank if you prefer) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age \_\_\_\_\_
3. Please circle one of the choices :    a. Male                      b. Female
4. Please circle one of the choices :    a. **1st year** student    b. **2nd year** student
5. Score of your university entrance examination for English \_\_\_\_\_
6. Score of your end of 1st year exam for English if you are a 2nd year student \_\_\_\_\_
7. Score of your end of 1st term exam for English if you are a 1st year student \_\_\_\_\_

### PART B: STUDENTS' ATTITUDES, MOTIVATION AND BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING ENGLISH

*SECTION 1: Please circle one of the choices below. Please remember the sequence:*

**a. strongly agree(SA) b. agree(A) c. uncertain(U) d. disagree(D) e. strongly disagree(SD)**

- |                      |                      |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 8. SA. A. U. D. SD.  | 12. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 16. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 20. SA. A. U. D. SD. |
| 9. SA. A. U. D. SD.  | 13. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 17. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 21. SA. A. U. D. SD. |
| 10. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 14. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 18. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 22. SA. A. U. D. SD. |
| 11. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 15. SA. A. U. D. SD. | 19. SA. A. U. D. SD. |                      |

*SECTION 2: Students' ideas and impressions about their teachers, English course and themselves*  
*Please remember the scale goes like this:*

**strongly :    somewhat:    slightly:    not at all:    slightly:    somewhat:    strongly**

23. My ideas and impression about my English teacher for the Reading Class

- a. efficient \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ inefficient
- b. organised \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ disorganised
- c. hard-working \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ not hard-working
- d. responsible \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ irresponsible
- e. competent \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ incompetent
- f. intelligent \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unintelligent
- g. sensitive \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ insensitive
- h. humorous \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unhumorous
- i. patient \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ impatient
- j. friendly \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unfriendly
- k. good \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ bad

**strongly :    somewhat:    slightly:    not at all:    slightly:    somewhat:    strongly**

24. My ideas and impression about my English Reading Class

- a. important \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unimportant
- b. good for learning \_\_\_\_\_ not good for learning \_\_\_\_\_
- reading strategies \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ reading strategies
- c. interesting \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ boring
- d. easy \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ difficult
- f. clear \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ confusing
- g. satisfactory \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unsatisfactory

25. My ideas and impression about myself in learning English

- a. efficient \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ inefficient
- b. sensitive \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ insensitive
- c. motivated \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unmotivated
- d. hard-working \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ not hard-working
- e. attentive in class \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ inattentive in class
- f. active in class \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ inactive in class
- g. organised \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ disorganised
- h. confident \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unconfident

- i. independent \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ dependent
- j. take risks \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ do not take risks
- k. wish to \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ do not want to
- surpass others \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ surpass others
- l. positive \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ negative
- m. satisfied \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unsatisfied
- n. fast reader \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ slow reader
- o. pay attention \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ pay attention
- to general meaning \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ to details
- p. good guesser of \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ bad guesser of
- unknown words \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ unknown words
- q. good predictor of \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ bad predictor of
- what the text will say \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ what the text will say
- r. good at using \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ poor at using
- reading strategies \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ reading strategies

### PART C: STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLES (1)

ANSWER THIS PART ON THE WORKSHEET AS WELL.

Please circle one of the choices below. Please remember the sequence:

- | 1. never            | 2. rarely           | 3. sometimes       | 4 often            | 5. always |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 26. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  | 28d. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 32. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 37. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 27. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  | 28e. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 33. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 38. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 28a. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 29. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  | 34. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 39. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 28b. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 30. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  | 35. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 40. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 28c. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 31. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  | 36. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |                    |           |

### PART D: STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLES(2)

ANSWER THIS PART ON THE WORKSHEET AS WELL.

Section 1: Vocabulary learning: Circle one that best describes your behaviour.

Please remember the sequence:

- |          |           |              |         |           |
|----------|-----------|--------------|---------|-----------|
| 1. never | 2. rarely | 3. sometimes | 4 often | 5. always |
|----------|-----------|--------------|---------|-----------|

41. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    45. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    49. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    50d. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  
 42. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    46. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    50a. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    50e. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  
 43. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    47. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    50b. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.  
 44. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    48. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.    50c. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

*Section 2: Reading strategies ANSWER THIS PART ON THE WORKSHEET AS WELL.*

- | 1. never           | 2. rarely          | 3. sometimes       | 4 often            | 5. always |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 51. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 61. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 71. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 81. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 52. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 62. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 72. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 82. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 53. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 63. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 73. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 83. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 54. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 64. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 74. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 84. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 55. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 65. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 75. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 85. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 56. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 66. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 76. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 86. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 57. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 67. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 77. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 87. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 58. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 68. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 78. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 88. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 59. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 69. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 79. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 89. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 60. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 70. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 80. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 90. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |

**PART E: PRACTICE STRATEGIES** *ANSWER THIS PART ON THE WORKSHEET AS WELL.*

- | 1. never           | 2. rarely          | 3. sometimes       | 4 often             | 5. always |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| 91. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 94. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 97. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 100. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 92. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 95. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 98. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 101. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |
| 93. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 96. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 99. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. | 102. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |           |

## **PART F: STUDENTS' BELIEFS AND OPINIONS ABOUT LEARNING ENGLISH IN CHINA**

*Please circle one of the choices below. Please remember the sequence:*

**a. strongly agree (SA) b. agree (A) c. uncertain (U) d disagree (D) e. strongly disagree (SD)**

103. SA. A. U. D. SD.    105. SA. A. U. D. SD.    107. SA. A. U. D. SD.    109. SA. A. U. D. SD.  
 104. SA. A. U. D. SD.    106. SA. A. U. D. SD.    108. SA. A. U. D. SD.

**PLEASE GIVE THIS ANSWER SHEET TO YOUR TEACHER. THANK YOU!**

## Appendix D3 Worksheet for Questionnaire 2 to Students in China

## Worksheet for Answering and Scoring the Strategy Inventory for Reading (SIFOR)

1. Write your response to each item (that is, write 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) in each of the blanks, which are numbered to correspond to each item on the Strategy Inventory for Reading (SIFOR).

| Part A = Part C<br>in Q2  | Part B = Voc. Stra.<br>in Part D in Q2 | Part C = Read. Stra.<br>in Part D in Q2                    | Part C = Read. Stra.<br>in Part D in Q2 | Part D (Some over-<br>lapping items) | Part E (Some over-<br>lapping items) | Part F = Part E<br>In Q2  | WHOLE SIFOR                                  |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 26. _____                 | 41. _____                              | 51. _____  | 71. _____                               | 28a. _____                           | 50a. _____                           | 91. _____                 | SUM: PART A _____                            |
| 27. _____                 | 42. _____                              | 52. _____  | 72. _____                               | 28b. _____                           | 50b. _____                           | 92. _____                 |  |
| 28a. _____                | 43. _____                              | 53. _____  | 73. _____                               | 28c. _____                           | 50c. _____                           | 93. _____                 | SUM: PART B _____                            |
| 28b. _____                | 44. _____                              | 54. _____  | 74. _____                               | 28d. _____                           | 50d. _____                           | 94. _____                 |  |
| 28c. _____                | 45. _____                              | 55. _____  | 75. _____                               | 28e. _____                           | 50e. _____                           | 95. _____                 | SUM: PART C _____                            |
| 28d. _____                | 46. _____                              | 56. _____  | 76. _____                               | 29. _____                            | 77. _____                            | 96. _____                 |  |
| 28e. _____                | 47. _____                              | 57. _____  | 77. _____                               | 32. _____                            | 78. _____                            | 97. _____                 | SUM: PART D _____                            |
| 29. _____                 | 48. _____                              | 58. _____  | 78. _____                               | 37. _____                            | 79. _____                            | 98. _____                 |  |
| 30. _____                 | 49. _____                              | 59. _____  | 79. _____                               | 40. _____                            | 86. _____                            | 99. _____                 | SUM: PART E _____                            |
| 31. _____                 | 50a. _____                             | 60. _____  | 80. _____                               |                                      | 87. _____                            | 100. _____                |  |
| 32. _____                 | 50b. _____                             | 61. _____  | 81. _____                               |                                      | 88. _____                            | 101. _____                | SUM: PART F _____                            |
| 33. _____                 | 50c. _____                             | 62. _____  | 82. _____                               |                                      | 89. _____                            | 102. _____                |  |
| 34. _____                 | 50d. _____                             | 63. _____  | 83. _____                               |                                      | 90. _____                            |                           |  |
| 35. _____                 | 50e. _____                             | 64. _____  | 84. _____                               |                                      |                                      |                           |  |
| 36. _____                 |  | 65. _____  | 85. _____                               |                                      |                                      |                           |  |
| 37. _____                 |  | 66. _____  | 86. _____                               |                                      |                                      |                           |  |
| 38. _____                 |  | 67. _____  | 87. _____                               |                                      |                                      |                           |  |
| 39. _____                 |  | 68. _____  | 88. _____                               |                                      |                                      |                           |  |
| 40. _____                 |  | 69. _____  | 89. _____                               |                                      |                                      |                           |  |
|                           |  | 70. _____  | 90. _____                               |                                      |                                      |                           |  |
| Sum _____<br>÷ 19 = _____ | Sum _____<br>÷ 14 = _____              | Sum _____ + Sum _____<br>= Total Sum _____<br>÷ 40 = _____ |   | Sum _____<br>÷ 9 = _____             | Sum _____<br>÷ 13 = _____            | Sum _____<br>÷ 12 = _____ | Sum _____ ÷ 107 = _____<br>(Overall Average) |

2. Total each column and put the result on the line marked "SUM".
3. Divide by the number under "SUM" to provide an average for each column. Round this average off to the nearest tenth, as in 3.4. Because the only possible response for a SIFOR is 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5, your average across items for each part of the SIFOR should be between 1.0 and 5.0. You can make sure your figuring is correct by checking whether your average for each part is within the range of 1.0 to 5.0.
4. Calculate your overall average. To do this, add up all the SUMS for the different parts of the SIFOR. This will give you the total raw score. Divide by 112, the number of items on the SIFOR. This will give you the overall average, which should be within the range of 1.0 and 5.0.
5. When you have completed this Worksheet, your teacher will give you the Profile of results on the Strategy Inventory for Reading (SIFOR). Transfer your averages (for each part or overlapping items) from the Worksheet to the Profile in order to obtain an interpretation of your SIFOR results.

## Appendix E

## Follow-up Questionnaires (1a) to Chinese Teachers in China

After answering Questionnaire 1 to Chinese teachers in China a few weeks ago and reading the Extended Version of the Workshop to show how to teach reading strategies, could you please kindly answer a few follow-up research questions?

*Please circle one of the choices below that best describes your ideas or opinions:*

1. Do you understand the strategies mentioned in Questionnaire1? Please choose one of the answers to show your approximate percentage of understanding?  
a. 100%                      b. 80%                      c. 60%                      d. 40%                      e. 20%
2. What do you think of the strategies mentioned in Questionnaire1?  
a. very useful              b. useful              c. OK              d. not very useful              e. not useful at all
3. What do you think of the Extended Version of the Workshop with the example?  
a. very helpful              b. helpful              c. OK              d. not very helpful              e. no help at all
4. Did the Workshop enrich your ideas of teaching?  
a. very much              b. a lot              c. somewhat              d. a little              e. not at all
5. Have you tried teaching with the strategies in your teaching practice?  
a. Yes, all the time              b. Yes, many times              c. Yes, quite often  
d. Yes , occasionally              e. No, not at all
6. If your answer is 'Yes' in Question 5, what do you feel about this way of teaching strategies?  
a. I like it very much.  
b. I like it.  
c. I think it is all right.  
d. I don't like it.



e. I really dislike it.

7. If the answer is 'Yes' in Question 5, what is your students' response to the way of teaching reading strategies?

a. My students like it very much.

b. My students like it.

c. My students think it is all right.

d. My students don't like it.

e. My students really dislike it.

8. If a few teachers do not like this approach to developing reading strategies, what do you think of their reasons for this? (You can choose more than one answer for this question.)

a. Because they are so used to the traditional way of teaching.

b. Because they are worried that it will take too much time.

c. Because in the Band Four Test, the strategy skills are not tested. So they teach what will be tested in the exams.

d. They haven't tried the strategies yet, but they may think they are useful and they will use them in their teaching in the future.

e. Because they do not know them so well.

f. Others. Please specify:

9. The strategies should be made known to every teacher.

a. strongly agree

b. agree

c. uncertain

d. disagree

e. strongly disagree

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

**PLEASE RETURN IT TO ME (THROUGH THE COLLECTOR). THANK YOU!**

## Appendix F

## Follow -up Questionnaires (2a) to Students in China and in Britain

After answering Questionnaire2 to students in China a few weeks ago and reading the explanation of strategies and how they are inter-related, and how to improve your strategy use, could you please kindly answer a few follow-up research questions?

*Please circle one of the choices below that best describes your ideas or opinions:*

1. Do you understand the strategies mentioned in Questionnaire2? Please choose one of the answers to show your approximate percentage of your understanding?

- a. 100%                      b. 80%                      c. 60%                      d. 40%                      e. 20%

2. What do you think of the strategies mentioned in Questionnaire2?

- a. very useful              b. useful              c. OK              d. not very useful              e. not useful at all

3. I have now realised how important learning attitude, motivation and self-confidence are.

- a. strongly agree              b. agree              c. uncertain              d. disagree              e. strongly disagree

4. Did Questionnaire (2) enrich your ideas of learning strategies?

- a. very much              b. a lot              c. somewhat              d. a little              e. not at all

5. Have you tried the strategies in your reading?

- a. Yes, all the time              b. Yes, many times              c. Yes, quite often  
d. Yes, occasionally              e. No, never

6. If your answer is 'Yes' in Question 5, what do you feel about the strategies?

- a. I like them very much.  
b. I like them.  
c. I think they are all right.  
d. I don't like them.  
e. I really dislike them.

7. If a few students do not like this approach to developing their reading skills, what do you think of their reasons for this? (You can choose more than one answer for this question.)

- a. Because they are so used to the traditional way of reading. They haven't got the time to try the new methods yet.
- b. Because in the Band Four Test, the strategy skills are not tested. So they memorise what will be tested in the exams.
- c. They haven't tried the strategies yet, but they may think they are useful and probably will use them in their reading in the future.
- d. Because they do not know them so well.
- e. Others. Please specify:

8. I find that the strategies help me read faster and understand better.

- a. strongly agree      b. agree    c. uncertain    d. disagree    e. strongly disagree

9. I know better now how to guess unknown words.

- a. strongly agree      b. agree    c. uncertain    d. disagree    e. strongly disagree

10. The strategies should be made known to every student.

- a. strongly agree      b. agree    c. uncertain    d. disagree    e. strongly disagree

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

**PLEASE RETURN IT TO ME (THROUGH THE COLLECTOR).    THANK YOU!**

## Appendix G

Correlation of the End of 1<sup>st</sup> Year Scores and the Use of Strategies

## Classroom behaviour

## Vocabulary strategies

| Variables                        | Coefficients (N) | Sig. (2-tailed) | Variables            | Coefficients (N) | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| link when preview                | .3168 (181)      | .000 ***        | mental linkage       | .3209 (182)      | .000 ***        |
| goal per lesson                  | .2464 (181)      | .001 ***        | grouping             | .1698 (182)      | .022 *          |
| ask teacher to repeat            | .1237 (181)      | .097            | paired associates    | .3124 (182)      | .000 ***        |
| ask teacher to paraphrase        | .1702 (179)      | .023 *          | words to context     | .2421 (179)      | .001 ***        |
| ask teacher to explain           | .2257 (181)      | .002 **         | imagined map         | .3110 (181)      | .000 ***        |
| ask teacher to slow down         | .0196 (181)      | .794            | semantic sets        | .3631 (181)      | .000 ***        |
| ask for example                  | .1393 (181)      | .061            | metaphor sets        | .1261 (180)      | .092            |
| Discuss                          | .3279 (181)      | .000 ***        | dictionary           | .0456 (181)      | .542            |
| use appropriate strategies       | .3003 (180)      | .000 ***        | vocabulary knowledge | .1972 (181)      | .008 **         |
| Record                           | .2165 (181)      | .003 **         | part of speech       | .1930 (182)      | .009 **         |
| check progress                   | .1812 (181)      | .015 *          | immediate context    | .3157 (182)      | .000 ***        |
| reward self                      | .0003 (181)      | .996            | wider context        | .3614 (182)      | .000 ***        |
| lower anxiety                    | .3541 (181)      | .000 ***        | guess meaning        | .2011 (182)      | .006 **         |
| no worry                         | .1789 (181)      | .016 *          | check                | .2414 (182)      | .001 ***        |
| guess & correct misunderstanding | .2132 (181)      | .004 **         |                      |                  |                 |
| active in class                  | .3950 (181)      | .000 ***        |                      |                  |                 |
| take notes                       | .2074 (181)      | .005 **         |                      |                  |                 |
| Highlight                        | .3074 (181)      | .000 ***        |                      |                  |                 |
| Cooperate                        | .2897 (181)      | .000 ***        |                      |                  |                 |

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$ \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

## Reading strategies

## Reading strategies

| Variables                         | Coefficient (N) | Sig. (2-tailed) | Variables                       | Coefficient (N) | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Pay attention to titles           | .2080 (182)     | .005 **         | to scan                         | .2610 (182)     | .000 ***        |
| Predict content                   | .2993 (182)     | .000 ***        | same as L1 reading              | .0667 (182)     | .371            |
| Pay attention to types of letters | -.0299 (182)    | .689            | to translate                    | .0389 (182)     | .603            |
| Punctuation                       | .1987 (181)     | .007 **         | to summarise                    | .2023 (182)     | .006 ***        |
| Pictures, charts...               | .1194 (182)     | .108            | adjust speed                    | .2420 (182)     | .001 ***        |
| Type of text                      | .1781 (182)     | .016 *          | read in blocks                  | .2937 (182)     | .000 ***        |
| Predict & adjust prediction       | .2345 (181)     | .001 ***        | ignore words                    | .1384 (182)     | .062            |
| distinguish g fr specific         | .2767 (181)     | .000 ***        | guess by f/b clues              | .3456 (182)     | .000 ***        |
| analyse cause and effect          | .2368 (182)     | .001 ***        | guess by prefix etc             | .2529 (182)     | .001 ***        |
| comparison/contrast               | .3629 (182)     | .000 ***        | use culture knowledge           | .3964 (181)     | .000 ***        |
| topic sentence                    | .2590 (182)     | .000 ***        | guess by topic knowledge        | .1791 (182)     | .016 *          |
| main idea from details            | .3554 (181)     | .000 ***        | guess by experience             | .3590 (182)     | .000 ***        |
| Coherence                         | .2935 (181)     | .000 ***        | focus on g meaning              | .2219 (182)     | .003 **         |
| sentence markers                  | .3684 (182)     | .000 ***        | analyse complicated expressions | .3163 (182)     | .000 ***        |
| Organisation                      | .3060 (182)     | .000 ***        | analyse writer intention        | .3130 (182)     | .000 ***        |
| Reference                         | .2047 (181)     | .006 **         | graphs etc.                     | .1194 (181)     | .109            |
| pay attention to ellipsis         | .2592 (182)     | .000 ***        | knowledge of cultures           | .3043 (182)     | .000 ***        |
| Substitution                      | .3479 (182)     | .000 ***        | associate new with known        | .2606 (182)     | .000 ***        |
| to infer                          | .3538 (180)     | .000 ***        | facial expression               | .1916 (182)     | .010 **         |
| to skim                           | .2082 (182)     | .005 **         | tone of voice etc.              | .2954 (182)     | .000 ***        |

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$ \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ 

## Practice strategies

## Practice strategies

| Variables             | Coefficient (N) | Sig. (2-tailed) | Variables                  | Coefficient (N) | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| do exercise carefully | .4587 (182)     | .000 ***        | technical books in English | -.0075 (182)    | .920            |
| Newspaper             | .1181 (182)     | .112            | TOEFL exercises            | .1905 (182)     | .010 **         |
| Magazines             | .3103 (182)     | .000 ***        | multiple choice exercises  | .0820 (182)     | .271            |
| Stories               | .2047 (182)     | .006 **         | CLOZE exercises            | .1036 (182)     | .164            |
| additional textbooks  | .2614 (182)     | .000 ***        | T/F questions              | .1789 (182)     | .016 *          |
| journal in English    | .2374 (182)     | .001 ***        | do homework carefully      | .3920 (182)     | .000 ***        |

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$ \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

## Appendix H

## Correlation of the Improvement Scores and the Use of Strategies

## Classroom behaviour

## Vocabulary strategies

| Variables                           | Coefficients<br>(N) | Sig.<br>(2-tailed) | Variables               | Coefficients<br>(N) | Sig.<br>(2-tailed) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| link when preview                   | .2753 ( 158)        | .000 ***           | mental linkage          | .3061 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| goal per lesson                     | .1513 ( 158)        | .058               | Grouping                | .3251 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| ask teacher to repeat               | .2460 ( 158)        | .002 **            | paired associates       | .3489 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| ask teacher to paraphrase           | .1699 ( 156)        | .034 *             | words to context        | .2314 ( 157)        | .004 **            |
| ask teacher to explain              | .2599 ( 158)        | .001 ***           | imagined map            | .2158 ( 158)        | .006 **            |
| ask teacher to slow down            | .0711 ( 158)        | .375               | semantic sets           | .3300 (158)         | .000 ***           |
| ask for example                     | .1656 ( 158)        | .038 *             | metaphor sets           | .2172 ( 157)        | .006 **            |
| Discuss                             | .1969 ( 158)        | .013 **            | dictionary              | .1776 ( 158)        | .026 *             |
| use appropriate strategies          | .2359 ( 157)        | .003 **            | vocabulary<br>knowledge | .3209 ( 158)        | .000 ***           |
| Record                              | .1847 ( 158)        | .020 *             | part of speech          | .1844 ( 159)        | .020 *             |
| check progress                      | .3085 ( 158)        | .000 ***           | immediate context       | .3133 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| reward oneself                      | .1984 ( 158)        | .012 **            | wider context           | .3651 (159)         | .000 ***           |
| lower anxiety                       | .2096 ( 158)        | .008 **            | guess meaning           | .1640 ( 159)        | .039 *             |
| no worry                            | .0768 ( 158)        | .337               | check                   | .2934 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| guess & correct<br>misunderstanding | .1850 ( 158)        | .020 *             |                         |                     |                    |
| active in class                     | .2767 ( 158)        | .000 ***           |                         |                     |                    |
| take notes                          | .1347 ( 158)        | .091               |                         |                     |                    |
| Highlight                           | .1357 ( 158)        | .089               |                         |                     |                    |
| Cooperate                           | .1421 ( 158)        | .075               |                         |                     |                    |

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$ \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

## Reading strategies

## Reading strategies

| Variables                         | Coefficient<br>( N) | Sig.<br>(2-tailed) | Variables                       | Coefficient<br>( N) | Sig.<br>(2-tailed) |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| pay attention to titles           | .2099 ( 159)        | .008 **            | To scan                         | .2614 ( 159)        | .001 ***           |
| predict content                   | .3580 ( 159)        | .000 ***           | same as L1 reading              | .1965 ( 159)        | .013 **            |
| pay attention to types of letters | .1493 ( 159)        | .060               | To translate                    | .0747 ( 159)        | .349               |
| Punctuation                       | .3419 ( 158)        | .000 ***           | To summarise                    | .2074 ( 159)        | .009 **            |
| pictures, charts...               | .1319 ( 159)        | .098               | adjust speed                    | .1833 ( 159)        | .021 *             |
| type of text                      | .1672 ( 159)        | .035 *             | Read in blocks                  | .3854 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| predict & adjust prediction       | .3007 ( 158)        | .000 ***           | Ignore words                    | .1757 ( 159)        | .027 *             |
| distinguish g fr specific         | .3647 ( 159)        | .000 ***           | guess by f/b clues              | .3247 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| analyse cause and effect          | .2697 (159)         | .001 ***           | guess by prefix etc             | .2428 ( 159)        | .002 **            |
| comparison/contrast               | .1923 ( 159)        | .015 *             | use culture knowledge           | .4058 ( 158)        | .000 ***           |
| topic sentence                    | .3929 (159)         | .000 ***           | guess by topic knowledge        | .2689 ( 159)        | .001 ***           |
| main idea from details            | .3285 ( 158)        | .000 ***           | guess by experience             | .3552 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| Coherence                         | .3136 ( 158)        | .000 ***           | Focus on g meaning              | .1674 ( 159)        | .035 *             |
| sentence markers                  | .3496 ( 159)        | .000 ***           | analyse complicated expressions | .3646 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| Organisation                      | .2581 ( 159)        | .000 ***           | analyse writer intention        | .2824 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| Reference                         | .2480 ( 159)        | .002 **            | graphs etc.                     | .3083 ( 158)        | .000 ***           |
| pay attention to ellipsis         | .3459 (159)         | .000 ***           | knowledge of cultures           | .3105 ( 159)        | .000 ***           |
| Substitution                      | .3640 (159)         | .000 ***           | associate new with known        | .2210 ( 159)        | .005 **            |
| to infer                          | .2238 (158)         | .005 **            | Facial expression               | .1372 ( 159)        | .085               |
| to skim                           | .2530 (159)         | .001 ***           | Tone of voice etc.              | .2340 ( 159)        | .003 **            |

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$ \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$ 

## Practice strategies

## Practice strategies

| Variables             | Coefficient<br>( N) | Sig.<br>(2-tailed) | Variables                  | Coefficient<br>( N) | Sig.<br>(2-tailed) |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| do exercise carefully | .2571 ( 159)        | .001 ***           | Technical books in English | .1119 ( 159)        | .160               |
| Newspaper             | .1221 ( 159)        | .125               | TOEFL exercises            | .1418 ( 159)        | .075               |
| Magazines             | .2553 ( 159)        | .001 ***           | Multiple choice exercises  | .1813 ( 159)        | .022 *             |
| Stories               | .3424 ( 159)        | .000 ***           | CLOZE exercises            | .1599 ( 159)        | .044 *             |
| additional textbooks  | .3839 ( 159)        | .000 ***           | T/F questions              | .3049 ( 1559)       | .000 ***           |
| journal in English    | .1831 ( 159)        | .021 *             | do homework carefully      | .2717 ( 159)        | .001 ***           |

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ \*\* Very significant at  $p \leq 0.01$ \*\*\* Extremely significant at  $p \leq 0.001$

## Appendix I

## Extremely Significant and the Least Significant Strategies

| Metacognitive Strategies         | Extremely Sig. in Both scores | Extremely Sig. in Year scores | Extremely Sig. in Improvement Scores | Least sig. In Both scores | Least sig. in Year scores | Least sig. in Improvement scores |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Link when preview                | ✓✓                            |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Goal per lesson                  |                               | ✓                             |                                      |                           |                           | ✓                                |
| Ask teacher to repeat            |                               |                               |                                      |                           | ✓                         |                                  |
| Ask teacher to paraphrase        |                               |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Ask teacher to explain           |                               |                               | ✓                                    |                           |                           |                                  |
| Ask teacher to slow down         |                               |                               |                                      | ✓✓                        |                           |                                  |
| Ask for example                  |                               |                               |                                      |                           | ✓                         |                                  |
| Discuss                          |                               | ✓                             |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Use appropriate strategies       |                               | ✓                             |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Keep a record                    |                               |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Check progress                   |                               |                               | ✓                                    |                           |                           |                                  |
| Reward oneself                   |                               |                               |                                      |                           | ✓                         |                                  |
| Lower anxiety                    |                               | ✓                             |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| No worry                         |                               |                               |                                      |                           |                           | ✓                                |
| Guess & correct Misunderstanding |                               |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Active in class                  | ✓✓                            |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Take notes                       |                               |                               |                                      |                           |                           | ✓                                |
| Highlight                        |                               | ✓                             |                                      |                           |                           | ✓                                |
| Cooperate                        |                               | ✓                             |                                      |                           |                           | ✓                                |

| Cognitive Strategies (Vocabulary) | Extremely Sig. in Both scores | Extremely Sig. in Year scores | Extremely Sig. in Improvement scores | Least sig. In Both scores | Least sig. in Year scores | Least sig. in improvement scores |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Mental linkage                    | ✓✓                            |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Grouping                          |                               |                               | ✓                                    |                           |                           |                                  |
| Paired associates                 | ✓✓                            |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Words to context                  |                               | ✓                             |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Imagined map                      |                               | ✓                             |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Semantic sets                     | ✓✓                            |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Metaphor sets                     |                               |                               |                                      |                           | ✓                         |                                  |
| Dictionary                        |                               |                               |                                      |                           | ✓                         |                                  |
| Voc knowledge                     |                               |                               | ✓                                    |                           |                           |                                  |
| Part of speech                    |                               |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Immediate context                 | ✓✓                            |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Wider context                     | ✓✓                            |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Guess meaning                     |                               |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |
| Check                             | ✓✓                            |                               |                                      |                           |                           |                                  |



## Appendix I

| <b>Cognitive Strategies<br/>(Reading)</b> | <b>Extremely<br/>Sig. in<br/>Both scores</b> | <b>Extremely<br/>Sig. in<br/>Year scores</b> | <b>Extremely<br/>Sig. in<br/>Improvement<br/>scores</b> | <b>Least sig.<br/>In<br/>Both scores</b> | <b>Least sig.<br/>In<br/>Year scores</b> | <b>Least sig.<br/>in<br/>Improvement<br/>scores</b> |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| Titles                                    |  |  |   |  |  |   |
| Predict content                           | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Types of letters                          |  |  |   | ✓✓                                       |  |   |
| Punctuation                               |  |  | ✓   |  |  |   |
| Pictures, charts...                       |  |  |   | ✓✓                                       |  |   |
| Type of text                              |  |  |   |  |  |   |
| Predict & adjust prediction               | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Distinguish g fr specific                 | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Analyse cause and effect                  | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Comparison/contrast                       |  | ✓  | ✓   |  |  |   |
| Topic sentence                            | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Main idea from details                    | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Coherence                                 | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Sentence markers                          | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Organisation                              | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Reference                                 |  |  |   |  |  |   |
| Pay attention to ellipsis                 | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Substitution                              | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| To infer                                  |  | ✓  |   |  |  |   |
| To skim                                   |  |  | ✓   |  |  |   |
| To scan                                   | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Same as L1 reading                        |  |  |   |  | ✓  |   |
| To translate                              |  |  |   | ✓✓                                       |  |   |
| To summarise                              |  |  |   |  |  |   |
| Adjust speed                              |  | ✓  |   |  |  |   |
| Read in blocks                            | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Ignore words                              |  |  |   |  | ✓  |   |
| Guess by f/b clues                        | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Guess by prefix etc                       |  | ✓  |   |  |  |   |
| Use culture knowledge                     | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Guess by topic                            |  |  | ✓   |  |  | ✓   |
| Guess by experience                       | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Focus on Gen. meaning                     |  | ✓  |   |  |  |   |
| Analyse complex expressions               | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Analyse writer intention                  | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Graphs etc.                               |  |  | ✓   |  | ✓  |   |
| Knowledge of cultures                     | ✓✓   |  |   |  |  |   |
| Associate new with known                  |  | ✓  |   |  |  |   |
| Facial expression                         |  |  |   |  |  | ✓   |
| Tone of voice etc.                        |  | ✓  |   |  |  |   |

## Appendix I

| Practice Strategies           | Extremely<br>Sig. in<br>Both scores | Extremely<br>Sig. in<br>Year scores | Extremely<br>Sig. in<br>Improvement<br>scores | Least sig.<br>In<br>Both scores | Least sig.<br>in<br>Year scores | Least sig.<br>in<br>Improvement<br>scores |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| do exercise carefully         | ✓✓                                  |                                     |   |                                 |                                 |   |
| Newspaper                     |                                     |                                     |   | ✓✓                              |                                 |   |
| Magazines                     | ✓✓                                  |                                     |   |                                 |                                 |   |
| Stories                       |                                     |                                     | ✓   |                                 |                                 |   |
| Additional textbooks          | ✓✓                                  |                                     |   |                                 |                                 |   |
| Journal in English            |                                     | ✓                                   |   |                                 |                                 |   |
| Technical books in<br>English |                                     |                                     |   | ✓✓                              |                                 |   |
| TOEFL exercises               |                                     |                                     |   |                                 |                                 | ✓   |
| Multiple choice<br>Exercises  |                                     |                                     |   |                                 | ✓                               |   |
| CLOZE exercises               |                                     |                                     |   |                                 | ✓                               |   |
| T/F questions                 |                                     |                                     | ✓   |                                 |                                 |   |
| Do homework carefully         | ✓✓                                  |                                     |   |                                 |                                 |   |

## Appendix J

**Basic and Advanced Strategies**

| Basic Strategies   | Advanced Strategies   |
|--|---|
| Link when preview<br>Set a goal per lesson<br>Ask teacher to repeat<br>Ask teacher to paraphrase<br>Ask teacher to explain<br>Ask teacher to slow down<br>Ask for examples<br>Keep a record of one's progress<br>Check progress<br>Reward oneself<br>Lower anxiety<br>Do not worry about reading speed<br>Guess and correct misunderstanding<br>Be active in class<br>Take notes<br>Highlight important points<br>Cooperate with teacher<br>Use mental linkage<br>Group words together<br>Use paired associates<br>Put words into context<br>Use imagined map<br>Use semantic sets<br>Use a dictionary<br>Use vocabulary knowledge<br>Check for part of speech when guessing<br>Check immediate context<br>Check wider context<br>Guess meaning<br>Check the guess<br>Pay attention to titles<br>Predict content<br>Pay attention to the types of letters<br>Pay attention to punctuation<br>Pay attention to pictures etc.<br>Pay attention to sentence markers<br>Pay attention to ellipsis<br>Pay attention to substitution<br>Scanning, Same way as reading L1<br>Read in blocks, Ignore unknown words<br>Guess by forward/backward clues<br>Associate new with known<br>Pay attention to teacher's facial expression/tone of voice etc. | Discuss<br>Use appropriate strategies<br>Use metaphor sets<br>Pay attention to the titles<br>Predict content<br>Pay attention to the types of text<br>Predict and adjust prediction<br>Distinguish general from specific<br>Pay attention to cause and effect in the text<br>Compare and contrast<br>Pay attention to the topic sentence<br>Distinguish main idea from details<br>Pay attention to coherence<br>Pay attention to the organisation of text<br>To refer<br>To infer<br>Skimming<br>Scanning<br>Summarise<br>Adjust speed<br>Read in blocks<br>Ignore unknown words<br>Guess by forward/backward clues<br>Use cultural knowledge<br>Guess by topic knowledge<br>Guess by experience<br>Focus on general meaning<br>Analyse complicated expressions<br>Analyse writer's intention<br>Pay attention to graphs etc.<br>Associate new with known |

## Appendix K

Significant Strategies for Teachers and Students in Relation to  
Categorised Strategies and Variables

## T1 Significant teaching strategies in relation to qualification

| Extremely significant strategies<br><i>P &lt; 0.001</i>  | Very significant strategies<br><i>P &lt; 0.01</i>  | Significant strategies<br><i>P &lt; 0.05</i>  |
|--|--|---|
| Teach how to do word<br>Completion exercises<br>Teach how to do phrase<br>Completion exercises<br>Teach paired associates<br>Place words to context<br>Place words on an imagined map<br>Look at the wider context<br>Check that the guess is correct<br>- pay attention to the titles<br>(graduates)<br>Pay attention to the types of<br>Letters<br>Predict and adjust prediction<br>Read in blocks | Teach how to do sentence<br>completion exercises<br>Provide table for completion<br>Complete a diagram by adding<br>labels<br>Finish an incomplete diagram<br>Teach metaphor sets<br>Pay attention to punctuation<br>Pay attention to the type of text<br>Understand cause and effect<br>relation<br>Make an explicit comparison and<br>contrast with given<br>information in the text<br>Find the topic sentence and<br>supporting sentences<br>- guess by experience<br>(teachers with training) | Do role plays<br>Do pair work<br>Do group work<br>Cut texts into segments<br>Representing certain<br>categories<br>to ask students to sort out<br>Devise table for completion<br>-T/F questions<br>(teachers with training)<br>Do silent reading<br>Group words<br>Teach semantic sets<br>Teach how to find the right<br>meaning from a dictionary<br>Introduce the usefulness of<br>vocabulary knowledge like<br><i>active</i> vocabulary, <i>receptive</i><br>vocabulary and <i>throw-away</i><br>vocabulary<br>find out the part of speech of the<br>unknown word<br>Predict content<br>Distinguish general information<br>from specific information<br>Pay attention to sentence markers<br>Pay attention to ellipsis<br>Pay attention to substitution<br>- scan (teachers with training)<br>-adjust speed<br>(teachers with training)<br>- guess by prefix, suffix, etc.<br>(teachers with training)<br>- guess by forward/backward<br>clues (teachers with training)<br>- guess by topic knowledge<br>(teachers with training)<br>- use cultural knowledge<br>(teachers with training)<br>Analyse complicated expressions |

‘-’ This sign means the unexpected group has higher mean than the expected one. It applies to all the other figures in the model.

## T2 Significant teaching strategies in relation to age groups

| Extremely significant strategies<br>P < 0.001   | Very significant strategies<br>P < 0.01   | Significant strategies<br>P < 0.05   |
|---|---|--|
| Cut texts into segments<br>Representing certain categories<br>to ask students to sort out<br>Complete a diagram by adding Labels<br>Look at the wider context<br>Pay attention to the type of letters<br>- predict and adjust prediction (age 20-30)<br>Understand cause and effects Relation<br>Pay attention to coherence<br>- guess by topic knowledge (age over 46) | Do pair work<br>Teach paired associates<br>Place words on an imagined map<br>Check that the guess is correct<br>Predict content<br>Pay attention to pictures, charts and diagrams related to the reading<br>Pay attention to the types of texts<br>Make an explicit comparison and contrast with given information in the text<br>- focus on general meaning (age over 46)<br>- guess by prefixetc. (age over 46) | Teach how to do word completion exercises<br>Devise tables for completion<br>- finish an incomplete diagram (age 20-30)<br>Do silent reading<br>Teach metaphor sets<br>Teach how to find the right meaning from a dictionary<br>pay attention to punctuation from specific information<br>- adjust speed (age over 46) |

S1 to Sn provide information for significant learning strategies in relation to the variables investigated and the categorised strategies in relation to students' performance, measured by the improvement scores.

## S1 Significant learning strategies in learning attitude (Like English)

| Extremely significant strategies<br>P < 0.0009                                 | Very significant strategies<br>P < 0.01  | Significant strategies<br>P < 0.05   |
|--|--|--|
| Set a goal per lesson<br>Lower anxiety<br>Be active in class<br>Read in blocks | Link when preview<br>Cooperate with teacher<br>Create mental linkage<br>Do multiple choice exercises | Ask teacher to explain<br>- pay attention to the type of letters (dislike English)<br>Make an explicit comparison and contrast with given information in the text<br>Pay attention to substitution<br>Summarise<br>Adjust speed<br>Guess from teacher's facial expression<br>Guess from teacher's tone of voice<br>Do exercises carefully<br>Read newspaper<br>Read magazines<br>Use additional textbook<br>Do TOEFL exercises |

## S2 Significant learning strategies in motivation

| Extremely significant strategies<br>$P < 0.001$                          | Very significant strategies<br>$P < 0.01$  | Significant strategies<br>$P < 0.05$   |
|--|--|--|
| Group words<br>Infer<br>- read technical books<br>(strongly unmotivated) | Link when preview<br>Lower anxiety<br>Take notes<br>- pay attention to punctuation<br>(strongly unmotivated)<br>Pay attention to sentence markers<br>Skim<br>Analyse writer's intention<br>Guess from teacher's tone of<br>Voice | Set a goal per lesson<br>- ask teacher to explain<br>(strongly unmotivated)<br>Be active in class<br>Create mental linkage<br>Distinguish main idea from<br>details<br>- same as reading L1<br>(strongly unmotivated)<br>Summarise<br>Adjust speed<br>Read in blocks<br>Use background knowledge<br>Focus on general meaning<br>Do exercises carefully<br>Read newspaper<br>- read stories<br>(strongly unmotivated)<br>Use additional textbook<br>Do homework carefully |

## S3 Significant learning strategies in being hard-working

| Extremely significant strategies<br>$P < 0.001$   | Very significant Strategies<br>$P < 0.01$   | Significant strategies<br>$P < 0.05$  |
|---|---|---|
| Link when preview<br>Set a goal per lesson<br>Lower anxiety<br>Be active in class<br>Cooperate with teacher<br>Do exercises carefully<br>Do multiple choice exercises | Check progress<br>Guess and correct<br>misunderstanding<br>Pay attention to<br>sentence markers<br>Pay attention to<br>substitution<br>Infer<br>Do exercises with<br>T/F<br>questions | Ask teacher to paraphrase<br>- discuss (not hard-working)<br>Use appropriate strategies<br>Keep a record<br>- highlight (not hard-working)<br>Create mental linkage<br>Guess meaning<br>Predict content<br>Pay attention to punctuation<br>Make an explicit comparison and<br>Contrast with given information in the text<br>Summarise<br>Read in blocks<br>Use cultural knowledge<br>Read newspaper<br>Read magazines<br>Use additional textbook<br>Do TOEFL exercises<br>Do CLOZE exercises |

## S4 Significant learning strategies in being active in class

| Extremely significant strategies<br>$P < 0.001$   | Very significant strategies<br>$P < 0.01$   | Significant strategies<br>$P < 0.05$  |
|---|---|---|
| Set a goal per lesson<br>Be active in class<br>Cooperate with teacher<br>Use cultural knowledge<br>Analyse writer's intention<br>Read stories | Ask teacher to explain<br>Discuss<br>Check progress<br>Lower anxiety<br>Guess and correct<br>Misunderstanding<br>Place words on an imagined map<br>Use vocabulary knowledge like<br><i>active, receptive</i> and <i>throw-away</i><br>vocabulary to judge how much<br>time to be spent on a new word<br>Predict content<br>Pay attention to coherence<br>Scan<br>Read in blocks<br>Guess by using personal<br>experience<br>Use analysing strategies<br>Do exercises carefully<br>Use additional textbook | Ask teacher to paraphrase<br>Use appropriate strategies<br>Place words to context<br>Look at the wider context<br>Guess meaning<br>Pay attention to punctuation<br>Understand cause and effect<br>relation<br>Distinguish main idea from<br>details<br>Pay attention to sentence markers<br>Pay attention to organisation of<br>the text<br>Skim<br>Same as reading L1<br>Summarise<br>Associate new with known<br>Do multiple choice exercises |

## S5 Significant learning strategies in being good at reading strategies

| Extremely significant strategies<br>$P < 0.001$   | Very significant strategies<br>$P < 0.01$  | <i>Significant strategies</i><br>$P < 0.05$  |
|---|--|--|
| Set a goal per lesson<br>Pay attention to the organisation<br>of the text<br>Infer<br>Guess from teacher's tone of<br>voice | Use appropriate strategies<br>Use semantic sets for memorising<br>words<br>Predict content<br>Pay attention to sentence markers<br>Pay attention to ellipsis<br>Scan<br>Read in blocks<br>Guess by using personal<br>experience<br>Guess from teacher's facial<br>Expression<br>Read stories | Link when preview<br>Ask teacher to paraphrase<br>Check progress<br>Cooperate with teacher<br>Create mental linkage<br>Group words<br>Look at the immediate context<br>Look at the wider context<br>Pay attention to the type of text<br>Predict and adjust prediction<br>Distinguish main idea from<br>details<br>Translate<br>Adjust speed<br>Guess by prefix, suffix, etc.<br>Use cultural knowledge<br>Analyse writer's intention<br>Use additional textbook |

## S6 Significant learning strategies in metacognitive strategies

| Extremely highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.001$  | Very highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.01$ | Highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.05$  |
|--|---|---|
| Link when preview<br>Ask teacher to repeat<br>Ask teacher to explain<br>Use appropriate strategies<br>Check that the guess is correct<br>Lower anxiety<br>Be active in class |   | Ask teacher to paraphrase<br>Ask for examples<br>Discuss<br>Keep a record of progress<br>Reward oneself<br>Guess and correct misunderstanding |

## S7 Significant learning strategies in cognitive strategies

| Extremely highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.001$  | Very highly correlated Strategies<br>$P < 0.01$ | Highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.05$   |
|--|---|--|
| Link when preview<br>Set a goal per lesson<br>Make paired associates<br>Place words to context<br>Place words on an imagined map<br>Look for semantic sets<br>Use vocabulary knowledge like <i>active, receptive</i> and <i>throw-away</i> vocabulary to judge how much to be spent on a new word<br>Look at the immediate context<br>Look at the wider context<br>Check the guess is correct<br>Pay attention to titles<br>Predict content<br>Pay attention to punctuation<br>Predict & adjust prediction<br>Distinguish general information<br>From specific information<br>Understand cause and effect relation<br>Pay attention to topic sentence and supporting sentences<br>Distinguish main idea from details<br>Pay attention to coherence<br>Pay attention to sentence markers<br>Pay attention to organisation of the text<br>Refer<br>Pay attention to ellipsis<br>Pay attention to substitution<br>Infer<br>Skim<br>Read in blocks |   | Use dictionary<br>Check part of speech<br>Guess meaning<br>Type of text<br>Comparison/contrast<br>Ignore words<br>Focus on general meaning |



|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Guess by forward/backward clues<br>Guess by prefix, suffix etc.<br>Use culture knowledge<br>Guess by topic knowledge<br>Guess by experience<br>Analyse complicated expressions<br>Analyse writer's intention<br>Make use of graphs etc. for<br>Understanding<br>Associate new with known<br>Guess from teacher's tone of voice etc. |  |  |
|---|--|--|

### S8 Significant learning strategies in compensation strategies

| Extremely highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.001$  | Very highly correlated Strategies<br>$P < 0.01$ | Highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.05$ |
|--|---|--|
| Look at the immediate context<br>Look at the wider context<br>Check that the guess is correct<br>Guess by forward/backward clues<br>Guess by prefix, suffix etc<br>Use culture knowledge<br>Guess from teacher's tone of voice etc |   |  |

### S9 Significant learning strategies in practice strategies

| Extremely highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.001$   | Very highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.01$ | Highly correlated strategies<br>$P < 0.05$                                     |
|---|---|--|
| Do exercises carefully<br>Read magazines<br>Read stories<br>Use additional textbook<br>Do exercises with T/F questions<br>Do homework carefully |   | Read journals in English<br>Do multiple choice exercises<br>Do CLOZE exercises |

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Appendix L

## Profile of Results for Teaching Strategies

As a teacher, if you are interested in finding out the score that relates to your use of teaching strategies, you can work it out in the same way as explained to the students in their worksheet. The following explanations show the strategies covered by the type of strategies.

Stage 1 – Hierarchy strategies:

This involves higher levels of thinking and organising the teaching and management of students. By planning the lesson; choosing the methods to use (probably the most appropriate method will be the Eclectic Method carried out in a communicative approach); encouraging students and exerting influence and control to achieve an active learning atmosphere.

Stage 2 – Teaching strategies:

College English textbooks involve many subjects. In teaching, the teacher should try to:

- Impart knowledge of the cultural, background and subject knowledge involved;
- Teach reading and comprehension from a discourse level by considering the type of text being read;
- Create a mental picture of the text from reading the title and comparing and adjusting it as it is read.
- Teach discourse analysis skills, working on the text both from the linguistic and non-linguistic clues provided in the text, reading for meaning and for the general main ideas.
- Teach the skills of skimming, scanning, predicting, inferring and adjusting reading speed according to the reading purpose;
- Ensure the students apply L1 reading skills to L2 reading, and analyse and translate text where necessary.

Stage 3 – Practice strategies:

This involves 2 steps: in-class and after-class practice. When doing in-class practice, the teacher should monitor that students apply the reading skills when they have a group or pair discussion. The discussion of how one comes to a conclusion or how one works out the problem is very important. The teacher or a good student in class should do the think-aloud (demonstrating the thinking process) in reading to show students how the mind works when reading and how all the other important elements like prior knowledge and forward or backward clues etc. interact and help reading. After-class practice should be given and checked regularly. Students should also be assigned to do group reading after class.

In conclusion, the purpose of the profile may be viewed as serving a kind of guideline in teaching to summarise the aspects of teaching strategies. The actual application of the detailed strategies is shown in the workshop.

## Appendix M

## Acquisition, Retention and Metacognitive Strategies

| <b>Acquisition strategies</b>   | <b>Retention strategies</b>             | <b>Metacognitive strategies</b>                              |
|---|---|--|
| Ask the teacher to repeat, paraphrase, explain, slow down, give examples  | Link the lesson with what already known | Arrange and plan each lesson                                 |
| Discuss with peers to sort out problems   | Take part in class activities           | Assess progress by keeping a record                          |
| Use the appropriate strategies to finish a task   | Take notes                              | Check progress   |
| Make guesses in skimming  | Highlight important points              | Reward oneself for the progress                              |
| Cooperate with teacher and peers  | Create mental linkage                   | Lower anxiety  |
| Use vocabulary knowledge  | Group words together                    | Concentrate on reading, not to worry about the reading speed |
| Guess part of speech of new word  | Use paired associates                   |  |
| Look at the immediate context, the wider context  | Place new words into context            |  |
| Guess and check the meaning   | Use imagined map                        |  |
| Pay attention to titles/subtitles, types of letters, punctuation, pictures, charts, the types of text, coherence, sentence markers, text organisation, ellipsis, substitution | Use semantic sets                       |  |
| Anticipate/predict content and adjust prediction  | Use metaphor sets                       |  |
| Distinguish general from specific information   | Use a dictionary                        |  |
| Analyse cause and effect in the text, complicated sentences, writer's intention/opinion/attitude  | Social strategies                       |  |
| Find out the reference  | Practice strategies                     |  |
| Infer, skim, scan   | Linking skills                          |  |
| Use the same way of reading L1  |   |  |
| Translate if necessary  |   |  |
| Summarise   |   |  |
| Read in a block of meaning, ignore unimportant words  |   |  |
| Look for forward/backward clues, prefix/suffix, word family   |   |  |
| Use cultural knowledge, personal experience, background knowledge   |   |  |
| Focus on general information rather than on details   |   |  |
| Use teacher's facial expression/gestures/tone of voice/repetition of words/phrases for understanding  |   |  |