ENGLISH AMONG TAIWANESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Reading instruction in Taiwan and elsewhere has traditionally focused on intensive classroom teaching. Such an approach may prove successful in terms of scores on reading tests or grades in courses. The problem is that it simply is not complete; it does not cultivate a reader who chooses to read. Therefore, there has been a call for free voluntary reading to complement reading instruction, to extend and consolidate its effectiveness (e.g. Nuttall, 1996; Eskey and Grabe, 1988).

Although free voluntary reading has been claimed by L1 and L2 educators to be beneficial for language and cognitive development (e.g. Krashen, 1993b), there are only a few research studies which have investigated it and even less research has been undertaken in Taiwan to determine its benefits. Unfamiliarity with free voluntary reading and a lack of appreciation of its likely benefits led to considerable difficulties in gaining access to readers in Taiwan to implement an experimental programme.

In this study, sixty-three college freshmen, studying at two universities in Taiwan, participated in a free voluntary reading programme. The thesis described the free voluntary reading activities of the college freshmen. It tried to assess the extent and the variety of their reading attitudes, reading habits, and perceptions about reading for enjoyment. In particular, it attempts to identify the differences between comparison groups varying in gender, university, continuity of reading, and test achievement scores.

Data in the study is drawn from reading questionnaires, grammar proficiency tests, and reading journals. The test results showed an improvement in particular with those subjects who continued free voluntary reading throughout the experiment. From questionnaires and reading journals, three problems that hampered free voluntary activities were identified: vocabulary problem, faulty reading habits and attitude, and inability to locate suitable reading material. Additionally, the results showed that the subjects seemed to equate free voluntary reading with studying, and they did not read much both in terms of frequency of reading and time spent on reading. Distinctive results were found between gender groups on reading preferences, between score groups on reading purposes and reading patterns, and between continuity groups on reading purposes. A number of recommendations and implications were derived for teachers on assisting free voluntary reading and for students on how to be better active readers.

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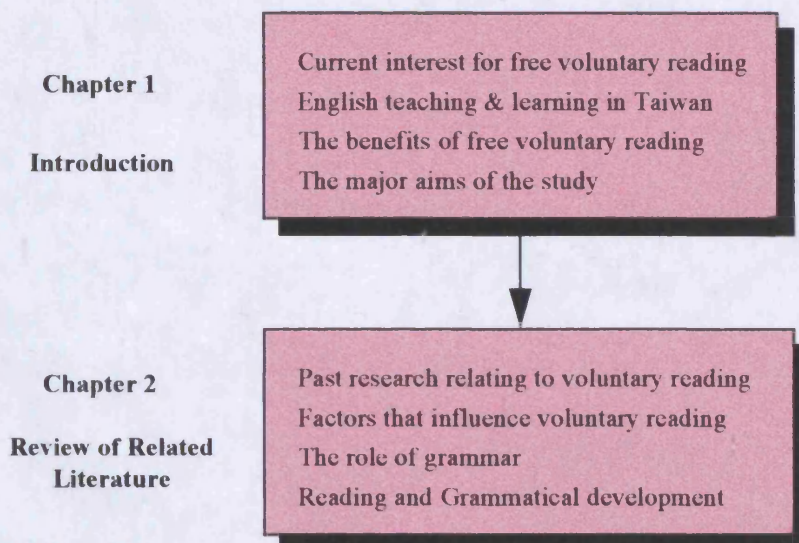
1. INTRODUCTION

> The best way to improve your knowledge of a foreign language is to go
> and live among its speakers. The next best way is to read extensively in it.
>
> Experienced teachers know this, and there is research evidence to justify it.
> This is useful when persuading head teachers to give you funds to buy
> books, or convincing parents that reading is not a waste of time. Students
> who read a lot will not become fluent overnight, and it may take a year or
> two before you notice an improvement in their speaking and writing; but
> then it often comes as a breakthrough. They will progress at increasing
> speed and far outstrip classmates who have not developed the reading
> habit.
>
> .... *Christine Nuttall* (1996: 128)

Overview

This chapter introduces the importance of developing a lifelong reading habit from the following aspects: the importance of reading, the problem of passive reading attitudes, and the diversity of reading abilities and backgrounds. It then discusses how free voluntary reading must correspond to the readers' current interests and meet their individual needs if it is to be successful. It describes the necessary conditions as well as ways of promoting free voluntary reading in order to ensure its effectiveness. In the final section, the purpose of the present study is detailed against a background analysis of the problems of language teaching and learning in Taiwan, and its significance. Definitions of terms used are also provided.

1.1 Background

The concept of free voluntary reading is not a new one. It has been reported over the past 30 years[1], albeit it was dubbed with various names, such as sustained

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[1] Studies of reported pleasure reading can be traced back to 1937, when Schoonover's high school students were involved in a free reading program. More studies were administered during the 1980s. They include Greaney (1980), Newman &

silent reading, self-selected reading, recreational reading, leisure reading, independent reading, extensive reading, etc. It presupposes readers' own decision to spend, either in school or at home, portions of their time reading a book of their own choice.

By emphasising the effects of the free voluntary reading on the improvement of vocabulary knowledge, reading ability, writing style, spelling and ability to use complex grammatical constructions, over a number of these years Krashen has been promulgating the power of reading (Krashen, 1984, 1985, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992a, 1993b, 1995). In the prologue of his book (1993b), he indicates that free voluntary reading is not a panacea but is something highly beneficial for language acquisition and literacy development.

> "I will not claim that free voluntary reading is the complete answer.
> Free readers are not all guaranteed admission to Harvard Law
> School. What the research tells me is that if children or less literate
> adults start reading for pleasure, however, good things will happen.
> Their reading comprehension will improve, and they will find
> difficult, academic-style texts more comprehensible. Their writing
> style will improve, and they will be better able to write prose in a
> style that is acceptable to schools, business, and the scientific
> community. Their vocabulary will improve and will improve at a
> better rate than if they took one of the well-advertised vocabulary
> building courses. Also, their spelling and control of grammar will
> improve." (Krashen, 1993b)

In addition to language development, Krashen argues that free voluntary reading is also an extremely powerful way of promoting cognitive development. In his

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Prowda (1982), Evans & Gleadow (1983), Wahlberg & Tsai (1983, 1985), Telfer & Kann (1984), Robert et al (1984), Neuman (1986), Hafner et al (1986), and Fielding et al (1988).

greatly expanded reading hypothesis, Krashen (1995) asserts that free voluntary reading has a number of other positive consequences as well:

- it is a source of great enjoyment;
- it is an important source of knowledge; and
- it can help people define their life paths.

1.1.1   Current interests

1.1.1.1   The importance of reading

The importance of reading is depicted clearly in the book, *The Reading Solution*, in which the authors write:

> One researcher has declared that unless children and adults read twenty-two minutes a day, their reading skills will go into decline. I'm sceptical about magic numbers like 'twenty-two minutes a day', but I do know that children who stop reading start to fall behind their classmates. They lose ground in vocabulary, in comprehension, in advanced thinking skills, even in the ability to write. (Kropp and Cooling, 1995: 161)

Carrell (1988a) also argues that "reading is by far the most important of the four skills in a second language, particularly in English as a second or foreign language" (p.1).

Teaching people to read is certainly the most prevalent goal of schooling in English-speaking countries. It is all but impossible to identify a goal more basic or more traditional. Language teaching is undergoing many changes; however, reading remains unaltered, for the importance of reading is almost universally

recognised. In second language teaching and learning, reading has always had a prominent position in the interests of both second language teachers and researchers. For many countries where English is taught as a foreign language, reading is often identified as the main reason why students learn the language (Carrell, 1988a). Such universal demand for English, especially from those with a need to study English for academic purposes (Prator, 1991; Dubin and Bycina, 1991; Mokhatari and Sheorey, 1994), is reflected by the large number of research projects and publications concerned with the learning and teaching of reading in ESL/EFL situations.

In today's global village, the skill of reading has never been more important. The advent of new information technologies, such as computers and electronic networks, has made it a crucial tool for information transmission and retrieval. The Internet, for example, provides a unique level of access to information databases all over the world, and people are using the Internet for teaching, research, business, and practice. Immediate access to a 'virtual' library of millions of volumes and thousands of items of information is now available at people's fingertips. Electronic mail, moreover, allows people to write back and forth quickly without concern about how the message actually gets delivered. The Internet has come of age. As with the telephone and the television, it has fundamentally changed the way people live and work, and it is becoming impossible to ignore. Seemingly, the ability to read in English is crucial for joining the global village, as it permits new forms of meaningful communication, and provides an easy access to all sorts of information needed.

1.1.1.2   The call for development of life-long reading habits

It may be true enough that people learn to read by reading (Smith, 1988b; Goodman, 1982) and that good readers are those who read much (Elley, 1994). Nuttall (1996) indicates that the easiest and most effective way of improving students' reading skills is getting them to read extensively. She also emphasises

that "it is much easier to teach people to read better if they are learning in a favourable climate, where reading is valued not only as an educational tool, but as a source of enjoyment" (Nuttall, 1996: 127).

Reading is paramount in language education and free voluntary reading is perceived as an effective way to ensure its success. Additionally, most education systems emphasise voluntary reading as an important objective, and in at least one major large-scale study the majority of teachers rated highly the instructional aim of fostering students' interest in reading (Elley, 1994). It is remarkable, therefore, that so little attention is paid in instructional programmes to developing voluntary readers; youngsters who do choose to read widely and often do so on their own (Lamme, 1976; Speigel, 1981; Morrow, 1986, 1987, 1991; Morrow and Weinstein, 1986; Huber, 1993). Lunzer and Gardner (1979, as referred to in Nuttall, 1996), for example, revealed that in British classrooms reading occupied no more than 15% of lesson time overall, and the situation had not improved ten years later. Dubin and Bycina (1991) emphasise that the cause of low frequency of free voluntary reading may be that "too many teachers feel they are shirking their duties if they fail to 'instruct' during each and every minute of a class session" (p. 201). Williams (1984) also highlights that "teachers should not feel that they are neglecting their job if they are not constantly explaining something or organising classroom activities. It is important to give learners some uninterrupted time to read and reflect, and resist the temptation to rush in constantly to help" (p. 19). In other words, most teachers provide little opportunity for students to read for enjoyment as they are not accustomed to making time for independent reading. Reasons commonly given for such lack of attention to voluntary reading are lack of time, pressure of the syllabus and examinations. More often than not, teachers simply instruct on help the students discover something in situations where the students ought to find out for themselves, which in turn, deprives them the chance of learning through experience.

Another factor accounting for the low frequency of free voluntary reading may be that schools generally gauge the success of their reading programmes by successful scores on standardised reading tests rather than by assessing frequency or liking for reading or by profiling the personal reading habits of their students (Irving, 1980; Spiegel, 1981). This view is echoed by Krashen's statement "school is a test" (1990[2], 1993b: 24) and Nuttall's "testing instead of teaching" (1996: 34). Taverner (1990) fully elucidates this point: "what could be measured was important and, conversely, what could not be tested was peripheral" (p. 1). Due to the external pressures to improve standardised test scores, it has never been more obvious that comparatively few teachers would promote pleasurable literary activities to enhance enthusiasm and foster positive attitudes among students toward reading, as the benefits of free voluntary reading are apparently not immediately forthcoming.

There are two main reasons for reading: Reading for pleasure and reading for information (Grellet, 1981). Unfortunately, it is clear that substantial numbers of children and adults who can read choose not to read either for pleasure or for information. Studies by Greaney (1980), for example, found that fifth-grade students devoted only 5.4 percent of available leisure time to reading, and that 22.2% of the students did not read at all. Few primary-grade children, as Morrow and Weinstein (1982) report, choose to read books during free-choice time in school. Gurthrie and Greaney (1991, as cited in Elley, 1994) survey across USA, Ireland, England, Scotland and New Zealand, and conclude that students do not read much in their leisure time. Gurthrie even points out that the small numbers of books read by students indicate that many students might have difficulty meeting the reading demands of adult life. Similar studies find that children do not choose to read very much in their leisure time (Whitehead, *et al*, 1977, as described in Davies, 1986; Speigel, 1981; Walberg and Tsai, 1984; Anderson,

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[2] Krashen (1990) argues that school does not encourage selective reading or critical writing for problem solving. It assigns a certain amount of reading and writing for each class, and then test students on their reading and writing ability.

Wilson and Fielding, 1988; Greaney and Hegarty, 1987; Lesesne, 1991; Valencia, Hiebert, and Kapinus, 1992).

As reported by Morrow (1991), there is even more concern among educators that students' reading activity out of school is declining, and is declining as children become older.

> "Whitehead, Capey, Maddren, and Wellings (1977) studied the voluntary reading of 8,000 English children. The investigation revealed a decline in reading as children became older. They found that at age 10, nine percent of the children studied did not read voluntarily; by age 14, that figure rose to 40 percent. A survey of 233,000 sixth graders by the California Department of Education (1980) found that 70 percent almost never read for pleasure. A 1972 Gallop survey revealed that 80 percent of the books read in the United States were read by only 10 percent of the population (Spiegel, 1981); half the adults sampled admitted never having completed a book. An extensive investigation by the Book Industry Study Group indicated that the number of young people under the age of 21 identified as readers dropped from 75 percent in 1976 to 63 percent in 1984." (p. 682)

Most EFL teachers instruct students how to read set texts intensively in class. However, as mentioned above, they do not encourage them to read much on their own and leave little room for them to practice outside class the skills acquired in class and required for approaching other texts not studies in class. From a cognitive viewpoint, this low investment of time for extensive reading means that teacher may fail to develop the students' facility to read widely and independently for enjoyment. Whereas, from an affective viewpoint, they also fail to develop students' habits and, consequently, the love of reading. It is therefore not surprising that substantial numbers of students choose not to read, and this has

become even more of a problem when television, videos, computers and other entertainment compete for students' free time (Greaney and Neuman, 1990; Morrow, 1991).

Teaching students to read is necessary, but is certainly not a sufficient purpose for reading teaching. A further concern is with nurturing individuals who will choose to read throughout their lives (Davies, 1986; Taverner, 1990; Ellis and McRae, 1991; Morrow, 1991; Kropp and Cooling, 1995; Nuttall, 1996). Morrow (1991) clearly proclaims that readers are made in childhood, so "if schools do not deliberately and thoughtfully attract students to reading during these early years, voluntary reading may never become a life-long habit" (p. 682). The importance of attracting students to reading during the early years is also emphasised in the Bullock Report.

> The reading habit should be established early, and should receive
> unqualified encouragement from that point onwards. (DES, 1975:
> 304)

Motivating an interest in reading is also the top concern of US Office of Education, who appointed ten experts to undertake a survey on reading. Their report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985) describes reading as a lifelong process and refers to independent reading as a most useful form of reading fluency.

Although the EFL learner's purpose in reading English might be more on learning the target language, "in order for the learner to become an effective reader, he needs to have appropriate texts and appropriate tasks that allow him not only to develop his language, but also to develop purposeful reading styles (Williams, 1984: 12)." That is, he should be encouraged to practice reading intensively as well as extensively, according to his reading purposes. And this could only be completed by reading widely, whether it be for information, interest or

enjoyment. Some, or most, of this reading must be done out of class by students' reading on their own.

1.1.1.3 English language teaching and learning in Taiwan

It is widely accepted in Taiwan that English is a prerequisite for further learning in many areas of knowledge, and a key skill needed for many occupations. However, the social context of Taiwan does not provide an urgent motive, such as survival in an English speaking society, to learn the language. In other words, there may not be an immediate, practical purpose for learning English. Essentially, English is a foreign, rather than a second language. English is learned by nearly all students at secondary school level and the subject is all important element of university entrance, while some students certainly enjoy learning English for many it remains only a required subject, to be learned for practical and pragmatic reasons. The popular perception of the need for English (at least for exams) is seen in the widespread attendance at "cram" school. Again in these school, as in daytime normal school, reading focuses on class texts, often only for language practices.

In Taiwanese universities, the extensive use of academic materials written in English in a wide range of disciplines increasingly fosters the need to master English, in particular reading skills. Far too many young people today are growing up in circumstances where English teaching and learning is solely to prepare for tests or exams, and they are kept dependent on the teacher as source of information. Such an attitude is as Ruddock and Hopkins (1984) put it, "For many students the teacher is an authority and they are in no position to question the claim to authority because the pedagogy does not encourage them to seek evidence which might demonstrate the complexity of competing claims to knowledge" (p. 26).

Reading leads to reading (Smith, 1976, 1988b; Goodman, 1982). Many factors in Taiwan's teaching situation often weigh heavily against the development of students' individual reading skills and abilities, such as constraints of class time, the availability of books and back-up material, reader motivation, etc. Nuttall (1996) emphasises that "class time is always in short supply and the amount of reading needed to achieve fluency and efficiency is very great - much greater than most students will undertake if left to themselves. So we need to promote reading out of class" (p. 39). Free voluntary reading is needed; however, it depends heavily on enthusiasm on the teacher's part to develop students' desire to read. Ellis and McRae (1991) suggest that the teacher should "carefully build up of reader familiarity with a variety of books leading to a wider reading range, encourage individual exploration, and make extensive reading part of a student's education for life" (p. 5). Such a scaffolding of support is necessary to progressively establish students' confidence and capability for reading widely. Otherwise, the exam-led education system will keep students from reading books voluntarily and fail to convey the joy that reading can be.

1.1.2 Individual needs

Not only the call for developing students who will choose to read and therefore become lifelong readers encourages free voluntary reading, but the enormous variety of students' individual choices and preferences lends powerful support to the widespread practice of catering for their needs by means of an individualised reading scheme rather than by class sets of books (Whitehead *et al*, 1977, as cited in Davies, 1986).

It is widely agreed that all the students in a given class may not have the same tastes. Personal interest or an instrumental need for information varies, so it is difficult to cater for individual needs in traditional intensive reading lessons. And in order to identify and meet various individual needs, greater effort is required

from the teacher to try to arouse motivation through the classroom handling of the text, so as to give learners a range of purposes in reading.

When dealing with language learners, current attention is being given to whether reading is "a reading problem or a language problem" (Alderson, 1984: 1). Williams (1984) explicitly stresses the problem of lack of language knowledge: "For the foreign language learner, ignorance of the language can be an obstacle to understanding, no matter how highly motivated a person may be" (p. 16). Apart from the diversity of individual needs and interests, the differences of EFL readers' knowledge of language in comprehending texts also indicate that free voluntary reading plays a key role in furthering individual development. For some students, reading simply clicks. They read with some degree of critical awareness. They know how to assess the purposes of the authors, following their lines of argument and making judgements about their views and conclusions. For other students, the process is less dramatic. They tend to read slowly and intensively with the purpose of extracting the literal meaning from the text. However, their understanding varies depending on the extent how they are able to make sense of the written word and focus on key words and word sequences. In a general sense, some know how to interpret the text, whereas others try to understand the text.

Although it is difficult for a teacher to teach a class of students who have an enormous range of abilities and backgrounds, the goal of a language course at university level is to equip students with the basics to handle many different kinds of reading material. Through free voluntary reading, the student is then expected to learn the language through reading at his own pace, in his own way, since "reading is the skill adults can most easily maintain and improve independent of established language courses" (Barnett, 1989: 2).

1.1.3   Promotion of free voluntary reading

The importance of promoting free voluntary reading is based on the premise that schooling alone does not necessarily produce active readers, able to read fluently, frequently and voluntarily. If reading is learned by reading, by having control over the selection and the pace of reading, by practising skills through an individual and private process, by exposure to substantial quantities of favourite material, then free voluntary reading should be able to remedy the present situation. It must, in other words, be able to correspond to students' current interests and meet their individual needs, as described above.

1.1.3.1   Benefits associated with free voluntary reading

Several studies have identified the benefits of free voluntary reading. Figure 1.1 illustrates the benefits of language development (reading comprehension, writing style, grammar, vocabulary, spelling) and cognitive development (facts and ideas).
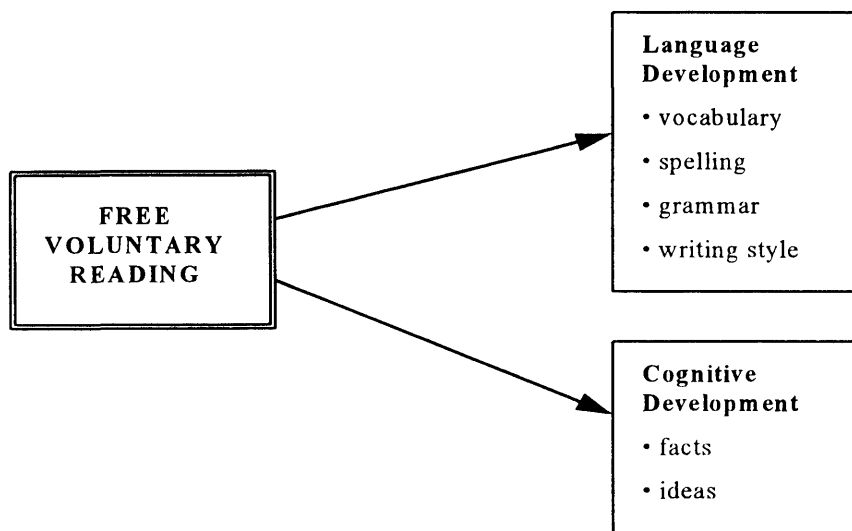
Figure 1.1 The benefits of free voluntary reading

Language development. It has been shown that more reading results in better language development. Some studies revealed positive relationships between the amount of leisure reading and success in reading (Greaney, 1980; Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, 1988; Gradman and Hanania, 1991; Foertsch, 1992; Pilgreen and Krashen, 1993). Students who participate in in-school free reading programs such as sustained silent reading do at least as well, and usually better than, children in traditional language arts programmes on tests of vocabulary and reading comprehension, as long as the programs last for seven months or longer (Krashen, 1988, 1989, 1993b, 1993c). More evidence exists that those who say they read more and those who live in a richer print environment display greater competence in vocabulary (Wells, 1985; Nagy, Herman, and Anderson, 1985; Greaney and Hegarty, 1987; Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, 1988; West, Stanovich and Mitchell, 1993; Cho and Krashen, 1994; Lee, 1996; see Krashen, 1989 for a detailed review) and in grammar (Chomsky, 1972; Elley and Mangubhai, 1983). Also, more comprehensible input in the form of listening to stories is associated with better vocabulary development (Elley, 1989; Krashen, 1993b, 1993c). Several studies confirm that pleasure reading and writing are correlated (Applebee, 1978; Elley and Mangubhai, 1983; Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, 1988; Janopoulos, 1986; Elley, 1991; Lee, 1996; Tsang, 1996). Studies by Stanovich and West (1989), Polak and Krashen (1988) find that more reading is associated with better spelling. There are several cases showing that the development of literacy can occur without formal instruction and study (Krashen, 1988; 1989, 1991; 1992a; 1993a; 1993b, 1993c, 1994, 1995).

Cognitive development. Cognitive development refers to the development of new ideas and the acquisition of new factual knowledge, which are developed through a five-stage process (Krashen, 1990). The five stages in thinking and creating new ideas are (Krashen, 1990: 364):

(1) *Gathering ideas.* This takes place through reading and listening, or may be the result of the entire five-stage thinking process.

(2) *Preparing ideas.* In order to come up with new ideas, we first have to prepare, or clarify, our current ideas and the problem we are working on. Wallas (1926: 44) states: "our mind is not likely to give us a clear answer to any particular problem unless we set it a clear question." Elbow (1972: 129) may be referring to the same stage when he discusses "wrestling with ideas" and "perception of a major mess" (131).

(3) *Incubation.* In this stage, the mind goes about solving the problem. Elbow (1972, 1981) refers to this as 'cooking'. Incubation occurs subconsciously and automatically. When given a clearly stated problem, we involuntarily attempt to solve it.

(4) *Illumination.* Illumination is the emergence of a new idea, the result of incubation. It is often perceived by the thinker as a sudden insight.

(5) *Verification.* Ideas that emerge from the incubation stage are 'fragile' and easily forgotten. To enter long-term memory they need to be confirmed. This happens when the thinker notes that he or she has arrived at the same idea from a different source, or when he or she discovers that someone else has the same idea, through reading or listening.

Krashen (1990, 1992b) emphasises that cognitive development occurs incidentally when people attempt to solve problems, but not intentionally when people are engaged in deliberate study. Smart people use reading in ways that are consistent with the five-stage process to solve problems.

Good thinkers read more than general population does. Studies show that there is a positive relationship between the amount of leisure reading and thinking (see research cited in Krashen, 1990, 1992b). For example, Simonton (1988: 111) concludes that "omnivorous reading in childhood and adolescence correlates positively with ultimate adulthood success." It should be noted that those who read more are not necessarily these perceived as be good thinkers, as industrious

passive reading may interfere with incubation of new ideas (Krashen, 1990, 1992b). Krashen's own experience illustrates how people learn by reading selectively for problem solving, not by studying deliberately.

> I have, it seems, nearly total recall for some articles and books I read years ago. Quite often, however, I run across an article or book on my shelf that has my underlining in it, my notes in the margin, and I have no conscious memory whatsoever of having read it, even if the book or journal is fairly recent. Whenever this happens, it is something I read because I felt I should read it, not something that related to a problem I was working on at the time.
> (Krashen, 1990: 368)

In sum, well-educated people will choose to read because it is beneficial to do so. They are readers by choice, not by coercion. They read for interest and pleasure and they engage in problem solving; language acquisition and intellectual development occur as a result (Krashen, 1990).

For EFL students, free voluntary reading in English may also be the best way to stimulate language development and make a significant contribution to cognitive development. In Taiwan, free voluntary reading is likely to help students bridge the gap between little or no L2 (Second Language) reading in high school and a lot of difficult L2 texts in the university, and also enable them to discover that L2 reading can be interesting and entertaining, and not just hard work.

1.1.3.2   Strategies for promoting free voluntary reading

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, encouraging students to develop lifelong, voluntary reading habits is valued highly by most teachers and many researchers. Morrow (1991) points out that although schools have emphasised the important role of literature in promoting free voluntary reading, the use of literature in the classroom appears to be quite limited. In her studies (reported in 1991), she finds

out that "most teachers had no regular literature programme and that no time was set aside for students to use books", and that "while programmatic development of voluntary reading was ranked and rated fourth in importance by parents, principals, and teachers, when compared with comprehension, word recognition skills, and study skills, its ratings were fairly high - an indication that teachers, principals, and parents considered it an important area, though simply not one to which they would assign top priority." In addition to a teacher's external pressure for improving standardised test scores (see Section 1.1.1.2), constraints of class time, limited money for reading material, and reader motivation are perceived to hinder the promotion of free voluntary reading (Morrow, 1991; Ellis and McRae, 1991). These will not be barriers if there is a teacher, a supportive model who provides time for pleasure reading in class and who influences the student's attitude toward reading. The importance of the teacher as a key factor in the success of any voluntary reading activity is widely supported (e.g. Nuttall, 1996; Morrow, 1991; Richards, 1990; Williams 1984; etc.). Below is a typical contention.

> "One of the clear points to emerge from research into reading failure is that there was no association between reading and pleasure...The role of teachers in stimulating voluntary reading among children and young people is ... potentially the most powerful of all adult influences upon the young." (Irving, 1980: 7)

With regard to extensive reading, the role of the teacher is mainly to instil students' desire to read (Spiegel, 1981). The teacher, in other words, has to prepare students to become voluntary readers. Some efficient readers may be able to adapt their style to their reading purpose[3]; however, most students will

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[3] Williams (1984) contends that people generally do not read unless they have a reason for reading, and that an effective reader knows how to determine his reading style (e.g. skimming, scanning, intensive reading, extensive reading) according to his own purpose (e.g. learning English, information, pleasure or interest).

probably need preparation to make the leap from teacher-guided close study of short texts to individual reading of whole books.

Preparing the students

For students who have not developed the habit of reading in English or who have not experienced pleasure reading, preparation is needed to lead them away from passive or intensive reading and to promote purposeful and active involvement.

Psychological preparation. As Williams (1984) states, "one of the principal problems of the foreign language learner is that his knowledge of the language is incomplete, and this may cause serious difficulty with some texts." Language barriers, in particular vocabulary, are found to deter EFL students from the desire to read. As a consequence, many students find reading in English difficult and laborious, and it is unlikely for them to associate reading with pleasure. It is important that students are helped to become aware of and to understand, the differences between intensive and extensive reading, and to build up suitable attitudes and confidence for reading independently.

Methodological preparation and practical consideration. No matter whether previewing, predicting, guessing the meaning of unknown words, developing vocabulary, SQ3R[4], or KSQ4R[5], the major concern is to create an interest in reading.

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[4] The SQ3R technique consists of five steps: Survey (S), Question (Q), Read (R), Recite (R), and Review (R). Nuttall (1996: 129) explains how the study technique is for use when the teacher has provided no guidance.
- *Survey:* Skim the text to make sure it is relevant and to get an overview of the main points.
- *Question:* Pause to ask yourself questions you want the text to answer; beginners should write them down. Note that *it is the reader who asks the questions;* this is intended to make you think about your purpose - what you want to get out of the text. It also involves prediction: what help do you expect the text to supply?
- *Read:* Now read carefully, looking for the answers to your questions and noting anything else that is relevant.
- *Recite:* This is not reading the text aloud, but speaking aloud the answers to your questions, to fix them in your mind; alternatively, write them down. The essential thing is to reprocess in some way the salient points gained from the text.
- *Review:* Think about what you have learnt, and organise the information in your mind, consider its implications for other things you know, assess its importance and so on. The aim is to integrate it into your previous knowledge and experience. This stage may usefully take place later, to provide reinforcement and revision.

Nuttall (1996: 141) recommends some promoting activities in the class to help the students become interested in the books.

- Read aloud, stopping the story at a tantalising point. Help the class to speculate about what happens next and encourage them to read on by themselves.

- Get a student who has enjoyed a book to talk about it or write a brief note for display (without giving away the end of the story!).

- Show the class new books and talk a little about each one - enough to whet the appetite but not to give away the plot.

- Buy cassette recordings of some graded readers for loan with the books. Play parts of them in class. Or play a whole cassette in instalments of about five minutes at the end of each lesson. (If you or a friend read well, make your own recording if the commercial ones are not available or too costly.)

- Encourage students to make or do things arising from their reading; they might prepare pictures for display or tape a dramatised version of the story. Students may enjoy preparing materials of this kind to interest their friends in lower classes, with benefit to both.

- Promote discussion of the practical or ethical problems faced by people in the books. This can take place after a fair number of the class have read the book, or follow an outline of the problem given by a student who has read it; either way, others may be tempted to do the same.

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⁵ KSQ4R refers to knowledge of the world, survey, question, read, recite, review, and reflect according to Richards (1990).

Morrow (1991: 687) also lists 14 elements found to have a positive relationship toward promoting voluntary reading.

- Discussing story meaning
- Reading to children
- Using children's literature in basal stories
- Scheduling recreational reading
- Doing art activities related to stories
- Maintaining a classroom library
- Asking children to record books read
- Asking children to write stories for the classroom library
- Encouraging children to read to each other
- Encouraging children to tell stories
- Using the school and public library
- Sharing books read at home and school
- Discussing authors and illustrators
- Asking children to keep records of books they've read

The importance of teacher guidance is acknowledged; however, the question is to what degree should the teacher of second language reading intervene in his or her students' learning (Eskey and Grabe, 1988). Nuttall and Morrow, as mentioned above, recommend the teacher to introduce and provide practice in reading strategies for motivating students to read. Whereas the best way to promote free voluntary reading, as suggested by Krashen, is letting students select their favourite texts and allowing time for reading. For Krashen (1993b, 1995), free voluntary reading provides many students with genuine pleasure. That is, the real motivation for reading must always be found in reading itself - and the books, magazines, and stories that go with that. No matter if it is total non-intervention or the kind of structured approach, without doubt the premise is that students will

learn to know what to read. Nuttall (1996: 131) presents the acronym SAVE to list criteria for selecting extensive reading materials, defined as follows:

S *Short*   The length of the book must not be intimidating. Elementary students, and anyone undertaking extensive reading for the first time, need short books that they can finish quickly, to avoid becoming bored or discouraged.

A *Appealing* The books must genuinely appeal to the intended readers. It helps if they look attractive, are well printed and have (coloured) illustration - more pictures and bigger print for elementary students. They should look like the books we buy from choice, not smell of the classroom - notes and questions should be unobtrusive or excluded.

V *Varied*   There must be a wide choice suiting the various needs of the readers in terms of content, language and intellectual maturity.

E *Easy*   The level must be easier than that of the current target language course book. We cannot expect people to read from choice, or to read fluently, if the language is a struggle. Improvement comes from reading a lot of easy material.

Practice in self-direction.   While consensus has not yet been reached on an overall effective reading strategy, the concept that reading is private, a process controlled by the reader himself rather than the teacher, accounts for the importance of providing opportunities for students to gain periods of independence from the teacher and to initiate their own activities. Essentially reading is a matter of "you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink". The best way to establish reading habit is- as Abby suggests (see below) - read! read! read!

Dear Abby
Words to the Wise: **Read! Read! Read!**
By Abigail Van Buren DEAR ABBY: As an eighth-grade English and social studies teacher, I am trying to encourage my students to establish the habit of reading. Students tend to emulate and identify with famous people, so I am asking various celebrities to help me with this project. As you know, Abby, better-educated students grow up to be more informed and responsible citizens. Would you please write a paragraph or two, stressing the importance of reading? Thank you for your time and help. RAY SMYTHE, PORTLAND, ORE. DEAR MR. SMYTHE: With pleasure. If I could give young people on piece of advice. It would be, read, read, read! Reading will open up new worlds, real and imagined. Read for information, read for pleasure, read for inspiration. Our libraries contain a wealth of information and entertainment, and it's all yours - as much as your want - free for the taking! The person who *does not* read has no advantage over the person who *cannot* read. And since last week was National Library Week, I want to encourage parents to read to their very young children. This loving act will create a bond of closeness between parent and child as well as make the child aware of the buried treasures that can be found in books. Let me share with you the closing paragraph from one of my favourite poems, "The Reading Mother" by Strickland Gillilan: *You may have tangible wealth untold,* *Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold,* *Richer than I you can never be -* *I had a mother who read to me.*

-------------------------------- 24 April 1985, L. A. Times

Williams' conclusions in *Reading in the Language Classroom* (1984: 126) justifies Abby's assertion: "While the learner is reading, however, teachers should bear in mind that it is essentially a private and individual process. Learners should be given time to read, and time to reflect. ..... The teacher may guide and encourage, but reading skills are achieved by the learner, through practice; the more the learner practises, the more chance there is of improvement."

1.2   Statement of the problem and its proposed solution

Although proficiency in English is valued highly in Taiwan, English teaching and learning, (as discussed in Section 1.1.1.3), are often aimed principally to train students to pass tests. As far as reading is concerned, such teacher-centred and text-based teaching, more often than not, results in passive reading. For example, many students tend to depend excessively on the teacher to explain or translate the text for them, rather than actively take responsibility in their own learning. Reading in Taiwan, for another example, is usually confined to academic texts, so students are accustomed to a slow and intensive reading style even if they can read other kinds of texts. However, the main problem appears not to be faulty reading habits but reading attitude. In Taiwan, considerable concern is placed on promoting for the least expenditure of time and energy, the greatest performance in term of test scores. Whether students can take personal control over further learning seems to be a forgotten goal. Accordingly, university students may not see how much they need to read and thus may feel they have no time in their busy lives for reading. Such an indifferent attitude toward reading is likely to cause the rejection of reading of wider reading or reading for pleasure and eventually result in limited language proficiency.

The general rationale for free voluntary reading is that it will promote language and cognitive development (see Section 1.1.3.1). While research findings on its effects are mixed, the consensus is that free voluntary reading is useful in developing reading maturity and a more positive attitude towards reading.

It is therefore assumed that if any one wants to improve one's English and to obtain profit and enjoyment for life, then one needs to:

(1) reads books of his interest, and

(2) reads a substantial number of them.

Interesting and meaningful reading.   Reading   educators   have   long accepted the notion that reading is important, and noticed that inadequate language competence can be a major hindrance to reading comprehension (Alderson, 1984; Clarke, 1988). However, the usage of more difficult texts in the class[6] confines the student to relying on bottom-up decoding skills, processing graphic information, rather than relying on top-down strategies such as higher order schemata for understanding the text. This heavy reliance on textual features may associate reading with a slow and laborious experience and thus inhibit the reader's desire to read. Therefore, the selection of reading material should be according to the reader's own interest and at his independent reading level. Simplified readers, for example, are suitable for students to enjoy stories and ensure comprehensible input.

Plentiful reading.   For Krashen (1988, 1990, 1991, 1992b, 1993b, 1993c, 1994, 1995), language competence is most efficiently attained by comprehensible input in the form of reading. If it is true that one learns to read by reading, as Krashen and many other specialists claim, then why is it that many people fail to make progress in such a valuable skill[7]?

Clay (1991) points out that most difficulties in learning to read stem from inappropriate experiences rather than from impaired structures. Generally speaking, teachers' expectation is higher than students' reading proficiency. Therefore, the course textbooks used in universities are often a bit too difficult for students and the topics chosen might not meet every one's needs. And these problems will hinder their understanding and interest. When reading is too often associated with a laborious experience, students might well tend to dislike English reading. Stanovich (1986) describes the rich-get-richer and poor-get-poorer

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[6] According to Nuttall (1985), there is a tendency for the teacher to use more difficult texts and to eschew simplification of text, particularly at intermediate levels and above.
[7] For example, most in-school free voluntary reading usually works better than traditional language arts programmes, but some projects are not as consistently successful.

phenomenon as the Matthew effect. He explains that readers who read become better readers and those who do not choose to read rarely develop into good readers. Nuttall's book (1996) advising the teacher to get students out of the cycle of frustration and into the cycle of growth, refers to the same concept. Cullinan (1992), corresponding to Stanovich and Nuttall's accounts, indicates that "The more you read, the better you read. The better your read, the more you enjoy it. The more you enjoy it, the more you want to read" (p. 32). If enjoyment is a prerequisite for learning to read, then plentiful reading should be followed for maintaining that skill. A free voluntary reading programme is a major way to encourage large numbers of readers to read more extensively for pleasure.

1.3   Purpose of the study

Motivated by Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1988, 1990, 1991, 1992b, 1993b, 1993c, 1994, 1995) about second language acquisition, and the findings of previous free reading research (see Section 1.1.3 and Chapter 2), which suggest quantitative free reading to promote the acquisition of language proficiency and reading attitudes, the major purpose of this study was to describe the free voluntary reading activities of a group of university students in Taiwan. The study tries to assess the extent and variety of the students' reading, such as reading habits, factors hindering reading, personal belief concerning being a good reader and claimed purposes of reading English. In particular, it attempts to identify the differences on the above reading perceptions between comparison groups varying in gender, continuity, performance on a grammar test, and university.

The study is an attempt to determine whether free voluntary reading can be useful for university students in Taiwan, and see what can be done to make it even more effective.

1.4 Research questions

The present investigation was guided by the following questions:

- What are the factors claimed to influence the development of voluntary reading by the university students?

- Which books do students prefer for their free voluntary reading and which criteria influence their choices?

- Is reading for pleasure given priority by the university students among their reading purposes?

- What do the university students perceive about being a good reader? Do their beliefs influence their reading habits?

- Do L1 (Chinese) and L2 (English) have an effect on the reading preference and reading frequency?

- What are the differences in voluntary reading activities between comparison groups varying in gender, continuity, the grammar test, and university?

1.5 Significance of the study

Although free voluntary reading has been claimed by L1 and L2 educators to be better than traditional reading instruction, little research has been done to investigate its effectiveness on EFL/ESL instruction in Taiwan (see Chapter 2). Empirical research findings from this kind of study would draw attention to free voluntary reading and the possible benefit for EFL/ESL teachers in Taiwan who are looking for new approaches to enhance their students' English language proficiency.

The current study provides a description of why and how free voluntary reading should be promoted in terms of current interest and individual needs. The findings

should enhance our understanding of how the university students do free voluntary reading in Taiwan as well as highlight any problems that hinder the effectiveness of free voluntary reading. This provides important implications for teachers on assisting free voluntary reading and for students on how to be better active readers.

1.6 Definition of terms

The following terms are used in this study:

Free voluntary reading: reading self-selected print materials such as books, magazines, and newspapers for pleasure. In this study, the term is used interchangeably with extensive reading, independent reading and pleasure reading.

Gender groups: female and male students.

Continuity groups: continuous and discontinuous students, into whom the sample was divided based on the participating students' answer on the question: Do you read continuously during the semester?

Score groups: high-scoring and low-scoring students, into whom the sample was divided based on the scores of the grammar test. The top 25 per cent scoring students were defined belonging to the high-scoring group, while the bottom 25 per cent were allocated to the low-scoring group.

University groups: University A and University B students i.e., students at two contrasting universities

Books: In the study, books were sometimes broadly referred to as any kind of reading material.

1.7   Organisation of the study

This study is composed of six chapters (see the flowchart of the research). Chapter One introduces the study including the background concerning free voluntary reading, a statement of the problem, significance of the study, and a definition of terms.   Chapter Two reviews the literature related to this study. Chapter Three contains (a) the original framework of the study, (b) problems encountered during the process of setting up the research project, (c) modified design, and (d) a description of the subjects, procedures, and limitations of the study.   Chapter Four presents methods of interpreting data and the descriptive results of the study.   Chapter Five describes the patterns of free voluntary reading from the aspects of the learner and text, and provides a discussion of the findings. A summary of the results and recommendations is given in Chapter Six.

Flowchart of the Research

PART I **A General Background and Theoretical Framework**	**Chapter 1** Introduction ↓ **Chapter 2** Review of Related Literature
PART II **The Voluntary Reading Study Approach, Results, and Discussion**	**Chapter 3** Methodology ↓ **Chapter 4** Data Analysis ↓ **Chapter 5** Findings & Discussion
PART III **Conclusions**	**Chapter 6** Conclusions & Recommendations
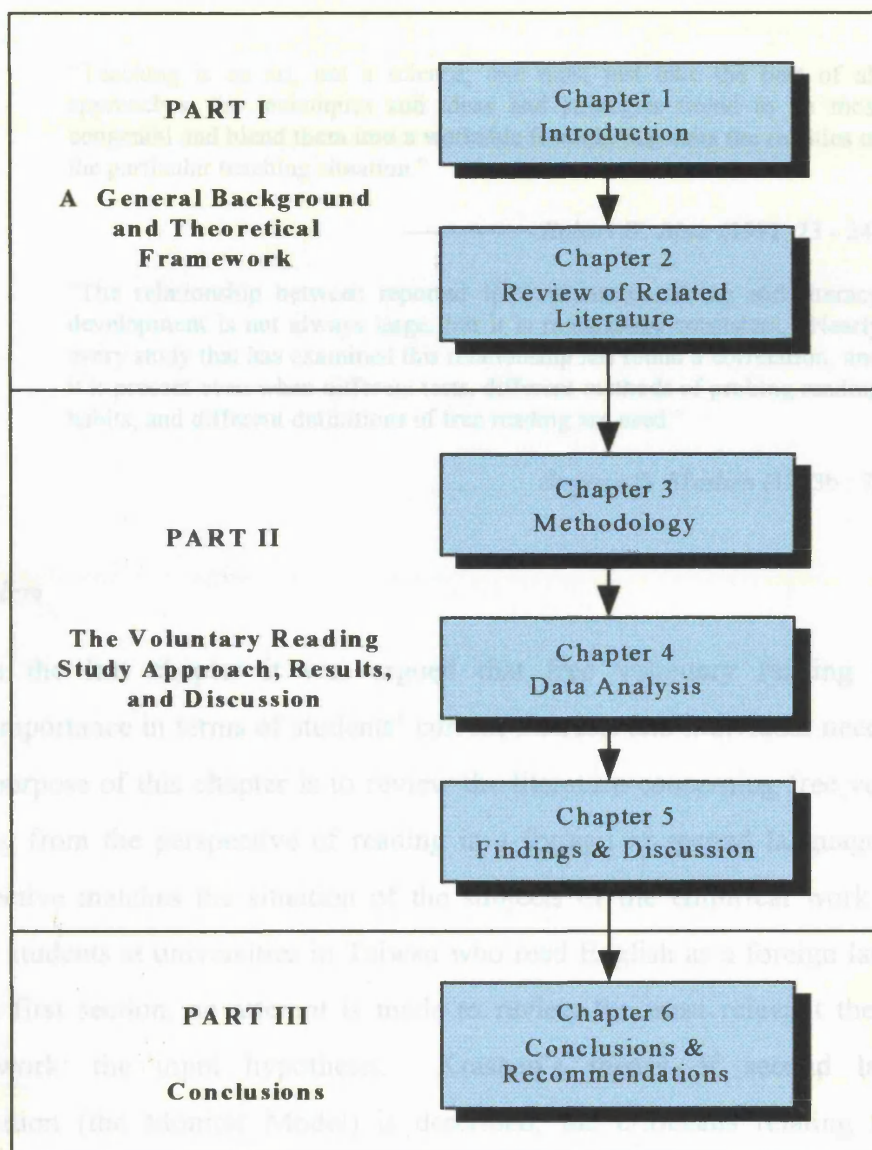
Maggie, April '97

2.   REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

"Teaching is an art, not a science; one must just take the best of all
approaches, the techniques and ideas and strategies found to be most
congenial and blend them into a workable formula that suits the realities of
the particular teaching situation."

---------------- _Robert W. Blair_ (1991: 23 - 24)

"The relationship between reported free voluntary reading and literacy
development is not always large, but it is remarkably consistent. Nearly
every study that has examined this relationship has found a correlation, and
it is present even when different tests, different methods of probing reading
habits, and different definitions of free reading are used."

.... _Stephen D. Krashen_ (1993b : 7)

Overview

In the last chapter it was argued that free voluntary reading was of
importance in terms of students' current interests and individual needs. The
purpose of this chapter is to review the literature concerning free voluntary
reading from the perspective of reading in a foreign or second language. This
perspective matches the situation of the subjects of the empirical work of this
study: students at universities in Taiwan who read English as a foreign language.
In the first section, an attempt is made to review the most relevant theoretical
framework: the input hypothesis. Krashen's theory of second language
acquisition (the Monitor Model) is described, the criticisms relating to each
hypothesis (the acquisition learning hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the
monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis) and
Krashen's general responses to these criticisms then follow. The second section
aims to explore current theories and approaches to English (EFL) reading research
from two aspects: a) the principal issues discussed in first and second language
reading, and b) the effects of first language reading models on EFL / ESL

reading. The third section focuses on how Chinese approaches to reading affect English reading. Possible explanations are offered from the viewpoints of language differences and training background differences. The last section describes successful programmes of free voluntary reading. Rationales in the cognitive domain and affective domain are depicted and some correlates of free voluntary reading are identified.

2.1   Regarding Krashen's theory of second language acquisition

This section begins with a brief introduction to Krashen's theory of second language acquisition. The theory as a whole is variously known as the Monitor Model, or the Input Hypothesis Model. Criticisms of its five central hypotheses are then addressed. The last part presents Krashen's responses to such criticisms.

2.1.1   Krashen's context

Krashen's theory of second language acquisition consists of five central hypotheses. Although the present study was mainly based on Krashen's input hypothesis, a brief review of each hypothesis is introduced below as the five hypotheses are closely interrelated. For example, when comprehensible input via reading for one's own interest (the input hypothesis) is encouraged, motivation for more reading (the affective filter hypothesis) is necessary to reinforce the effects of free voluntary reading.

2.1.1.1   The acquisition-learning hypothesis

It has been observed in foreign language learning that what adults generally achieve only at great expense and with great imperfection, children do both effortlessly and perfectly (Brown, 1987). One explanation for this discrepancy is that there is a critical period for language acquisition. Such a biologically- or neurologically-based critical period was first connected to first language acquisition by Lenneberg (1967) and utilised in second language acquisition to explain the adult's laboriously obtained, yet mostly imperfect, results. It presupposes that once past this critical period, language can not be acquired easily. In other words, the adult L2 learner cannot unconsciously assimilate language in a way a normal child develops. He, on the contrary, demands a more cognitive, though less successful, learning strategy to acquire a second language.

However, Krashen strongly asserts that not only children, but adult L2 learners[8] can also acquire the target language through subconscious processes similar to those involved in L1 acquisition. Krashen (1983: 26) states: "the acquisition-learning hypothesis claims that adults can still acquire a second language, that the ability to 'pick-up' languages does not disappear at puberty, as some have claimed, but it is still with us as adults".

Krashen's theory of second language acquisition (1982) is based on the acquisition-learning hypothesis. The acquisition-learning hypothesis claims that there are two independent ways of developing ability in second languages.

> "Acquisition" is a subconscious process identical in all important ways to the process children utilise in acquiring their first language, while "learning" is a conscious process that results in "knowing about" language. (Krashen, 1985: 1)

When knowledge is acquired, it is subconsciously stored in the brain. When it is learned, it represents consciously in the brain. Krashen (1982) emphasises that 'a very important point that also needs to be stated is that learning does not 'turn into' acquisition" (p. 83). Krashen (1992b) specifies that some language teaching techniques and strategies, such as error correction, help learning not acquisition. It is, nevertheless, possible to effectively encourage acquisition in the classroom. Just as the child is not explicitly taught his first language, the second language learner can develop his linguistic ability in a natural way - with focus on meaning rather than form - but the process might be different. This implies that formal learning environments (i.e. classrooms) should be language-rich in order to provide the optimum conditions for acquisition, and that such formal environments should not centre on teaching about grammar or any other form-

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[8] From Krashen's viewpoint, learners and acquirers are different, but in this thesis learners are broadly referred to as both acquirers and learners.

focussed aspect of language. Table 2.1 summarises the characteristics of acquisition and learning according to Krashen.

Table 2.1 The Acquisition-Learning Distinction

Acquisition	Learning
similar to child first language acquisition	formal knowledge of language
"picking up" a language	"knowledge about" a language
subconscious	conscious
implicit knowledge	explicit knowledge
formal teaching does not help	formal teaching helps

Source: Krashen and Terrell, 1983, p. 27.

2.1.1.2   The natural order hypothesis

The natural order hypothesis states that there is a predictable order of grammar acquisition in both child and adult learners of either a first or a second language. This, as Krashen emphasised (1992b; Krashen and Terrell, 1983), does not imply strict invariance. The order of acquisition for first and second languages is similar, but not identical. There is good evidence of the natural order hypothesis in first language acquisition (Brown's longitudinal study of Adam, Eve and Sarah, 1973; de Villers and de Villers' cross-sectional study, 1973); language pathology or delayed first language (Curtiss, Fromkin and Krashen, 1978; Johnston and Schery, as reported in Morehead and Morehead, 1976); children's second language acquisition (Dulay and Burt, 1973, 1974; Hakuta, 1976; Fabris, 1978; Makino, 1980; Kessler and Idar, 1977; Rosansky, 1976); adult second language acquisition (Bailey, Madden and Krashen, 1974; Larsen-Freeman, 1975; Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman, and Fathman, 1976; Krashen, Butler, Birnbaum and Robertson, 1978; Houck, Robertson and Krashen, 1978; Christison, 1979; Long, 1981; Kayfetz, 1982); studies using other languages (Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle, 1978; Kaplan, 1987; VanPatten, 1987; Eubank, 1987); a natural order for comprehension (Morsbach, 1981; d'Anglejan and Tucker, 1975); a natural order for spelling (Read, 1971; Henderson and Beers, 1980). Through such a review of

studies that examined the accuracy of learners' production of morphemes and grammatical structures, Krashen (1985) stated: "In all these studies some individual variation is found, but it is quite clear that strong tendencies exist - we can certainly speak of some rules as being early-acquired and others as being late-acquired, and of predictable states of acquisition" (p. 21). For example, some grammatical items tend to be acquired early in L2 but later in L1 acquisition (e.g. copula and auxiliary), whereas other are acquired early in L1 but may never come in L2 acquisition (e.g. possessive and article). The average order of acquisition of a selected range of grammatical morphemes for ESL is presented in Figure 2.1, which shows Krashen's much-quoted summary.

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  ING (progressive)          │
│  PLURAL                     │
│  COPULA (to be)             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              ↓
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  AUXILARY (progressive)     │
│  ARTICLE ( a, the)          │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              ↓
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  IRREGULAR PAST             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              ↓
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  REGULAR PAST               │
│  III SINGULAR (-s)          │
│  POSSESSIVE ('s)            │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```
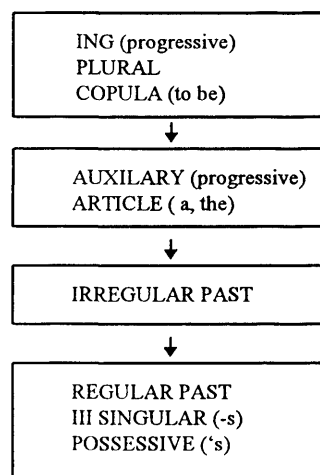
Figure 2.1 Average Order of Acquisition of Grammatical Morphemes for English as a Second Language (Children and Adults)

Notes: 1. This order is derived from an analysis of empirical studies of second language acquisition in a 1981 study by Krashen. Most studies show significant correlations with the average order.

2. No claims are made about ordering relations for morphemes in the same box!

3. Many of the relationships posited here also hold for child first language acquisition, but some do not. In general, the bound morphemes have the same relative order for first and second language acquisition (-ing, Plural, Ir. Past, Reg. Past, III Singular, and Possessive) while Copula and Auxiliary tend to be acquired relatively later in first language acquisition than in second language acquisition.

(Source: Krashen and Terrell, 1983, p. 29.)

Krashen (1992b) highlighted: "natural order appears to be immune to deliberate teaching; we cannot change the natural order by explanations, drills and exercises" (p. 2).

2.1.1.3 The monitor hypothesis

Learning is only available as a Monitor or editor. The monitor hypothesis attempts to explain how acquisition and learning are used in production. Language is produced using the acquired linguistic competence, the subconscious knowledge. Conscious learning functions as a "Monitor" or editor. It is utilised to correct errors, to inspect and change utterances generated from acquired knowledge. The monitoring process can take place internally before the production of speech or writing, or as self-correction after sentences are produced, or as reformulation while they are being produced (see Figure 2.2).
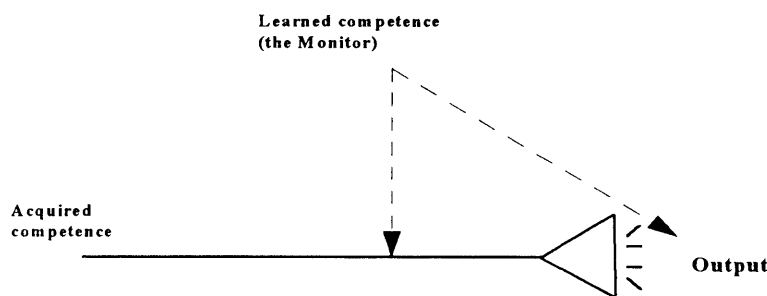
Figure 2.2 A Model of Adult Second Language Performance
Source: Krashen and Terrell, 1983

Monitor use disturbs natural order. When the Monitor is blocked or not used, the natural order appears, which is held to be the evidence of the use of the acquired system. On the contrary, when the Monitor is used, it disturbs the natural order. Krashen (Krashen and Terrell, 1983) explained as below:

"We see the natural order for grammatical morphemes when we test students in situations that appear to be relatively 'Monitor-free', where they are focused on communication and not form. When we give adult students pencil and paper grammar tests, we see 'unnatural orders', a difficulty order that is unlike the child second language acquisition order. ... The unnatural order is due to the intrusion of conscious grammar in situations where students are deliberately focused on correctness. Specially, the natural order is disturbed by the rise in accuracy of certain late acquired items, items that the performer has not yet acquired, but that are "easy" to learn. ... The English third person singular, for example, is ideal for the conscious Monitor. It is relatively easy to describe and learn, and it is very late acquired, one of the last of the grammatical morphemes to arrive. In fact, even very advanced acquirers of English as a second language may miss the third person marker in unmonitored speech. If, however, they are efficient Monitor users, they will rarely get it wrong in writing, in prepared speech or on other occasions when monitoring is a relatively simple task." (pp. 31 - 32)

Conditions for Monitor use.   Three conditions need to be met in order to use the Monitor successfully (Krashen, 1985, 1992b; Krashen and Terrell, 1983):

1. Focus on form: The performer must be consciously concerned about correctness, not meaning.

2. Know the unacquired rule: For Monitor effect, the performer must know the rule, and the rule must not be acquired yet.

3. Time: There must be sufficient time.

The three conditions are necessary and must be satisfied to produce Monitor (capital "M") effects. For example,

> Child: I goed there yesterday.
> Adult: You what? You did what yesterday?
> Child: I mean I went there yesterday.

The child knows "went" (know the rule), but has not yet settled in his acquired knowledge (at i + 1 level). Thus, he used "goed" first and edited into "went" when questioned (focus on form). Nevertheless, any focus on form may present monitor (lower-case "m") effects. For example, in the study of Hustijn and Hustijn (1984), those who did not know the rule also showed improvement when the focus was on form. This is the m-effect (monitor effect) without the M-effect (Monitor effect).

Krashen (1992b) emphasised that Monitor use can be helpful in some aspects but at a price[9]. He stated:

> "Acquisition does not, typically, provide us with 100% of a language; there is often a small residue of grammar, punctuation, and spelling rules we do not acquire, even after extensive opportunity to do so. In English, these can include the lie / lay distinction, the its/it's distinction, and spelling demons such as "separate," and "commitment" (how many t's?). Since our standard for written language is 100%, these aspects of language need to be learned, but they make up a very small part of our language competence. We pay a price for the modest amount of accuracy we get from Monitoring. Some research shows that when we focus on form while speaking, we produce less information, and we slow down (Hulstijn and Hulstijn, 1984)." (Krashen, 1992b: 3)

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[9] Krashen classifies learners as Monitor under-users, over-users and optimal users. Under-users do not edit their output, either because they have never learned the rules or because they do not use those rules which they have learned. Over-users, on the other hand, constantly check their output against their conscious rule system. No surprisingly, their production, which is marked by hesitation and massive self-correction, is often extremely not fluent. Krashen believes that neither Monitor under-use nor over-use is an acceptable instructional outcomes. He (1982: 19) states: "our pedagogical goal is to produce optimal users, performers who use the Monitor when it is appropriate and when it does not interfere with communication."

The effects of Monitor.   In his previous publications, Krashen (1982, 1991, 1994; Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1982) has argued that correction is consistently ineffective, no matter whether it is self correction or other error correction. Krashen (1982) indicated that self-correction improved with more focus on form, but is was never perfect. For example, Mallet's (1985) study revealed that FSL (French as a Second Language) university students heard their taped interview and were able to correct 12.9% of their errors (Of the 20.6% identified oral errors, they were able to correct 62.4%.). Moreover, Houck, Robertson, and Krashen (1978) showed that subjects inspected transcriptions of their own speech and were able to correct 17.5% of their errors. When asked if they wanted their teachers or native-speaker friends to correct their mistakes, a large percentage of language students appeared to desire correction. According to Krashen (1994), the subjects in Chenoweth, Day, Chun, and Luppescu's (1983) and Young's (1990) studies showed a positive attitude toward correction. The study of Nemni, Huovelin, Rondeau, and Vadnais (1993) found that 79% of FSL (French as a Second Language) adult students approved of error correction in both grammar and pronunciation. Similarly, in Cathcart and Olsen's (1976) study, 100% of the community college and university ESL students wanted their teachers to correct their mistakes, and teachers tried to provide as much as they could. However, very little correction (6.3 correction per class) actually went on in class, and a variety of correction styles (e.g. expansion, repeating both error and correct model, providing rules, etc.) were used. Moreover, when total correction was provided, the full correction behaviour was dysfunctional for students:

> "An interesting informal experiment was conducted by one of the teachers following the questionnaire. She told her students she would correct all their errors in a discussion and proceeded to do so. Afterwards, the students agreed that it was impossible to think coherently or produce more than fragmented sentences when they were interrupted constantly." (Cathcart and Olsen, 1976: 50)

Additionally, studies of error correction showed either no effect for correction or a very small effect on form-based measures. Cohen and Robbins (1976) reported no relationship between correction and students' errors, as correction was not consistent, not always done by the same person, and there was no record kept of correction:

> "The finding from analysis of deviant verb forms in papers over a 10-week quarter was that the corrections did not seem to have any significant effect on student errors. But a closer look at the whole correction process suggested that the specific process of correction was at fault, rather than correction in general. Although there was a correction checklist used by graders, there wasn't necessarily consistency in correction procedures. The papers were corrected by one of three people, the instructor or one of the two volunteer classroom aides. Furthermore, the instructor returned the papers to students without keeping any record of the errors each student committed. Thus, it was impossible to make any accurate diagnosis of student difficulties in that in any given paper, errors could appear as non-errors or as random rather than systematic."
> (p. 50).

More studies showed that those who were corrected did no better (Hendrickson, 1977; Jafarpur and Yamini, 1993; DeKeyser, 1993), or did only slightly better (Ramirez and Stromquist, 1979; Cardelle and Corno, 1981; Lalonde, 1982; Carroll, Roberge and Swain, 1992; Carroll and Swain, 1993). These studies described above involved a variety of modalities (oral, written) and situations (e.g. ESL, FSL), they all concluded that correction was not a very reliable tool in helping students overcome errors.

2.1.1.4 The input hypothesis

Krashen (1985, 1992b; Krashen and Terrell, 1983) states that the input hypothesis[10] is the most important part of his theory of second language acquisition as it answers the most crucial question in the field of language education: How does language acquisition occur?

The hypothesis is supported by a range of evidence from studies such as caretaker (mother, father, and others) speech to children (Cross, 1977; Ellis and Wells, 1980; Barnes *et al.*, 1983), exposure to a language-rich environment[11] (e.g. Fathman, 1975; Murakami, 1980; Oller et al. 1980), successful cases of second language acquisition without formal instruction and study[12] (e.g. Constantino, 1993; Nagy, Herman, and Anderson, 1985), sheltered subject matter teaching (e.g. Edwards et. al. 1985; Hauptman *et al.*, 1988; Lafayette and Buscaglia, 1985; Schleppegrell, 1984; Peck, 1987), free voluntary reading (see Section 2.4.1), the din in the head[13] (Bedford, 1985; Parr and Krashen, 1986; deGuerrero, 1987)), complexity arguments[14], etc.

The input hypothesis assumes that language is acquired by understanding messages, or obtaining 'comprehensible input' (Krashen, 1989, 1992b). In other words, people move from i (the current level of acquired competence) to i + 1 (the next level that is a bit beyond the current level of competence along some

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[10] Hatch's (1978) input hypothesis said that meaning, rather than structure learning, should be emphasised from the beginning. MacNamara (1973) made the same claim for first language acquisition. Others who proposed an input hypothesis before Krashen include: Winitz (1981), Asher, Nord, and Burling (1981), Wagner-Gough and Hatch (1975), and Oller (1979).

[11] Positive correlations have been found between length of residence in the country where the language is spoken and attainment in second language acquisition.

[12] "There are, for example, documented cases of adult immigrants developing impressive levels of second language competence without instruction. Also, second language teaching methods that rely nearly completely on comprehensible input have produced excellent results. In all cases of acquisition without instruction, comprehensible input was available." (Krashen (1992b: 5- 6).

[13] "Din in the Head" as described by Barber (1980), is an involuntary rehearsal of second language words and phrases, that occurs along with exposure to a second language in natural situations. Krashen (1983) hypothesised the phenomenon is the result of the Language Acquisition Device at work.

[14] According to Krashen (1992b, 1993b, 1994, 1995), the complexity of language makes it unlikely that much of language is consciously learned. He (ibid.) listed research studies to manifest that direct instruction did not help language acquisition in grammar (Krashen, 1982), spelling (Krashen, 1989), phonics (Smith, 1988b), writing style (Smith 1988a; Krashen, 1984), and vocabulary, (Smith, 1988b; Nagy, Herman, and Anderson, 1985; Nagy and Herman, 1987).

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natural order) by understanding input containing i + 1. This is able to be done with the aid of context, which includes extra-linguistic competence knowledge of the world and previously acquired linguistic competence. Krashen (Krashen and Terrell, 1983) exemplified how this happened:

> "..teachers help make input comprehensible by providing extra-linguistic knowledge in the form of pictures and realia, and by modifying their speech. The adjustment they make, however, are not rigidly imposed. Rather, teachers naturally tend to talk a little slower and use somewhat less complex language as they try to make themselves understood." (p. 27)

The input hypothesis also supports the notion of a silent period that proceeds second language production - "a time during which the acquirers build up competence by active listening, via input" (Krashen and Terrell, 1983: 36). The ability to speak is a result of acquisition, not a cause[15]. It is produced after enough competence has been developed by listening and understanding. During the time of readiness, it is therefore reasonable that early speech is typically not accurate, and the cure is more input. By documenting studies (e.g. SSR) and cases of individual readers without formal instruction to show that free voluntary reading resulted in cognitive and literacy development, Krashen (1984, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992b, 1993b, 1993c, 1995) asserted that free voluntary reading was the major source of comprehensible input. Krashen (1992b) stated that "We read for interest and pleasure and engage in problem-solving, and language acquisition and intellectual development occur as a result" (p. 24). (Further discussion about free voluntary reading is offered in Section 2.4.)

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[15] Krashen (1992b: 7) argued that speaking did not directly result in language acquisition. He (ibid.) exemplified that if a person practised his French out loud every morning in front of the mirror, his French would not improve. However, speaking could help language acquisition indirectly. It could result in conversation and invited more input, but the premise was that the speech was not forced.

Krashen (1994) emphsised that comprehensibe input was good for language acquisition and listed three activities that did not help language acquisition: correction, forced speech, and grammar study. Error correction has been discusssed earlier. This section focuses on Krashen's view of forced speech and grammar study.

Forced speech. According to this input hypothesis, forced speech can not assist language acquisition as the learners are forced to produce what is beyond their current level of acquisition (i.e. i + 1 or beyond). Swain's output hypothesis (1985) claimed that forced speech was one of the effective ways of acquiring language. Krashen (1994: 302) argued that "people simply do not produce enough language for output to make a significant contribution to language development." Additionally, forced speech, more often than not, may cause anxiety. Price (as reported in Krashen 1994) asked a group of anxious EFL learners what bothered them the most, "they all responded that the greatest source of anxiety was having to speak the target language in front of their peers. They all spoke of their fears of being laughed at by the others, of making a fool of themselves in public" (p.313).

Grammar study. Krashen (1992a, 1993a, 1994) stated that the effectiveness of formal grammar instruction was typically short lasting and did not become part of acquired competence. He (1992a, 1993a) argued that the 1984 study of Pienemann focused on the performance of one student and only one rule was taught, and that the 1989 study of Pienemann did not provide raw data and the effects appeared to be short-term. Also, he (1993a) questioned whether oral test in the study of White *et al.* (1991) focused students on form rather than on acquired competence. As described in Krashen (1994), the subjects in Scott and Randell's (1992) study showed clear drops in accuracy on the second test; Harley's (1989) subjects lost their advantage over a comparison group on grammar tests administered three month later; Day and Shapson's (1991) subjects received six weeks of grammar instruction and held their gains for merely eleven weeks; and

after five weeks of treatment, the subjects in White's (1991) study lost the grammar rules they learned when tested one year later. Such research merely confirms that "the effect of grammar is peripheral and fragile", as described by Krashen (1992a: 410). He (ibid.), therefore, contended:

> Although there is a role for grammar, research and theory show that the best way of increasing grammatical accuracy is comprehensible input. Studies also suggest that the most effective kind of comprehensible input for advanced grammatical development is reading (Elley, 1991; Krashen, 1991). Getting students interested in books will insure continued grammatical development (as well as improvement in vocabulary, spelling, and writing style) long after the language course ends. (Krashen, 1992a: 411)

If free reading is considered as input, reading in class may be considered as forced input and correction of reading may be analogous to grammar correction.

2.1.1.5 The affective filter hypothesis

The affective filter hypothesis claims that affective variables affect second language acquisition. They prevent input from reaching the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), the part of brain that is responsible for language acquisition (see Figure 2.3).
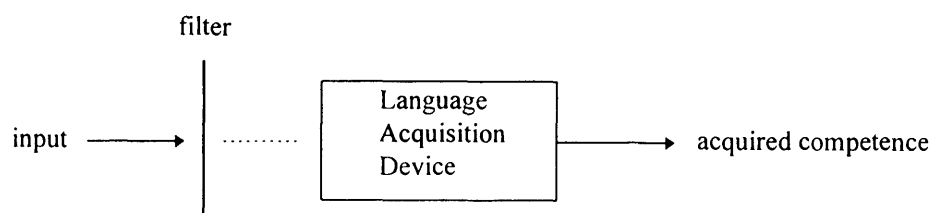
Figure 2.3 Operation of the "Affective Filter"

The affective filter acts to prevent input from being used for language acquisition. Acquirers with optimal attitudes are hypothesised to have a low affective filter. Classrooms that encourage low filters are those that promote low anxiety amount students, that keep students off the defensive.

(Source: Krashen and Terrell, 1983, p. 39)

Performers with optimal attitudes, a low affective filter, are more open to the input and thus obtain more input. On the contrary, when they are anxious, have low self-confidence, or lack of motivation[16] to learn the language, the affective filter is up and blocks input to reach the language acquisition device. The affective filter hypothesis implies that "our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying optimal input, but also creating a situation that promotes low filter" (Krashen and Terrell, 1983: 38).

Studies of affective variables. Many research studies show a stronger relationship between second language acquisition and affective variables. Positive affective variables include:

a) *high motivation:* Some studies show that integrative motivation helps to achieve proficiency in a new language (FSL/FFL in Anglophone Canada: Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Gardner et al, 1976. ESL in the USA: Bialystok and Frohlich, 1977; Spolsky, 1969). Others reveal that instrumental motivation is stronger than integrative motivation in language proficiency (ESL in Bombay: Lukmani, 1972; ESL in Philippines: Gardner and Lambert, 1972).

b) *high self-confidence:* Chastain (1975) reported that outgoing students tended to get higher grades in FL. Wesche (1979) indicated that students who were more willing to role-play did better in intensive French as L2.

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[16] Based on Gardner and Lambert (1972), there are two types of motivation. One is integrative motivation, referring to the desire to be like members of the community who speak the language. The other is instrumental motivation. The goal of this is to use the second language for practical purposes, such as to solve problems.

c) *low anxiety:* Results of Horowitz's (1986: 561) study indicated that "anxiety specifically related to foreign language class accounts for approximately 25% of the variance in final grades." Chastain (1975) pointed out that acquisition required low or zero anxiety, whereas learning required moderate anxiety.

The free voluntary reading approach (see later) is, among other aspects, to lower the affective filter and enhance motivation through less pressure and more choice of what and when to read.

2.1.1.6 Factors influencing second language acquisition

Second language aptitude. Krashen (Krashen and Terrell, 1983) argued that aptitude is related to learning rather than acquisition, as language aptitude measures such as Carroll and Sapon's Modern Language Aptitude Test or Pimsleur's Language Aptitude Battery tested classroom skills and included many tasks that required a conscious awareness of language. He (ibid.) thus hypothesised that "aptitude relates to learning and attitude to language acquisition" (p. 40).

The use of the first language. According to Krashen (1985, 1989, 1992b; Krashen and Terrell, 1983), first language can help or hurt second language acquisition, depending on how it is used. It can catalyse and accelerate second language acquisition; it makes L2 input more comprehensible by providing background knowledge, subject matter knowledge and knowledge of the world. L1 literacy can be transferred by way of negotiation. On the other hand, L1 can hurt second language acquisition when L2 learners fall back on the first language due to the lack of acquisition of a target language rule that is needed in performance. Concurrent translation, for example, tends to make L2 learners focus on L1 rather than L2, for the students do not have to listen to the second language to get comprehensible input. Therefore, reading in Chinese might - or

might not - reinforce free voluntary reading in English. This remains to be investigated (see Chapter 4).

Routines and Patterns.   Krashen and Scarcella (reported in Krashen and Terrell, 1983) argue that "routines and patterns are neither acquisition nor learning, nor do they turn into acquisition or learning directly, except to occasionally serve as comprehensible input" (p. 43). Routines and patterns, like the first language, have advantages and disadvantages. They indirectly benefit second language acquisition by allowing early production and thus inviting input. On the contrary, they lead to trouble when L2 learners have not acquired the rules for productive use.

Individual variation.   Krashen (1982, 1985; Krashen and Terrell, 1983) claimed that language was acquired in the same way, via comprehensible input. This does not mean, however, that individual variation does not exist. Individual variation is seen in the rate and extent of acquisition, which are determined by the amount of comprehensible input and/or the strength of the affective filter. Additionally, individual variation exists to the extent how conscious knowledge is applied. Krashen (1982, 1985, 1992b; Krashen and Terrell, 1983) indicated three types of adult second language learners: a) Monitor over-users, b) Monitor under-users, and c) the optimal Monitor user (See footnote 9 on page 38).

Age differences.   Krashen indicated that older learners (i.e. after age 15) get more comprehensible input than younger learners due to the fact that they manage conversations better, that they produce earlier in L2 via the first language (this invites more input), and that they have more knowledge of the world to help to make input more comprehensible. In other words, the difference between child and adult acquisition is rate; adults are faster in attaining second language proficiency over the short run. With respect to ultimate attainment, however, younger learners are better than older learners in the long run, as younger learners tend to have a lower filter. This is not to say that adult learners can not acquire

high levels of language proficiency. "The increase in filter strength may only mean that most adults will probably not attain a native-like level" (Krashen and Terrell, 1983).

2.1.2   Criticisms of Krashen's theory

Krashen's theory is simple and comprehensive in its formulation (Ellis, 1986); it does not posit a different neurological mechanism than the one that accounts for first language acquisition (Brown, 1987); it is congruent with a great deal of experimental data on second language acquisition (e.g. Hafiz and Tudor, 1989); it allows teachers to predict outcomes under various social circumstances for various types of individuals[17]; and it provides a framework for designing interventions aimed at facilitating second language acquisition[18].

Although this theory enjoys wide popular support, it has met with considerable scepticism from theorists and researchers in second language acquisition (e.g. Ellis, McLaughlin and Yorio), who dispute the dichotomy which Krashen has established between subconscious assimilation (i.e. acquisition) and conscious assimilation (i.e. learning) of target language rules. Whatever the underlying neurological organisation of conscious and subconscious processes may be, it cannot be refuted that the product of conscious, formalised study of a second language is not the same as that of unconscious assimilation of the language through social interaction. The following sections address some key critical points concerning each hypothesis of the Monitor Theory.

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[17] For example, Krashen (Krashen and Terrell, 1983: Ellis, 1986) discusses a number of factors that influence second language acquisition., such as age differences and second language aptitude.

[18] As Krahnke (1994: 246) described, "Each teacher can decide for himself or herself what constitutes comprehensible input in any given situation. Each teacher can decide how much form-focused instruction to include in the overall instructional mix. Each teacher can try to identify the affective factors operating in the classroom and to devise ways of minimising their effects. Therefore, the practical, real-world effect of the theory on teaching practice is helpful to teachers in the sense that it suggests structured freedom and individual latitude rather than strict adherence." Yorio (1994: 125) also indicated: "Not very many theoretical hypotheses or insights find their way into practice so easily as this one has."

2.1.2.1 The acquisition-learning hypothesis

The distinction between acquisition and learning. The principal argument for the acquisition-learning hypothesis is based on the distinction between acquisition and learning. The first objection is from the view point of methodology. Ellis (1986) argued that "the 'acquisition-learning' hypothesis is not acceptable, because it cannot be tested in empirical investigation" (p. 264). McLaughlin (1987) pointed out that the concepts of acquisition and learning are poorly defined. He (ibid.) stated: "there needs to be some objective way of determining what is acquisition and what is learning. This Krashen did not supply" (p. 22).

Does learning become acquisition? Another criticism concerns Krashen's claims that consciously learnt rules are never turned into acquired knowledge. In other words, the focus is on the question: Does learning become acquisition? Gregg (1984), among others[19], doubted that even maximal exploitation of acquisition strategies may not be sufficient for successful second language development, especially to adult learners, and argued that some rules can be automatized and then acquired through practice. Yorio (1994) cited his self-study and argued that highly conscious learning and successful communication were not incompatible. If linguistic awareness was used appropriately, it could lead to acquisition. He (ibid.) thus concluded : "*Acquisition* and *learning* are not incompatible; neither should they be seen as two separate, opposing forces. They are, rather, like the two ends of a continuum that adult second language learners must have access to if they are to become effective and accurate communicators" (p. 135).

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[19] Such as McLaughlin (1987), Rivers (1980, 1983), Stevick (1980), Sharwood-Smith (1981), and Yorio (1994).

2.1.2.2   The natural order hypothesis

A central problem with the natural order hypothesis is about rampant individual variation. A greater complexity than that acknowledged by Krashen is revealed from a number of case studies. McLaughlin (1987) queried the limited data base on the California "morpheme" studies. He (ibid.) listed studies of individual children and argued that the natural order was not always found. For one thing, "the results of longitudinal studies do not always agree with the result of cross-sectional research" (p. 32). For another thing, the learner's native language has great impact on acquisitional sequences of the second language. McLaughlin (1987: 32), additionally, pointed out that these morpheme studies "did not measure acquisition sequence but rather accuracy of use in obligatory contexts" by only a few morphemes in one language. It is, indeed, easy to see that the range of morphemes in studies cited by Krashen is quite limited and, in any case, morphology is only one aspect of language structure. In agreement with McLaughlin, Ellis (1994) also doubted if the linear natural order could adequately account for second-language variability. He (ibid.) stated:

> "the main evidence for the [natural order] hypothesis comes from largely cross-sectional studies that have investigated the order of acquisition of a number of English grammatical morphemes, longitudinal studies of structures involving the uses of auxiliary verbs (e.g., English negatives and interrogatives), and, for German, studies of the acquisition of word order rules by migrant worker (cf. Pienemann, 1980; Meisel _et al._, 1981). The question that needs to be addressed is whether this hypothesis is compatible with the nature of variability in SLA." (p. 151)

Considering the variability that learners display across various linguistic and situational contexts, Ellis (ibid.) recognised that the order of acquisition depended on the learner's performance and that different tasks produced different orders.

2.1.2.3 The monitor hypothesis

There are several difficulties with Krashen's monitor hypothesis. First, the three conditions for Monitor use do not automatically lead to its application. The study of Hulstijn and Hulstijn (1984) revealed that when there was no focus on form, giving subjects more time did not make a difference in their performance. The same study did find that accuracy increased when the learners were focused on form. Houck *et al* (1978) found that asking students to correct themselves (i.e. focus on form) did not result in the use of Monitor. Another problem is that there is no clear distinction on the extent and the types of monitoring. According to Krashen, some language learners are Monitor over-users, who become hesitant and excessively slow both in language reception and production. Whereas others are Monitor under-users, who tend to be overconfident and draw little attention to check what they read and write. In order not to get bogged down in a fossilised use of language errors, learners have to adjust the degree of monitoring. Krashen puts it at "between 7% and 50%, depending on the time available and the amount of 'learned' knowledge available" (Ellis, 1994: 146). However, the range is questionable. In addition, it is difficult to distinguish Monitoring (editing by rule) from monitoring effects (editing by "feel").

Finally, Krashen (Krashen and Terrell, 1983) stated that for most people, it took a grammar test to bring out the conscious Monitor. In other words, he limits the use of Monitor to grammar. Stern (1992: 332) argued: "a conscious learning strategy covers a much wider range of activities, and consequently an explicit teaching strategy is not restricted to what in Krashen's terms is described as grammar teaching alone."

2.1.2.4   The input hypothesis

It is widely agreed that "access to meaningful input is somehow a critical factor in successful language development" (VanPatten, 1994: 225). It is a valuable service for Krashen to emphasise the role of meaning input in the process of language acquisition. However, many query the adequacy of comprehensible input as an over-arching concept. McLaughlin (1987) argued that input hypothesis did not show how the learner progressed from understanding messages to acquisition. Long (1983) also asserted that comprehensible input was not a sufficient condition for second language acquisition. To maximise acquisition, learners need more than receive comprehensible input. They must be "active conversational partners who negotiate the quality and quantity of input they receive in order to pick up language" (VanPattern, 1994: 230). In general, the major criticisms concerning the input hypothesis centre on two views: the effects of instruction and the role of output.

The effects of formal instruction.   Marton (1994) described Krashen's theory was deeply anti-pedagogical. As he (ibid.) has indicated, Krashen stressed the importance of comprehensible input, questioned the value of many classroom practices and gave incomparable attention to learning in a natural setting. Ellis (1986) recognised that studies of formal instruction had produced mixed results, but in general instruction was found to aid the rate/success of second language acquisition and classroom fostered more rapid development. He (ibid.) thus queried Krashen's overreliance on comprehensible input, rather than formal instruction, to aid language development.

The other point raised against the input hypothesis is the untestability of 'i + 1'. It is impossible to measure or observe the i + 1 notion. As cited in McLaughlin (1987: 39), Loup pointed out that at the present stage of second-language study, it is possible for researchers and teachers to define a set of levels and determine

which structures constitute the i + 1 level when dealing with many students at different levels of ability.

The role of output.   As the input hypothesis emphasises that speaking the second language is the result of acquisition rather than the cause, the role of production, or output, is minimalized, particularly at the early stage (i.e. the silent period).   Chaudron (1983) noted that little feedback from students was less likely to help teachers tune their input.   In other words, learners output can thus influence teachers input; input and output are dialogically (interactively) related. McLaughlin (1987) argued that Krashen de-emphasised the importance of output, and that "the learner must be given the opportunity to produce the new forms" (p. 50).   The 1985 study of Yorio (1994) revealed that full emphasis on meaning and ignorance on form resulted in fossilisation:

> "The high level of comprehensibility (98%), the low level of
> grammatical accuracy (32%), the fluency and ease with which K.
> (the subject) handled himself both in writing and speaking, and the
> lengthy term of residence (6 years) in an English-speaking
> environment show clearly that comprehensible input and exposure
> to an acquisition-rich environment are not sufficient to produce a
> communicative and accurate learner.   K. is at present a fossilised
> learner who must 'de-fossilise' if he is to meet the writing
> requirements needed for graduation from his college."   (p. 133)

In other words, exposure to comprehensible input can achieve fluency but not accuracy.   Swain (1985) also found that despite seven years' comprehensible input, the subjects failed to achieve native-like grammatical competence.   She thus concluded that if accuracy was desired, comprehensible output had to be added to second language learning.   She (1993: 159 - 61) suggested that output was important in several ways:

a) it provided opportunities for practice of linguistic resources permitting the development of automaticity in their use;

b) using the language might force the learner to move from semantic to syntactic processing;

c) it provided the opportunity to test out hypothesis about the second language; and

d) it generated feedback from speakers of the language which could lead learners to make modifications.

Apart from the assertion that talking was not practising, Krashen (1990, 1992b, 1993b, 1994, 1995) also maintained that writing was not practising. Krashen (ibid.) argued that writing competence came from the quantitative input from free voluntary reading rather from writing. However, McLaughlin (1987) queried what the best type of reading input for writing was, and questioned whether i + 1 input in reading helped writing. He (ibid.) pointed out that "there is a certain degree of 'face validity' to much of what Krashen says" (p.43).

2.1.2.5 The affective filter hypothesis

McLaughlin (1987) argued that the theory was not precise about how a filter would operate, and that "the theory does not differentiate between the indifferent and highly motivated [learners], because the filter is essentially described as a limiting and restrictive mechanism" (p. 54). Additionally, he queried that children were better learners than adolescents. He emphasised individual differences in second language learning, for a considerable evidence supported that "early adolescence is the best time to learn a second language" (McLaughlin, 1987: 55). The affective filter, like the Monitor, is uncharacteristic of first language acquisition. It is impossible to define clearly or to measure its function; it, therefore, can be used only as a metaphor (Larsen-Freeman and Long ,1991).

2.1.2.6 Evaluation

Many theorists and researchers recognise Krashen's theory is influential on scholars and students of second language acquisition and learning. This is noticeable from the fact that his theory and concepts are introduced in books of current research review on second language acquisition, such as Ellis's _Understanding Second Language Acquisition_ (1986), Larsen-Freeman, and Long's _An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research_ (1991), and that "Krashen's ideas", as Barasch and James (1994: 3) stated, "have become the focal point of interest in successive conferences". Also, they (e.g. McLaughlin, 1987; Barasch and James, 1994; Littlewood, 1994) admit that his theory can be practically applied to language teaching and learning as it clearly presents the concepts of language acquisition and provides concrete suggestions and approaches for language arts teachers. However, they (e.g. Gregg, 1984; McLaughlin, 1987; Ellis, 1986, 1994) tend to choose parts of Krashen's theory to criticise rather than treat it as a whole. What they have pinpointed is not totally unreasonable. What is questionable is that most of them criticise Krashen's early works and often focus on the issue of speech production. Browsing through Krashen's recent publications and papers, any one can easily detect that Krashen has shifted his focus to the role of input rather than that of the monitor, and that free voluntary reading is central to his thinking. For example, _Beyond the Monitor Model_ was published in 1994 to assess the impact of Krashen's theory on different aspects of language teaching and learning. Of the 19 contributors to the book, the majority quoted Krashen's works before 1985, and only one article (Pica, 1994) referred to any of Krashen's published work or major conference presentation on reading, and even this was only a passing reference. From the mid 80s, however, reading as input was clearly a major theme in Krashen's thinking, as demonstrated by a number of important papers by Krashen from the mid 80s onwards, referred to comprehensively in Krashen (1993b). Krashen (1993b) also summarises much other research on reading.

Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' has clear parallels with Krashen's independently thought of 'i + 1'. Both concepts involve the teacher, or tutoring peer, matching input to learner's knowledge, skill or current ability but extending the input towards the next stage of potential learning. Where Vygotskian approaches emphasise joint activity, scaffolding and socio-cultural contexts for cognitive development, Krashen's Natural Approach emphasises comprehension, meaning, language activity and lowering anxiety. Clearly, the two key concepts overlap.

Surprisingly, while neo-Vygotskian theories were applied to young learners and oral language (Bruner, 1983; Wood, 1988; Meadows and Cashdan, 1988, Mercer, 1995), it was only later that they were specifically applied to the learning of literacy skills, although Vygotsky had clearly written of writing development (Vygotsky, 1978). However, when such applications were made, it was noticeable that many were specifically in a second-language or multi-ethnic context. (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988; McNamee, 1990; Wells and Chang-Wells, 1992; Cazden, 1994; Moll and Dworin, 1996), or related to such areas as Reading Recovery (Clay and Cazden, 1990) or Whole-language perspectives (Goodman and Goodman, 1990). However, it was only slowly, and by few researchers that clear connections were made to Second Language Acquisition research and theory (Frawley and Lantolf, 1985; Lantolf and Ahmed, 1989; Foley, 1991; Lantolf and Appel, 1994). Even so, few researchers, or literacy experts, relate Vygotsky's theories to Krashen's. For example, of 12 contributors to Lantolf and Appel (1994), only 4 mention Krashen, and then only to discuss, briefly, the Input Hypothesis, not reading. However, while Krashen's 'i + 1' has evoked strong criticism - and relatively little specific research other than by immediate followers - Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' has not only been widely taken up, with much less criticism, but it has also engendered strong research to (locate) the 'zone of proximal development' in practical terms (Wertsch, 1985; Tharp and Gallimore, 1988; Newman, Griffin and Cole, 1989; Tudge, 1990; Litowitz, 1993;

Washburn, 1994; Erickson, 1996). Plainly, there is scope for inter-disciplinary of research and application here. A free voluntary reading programme might well draw on the 'zone of proximal development' notion by first, the ways in which teachers recommend levels or titles of books, and secondly, the specific ways in which teacher (and peers) might discuss reading material before, during or after it has been read, in presentations, classroom discussions or through journals. The teacher who is strongly aware of the 'zone of proximal development', or 'i + 1', may effectively take a scaffolding role in these contexts.

2.1.3   *Krashen's replies to these criticism*

Krashen (1989, 1993c, 1995) indicates two leading rivals to his theory of second language acquisition: the instruction hypothesis and the writing, or output, hypothesis. He claims that each has serious problems.

The instruction hypothesis claims that language is learned by first consciously learning individual rules or items, and then practising them or output them until they become "automatic." In Krashen's terms, the instruction hypothesis emphasises that "learning becomes acquisition." Krashen argues that this hypothesis is impossible for three reasons: complexity argument, competence without direct instruction, and weak effects of direct instruction (Krashen, 1995: 189).

1. The system to be acquired is too complex to be learned consciously. The rules of grammar, discourse, and spelling have not even been adequately described by linguists, and the amount of vocabulary to be learned is amazingly high, far more than any instructional program can handle.

2. There are cases of literacy development without direct instruction, including some in which individuals developed

high levels of literacy from reading alone[20], as well as studies showing that readers can pick up small but significant amounts of vocabulary and spelling knowledge from as little as one exposure to an unknown word in context, without instruction or output (Nagy *et al*, 1985). ... Finally, there are studies showing that exposure to misspelled words can have a deleterious effect on spelling competence (Jacoby & Hollingshead, 1990). Such studies confirm that we can acquire spelling from input, from reading, without study and without output.

3. Studies consistently show that direct instruction in spelling, vocabulary, and grammar is not particularly effective and that the effect of error correction is very small and often absent. In addition, research strongly suggests that the effect of the direct teaching of grammar is weak. Studies do show improvement after direct instruction, but gains are typically very modest and short-lived; when students are retested some time later, the gains have often disappeared. In addition, gains are evidence only on measures in which students are focused on form and have time to apply the rules they have studied.

The other is output hypothesis, which claims language is learned by trying them out in production. There are several versions of the output / writing hypothesis (Krashen, 1993c: 73 - 74):

1. the Simple Output hypothesis, that claims we acquire language by producing it, with or without feedback. Those who believe that writing alone, as in personal journals, improves writing style and mechanics, believe in this hypothesis.

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[20] For example, Day, Omura and Hiramatsu (1991), Dupuy and Krashen (1993), Pitts, White, and Krashen (1989) confirm that vocabulary acquisition is possible in second language acquisition from reading alone.

2. the Output plus Correction hypothesis, that claims we acquire language by trying out new forms in conversation or writing, and receiving feedback on their correctness. When we receive a correction, we adjust our version of our conscious rule.

3. the Comprehensible Output hypothesis, that claims we acquire language by trying out new forms in conversation or writing, and receiving feedback on their communicative success. If we succeed in communicating, the rules or items we used are confirmed. If not, we try a different version until we succeed.

Krashen indicated three problems of the output hypothesis. The major problem with all versions of the output/writing hypothesis is that increasing writing quantity does not affect writing quality (Krashen, 1991, 1993b, 1995). For example, Gradman and Hanania (1991) found frequency of writing reported outside of shool did not correlate with performance on Test of English as a Foreign Languge among international students who planned to study in the United States. As Krashen (1993b) reported, Hillocks (1986) found that writing classes that emphasised free writing did not produce significantly better writing than comparison classes. The results suggest that language acquisition comes from input rather than output. The second problem is that people simply do not write much (Krashen, 1991, 1993b, 1995). Research shows actual writing in school and out of school appears to be infrequent. The subjects in Rice (1986, reported in Krashen, 1993b) study reported 2 hours per week in writing. Applebee *et al* (1986, reported in Krashen, 1993b) found that the majority of students wrote less than 10 essays over six weeks for any school subjects. The Output plus Correction hypothesis is further damaged by research showing that despite a great deal of effort, correction achieves little or no effects on language development, and that the phenomenon itself is surprisingly rare (Krashen, 1991). Krashen (1995), thus concluded that "although writing makes an important contribution to

cognitive development, it does not appear to cause language acquisition and literacy development" (p. 189).

In addition, Krashen uses inter-stage fluctuation to explain the variation in individual performance when the learner is using "acquired" knowledge (Ellis, 1994). He indicates that the phenomenon of editing by "feel" emerges when the leaner is focusing on form and when the features have only partially acquired (i.e. at $i + 1$ stage rather than at firmly acquired i stage). Furthermore, Krashen uses the output filter to explain why learners are not able to perform firmly "acquired" rules. According to Krashen, when the learner is focused on form instead of meaning, the output filter is raised and the learner is not able to perform at his or her level of competence (Ellis, 1994).

2.1.4 Summary

As described earlier, Krashen has drawn from a large number of various empirical studies and cases, incorporating not only his own studies but those of many different researchers, to describe the assumptions of his second language acquisition theory. Krashen's theory and its application have created controversial debates and discussions, and, meanwhile, promoted thinking and understanding of second language acquisition and language teaching. For many teachers, "he is the first 'applied linguist' who has not only made theoretical ideas accessible but also shown how these ideas might be relevant to their practical problems" (Littlewood, 1994: 204), although many teachers do not agree with a strict distinction between learning and acquisition. Based on their experience, they view learning and acquisition as more interactive and interconnected. For theorists and researchers, "Krashen's views are hypothetical and not based on sufficiently firm evidence to warrant the practical conclusion that they point toward" (Littlewood, 1994: 204). They have challenged, as mentioned above, the definition of his hypotheses, his overemphasis on acquisition and underestimation in learning. As Brumfit (1994: 264) stated: "The views of Krashen do indeed pose problems for the profession,

not simply because of inconsistencies in the views themselves or possible deficiencies in the argumentation and exemplification (these are of course the normal currency of academic debate), but also because of the manner in which they have been both presented and taken up." Apart from examining the theoretical justification of Krashen's theory and criticising "like sour grapes rather than careful concern for the well-being of language teaching", in Brumfit's (1994: 264) terms, it should be more important to employ the useful insights that Krashen's theory offers for coping with classroom realities. Rivers (1994) put it well:

> "Theories of language acquisition and learning are continually changing as they evolve. In classrooms, language learning is taking place in ways theorists may not yet understand, but which teachers observe every day. They must continue with their task while waiting for more definitive answers, employing the best of what has been proposed theoretically, according to their own judgement of its appropriateness in their own situation, and innovating in a practical way in classroom involvement to help students express themselves in the new and unfamiliar language. If we wish to see our students develop the ability to use the language freely and purposefully, we must provide a classroom environment where there is an atmosphere of trust and confidence that develops the students' own confidence and encourages them to plunge in and make the language their own." (p. 88)

2.2   Current theories and approaches to reading of English

2.2.1   Principal issues in first and second language reading

Reading researchers have long been trying to answer two basic questions:

> a) What is reading?
>
> b) How do you teach someone to do it?

The problem is that reading is an invisible process[21] so that no product is necessarily produced for a teacher to see. However, most reading teachers feel they need to teach something tangible in isolated reading classes, and typically turn to teaching reading strategies and study skills rather than text comprehension or meaning construction. Of more concern, they pay little attention to reading process, but want to observe its apparently related products - they want to know if students are learning when they and students are engaged in these instructional activities. Asking students to answer questions orally or in writing, for example, does not often teach reading but tests it.

Reading is a complex mental process which cannot be broken down into a series of discrete steps that a teacher can take into the classroom and teach (Eskey, 1973). That is to say, reading cannot be taught. Nevertheless, if the reading process is better understood, the teacher could help students to become better readers.

With over twenty years work on the psycholinguistics of reading, various explicit models have been developed to explain the implicit process of reading and therefore provided the teacher ways to intervene in the process.

There are three general types of reading models: bottom-up, top-down, and interactive.   Models based on the idea that reading is principally obtaining

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[21] We must always remember, too, that reading comprehension processes are invisible and that our evidence about what is taking place can be no better than second-hand. (Casanave, 1988, reported in Barnett, 1989)

meaning from the text are called "bottom-up" models. Models based on the idea that reading is directed by the brain, that the brain makes predictions about the meaning of the text based on what it already knows and then mainly samples the text to confirm these predictions, are called "top-down" models. Models based on the idea that reading is best thought of as combining information acquired from the text (bottom-up) with information supplied by the brain (top-down) are called "interactive" models. That is, reading is dynamic interaction between bottom-up and top-down processes.

2.2.1.1   Reading and decoding

Bottom-up models.   In the traditional notion, reading involves merely a sequential, word by word, phrase by phrase, decoding of the text (Gough, 1972). The reader builds up meaning by recognising letters and words and working out sentence structure. Such a process requires the reader to engage in a step-by-step process, in which "small chunks of text are absorbed, analysed, and gradually added to the next chunk until they become meaningful" (Barnett, 1989). Davies (1995) illustrates the process of sequence as 1) eyes look, 2) letters identified and "sounded out", 3) words recognised, 4) words allocated to grammatical class and sentence structure, 5) sentences give meaning, and 6) meaning leads to thinking. Comprehension is built from letter to word to phrase to sentence. In sum, the reader performs two major tasks in the reading process: decoding and comprehending. As letters and word patterns become more familiar, the decoding process will become increasingly automatic, more attention can then be allocated to comprehension, and reading will become more fluent (LaBerge and Samuels, 1974). Good readers are good decoders; their decoding skills become more automatic (both rapid and accurate) as their reading skill develops.

According to such models, reading can be defined as the process of taking information from   written or printed text.   Therefore, reading aloud is not necessarily reading since sometimes the person reading aloud may be so

concerned with pronouncing the words correctly that he or she does not pay attention to the meaning and does not truly read. It is "barking at print", to use Smith's term.

Bottom-up models like Gough's (1972) and LaBerge and Samuels' (1974) imply that the teaching of reading should reflect the sequential and automatic processing, and are usually used to support phonic approaches to the teaching of reading, which focus attention on phonetic interpretation of the written symbol (sound-symbol correspondences). It is expected that "the more the reader has automatized the mechanical decoding skills, the more attention is freed up to grasp the overall meaning of a phrase or sentence" (McLaughlin, 1987: 61).

Limitations of bottom-up models to ESL / EFL readers. As indicated by Barnett (1989: 34), "most foreign / second language readers do not have a fully developed phonological system when they begin to read." Therefore, any deficiency of skills in the sound-symbol correspondences hinders second language students from applying the bottom-up strategies in processing reading in the target language.

The major problem with practices associated with bottom-up models is that readers' short-term memory is saturated with too many individual words and letters, so they fail to grasp the larger meaning of the text or to relate it to what they already know about the subject (Eskey and Grabe, 1988):

> "This plodding, exact identification approach slows the reader
> down to the point that the information cannot be held in short-term
> memory[22] long enough to make sense of whole sentences or larger
> pieces of discourse and makes the process of reading overly

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[22] Short-term memory, or working memory, is "a temporary memory that is required to make sense of what we are ding at the moment" (Smith, 1985: 36). According to Eskey (1986), to read for meaning, a reader must bring groups of words into short-term memory to construct meaning. However, if letter-by-letter or word-by-word reading fill short-term memory with meaningless units, then no meaningful information will get through to combine with the reader's schemata for placement in long-term memory.

laborious and unenjoyable " (Eskey, cited in Lynch and Hudson, 1991: 219)

2.2.1.2 Reading and prediction

Top-down models. In top-down models, the process of reading is more like a "psycholinguistic guessing game" (Goodman, 1967), in which the reader picks up graphic cues and uses general knowledge of the world and about the language to make intelligent guesses, a syntactic and semantic prediction about what appears on the printed page. According to Goodman (1973), a proficient reader:

> "... does not use all the information available to him. Reading is a process in which the reader picks and chooses from the available information only enough to select and predict a language structure which is decodable. It is not in any sense a precise perceptual process." (p. 164)

With minimal attention to visual decoding, the reader samples only enough of the text to confirm hypotheses and form new hypotheses. Davies (1995) illustrates the process of sequence as 1) eyes look, 2) thinking - predictions about meaning, 3) sample sentence as a whole to check meaning, 4) to check further, look at words, 5) if still uncertain study letters, and 6) back to meaning predictions. Comprehension is built from higher order mental concepts down to physical text on the page.

In his miscue analysis, Goodman (1981) distinguishes proficient and nonproficient readers from the types of miscues they make. Proficient readers know how to use implicit knowledge of sentence structure (syntactic cues) in order to predict a word that is grammatically acceptable in context, or use meaning (semantic cues) to predict a word that is meaningful in context. They tend to make meaningful errors (miscues). Nonproficient readers, on the other hand, use mainly phonological cues to interpret texts and often neglect syntactic

and semantic cues. Their reading is likely to lose track of the overall meaning of the passage, so they tend to make more local errors.

Like Goodman, Smith emphasises the importance of meaning and of making use of prior knowledge for prediction. Smith (1982: 3) lists four fundamental characteristics of reading: First, reading is purposeful. Reading is a matter of making sense of print and meaningfulness is the basis of learning. It is meaningless in reading if there is no purpose. Second, reading is selective: readers selectively extract information from text or sample the text in order to answer specific question that they are asking. Moreover, reading is anticipatory, that is readers expect what they read since reading is used for evident meaningful purposes. Finally, reading entails comprehension. Understanding is the basis while meaning is constructed during fast reading process.

What differentiates the top-down view from the traditional bottom-up view is that the former reading is more a process of bringing meaning to print than extracting sound from print.

> "Meaning is not contained with the sounds of speech or the printed marks of writing, conveniently waiting to be discovered or decoded but rather must be provided by the listener or reader ... an understanding of reading requires a more complex theory of comprehension than one that simplistically assumes that meaning will take care of itself provided a reader can identify individual words correctly." (Smith, 1982: 69 - 70)

For Smith (ibid.), reading is an interaction between a reader and a text, which involves a combination of visual and nonvisual information. Visual information refers to what is received from print through the eyes to the brain; whilst nonvisual information includes knowledge of language, knowledge of subject matter, and knowledge of how to read. Even though reading is a sequential process, the reader does not have to see everything on the page. That is, a

proficient reader does not always employ rigid fixation of eye movements that move from left to right along the first line of print. Studies of the eye movements of readers show that the eyes do not move smoothly over the page (Hawkins, 1991; Smith, 1982). Instead the eyes move in short, jerky movements (called "saccades"). Skilled readers may not make more than one fixation a line and may skip lines in reading down the page. With each movement, the eyes take in a chunk of text. The brain then decodes (takes the meaning of) this chunk of text on the basis of the minimum amount of visual information needed. Here is an example to illustrate the point.

Take a quick look at Figure 2.4, and answer what is written in the triangle.
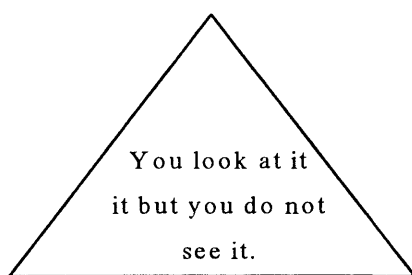
Figure 2.4 A Reading Test

Apart from those who have encountered the test before, most testees, including non-native speakers, do not notice the redundant "it". The test results suggest that good readers do not have to see everything on the page - just enough to get the meaning. Smith (1985) says: "what the brain tells the eyes" is much more important than "what the eyes tell the brain", as "It is the brain that sees, the eyes merely look, usually under the direction of the brain."

Limitations of top-down models for ESL / EFL readers. It is widely acknowledged that language is a problem for foreign or second language readers (e.g. Alderson, 1984). The problem of top-down models lies in their overemphasis on higher-level processing skills and ignorance of lower-level linguistic skills. Hawkins (1991: 174) criticises that "second language learners

are not able to predict with much accuracy in the first stages of reading, since their experience with the language, in terms of both syntax and semantics, is so limited.". The problem is related not only to lack of language knowledge, but also to the amount of time required for effortful prediction, for:

> "even if a skilled reader can generate predictions, the amount of time necessary to generate a prediction may be greater than the amount of time the skilled reader needs simply to recognise the words. In other words, for the sake of efficiency, it is easier for a skilled reader to simply recognise words in a text than to try to generate predictions." (Samuels and Kamil, 1989: 32)

2.2.1.3   *Reading and schema / script building*

Interactive models.   During the 1980s an interactive model of reading was proposed, for researchers in both first and second language reading noted the weaknesses and inadequacy of over-reliance on lower-level or high-level process. They have come to believe that although top-down and bottom-up models are contradictory, it is not a question of one or the other. The view, widely accepted at present, is that the two processes are complementary and both are used to create meaning from text.

As mentioned earlier, bottom-up skills are to decode linguistic units and build textual meaning from graphemes to phonemes, whilst top-down skills are to predict text based on prior experience or background knowledge and relate new information or interpretation to existing cognitive structure. However, the bottom-up model lacks feedback loops between low-level decoding and high-level encoding. Similarly, the top-down model does not apply to those who with little knowledge of presented texts, who cannot generate predictions and activate relevant schema. By subsuming both knowledge-based and text-based strategies, the interactive model serves the purpose to compensate for the deficiencies

apparent in schema inference and text-boundedness. Briefly, this model assumes that the reading process is an interactive relation between decoding text and predicting meaning. Efficient and effective reading requires the interactive operation of both bottom-up and top-down strategies.

In 1977, Rumelhart proposed the first interactive model to compensate for the deficiencies in linear models. His model (see Figure 2.5) assumes that:

> "the reader looks at the words and spelling that are registered in a visual information store (VIS). The feature extraction device pulls out the critical features of these words (with the successful reader sampling only enough of the text to continue) and moves them into the pattern synthesiser. The pattern synthesiser is where all the reader's previous knowledge about the language spelling patterns, syntax, vocabulary, semantics, and context come together to interpret what has been read. 'Thus, all of the various sources knowledge, both sensory and nonsensory, come together at one place and the reading process is the product of the simultaneous joint application of all the knowledge sources.'" (Barnett, 1989: 23)

Although Rumelhart's model incorporates parallel processing of a range of source information (visual, orthographic, lexical, semantic, syntactic and schematic), it pays considerable attention to the processing of visual information. For Rumelhart, the process of reading "begins with a flutter of patterns on the retinal and ends (when successful) with a definite idea about the author's intended message. Thus reading is at once a "perceptual" and "cognitive" process. Moreover, a skilled reader must be able to make use of sensory, semantic and pragmatic information to accomplish his task. These various sources of information appear to interact in many complex ways during the process of reading." (Rumelhart 1977: 573 - 573, cited in Davies 1995: 64).
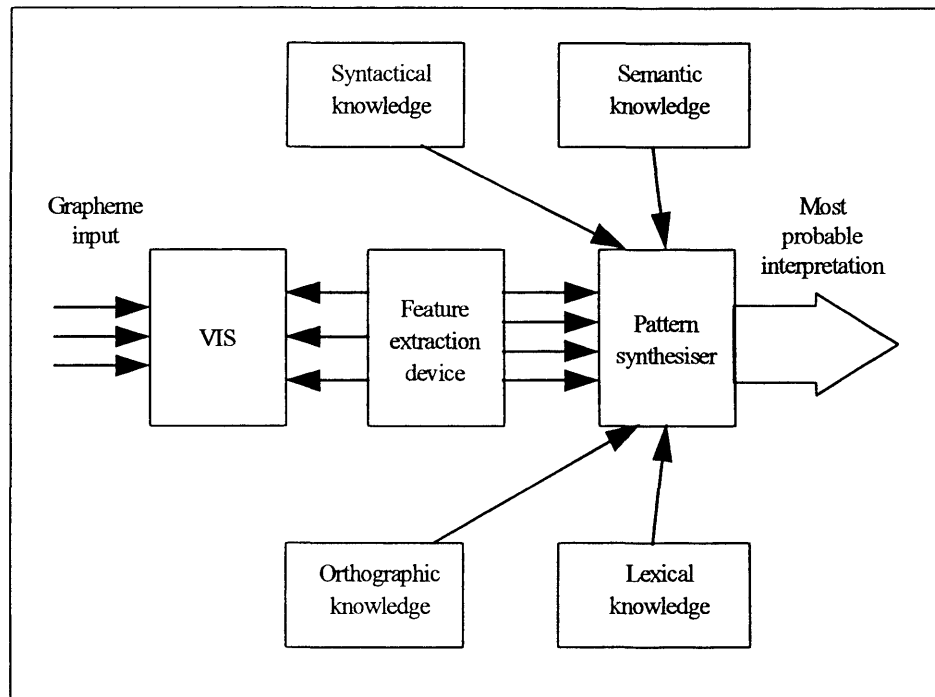
Figure 2.5 Rumelhart's model of reading
Source: Rumelhart 1977, pages 573-4

Rumelhart (1977) presents the concepts of schema[23] and relate them to the process of reading as the cognitive structure underlying the process. In order to explain semantic level of processing, he amplified his 1977 model by paying greater attention to the role of schemata. According to Rumelhart (1984):

"A schema theory is basically a theory about knowledge ...
According to schema theories all knowledge is packaged into units.
These units are the schemata ... A schema then, is a data structure
for representing the generic concepts stored in memory." (p. 2)

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[23] According to Ausubel (Ausubel, 1963; Ausubel and Robinson, 1969), in meaningful learning, already-known general ideas "subsume" or "anchor" the new particular propositions found in texts. This happens only when the existing ideas are stable, clear, discriminable from other ideas, and directly relevant to the to-be-understood propositions. The readers has to be aware of which aspects of his knowledge are relevant. Sometimes this will be obvious. Sometimes the text will be explicit. When neither of these conditions holds or the reader's grasp of the required knowledge is shaky, an "advance organiser" may be prescribed. An advance organiser is a statement written in abstract, including terms deliberately before a text and intended to provide a conceptual bridge between what the reader already knows and the propositions in the text that it is hoped he will understand and learn.

Ausubel has not called his theory a schema theory, but it clearly is. (Anderson and Pearson, 1988)

Rumelhart (1977) calls schemata the "building blocks of cognition," as they are the fundamental elements used in the process of "interpreting sensory data, in retrieving information from memory, in organising actions, in determining goals and subgoals, in allocating resources, and generally, in guiding the flow of processing in the system" (p.34). Namely, they "provide frameworks for interpreting the world" (Davies, 1995). The notion of schema implies that the brain is not an empty container but full of "packets" or "units of knowledge" already stored in memory. The brain relates new information taken from the text to the much larger body of old information it already has to make sense of and give a meaning to the text. The process of connecting new visual information to prior knowledge and experience suggests that schemata may change over time and with experience. In terms of reading, the schemata notion plays an important role. If there is a good match between new information and old knowledge, then comprehending new information is of no trouble. If, on the other hand, there is not a good match, or the new information is entirely new that there is no existing schema for it, then it will be difficult to comprehend new information. Accordingly, the definition that reading is taking information from a written or printed text is incomplete and partial. Reading should, therefore, be defined as:

> Reading is taking information from a written or printed text and
> relating it to what the reader already knows to create a meaning for
> the text as a whole.

Readers are held to have schemata, or background knowledge, relating not only to text topic or content (content schemata) but also to text or rhetorical structure (formal schemata). Appropriate schema should be possesed and activated in order to construct meaning of the text. Obviously, the lack of a given schema or the inability to activate a relevant schema is potentially a major difficulty with reading comprehension in L2. Further discussion of this point is provided later in the Chapter.

The interactive-compensatory model of Stanovich (1980) accounts for different kinds of reading behaviour. As Stanovich (1981, reported in Grabe 1988) states, "a process at any level can compensate for deficiencies at any other level" (p. 61). That is, when readers are weak at decoding skills, they will rely more heavily on context-dependent guessing or hypothesis testing. Similarly, when readers fail to take advantage of previous knowledge and prediction, a greater reliance may be placed on decoding letters and words. For Samuels and Kamil (1988), Stanovich's approach offers an explanation of why sometimes poor readers are better predictors or make better use of context than good readers.

Stanovich (1980) summarises, "Interactive models ... assume that a pattern is synthesised based on information provided simultaneously from several knowledge sources. The compensatory assumption states that a deficit in any knowledge results in heavier reliance on other knowledge sources, regardless of their level in the processing hierarchy" (p. 63). Table 2.2 presents the summary of the three types of reading models.

Table 2.2 Summary of Reading Models

	Bottom-up	Top-down	Interactive
Representative	Gough LaBerge and Samuels	Goodman Smith	Rumelhart Stanovich
Characteristics	sequential automatic	psycholinguistic anticipatory	interactive compensatory
Reader's role	decoder	interpreter	active participant
Teacher's role	instructor	informer	facilitator
Focus	graphic information	linguistic guesswork	reader variables the role of interference
Strategy	text-based data-driven	knowledge-based conceptual-driven	bottom-up + top-down
Major tasks	decoding text comprehending	activating schemata predicting meaning	bottom-up + top-down

Approach	skill-based
	• developing rapid
	  identification skills
	• rate building
	• vocabulary
	  building
	• grammar practice
		strategy-based
		• building content
		  schemata
		• building formal
		  schemata
			skill-based + strategy-based

2.2.2   The effects of L1 models on EFL / ESL reading

In terms of ESL / EFL reading, particularly for adult readers, it is important to take into consideration language proficiency levels and reading proficiency levels.

2.2.2.1   Holding in the bottom

Goodman's and Smith's top-down views of reading have had a stronger impact on second and foreign language reading than any other first language models, presumably because it considered the cognitive skills of an adult second or foreign language reader. The model also easily accommodates linguistic and literacy skills which L2 readers may already possess in their L1. Extensive research has therefore been generated to study how conceptual knowledge, inference and background interaction affect the reading process. Although top-down approaches have been influential, they only provide a partial explanation to the reason how readers read (e.g. good readers). They, for example, do not account for poor readers who guess extensively and good readers who do not make use of their greater ability for syntactic and semantic prediction. In addition, an ample number of researchers have questioned that at the expense of perceptual processing skills, top-down models may have overestimated context clue effects in reading (e.g. Alderson, 1984; Carrell, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c; Eskey, 1988; Samuels and Kamil, 1988).

There is considerable evidence to show that many reading problems in the L2 basically stem from linguistic deficiency (Alderson, 1984; Carrell, 1988b; Bossers, 1991). Reading research from experimental studies and self-reports of L2 has particularly identified vocabulary as the primary reading problem for second / foreign language learners (Clarke, 1979; Cohen *et al*, 1988; Singer, 1981; Carrell, 1988c). That is, non-native speakers do not have a large enough vocabulary to help them process reading fluently. Stanovich's interactive-compensatory model also suggests that less skilled readers rely on context to compensate for their poor decoding skills; however, good readers do not need to

do so, since they already have good decoding skills (Stanovich, 1980; Eskey and Grabe, 1988). Reported in Grabe (1988: 60), van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) exemplify how word identifying skills distinguish good and poor readers:

> "The full complex nature of the interaction between these top-down and bottom-up processes becomes apparent if one looks at the contrast between good and poor readers in these terms. What exactly distinguishes a good reader from a poor reader? ...
>
> The greatest facilitation of word recognition by meaningful context is observed with poor readers, not with good readers. Furthermore, it is simply not true that good readers take decoding lightly; they fixate almost every content word...It has been found over and over again that the best discriminator between good and poor readers is performance on simple letter and word identification tasks. What is really wrong with poor readers is that they recognise isolated words inaccurately and too slowly, and compensate for their lack in decoding skills with context-dependent guessing or hypothesis testing ... Good readers with their superior decoding skills can decode letters and words rapidly in a bottom-up fashion, and therefore do not normally need to resort to guessing strategies...What is really at issue are the speed and accuracy of context-free word recognition operations." (pp. 23 - 24)

When compared to vocabulary, grammatical complexity does not seem to cause so many difficulties to second or foreign language learners. This does not imply that syntax should be ignored. Instead, it has been recognised that both lexical units and syntactic structures are necessary to decode the text. As Eskey and Grabe (1988: 226) assert: "Reading requires a relatively high degree of grammatical control over structures that appear in whatever readings are given to

[L2] students." A good reader, from the perspective mentioned above, does not do away with bottom-up recognition skills but becomes so proficient at them that they become automatic in their interaction with top-down interpretation skills. As Eskey (1988) notes, the fact that top-down processing skills which focus primarily on meaning, rather than on form, play a major role in reading does not "substitute for accurate decoding". He thus summarises:

> "Fluent reading entails both skillful decoding and relating the information so obtained to the reader's prior knowledge of the subject and the world. Thus the fluent reader is characterised by both skill at rapid, context-free word and phrase recognition and, at higher cognitive levels, the skillful use of appropriate comprehension strategies. For the proper interpretation of texts the latter skills are crucial, but such lower-level skills as the rapid and accurate identification of lexical and grammatical forms are not merely obstacles to be cleared on the way to higher-level "guessing game" strategies, but skills to be mastered as a necessary means of taking much of the guesswork out of reading comprehension. An interactive model or reading provides the most convincing account of this reciprocal perceptual / cognitive process." (p. 98)

The other prospective that supports the assumption that second or foreign language reading ability depends more on general language proficiency is the failure of language transfer. Clarke's (1988) well-known study found that a language competence ceiling in L2 effectively prohibits the complete transfer of L1 reading skills to L2 reading. The results of his study suggest that although the psycholinguistic assumptions that reading is universal may be justified, "the role of language proficiency [in L2] may be greater than has previously been assumed; apparently, limited control over the language 'short circuits' the good reader's system causing him / her to revert to poor reader strategies when confronted with

a difficult or confusing task in the second language" (p. 120). Such a 'language-ceiling' or 'short circuit hypothesis' of second language reading emphasises that minimal threshold of the second language proficiency needs to be attained before good readers' reading strategies from their native language can be transferred to reading comprehension in the second language (Cummins, 1979; Clarke, 1988; Devine, 1988; Bossers, 1991; Carrell, 1991).

Since most EFL readers, in particular adult learners, are fluent in their native language, they tend to have well-established schemata for reading (L1 reading skills) but knowledge of the phonology, syntax and vocabulary of the target language (L2 language skills). As a consequence, lower-level linguistic skills are critical for those who want to be fluent readers. These bottom-up skills may include: a) developing rapid identification skills, b) rate-building, c) vocabulary building and d) grammar practice.

Developing rapid identification skills. As asserted by Eskey and Grabe (1988), the ability to identify lexical cues more quickly and efficiently is important for good comprehension. It can be promoted through a variety of rapid recognition exercises, such as word recognition and phrase identification.

Rate-building. As most EFL / ESL students tend to read at a laboriously slow pace and mistakenly believe such close reading ensure comprehension, reading speed needs to be built up. Reading at a rate of 200 words per minute would appear to be the absolute minimum; below that speed the comprehension is negatively affected (Eskey and Grabe, 1988; Nuttall, 1996). However, the key point is to balance speed and comprehension. Grellet (1981: 16) suggests that "one of the most common ways of increasing reading speed is to give students passages to read and to ask them to time themselves". Nevertheless, extensive reading after class is the most natural way to attain a reasonable fast reading speed.

Vocabulary building. A large vocabulary is "a prerequisite to fluent reading skills" (Eskey and Grabe, 1988: 226). It is widely agreed that simply providing a list of new words from the passage, as many ESL textbooks do, does not ensure vocabulary acquisition, nor does it seem to improve reading comprehension (Hudson, 1988). Knowledge of individual word meaning, as Carrell (1988c) has claimed, is closely related to conceptual knowledge. A good way to expand vocabulary is reading extensively, as full vocabulary meanings are better acquired when they are presented in a natural linguistic context rather than in isolation.

Grammar practice. Fluent reading depends on the ability to recognise and understand grammatical structure (Eskey and Grabe, 1988). In research by Cohen *et al.* (1988), noun phrases and conjunctions were identified to be the serious problem in comprehending science and economic texts. Unfamiliarity with other cohesive devices may also cause difficulties, particularly in synthesising information across sentences and paragraphs.

2.2.2.2 Projecting appropriate schemata

"Within second languge reading theory, particular prominence has been given to the role that the reader's background information or previous knowledge plays in text comprehension" (Dubin and Bycina, 1991: 197). Schemata, knowledge structures already stored in memory, are identified into two types: content schemata and formal schemata. Content schemata refer to a reader's concepts about the content area of a text, whereas formal schemata are a reader's concepts of the formal, rhetorical organisational structures of different types of texts (i.e. genre). Readers of a text containing familiar cultural concepts or topics can attain a better understanding than those who are less familiar with the text content. Similarly, formal schemata, knowledge of how texts are organised, define readers' expectations about how pieces of textual information are arranged and related to each other. Thus, comprehension results from the activation of

appropriate content and formal schemata. That is, the readers successfully use their background knowledge in predicting what comes next. On the other hand, schemata failure may cause reading problems. In other words, inappropriate schemata use may interfere with comprehension. The various degrees of comprehension interference are listed as below.

a) the reader lacks the appropriate schemata required by the text,

b) the reader has not activated the relevant schemata,

c) the reader makes a mismatch between the schemata presumed by the text and those possessed by the reader, and

d) the writer has not provided sufficient textural cues to signal the appropriate schema to be activated.

Teaching schemata use has been found to increase second language comprehension (Hudson, 1988). However, studies also suggest that learners below a certain threshold of language proficiency are unable to activate their top-down processing skills (Clarke, 1988).

Building content schemata. Many of the problems encountered by L2 readers seem to be due to insufficient or non-existent background knowledge. The lack of an adequate schema may result from either ignorance of a particular field or the absence of a specific schema in the students' cultural experience. However, reading difficulties are caused not so much by the absence of a schema as by interference from one which exists and which sets up different expectations. This is particularly the case when dealing with culture-bound material in a second or foreign language. Since different cultures have different values and attitudes, or different ways of organising thoughts and rhetoric, readers from different cultures tend to bring different systems of background knowledge to the comprehension process. That is, culture plays a critical role for the comprehension of many text topics. Cited in Carrell (1988c: 245), Steffensen *et al.* (1979), Johnson (1981), and Carrell (1981) have all demonstrated that it is easier for students to read texts

based on their own culture than to read texts of similar difficulty based on a less familiar culture. Additionally, Hayes and Tierney (1982, reported in Carrell, 1988c) found that presenting background information related to the topic to be read helped readers to comprehend the passage no matter how that background information was presented or how specific or general it was.

Established techniques for building schemata involve introducing key words and previewing the text, but recently class discussions and debates, role-play activities, lectures, cue pictures, movies, and even field trips have been used with some success.

Building formal schemata. The value of teaching text structure has in fact been confirmed in both L1 and L2 situations. As reported by Carrell (1988c), many researchers, such as Meyer (1975) and Carrell (1985), have shown that explicit instruction in top-level organisational patterns (e.g. time order, collection of descriptions, cause-effect, and comparison-contrast) does indeed facilitate comprehension.

Teaching such patterns is often done today with the assistance of graphic techniques, such as flow-charting, text mapping, or semantic webbing. Again, once the patterns have become clear, the same techniques can be used to guide students through a text and to make the relationship of ideas more evident.

2.2.2.3 Reading as situated social practice

The current trend of literacy over the last decade has moved "away from idealised generalisation about the nature of Language and of Literacy and toward more concrete understanding of literacy practices in 'real' social contexts" (Street, 1995: 3). Many literacy educators have argued that literate development is a socially elaborated process (Au, 1980; Bloome and Green, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978) and challenged the narrowness of psychological and skills-based approaches (Wallace, 1992; Gee, 1992; Baynham, 1995; Williams and Hasan, 1996;

Lankshear, 1997). In order to be read meaningfully, critical reading requires more than an interaction between reader and text (e.g. bottom-up, top-down and interactive approaches); it involves a broader consideration of social aspects regarding who writes and reads what, and why they do so in what situations (see Figure 2.6). In other words, reading is not "private psychic possessions of decontextualised heads, nor [is it] generalised skills isolable from specific contents and contexts" (Gee, 1992: 33). Reading, from a social practice perspective, must be understood in how varying social conditions shape the production and interpretation of text. Reading development is "not mastered solely by overt instruction, but by enculturation ("apprenticeship") into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who have already mastered [it]" (Gee, 1992: 33). Such a socio-cultural approach is similar to "guided participation" in Vygotsky's (1987) view and "joining the literacy club" in Smith's (1988a) terms. As a social practice, reading should be extended beyond the class. When students read for their own interest (i.e. free voluntary reading), they are, in effect, developing their reading proficiency within a social context.
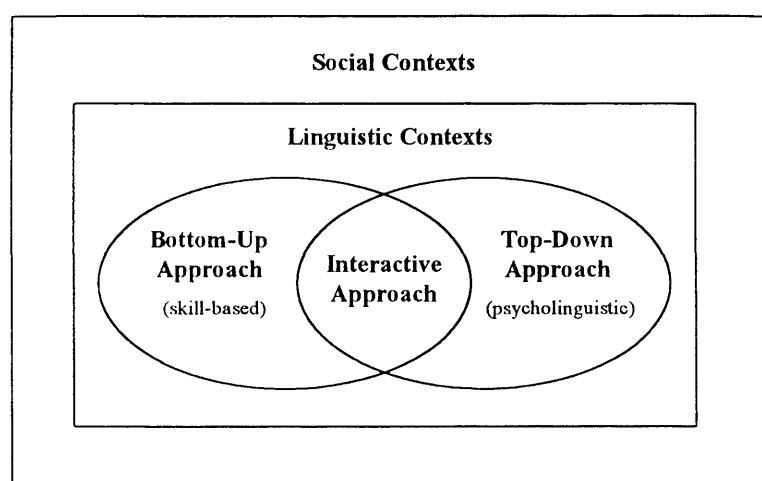
Figure 2.6 Reading in linguistic and social contexts

In this Information Age, the Internet has played an influential role in the society[24] and therefore in literacy. Reference to the Internet is seen everywhere - it is in the newspapers and magazines, at the end of television news broadcasts and commercials; it is unlikely to see a business card without providing electronic mail (e-mail) and/or World Wide Web (also referred to as WWW or the Web) addresses. The number of the Web sites is increasing "at a rate of 3,000% per year as hundreds of new sites are added each week" (Mike, 1996: 5). The Internet is used for information retrieval, resource material retrieval and communication (e.g. e-mail, newsgroups). It is obvious that the interaction with the Internet is entirely through reading and writing, and more often than not, is in the language of English. From the social perspective of literacy, the Internet enables learners to explore with the real world. Although the Internet is unlikely to replace textbooks any time soon, it can promote literacy for authentic purposes and within a social context by providing the most current information for both teacher and student as well to supplement printed materials. It is never known what will be found, but every individual is able to find something particularly interesting to him/her through searching tools, such as Yahoo for searching the Web and Veronica for searching Gopherspace. It, therefore, carries great potential for promoting free voluntary reading programmes. As an example of the range of what is available to a voluntary reader who might be interested in education, Table 2.3 provides a list of Web and Gopher sites related to education.

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[24] According to Mike (1996: 5), the Web, as a mirror on society, reflects both depth (i.e. there often is a great deal available on a particular subject) and breadth (i.e. an extremely wide variety of subjects are available). For example, 293 Web sites are accessible for those interested in dance. There are 698 sites devoted to hobbies, 3,713 to games, and 4,576 to sports. The singer Michael Jackson appears on more than 6,000 World Wide Web home pages; U.S. President Clinton shows up more than 5,500 times. In Taiwan, the Internet is particularly popular to students. Based on the statistics compiled by Liu (1996), of 300,000 wired users in Taiwan, 250,000 were students and 50,000 were members of the general public.

Table 2.3 Internet sites related to education

Gopher sites
AskEric   askeric@ericir.syr.edu
Educational Journals   gopher://info.asu.edu:70/11/asc-cwis/education/journals
K-12 Internet Resources   informns.k12.mn.us
Kidsphere (discussion group)   kidsphere@vms.cis.pitt.edu
National Aeronautics and Space Administration   spacelink.msfc.nasa.gov
National School Network Testbed   copernicus.bbn.com
University of Massachusetts K-12 Internet Resources   k12.ucs.umass.edu
WELL (While Earth 'Lectronic Link)   gopher.well.sf.ca.us

World Wide Web sites
AskEric   http://ericir.syr.edu/index.html
British Library   http://portico.bl.uk
Cisco Ed Archive   http://sunsite.unc.edu/cisco/edu-arch.html
Collins Cobuild   http://titania.cobuild.collins.uk
Department of Instructional Technologies at San Francisco State University WWW Server   http://130.212.25.153/dit_home_page.html
EdWeb   http://k12.cnidr.org:90
Financial Times   http://www.ft.com
Gifted and Talented Homepage   http://www.eskimo.com/~user/kids.html
Guides/Tutorials/Lists   http://library.tufts.edu/www/internet_guides.html
Heinemann   http://www.heinemann.co.uk
Internet in the Classroom   http://www.schnet.edu.au
NASA's Network Applications and Information Centre (NAIC)   http://naic.nasa.gov/naic/guide/
National Reading Conference   http://www.iusb.edu/webacts/edud/EleEd/nrc/nrcindex.html
K12 Cyberspace Outpost   http://k12.cnidr.org/janice_k12/k12menu.html
Kids Created Resources   http://sln.fi.edu/tfi/hotlists/kids.html
Kids Internet Delight   http://www.clark.net/pub/journalism/kid.html
Learning in Motion   http:///www.learn.motion.com
NASA's Network Applications and Information Centre (NAIC)   http://naic.nasa.gov/naic/guide/
National Reading Conference   http://www.iusb.edu/webacts/edud/EleEd/nrc/nrcindex.html
National Reading Conference Yearbook   http://syllabus.syr.edu./EED/DJLEU/EED625/
Roadmap for the information Superhighway Interactive Internet Training Workshop   http://www.ll.mit.edu/Roadmap/
Scholastic   http://scholastic.com:2005/b
Spacelink   http://spacelink.msfc.nasa.gov
The Applied Linguistics WWW Virtual Library   http://alt.venus.co.uk/VL/AppLingBBK/VLESL.html
U.S. Department of Education (ED)/Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)   http://www.ed.gov/
Web66   http://web66.coled.umn.edu

Sources: compiled from Mike, 1996, p. 9 and the author

2.2.2.4 Summary

Teaching bottom-up and top-down reading skills may raise students' consciousness of these strategies for assessing a text and prepare students to be better decoders and interpreters. However, this may not be the most important determinant of developing a fluent reader. As Eskey and Grabe (1988) claim, the content of the readings provided and the amount of reading students are expected to do may be more significant in the end. A reading programme in which students can set their own pace and choose their own reading materials in order to promote their reading proficiency (i.e. literacy from a linguistic perspective), as well as build their confidence and personal satisfaction (i.e. literacy from a social perspective), would seem to be ideal.

2.3   Comparing English and Chinese approaches to reading

It may be true, as Alderson (1984) and Goodman (1967) have proclaimed, that reading is a universal process and should be similar across languages. Previous studies have shown similarities in reading process and indicated the possibility of transfer of reading strategies across languages (Coady, 1979; Alderson, 1984; Hudson, 1988). It can not be ignored that the differences of languages and cultures inevitably cause various degrees of comprehension problems in second / foreign language reading. In this section, an attempt is made to discuss the differences of reading in English and in Chinese in terms of two identified features. The first feature regarding the distinctive writing systems is language processing differences; the second focuses on training regarding background differences[25].

2.3.1   Writing system: language processing differences

The languages in use today can be divided into two main categories regarding scripts: logographic languages such as Chinese and alphabetic systems such as English (Gray 1956, cited in Leong 1973; Lee, Stigler, and Stevenson, 1986). Apparently, the greater difference between English and Chinese lies in the writing system.

In English, each symbol represents a speech sound and the relation of symbol to meaning is mediated through its phonological system. Phonetic decoding therefore is obligatory in English reading. Whereas in Chinese, each symbol or character represents a single morpheme or a minimum meaningful linguistic unit. A character, or often more than one character, constitutes a word, and the word itself is directly linked with meaning. Thus, English words have more direct

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[25] According to Grabe (1991), reading in a second language is influenced by training background differences, language processing differences, and social context differences.

relationship to phonemes, but Chinese words have more direct relationship to meaning.

There is no grapheme-phoneme recognition process in reading Chinese characters[26]. However, it is important for a beginning reader of English to develop such phonetic interpretation of the written symbol. As mentioned in Section 2.2.1.1, it is the skill that is emphasised in bottom-up and interactive models for automatic decoding process. Mastering phonology, or knowing how to relate symbol to sound, helps English reading as well as spelling. Thus, it is possible to learn English vocabulary by reading, by phonetic decoding. However, Chinese characters, more often than not, have to be learned by writing, particularly at the beginning stage. Traditionally, every single character with its arbitrary stoke sequences needs to be practised repeatedly until it is memorised. Lee *et al.* (1986) explain how Chinese students are taught to read Chinese:

> "Teachers introduce several characters each day, and through
> successive years of elementary school, children's reading
> vocabularies increase. By the end of the sixth grade, they have
> acquired the approximately 3000 characters needed for reasonable
> literacy. Although, initially, the meaning of combinations of
> characters must be memorised, consistencies in their use
> sometimes make it easier for the experienced reader to learn the
> meaning and pronunciation of new words employing one or more
> of these characters." (p. 129)

In other words, learning to read Chinese depends heavily on writing drills and memory to learn Chinese for beginners. This is presumably because Chinese

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[26] It is *zhuyin fuhao*, or *pinyin*, rather than characters that has grapheme-phoneme correspondence.
In Taiwan, *zhuyin fuhao*, a phonetic spelling system, is used to assist the child in pronouncing characters. *Zhuyin fuhao* is a set of 37 symbols for which there is consistent grapheme-phoneme correspondence. The pronunciation of any Chinese character can be represented by more than three of these symbols. In the People's Republic of China, *pinyin*, an alphabetic form of writing with consistent grapheme-phoneme correspondence, has been adopted for this purpose. Markers indicating the four tones of Mandarin Chinese are further aids to pronunciation. (Lee *et al.* 1986: 128)

written symbols are more complicated and difficult to be learned, or perhaps because calligraphy is more emphasised and valued. The complexity of the Chinese writing system can be observed from the various ways in which characters are formed. Chinese characters can be grouped into six categories (Leong, 1973: 385 - 386):

a) Pictographs (象 形)are characters based on pictures of objects.

b) Ideographs (指 事) or diagrammatic characters indicate the idea or ideas they are meant to convey.

c) Compound ideographs or suggestive characters (會 意 字) are those formed on the basis of associations of ideas suggested by their constituent parts.

d) Loan characters (假 借) are those adopted for new characters on the basis of identity of sound.

e) Phonetic compounds (形 聲) form by far the largest category, comprising at least 80 per cent of the characters.

f) Analogous characters (轉 注) are mainly new characters patterned after old ones so that they are analogous in meaning but do not share the same sound.

Most Chinese characters (phonetic compounds) consist of two elements: a radical, or signific, which determines the meaning (e.g. __糸__ means "silk", __言__ means "words", __氵__ means "water"), and a phonetic, which suggests the pronunciation (e.g. __方__ fang; __平__ ping; __羊__ yang). The combination of these phonemic-semantic components make up characters. Thus, __紡__ "to spin" is compounded of __糸__ "silk" and the phonetic __方__ "fang". Similarly, the combination of __言__ "words" and __平__ "ping" means __評__ "to comment". __洋__ "ocean" has __羊__ "yang" as the sound component and __氵__ "water" to give the character its meaning. Thus, Leong (1973) challenges the idea that Chinese characters are arbitrary and demand unreasonable rote memory by stressing

certain similarities between logographic and alphabetic writing. Leong (ibid.) states:

> "Even though the English phonemic system cannot strictly be equated with sounds in Chinese, there is isomorphy between the distinctive functions of phonemes as contrastive linguistic members and the distinctive properties of the 214 radicals." (p. 391)

Fundamentally, any Chinese character can be categorised into one of the six basic patterns; however, there are irregularities. Lee *et al.* (1986) give good examples to explain that components of a character do not give cues to meaning or pronunciation.

> ... in the character 桐 the left radical (the signific) stands for "tree" and gives us a clue that the character might present a type of tree. However, this is a very general piece of information; scores of characters contain this radical and each represents something having to do with trees or wood. Similarly, radicals such as 氵, which denotes water, or 金, which appears in characters concerned with metals, again pertain to very broad categories that give only vague cues about meaning.

> The right component (the phonetic) of the character provides information about pronunciation. The character 桐 is pronounced "tong." In this case the right-hand component 同 also is pronounced "tong." Unfortunately, this type of aid to pronunciation occurs only in a limited number of characters. This can be illustrated with the character 柏. Here, the pronunciation of the right component is "bai." The pronunciation of the right component. Thus, even though in this case the right

component carries information about pronunciation, the information is of little value to the contemporary reader. In other cases there is no relation between the pronunciation of the right component and the pronunciation of the character. For example, the left hand portion of the character ___化___ means person ('ren") and the right hand portion means word ("yen"). The pronunciation of the whole character, however, is "xing." (p. 127)

Therefore, teachers seldom analyse the structure components of a character or stress the relationships between components while teaching young students Chinese. The focus is on holistic recognition rather than analytical understanding of Chinese characters, which is totally different from the way English is generally learned. English words, on the contrary, require a pattern of analysis to be broken down into letters and English sounds. That is, there is a strong tendency for new words to be broken down into phonemes[27].

The characteristics of Chinese writing system suggest that Chinese readers in reading Chinese characters, comparatively have a more direct access to meaning from the visual configuration of a character and can consequently read with little recourse to phonetic recoding. That is, phonetic recoding is not a common strategy for Chinese learners in reading Chinese. Therefore, when they read English, they are not likely to relate visual symbol with sound. Other strategies, such as looking up a dictionary, are more typically used to obtain lexical sounds. This is in accordance with what Barnett (1989: 34) states: "[U]nlike first language readers, most foreign / second language readers do not have a fully developed phonological system when they begin to read. Therefore, the bottom-up models that depend on the reader's encoding of the text into phonological

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[27] These statements depend heavily on the particular approach or approaches adopted for reading in English. The 'Look and Say' approach is, indeed, holistic; however, the currently more favoured 'Phonics" approach is arguably analytic.

symbols or internal speech cannot apply directly to the second language reading process."

2.3.2 Learning and teaching culture: training background differences

In terms of reading instructions, there seems to be a close connection between teaching Chinese students in reading Chinese as a native language and their reading of English as a second language. According to Fischer-Kohn (1986, cited in Kohn 1992: 121), Chinese teachers of reading have a tendency to encourage students to:

1. read slowly and take care that they know each word as they go;

2. vocalise or voice the material, either aloud or silently;

3. reread difficult sentences until they are understood;

4. look up definitions for all unknown words in a dictionary;

5. analyse complex structures carefully.

Such close and intensive reading strategies are similar to the traditional way that Chinese is taught and learned. However, they are very different from what American teachers would expect their students to use. Conversely, American teachers of reading tend to teach students to (Fischer-Kohn, 1986, cited in Kohn 1992: 121):

1. read rapidly;

2. take care to avoid vocalisation or regression;

3. use prior background knowledge to predict what a reading may be about;

4. focus on the main ideas rather than treating every phrase as equally important;

5. guess the meaning of the words from the context wherever possible, avoiding frequent use of a dictionary.

As Kohn (1992: 121) puts it: "the very patterns of reading behaviour that American teachers are training their students to avoid are the ones that Chinese teachers expect their students to use".

The intensive teaching methods used by Chinese teachers not only reflect the way Chinese is learned, but impose great influence on students, particularly in a culture where the teacher is viewed as "an authority, a source of knowledge, an intellectual and moral example" (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996: 155). Thus, student learning style, more often than not, would concentrate on vocabulary, repetition, and accuracy (e.g. Leong, 1973; Chi, 1993; Bell, 1995).

This suggests that reading strategies specific to the native orthography transfer to a second language reading involving a different orthography. Of course, there are similarities between the processes of reading in Chinese and in English (Leong, 1973; Mohan and Lo, 1985; Alptekin, 1988), which are likely to assist the success of transfer. There are apparent differences between the two distinctive types of orthographies. Special difficulty, for example, can be expected in comprehending English texts since the habits of focusing on the form will limit attention to the comprehension of meaning. As Yorio (1971) has claimed, the difficulty in learning to read in a foreign language could basically be traced to lack of knowledge in the target language and continuous interference of the native language.

An understanding of the negative transfer of reading a logographic language to reading an alphabetic one will help to avoid interference and hopefully to increase reading comprehension and language acquisition. Traditionally, learning to read Chinese depends heavily on holistic recognition of words and phrases, memorisation, intensive and close study and accuracy (Leong, 1973; Lee *et al.*, 1986; Bell, 1995; Cortazzi and Jin, 1996). These Chinese readers' literacy skills and reading habits not only are detected in the way they read English but found to cause some problems in reading the target language.

Vocabulary and memorisation.   It is not surprising to know that many Chinese students indicate that vocabulary is the most important thing when learning a language (Chi, 1993; Cortazzi and Jin, 1996), for mastery of vocabulary, as mentioned earlier, has been emphasised in Chinese reading.

With regard to Chinese approaches to learning English vocabulary, the study of Cortazzi and Jin (1996) found that memorisation of lists of individual words, though such a process may be viewed as dull, boring and mechanical, is still popular. Even to those who have good command at English, "memorising words" was one of the two dominating strategies used to learn vocabulary (Chang, 1990, reported in Cortazzi and Jin, 1996). The prevalence of memorisation is probably because, as indicated by interviewees in Cortazzi and Jin's study (1996), it is "efficient to enlarge vocabulary in a short period to pass tests." (More discussion about the effect of the examination system on the concentration on accuracy is discussed later.)

The importance of vocabulary in reading has been recognised (Eskey and Grabe, 1988). However, memorisation of lists of individual words is not believed by EFL teachers to be an efficient strategy in reading English as a foreign or second language. Words learned in isolation can hardly obtain their full meaning, since "a given word does not have a fixed meaning, but rather has a variety of meanings around a 'prototypical' core, and that these meanings interact with context and background knowledge" (Carrell, 1988c: 242). The complex nature of vocabulary is demonstrated by Richards, who clearly depicts the characteristics of lexical competence (cited in Carter and McCarthy, 1988: 44):

1. Native speakers continue to expand their vocabulary in adulthood. Little is known about the average language-user's vocabulary but anything from 20,000 - 100,000 words could be within a person's receptive vocabulary.

2. Knowing a word means knowing the degree of probability of encountering it and the sorts of words most likely to be found associated with it (frequency and collocability).

3. Knowing a word means knowing its limitations of use according to function and situation (temporal, social, geographical; field, mode, etc.).

4. Knowing a word means knowing its syntactic behaviour (e.g. transitivity patterns, cases).

5. Knowing a word means knowing its underlying forms and derivations.

6. Knowing a word means knowing its place in a network of associations with other words in the language.

7. Knowing a word means knowing its semantic value (its composition).

8. Knowing a word means knowing its different meanings (ploysemy).

Such a categorisation shows that extending vocabulary by memorising lists of isolated words is not so much efficient or effective as encountering words repeatedly in different linguistic contexts. As to vocabulary acquisition, the traditional way to learn Chinese characters is obviously not suitable for learning English new words.

Slow reading speed. Fluent reading for a native reader is rapid (Grabe, 1991), as the reader needs to maintain the flow of information at a sufficient rate to make connections and inferences which are vital to comprehension. Unfortunately, a slow reading speed is a common phenomenon among many second language learners. In the study of the relationship between general language proficiency and L2 reading ability, Cohen *et al.* (1988) indicated that second language learners read far more slowly - up to six times slower - than native readers,

presumably because L2 readers spent more efforts on processing syntactic cues. Many students, as Coady (1979) indicated, have a great deal of proficiency in English and yet read very slowly and with poor comprehension.

As mentioned earlier, English is written in an alphabetic system, whereas the Chinese writing system is logographic. When reading a less familiar orthographic system, Chinese students tend to spend more time decoding the words and phrases and figuring out their meanings. Apart from linguistic deficiencies, their slow reading speed might be attributed to their Chinese reading habits (i.e. a transfer of habits from L1 to L2). From her experience of learning Chinese, Bell (1995) noted that her Chinese teacher "did not see speed as being relevant or helpful to the development of literacy in Chinese." When it comes to English reading, Kohn (1992) also mentioned that accuracy rather than fluency had been emphasised in the teaching of reading in China. Such close reading habits, as a consequence, tend to encourage Chinese naturally to give the same amount of attention to every word in order not to misinterpret the meaning of each word. The feeling of insecurity to skip some words not only slows down reading but, more often than not, is likely to result in comprehension failure. In other words, if a reader has to concentrate most of his attention on word recognition, he has little attention left to give priority to the meaning, especially with difficult material or unfamiliar topics. For ESL / EFL students, building up a faster reading rate has been emphasised in much of the literature in the field of second language reading - "the ability to read the written language at a reasonable rate and with good comprehension has long been recognised to be ... important" (Carrell, 1988a: 1), "Good readers ... are more reliant on context for fluency and poor readers more reliant on context for accuracy" (Stanovich 1980, cited in Eskey 1988: 95), etc. A slow reading speed is obviously one of the main obstacles for L2 readers in their reading. Thus, it is important for Chinese students to build up a reasonably fast reading speed when they do English reading

Accuracy.   "In Taiwan, students are constantly tested to see whether they can produce the 'right' answers in order to complete the course" (Chi, 1993: 117 - 118). When high accuracy is demanded, students inevitably focus on decoding processes and / or depend on the teacher to provide the right answers (e.g. in tackling reading comprehension tasks). The former tend to slow down reading rate, and the latter is likely to develop more passive responses in students who might excessively depend on the teacher rather than initially take responsibilities for their own learning. As Kohn (1992: 121) described, Chinese students are accustomed to "detailed concentration on the words and phrases used in the text, with little or no attention to the overall structure of the short story", and when asked to analyse a story they would either "copy the introduction from the textbook", or "copy excerpted passages from the story". He thus concluded that "in their experience, analysing a story independently of the teacher's interpretation given in class was a very novel concept." In most or nearly all Chinese classroom situations, the teacher plays a dominant role as an authority, an information-giver and a text-explainer; he is not to be "questioned", in Bell's (1995: 698) terms. Students are usually not expected and not rewarded for active engagement in active participation. Such a traditional culture of teaching and learning is contradictory to those western cultures, where reading is viewed as an individual process; fluency rather than accuracy is targeted first, and closer attention is paid to learners' needs (Kohn, 1992; Cortazzi and Jin, 1996). Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964) present a question that is central to the differences of Chinese culture and western culture and deepens the understanding of why and how the processes of teaching and learning vary:

> "Before we can properly consider the problems and techniques of
> teaching languages we must first take account of the other side of
> the coin, language learning. The relationship between learning and
> teaching is one that defies close analysis. 'Did he learn or was he
> taught?' is an unanswerable question." (p. 177)

In essence, it can be concluded from the above examination of trends that Chinese students are taught and western students learn. Chinese teachers teach, and western teachers guide students to learn.

It is hoped by understanding the differences of training background, the L1 literacy skills can be an advantage rather than impediment in the switch from reading an logogrphic language to reading an alphabetic one.

2.4 Past research relating to free voluntary reading

The limited evidence available on free voluntary reading can be classified into two principal groups, one examining the extent of free voluntary reading and the other identifying correlates of free voluntary reading.

2.4.1 *The extent of free voluntary reading*

The extent of free voluntary reading can be seen from the viewpoints of cognitive and affective domains. The former refers to teaching students how to read, or the development of reading skills by reading. The latter emphasises teaching students to love reading. In other words, it focuses on encouragement and development of reading interests and enjoyment. According to Lundberg (1994: 162), the cognitive domain contains five aims:

1. developing skills in reading aloud
2. improving students' reading comprehension
3. extending students' vocabulary
4. improving word-attack skills
5. increase speed of reading

The affective domain contains:

1. developing a lasting interest in reading
2. developing students' research and study skills
3. developing students' critical thinking
4. expanding students' world views
5. making reading enjoyable

Historically, the cognitive domain has dominated the attention of reading teachers and researchers. However, the last decades have witnessed an emerging interest in the affective domain.

2.4.1.1   *The cognitive domain's rationale*

There have developed two positions on free voluntary reading in recent years. The most prevalent position is that free voluntary reading is used as a means of practising skills. Krashen (1995) explains this:

> "This view is consistent with the 'skill-building' hypothesis of language and literacy development, which holds that we acquire language and develop literacy by first learning an aspect of language consciously and then practising it repeatedly in output until it becomes 'automatic'." (p. 187)

The popularity of skill-building free voluntary reading is evident in the huge expenditures for basals (books in reading schemes) and computers but declining expenditures on a more general range of books (Miller and Shontz, 1993); however, this is not the focus in this thesis.

Another position is that free voluntary reading itself is the major cause of the acquisition of reading ability. The possibility of learning to read by reading is contended by Smith's (1976, 1988b) and Goodman's (1982) emphasis on giving the reader a central (anticipating / predicting) role in understanding what he or she reads, and is supported by Teale's (1981, as referred to in Morrow 1991) discussion of natural literacy development and Vygotsky's (1978) theory of "zone of proximal development"[28].

Teale (ibid.) argues that "the typical literacy curriculum with its progression from part to whole and its hierarchy of skills" does not reflect the way children learn to read:

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[28] Vygotsky (1978) defined the zone of proximal development in a deceptively simple way: the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by individual problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (p. 86).

"The belief is that literacy development is a case of building competencies in certain cognitive operations with letters, words, sentences and texts, competencies which can be applied in a variety of situations. A critical mistake here is that the motives, goals, and conditions have been abstracted away from the activity in the belief that this enables the student to "get down to" working on the essential process of reading and writing. But ... these features are critical aspects of reading and writing themselves. By organising instruction which omits them, the teacher ignores how literacy is practised (and therefore learned) and thereby creates a situation in which the teaching is an inappropriate model for the learning." (p. 567)

Following a similar line as Teale, Vygotsky (1987) had earlier argued against focusing on isolated skills and subskills, and insisted on carrying out the whole process of reading in the general conditions of learning.

"... a psychology that decomposes verbal thinking into its elements in an attempt to explain its characteristics will search in vain for the unity that is characteristic of the whole. These characteristics are inherent in the phenomenon only as a unified whole. Therefore, when the whole is analysed into its elements, these characteristics evaporate. In his attempt to reconstruct these characteristics, the investigator is left with no alternative but to search for external, mechanical forces of interaction between elements." (p. 9)

According to Vygotsky (1987), what learners can do with help today they will be able to do unaided tomorrow. The role of the teacher is to provide the necessary guidance - mediations, in a Vygotskian sense - so that learners, through their own efforts, assume full control of their own learning.

"That which lies in the zone of proximal development at one stage is realised and moves to the level of actual development at a second. In other words, what the child is able to do in collaboration today he will be able to do independently tomorrow." (p. 206)

"a central feature of the psychological study of instruction is the potential the child has to raise himself to a higher intellectual level of development through collaboration ... The zone of proximal development determines the domain of transitions that are accessible to the child." (p. 206)

This perception is similar to what Smith (1988a) proposes, 'an effective non-evaluative teacher'. He provides his personal experience to illustrate how a teacher can facilitate students to appropriate their independence on learning.

"Earlier this year, at an informal reception at a private house in Chicago for participants in a literacy conference, I met a most remarkable teacher of Greek. Everyone was speaking English, but there was a pleasant Greek atmosphere in the room, in the books that were around, in the pictures on the walls, in the music that was playing, (and in the refreshments). The setting led me to reveal that I had once studied modern Greek but had given up because I felt I hadn't made much progress.

The Greek teacher took me in hand. She found some books that she knew I would understand, simple stories with interesting illustrations. We easily ignored all the other conversations in the room. We browsed through the books until we found one that I was comfortable with. Then she invited me to read the story with her - in Greek. If I mispronounced a word, she didn't worry. If I struggled to say a word, she quietly said it for me, in Greek. If I

didn't understand, she gently suggested a meaning, in English. I
don't suppose I read much of the book myself, but she made me
feel that I read it all, without any stress of being evaluated, in a
pleasant collaboration. She devoted twenty minutes to me, and
when we had done, I was a member of the club of people who read
Greek. I might not have been very proficient, but I was well
established. I was able to enjoy the next book by myself. And I
started to look for other Greek books that I could read (with the
help of the authors and illustrators) when my teacher was not
around.

The name of my teacher was Sofia - and she was seven
years old." (p. 136-137)

By providing meaningful texts for learners to read, teachers, as described above,
can promote reading practice and encourage the learners to teach themselves to
read. However, the active organism is still the learner.

Learning to read by reading is supported by direct evidence that free voluntary
reading and reading proficiency are related. Greaney (1980) reported a
significant correlation (p<.001) between the amount of time devoted to book and
comic reading and reading attainment. Anderson, Wilson and Fielding(1988)
recorded children's amount of leisure reading in minutes. The study found that
children who scored at the 90th percentile on a reading test spend five times as
many minutes per day reading books as children at the 50th percentile, and more
than two hundred times as many minutes per day reading books as the children at
the 10th percentile. Gradman and Hanania (1991) pointed out a clear
relationship between reading done outside of school and performance on the Test
of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Pilgreen and Krashen (1993)
reported a remarkable gains on the Standard Diagnostic Reading Comprehension
Test (p<.001) for ESL students participating in a sixteen-week sustained silent

reading programme. The possible explanation by Krashen (1995) for the short but successful programme is that: the students "had an excellent supply of interesting reading material easily available to them, were encouraged to read at home, were allowed to take books home, and were informed about the advantages of free reading" (p. 188). Additionally, Krashen (1988; 1989; 1991; 1992a; 1993a; 1993b, 1993c; 1994; 1995) enumerates a number of studies to manifest the effect of free voluntary reading on reading ability, as well as the development of vocabulary, spelling, grammar and writing style.

According to Krashen (1993b), free voluntary reading may be categorised into three kinds: a) in-school free reading programmes, b) reported free voluntary reading, and c) read and test studies. Each of these is discussed in turn.

In-school free reading programmes. In-school free reading programmes include sustained silent reading[29] (SSR) and self-selected reading. In SSR, student are given a quiet time (about five to fifteen minutes) for engaging in free voluntary reading. Teachers in order to model how to enjoy reading also read what they want to read. No book reports or comprehension questions are required. In self-selected reading, more time is devoted to free reading. Regular short conferences are held to discuss what students read with teachers. Previous research (see below) shows that students in in-school free reading programmes outperform students in traditional language arts programmes on standardised tests of reading comprehension and vocabulary if the programmes last longer than seven months.

Among these studies, the following in-school free reading programmes are particularly relevant to the present study since they were performed on second language learners. Firstly, the study by Elley and Mangubhai (1983) was an 8

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[29] The principles of sustained silent reading were developed by McCracken (1971). Unlike earlier models of independent reading, McCracken recommended that students should not be required to conference about, or report on, their voluntary reading. He emphasised that all they have to do were select their own reading materials and pace themselves in their reading

month-long project with 614 Class 4 and 5 Fijian students from 12 rural schools. They found that students in book flood groups progressed in reading and listening comprehension at twice the normal rate. After 20 months, more significant differences were found between two book flood groups and the control group in reading, word knowledge, English structures and written composition. The findings of the investigation described in this paper are also similar to those of Elley (1991). He conducted a large scale study in Singapore with 3000 EFL students. By comparing book-based programmes with traditional and audiolingual approaches, he reported that students in book-based programmes outperformed those in regular language programmes in reading. Moreover, he stressed "the spread of effect from reading competence to other language skills - writing, speaking, and control over syntax" (p. 404). Working with ESL learners of Pakistani origin aged ten and eleven in Leeds in the UK, Hafiz and Tudor (1989) reported that the free reading experimental group outperformed the control groups in both reading and writing during a period of 12 weeks. In a further report, Tudor and Hafiz (1989) conducted a more detailed analysis of improvement on an essay writing test. The results showed gains in the number of words written and greater accuracy of expression. However, the subjects' vocabulary base remained relatively unchanged and they used a generally more simple syntax. Tudor and Hafiz (ibid.) suggested that probably due to the provision of simplified graded reader, the extensive reading programme appeared to encourage a simpler though more correct form of expression in the target language. Tudor and Hafiz thus concluded: "Extensive reading is suggested to have a potential in L2 development terms, though the effect obtained from any given reading programme may be significantly related to linguistic form of the material used. (p. 164)"

Reported free voluntary reading. Data gained from questionnaire or reading diaries show that there are modest but positive correlations between reading achievement and amount of reading done outside school. Table 2.4 summarises

findings from previous studies regarding reported pleasure reading and reading achievement.

Table 2.4 Reported Pleasure Reading and Reading Achievement

Study	Subjects	Results
Schoonover 1937	high school	r = .079 between number of books read over six years and scores on reading test: all students involved in free reading program
Sheldon & Cutts 1953	grades 1 - 12 n = 521	parents report that "almost half of the above-average and superior readers have reading as an out-of school interest ... about one-fourth of the average and only one-tenth of the below-average readers seem to be interested in reading at home." (p. 519)
Hansen 1969	grade 4 n = 48	no relationship between reading achievement and number of books read
Long & Henderson 1973	grade 5 n = 150	r = .18 to .22 between time spent reading and subtests of Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test
Thorndike 1973	14 years old n = 39,307 (15 countries)	correlations between hours of reading for pleasure and reading comprehension: all 15 countries: r = .16 12 developed countries: r = .29
Purves 1973	age 14	High correlations between professed interest in reading literature and achievement scores.
Lamme 1976	grades 4 - 6 n = 65	r = .30 between number of books read and test of reading comprehension
Lambert & Saunders 1976	high school	skilled readers / non-skilled readers readers 42 / readers non-readers 26 / 25 51 "skilled" = top 50% of STEP test "reader" = reads five hours or more per day for pleasure "non-reader" = reports no free reading chi square = 12.023, p<.001 phi coefficient = .29
Greaney 1980	grade 5 n = 920	correlations between time devoted to reading and performance on the Drumconda English Test comprehension and vocabulary: books = .31 comics and popular magazines = .13
Newman & Prowda 1982	4, 8, 11th graders n = 7,787	partial correlations between hours per week of reading for pleasure and tests of reading: grade 4 r = .22 grade 8 r = .25 grade 11 r = .27
Evans & Gleadow 1983	grade 11 n = 78; adults n = 66 middle class	no relationship between reported leisure reading and reading proficiency (British Columbia Reading Assessment)

continued

Study	Subjects	Results
Telfer & Kann 1984	4, 8, 11th grade n = 234	r = .21 between time spent reading for enjoyment and reading scores on Gates-MacGinitie test for 11th graders. "statistically nonsignificant trend among 4th and 8th graders" (p. 538)
Robert, Bachen, Hornby & Hernandez-Ramos 1984	grades 2, 3, 5	correlation between reading achievement (CTBS, SAT, SRA) and number of books read in last two weeks: grade 2 r = .01 n = 127 grade 3 r = .22 n = 134 grade 5 r = .21 n = 203
Walberg & Tsai 1984	age 17 n = 2,300	correlations with reading achievements frequency of spare time reading = .18 amount of leisure reading = .10
Walberg & Tsai 1985	age 9 n = 1,459	correlation between reading achievement & frequency of spare time reading = -.03
Neuman 1986	grade 5 n = 59	"heavy readers" (about 6 books per month) score higher on Reading Progress Scale than "light readers" (about one book per month) heavy readers = 2.8 light readers = 2.3 (maximum = 4 points)
Hafner, Palmer & Tullos 1986	grade 9 n = 80	no difference between good readers and poor readers in "number of books or magazines read"; good reader = upper half of scores on Davis Reading test poor readers= lower half of scores on Davis Reading test
Alexander 1986	grade 8	positive relationship between amount of free reading and scores on the CAP test of English and Language Arts
Anderson, Wilson & Fielding 1988	grade 5 n = 155	minutes per day reading best predictor among leisure time activities of reading comprehension, vocabulary and reading speed
Foertsch 1992	4, 8, 12th graders	positive relationship between amount of free reading and test of reading comprehension
Mokhtari & Sheorey 1994	undergraduate, graduate students n = 158 (95 + 63)	positive relationship between amount of academic reading and TOEFL; no significant differences between the amount of non-academic reading and TOEFL
Elley 1994	Age 9, 14 27 countries	Positive relationship between frequency of reading and achievement.
Masuhara, Kimura, Fukada & Takeuchi 1996	English major college students n = 89	Both groups (the Reading Experience and the Strategy Training Groups) improved after 10-week treatment, but greater improvement was the Reading Experience Group.

Sources: Compiled from Krashen 1988, 1993b; Greaney, 1980; Anderson *et al*, 1988; Foertsch, 1992; Elley, 1994; Mokhtari *et al*. 1994; Masuhara *et al*, 1996

Apart from reading achievement, positive relationships have been found between free voluntary reading and writing. In a study by Applebee (1978), high school students who won the National Council of Teachers of English achievement awards in writing reported reading an outstanding average of 14 books for pleasure during the summer vacation and 4 books at the first two months of their senior year. Janopoulos (1986) investigated 79 ESL graduate students in seven language groups and found that reading proficiency was correlated with writing proficiency. The results indicated that the heavy readers tended to write better in English. Tsang (1996) examined 144 Cantonese students at four form levels in Hong Kong and compared the effects of reading and writing on writing performance. The extensive reading group was found to be the most effective in improving writing when compared with writing and mathematics groups. Lee (1996) studied 318 Taiwanese senior high school students, and the results showed that free voluntary reading significantly influenced their writing performance.

Other evidence shows that free voluntary reading leads to literacy development. Greaney (1980) and Greaney and Hegarty (1987) found modest but significant positive correlations between the amount of leisure reading reported by fifth graders and performance on test that included a vocabulary measure. As mentioned earlier, Anderson, Wilson and Fielding (1988) reported that reading books out of school not only benefited reading comprehension but vocabulary and reading speed. West, Stanovich and Mitchell (1993) surveyed airport passengers and discovered the performance on an author-recognition test, considered a measure of free reading, was highly correlated with airport reading (r = .47), vocabulary recognition (r = .62), and cultural literacy (r = .72). In Cho and Krashen's (1994) study, four adult second-language acquirers made impressive gains in vocabulary knowledge from reading novels from the "Sweet Valley Kids" series and reported increased competence in understanding and speaking English. Polak and Krashen (1988) indicated that intermediate ESL students in Los Angeles who reported more free reading tended to make fewer spelling

errors. Chomsky (1972) reported that children who grew up in richer print environments displayed more grammatical competence. Elley and Mangubhai (1983) also found that subjects in book flood groups outperformed the control group in English syntactic structures.

Read and test studies.   Read and test studies require subjects to read for comprehension passages with unfamiliar words in the context. An untold spelling or vocabulary test is given afterwards to evaluate if the meaning or spelling of these unfamiliar words has been acquired or improved. A study by Nagy, Herman and Anderson (1985) revealed that readers could pick up small but statistically reliable increases in vocabulary and spelling knowledge from as little as one exposure to an unknown word in context, without instruction or output. They also suggested that reading alone was enough to account for an adult native speaker's vocabulary size. Thus, while Nagy *et al.* (ibid.) have successfully shown vocabulary growth of first language learners through reading, Pitts, White and Krashen's (1989) study showed that adult intermediate students of English as a second language could also increase their vocabulary by reading. Following Saragi, Nation and Meister (1978)[30], Pitts *et al.* asked ESL adult students to read two chapters of *A Clockwork Orange* and tested if they could acquire nadsat words incidentally from reading. The results showed that subjects in both experimental groups exceeded the control group; the gain in vocabulary was small but significant.

Evidence from most of the studies advanced above implies that free voluntary reading is the best predictor of reading comprehension, vocabulary growth, spelling ability, grammatical structures and writing style. Stanovich (1986)

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[30] Saragi, Nation and Meister (1978) asked adult native speakers of English to read *A Clockwork Orange*, a novel containing 241 slang words of Russian origin, called "nadsat" words. Subjects were not told to try to learn or remember the nadsat words, but were only told that after they finished the book they would be given a test of literary criticism and comprehension based on *A Clockwork Orange*. The dictionary of nadsat words that is published at the end of *A Clock Orange* was removed from the copies the subjects read. A few days after they finished the book, subjects were give a multiple choice test covering 90 nadsat words. There was a significant amount of nadsat word learning: The lowest score on the multiple choice test was about 50% correct, and the average score was about 76% correct (Pitts, White and Krashen, 1989).

brings to attention "the Matthew Effect" - an analogy of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. If readers who read become better readers and those who do not choose to read rarely develop into good readers, then a further concern is how to motivate non-readers to want to read.

2.4.1.2   The affective domain's rationale

"The 'affective domain' has long been accorded an important place in education", as indicated by Stern (1992). He points out: "Since the early years of the twentieth century psychology has concerned itself more and more with emotional and motivational aspects of the human psyche, which had previously been neglected." More than the training of the intellect or the learning of specific skills, educational goals should include two aspects of the affective domain (Stern, 1992: 85):

a) Emotional response, concerning the development of positive feelings about activities in which learners are being trained.

b) Ego-involvement[31], referring to the relationship between the individual and the activities concerned.

- What does the individual do about the objects towards which he has such positive feeling?

- To what extent can it be said that he is involved, that he cares about them and shows concern for them.

The affective domain is concerned with "changes in interest, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciation and adequate adjustment" (Krathwohl *et al.*, 1964, as cited in Stern, 1992).

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[31] Ego-involvement is used as a unifying expression for the related concepts of interest, motivation, participation, engagement, and commitment. The degree of ego-involvement can range from simple awareness of an activity or field of knowledge, becoming personally involved in the activity or being informed about the field, to the greater level of becoming part of the individual's value system and playing a well-defined and visible role in the person's life.

The importance of developing the affective domain in free voluntary reading is established by the evidence described in Section 1.1.1.2, as well as research results presented in Section 2.4.1.1, that many people, either in L1 or L2, do not choose to read even though they can read. For example, Anderson, Wilson and Fielding (1988) argued that although reading books was found to be the best predictor of reading achievement, on most days most children did little or no book reading. They concluded that:

> " ... the typical child in the middle grades reads less than 25 minutes a day out of school. The amount appears to be considerably less than this in the United States, maybe as little as 8 - 12 minutes per day when all types of reading material are included and maybe as little as 4 - 5 minutes a day when only books are counted. The amount of reading is almost certainly much lower than many have supposed." (p. 299)

Taking ESL learners as subjects, Mokhtari and Sheorey (1994) found that students did not do much English reading for pleasure:

> "... however well or poorly these students read, they spend more time on academic reading than any other type of reading in college. In other words, ESL students either do not have the time to do extracurricular reading or English is not their language of choice when it comes to reading non-academic materials." (pp. 58 - 59)

Morrow (1991) emphasises that aliterates - individuals who can read but choose not to do so - constitute a threat to the development of societies and civilisation which is at least equal to a perceived threat from illiterates. Furthermore, Smith (1988a) describes the danger of assuming that information gathering is the sole or even the most important function of reading -- and behaving and teaching

accordingly. He emphasises that reading should fulfil a range of purposes and extend across all human endeavours. However, if just one aspect of reading must be highlighted then it should be reading for pleasure.

> "Louise Rosenblatt (1978) distinguishes two kinds of reading, which she calls efferent and aesthetic. Efferent reading is reading that is indeed done for the sake of information, like looking something up in a telephone directory, a catalogue, a television guide, or a textbook. Efferent reading is easy to recognise - you want to finish it as quickly as possible and would be quite happy to get the information in some other way (by being told, for example). Aesthetic reading, on the other hand, is reading engaged in for the pleasure of the activity, like reading a novel or poem (or in certain circumstances a newspaper or magazine). With aesthetic reading we do not want other people to save us the trouble by telling us what is going to happen. We may even slow down as we near the end so that we can extend the satisfaction we are getting. Aesthetic reading, in other words, is done for experience, not for information. Experience may provide information as a by-product, but information can never provide experience. And experience, I shall argue, is the basis of learning." (Smith, 1988a: 95 - 96)

Developing students who not only can read but who will read and love to read is a critical goal for reading instruction. According to the previous research cited earlier (e.g. Masuhara *et al*, 1996), the key factor that distinguishes students in free voluntary reading groups from other groups is 'interest' - being able to read their own choice. However, a requisite for benefiting from free voluntary reading is 'continuity' (or sustaining free reading over time). Ultimately, it refers to developing the habits of reading for pleasure.

The teacher has an important influence on the amount of time students spend reading books out of school (Anderson *et al*, 1988). If reading, as advocated by Smith (1990), is an activity in which there is a strong attitude-behaviour connection, then the teacher's role, especially for inexperienced or non-readers, is to cultivate positive attitudes toward reading while at the same time recognising and respecting individual differences.

Anderson *et al* (1988: 296) suggest ways of promoting reading. They are:

a)   assuring access to interesting books at a suitable level of difficulty,

b)   using incentives to increase motivation for reading,

c)   reading aloud to students, and

d)   providing time for reading during the school day.

By providing these positive teaching treatments, students can then be expected to gain a positive learning outcome (see Figure 2.7). Cultivating positive attitudes toward reading does not guarantee swift success on the affective goal of reading, for reluctant or aliterate students are always prone to complain of having no time to read (Kropp and Cooling, 1995). As advocated by Smith (1988a), getting students to love to read is no different for reluctant students than for the enthusiastic ones. It just requires more patience and sensitivity. The answers that Smith (1988a) gave to a question about how to motivate reluctant readers and writers to show an interest in reading and writing, disclose that the best solution to aliteracy is reading, and more free reading.

"The trick is to find something involving reading and writing that interests the learner and to engage the learner authentically in that area of interest, making the reading and writing incidental. Lack of interest in reading and writing should not be a problem, because it should never be an issue." (p. 125)

	Very positive		Encourage interest in English reading
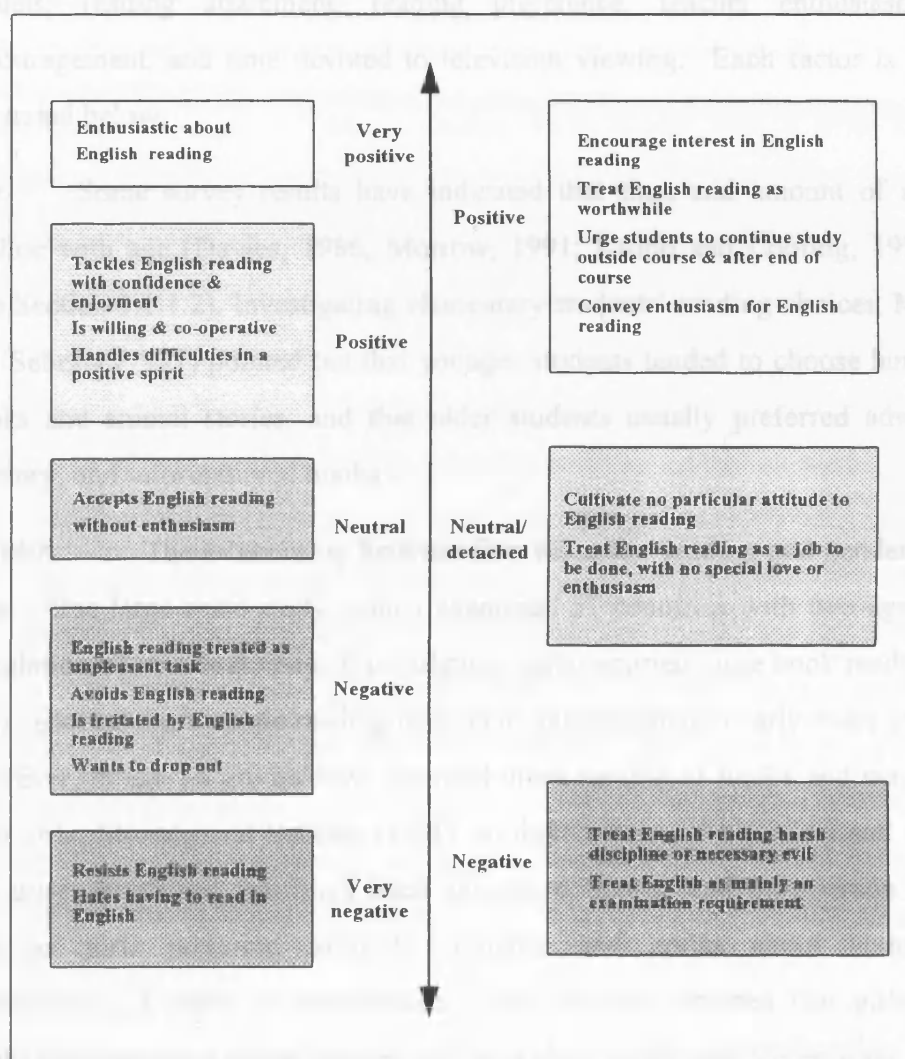
Figure 2.7   Range of student attitudes to English reading expressed
as learning outcomes and teaching goals

2.4.2 The correlates of free voluntary reading

Various factors have been reported to be correlated with free voluntary reading. They include age, gender, socio-economic status, a print-rich environment, role models, reading attainment, reading preference, teacher enthusiasm and encouragement, and time devoted to television viewing. Each factor is briefly discussed below.

Age. Some survey results have indicated that time and amount of reading decline with age (Davies, 1986; Morrow, 1991; Kropp and Cooling, 1995; see also Section 1.1.1.2). Investigating elementary students' reading choices, Monson and Sebesta (1991) pointed out that younger students tended to choose humorous books and animal stories, and that older students usually preferred adventure, mystery, and informational books.

Gender. The relationship between free voluntary reading and gender seems clear. One large scale study, which examined 27 countries with two age-group populations, found that in age 9 populations girls reported more book reading and boys reported more comic reading than their counterparts in nearly every country. However, in age 14 groups boys reported more reading of books and magazines than girls. Monson and Sebesta (1991), in their review of historical and current literature, concluded that boys liked adventure, sports, and information books, whereas girls preferred mystery, romance and books about home life. Additionally, a study of intermediate grade students reported that girls chose books recommended by the teacher and boys chose books by interest topic (Linek *et al*, 1994).

Socio-economic status. A number of studies have found that socio-economic status is a factor in free voluntary reading, though not the most important. Greaney (1980: 340) indicated in his review: Long and Henderson (1973), Maxwell (1977), and Whitehead *et al.* (1975) observed that children from working class homes did not read very much; frequent leisure reading was most

characteristic of those of higher social backgrounds, education, and ability (Himmelweit & Swift, 1976). According to Greaney and Hegarty (1987), formally educated parents have more positive home support for reading. Morrow (1983) also found that free voluntary readers were more likely to come from small families and have parents holding a college or graduate degree.

Print-rich environment. Many studies have found that a rich literacy environment contributes to students' voluntary interest. Powell (1966) found that the more immediate the access to library material, the greater the amount of student recreatory reading. Correlation is also found by Morrow (1982) and Morrow and Weinstein (1982) between the number of children using literature and physical characteristics of the class "library corner", such as adding new books to the library corner, having attractive displays related to books, placing pillows in the library corner, etc. Greaney and Hegarty (1987) reported that a good reading environment encouraged reading: Heavy readers had more books at home, and their parents allowed them to read in bed more than those of non-readers. Evidence presented in a number of surveys indicates that the correlation between book ownership and extensive reading is well established (Heather, 1981; Whitehead *et al.* 1977, cited in Davies, 1986). The study by Elley (1994), for example, showed that homes with a plentiful source of books and newspapers apparently provided more advantages for children's literacy development in all the countries surveyed.

Role models. In addition, results of many investigations have demonstrated that parents and teachers who read more often in their leisure time influence their children and students to read more, since they serve as reading models and create a reading atmosphere. Morrow (1983) reported that parents of high interest literature groups read more novels and magazines, and that more books were in the home and were kept in the child's own room. Morrow (1982) found that children in SSR programmes read more when teachers read too. In Heather's (1981, reported in Davies 1986) study, students were found to be more

likely to use the public library if their parents used the library. Rieck (1977, reported in Davies 1986), described a study investigating teacher and student attitudes toward reading, showing how teachers who did not read or did not value reading might pass this negative attitude on to their students. Teachers and parents are models of reading behaviour for their students and children. If they show that they value reading, their students and children will be more motivated to read.

Reading preference. Examining previous studies, Krashen (1993b) found that good readers consistently preferred science fiction and adventure books. He also indicated some contradictions: history and religious books were popular for good readers in Thorndike's (1973) study, but by poor readers in Hafner, Palmer, and Tullos' (1986) study. Elley (1994), in his large scale study, reported that humour, sports, music and adventure were preferred book themes for 14-year-olds in nearly all countries surveyed, whereas poetry, biography and classics were the least popular. In magazines and newspapers, these subjects devoted more attention to sections related to entertainment and sports. Morrow (1983) found that all parents read newspapers and work-related materials. However, parents with children who were interested in books tended to read novels and magazines when compared with parents of non-voluntary readers. Greaney (1980) concluded that fiction was generally preferred to non-fiction and that poetry was less popular than prose. Davies (1986: 41- 42) summarised reading choices: "the case for selecting books for voluntary reading according to literary (fiction and quality) and recency criteria are well established and widely unchallenged."

Reading attainment. Previous research studies discussed in 2.4.1.1 indicate a positive correlation between free voluntary reading and reading performance, but there is apparently no direct evidence to indicate that this relationship is causal.

Teacher enthusiasm and encouragement. Morrow (1982) strongly suggested that teacher enthusiasm and encouragement might result in more literature use and

better library corners. Elley (1994) reported that good teachers tended to give students many opportunities to do independent, silent reading in a library which is richly stocked, and they often held discussions with students about the books they had read. In addition, they encouraged students to read outside school and to use the library often, and they themselves read a lot, both professionally about education and also literature. Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1988) emphasised the significant influence of the teacher on the amount of book reading children do out of school. They indicated: "The influence is substantial: the class that read the most averaged 16.5 minutes per day, whereas the class that read the least averaged only 4.1 minutes per day. (p. 296)"

Time devoted to television viewing. Studies that have compared television viewing and free voluntary reading have not proved that watching television diminishes students' interest in reading. Inconclusive results have been found. Some studies show television prevents reading when the viewers are young (Gadberry, 1980, cited in Krashen, 1993b). Reviews of studies by Greaney (1980) and Krashen (1993b) suggest that a substantial number of studies demonstrate that television does not interfere with the reading of books and that merely a few studies show that heavy readers watch a lot of television. In general, children who demonstrate an interest in books watch less television daily than those who do not demonstrate an interest in books (Hansen, 1969; Morrow, 1983), and yet good readers still watch a modest amount of television (Williams *et al*, 1982; Anderson *et al*, 1988; Krashen, 1993b).

The characteristics of a voluntary reader

Due to the diversity of individuals and environments, it is difficult to make generalisations about features characterising the best voluntary readers. It might be worthwhile, however, to attempt a brief summary statement that draws a picture of free voluntary readers based on characteristics appearing regularly in the studies discussed above.

Voluntary readers tend to be girls. Most of the research reviewed indicates that voluntary readers with strong interest in books score well on tests (e.g. vocabulary, writing, reading speed tests) in school and are particularly successful in reading performance. The readers who demonstrate a voluntary interest in books tend to spend more of their leisure time reading, especially reading fiction. In addition, voluntary readers tend to watch less television daily than those who do not demonstrate an interest in books. Students who are voluntary readers tend to visit a library more and more often than not, are likely to be a member of the library. They are likely to come from a print-rich family: there are a large supply of accessible books at home, their parents read to them daily and take them to the library often, and their parents read a great deal themselves.

PART II

The Voluntary Reading Study Approach, Results, and Discussion

The first part of this thesis has set the background on which this research is constructed. Part II consists of three chapters which are the main contribution of this free voluntary reading research. This part gives details of the methodology, data analysis, results and discussion.

Chapter 3 **Methodology**	General framework of the study Preparation of the research The role of teachers Procedures of the research
Chapter 4 **Data Analysis**	Methods of interpreting the results Quantitative & qualitative data analysis Reading journal
Chapter 5 **Findings &** **Discussion**	Patterns of free voluntary reading Gender differences in FVR Continuity differences in FVR Scores differences in FVR

3. METHODOLOGY

> On a November day in 1957 I found myself standing in front of Miss
> Grosier's first grade class in Hillcrest Elementary School, trying to think
> of a really good word. She had us playing this game in which each kid
> had to offer up a word to the class, and for every classmate who couldn't
> spell your word, you got a point - provided of course that you could spell
> the word. Whoever got the most points received the coveted gold star.
>
> "Bouillabaisse," I said, finally.
>
> "You don't even know what that is," Miss Grosier scolded.
>
> "It's fish soup."
>
> "You can't spell that."
>
> "Can too."
>
> "Come here. Write it." She demanded.
>
> I wrote it. She looked it up, and admitted that it was, indeed, correct.
>
> Easiest gold star I ever won. And right here, right now, I'd like to thank,
> albeit somewhat belatedly, whoever wrote the Donald Duck comic book
> in which I found the word bouillabaisse. Also, I'd like to thank my
> mother who read me that comic book and so many others when I was
> four and five...I learned to read from those sessions long before I started
> school. While most of my classmates were struggling with *See Spot Run*,
> I was reading *Superman*. I knew what indestructible meant, could spell
> it, and would have cold-bloodedly used it to win another gold star if I
> hadn't been banned from competition after bouillabaisse...
>
> ------- *Jim Shooter* (1986: A85)

Overview

This chapter begins with the initial design of the experimental study, and then explains the preparation process of setting up the main study and the problems encountered in applying the initial design to actual classroom teaching both in Britain and in Taiwan. The development and design of the questionnaires and the selection of the test are also discussed. The remaining

section of this chapter describes the revised procedures, the roles of the teacher and students participating the experiment, and limitations of the study.

3.1 Original framework of the study

This study arises from noticing the needs of those learning English in Taiwan and from observation of learning bottlenecks in adult EFL learners, particularly those who have entered the intermediate level but have not mastered English. The major problem encountered by these adult learners is that they do not know how to improve their language proficiency efficiently after the language courses end.

At the university level, reading is considered to be the most important of the four skills in both teaching and learning English in Taiwan (and also in many other countries), as university students are required to handle authentic texts in very short time-scales. However, English teaching in Taiwan and learning are driven by tests and exams, so learning activities often focus the learner's attention on the form rather than on meaning and do not prepare students to cope with difficult texts. It is often the case that students "plod through the text from beginning to end in a laborious word-by-word fashion, pausing often to consult a dictionary for lexical items that they do not know" (Dubin & Bycina, 1991: 198). Student efforts are limited to reading for memorising vocabulary, phrases and grammatical patterns. Instruction in English courses, on the other hand, centres on understanding the meaning of each word in regard to its grammatical features in a given sentence (Chien, 1993). As a result, the learners are used to reading every kind of text intensively and closely, and often at the expense of comprehension. To most university students, reading is studying. It is regarded as a medium to improve one's language proficiency or to meet the demands of most academic programmes, but never as a means to cater for personal interests. Even in reading lessons, such as Freshman English, where most time is actually spent on reading, it is relatively rare for students to read for interest although it is

widely agreed that one becomes a good reader through reading (Krashen, 1988; Smith, 1976).

Since free voluntary reading is not emphasised in classroom teaching in Taiwan, it is considered that for free voluntary reading to be successfully introduced, the importance of reading need to be highlighted and guidance should be offered both teachers and students to stimulate a love of reading. This study therefore involves a three-phase process: confidence building, habit cultivation, and progress evaluation (see Figure 3.1).
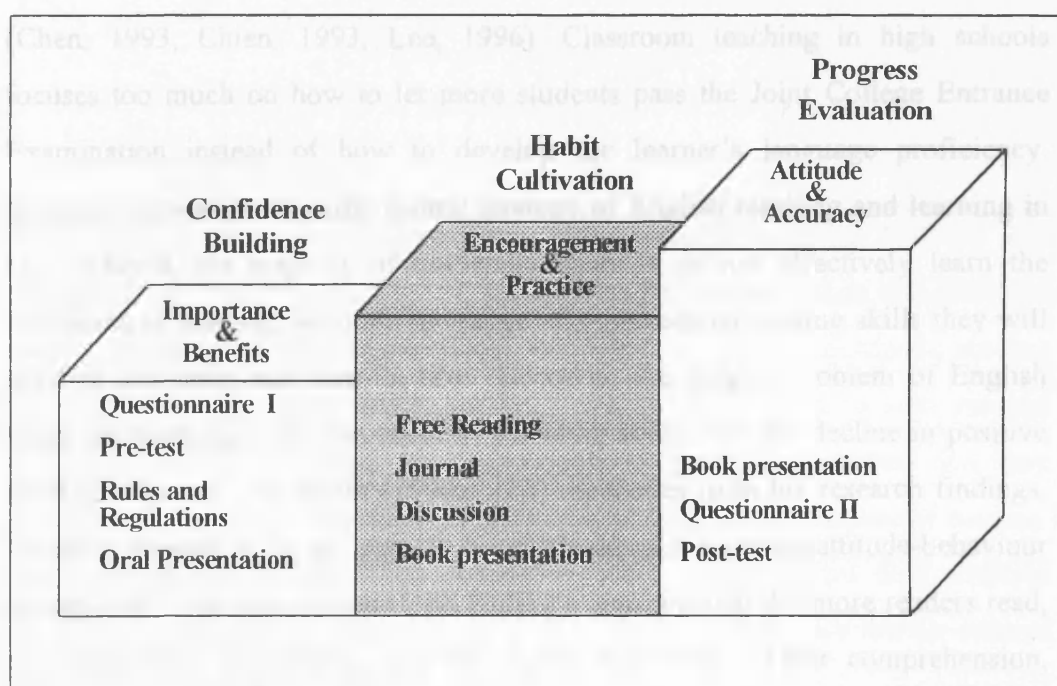
Figure 3.1 Framework of the study

3.1.1 Phase of confidence building

The main purpose of this phase was to introduce students to the importance of reading in today's global village and its benefits of improving their knowledge and English proficiency.

The power of reading is depicted clearly by Stern (1991), who says that:

Literature offers potential benefits of a high order for English as a second or foreign language. Linguistically, literature can help students master the vocabulary and grammar of the language as well as the four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Culturally, literature enables the reader to examine universal human experience within the context of a specific setting and the consciousness of a particular people. (p. 328)

English teaching in Taiwan has long been exam-oriented and teacher-centred (Chen, 1993; Chien, 1993; Lee, 1996). Classroom teaching in high schools focuses too much on how to let more students pass the Joint College Entrance Examination instead of how to develop the learner's language proficiency. Because memorisation is the central strategy of English teaching and learning in high schools, the majority of university students do not effectively learn the rudiments of reading, let alone the range of sophisticated reading skills they will need at university and later in life. However, the biggest problem of English language teaching is not the decline of reading skills, but the decline in positive reading attitudes. As Smith (1990a: 120) concludes from his research findings, "reading appears to be an activity in which there is a strong attitude-behaviour connection". His idea concurs with Nuttall's concepts that the more readers read, the better they understand, and the faster they read. Their comprehension, consequently, is enhanced and the pleasure of reading emerges. This is what she called the cycle of growth (Figure 3.2) On the other hand, readers who have a negative attitude to reading tend to spend little time in reading and their reading comprehension and language proficiency decline.

Enjoy reading

Understands
better

Reads faster

Reads more

Doesn't
understand

Doesn't
read much

Reads
slower

Doesn't
enjoy reading

The Cycle of Growth

The Cycle of Frustration
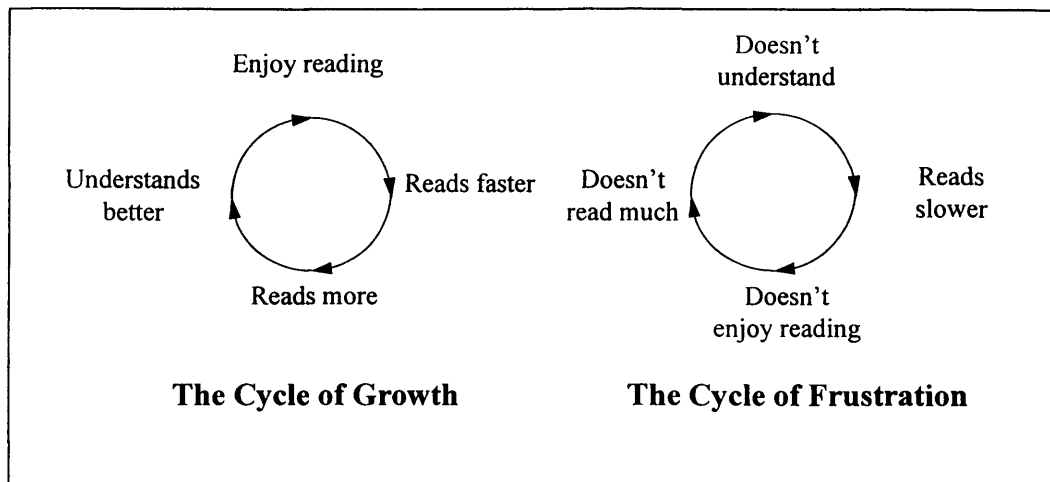
Figure 3.2 Reading Cycle

Source: Nuttall (1996)

It is obvious from the reading cycle that students' attitudes towards and perceptions of reading are vital in determining their reading habits and interests. Especially for students who are used to spending more time on academic reading than any other type of reading, the teacher should get them to start reading independently by modelling, by encouragement, and by any method that may stimulate students' interests and confidence in reading for the purpose of reading. Teachers have to initiate these kinds of activities simply to get their students involved in reading. The project is expected to become much more learner-centred after the students see a purpose for these activities to carry on.

Thus, there were two aspects that were important in the first phase of this study. One of these was to explore the students' reading attitudes and habits. The other, depending heavily on the teacher, was to provide guidance and confidence in the pleasure of reading. This initiative will later be handed over to students as they are able to be responsible for their own reading.

Before the main experiment, it was considered necessary to administer a questionnaire in order to have a better idea of the learner's reading habits and

attitudes. For example, some questions were designed to find out what sort of books students like. This information would help the teacher to recommend appropriate books for them and to group them while at discussion sessions. The questionnaire survey aimed to investigate university students' perception of English reading and to improve teachers' and researchers' understanding of their reading habits. Additionally, all students were given a pre-test with the purpose of measuring their proficiency in grammar.

In order to provide an unthreatening environment, the teachers were asked to tell the students that grades would not to be assigned during the reading project and that students would not be classified by ability based upon performance outcome.

3.1.2 Phase of habit cultivation

Ultimately, teachers can never force their students to enjoy a book, but they can make some effort to broaden their tastes until students are accustomed to thinking of reading as something to be done for personal reasons. After the introduction of the importance and benefits of reading, the teacher helped the students towards readiness for beginning reading. This included providing information and feedback.

Because students' desire for books and their attitudes towards them will be likely to depend in large part upon their previous reading experiences, it is important for the teacher to introduce the right book at the right time when encouraging free voluntary reading. Since English is viewed as an essential tool for people in Taiwan for instrumental purposes, English learning is prevalent from children to adults. The widespread interest is reflected by the availability of a large quantity of English books and magazines that suit the needs of learners ranging from beginning to advanced levels. There is an enormous variety of English material available to sharpen the learners' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, and there is also a wide collection of fiction and non-fiction materials obtainable

at bookstores for pleasure reading[32]. Additionally, the advent of the Internet makes it possible for the language learner to access a wide assortment of reading materials and information[33]. It is, therefore, possible for university students to find reading material suitable for their own needs and interests. The key point is discovery: each student has to find the book he or she enjoys otherwise they may give up free reading. This is especially true for a reluctant or non- reader. Thus, the role of the teacher becomes important in strengthening the students' involvement and sustaining their interest. It is essential for the teacher to introduce the right books to the students, to assist them to access the books, and to encourage them to continue reading. Opportunities for them to share their reactions to their reading with the teacher or peers are needed to motivate free reading and cultivate their reading habits.

3.1.2.1   Selection of reading material

Studies show that good readers prefer newspaper reading and book reading whereas poor readers are more likely to prefer light reading, such as magazines and comic books (Elley, 1994). Although light reading tends to be easy and short, the quick success that poor readers experience motivates them to go on, and that is the essence of free reading - more interesting input leads to more language acquisition and greater literacy development.

To increase the range of material available to them , students are referred to a list of graded readers (Oxford Bookworms, Oxford Progressive English Readers and Heinemann Guided Readers). The listed graded readers are graded based on the predicted difficulties of vocabulary and sentence structure, categorised into 6 levels (Table 3.1), and coded into 12 kinds of books (Table 3.2).

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[32] There are good authentic magazines obtainable in Taiwan, such as Time, Newsweek, Readers' Digest and many fiction and non-fiction books. A number of series of graded readers, like Oxford Bookworms, Oxford Progressive English Readers and Heinemann Guided Readers, are also available. In addition, monthly English magazines which either come with or without radio programmes are abundant. The best known ones are Studio Classroom and Time Express.
[33] Virtual libraries, electronic journals and on-line newspapers, to name a few examples, give a person access to an accumulated capital of information, interest and pleasure.

Table 3.1 Levels of graded readers

Levels	Number of Words
Starter Level	400
Beginner Level	600 - 700
Elementary Level	1000 - 1100
Pre-intermediate Level	1400 - 1600 - 1800
Intermediate Level	2100 - 2200
Advanced Level	2500 - 3100 - 3700 - 5000

Given such relevant information together with the availability of the readers, students will have a better possibility to locate the kind of book they like at the appropriate level. However, these recommended books are used at the first stage when students do not know what books to start with. The books are intended to develop independence gradually as students come to know how to search for suitable books for themselves.

Free reading takes place out of class and students are encouraged to read books of any genre written in English either on or off the recommended reading list at their own pace and at any time. The free choice of books is intended to help maintain interest.

Table 3.2 Coded kinds of books

Number	Kinds of Books
1	Human Interest
2	Film & TV Tie-ins
3	Science Fiction
4	Classics
5	Adventure / Thriller
6	Crime / Detection
7	Romance
8	Western (E) / War (A)
9	Mystery / Horror / Ghost
10	Humour
11	Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T)
12	Non-fiction

3.1.2.2   Reinforced activities

Langer and Applebee (1987) reported that "in general, any kind of written response leads to better performance than does reading without writing" (p.130). It can therefore be assumed that free voluntary reading will be more effective where there is a response, for example, when students talk about and then write down their reactions regarding what they read.   Further reinforcement and consolidation activities, such as group discussions and book presentations, are designed to provide opportunities for the students to become closely involved in using the language gained from reading. However, it is dependent on the teacher to arrange these activities in the class according to their own schedule.

3.1.2.2.1   Group discussions

Part of the joy of reading is in sharing. Discussion of books that have been read (with or without the teacher) is encouraged for about 5 minutes a day during the class, so that students can share their reactions about their reading matter with one another and, at the same time, they can be informed and guided regarding their selections for future reading. Such discussion is designed to enable students to test their own interpretations of the text and of the ideas contained in it against others' interpretation, and it also helps students to extend their understanding. The atmosphere is likely to be less threatening than the more formal mode of teacher-class talk. Nothing is written down, it is not the teachers' role (in free voluntary reading discussions) to criticise students in public. In addition, there is the opportunity for everybody to participate. It is suggested that this kind of discussion should be held at the beginning of the lesson as a warm-up activity to arouse class interest. It is possible, of course, that such group discussions may lead to difficulty; both teachers and students may possibly feel uncomfortable on insecure in such discussions. Teachers are likely, given the tendency to teacher-centred approaches in Taiwan, to feed the need to give guidance and direction to

the discussion or, perhaps involuntarily, turn discussion into a teacher presentation/explanation of vocabulary and other aspects of the books read.

In sum, group discussion is designed for students to exchange their findings from or their understanding of their reading, facilitate the selection of material for further reading, and motivate them to read more for enjoyment.

3.1.2.2.2 Book presentations

While the pre-test and the post-test measure students' grammar competence, taped book presentations are designed to evaluate their grammar performance. The purposes of the book presentations are to motivate students to read by setting a performance goal, to encourage students' use of the language being read, to deepen understanding, to learn to develop coherence in talk, to acquire presentation skills and to evaluate students' progress. Three taped oral presentations are arranged to evaluate the students' active grammar before, during and after the experiment. Students are asked to prepare a presentation of approximately 5 minutes duration including the title, the author, summary and comments about the book they have read. The following questions are provided as guidelines for the teacher to assist students on preparing book presentations:

Table 3.3 Prompts provided for the teacher to assist students on preparing book presentations

Fiction	Non-fiction
• Give a short overview of the novel.	• Give a brief summary of the article.
• Write a summary of the plot.	• Describe the interesting (or uninteresting) points.
• Describe the character you liked the best and explain why.	• Describe one passage from the article which you particularly liked and give your reasons.
• Discuss what you liked (or disliked) about the novel.	• Present an idea from the article, which you believe can be applied to everyone's life.
• Present what you found to be exciting about the novel.	
• Describe one passage from the novel which you particularly liked and give your reasons.	
• Present an idea from the novel, which you believe can be applied to everyone's life.	

On presentation day, the teacher is asked to assemble 3 - 4 students with a similar reading interest into a group, ask each student to present his speech in his group, and tape their oral performance. Students should be asked to state their names before giving their presentations while being taped. The purposes of arranging presentations in groups are to lessen the public performance aspect which might apply to a whole class presentation and also to allow a number of simultaneous presentations within a single session. The latter point seems important to allow all students to present aspects of their reading without devoting many lessons to this simple activity, to which English teachers might not agree, given their frequent comments on pressures of time.

The first presentation is administered during the first week of the semester, but the teacher should ask students to talk about the topic assigned to them rather than the book are reading, for they might not have finished any book. After students have read some books and shared insights in group discussions, the second presentation is assigned in the middle of the semester and the last presentation at the end of the semester (see Figure 3.3). Both of these are book presentations. Students can talk about their favourite book or author, or about the topics they have talked about in group discussions. The presentation by students is not intended to be voluntary . Rather, the aim is to involve all students in their oral element of sharing reading. However, as indicated about, students have a wide choice in both the content and the manner and focus of their presentations. The teacher, also, can suggest specific topics, such as news or fairy tales, which relate to students' reading, to motivate students to express their opinions and evoke their interests.

first week   in the middle of the semester   last week

Pre-test   **Post-test**
Questionnaire I   Questionnaire II

Book presentations
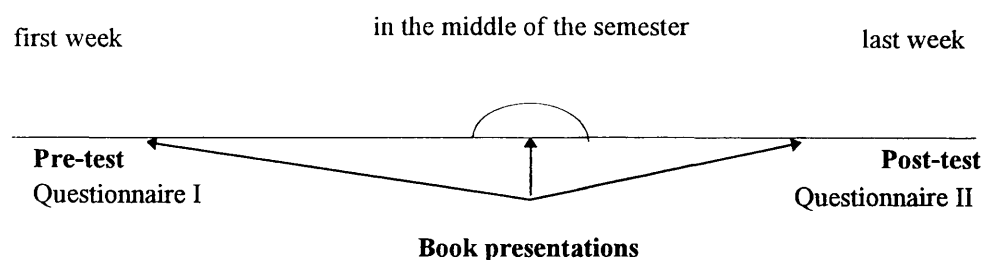
Figure 3.3 Administration of book presentations

3.1.2.2.3   Reading journal

To promote the comprehension of text and to obtain more accurate self-report
data students were required to use journals to take notes and add their own
reflections after each reading.   Notes can include new vocabulary or
exemplification, quotations, statements, summaries, questions raised during
reading, students' own feelings or comments about the characters, the setting,
their expectations and predictions regarding material not yet read and any
outcomes of their readings.   The journal gives students the chance to interpret
texts and therefore to reinforce what they have read. Moreover, a journal creates
a visible, permanent record which allows students to interact personally with text.
The teacher needs to check their journals every day to ensure that students keep
these records and to encourage students to read more and to share books with
others. The group discussions, book presentations and journals were also designed
to help the students (and teachers) to sustain their involvement in the project
since, without programming such activities, there is a clear danger that students
will not keep up these voluntary reading in English and other competing activities
will take up these time. The importance of this sustaining function of the group
discussions, book presentations and journals was explained to participating
teachers and students. However, the teacher does not need to correct the language

of journal notes. In writing journal notes, the students work on fluency rather than accuracy in their English, for it is not an assignment, but a record of their personal interaction with the text. Hopefully, keeping a journal can serve as an indirect way to develop their reading habits. There is, of course, the danger that despite assurances given to students (about journals not being assessed) that the journals are nevertheless perceived by students as assessed material, to be completed as a duty rather than as a personal response to reading. It is intended that all students should keep such a journal, i.e., this element of the programme is not voluntary pro. se. However, students do have a free choice of reading material and a broad choice in both the manner of keeping their journals and in the content of what they write.

3.1.3   Phase of progress evaluation

The purpose of this phase was to evaluate the students' progress before and after the experiment. In order to establish the reliability of a test, the same test that was administered initially was given to all students again at the end of experimental treatment. Since the pre-test had been retained by the teacher and had not been discussed, students were unlikely to remember the content of the pre-test. Moreover, the teacher was notified not to inform students that the same test was going to be used to test them again. This was to ensure the reliability of the test results.

The results obtained from pre- and post- tests were used to compare the students' grammatical proficiency in English before and after the experimental treatment, and as a measure to assess the effect of free voluntary reading on the grammatical competence and possible variation between comparative groups in terms of gender, continuity, score, and university. T-tests were conducted to determine whether there were differences between the pre- and post- tests performances. Gain scores were also calculated to see if students had improved significantly

after the experiment. Teachers were asked to inform students that the scores of these tests would not influence their final scores in the language course.

The second questionnaire was given at the end of the experiment for self-evaluation by the subjects. In general, it covers similar questions to those listed on the first questionnaire, but it also includes some additional questions, aiming to elicit more information, such as their reaction about the project and their reading habits during the experiment, etc. Chi-squared analysis was utilised to compare the difference of attitude or habits between the comparative groups regarding their past reading experience, perceptions about reading, amount of reading, reading difficulties, reading purpose and reading preference.

By referring to the reading journal the teacher could see what reading preferences a student might have and to plan appropriate support. This knowledge would also help the teacher suggest other titles and authors that might interest the students, and thus help to extend his/her range of reading and encourage an ability to select. In addition it provides the student with an opportunity to make comments about his reading. In general, the reading journal offers direct data and digested data of the subject's written response to the text. Direct data contains the details of material they had read, reading duration and frequency, vocabulary and short extracts from favourite passages; while digested data includes students' reactions and any summary. It is expected that able readers would note down more digested data than less able readers, and that those who view reading as studying would record more direct data than those who read for enjoyment.

3.2 Process of the research project

The procedure of the empirical study was carried out in five stages: access negotiation, questionnaire construction and test selection, the pilot stage, the main study, and finally the stage of the data collection and analysis. The following sections give a detailed description of each stage of these aspects of the research process.

3.2.1 Negotiating access

3.2.1.1 LTTC

The experiment was originally designed for the students at the Language Training and Testing Centre (LTTC) at National Taiwan University in Taipei. The LTTC was chosen for several reasons. First, most of the students were sponsored by government agencies and enterprises, and some of them were taking intensive English courses (six hours a day for 50 or 100 days) before doing research abroad, so they tended to be more motivated than other students who would remain in Taiwan. Other considerations lay in the large number and various levels of potential subjects. About 3,000 people were studying at the centre each year. Their English proficiency ranges from beginner to advanced levels. Furthermore, there was a reasonable variety of material available in the library room. Graded readers, novels, journals, magazines, newspapers, language course books, travel guides, and reference books were accessible to students. Additionally, the centre administered TOEFL, a standardised test developed to measure the English proficiency of non-native speakers of English wishing to study at colleges and universities in the United States. Therefore, not only did the centre have the resources for TOEFL, but also the staff and teachers were familiar with the procedures of monitoring TOEFL. If TOEFL had been adopted as the controlling test in the experiment, it would be certain that the test results obtained would have

been "authentic". (See selection of a language test is discussed further later in the chapter.)

During initial contact, the acting director expressed a willingness to implement the research project at the centre; however, the final decision would have to be made by the new director who was due to assume office four months later. In the interim, procedures had been discussed and adjusted to fit the practical situation at the LTTC after several meetings with the teachers who would probably help with the research project. For example, the post-test and final book presentation were rescheduled to be given a week earlier as the teachers were concerned that too many final tests were scheduled in the last week of a term, imposing too much pressure on students.

Unfortunately, the new director turned down the proposal (Appendix A). He explained the difficulties of running the project at the LTTC -- he couldn't ask the teachers' assistance and students' co-operation to run the research project; he was afraid that questionnaires and journals would involve some legal problems, etc. Some of these reasons for the refusal were odd, e.g. a number of teachers, as mentioned above, had already shown clear commitment to the research project. Ultimately, the refusal reflected the difficulties of establishing mutual collaboration between teacher (administrator) and researcher, particularly in an organisation where academic research was not valued.

The misgivings and fears about the greater burden that a researcher's project could add to teachers' already heavy workload make it difficult to establish rapport between teacher and researcher if the policy of the educational institute does not encourage teachers to be involved in teacher development as part of a research culture. As a consequence, the research is always "the researcher's project", and the teacher is offering the researcher "a big favour", as was said by an associate professor when the research proposal was presented to her. What Ulichny and Schoener (1996) call teacher-research collaboration -- determining

mutual goals for the research, sharing responsibility for the research product, and building a trusting relationship that permitted interdependence and mutuality between teacher and researcher -- needs initial recognition and understanding on both sides of the interdependence. After that, such co-operation can be extended beyond agreeing on a research focus to include an acknowledgement of sharing responsibility in dealing with all phases of a research project, a willingness to establish the necessary channels of communication, and a commitment to participate in the development of the required procedures.

3.2.1.2 _Language centres in the UK_

Due to the constraints of geography and time, it was decided that a pilot test should be carried out in the UK rather than in Taiwan. While submitting the proposal of the free reading experiment to the LTTC, the author had tried contacting language centres in the UK to implement a pilot experiment. This was done in order to test out the project design for any unpredictable problems that might be encountered in the major study, and to determine whether or not the questions and instructions were clear and readily understood. More than 40 faxes and letters to UK language centres were sent to locate Taiwanese students; however, the search did not yield very encouraging results. Of the 45 language centres, only one had more than 35 Taiwanese students studying for summer courses, and it was because the director was a Leicester graduate that he was willing to cooperate with the research project.

A 2-month pilot test of a free voluntary programme was proposed to provide exposure to the free reading activity, to locate and eliminate problems, and to evaluate the programme's impact. Before the pilot test, a pre-pilot trial was conducted with 8 EFL adult learners in April 1995. The trial procedures and respondents' comments led to minor modification of the design of the research project as well as changes in some questions in the questionnaires. The pilot test will be outlined in section 3.2.3.

3.2.1.3   Universities in the greater Taipei area

After the negative experience with the LTTC, negotiations were reinitiated with Departments of English in most of the universities in the greater Taipei area, including Taiwan University, Normal University, Tamkang University, Chengchi University, Shoochow University, and others.   There were about 60 to 120 undergraduates for each year level at these universities, but as all courses were taught by teachers themselves, the author needed to contact each teacher to secure permission for implementing the research project in the class. The responses from teachers proved disappointing. As mentioned above, additional workload was the most common reason for teachers to be reluctant to engage in such research projects.   Although minimising disturbance of their classroom teaching was emphasised and assured, most teachers still addressed the problem of demands on their time. They did not have time to be involved. Some were busy in writing their promotion thesis; others were working on their own projects. A few worried that the research project of free reading might influence the assessment of their students in the mid-term and final exams of their language courses. Access to students via teachers was proving to be extremely difficult. Only three of the teachers agreed to have the research project implemented in class, but before the beginning of the study, one teacher withdrew from the study for personal reasons as family affairs occupied most of her time.

Due to administrative constraints, the two teachers felt it might be too difficult for them to arrange book presentations and then tape the presentations in class. In addition, they had a tight schedule for that semester. The first reason was that the classes for the freshmen students started in October, which was a bit later than general classes. Furthermore, many national holidays fell in that semester. They concluded that although they did not even have enough time to cover their lesson plans, they would spend two class meetings for the pre- and post-tests as well as the two questionnaires. Therefore, since book presentations proved impossible to administer in class, they were removed from the procedure. However, audio tapes

were still prepared for the teachers with the hope that they might somehow find the time to tape students' book presentations.

The teachers also felt that gap-filling questions of the tests were too difficult for freshman students. As a result, the first and third parts of controlling test were changed to a multiple-choice format. This format would be familiar to the students as it is used very frequently in English (and other) tests and examinations in Taiwan. In this way, aspects of the project design had to be adjusted and arguably weakened in order to negotiate access to the subjects. The researcher was willing to make these modifications, since without doing so access would have been impossible. It had become clear from the LTTC response and those of teachers in the other universities that most teachers or administrators found reasons not to be involved.

Since the major study began in the first semester of 1995 academic year, the teachers were not sure what courses they were going to teach and how many students would be there in these classes when they gave their commitment to help out with the research project. It was not until two weeks before the beginning of the semester that the experimental classes were chosen, and two weeks after the beginning of the class that the number of subjects was confirmed. Three samples of subjects were obtained and 89 freshmen students in total participated in the major study.

3.2.2   *Questionnaire construction and test selection*

3.2.2.1   *Methodological considerations*

The term "survey" has been labelled in a wide range of studies. It is commonly

characterised as the collection of data in standardised form from some sample of a

population in order to draw conclusions about that entire population.   Bryman

(1989) attempts a more formal definition:

> Survey research entails the collection of data on a number of units and
>
> usually at a single juncture in time, with a view to collecting
>
> systematically a body of quantifiable data in respect of a number of
>
> variables which are then examined to discern patterns of association. (p.
>
> 104)

Survey research is almost always conducted in order to provide a quantitative

picture of the sample as a means of understanding the population from which it is

drawn. However, in studies employing samples of convenience or of volunteers,

the results might not be very valuable in quantitative generalisability but more so

for identifying important issues or trends (Johnson, 1992; Robson, 1993).

The most prevalent data-collection methods in L2 survey research are

questionnaires, interviews, and direct observations of language use. Among them,

perhaps the most common method is the questionnaire. The major reason that

questionnaires are widely used in survey research is that they can be extremely

efficient at providing large amounts of data at relatively low cost,   in a short

period of time, in comparison with interviews or observations. For example,

questionnaires can be completed and returned by a large number of respondents in

about the same amount of time that it takes to complete a single interview. With

regard to data analysis and interpretation, questionnaires[34] generally need less time

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[34] This refers to structured or semi-structured questionnaires. Based on the degree of structure or formality, questionnaire surveys are commonly divided into three types: Structured, semi-structured and unstructured questionnaires. The degree

to code and analyse responses, particularly when open-ended questions are kept to a minimum and when computer coding or analysis is available.

The main purpose of surveys is to get reliable information from answers. Thus, securing a high degree of involvement by respondents to a survey is essential to ensure truthful and factual answers. Securing involvement needs to take into account some technical considerations, such as question formulation, wording, question form, question structure, and time for administration., etc.

Question formulation.   A good questionnaire item 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). After a pool of question items are gathered, a response categorisation system needs to be decided. The most widely used scaling technique in attitude measurement is a Likert scale. Likert scales have five (sometimes 7, 4 or 3) fixed alternative expressions, with such labels as "strongly agree', 'agree', undecided', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree'. These are assigned weights or measured values of 1,2,3,4 and 5. The next phase is, then, to repeatedly pilot-test and revise the questions. Sudman and Bradburn (1982) suggest that questionnaires should be subjected to this series of tests and revisions: 1) criticism from experienced peers; 2) revision and testing on friends, relatives, co-workers; 3) revision and testing on about 50 people resembling the eventual respondents in the survey; 4) revision and testing again; 5) revision. Such steps are designed to detect any serious problems leading to reformulation and retesting of the trial questions before going on to ask them in the survey itself.

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of structure is determined by the inclusion of closed and/or open-ended questions. Closed-ended questionnaires are by nature quantitative. This is because most of the questions have predefined answers. Giving alternatives allow the respondent to choose can easily be constructed into numerical results, and the analysis is, therefore, relatively straightforward. Open-ended questionnaires, on the other hand, provide qualitative data, which in practice means that there is wide variety of response need to be reduced and transformed in order to permit the drawing of conclusions. As a result, they take long time to analyse.

Wording.   Wording refers to vocabulary, form, structure and phrasing of questions. Question items should be written in clear, nontechnical language that is easy to understand by everyone in the sample, and they should contain only one idea per item. For a potentially confusing items, it is important to give the respondents an example that illustrates how they should answer the question.

People tend to avoid negative and choose positive answers when a dichotomy of choice is presented to them. If such distortion occurs, it is always in one direction only - over-reporting the positive, under-reporting the negative (Dillon, 1990). Therefore, items containing negative phrasing should be analysed with caution. However, providing a middle term would make a great deal of difference to in the responses. Hui and Triandis (1989) point out that a less extreme response style, a tendency to overuse the mid-range of a scale, has been linked with cultural norms of modesty and caution in Asian cultures, while some Mediterranean romance cultures appear to overuse the extremes of the scale to demonstrate sincerity. In addition, responses tend to be distorted when respondents attempt to give socially desirable answers, when they don't know how to answer, when they wish to be polite and agreeable, or when the issue is controversial or the question ambiguous or difficult to understand (Dillon, 1990).

Question form.   Open-ended questions allow respondents to reply in their own words, while close-ended questions require the respondent to select from a list of answers previously set up by the researcher. Both open and closed forms of question are useful, but are consciously used at different stages. In the early phases of questionnaire development, e.g. in the pilot stages open questions are often used to discover and develop variables that can be incorporated into closed items. Closed questions are considered useful for the survey because of their low cost, relatively little difficulty in coding, and their suitability for statistical manipulation (Dillon, 1990).

Question structure. People give systematically different responses to variously structured questions. Table 3.4 illustrates how the provision of an alternative response shifts responses away from bipolar yes/no, agree/disagree to no opinion, a middle term, and a last-mentioned alternative. However, offering an alternative response, either a don't know option or an alternative proposition, makes agreeable responses more reliable.

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). Therefore, the discourse of questionnaire structure and presentation, the time of administration, the length and design are also important consideration. For example, a poorly designed and printed, lengthy questionnaire administered just before Christmas to workers in an organisation who are currently trying to meet a seasonal deadline is unlikely to get a good response.

It is acknowledged that what people say in a survey and what they actually do is not positively related[35]. Nevertheless, with a good, competently run survey it is still possible to obtain high reliability of response.

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[35] Hanson (1980) found that twenty of the forty-six studies he reviewed did not demonstrate a positive relationship between attitudes and behaviour.

Table 3.4 Responses to different structures of question
(percentages)

1. Alternative stated	*Russian leaders trying*	
	(a) to get along with US	59
	(b) to get along	49
	or to dominate	-
2. 'Don't know' answer option	*Russian leaders trying*	
	to get along	28
	or you have no opinion	43
3. 'Don't know' filter question	*Russian leaders get along*	
	(a) any opinion? (no opinion)	56
	(b) (if opinion) agree?	23
4. Counter argument added	*workers to join union*	
	(a) require to join	32
	(b) require to join	20
	or leave to individual	80
5. Middle term added	*your politics*	
	(a) liberal	30
	conservative	58
	(b) liberal	20
	conservative	33
	middle of road	42
6. Order of alternatives	*divorce should be*	
	(a) easier to get	40
	harder to get	50
	(b) easier	21
	harder	34
	stay as is	45
	(c) easier	23
	stay as is	35
	harder	41
7. Order of questions	*let reporters in*	
	(a) Communists here	55
	Americans there	64
	(b) Americans there	82
	Communists here	75
	rated 'very happy'	
	(a) things altogether	52
	my marriage	70
	(b) my marriage	63
	things altogether	38
8. Acquiescence of response	*blame for crime*	
	(a) individuals more than social conditions	60
	(b) social conditions more than individuals	57
	(c) individuals	46
	or social conditions	54

Source: Dillon 1990

3.2.2.2   Development of the survey instrument in the present study

3.2.2.2.1   Questionnaire development

Two questionnaires were prepared to assess the students' reading habits and perceptions before and after the experiment. Questionnaires I and II were completed in the classroom; it took about 15 minutes to fill out each questionnaire.

The overall design of the student questionnaires attempted to reduce the possibility of respondents becoming bored. This would help to ensure the completion of the questionnaires, so the length of the questionnaires was evaluated to meet the minimum needs of the study. This is especially important because the teacher is unlikely to encourage the respondents to complete the questionnaires, if they decide to give up before reaching the end. On the other hand, a dominant teacher may influence the views of the students, and that is obviously something to be avoided. It was also thought that language used in the questionnaires should be appropriate to the sample population based on the results of the pilot tests to some EFL students studying in a language centre in Oxford. Both the first and the second questionnaires were, therefore, translated into Chinese to ensure comprehension and to save completion time, since the purpose of the questionnaires was only to gather their opinions on reading rather than to test their language levels in English (the latter would be tested separately in the grammar test).

The first questionnaire was divided into three main sections. The first section asked about the students' age, sex, and the class they were in. The second section was designed to gain information about the students' past reading experience and habits, factors that hinder reading, their reading purposes, preferences of reading material, and meta-cognition on reading strategies. The third section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit the respondents' Chinese reading habits, such

as their attitudes toward Chinese reading, the frequency of reading different kinds of reading material, and their reading preferences.

The second questionnaire consisted of two parts: the first contained questions similar to the first questionnaire; the second questioned about students' free reading experience during the process of the experiment, such as the selection of and access to reading material, and their opinions about the free reading programme. The intentions of questionnaire II were to survey students' general perceptions about how they read English reading material during the experiment, to reveal how they obtained access to reading material, and to evaluate the research project.

3.2.2.2.2   Development of questionnaire questions

The questions asked in the questionnaires were derived from a consideration of the issues raised in the literature on the subject of free voluntary reading (see chapter 2), and also to a lesser extent from a number of previous research studies (e.g., Greaney, 1980; Smith, 1990a; Mokhtari and Sheorey, 1994) regarding habits, attitudes, and interests. In addition, suggestions for closed alternatives were obtained from pilot work using open-ended questions and from talking to students and teachers during the development phase.

Student questionnaires are presented in Appendix B, and the results of analysing them are discussed in the following chapter.

Questionnaire I:

1. Past reading experience

In this section, students were requested to state their agreement on 15 statements regarding their past English reading experience. These questions in this section required students to respond on a six-point scale from "strongly agree" to

"strongly disagree" to indicate their past reading habits (questions 2 - 9, 16) and their perceptions of reading (questions 10 - 15). In addition to these six categories, an "I don't know" was also listed for those who did not want to show their opinions or did not know how to answer the question.

Six-point scales were found to be appropriate for Taiwanese students. Considering that Chinese tend to choose neutral answers if the format of these questions was a five-point Likert scaling (see section 3.2.2.1), a six-point scaling was adopted to force the subjects to take a decision.

2. *Factors hindering reading*

This question have focused on the subjects' perceptions of the factors that hinder continuous reading in English. They were asked to identify what, in their opinion, were the main reasons which led them to stop reading English material for enjoyment. They were provided with 13 choices, including an open-ended 'other' category, and were asked to check the items which applied to them.

3. *Reading purpose*

In this section, the question requested information about the purposes of being able to read in English. The items drawn from previous studies (e.g. Davies, 1986) were modified where appropriate to reflect university students' reading purpose rather than adults' (e.g., the item "for work" was changed to "for getting a job"). Students were asked to select from a list of nine choices, giving the three that they agreed with most. As before, an open-ended 'other' category was provided to allow respondents to specify any different purpose they had in mind.

4. *Reading preference*

Studies show that reading ability is related to reading material (Rice, 1986; Hafner, *et al*, 1986; Southgate, *et al*, 1981; Thorndike, 1973; Schoonover, 1938; LaBrant, 1958). Two questions were designed to elicit information about the types of English and Chinese materials the subjects read in their free time. The

purposes of these questions were to compare reading preference of the subjects with those in the previous studies, and to investigate whether there was a difference in subjects preferences for reading in Chinese and in English. This was further differentiated by looking for possible differences between groups varying in gender, levels of the grammar test result (high versus low), continuity (those who stopped reading versus those who did not), and universities (University A versus University B) in the study. Additionally, the results of this question could help the teachers to recommend appropriate books for the students in discussion sessions.

Subjects were asked to check any of 16 categories of reading materials (e.g., science fiction, newspapers, magazines) that they liked to read and to add any categories that were not listed.

5. Meta-cognitive strategies

The students were asked to select, from a list of fourteen common views about ways to become a good reader, the five that they thought were most important. The beliefs, drawn from earlier studies of meta-cognition (Elley, 1994; Krashen, 1993b) as well as alternatives gathered in pilot-testing, were used to obtain results which might provide direction for promoting reading. The main purposes of this question were to provide information about the kinds of literacy acquisition strategies as perceived by the subjects, to reveal which strategies are associated with high achievement in the grammar test, and to relate the findings of the study to earlier studies.

6. Chinese reading attitudes and habits

Another set of questions sought information from students on their Chinese reading attitudes and habits. This was to elicit information about whether the subjects like reading in Chinese, how often they read Chinese material for enjoyment, e.g. materials like newspapers, magazines, comics and books, and to reveal what kinds of Chinese reading materials they preferred. Students were

asked to rate their general attitude toward liking reading in Chinese, using a rating scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree), and to choose from a list of 17 items the five kinds of reading material they most like to read. Then, they were asked to indicate how often they read newspapers for enjoyment (on a six-point scale: "more than once a day" to "never"). Similar questions were designed for magazines, comics and books.

Questionnaire II:

Some questions in the second questionnaire were similar to the first questionnaire, the purpose of which was to investigate whether the students' reading experience during the experiment had changed their attitudes and habits. If so, what were these changes? In order to upgrade the programme to meet the requirements of students with different backgrounds, other questions, including both open-ended and close-ended, were designed to gather opinions and student evaluations regarding the free reading programme. At the end of the questionnaire respondents were given space for freehand comments.

1. Past reading experience

This section asked for information about the subjects' free reading experience during the semester. They were requested to respond on a six-point scale to indicate their agreement on 16 statements regarding their reading habits (questions 1 - 8, 15 - 16) and their perceptions of reading (questions 9 - 14). In addition, an "I don't know" category was provided for those who did not know the answer or had no opinion on the issue. Two more questions (questions 35 & 36) were designed to ask if the subjects had recommended books to others, and if so, whether other students had read the book recommended to them.

2. Reading preferences

This question was to examine the types of material read during the experiment, and to investigate whether there was difference between groups varying in gender, levels of the grammar test, continuity, and universities in the study. Additionally, the responses were to be compared with those elicited before the experiment. A more elaborate set of questions (questions 31 - 34) was prepared about their likes and dislikes of the reading material read during the semester, and the reasons why they had formed such judgements.

3. Selection of reading material

This question was designed to elicit information about the subjects' criteria for book selection. They were asked to choose from a list of 12 reasons for choosing books to read, the five that applied most to them. The response results were intended to determine whether content, as revealed in Southgate's and Heather's studies (Southgate _et al_, 1981; Heather, 1981), was also the major method for the selection of books by the university students. The findings might give the teachers some ideas to stimulate the students' interest and to promote book reading. They might also suggest strategies to broaden students ways of selecting books. An open-ended 'other' category was provided for the subjects to specify any other reason in their mind.

4. Frequency and amount of time

This section (questions 19 - 26) asked for information about the frequency and the amount of time the students spent reading English materials for enjoyment. The subjects were provided with five categories of time frames (1 = more than 3 hours; 2 = 1-3 hours; 3 = 1/2 - 1 hour; 4 = 15-30 minutes; 5 = less than 15 minutes), and were asked to estimate the amount of time they devoted each time to newspapers, magazines, comics and books. A "Not Available" category was provided for those who did not do reading or did not want to answer the questions. Similarly, another six categories of time frame (1 = more than once a

day; 2 = once a day; 3 = once or twice a week; 4 = once or twice a month; 5 = less than once a month; 6 = never) were provided for them to indicate the frequency of newspaper reading, magazine reading, comic reading and book reading. It is recognised that responses to such items involve memory and subjectivity so any results of analysing these items may not be entirely valid. However, they should provide some indication of reading habits.

5. Provision of reading material

This question requested the subjects to indicate where the English material they read for enjoyment during the semester was obtained. The students selected no more than three ways, from a given list of six (public library, gift, borrowing from friends, personal purchase, school, and other) to indicate the sources of books read during the study. As previous studies have shown that there is correlation between book ownership and extent of voluntary reading (Heather, 1981; Whitehead _et al_, 1977), it was expected that the good readers were more likely to have more books in their possession than the poorer readers.

6. Reading purpose

This question was designed to determine why the subjects chose the reading materials they read during the semester. Its main purpose was see whether reading for pleasure had been valued higher by the subjects since they just completed the free reading programme. Once again, students were asked to select from a list of nine choices the three that they most agreed with. An open-ended 'other' category was also provided to specify the purpose they had in mind.

7. Factors hindering continuous reading

This question requested the subjects to indicate the reasons why they stopped reading English material continuously in their free time during the semester if they had done so. The purposes of the question was to elicit the opinions of those who rarely read in English before the experiment, and to gather more reliable

reasons regarding subjects' difficulties reading for their own enjoyment. The item could help to pinpoint potential problems which hinder the success of a free reading programme. Further, this not only assisted the subjects to discover their own weakness, but also offered the teacher ideas for motivating reading.

8. Perceptions of the free reading programme

These subjects were asked to state what parts of the free reading programme they enjoyed or disliked most, and to explain why they thought so (questions 37 - 40). Another question (question 41) attempted to examine whether the free reading programme had made any difference to subjects' reading in Chinese.

Teacher Questionnaire:

A teacher questionnaire was also developed. This was given to the teacher at the end of the experiment to ask about the frequency and average time spent when they checked students' journals and administered mini-discussions and book presentations, as well as any difficulties they had had in implementing the free reading programme in class. A further question was designed to investigate teachers' beliefs about how they encourage their students to read more. At the end of the questionnaire, space was give for teachers' suggestions and comments about the role of free voluntary reading in improving reading and grammar. The purpose of this questionnaire was to seek information for upgrading the programme to meet the needs and abilities of students, and for adjusting its design to complement classroom practices.

The survey is presented in Appendix C, and the results of analysing it are discussed in the next chapter.

3.2.2.2.3   Selection and modification of test

Selection of grammar proficiency test.   A "good" test should meet with three requirements: practicality, reliability, and validity. Brown (1987) points out that it should be practical - within the means of financial limitations, time constraints, ease of administration, and scoring and interpretations. It should be reliable in the test itself and in the scoring of the test, so that the same test to the same subjects or matched subjects should yield similar results. And it should be valid, measuring what it is intended to measure.

As mentioned earlier, the second section of TOEFL[36] was initially considered for use as the control test in the research project. Choosing the TOEFL test would have several advantages: it is familiar to both teachers and students, test materials are readily available, and it is widely recognised as having international reliability. Considering test validity, it was then decided that a text-based test would be more appropriate than a sentence-based test. In other words, the subjects' grammar ability should be measured by a grammar test, focusing on meaning (e.g. detecting meaning relationships in a text) rather than on form (e.g. decoding grammatical structure in a group of isolated sentences). This would have greater validity since the participating students are encouraged, obviously, to read whole texts. not lists of isolated or unconnected sentences. The latter are the favoured form for the TOEFL test of grammar.

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[36] TOEFL is used by nearly 1000 institutions of higher education in the United States as an indicator of a prospective student's ability to undertake academic work in an English medium. The TOEFL consists of the following three sections. Section 1, Listening Comprehension, measures the ability to understand English as it is spoken in the United States. The oral aspects of the language are stressed. The problems tested include vocabulary that is more frequently used in spoken English, structures that are primarily peculiar to spoken English, and sound and intonation distinctions that have proven to be difficult for non-native speakers. The stimulus material is recorded in standard American English; the response options are printed in the test books. Section 2, Structure and Written Expression, measures mastery of important structural and grammatical points in standard written English. The language tested is formal, rather than conversational. The topics of the sentences are of a general academic nature so that individuals in specific fields of study or from specific national or linguistic groups have no particular advantage. When topics have a national context, they refer to United States history, culture, art, or literature. Section 3, Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension, tests the ability to understand the meanings and uses of words in written English as well as the ability to understand a variety of reading materials. So that there is no advantage to individuals in any one field of study, the questions based on reading materials do not require outside knowledge of the subject matter.

In order to obtain some measure of the subjects' development of awareness of grammar, a standardised grammar test was searched for. Of all the public ELT examinations[37] available, the one which best fitted the needs of the study was the Certificate in Advanced English (CAE). The CAE is at Level 4 in the Cambridge five level EFL exam suite. It includes five papers: reading, writing, English in use, listening, and speaking. The CAE English in Use paper is designed to test the ability to apply knowledge of the language system, such as control of grammar, cohesion and coherence. As mentioned in its examination report (UCLES, 1993) regarding how to prepare for the CAE English in Use paper, "All CAE candidates will benefit from _reading as extensively as possible in English_ in order to develop their knowledge and use of vocabulary and structure" (p. 16). It was assumed that this test would be more appropriate than the Structure and Written Expression Section of TOEFL, for the test involved the candidate in a sample of the behaviour that was being measured (reading extensively) and tapped into the theoretical construct as it had been defined (good readers' grammar scores were better). Apart from the content and construct validity, CAE passages have titles, which gives candidates an organising principle to help them in their attempt to develop a better understanding of more detailed aspects of the text. This is something that TOEFL lacks. The CAE test therefore seemed more appropriate as independent measure of relevant aspects of language than the TOEFL test.

Modification of test. The CAE Paper 3- English in Use comprises six tasks in three sections:

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[37] Such as The Oxford Examination in English as a Foreign Language, International Baccalaureate - English as a Second Language, British Council / UCLES - English Language Testing Service (ELTS), Educational Testing Service - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and all the EFL examinations administered by University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate.

Section A: multiple-choice and open-completion items based on two short texts, designed to test control over formal elements of the language in context.

Section B: questions requiring the revision or correction of two short texts, designed to test ability to refine and proof-read samples of written English.

Section C: questions requiring the completion of a text and/or the expansion of notes, etc. into a fuller form, designed to test ability to recognise, produce and organise written English which is appropriate to both purpose and audience.

Completing all six tasks takes a hour and 30 minutes. However, the normal class meeting time is merely 50 minutes. It was then decided that three tasks would be appropriate to accomplish in a practical teaching environment. Considering time constraints and securing attention, passages with appropriate length and interesting topics were sorted from past exam papers and from published preparation books for the CAE[38]. Of 17 chosen passages, six were used in the formal and alternative forms. As suggested by the teachers, appropriate changes to the items were made to ensure that it met the university students' language level. For example, multiple-choice items were developed to replace open-completion items, as gap-filling was too difficult for the freshmen students to accomplish. By offering four suggested answers to choose from multiple choice might be more appropriate to their language level. Also, this format would be more familiar to the subjects. In the absence of any feedback to students from the pre-test, and since students were not permitted to retain copies of the test form, it is highly unlikely that completing the pre-test would, in itself, influence the

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[38] Permission had been granted for using extracts from the CAE past exam papers as part of the research from the Local Examination Syndicate of Cambridge University. Regarding the use of some passages from the CAE Practice Tests book published by Oxford University Press, the author was enabled to use up to 5% of the book according to the licensed copying user guidelines as Leicester University was a member of the Copyright Licency Agency.

validity or reliability of the post-test. Moreover, it saved a great deal of time for student to complete all the questions.

The modified test (formal form) was administered before and after the reading programme as the criterion measure. The form was not changed because the time lapse between tests negated the need to administer two different forms.

3.2.2.2.4   Journal development

The reading journal was developed for the students to keep notes of what had been read for enjoyment. Space was given for them to make brief notes of new, unusual, attractive, useful or specialised words, to highlight key moments in the plot or summarise a story, to record their own feelings or opinions about the story, its characters, their expectations and results, etc. In sum, the reading journal allowed students to write about what was important to them personally. A sample of journal keeping was provided on the first page of the reading journal.

3.2.3   Pilot tests

One pre-pilot trial and one pilot test were administered at the language centre in Oxford.   8 EFL students of First Certificate Exam (FCE) course (see 8 participants attended the pre-testing in Oxford), who were reportedly more motivated in English learning, attended the pre-pilot trial. 7 out of the 8 had done reading in English before. However, none of them was Taiwanese. The author was available to answer queries about the questionnaire and to observe the students when they filled it in so that any possible misunderstanding of the questions could be avoided or corrected (see Picture 3-2).

The questionnaire survey revealed that all of them liked free reading, but they had difficulty in finding books at their level. The findings suggested that facilitating greater access to books would be important to help students start their reading activity. With regard to questionnaire design, some participants felt impatient to complete the questionnaires. In general, they did not like to answer open

questions. Some misunderstood the questions and gave unsuitable answers, which was most likely caused by language difficulty or was a result of an attitude of indifference towards questionnaire. This procedure and participants' comments led to minor modifications of some questions. For example, open questions were kept to a minimum. Questionnaires were translated into Chinese in order to avoid misunderstanding and to save time in filling out. When the second test was administered, a Chinese translation of the questionnaires was available to respondents. These final copies used for the study can be found in Appendix B.

37 Taiwanese students aged 15 to 19 years participated in the pilot test. Their English proficiency could be generally described as elementary to low intermediate. 33 claimed that they had done reading in English before (a comment which must refer to voluntary reading, since such EFL students clearly do real English in their English classes), more than half of them no longer read English material in their free time. As with the findings of the first experiment, the most frequent cited reasons for not reading were that they did not know what to read and they had vocabulary difficulty with the texts which they attempted to read. The written and oral comments gained from questionnaire surveys and interviews also revealed that the students felt the necessity for the teacher recommendations of books for free reading.

Picture 3-1 8 participants attending the pre-testing in Oxford
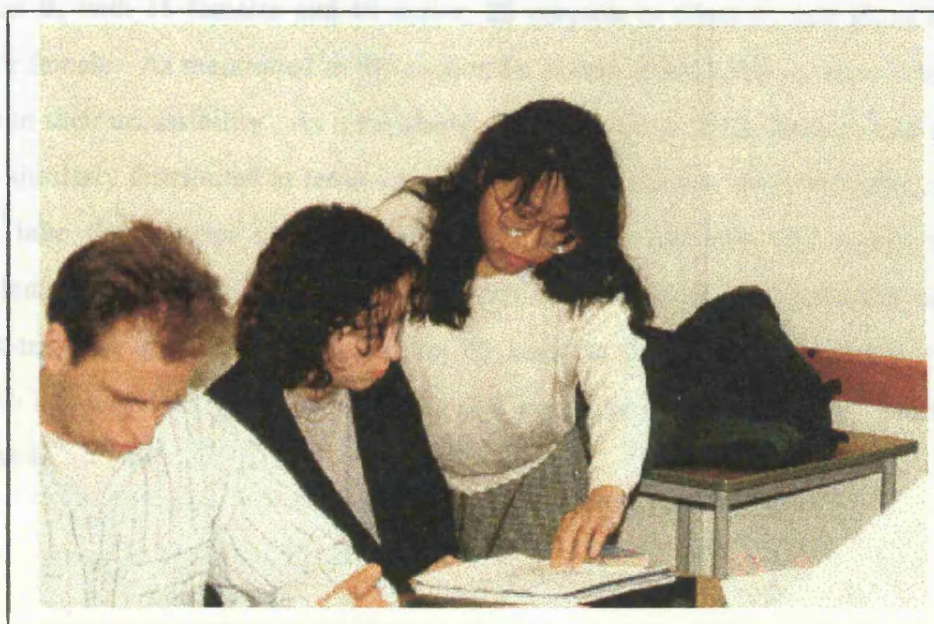
**Picture 3-2 Pre-testing of the self-administered
questionnaires**

3.2.4 Main study

3.2.4.1 Subjects

Three classes of subjects were obtained for the main study at the two universities in Taiwan, one comprising students from University A who were taking News English (Class A). The other consisted of Computer Science majors (Class B) and another of English majors (Class C) at University B. All of these students were freshmen (first year)students, who just passed the competitive Joint College Entrance Exam[39] in the summer of 1995 in order to be admitted to the universities in the greater Taipei area. All of them had had six years of previous regular EFL study in Taiwanese high schools; however, this training focused primarily on how to prepare them for entrance exams - the Senior High Entrance Exam after they graduated from junior high schools, and the Joint College Entrance Exam after they graduated from senior high schools (see chapter 1).

There were 38 subjects in Class A, with 29 females and 9 males; 29 subjects in Class B, with 15 females and 14 males; 22 subjects in Class C, and all of them were female. As mentioned in the section on access, these subjects were selected due to their accessibility. As it happened, the subjects in these three classes were not similarly distributed in terms of sex. Out of 89 students, three students could not take the pre-test and questionnaire I due to sickness and twenty-three students[40] were either absent or dropped out at the time of administration of the post-test and questionnaire II, leaving 63 subjects for the final analyses. The mean age was 18.3 years for Class A, 18.6 years for Class B and 19.7 years for Class C.

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[39] Out of 122,650 testees, 55,644 (45.37%) passed the Joint College Entrance Exam (China Times, 22 July 1995).

[40] It was difficult to involve students and sustain participation, as they were informed that their performance on this free voluntary programme would not influence the final scores of their English courses. Apart from their indifference to the programme, the heavy workload of the English courses might be another reason for the high drop-out rate.

3.2.4.2 Materials

The first and last class meetings in the experimental period were used for administering the tests and questionnaires. The teachers were helpful in their support for the project by giving up two classes in their busy schedule to permit these meetings to take place.

Measures of grammar proficiency. The grammar test comprised three passages selected and modified from the English in Use section of the CAE test. CAE English is Use was originally developed to provide a comprehensive general English proficiency examination of structure and vocabulary of an intermediate standard for non-native (EFL) speakers. The test was modified to measure the knowledge and use of grammatical structure. It was simplified for testees with lower levels of English proficiency.

The test contained three sections with a total of 35 questions. A multiple-choice format was selected for the first and third sections as this was the most common method of testing language proficiency in Taiwan; while the word-deleting questions in the second section were intended to tap deeper levels of text processing, based on careful reading and a more profound comprehension of the text. Section I required the subjects to read an article entitled _Carrot Addiction_ and choose a multiple-choice answer that best fitted each space in the text. Section II asked the subjects to proof-read the article _Hay Fever_ and find in most lines of the text one unnecessary word, the one that was either grammatically incorrect or did not fit in with the sense of the text. In Section III, the subjects were required to read regulations for workers about what to do in case of fire, and use the information to decide which multiple-choice alternative best fitted each space in the revised informal instructions.

Survey of reading habits and attitudes. Information was collected by means of questionnaires about the students' voluntary reading activities, and the students themselves. The limitations of questionnaires for obtaining reliable data were

recognised, but in view of geographic and time constraints as well the requirement to minimise interference with classroom teaching, questionnaires were judged to be the only practicable approach for the study. The subjects completed two reading habits and attitudes questionnaire surveys, which were prepared specifically for this study. These questionnaires, as described earlier, were generated from a number of previous research studies (e.g. Greaney, 1980; Smith, 1990a; Mokhtari and Sheorey, 1994) as well as feedback from the pilot studies of this project(e.g. comments and suggestions from the respondents and the teachers). In order to cover the most important questions relating to free reading, and to secure genuine or sincere responses, the self-administered questionnaires were designed to be as compact and easy to complete as possible. The first questionnaire contains 28 questions concerned with reading attitudes and behaviour, and 41 questions in the second were concerned with the free voluntary reading activities in which students participating during the experiment. The respondents were required to circle from a six-point scale, or check from a list of categories, the one that best fitted them. Open-ended questions were kept to a minimum - this format was used only if it was impossible to predetermine responses. At the end of the second questionnaire, space was provided for students to write further comments and suggestions.

Record of free reading.   The subjects were required to record what they read every day and write down their own feelings in the reading journal provided at the beginning of the experiment. Table 3.5 shows the examples provided by the researcher in the journal sample in order to guide the subjects in how to keep journals.

Table 3.5 Notes Sample

Example of notes	Category
The *traumatic* later stages of Alzheimer's placed a heavy burden on the patent's family. HIV: Human Immunodifiency Virus	vocabulary
"When the Lord calls me home, whenever that may be, I will leave with the greatest love for this country of ours and eternal optimism for its future."	quotation
As the disease progresses, they suffer increasing memory loss, disorientation and personality change.	statement
Approval for drugs to treat some life threatening diseases has been speeded up in recent years.	summary
Presumed Innocent raises serious questions about the legal system, about its causal corruptions and inequities, about the public and private motivations which often determine matters of life and death.	comment

A list of recommended books. Because many students are quick to become enthusiastic but then can be equally quick to lose that enthusiasm, the introduction of the right book at the right time can be important for encouraging independent reading. Given that it was unreasonable to expect teachers to have read all the books available, a book list coded in levels of vocabulary and book categories were given to the teachers. This was to intended to help them assist students in selecting books that matched their interests. However, these listed graded readers were just a sample of the choices available and they were intended to motivate students to read at the beginning stage. It was expected that after sharing books with others and asking recommendations from the teacher, the students should gradually be able to choose any kind of texts they felt interested in and enjoyed.

Guidelines for the teacher and the subjects.   A teacher's checklist and a letter to the learners were prepared to ensure that they knew what to do and how accomplish it.   The teacher's checklist provided step-by-step administration guidelines concerning the procedures of the experiment. This checklist was designed to make sure that the three classes in two universities establish the same conditions for the measurement.   The letter to the learners highlighted the advantages of free reading and explicitly addressed what and how they should read. The last paragraph in the letter emphasised the benefits of free reading and tried to encourage them to experience a lifelong enjoyment in reading. The letter was considered necessary to give them a broader idea of free reading than most English language students are likely to have at present in Taiwan.

3.2.4.3   Procedures

This task was designed to be low in risk, since no grade was assigned and no classification of students by performance outcome was proposed.   The questionnaire and test administration were carried out in class by course teachers in accordance with uniform guidelines being given to each class.   The actual voluntary reading was to be done outside the classroom in the student's own free time to ensure a tension-free environment.   Figure 3.4 illustrates the revised procedures of the free reading programme in terms of the roles of the teacher and the students participating the experiment.

At the Beginning	----------------------------------	At the End

Students
 	
• Taking Pre-test
• Filling out
  Questionnaire I
	• Free Reading
	• Keeping Journal
	• Participating Group Discussion
		• Taking Post-test
		• Filling out
		  Questionnaire II

Teacher
 	
• Giving Pre-test
• Giving
  Questionnaire I
• Introducing FVR
• Handing Out
  Reading Journal
	• Recommending Reading
	  Material
	• Encouraging Free Reading
	• Checking Journal
	• Administrating Group
	  Discussion
		• Giving Post-test
		• Giving
		  Questionnaire II
		• Collecting
		  Reading Journal

**Figure 3.4 Revised procedures of the free voluntary reading
programme**

Before the experiment.   Before the experiment all students were given a pre-test of proficiency in grammar (see section 3.2.2.2.3 and appendix D). The test was administered during the first week of the semester during the subjects' normal class time. They were informed that the scores of these tests would not influence their final scores of their English courses. Apart from the pre-test, questionnaire I was given in class and collected back before the class was dismissed.

Based on the letter to the learners, the teacher was requested to inform students of the importance and benefits of free reading in building up their English proficiency and giving them a source of profit and enjoyment that would last throughout their lives. After that, the teacher was asked to encourage the students to start reading for about 30 minutes each day and keep a journal of their activities. The students were told to select freely any printed material they liked, and to change to new reading material whenever they wished. They were required to record what they read every day and write down their own feelings about the reading in the journal. They were also instructed to leave the notes

blank if they did not do any reading on that day. Then the reading journals and the letters to the learners were handed out. The examples of notes in the journal sample were also explained to give the students a clear idea about keeping journals.

During the experiment.   The students were encouraged to select any type, kind, or quantity of reading material available which was suited to their level, and read the text outside the class at their own pace. Each student was requested to keep their own journal, and the record was to be checked from time to time by the teacher. Sections of mini-discussion were arranged for them to talk to each other about what they were reading. The teacher was reminded personally by mail(for the first two months), or by phone (for the rest of the time) to recommend books to the students and to encourage them to read and keep journals. The teacher needed to encourage students to take detailed notes, because the journal entries covering what they had read and what their comments were would offer information about their grammar ability and the record could be used to test the correlation between reading and grammar tests.

Despite the impracticality of implementing book presentations in the classroom context, as claimed by the teacher, it was still suggested that the teachers should arrange and tape students' book presentations if time permitted.

After the experiment.   The same test was given to all students again at the end of the experimental period (see appendix D). The post-test was administered in class. It required about 45 minutes to complete. In addition, questionnaire II was distributed, eliciting their self-evaluation and reactions about the project. Each student's journal was also collected for analysis.

3.3   Limitations of the study

3.3.1   Accuracy of student self-report

Entries in the self-reported reading journals proved to be problematic. They generally lacked veridical accuracy. For example, many students apparently found it inconvenient to record the length of time they spent on free reading as well as the number of pages they read. Some did not record such data and others reported unbelievable data (e.g. 200 pages in 30 minutes). Therefore, checking the students' journals was usually used only as a back-up to ensure and reconfirm other data. To some extent this was anticipated since all self-report data may carry distortions. However, the lack of even basic, easy-to-fill-in reports and the wild estimates (cited above) exceeded expectations and were disappointing.

3.3.2   Teacher co-operation

While few teachers were likely to disagree with the free reading programme in principle, they were keenly aware of the time and effort involved in achieving these ideals and, therefore, many turned down the proposal for participation. They may have believed that their participation might have required more time and effort than the researcher anticipated and, in fact, more than was found to be necessary by the teachers who did participate. In view of the students' apparent lack of participation in the post-test questionnaire and the seeming doubts, and suspicions of teachers who were contacted, and their readiness to find reasons not to take part, it might be concluded that not only students, as subjects, lack enthusiasm to be involved in reading. Teachers also, it seems, find it difficult to be involved, even though it seems highly likely that their students' English in general, and their reading, in particular , would benefit greatly in the long term and, perhaps, raise their exam scores. As noted earlier, the lack of a research culture among university staff is also a factor which may help to explain disappointing levels of teacher participation. If such a research culture could be

developed, teachers, and even students, might be helped to see themselves as stakeholders and beneficiaries in the research process, in general, and in the practical reading outcomes of the present project. For those who were committed to help, an excessively tight schedule of normal teaching had prevented them from implementing the original design of the research project even though it had been designed to minimise disturbance of the classroom teaching as much as possible.

It was inevitable that the teachers' time would be drawn upon and extra work would be necessary in order to carry out the required procedures. As the research was conducted by the teachers rather than the researcher, the success of the free reading programme relied heavily on their co-operation. This depended on their following the planned procedures, such as checking journals, recommending reading materials and modelling reading.

3.3.3   Book supply

The ideal situation would be to supply every subject with the reading material that students might wish for and an appropriate level, but in practice this is not always easy to fulfil.   In an attempt to supply the subjects with reading material, a collection of single copies of brief texts, such as Readers' Digest, abstracts of readers, short stories, or short articles from reading textbooks and newspapers, had been prepared for the study.   This task of assembling texts was given up, mainly because a collection of reading materials to suit all levels and all tastes required excessive effort and was impractical to be accomplished single-handed. When assistance was sought from librarians in preparation of more reading material for the folder, they raised concerns about copyright and questioned the necessity to acquire permission from each publisher to reproduce its publications, since the study was going to be implemented in Taiwan and they didn't know whether the participating universities were licensed to copy. It is not entirely clear how , if the original plan to provide a collection of photocopied materials had

been fulfilled, this might have had a positive effort on teaching, and their students' participation. No doubt the provision of an attractive range of contemporary English language materials, chosen for a wide range of topics and including many short texts, would have seemed attractive and encouraging, at least at last, and this could have benefited the project. In the event, and following the librarians' advice, providing access to books seemed a more practicable solution to make free reading more accessible in quantity. The teachers were requested to guide students to access to public libraries or bookstores, and to encourage them to share books with others. More information needed to be provided for the students to locate a wide range of titles and genres. This meant, of course, that much of the actual locating of suitable reading material remained up to students' initiative and this seems somewhat fragile composed to the original research design to provide graded readers and a photocopied collection of articles of interest.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

"A big man has no time really to do anything but just sit and be big."

------ *Scott Fitzgerald*, The Side of Paradise, 1920

"There are two motives for reading a book: one, that you enjoy it, the other that you can boast about it."

------ *Bertrand Russell*, The Conquest of Happiness

Introduction

Following the description of the design of the study, this chapter reports the procedures of data collection and analysis of the results. Data in the study consisted of answers to the questionnaires about reading attitudes and habits, the grammar proficiency tests, and reading journal entries. Statistical analyses of quantitative data were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) personal computer software.

Data obtained from the above sources were used to investigate if there were any significant differences between the comparative groups in terms of four identified variables: *gender* (female vs. male), *continuity* (continuous vs. discontinuous), the *grammar test* (high-scoring vs. low-scoring), and *university* (University A vs. University B). Gender differences have been found in many previous studies regarding free voluntary reading (Davies, 1986; Elley, 1994). Thus, the sample was divided into female and male groups to compare their differences. To determine if continuous reading was related to the subjects' reading practices, the sample was divided into two groups (continuous and discontinuous students) based on the answer to the question in the questionnaire survey: Do you read continuously during the semester? Similarly, to determine if grammar proficiency

was related to the subjects' reading practices, the sample was divided into two groups (high-scoring and low-scoring) based on the scores of CAE grammar test. Students scoring in the top 25 percent were assigned to the high-scoring group, while the bottom 25 percent were allocated to the low-scoring group. In a preliminary analysis it was found that the classes within University B (classes B and C) were far more similar than they were different. It was decided, therefore, to tabulate Class B and Class C as a single group. The combined University B group was then compared with University A to determine whether university differences might influence the free voluntary reading of the students.

4.1 Methods of interpreting the results

4.1.1 Method of interpreting the test

Paired t-test comparisons were performed to determine whether there were any significant differences between pre-test and post-test and between each part of the grammar tests. Independent t-tests were also undertaken to compare the differences between gender, continuity, grammar score and university comparative groups. Differences were assumed to be significant if five (or fewer) out of 100 random samples yielded a t value equal to or greater than the one obtained i.e., the significance level for this study was set at $p < .05$. The .05 level is taken to determine the significance decision in a large number of studies in linguistics, education and the social science and present study follows this established level. Considering the size of the sample was not large enough to get consistent results significant at the .05 or higher level, differences significant at the .10 level and close to .05 level were highlighted to raise concern.

4.1.2 Method of interpreting the questionnaire

Frequency counts were performed to all questions in Q1 and Q2. More comparisons were made to similar questions in Q1 and Q2, such as reading

preference and reading difficulties, in order to examine differences between and after the free reading programme. The significance of any notable differences in responses were statistically tested using a chi-square test. Differences were assumed to be significant if there was at least a five in one hundred possibility that the differences were due to chance ($p < .05$). With respect to the small size of the sample, differences close to .05 level were again marked to raise attention.

To be a valid test of significance, chi-square usually requires the most expected frequencies (f_e's) to be 5 or larger. This is always true for a two-by-two table. If a test involves a larger than a two-by-two table, a few exceptions are allowed as long as (a) no f_e is less than one and (b) no more than 20% of the f_e's are less than 5. Otherwise, the table needs to be modified by collapsing or combining categories until all f_e's satisfy the size criteria (Sirkin, 1995).

In this study, the tables are two-by-two tables. When any f_e was less than 5, Fisher's Exact Test was used in place of the chi-square test.

4.1.3   The process of selecting from reading journal data

Qualitative data obtained from the reading journal were not immediately accessible for analysis as quantitative data, but required to be selected and systematically analysed in order to draw valid meaning from it. The qualitative data, though difficult to analyse, were full of rich information about the reading experiences of the subjects. Moreover, the journals were useful in supplementing and illustrating the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire surveys.

In order to generate trustworthy results, there were three stages in analysing the qualitative data (Miles and Huberman, 1994): Data reduction, data display, drawing conclusions and verification. At the first stage, the author examined the students' notes and left out those appeared to be unreasonable (e.g. a student claiming to have read 200 pages in 30 minutes) and those which recorded items not connected with the purpose of this research (e.g. notes for Chinese reading).

At the second stage, all the journals selected were coded into duration (for how many days the journals was kept), amount of time (how long did each reading take), number of pages, type of reading material (e.g. fiction, magazines) and notes (e.g. vocabulary, summary). Based on the type of note keeping, students were then classified into three groups (recalcitrant, slow, and assimilated readers). The information was consequently organised and assembled in each group into the five categories mentioned above, so that it was easier to draw justified conclusions. The final stage was conclusion drawing and verification. The attempts at this stage were to locate recurring patterns, make contrasts/comparisons, and generate meaning from the findings. The conclusions were consequently weighted with evidence gained from questionnaire surveys to check their validity.

4.2 Questionnaires

As explained in Chapter 3, two questionnaire surveys were administered to a group of 89 university students. 96.6% of the first questionnaire and 70.8% of the second questionnaire were returned[41]. The surveys asked about several aspects of reading habits and attitudes:

(1) daily reading habits;

(2) the subject's purposes for reading (e.g., intellectual, work, leisure, functional);

(3) type of reading preference (e.g., books and newspapers);

(4) the amount of time spent in free voluntary reading (the frequency and length);

(5) factors hindering continuous reading (e.g. vocabulary difficulty, no time to read);

(6) metacognitive strategies of being a good reader (e.g. concentration, regular reading);

(7) the reader's perception of the free reading program;

(8) selection of reading material (e.g. met with before, subject appeal);

(9) provision of reading material (e.g. personal purchase, public library); and

(10) the subject's Chinese reading attitudes and habits (e.g. the type of reading material, time spent on reading).

Since the data collected was in the form of Likert scale responses, they were grouped into frequencies. Subsequently, a series of Chi-square calculations was performed on the means and frequencies to examine significant differences in the reading habits and attitudes of the subjects varying in gender, continuity, score, and university.

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[41] As mentioned in Chapter 3, three out of 89 students could not take the pre-test and questionnaire I due to sickness and twenty-three students either were absent or dropped out at the time of administration of the post-test and questionnaire II, leaving 63 subjects for the final analyses.

4.2.1   General opinions and attitudes about reading

Overall students. To investigate past reading experience, students were requested to state their agreement (using a six point Likert scale) on 9 statements regarding their past English reading experience. The mean ratings on the questionnaire surveys are shown in Table 4.1. As a whole, their rating of these statements in both questionnaires was positive: more than 60% of the subjects indicated slightly agree to strongly agree on all statements but two, "I can read uninterruptedly" and "I often talk with someone about something I have read". 59.3% of the subjects in Q1 and 46% of the subjects in Q2 were in favour of uninterruption of reading, and merely 14.8% and 9.5% of the subjects respectively in Q1 and Q2 agreed that they often talked about the book read. Among these statements, the highest mean rating was achieved with "like reading English material", ranking midway between "agree" to strongly agree", and the lowest mean rating was with "often talk with someone about something" they had read, ranking close to "slightly disagree".

Table 4.1 Overall students' reading experience

Questions	Before Experiment		After Experiment	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
I have time to read.	2.41	0.93	2.86	1.22
I can concentrate on reading well.	3.04	1.09	3.25	1.08
I can read uninterruptedly.	3.32	1.18	3.52	1.18
I like reading English material.	1.91	0.87	2.24	1.12
I have a lively imagination.	2.77	1.08	2.92	1.43
I like to note down good sentences.	2.85	1.21	3.30	1.28
I have learned lots of words from reading.	2.38	0.99	2.67	0.93
I can find books I like to read.	2.90	1.03	2.83	1.01
I often talk with someone about something I have read.	3.70	1.23	3.81	1.26

1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = slightly agree, 4 = slightly disagree, 5 = disagree, 6 = strongly disagree

A paired t-test revealed that significant differences were found for three of the nine statements: having time to read ($t = 2.84$, $p < .01$), liking reading ($t = 2.34$,

p < .05), and noting down good sentences (t = 3.97, p < .001). The results indicated that after the experiment the subjects didn't think so much as they felt before, that they had time to read, that they liked reading, and that they liked to note down good sentences. No significant differences were found with respect to the remaining six statements, although in all cases (except for "finding books") the means were lower after the experiment than before.

Gender groups.   As shown in Table 4.2, a clear difference was found between female and male students on the statement: "I can concentrate on reading well".   More female students gave negative answers than did male students; however, the difference was marginally significant (p = .056).

Table 4.2 Gender differences in reading experience

Questions (Chi-square, f_o's / f_e's)		*Male*	*Female*	*P Value*
I have time to read.	Positive	19/19	54/54	0.658^
	Negative	2/2	6/6	
I can concentrate on reading well.	Positive	19/16	41/44	0.056†
	Negative	2/5	18/15	
I can read uninterruptedly.	Positive	11/13	37/35	0.406
	Negative	10/8	22/24	
I like reading English material.	Positive	18/20	59/57	0.515^
	Negative	3/1	1/3	
I have a lively imagination.	Positive	18/16	43/45	0.198
	Negative	3/5	17/15	
I like to note down good sentences.	Positive	13/14	41/40	0.590
	Negative	8/7	19/20	
I have learned lots of words from reading.	Positive	20/19	57/58	0.569^
	Negative	0/1	3/2	
I can find books I like to read.	Positive	14/16	48/46	0.240^
	Negative	7/5	12/14	
I often talk with someone about something I have read.	Positive	11/9	27/28	0.438
	Negative	9/11	33/32	

†   Marginally significant difference at 0.05 level
^   Fisher's Exact Test

Continuity groups. The results indicated that there was wide variation between continuous students and discontinuous students regarding the ability to find books they liked to read (see Table 4.3; $x^2_{obt} = 5.27$, df = 1, p < .05). Additionally, the perception about "having a lively imagination" was marginally significant different at .05 level ($x^2_{obt} = 3.73$, df = 1, p = .053).

Table 4.3 Continuity differences in reading experience

Questions (Chi-square, f_o's / f_e's)		*Continuous*	*Dis-continuous*	*P Value*
I have time to read.	Positive	31/29	42/44	0.233^
	Negative	1/3	6/4	
I can concentrate on reading well.	Positive	26/23	34/37	0.185
	Negative	5/8	14/11	
I can read uninterruptedly.	Positive	22/19	26/29	0.135
	Negative	9/12	22/19	
I like reading English material.	Positive	32/30	44/46	0.145^
	Negative	0/2	4/2	
I have a lively imagination.	Positive	28/24	33/37	0.053†
	Negative	4/8	15/11	
I like to note down good sentences.	Positive	24/22	30/32	0.242
	Negative	8/10	18/16	
I have learned lots of words from reading.	Positive	32/31	44/45	0.267^
	Negative	0/1	3/2	
I can find books I like to read.	Positive	29/25	33/37	0.021*
	Negative	3/7	15/10	
I often talk with someone about something I have read.	Positive	30/31	46/45	0.562^
	Negative	2/1	1/2	

† Marginally significant difference at 0.05 level
* Significant difference at 0.05 level
^ Fisher's Exact Test

Score groups. Differences due to score were examined to determine if there were any differences between high-scoring and low-scoring students with respect to their reading experience. Data presented in Table 4.4 shows that no significant differences were found between the groups.

Table 4.4 Score differences in reading experience

Questions (Chi-square, f_o's / f_e's)		_Hi-score_	_Low-score_	_P Value_
I have time to read.	Positive	14/13	13/12	1.000^
	Negative	0/1	0/1	
I can concentrate on reading well.	Positive	8/8	8/8	0..816
	Negative	5/5	6/6	
I can read uninterruptedly.	Positive	7/7	7/7	0.841
	Negative	6/6	7/7	
I like reading English material.	Positive	12/13	14/13	0.481^
	Negative	2/1	0/1	
I have a lively imagination.	Positive	11/11	11/11	1.000^
	Negative	3/3	3/3	
I like to note down good sentences.	Positive	8/10	12/10	0.208^
	Negative	6/4	2/4	
I have learned lots of words from reading.	Positive	12/13	14/13	0.481^
	Negative	2/1	0/1	
I can find books I like to read.	Positive	10/10	11/11	1.000^
	Negative	4/4	3/3	
I often talk with someone about something I have read.	Positive	5/5	6/6	0.816
	Negative	8/8	8/8	

^ Fisher's Exact Test

University groups. The data were then analysed to examine the differences between University A and University B students. Table 4.5 showed that there were no significant differences between the groups (all p > .05).

Table 4.5 University differences in reading experience

Questions (Chi-square, f_o's / f_e's)		_Univ. A_	_Univ. B_	_P Value_
I have time to read.	Positive	29/30	44/43	0.709^
	Negative	4/3	4/5	
I can concentrate on reading well.	Positive	27/25	33/35	0.237
	Negative	6/8	44/42	
I can read uninterruptedly.	Positive	21/20	27/28	0.578
	Negative	12/13	20/19	
I like reading English material.	Positive	31/31	46/46	1.000^
	Negative	2/2	2/2	
I have a lively imagination.	Positive	26/25	35/36	0.547
	Negative	7/8	13/10	
I like to note down good sentences.	Positive	22/22	32/32	1.000
	Negative	11/11	16/16	
I have learned lots of words from reading.	Positive	31/32	46/45	0.565^
	Negative	2/1	1/2	
I can find books I like to read.	Positive	26/25	36/37	0.692
	Negative	7/8	12/11	
I often talk with someone about something I have read.	Positive	14/16	24/22	0.446
	Negative	19/17	23/25	

^ Fisher's Exact Test

4.2.2 Perceptions of reading benefits

Overall students. Students were asked to indicate on a six-point scale their perceptions of reading in benefiting their reading comprehension, writing style, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and English proficiency. Table 4.6 presents the mean ratings and standard deviations for these items on Q1 and Q2. The highest mean ratings were 1.75 in Q1 and 2.00 in Q2, indicating that "reading benefits reading comprehension" was agreed with. Of the subjects, 98.8% in Q1 and 100% in Q2 gave positive answers on this statement. The perception that "reading benefits grammar" received the lowest mean scores, 2.88 in Q1 and 3.17 in Q2. In descriptive terms of the survey, these rank around "slightly agree". The percentage of positive responses on this statement was not so high, being 81.5% in Q1 and 69.8% in Q2 .

Table 4.6 Overall students' perception of reading benefits

Questions	Before Experiment		After Experiment	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
I think reading benefits my reading comprehension.	2.00	0.74	1.75	0.97
I think reading benefits my writing style.	2.49	1.09	2.32	1.15
I think reading benefits my grammar.	3.17	1.40	2.88	1.44
I think reading benefits my spelling.	2.94	1.40	2.67	1.33
I think reading benefits my vocabulary.	2.16	0.75	1.81	0.79
I think reading benefits my general English proficiency.	2.06	0.69	1.86	1.10

1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = slightly agree, 4 = slightly disagree, 5 = disagree, 6 = strongly disagree

The data were then analysed using paired t-tests to determine if there were differences between Q1 and Q2. There was a significant difference ($t = 2.27$, $df = 57$, $p < .05$) on the statement, "I think reading benefits my grammar." There were no significant differences on the other statements.

Gender groups.   A Chi-square analysis revealed that there were no significant differences between female and male students (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7 Gender differences in perceptions of reading benefits

Questions (Chi-square, f_o's / f_e's)		_Male_	_Female_	_P Value_
I think reading benefits my reading comprehension.	Positive	20/20	60/60	
	Negative			
I think reading benefits my writing style.	Positive	19/18	54/55	0.673^
	Negative	1/2	6/5	
I think reading benefits my grammar.	Positive	17/17	49/49	1.000^
	Negative	3/3	9/9	
I think reading benefits my spelling.	Positive	18/18	49/49	1.000^
	Negative	3/3	9/9	
I think reading benefits my vocabulary.	Positive	21/21	59/59	1.000^
	Negative	0/0	1/1	
I think reading benefits my general English proficiency.	Positive	19/19	58/58	1.000^
	Negative	1/1	2/2	

^   Fisher's Exact Test

Continuity groups. The results provided in Table 4.8 using a Chi-square analysis suggest that there were no differences in regard to reading benefits between continuous and discontinuous students.

Table 4.8 Continuity differences in perceptions of reading benefits

Questions (Chi-square, f_o's / f_e's)		*Continuous*	*Dis-continuous*	*P Value*
I think reading benefits my reading comprehension.	Positive	32/32	47/47	
	Negative			
I think reading benefits my writing style.	Positive	32/29	41/43	0.231^
	Negative	1/3	6/5	
I think reading benefits my grammar.	Positive	27/25	38/44	0.348^
	Negative	3/5	9/7	
I think reading benefits my spelling.	Positive	27/27	39/39	1.000^
	Negative	5/5	7/7	
I think reading benefits my vocabulary.	Positive	31/32	48/48	0.400^
	Negative	1/0	0/0	
I think reading benefits my general English proficiency.	Positive	37/31	48/47	0.400^
	Negative	1/0	0/1	

^   Fisher's Exact Test

Score groups. Chi-square analyses performed for each of the six aspects revealed significant differences only in spelling (x^2_{obt} = 5.51, df = 1, p < .05), indicating that the low-scoring students thought that reading benefited their spelling (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9 Score differences in perceptions of reading benefits

Questions (Chi-square, f_o's / f_e's)		_Hi-score_	_Low-score_	_P Value_
I think reading benefits my reading comprehension.	Positive	14/14	14/14	
	Negative			
I think reading benefits my writing style.	Positive	13/14	14/14	1.000^
	Negative	1/0	0/0	
I think reading benefits my grammar.	Positive	11/12	13/12	0.595^
	Negative	2/1	1/2	
I think reading benefits my spelling.	Positive	9/11	14/12	0.040^
	Negative	4/2	0/2	*
I think reading benefits my vocabulary.	Positive	14/14	14/14	
	Negative			
I think reading benefits my general English proficiency.	Positive	14/14	14/14	
	Negative			

* Significant difference at 0.05 level
^ Fisher's Exact Test

University groups. Similar analyses were performed to determine if there were any differences between university groups with respect to their perceptions of reading benefits. No significant differences were found for reading comprehension, writing style, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and general English proficiency (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 University differences in perceptions of reading benefits

Questions (Chi-square, f_o's / f_e's)		_Univ. A_	_Univ. B_	_P Value_
I think reading benefits my reading comprehension.	Positive	33/33	47/47	
	Negative			
I think reading benefits my writing style.	Positive	28/30	45/43	0.118^
	Negative	5/3	2/4	
I think reading benefits my grammar.	Positive	25/27	41/40	0.214^
	Negative	7/5	5/7	
I think reading benefits my spelling.	Positive	27/27	40/40	1.000^
	Negative	5/5	7/7	
I think reading benefits my vocabulary.	Positive	32/33	48/47	0.407^
	Negative	1/0	0/1	
I think reading benefits my general English proficiency.	Positive	31/32	46/45	0.565^
	Negative	2/1	1/2	

^ Fisher's Exact Test

4.2.3 Frequency and amount of time

Frequency of English reading.　　Table 4.11 presents the frequency and percentage with which students reported reading each category of reading material: books, comics, newspapers, and magazines. Newspapers are, in general, read more than books or other materials. Students reported reading newspapers once or twice a week on average. The mean values for frequency of reading books, comics and magazines were 3.89, 4.16 and 4.03, which indicates a value close to once or twice a month.

Table 4.11 Reported frequency of English reading

	Books		Comics		Newspapers		Magazines	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
More than once a day	2	3.2	2	3.2	3	4.8	1	1.6
Once a day	7	11.1	1	1.6	14	22.2	6	9.5
Once or twice a week	16	25.4	13	20.6	19	30.2	14	22.2
Once or twice a month	17	27.0	24	38.1	12	19.1	18	28.6
Less than once a month	13	20.6	15	23.8	13	20.6	17	27.0
Never	8	12.7	8	12.7	2	3.2	7	11.1

n = 63

Amount of time in English reading.　　The differences with regard to the amount of time spent on the four different kinds of reading material were also examined. As shown in Table 4.12, more than 50% of all students spent 15 - 60 minutes reading newspapers and magazines, less then 30 minutes reading comics, and more than 30 minutes reading books. It is noteworthy that 2 students reported that they spent more than 3 hours each time they read comics.

Table 4.12 Reported amount of time in English reading

	Book		Comics		Newspaper		Magazine	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
More than 3 hours	2	3.2	2	3.2	0	0	0	0
1 - 3 hours	15	23.8	7	11.1	8	12.7	12	19.0
1/2 - 1 hour	19	30.2	13	20.6	18	28.6	17	27.0
15 - 30 minutes	11	17.5	17	27.0	24	38.1	19	30.2
Less than 15 minutes	10	15.9	15	23.8	10	15.9	10	15.9
Not available	6	9.5	9	14.3	3	4.8	5	7.9

4.2.4   Factors hindering continuous reading

Overall students.   Figure 4.1 shows the top-five reasons that caused the subject to stop reading English material for enjoyment. About 50% of the responses indicated that "no time to read", "not knowing what to read" and "vocabulary difficulty" were the major reasons. It appears that after the free reading program, "no time to read" became the main reason that stopped them from reading continuously. The interpretation of this (and some other figures) remains complex. However, first, the drop-out figures, i.e. students who participated but did not turn up to fill in the final questionnaire, have an unknown effect. It is not known precisely why they dropped out or in which ways they might have answered (although statistical significance tests obviously take account of the actual numbers who did complete questionnaires). Second, it is possible that involvement in the programme has raised students' horizons regarding reading (in a sense, this is a major aim of the project); this is seen in "reading benefits my comprehension" response. If so, "not having time" becomes proportionally more of an issue - clearly students do have time, since they are reading as part of the programme. However, if they are enjoying reading they might well wish for even more time to read ; this is a "higher" horizon. In contrast, as they read more, with success, other responses in this category of hindering factor decline; vocabulary difficulties, not knowing what to read, etc. become relatively less important.
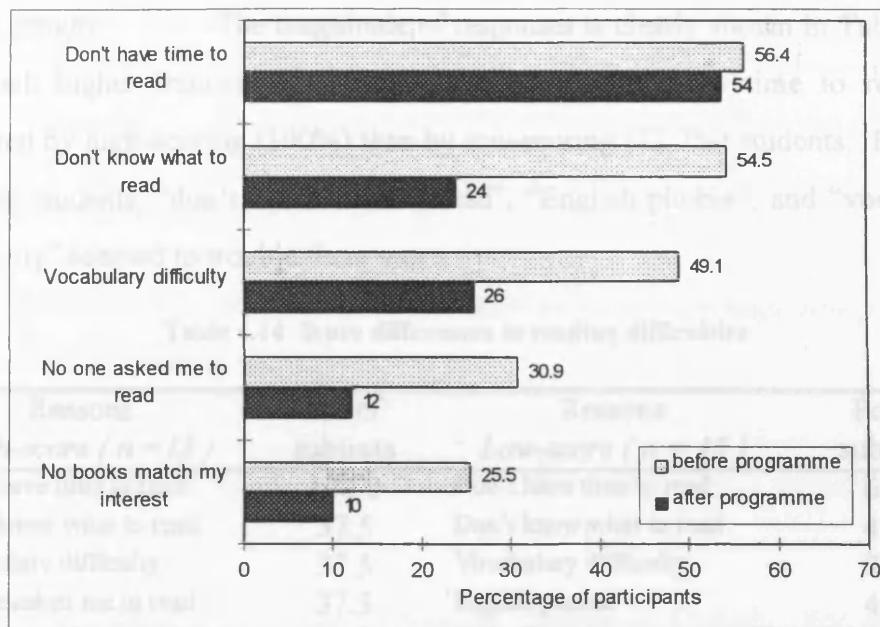
Figure 4.1 The overall percentage of reading difficulties

Gender groups. For male students, vocabulary difficulty (75%) was the main concern, whereas only 38.5% of the female students indicated that vocabulary difficulty hindered them from reading continuously (see Table 4.13)[42].

Table 4.13 Gender differences in reading difficulties

Reasons *Male (n = 16)*	Pct of subjects	Reasons *Female(n = 39)*	Pct of subjects
Vocabulary difficulty	75.0	Don't have time to read	59.0
Don't know what to read	62.5	Don't know what to read	51.3
Don't have time to read	50.0	Vocabulary difficulty	38.5
No books match my interest	50.0	No one asked me to read	30.8
No one asked me to read	31.3	Grammar difficulty	20.5

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[42] Ideally, these data will be tested significant differences. Considering small sample size, test of significant differences are not performed except where numbers are sufficiently large. This point about not carrying out possible test of significance applies also to the data display in Tables 4.14, 4.20, 4.22, 4.23, 4.24.

Score groups. The magnitude of responses is clearly shown in Table 4.14. A much higher frequency of responses with regard to no time to read was reported by high-scoring (100%) than by low-scoring (72.7%) students. For low-scoring students, "don't know what to read", "English phobia", and "vocabulary difficulty" seemed to trouble them more.

Table 4.14 Score differences in reading difficulties

Reasons *High-score (n =15)*	Pct of subjects	Reasons *Low-score (n = 15)*	Pct of subjects
Don't have time to read	100.0	Don't have time to read	63.5
Don't know what to read	37.5	Don't know what to read	45.5
Vocabulary difficulty	37.5	Vocabulary difficulty	72.7
No one asked me to read	37.5	English phobia	45.5
No books match my interest	25.0	No books match my interest	27.7
Grammar difficulty	25.0	Grammar difficulty	27.7

University groups. Similar results were obtained from university groups. About half of the students indicated that time and reading material with suitable level for them were the major causes, which resulted in their inability to read continuously (see Table 4.15).

Table 4.15 University differences in reading difficulties

Reasons *University A (n =24)*	Pct of subjects	Reasons *University B (n = 31)*	Pct of subjects
Don't have time to read	58.3	Don't know what to read	58.1
Don't know what to read	50.0	Don't have time to read	54.8
Vocabulary difficulty	50.0	Vocabulary difficulty	48.4
No one asked me to read	25.0	No one asked me to read	35.5
No books match my interest	25.0	Grammar difficulty	25.8

4.2.5   Purpose for reading

Overall students.   Nine purposes for reading were described on the survey:

(1) To solve a problem,   (2) for study,   (3) for information,

(4) for getting a job,   (5) to kill time,   (6) for pleasure,

(7) for course requirements,   (8) for increasing knowledge, and

(9) for examinations.

Subjects were asked to select no more than three purposes in accordance with their typical reading habits.

Figure 4.2 illustrates the major reasons for reading in English. For study, for increasing knowledge, for information, for pleasure and for course requirements comprised 87.5% of the responses in Q1. Only 2 out of the 83 valid cases indicated that reading was for problem solving, a critical reading skill alleged by educators. Though the top-five purposes were the same in Q1 and Q2, the rankings obtained were relatively different. After the program, a large proportion of responses described the value of reading for pleasure (from 36.1% and ranking 4 in Q1 to 64.5% and ranking 1 in Q2), while the percentage of reading for study decreased dramatically from 71.1 (ranking = 1) to 27.4 (ranking = 4). This finding confirms that a major aim of the programme has apparently been fulfilled to develop interest, pleasure and enjoyment in reading.
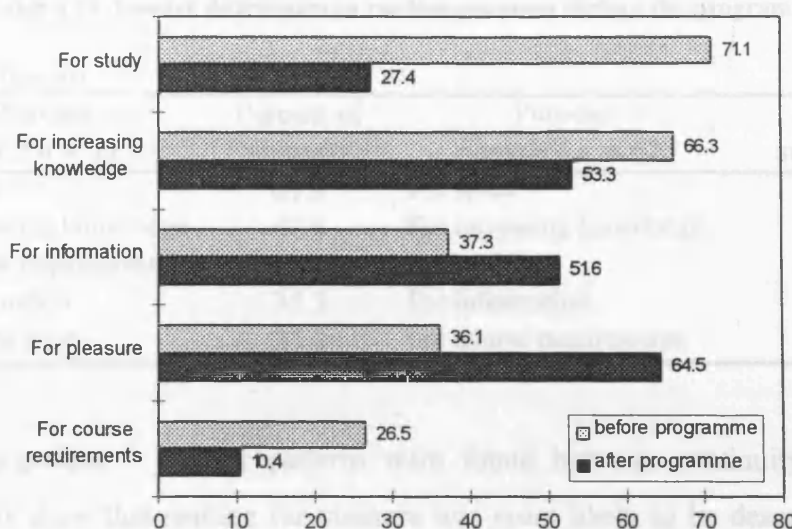
Figure 4.2 The overall percentage of reading purposes

A frequency count was performed to examine differences among the four comparative groups regarding reading purposes. The majority of subjects across all four comparative groups indicated "for study" and "for increasing knowledge" as the most frequent purposes for which they undertook English reading. The following tables list for each group the five major purposes for English reading. Differences between groups were highlighted and brought to the reader's attention.

Gender groups. As shown in Table 4.16, reading for getting a job was valued by male students (23.8%), while more than 40% of the female students indicated that they read for pleasure. The results also revealed that "for increasing knowledge" was given more weight by female students (72.6%) than male students (47.6%).

Table 4.16 Gender differences in reading purposes (before the program)

(the top 5 reasons)

Purposes _Male (n = 21)_	Percent of subjects	Purposes _Female (n = 62)_	Pct of subjects
For study	61.9	For study	74.2
For increasing knowledge	47.6	For increasing knowledge	72.6
For course requirements	38.1	For pleasure	41.9
For information	33.3	For information	38.7
For getting a job	23.8	For course requirements	22.6

Continuity groups. Similar patterns were found between continuity groups. The results show that reading for pleasure was more likely to be described as a reading purpose more by continuous students than by discontinuous students (see Table 4.17). This response is probably to be expected; students who give up (discontinue) probably do not enjoy reading.

Table 4.17 Continuity differences in reading purposes

(the top 5 reasons)

Purposes _Continuous (n = 31)_	Percent of subjects	Purposes _Discontinuous (n = 47)_	Pct of subjects
For increasing knowledge	74.2	For study	68.1
For study	71.0	For increasing knowledge	57.4
For pleasure	51.6	For course requirements	34.0
For information	41.9	For information	34.0
For course requirements	19.4	For pleasure	29.8

Score groups.   It is worth noting that a substantial number of low-scoring

students read primarily for study purposes, corresponding to 93.3%. Consistent

with the results found in gender groups, the major difference lay in that more than

50% of the high-scoring students read for pleasure, while more than one-fourth of

the low-scoring students read for the purpose of getting a job (see Table 4.18).

Table 4.18 Score differences in reading purposes

(the top 5 reasons)

Purposes *High-score (n = 15)*	Percent of subjects	Purposes *Low-score (n = 15)*	Pct of subjects
For study	73.3	For study	93.3
For increasing knowledge	73.3	For increasing knowledge	80.0
For pleasure	53.3	For information	40.0
For information	40.0	For course requirements	26.7
For course requirements	26.6	For getting a job	26.7

University groups.   As presented in Table 4.19, there was no wide variation

between University A and University B students with regard to reading purpose.

Table 4.19 University differences in reading purposes

(the top 5 reasons)

Purposes *University A (n = 34)*	Percent of subjects	Purposes *University B (n = 49)*	Pct of subjects
For study	76.5	For increasing knowledge	71.4
For increasing knowledge	58.8	For study	67.3
For information	35.3	For information	38.8
For pleasure	35.3	For pleasure	36.7
For course requirements	29.4	For course requirements	24.5

4.2.6 Reading preference

Overall students. Students chose short stories (62.4% in Q1; 54.8% in Q2) and magazines (56.5% in Q1; 46.8% in Q2) as the most preferred reading material (see Figure 4.3). There were great differences between Q1 and Q2 in the categories of classics and material related to study. Before the program, 44.7% of the students reported that they liked to read classics for enjoyment, but only 29% of the students indicated their preference for the choice after the program. The percentage of students reporting that they liked to read material related to study for enjoyment increased from 29.4% to 43.5%.
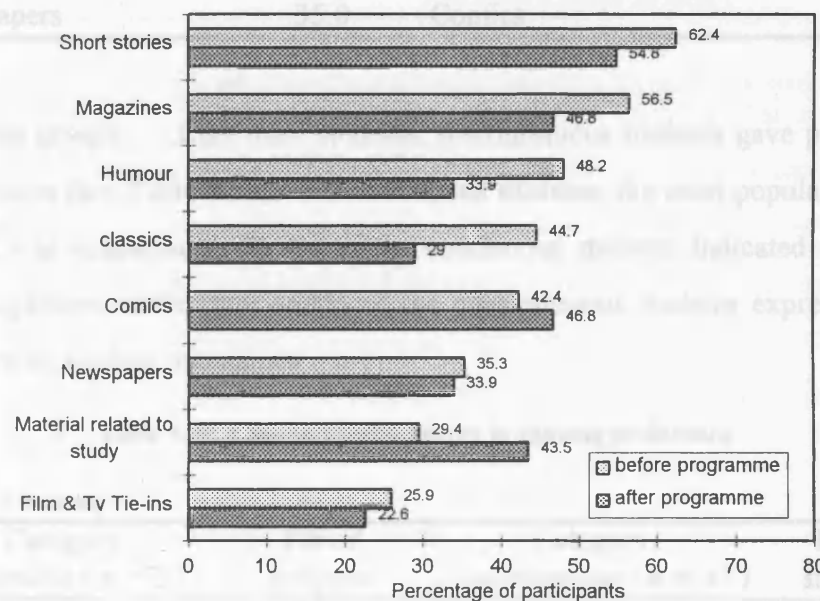
Figure 4.3 The overall percentage of reading preference

Gender groups. About 60% of the female students preferred classics. By contrast, only 10% of the male students liked classical literature. It appears that male students preferred to read short articles as the top-five choices were generally short (see Table 4.20).

Table 4.20 Gender differences in reading preference

(the top 5 reasons)

Category Male (n = 20)	Pct of subjects	Category Female (n = 65)	Pct of subjects
Comics	50.0	Short stories	67.7
Magazines	50.0	Classics	58.5
Short stories	45.0	Magazines	55.4
Humour	40.0	Humour	50.8
Newspapers	35.0	Comics	40.0

Continuity groups. Like male students, discontinuous students gave priority to short articles (see Table 4.21). For continuous students, the most popular reading material was magazines. 71.9% of the continuous students indicated that they liked magazines, while only 46.8% of the discontinuous students expressed that they enjoyed reading magazines.

Table 4.21 Continuity differences in reading preference

(the top 5 reasons)

Category Continuous (n = 32)	Pct of subjects	Category Discontinuous (n = 47)	Pct of subjects
Magazines	71.9	Short stories	51.1
Short stories	68.8	Humour	51.1
Classics	50.0	Comics	46.8
Humour	43.8	Magazines	42.5
Newspapers	43.8	Newspapers	38.2

Score groups.　　　Distinctive patterns were found in high-scoring and low-scoring students (see Table 4.22). Newspapers, film and TV tie-ins were ranked within the top-five list of high-scoring students but were given low priority by low-scoring students. Out of 16 choices, newspapers and tie-ins corresponded to the 10 and 13 ranks.

Table 4.22 Score differences in reading preference

(the top 5 reasons)

Category High-score (n = 15)	Pct of subjects	Category Low-score (n = 15)	Pct of subjects
Short stories	73.3	Humour	66.7
Magazines	73.3	Short stories	53.3
Newspapers	53.3	Magazines	53.3
Humour	53.3	Comics	53.3
Film & TV tie-ins	40.0	Material related to study	40.0

University groups.　　　As previous studies show that classical literature was consistently given low ratings in most countries (Elley, 1994), it is unusual that classics were ranked the first by students at University A. In addition, 40% of the students expressed that they preferred film and TV tie-ins, which like classics are likely to be long. In contrast, students at University B preferred short reading material. More than 60% of the students preferred short stories, humour and comics.

Table 4.23 University differences in reading preference

(the top 5 reasons)

Category Univ. A (n = 35)	Pct of subjects	Category Univ. B (n = 50)	Pct of subjects
Classics	57.1	Short stories	68.0
Short stories	54.3	Magazines	64.0
Magazines	45.7	Humour	64.0
Film & TV tie-ins	40.0	Comics	48.0
Comics	34.3	Newspapers	36.0

4.2.7   Metacognitive strategies of being a good reader

Overall students.   Figure 4.4 shows the 8 out of the 14 options, arranged in order of popularity for all students. "Like reading", "concentrate well", "read regularly" and "have lots of time for reading" were chosen by more than half of the respondents as the important ways to become a good reader. Among them, liking reading was given the most weight, with 83.7% of the students supporting the view.
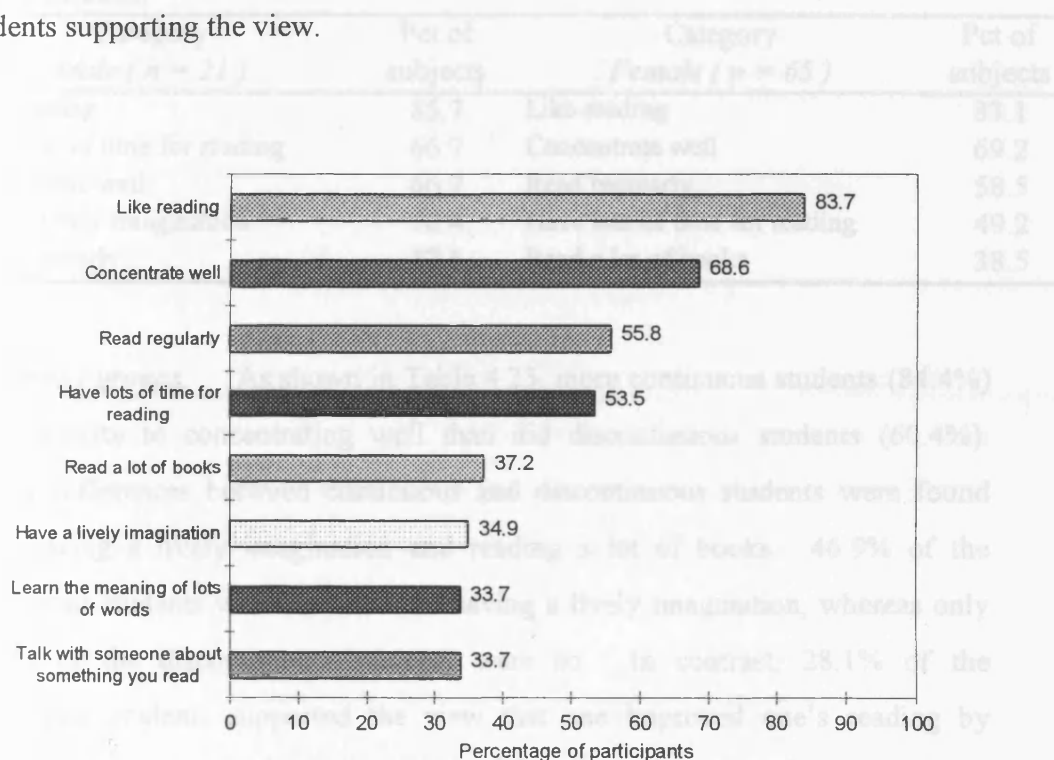
Figure 4.4 The overall percentage of metacognitive strategies

Gender groups. Table 4.24 reveals a similar pattern of popularity for both gender groups. Male students gave more weight to having lots of time for reading (Male: 66.7%; Female: 49.2%), and having a lively imagination (Male: 52.4%; Female: 29.2%).

Table 4.24 Gender differences in metacognitive strategies

(the top 5 reasons)

Category Male (n = 21)	Pct of subjects	Category Female (n = 65)	Pct of subjects
Like reading	85.7	Like reading	83.1
Have lots of time for reading	66.7	Concentrate well	69.2
Concentrate well	66.7	Read regularly	58.5
Have a lively imagination	52.4	Have lots of time for reading	49.2
Read regularly	47.6	Read a lot of books	38.5

Continuity groups. As shown in Table 4.25, more continuous students (84.4%) gave priority to concentrating well than did discontinuous students (60.4%). Larger differences between continuous and discontinuous students were found with having a lively imagination and reading a lot of books. 46.9% of the continuous students were in favour of having a lively imagination, whereas only 29.2% of the discontinuous students were so. In contrast, 28.1% of the continuous students supported the view that one improved one's reading by reading a lot of books, but still 25.8% of the discontinuous students saw some virtue in this strategy.

Table 4.25 Continuity differences in metacognitive strategies

(the top 5 reasons)

Category Continuous (n = 32)	Pct of subjects	Category Discontinuous (n = 48)	Pct of subjects
Like reading	87.5	Like reading	81.3
Concentrate well	84.4	Concentrate well	60.4
Read regularly	56.3	Have lots of time for reading	54.2
Have lots of time for reading	56.3	Read regularly	54.2
Have a lively imagination	46.9	Read a lot of books	45.8

Score groups. More students in the high-scoring group gave priority to concentrating well (see Table 4.26). Additionally high-scoring students (46.7%) gave more weight to "talking with somebody about something you read" than did low-scoring students (33.3%).

Table 4.26 Score differences in metacognitive strategies

(the top 5 reasons)

Category _High-score (n = 15)_	Pct of subjects	Category _Low score (n = 15)_	Pct of subjects
Like reading	86.7	Like reading	80.0
Concentrate well	80.0	Concentrate well	66.7
Read regularly	66.7	Have lots of time for reading	66.7
Have lots of time for reading	60.0	Read regularly	60.0
Talk with sb. about sth. you read	46.7	Read a lot of books	40.0

University groups. Inspection of Table 4.27 reveals a similar pattern of popularity for both university groups. Although University A students gave more weight to reading a lot of books and University B students saw more virtue in having a lively imagination, the differences were not large.

Table 4.27 University differences in metacognitive strategies

(the top 5 reasons)

Category _Univ. A (n = 36)_	Pct of subjects	Category _Univ. B (n = 50)_	Pct of subjects
Like reading	80.6	Like reading	86.0
Concentrate well	66.7	Concentrate well	70.0
Have lots of time for reading	61.1	Read regularly	58.0
Read regularly	52.8	Have lots of time for reading	48.0
Read a lot of books	38.9	Have a lively imagination	38.0

4.2.8   *Selection of reading material*

Overall students. Figure 4.5 shows students' reports of their major sources of books for free reading. It is clear from the percentages in the figure that subject appeal was the most popular criterion for book selection, followed by "met with before" and "recommended by others". "A gift", "read this book before" and "cover looked interesting" were weighted in the last three places, corresponding to 3.2%, 9.7% and 9.7% respectively.
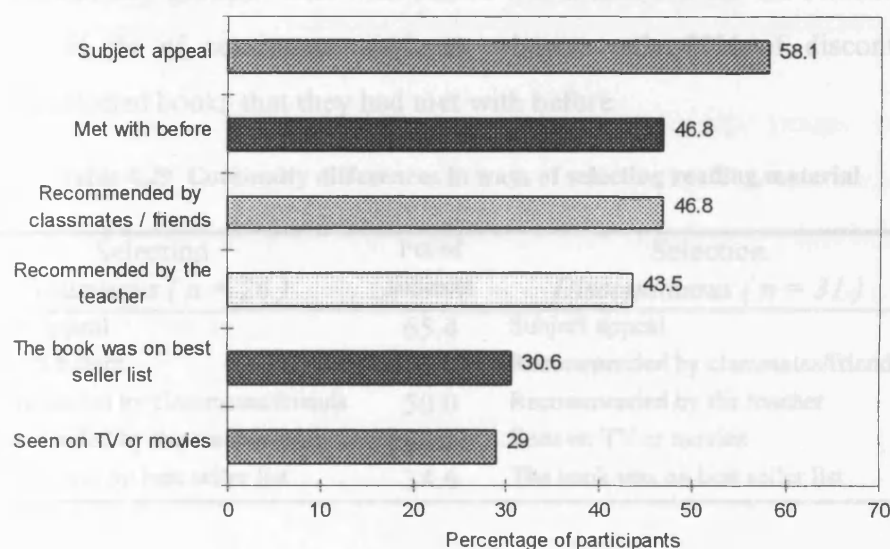
Figure 4.5 The overall percentage in book selection

Gender groups. The largest difference between male and female students was "seen on TV or movies". About half of the male students gave priority to this factor, whereas only one-fourth of the female students read books that had been seen on TV or in movies. Table 4.28 lists the top-five options, arranged in order of popularity for each gender group.

Table 4.28 Gender differences in ways of selecting reading material

Selection Male (n = 13)	Pct of subjects	Selection Female (n = 47)	Pct of subjects
Subject appeal	69.2	Subject appeal	55.3
Recommended by classmates/friends	61.5	Recommended by the teacher	44.7
Met with before	46.2	Recommended by classmates/friends	44.7
Recommended by the teacher	46.2	Met with before	44.7
Seen on TV or movies	46.2	The book was on best seller list	31.9

Continuity groups.   Table 4.29 presents the ways of selecting reading material by the continuity groups. Met with before was a criterion for the selection of a book in 65.4% of continuous students, whereas only 29% of discontinuous students selected books that they had met with before.

Table 4.29 Continuity differences in ways of selecting reading material

Selection Continuous (n = 26)	Pct of subjects	Selection Discontinuous (n = 31)	Pct of subjects
Subject appeal	65.4	Subject appeal	51.6
Met with before	65.4	Recommended by classmates/friends	48.4
Recommended by classmates/friends	50.0	Recommended by the teacher	45.2
Recommended by the teacher	46.2	Seen on TV or movies	32.3
The book was on best seller list	34.6	The book was on best seller list	32.3

Score groups. Half of the high-scoring students read books on best seller lists; however, only 26.7% of the low-scoring students did so. There are no other score differences that are worthy of note (see Table 4.30).

Table 4.30 Score differences in ways of selecting reading material

Selection *High-score (n = 15)*	Pct of subjects	Selection *Low-score (n = 15)*	Pct of subjects
Subject appeal	71.4	Subject appeal	60.0
Recommended by classmates/friends	50.0	Recommended by classmates/friends	53.3
The book was on best seller list	50.0	Met with before	53.3
Met with before	42.9	Recommended by the teacher	40.0
Recommended by the teacher	35.7	Seen on TV or movies	33.3

University groups. The main differences between university groups was that 60% of the students at University A read books recommended by the teacher, but merely 35.7% of the students at University B used the criterion to select books for free reading. Table 4.31 presents the ways in which university groups select their reading material.

Table 4.31 University differences in ways of selecting reading material

Selection *Univ. A (n = 20)*	Pct of subjects	Selection *Univ. B (n = 42)*	Pct of subjects
Recommended by the teacher	60.0	Subject appeal	59.5
Subject appeal	55.0	Recommended by classmates/friends	47.6
Met with before	45.0	Met with before	47.6
Recommended by classmates/friends	45.0	Recommended by the teacher	35.7
The book was on best seller list	40.0	The book was on best seller list	26.2

4.2.9   Provision of reading material

The majority of subjects across all four comparison groups indicated purchasing books as the most frequent manner in which they obtained books, followed by borrowing from friends, from university and public libraries, and obtaining as a gift (see Figure 4.6).
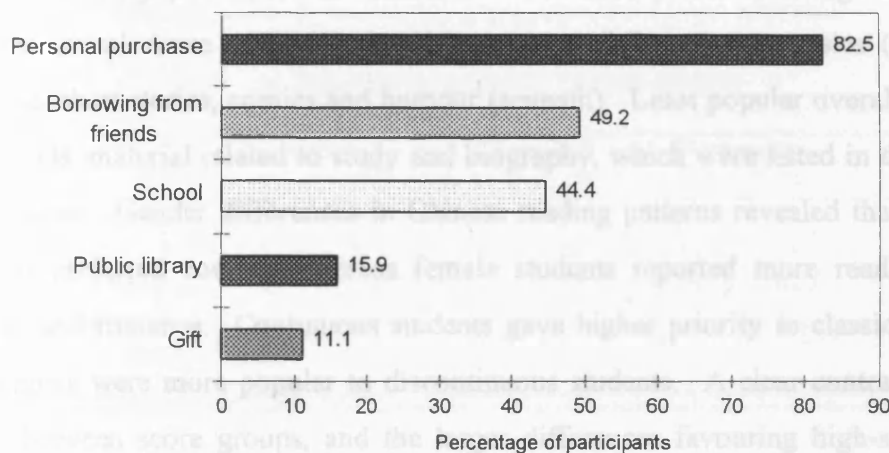
Figure 4.6   Sources of reading material read throughout study

Table 4.32 shows that relatively more female (87.5%) and high-scoring (86.7%) students indicated purchasing books most often when compared to their counterparts. It appears that across all groups, male and low-scoring students indicated borrowing books from friends (Male: 61.5%; Low-score: 60.0%) and school library (Male: 53.8%; Low-score: 53.3%) more often. The least popular source was "gift", ranging from 9.4% to 15.4% of students in each group indicated the manner of obtaining reading material.

Table 4.32   Percentage of responses regarding the provision of reading material

Source	Gender		Continuity		Score		University	
	M	F	C	D	H	L	A	B
Personal purchase	61.5	**87.5**	84.6	81.3	**86.7**	73.3	85.7	81.0
Borrowing from friends	**61.5**	45.8	50.0	46.9	46.7	**60.0**	47.6	50.0
School library	**53.8**	43.8	46.2	43.8	40.0	**53.3**	38.1	47.6
Public library	7.7	18.1	26.9	9.4	20.0	13.3	9.5	19.0
Gift	15.4	10.4	15.4	9.4	13.3	13.3	9.5	11.9

4.2.10   Chinese reading habits and attitudes

Liking reading in Chinese.   97.7% of the surveyed students gave positive answers to this question, among whom 47.7% indicated their strong agreement. Only 2 students "slightly disagree" with the question.

Chinese reading preference.   Table 4.33 presents the percentage of reported reading preference in Chinese.   The most preferred categories for students overall were newspapers and magazines, followed by classics (third), romance, short stories, comics and humour (seventh).   Least popular overall were war novels, material related to study and biography, which were listed in the last three places.   Gender differences in Chinese reading patterns revealed that male students preferred comics, whereas female students reported more reading of classics and romance.   Continuous students gave higher priority to classics, and newspapers were more popular to discontinuous students.   A clear contrast was found between score groups, and the larger differences favouring high-scoring students were romance and short stories.   University A students reported greater reading of classics than University B students.

Table 4.33 Percentage of reading preference in Chinese

	Overall	Gender		Continuity		Score		University	
		M	F	C	D	H	L	A	B
Newspapers	50.0	57.1	47.7	56.2	45.8	73.3	50.0	41.7	56.0
Magazines	50.0	57.1	47.7	37.5	52.1	46.7	57.1	47.2	52.0
Comics	40.7	76.2	29.2	40.6	45.8	46.7	28.6	30.6	48.0
Classics	45.3	14.3	55.4	53.1	39.6	40.0	35.7	61.1	34.0
Romance	43.0	19.0	50.8	46.9	37.5	26.7	57.1	33.3	50.0
Short stories	43.0	33.3	46.2	46.9	41.7	33.3	71.4	41.7	44.0

Frequency of Chinese reading. The majority of the subjects reported reading Chinese newspapers once or more than once a day. The average mean value for book reading was 3.05, indicating a value close to once or twice a week. However, one-fifth of the subjects reported reading books for more than once a day. Students reported reading magazines (M = 3.64) and comic books (M = 4.13) once or twice a month on average. Table 4.34 presents the frequency and percentage of the four kinds of Chinese reading reported by the students.

Table 4.34 Reported frequency of Chinese reading

	Books		Comics		Newspapers		Magazines	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
More than once a day	17	20.0	1	1.2	13	15.1	2	2.3
Once a day	5	5.9	3	3.5	47	54.7	2	2.3
Once or twice a week	32	37.6	22	25.6	23	26.7	33	38.4
Once or twice a month	19	22.4	23	26.7	1	1.2	38	44.2
Less than once a month	12	14.1	32	37.2	1	1.2	10	11.6
Never	0	0	5	5.8	0	0	1	1.2

n = 86

4.2.11 Perceptions about free voluntary reading program and its effect

1. (a) Which part of the free reading program did you enjoy most? Why did you like it best?
   (b) And which part did you not like? Why did you think so?

When asked which parts of the free voluntary reading program they enjoyed and disliked most, 87.5% of the students who answered the question indicated free reading as the most favourite part, and 57.1% of the responded students indicated that keeping a journal was the main dislike. Nevertheless, 15 students did not answer the first question and 35 did not answer the second one. It is assumed that they either did not have any like or dislike, or did not want to answer these questions, for if they checked one answer, they had to explain their reason for choosing that answer (see Section 3.2.2.1).

2. *Will you continue free reading after the program?*

58.7% of the students gave positive answers, 39.7% gave negative answers, and 1.6% indicated that they did not know.

3. *Did you recommend reading material to your classmates? If so, have your classmates started reading the material you recommended?*

46% (n = 29) of the students recommended books to their classmates, while 50.8% (n = 32) indicated that they did not. 2 students did not respond this question. Among the 29 students, 17 confirmed that their classmates read the material they recommended.

4. *Has the free reading program made any difference to your reading in Chinese?*

10.3% of the responded students indicated that they read less in Chinese. Slightly over half of the respondents indicated that it did not make any difference. Only 1.7% of the respondents indicated that they read more in Chinese. 34.5% of the respondents chose the option, "I don't know".

4.2.12 Teacher questionnaire

Teachers were asked to describe their reading instruction during the project covering how often they check students' journals, administer reinforcement activities, and whether they had difficulties conducting these activities. If so, what difficulties did they have? A further question was designed to investigate how they encouraged their students to read more. The space provided for suggestions and comments was to elicit their opinions toward the program and their experience of administering the programme. The information gathered from the teacher's questionnaire was to detect the problems experienced from the teacher's viewpoint, and help to upgrade the program in order to meet the needs and abilities of students as well as practical classroom teaching.

The results show that the teachers checked students' journals once a month for about 5 - 10 minutes. Mini-discussions were administered twice a week for about 15 to 20 minutes in the classes at University B. It became a routine activity and the students were interested in participation. One book presentation was arranged during the semester, but it was not successful, partly through lack of motivation, and partly because of the heavy workload imposed on students so that they did not have time to read anything but textbooks. By contrast, the teacher at University A never administered either mini-discussions or book presentations because of a tight schedule. She stated that there were too many national holidays during the semester. Accordingly, it was difficult to cover all the lesson plans in the remaining class meetings, let alone administer extra mini-discussions and book presentations. She emphasised that the requirements for passing the course had resulted in a great workload on the students. Moreover, all of the textbooks and teaching material were written in English, which created more difficulties for students to meet the requirements. In her comments, she mentioned that the class was chosen as she thought the class was at the school of arts and would have been more keen to read than the other class she was teaching at the medical school, but to her great disappointment they turned out to be less motivated and less conscientious in learning. The class, she said, was the least studious one in comparison with all the other classes she had ever taught.

The strategies utilised to encourage reading were "discussing books or authors with students", "grouping students and enabling them to undertake common tasks", and "encouraging students to talk about their reading matter and share their reactions with one another.

4.3 Pre-test & post-test

The results of the grammar proficiency test are illustrated in the following tables and figures. The overall results are reported first. Further analyses are then undertaken to compare the differences of pre-test and post-test results by gender, continuity, score and university. Finally, a summary of all the results is presented.

4.3.1.1 All students

Although the results of the post-test were better than the pre-test, a t-test comparison of the mean scores of all students in the study on the pre- and post-tests showed that there were no significant differences between the two (see Table 4.35).

Table 4.35 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of all students

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	61.8	15.1	1.30	58	0.199
Post-test	64.0	14.3			

Subsequent comparison of the mean scores for each part revealed no differences which were significant; however, the difference on the first part was marginal (see Table 4.36; p = .059).

Table 4.36 Analysis of t-test for the differences of test parts in pre-test and post-test of all students

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	62.8	15.9	1.92	58	0.059†
Post-test	65.3	16.8			

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	47.7	18.1	0.64	58	0.522
Post-test	48.8	19.2			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	75.1	25.6	0.59	58	0.556
Post-test	77.1	24.8			

† Marginally significant difference at .05 level

4.3.1.2   Gender comparison

Female students.   Table 4.37 presents the means, standard deviations and t-tests of female students between pre- and post-tests. There were no significant differences with regard to whole tests and their parts.

Table 4.37 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of female students

(Female)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	63.2	14.9	0.99	45	0.328
Post-test	64.9	14.9			

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	64.3	15.7	1.49	45	0.144
Post-test	66.6	16.5			

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	48.1	18.9	0.95	45	0.349
Post-test	49.9	19.2			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	77.1	26.2	0.54	45	0.593
Post-test	79.1	26.0			

Male students.   Table 4.38 presents the means, standard deviations and t-test results of male students between pre- and post-tests. Although the mean gain made by male students was 6.1, matched t-test comparisons of the pre- and post-test means reveals no statistically significant differences.

Table 4.38 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of male students

(Male)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	56.8	15.7	1.54	11	0.151
Post-test	62.9	8.5			

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	58.1	16.5	1.47	11	0.171
Post-test	62.4	17.9			

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	47.2	15.8	0.52	11	0.615
Post-test	48.7	15.0			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	66.5	23.4	0.46	11	0.655
Post-test	70.9	20.2			

Female vs. male students. Figure 4.7 reveals that female students outperformed male students on both pre- and post-tests. However, it is noteworthy that male students made greater gains on the grammar test than did female students. As a result, their differences gradually narrowed from 6.4 to 2.
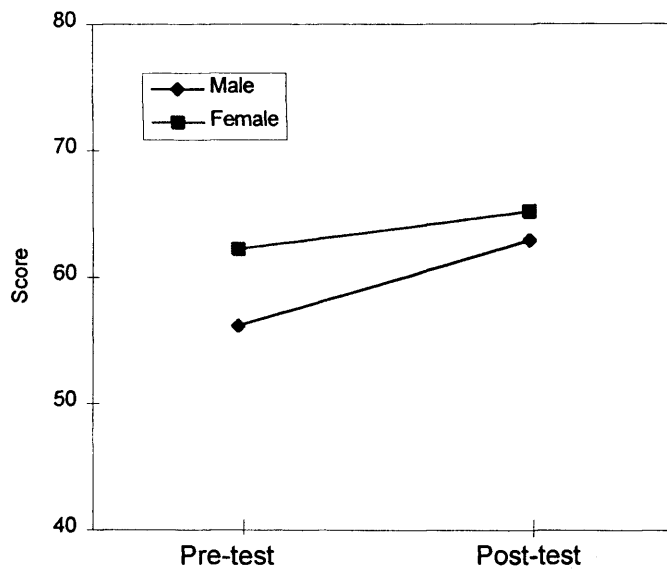
Figure 4.7 Pre-test and post-test comparisons on gender groups

4.3.1.3   _Continuity comparison_

Continuous students.   From the results provided in Table 4.39, it clearly emerges that continuous students improve substantially between pre- and post-tests. This was to be expected. A statistically significant difference was found on part 1 of the tests ($p < .001$).

Table 4.39 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of continuous students

(Continuous)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	64.9	15.8	1.69	23	0.105
Post-test	69.3	12.6			

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	64.3	16.1	5.34	23	< 0.001
Post-test	73.2	16.6			***

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	49.1	21.0	1.14	23	0.267
Post-test	52.1	20.3			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	81.3	25.6	0.67	23	0.510
Post-test	85.1	28.0			

*** Significant difference at .001 level

Discontinuous students.   Mean   scores,   and   standard   deviations   for discontinuous students in pre- and post-tests are presented in Table 4.40. A t-test analysis on pre- and post-test results determined that there were no significant differences between the whole tests and their parts. The mean scores of the first part dropped from 61.8 to 59.2. Apart from this, the mean scores of the other parts in the post-test were slightly higher than those in the pre-test, but the differences were small.

Table 4.40 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of discontinuous students

(Discontinuous)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	58.8	14.0	0.76	30	0.451
Post-test	60.4	13.6			

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	61.8	15.0	1.61	30	0.118
Post-test	59.2	13.0			

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	45.8	15.1	0.96	30	0.345
Post-test	47.9	15.8			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	69.0	25.5	0.39	30	0.697
Post-test	71.0	22.2			

Continuous vs. discontinuous students. Continuous students had higher mean test scores (pre-test: M = 64.9; post-test: M = 69.3) as compared with discontinuous students (pre-test: M = 58.8; post-test: M = 60.4). The mean gain made by continuous students (Gain score mean = 4.4) appears to be much larger than that made by discontinuous students (Gain score mean = 1.6). There was a significant difference with post-test (t = 2.26, p < .05). Figure 4.8 illustrates the wide gap between continuous and discontinuous students.
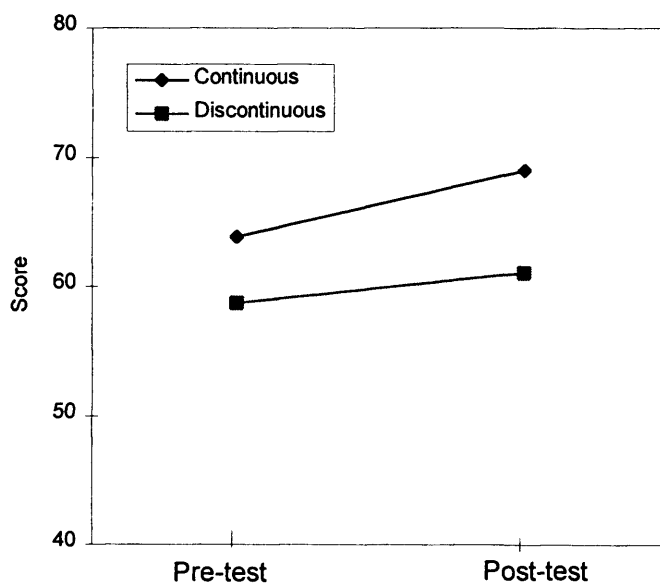
Figure 4.8 Pre-test and post-test comparisons on continuity groups

4.3.1.4 Score comparison

High-scoring students. The means and standard deviation for high-scoring students between pre- and post-test and each part are presented in Table 4.41. The high-scoring students obtained scores consistently higher on post-test than pre-test. However, no contrasts were statistically significant.

Table 4.41 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of high-scoring students

(High-score)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	75.3	9.5	1.70	14	0.111
Post-test	78.8	6.0			

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	73.7	13.0	1.87	14	0.083
Post-test	79.6	14.6			

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	57.0	17.2	1.16	14	0.264
Post-test	60.1	14.9			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	85.6	12.6	1.51	14	0.154
Post-test	90.8	7.4			

Low-scoring students.   There were no significant differences between pre-test and post-test performance; however, the mean differences of the whole test (t = 2.06, p = .059) and the first part (t = 2.21, p = .053) were marginal at the .05 level (see Table 4.42).

Table 4.42 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of low-scoring students

(Low-score)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	43.6	5.1	2.06	14	0.059†
Post-test	47.3	8.8			

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	45.8	10.7	2.21	14	0.053†
Post-test	52.8	11.4			

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	36.3	16.4	1.56	14	0.141
Post-test	40.2	16.8			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	49.5	12.9	1.91	14	0.076
Post-test	55.9	18.0			

† Marginally significant difference at .05 level

High-scoring vs. low-scoring students. Both high-scoring and low-scoring students made similar gains on post-test as compared to pre-test scores. Therefore, the gap between high-scoring and low-scoring students was still large though slight narrower: the differences in means were 31.7 on pre-test and 31.5 on post-test (see Figure 4.9).
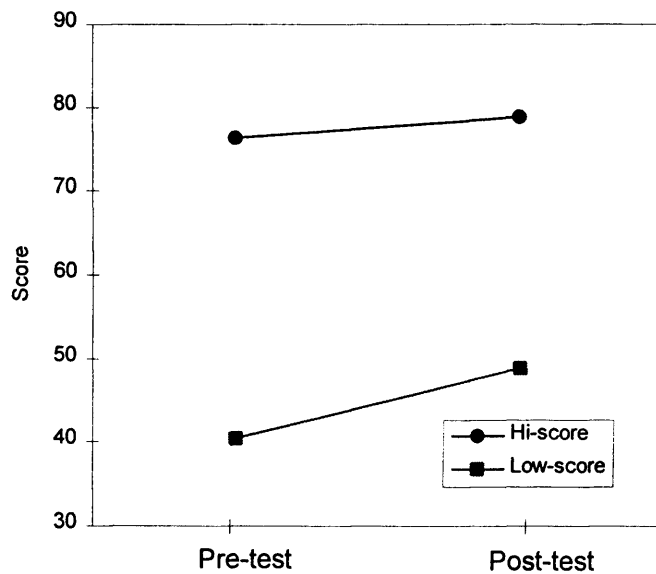
Figure 4.9 Pre-test and post-test comparisons on score groups

4.3.1.5   University comparison

University A students.   Despite a slightly increased performance on the second part of the grammar test (difference in mean scores = +0.6), Table 4.43 reveals that the mean scores of the other parts reduced on the post-test as compared to pre-test (difference in mean scores = -3.2 & -7.8). However, no significant differences were found with respect to the test and its sub-parts.

Table 4.43 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of students at University A

(University A)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	71.0	11.7	1.46	17	0.163
Post-test	68.7	11.3			

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	66.3	17.0	1.55	17	0.139
Post-test	69.5	18.6			

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	58.0	17.2	0.21	17	0.837
Post-test	58.6	16.3			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	87.5	14.8	1.78	17	0.092
Post-test	79.7	18.7			

University B students. As shown in Table 4.44, there was significant difference between pre-test and post-test on University B students (t = 2.18, p < .05). No other contrasts were statistically significant.

Table 4.44 Analysis of t-test for pre-test and post-test differences of students at University B

(University B)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	57.8	14.7	2.18	40	0.035
Post-test	62.4	15.2			*

(Part 1)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	61.2	15.4	1.35	40	0.184
Post-test	63.5	15.8			

(Part 2)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	43.2	16.8	0.62	40	0.538
Post-test	44.6	19.0			

(Part 3)

T - test	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	69.6	27.5	1.75	40	0.088
Post-test	76.9	27.4			

* Significant difference at .05 level

University A vs. University B students.   The magnitude and direction of the differences between university groups are clearly shown in Figure 4.10.   It is noteworthy that University B students made substantial improvement from 57.8 to 62.4. On the contrary, the mean scores of University A students decreased from 71 to 67.7. Independent t-test comparisons of the pre- and post-test means for the university comparative groups revealed that there were no significant differences between students at these two universities. Even though the University B students made greater gains, University A students still outperformed University B students.
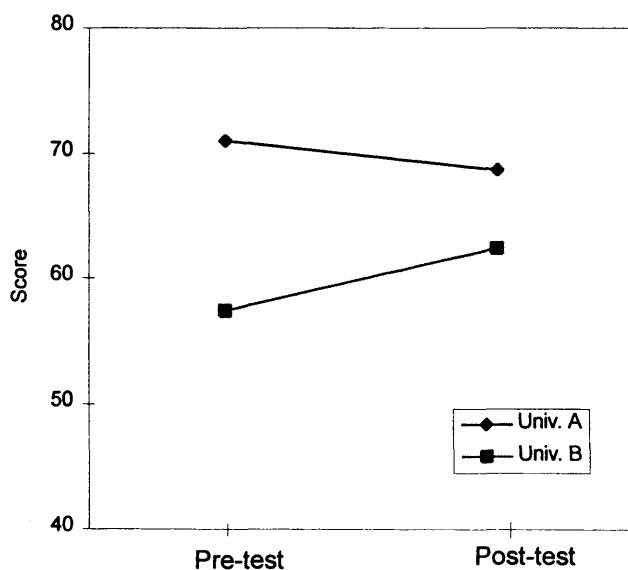
Figure 4.10 Pre-test and post-test comparisons on university groups

4.3.1.6   Test comparisons between all comparative groups

Table 4.45 presents the differences in means scores for pre-test and post-test between all comparative groups. Apart from the scoring of comparative groups, university groups were significantly different from each other on the pre-test as revealed by independent t-test (t = 2.65, p < .05). Significant differences also existed between continuous and discontinuous students on post-test (t = 2.26, p < .05).

Table 4.45 Comparisons of differences in mean scores for pre-test and post-test by groups

T - test		Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test	_Male_	56.8	14.3	1.64	80	0.105
	Female	63.2	14.3			
	Continuous	64.9	14.7	1.54	74	0.128
	Discontinuous	58.8	13.7			
	High-score	75.3	5.5	20.53	28	< 0.001
	Low-score	43.6	4.8			***
	University A	71.0	13.6	2.65	81	0.010
	University B	58.7	13.9			*
Post-test	_Male_	62.9	8.2	0.73	36	0.471
	Female	64.9	14.9			
	Continuous	69.3	12.4	2.26	55	0.028
	Discontinuous	60.4	13.8			*
	High-score	78.8	11.9	6.18	28	< 0.001
	Low-score	47.3	9.6			***
	University A	68.7	11.6	1.80	61	0.077
	University B	62.4	15.0			

* Significant difference at .05 level
*** Significant difference at .001 level

Subsequent analysis on each part of the grammar test are presented in the following tables. Table 4.46 shows that there was significant difference at .01 level between continuous and discontinuous students on the first part of post-test.

Table 4.46 Comparisons of differences in mean scores for part 1 of pre-test and post-test by groups

T - test		Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test (Part I)	_Male_	58.1	16.4	1.53	81	0.130
	Female	64.3	15.2			
	Continuous	64.3	15.8	1.26	75	0.212
	Discontinuous	60.8	14.2			
	High-score	73.7	10.2	7.81	28	0.000
	Low-score	48.8	12.1			***
	University A	66.3	15.7	1.23	82	0.222
	University B	61.2	15.4			
Post-test (Part I)	_Male_	62.4	17.5	0.72	58	0.474
	Female	66.6	17.0			
	Continuous	73.2	16.2	3.10	55	0.003
	Discontinuous	59.2	14.7			**
	High-score	79.6	12.9	7.56	28	0.000
	Low-score	52.8	9.9			***
	University A	69.5	18.7	1.72	61	0.091
	University B	63.5	15.9			

** Significant difference at .01 level
*** Significant difference at .001 level

Table 4.47 reveals that there was a wide variation between University A and University B students on the second part of pre-test ($p < .05$) and post-test ($p < .01$).

Table 4.47 Comparisons of differences in mean scores for part 2 of pre-test and post-test by groups

T - test		Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test (Part II)	*Male*	47.2	16.1	0.08	81	0.939
	Female	48.1	17.8			
	Continuous	49.1	19.8	0.77	75	0.444
	Discontinuous	45.8	15.4			
	High-score	57.0	14.6	5.01	28	0.000 ***
	Low-score	36.3	17.4			
	University A	58.0	18.2	2.34	82	0.022 **
	University B	43.2	15.8			
Post-test (Part II)	*Male*	48.7	14.4	0.24	58	0.811
	Female	49.9	19.0			
	Continuous	52.1	20.0	0.86	55	0.396
	Discontinuous	47.8	15.5			
	High-score	60.1	14.9	4.00	28	0.000 ***
	Low-score	40.2	17.9			
	University A	58.6	16.1	3.05	61	0.003 **
	University B	44.6	18.8			

** Significant difference at .01 level
*** Significant difference at .001 level

As shown in Table 4.48, there were no significant differences in the third part between all the comparative groups with the exception of score groups. A marginal significant was found between university groups (t = 1.98, p = .051).

Table 4.48 Comparisons of differences in mean scores for part 3 of pre-test and post-test by groups

T - test		Mean	S.D.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 Tail Prob.
Pre-test (Part III)	_Male_	66.5	20.3	1.86	80	0.066
	Female	77.1	25.4			
	Continuous	81.3	24.9	1.36	74	0.179
	Discontinuous	69.0	24.8			
	High-score	85.0	12.9	9.46	28	0.000
	Low-score	49.5	17.5			***
	University A	87.5	21.1	1.98	81	0.051
	University B	69.6	26.0			
Post-test (Part III)	_Male_	70.1	19.6	1.17	58	0.247
	Female	79.1	25.7			
	Continuous	85.1	27.9	1.95	55	0.56
	Discontinuous	70.0	21.9			
	High-score	82.8	20.9	2.31	28	0.028
	Low-score	55.9	25.0			**
	University A	79.7	19.8	0.10	61	0.923
	University B	76.9	27.1			

** Significant difference at .01 level
*** Significant difference at .001 level

4.3.1.7   Summary

Figure 4.11 illustrates the overall results of pre-test and post-test. Although the mean scores of the post-test were better than those of the pre-test, the differences are small. The results also indicate that word-deleting questions in the second part seemed to be more difficult for the university students to answer than the multiple-choice format used in the other parts.
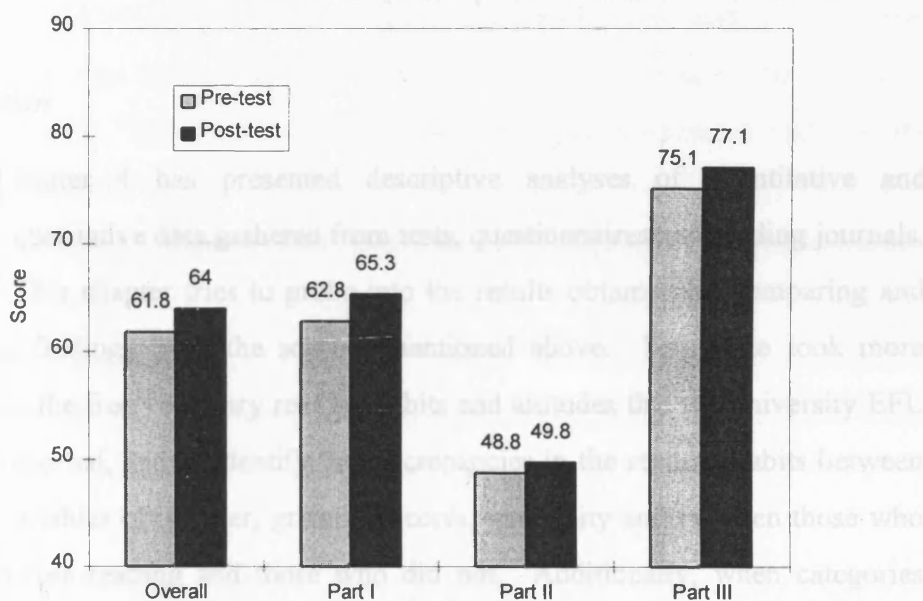
Figure 4.11 Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores

Table 4.49   summarises the paired t-test results between pre-test and post-test scores. There were significant differences between the test results for University B students in the whole test, and on continuous students in the first part. A wide variation in performance was found in the first part for overall students, and for low-scoring student in the first part and overall test scores. No other contrast was statistically significant.

5.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

> Reading is like an infectious disease: it is caught not taught. And you can't catch it from someone who hasn't got it himself.
>
> ....*Christine Nuttall (1996: 229)*
>
> Give someone a fish and you feed them for a day, teach someone how to fish and you feed them for a lifetime.
>
> ....*Paraphrased from an Ancient Chinese Proverb*

Introduction

Chapter 4 has presented descriptive analyses of quantitative and qualitative data gathered from tests, questionnaires and reading journals. This chapter tries to probe into the results obtained by comparing and discussing findings from the sources mentioned above. This is to look more deeply into the free voluntary reading habits and attitudes that the university EFL students reported, and to identify the discrepancies in the reading habits between the four variables of: gender, grammar scores, university and between those who continued free reading and those who did not. Additionally, when categories constructed from the analysis of data describe what was, or was not, happening in free voluntary reading events in the university students are combined with other research, the results of this study may help educators, especially those in Taiwan, to begin to understand the complexities of developing students' reading habits and the necessity to promote free reading.

There are numerous empirical studies in free voluntary reading activity[43], in particular related to reading in L1. This type of reading is known by various

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[43] Such as Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1988); Applebee (1978); Foertsch (1992); Stanovich and West (1989); Stanovich (1986); West, Stanovich, and Mitchell (1993); etc. See Chapter 2 for more details.

names: SSR (sustained silent reading), self-selected reading, RR (recreational reading), DIRT (daily independent reading time), leisure reading, extensive reading, and book flood programmes. In comparison, there are comparatively few empirical studies in L2 free voluntary reading studies include: Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Janopoulos, 1986; Mason, 1987; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Robb & Susser, 1989; Kanatani *et al.*, 1994; Masuhara, *et al*, 1996; Gradman and Hanania, 1991; Pilgreen and Krashen, 1993; Cho and Krashen, 1994; Huang, 1996; and Lee, 1996.

As well as the problem of there being comparatively few studies in L2 free reading, it is often debated whether findings from these studies can be applied to other situations. Thus, an understanding of both the features of text and the learner is essential to gain insights into the practice of free voluntary reading at university level on a regional basis. Previous work applicable to the current study was utilised as one way to probe external validity. An assessment of differences between comparative groups in the study, moreover, provides valuable information for the improvement of free reading programmes, and raises some questions and issues which warrant further discussion.

5.1 Overall patterns of free voluntary reading

This section tries to describe the patterns of free voluntary reading obtained in the study from two aspects: (1) the learner and (2) text. In respect of the learner, the focus is to probe into two main expressed causes of hindrance of reading continuously. These are 'do not have time to read' and 'do not know what to read'. As to the text, the main concern is to investigate the differences between L1 and L2 reading that the students reported in book selection and reading frequency, and then to discuss potential reasons for the difference. The purpose of this section is to discuss their attitudes as well as the behaviour reflected by these attitudes. For example, perceptions of free reading may influence viewpoints about reading purpose, and thus may reflect on the way students select

books for free reading. Likewise, the nature of the text selected might influence their reading purpose and reading attitudes.

5.1.1   *Time for reading*

Though the percentages of positive responses dropped from 90.1% to 77.8%, the majority of respondents indicated that they had time to read. It was also noted that when asked why they stopped reading for enjoyment, over half of the respondents stated that they did not have time to read, the major reading difficulty amongst the twelve options provided. The findings appeared contradictory, but were not inexplicable. They perceived they had time to read, and at the beginning, most of them probably read for a couple of days or much longer. Presumably because they lost their interest in reading, or because their attention shifted to other interesting activities, they did not have time for free reading at the end. Notes from the reading journals revealed that free reading was given lower priority in the winter vacation, as a number of students stopped reading after Chinese New Year. The point was made explicitly several times in the notes of students' reading journals:

> "No reading....Because now it's Chinese New Year!"

> "Today is Chinese New Year, so I don't read anything. I have a wonderful vocation [vacation], and I don't read in my vocation [vacation]. So..., I'm sorry.

Inspection of the results of questions about reading preference and reading purpose as well as notes in reading journals showed that most students did not experience the joy of having the inability to put books down, which in turn resulted in their lack of enthusiasm in free reading. Rather than reading for pleasure, a number of the students indicated that they read for study. When asked what they liked to read during the free reading programme, 43.8% of the respondents reported they liked to read material related to study. Additionally,

when asked what their reading purposes were, 64.8% and 45.9% of the responses in Q1 and Q2 respectively went to intellectual / academic pursuits (e.g. for study, for course requirements), whilst merely 15.1% of the responses in Q1 and 30.6% in Q2 went to the purpose of leisure (e.g. for pleasure, to kill time). The record in reading journals also showed that many kept notes of material related to study. Even though some seemed to read books of their interest, they read too little to trigger the desire to devour a book in a short time[44]. As a result, most of the students did not finish one book: Some kept changing from one book to another[45]; and others read at a slow pace[46] move to end of sentence which inevitably hindered their comprehension and motivation to read continuously. For those who did not maintain their journal, it was reasonable to assume that the majority of them did not do much free reading. Here are some quotations from open-ended questions and written comments, which might supplement the assumption of little reading.

"Laziness"

"I do not take outside reading seriously."

"I am lacking in perseverance, so sometimes I do not do outside reading."

"Sometimes, I read so little that I do not know what to record."

"If the teacher had assigned some readings for our class to read, I might not have quit reading due to laziness."

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[44] The average range of pages read for overall students in the 4-month period was 1.5 - 9.8 pages each time. Assimilated students read for 3.3 - 40.7 pages on average; slow readers read for 1.2 - 8.2 pages, and recalcitrant readers read for 1.5 - 5.2 pages.

[45] As shown in the records of reading journals, a student read up to 11 books in 24 days, such as 10 pages of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 4 pages of Little Women, and 1 page of Aesop's Fables (The Bear and the Two Travellers).

[46] Two students spent three days reading one page of a grammar book and an easy text, The Turnip. One student spent 2 hours and 10 minutes reading 3 pages of Anne of Green Gables.

Written comments from teachers' questionnaires as well as personal conversation with the teachers verified that free reading was not expected to be a source of pleasure or an important means of learning. On the contrary, it was viewed as an extra work. They stated that the course requirements were comparatively higher than the level of the majority of the students[47], so it imposed great demands on the students to spend much of their time studying textbooks. In addition, they also mentioned that it was not impossible to read for pleasure and keep journals if the students had not been lazy, but the relaxing spirit of the university prevented them from asking the students to do anything more. Both teachers and students are under considerable pressure. Comments made by the teachers could not be more clear:

> "These students are very busy with their majors. Many of them do not have enough time to do this extra work, or rather they are lazy."

> "Not many of them would read books other than textbooks. Their course load is too heavy."

> "...Maybe they are really very busy. The only two journals I got back are from very good students. The others told me they did not write much..."

To summarise, partly due to heavy workload and partly due to laziness, the university students did not have time to read for pleasure. However, the problem is not that they did not have time to do free reading, but that they did not know, apparently, what pleasure reading really could be. When reading was viewed as studying, it would always be given lower priority than other leisure activities in their free time.

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[47] The teachers admitted that the course itself was challenging. What added more difficulties for students was that they needed to spend more time reading and coping with English academic reading material. More details are shown in Section 4.1.12.

5.1.2   *Locating appropriate reading material*

Over three-quarters of the students surveyed reported that they were able to find books they liked to read. However, when asked why they did not continue English reading, "don't know what to read" was ranked second in Q1 and third in Q2 on the list of 12 reasons hindering continuous reading[48]. It was difficult to interpret what was meant by those who provided these puzzling answers. However, judging from the many comments made, students did have problems in selecting books. Common points mentioned were as follows:

> "Please recommend good English reading material."

> "I hope the teacher can recommend more good books for us; otherwise, I don't know what book is worth buying."

> "Please assign a few good English books for us to read."

> "I always feel that my English ability is regressing, but I do not know what I should read to improve it."

The evidence of questionnaire surveys suggested that students did not have a dislike of English reading. A substantial number of the students in Q1 and Q2 showed that they liked free reading, and 85.7% of the respondents indicated they enjoyed free reading the most. More clues came from the written answers made by the respondents completing the open-ended question in regard to why they liked free reading.

> "I enjoy free reading a lot because it allows me to read whatever I want without being restricted or controlled. Moreover, I can read as much or as little as I wish."

> "There is no pressure and restriction."

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[48] The main reason was "do not have time".

"I am able to read books of my interest and change to the others at
my liberty"

"I learn more by reading books I like."

"It's free. No burden. I like to read actively."

"English reading activity becomes my activity, which not only
enhances my interest but makes me learn more."

It could be concluded that little or non-reading was more a result of their inability
to find the right books than a consequence of their avoidance in doing English
reading. In addition, free reading requires students to be involved in active
reading, that is, reading for the purpose of reading. However, the call for reading
assignments revealed a picture of virtually passive models of learning. Some
students apparently looked forward to direct instruction from the teacher. The
findings in Ruddock and Hopkins' (1984) research may give an explanation to the
situation.

"It is not easy to develop confidence in one's powers after a long
and unbroken period of socialisation towards dependence on the
teacher, and the spectre of the examination inevitably forces
students back on to accepting the teachers' questions (rather than
their own) as guides to the proper routes of enquiry, and the
teachers' statements as a proper representation of meaning." (p.
25)

A student illustrated the point very clearly in her comments, "To passive Chinese
students, it is unlikely to find books of their interest and read, unless one shows
great interest in reading, or free reading is part of the course requirements.
Besides, good English books and magazines are not abundant. It requires effort to
locate them. Until then it is possible to spend time and spare energy for free
reading."

5.1.3 Metacognitive beliefs of being a good reader

Modest but positive correlations have been reported between reading and some encouraging factors, such as print-rich environment (Morrow, 1983; Neuman, 1986; Greaney & Hegarty, 1987), comfort and quiet reading environment (Morrow, 1983; Greaney & Hegarty, 1987), discussing stories (Morrow & Weinstein, 1982, 1986), vocabulary (Greaney, 1980; Wells, 1985; Nagy, Herman and Anderson, 1985; Greaney and Hegarty, 1987; Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, 1988; West, Stanovich and Mitchell, 1993; Cho and Krashen, 1994; Lee, 1996), attitude (Smith, 1990a; Elley, 1994), and writing (Applebee, 1978; Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, 1988; Janopoulos, 1986; Lee, 1996).

In addition, research studies show that correlations are found between reading achievement and statements of metacognitive beliefs. The higher achieving students tended to give priority to liking reading, concentrating well, and using their imagination; whereas the low scores gave more weight to doing lots of reading homework, being told how to do it, and having lots of time available for reading (Elley, 1994). Though the correlations were not substantial as there were many exceptions to these trends, as claimed by Elley, it was anticipated that these beliefs as well as those encouraging factors mentioned above would somehow provide an indirect indicator of the university students' reading performance.

Some contradictions were found between this present study and previous research studies. Table 5.1 lists the positive / negative relationships between reading and the characteristics of metacognitive statements found in previous studies.

Table 5.1 Relationships of characteristics of metacognitive beliefs and reading in previous studies

Metacognitive beliefs	Characteristics	Previous studies	
		Relationship with reading	Some research studies
Having lots of time for reading	amount of time	-	Elley, 1994
Noting down good sentences	writing	- +	Foertsch, 1992 Langer and Applebee, 1987
Doing much reading for homework		-	Elley, 1994
Having many good books available	print-rich environment	+	Morrow, 1983; Neuman, 1986
Liking reading	attitude	+	Elley, 1994
Concentrating well		+	Elley, 1994
Learning the meaning of lots of words	vocabulary	+	Cho and Krashen, 1994
Having attempts at difficult articles	drill	- +	Elley, 1994 Elley, 1994
Having a lively imagination		+	Elley, 1994
Talking with someone about books being read	discussing stories	+	Morrow & Weinstein, 1982, 1986
Reading a lot of books	quantity	+	Krashen, 1993b
Selectively reading books of interests		+	Cho & Krashen, 1994
Reading regularly	frequency	+	Fielding and Anderson, 1987; Elley, 1991

Having a lively imagination, having many good books available, talking with someone about something you read, and selectively reading books of interest were given less weight in this study, though previous studies show that there was a positive relationship between these beliefs and reading. On the other hand, having lots of time for reading and reading regularly were given relatively more priority by the students as important ways of being a good reader. It is worthy of note that the students saw relatively little value in 'having many good books available' and 'reading selectively books of one's interest only'. Merely five students gave emphasis to the strategy of having a print-rich environment, and no one believed that reading interesting reading material was a source of their strength in reading, which happens to be the essence of free reading. Instead, most (53.5%) seemed to support the view that one improved one's reading by spending much time reading.

The results imply that the students had no idea about the advantages of free reading, and that they perhaps had never had the experience of reading for its own sake, as drill or repetitive strategies such as 'having attempts at difficult articles', 'doing much reading for homework', 'having lots of written exercises', and 'reading out loud while reading' were valued even higher than interesting reading. In other words, the majority of students perceived practice and more practice, as a better means to be a good reader than reading in a natural way. This was confirmed by the finding that a substantial percentage of students indicated that they read for study. Of course, there may be other explanations for such a view, and this deserves further investigation.

5.1.4   Reading choices in Chinese and English free reading

Table 5.2 summaries the preferences for reading English material before and after the free reading programme as well as reading preferences in Chinese, arranged in order of popularity for all students on Q1.

Table 5.2 Percentages of cases on reading preferences in English and Chinese

	English		Chinese
	Q1	Q2	
Short stories	62.4	54.8	43.0
Magazines	56.5	46.8	50.0
Humour	48.2	33.9	39.5
Classics	44.7	29.0	45.3
Comics	42.4	46.8	40.7
Newspapers	35.3	33.9	50.0
Material related to study	29.4	43.5	14.0
Film & TV tie-ins	25.9	22.6	24.4
Romance	24.7	19.4	43.0
Adventure / Thriller	18.8	14.5	25.6
Mystery/Horror/Ghost	15.3	11.3	22.1
Crime/Detection	12.9	8.1	20.9
Biographies	9.4	12.9	16.3
Science Fiction	5.9	3.2	23.3
War	3.5	3.2	7.0

As described in Section 4.1.6, the favourite categories in English reading were short stories, magazines and comics. Short stories and magazines were ranked first and second on both questionnaires. Reading of comics was given higher priority in the fifth and second ranks on Q1 and Q2 respectively. The preferred category of books was short stories, followed by humour. This was in agreement with Elley's findings (1994) that books of humour were the most popular book reading. However, there was some contradiction: Classics were ranked in one of the last three places in most countries in the 1994 research, but showed relatively high preference in the study. For these university students, the least preferable were books of war and science fiction.

Inspection of reading preferences in English and Chinese revealed that there was wide variation in five categories: Short stories and material related to study were found to be in favour for English reading, whereas newspaper, romance and science fiction were preferred for Chinese reading.

It was noted that the largest difference lay in reading material related to study, which was ranked the last but one in Chinese reading but was placed considerably higher in English reading (ranking = 4 in Q2). The indication is that although academic reading might be beneficial for intellectual growth, it might not be very enjoyable to produce "flow", a concept developed by Csikszentmihalyi (1991) about a state one reaches when one is deeply but effortlessly involved in an activity. In other words, academic reading might not be able to produce sufficient real enjoyment that can make oneself immersed in the reading and find great pleasure in it. And this perhaps could account for the discrepancy between Chinese and English academic reading: For these university students, textbooks either in Chinese or English languages were definitely to be read more for study than for pleasure. With regard to English reading, the high percentage of students indicating they preferred academic reading suggested that their English proficiency might not allow them to read as voraciously as they did in Chinese reading. Such linguistic difficulties, in turn, directed any English reading to English learning, and material related to study was the best reading source to improve their language proficiency. Examining results of questions about reading purposes and reading difficulties verified the assumption.

Nine reading purposes were described in the survey, which could be put into four categories: (1) for intellectual and/or academic pursuits (for study, course requirements, exams and increasing knowledge), (2) for functional reasons (for information and to solve a problem), (3) for leisure (for pleasure, and to kill time), or (4) for occupational requirements (for getting a job). Subjects were asked to select no more than three purposes in accordance with their typical reading habits. Table 5.3 reveals that the most frequently mentioned purpose was

still for intellectual / academic pursuits, though the percentage declined slightly after the programme. Students' perception of reading for learning was further reinforced by their responses to the question 'why don't you read English material for enjoyment in your free time?'. Vocabulary difficulty was one of the major reasons that prevented them from reading continuously.

Table 5.3 Percentages of responses in English reading purpose

	Q1	Q2
Intellectual / academic pursuits	64.8	45.9
Functional reasons	14.7	22.3
Leisure	15.1	30.6
Occupational requirements	5.3	1.2

It is obvious that newspapers are contemporary and with the breadth of interest they cover, they are likely to link with many of the current interests of students. As a consequence, over half of the students reported that they liked reading Chinese newspapers and read them once or more than once a day. Whereas English newspapers were read less often and preferred by less students. It was assumed that their lower popularity was not due to the content but due to problems of availability and mainly the obstacle of language.

Comparison of reading preferences in the subjects' first language (Chinese) and second language (English) showed an interesting reading pattern. Student preference for comparatively long and complex reading material in L1 (e.g. classics, science fiction) outweighed that in L2 (see Figure 5.1). On the contrary, there was a tendency to favour relatively short and easy reading material, such as short stories, magazines, and comics, in respect to L2 reading. It was also noted that a wider range of topics were preferred to be read in L1 than in L2.
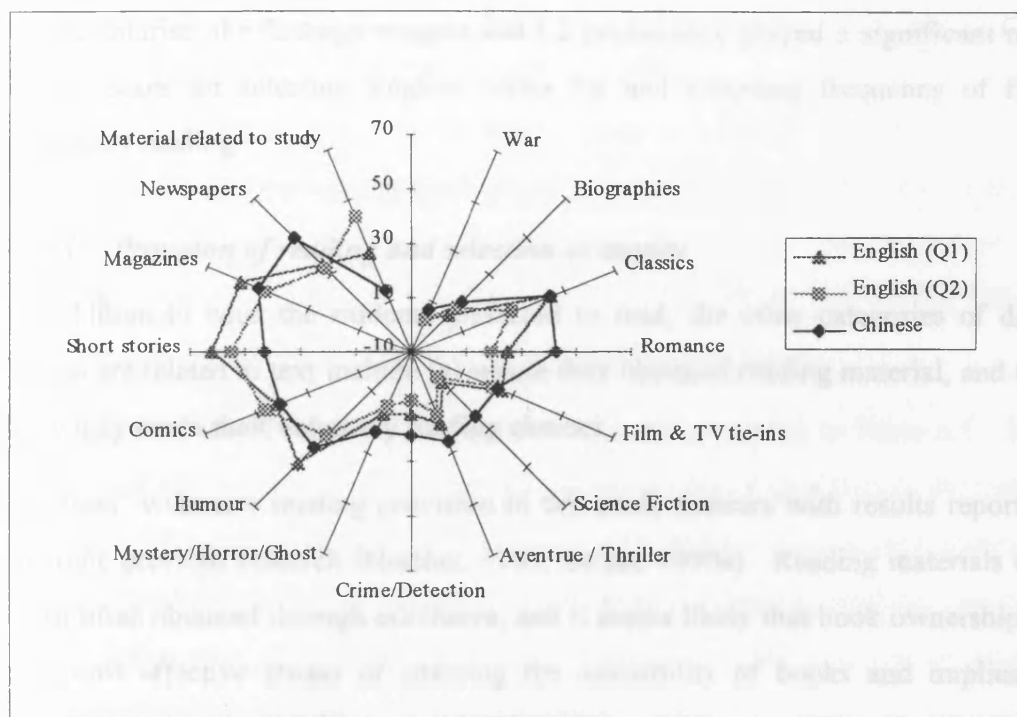
Figure 5.1 Radar chart of reading preferences in Chinese and English languages

Table 5.4 presents the average mean ratings for the four different kinds of reading materials: books, comics, newspapers, and magazines. There were some differences in frequency of reading in Chinese and English languages. In general, students claimed to devote more attention to reading material in L1 than in L2. The highest reported frequency in L2 was newspaper reading, and what was more common in L1 were books and newspapers. The findings corresponded with Elley's research: it was found that in Hong Kong and Singapore, newspapers were more widely read than books, comics and magazines (Elley, 1994).

Table 5.4 Mean ratings of the frequency of reported free reading

	Books	Comics	Newspapers	Magazines
English reading	3.89	4.16	3.11	4.03
Chinese reading	3.05	4.13	2.15	3.64

1 = more than once a day; 2 = once a day; 3= once or twice a week;
4 = once or twice a month; 5 = less than twice a month; 6 = never

To summarise, the findings suggest that L2 proficiency played a significant role in the cases for selecting English books for and reporting frequency of free voluntary reading.

5.1.5   Provision of reading and selection strategies

In addition to what the students preferred to read, the other categories of data which are related to text include (a) where they obtained reading material, and (b) how they made their voluntary reading choices.

Students' voluntary reading provision in this study concurs with results reported in some previous research (Heather, 1981; Smith, 1990a). Reading materials are most often obtained through purchases, and it seems likely that book ownership is the most effective means of ensuring the availability of books and implies a commitment to reading as a source of learning and leisure. Although university and public libraries could provide a variety of reading choices available to students, they were not the predominant source of reading material, and their popularity was lower than borrowing from friends. An increase in the use of libraries should be encouraged and the collections of reading material made available also need to be expanded in order to cope with students' needs and interests.

Strategies of 'subject appeal' and 'met with before' were utilised by over half of the students surveyed. The data also shows that students valued the advice of others when choosing books: the advice of both teachers and peers. Corresponding with the findings of previous research (Southgate _et al_, 1981; Heather, 1981), the results suggest that content was a basic criterion for the selection of a book by the university students.

5.2 Gender differences in free voluntary reading

The results of gender group comparisons suggest that female students tended to have problems in time management, as more female than male students reported that they could not concentrate on reading, and that they did not have time for reading. It is also noted that fewer female students thought that having lots of time for reading was an important way to become a good reader.

Gender differences in voluntary reading patterns are presented in Table 5.5. The higher z-score is denoted by M (for male students) and F (for female students), and the bold letters show when the absolute values of z-score difference is greater than 1. This makes diverse reading choices obvious. Female students reported more reading of classics and romance, whereas male students showed a greater tendency than female students in comic reading.

**Table 5.5 Differences of reading choices in English and Chinese
by gender groups**

Gender groups	English		Chinese
	Q1	Q2	
Short stories	F	F	F
Magazines	F	F	M
Humour	F	M	M
Classics	F	F	**F**
Comics	**M**	**M**	**M**
Newspapers	F	F	M
Material related to study	F	F	F
Film & TV tie-ins	F	F	F
Romance	F	**F**	**F**
Adventure / Thriller	M	M	M
Mystery/Horror/Ghost	M	M	M
Crime/Detection	M	M	F
Biographies	M	F	M
Science Fiction	M	M	M
War	M	M	M

Comparing reasons for English reading choices with reasons for stopping reading, it was found out that more male than female students indicated that they had

vocabulary difficulty and preferred short reading material. However, there were no statistical differences between them in pre-test and post-test.

5.3 Continuity differences in free voluntary reading

Before the free reading program, no statistical difference was found on the grammar test in continuity groups. However, continuous students in the study showed remarkable gains in the four-month period, in particular on the first part of the test (see Table 4.49). In addition, more of them reported that they could find books they liked to read and more read for pleasure. Though more continuous than discontinuous students tended to like magazine reading and more discontinuous students preferred books of humour, in general, there was no wide variation in reading preferences. Table 5.6 summaries the differences of reading choices in continuity group. The higher z-score is denoted by C (for continuous students) and D (for discontinuous students), and the bolded letter shows when the absolute value of z-score difference is greater than 1.

Table 5.6 Differences of reading choices in English and Chinese by continuity groups

Continuity groups	English		Chinese
	Q1	Q2	
Short stories	C	C	C
Magazines	C	C	C
Humour	**D**	**D**	**D**
Classics	C	C	C
Comics	**D**	**D**	**D**
Newspapers	C	C	D
Material related to study	C	C	C
Film & TV tie-ins	**D**	**D**	C
Romance	**D**	**D**	C
Adventure / Thriller	**D**	C	C
Mystery/Horror/Ghost	**D**	**D**	**D**
Crime/Detection	**D**	**D**	C
Biographies	**D**	C	**D**
Science Fiction	**D**	**D**	**D**
War	C	C	C

Continuous students gave comparatively higher weight to reading for pleasure and comparatively lower weight to reading for intellectual / academic pursuits, when compared with other groups. It is assumed that pleasure rather than reading patterns was the key factor that distinguished them from others. In other words, reading for pleasure seemed likely to ensure continuity of reading. The test results also suggested that free reading might contribute to gains in test scores.

5.4   Score differences in free voluntary reading

High-scoring students had comparatively different tastes in choosing reading material when compared with low-scoring students. Though the differences were not so apparent on Q2, their reading choices did not change significantly. Distinctive reading patterns were found between English and Chinese reading preferences (see Table 5.7). English short stories were more popular for high-scoring students, but Chinese short stories were given more weight by low-scoring students. More low-scoring students read comics and material related to study in English language, whereas high-scoring students tended to read these categories of books in Chinese.

Table 5.7   Differences of reading choices in English and Chinese
by score groups

Score groups	English		Chinese
	Q1	Q2	
Short stories	**H**	H	**L**
Magazines	**H**	H	H
Humour	L	L	**L**
Classics	**H**	L	H
Comics	L	L	H
Newspapers	**H**	H	L
Material related to study	**L**	L	H
Film & TV tie-ins	**H**	H	H
Romance	L	L	**L**
Adventure / Thriller	L	L	H
Mystery/Horror/Ghost	L	L	L
Crime/Detection	L	L	H
Biographies	L	H	L
Science Fiction	**L**	L	L

With regard to English reading, it seems likely that more low-scoring than high-scoring students worked harder, since more of them read for learning (see Table

5.8[49]) and did academic reading. It was noted that more than one-third of the low-scoring students indicated that they were afraid of English (see Table 5.9), and that they did not know what to read. In contrast, more high-scoring students read for leisure, and reported that they did not have time to read.

Table 5.8 Percentages of reading purposes on Q1 and Q2
by score groups

Score groups	Q1		Q2	
	H	L	H	L
Intellectual / academic pursuits	65.8	68.2	50.1	52.5
Functional reasons	14.3	13.6	18.4	20.0
Leisure	20.0	9.1	31.6	25.0
Occupational requirements	0	9.1	0	2.5

Table 5.9 Percentages of reading difficulties on Q1 and Q2
by score groups

Score groups	Q1		Q2	
	H	L	H	L
No books match my needs	25.0	9.1	8.3	15.4
Grammar difficulty	25.0	27.3	8.3	7.7
Vocabulary difficulty	37.5	45.5	25.0	23.1
No books match my interest	12.5	27.3	0	30.8
English phobia	0	45.5	0	30.8
No books available	0	9.1	0	15.4
Don't know what to read	37.5	63.6	16.7	46.2
Don't like reading	12.5	0	0	7.7
Don't have time to read	100	72.7	75.0	30.8
No quiet reading atmosphere	12.5	0	16.7	0
No one asked me to read	37.5	18.2	8.3	15.4
No need to read	12.5	0	0	0

The differences in score groups suggest that English language might be a barrier to low-scoring students. However, they made more gains in grammar tests, and many of them showed from studying notes in their reading journal and written

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[49] When compared with other groups, low-scoring students gave the highest weight to intellectual / academic pursuits on Q2, whilst reading for the purpose of leisure was given the greatest priority by high-scoring students on both questionnaires.

comments, as well as the transition of reading attitudes found in the questionnaires, that they wanted to improve. This indicates that for low-scoring students, initial concern should be given to improving their language proficiency and reading skills. Once this has been achieved it will be possible for them to read on their own and do so for the purpose of enjoyment.

5.5   University differences

Contrary to continuity groups, there was significant difference between students in both universities on the pre-test, but the gap diminished on the post-test. That is, University A students did not have an advantage over University B students in view of the statistics. As the students in University B had already met the author on previous occasions, rapport existed. Because of this, there was more understanding about the free reading and fewer problems of reluctance on the part of the students to participate in the programme, which might account for significant gains on the grammar test as well as more receptive attitudes towards free reading.

Similar patterns were found among subjects varying in universities with respect to reading attitudes and habits as indicated by past reading practices, perceptions of reading benefits, reading difficulties, reading purposes, metacognitive strategies, and selection strategies. Although those percentages of reading for intellectual / academic pursuits declined in Q2 as the nature of reading for pleasure became known to the subjects, students in University A still reported to be engaged in more academic reading when compared with the other groups (see Table 5.10). In contrast students in University B indicated a greater propensity for reading for leisure than other groups.

Table 5.10 Percentages of reading purposes in Q1 and Q2
by university groups

University groups	Q1		Q2	
	A	B	A	B
Intellectual / academic pursuits	68.3	62.9	52.9	42.8
Functional reasons	15.3	14.3	17.7	24.3
Leisure	14.1	15.8	29.4	31.1
Occupational requirements	2.4	7.1	0	1.7

More subjects in University A exhibited a preference for classics, film and TV tie-ins, whereas more subjects in University B liked reading books of humour.

Table 5.11 Differences of reading choices in English and Chinese
by university groups

University groups	English		Chinese
	Q1	Q2	
Short stories	B	B	B
Magazines	B	B	B
Humour	**B**	**B**	**B**
Classics	**A**	B	**A**
Comics	B	A	B
Newspapers	B	B	B
Material related to study	B	A	A
Film & TV tie-ins	A	A	A
Romance	B	B	B
Adventure / Thriller	A	B	A
Mystery/Horror/Ghost	B	B	B
Crime/Detection	A	A	A
Biographies	B	B	A
Science Fiction	B	B	A
War	A	A	A

It appears reasonable to conclude that there were no university differences in regards to reading habits and attitudes. The indication could therefore be that gender, continuity, or even score differences generally might supersede university differences in most aspects of free voluntary reading.

5.6   Discussion

Building a positive attitude and a clear notion toward free reading.   As mentioned earlier, many students had a blurred notion of free voluntary reading. When asked about books they liked to read for their enjoyment, lots of them referred to material related to study.   And when asked why they did English reading, most showed that they valued reading as a means of intellectual / academic pursuit.   More evidence found in their reading journal and written comments supported the perception that subjects in the study did not know what free voluntary reading really was.   Partly because students had not had free reading programmes in their elementary or high schools, and partly because traditional English teaching and learning in Taiwan are largely teacher-centred[50], such an active and student-centred reading activity was more often than not to be viewed as studying, or as homework needed to be assigned by the teacher.   The passive attitude towards learning was reflected in responses given in the survey: When asked why they did not do English reading in their free time, 30.9% of the students checked the option, 'no one asked me to read'.

Previous studies also show that substantial numbers of children and adults read neither for pleasure nor for information (Morrow and Weinstein, 1982; Greaney, 1980; Guthrie & Greaney, 1991, as cited in Elley, 1994; Walberg and Tsai, 1984; Greaney and Hegarty, 1987; Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, 1985;   Spiegel, 1981; Whitehead, Capey, Maddren, and Wellings, 1977, as referred to in Davies, 1986; Lesesne, 1991; Valencia, Hiebert, and Kapinus, 1992).   These studies found that children and adults did not choose to read very much in their spare time. Moreover, they revealed a decline in reading as children became older.   The problem seemed to be aggravated when television[51], VCRs, video games, CDs,

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[50]
  As shown in Table 4.31, subjects in University A reported that the major selection strategy was to read books recommended by the teacher.
[51]
  Though researchers have found inconclusive results regarding the impact of TV watching on free reading (see Krashen, 1993), excessive TV watching may result in a clear negative effect.

computers, and other electronic equipment introduced and diverted the attention of youth from books (Greaney and Nueman, 1990; Morrow, 1991).

Reading attitude is of importance and can be viewed as a motivational aspect of reading, for previous studies point out that it is likely to have a significant influence on an individual's reading behaviours (Mikulecky, Shanklin & Caverly, 1979) and decisions about what to read (Smith, 1990a). A positive attitude is likely to play an important role in one's motivation for successfully accomplishing cognitive tasks. In other words, it is crucial to make free reading more likely to occur. Smith (1990a: 120) puts it well: "Adults who enjoy reading make time to do so, while those for whom reading is unenjoyable avoid it, or read only materials that they must in order to 'survive' or to be informed about current events".

If the short-term effects are a failure to cultivate in students a positive attitude toward free reading, the long-term effects appear to be either rejection of free reading, or excessive reliance on the teacher as a source of information. The importance of building a positive attitude toward free reading can hardly be overstated.

Providing guidance. Colleges and universities require students to be independent readers. Textbooks are written in English at a level that is too difficult for most students. University teachers expect junior or senior school teachers to prepare students for independent reading, while in fact it seems that junior or senior school teachers pay more attention to making them pass entrance exams. It was found that students, who did not have a lot of encouragement at school to enforce in them the value of reading, and who had little inducement to lead them on, were more likely not to finish books or read more, even though they showed moderate interest in free reading at the beginning. As mentioned earlier, the difficulty of building independent reading habits would be compounded if students were distracted by TV or other activities.

Evidence in this study indicates that students liked free reading, but that they had problems locating the right books for themselves. Apart from the difficulty of finding books, students' attitudes towards reading might not lead them to continue to read. In most cases, students (in particular those who are slow readers), worked very hard with the hope of improving their English ability in a short time. A typical comment is as follows:

> "When I took the post-test I could feel that there was no big difference from the first time I took the same test, it seemed that I did not improve much. And that makes me feel frustrated and want to give up. Perhaps my English ability is too poor to make a difference."

Although Anderson _et al_ (1985) report that independent reading is a major source of reading fluency, to students who have not reached the independent level, opportunities for free reading does not ensure continuous reading. Students need to be guided during the development of their independence in the use of skills required for both reading and study at colleges. Obviously a great responsibility is placed on teachers to guide students and prepare them for a life as an independent reader, particularly in another language.

It is teachers who can help students experience a sense of success enjoyable enough for them to continue to read by choice. In a sense, good teaching is as Niles (as cited in Davies 1986: 351) put it, "literally leading the pupils through a process until such time as they can walk alone. Rarely does that time come abruptly."

Independent reading, such as free reading, needs to be modelled and guided in order to move students away from long-term dependence on the teacher and from their passive study habits. Herber (1978) addresses the issue of leading students toward independence.

"Independence is a relative term. Teachers need to move students along the continuum with forethought and calculation. A design, a structure, within which students are led to potential independence is needed. If independent activity is expected and students have not been shown how to perform that activity, the teaching is assumptive. It neglects the critical factor in good instruction: that is, that students must be _shown how_ to do whatever it is they are _expected_ to do independently. With respect to any skill, independence is an ultimate state, not an immediate one." (p. 216)

Research results reviewed in Krashen's (1993b) _The Power of Reading_ show that in-school reading programmes work very well if programmes are carried out long enough to get students involved in books. Cummins (1989) also claims that ESL students require a longer time[52] to achieve peer-appropriate levels in academic skills[53] in the second language as compared to conversational skills. Figure 5.2 outlines the approximate time differences required for developing peer-appropriate conversational and academic communicative proficiency.

If we learn to read by reading (Smith, 1988b; Goodman, 1982; Krashen, 1993b), making significant progress in English reading requires the teacher to provide guidance, encouragement and inducement to motivate students to continue free reading as long as possible.

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[52] Cummins (1989) points out that conversational skills often approach native-like levels within about two years of exposure to English whereas a period of five years or more may be required for ESL students to achieve as well as native speakers in academic aspects of language proficiency.
[53] He proclaims that the academic language proficiency refers to both reading and writing abilities and to content areas where students are required to use their language abilities for learning.
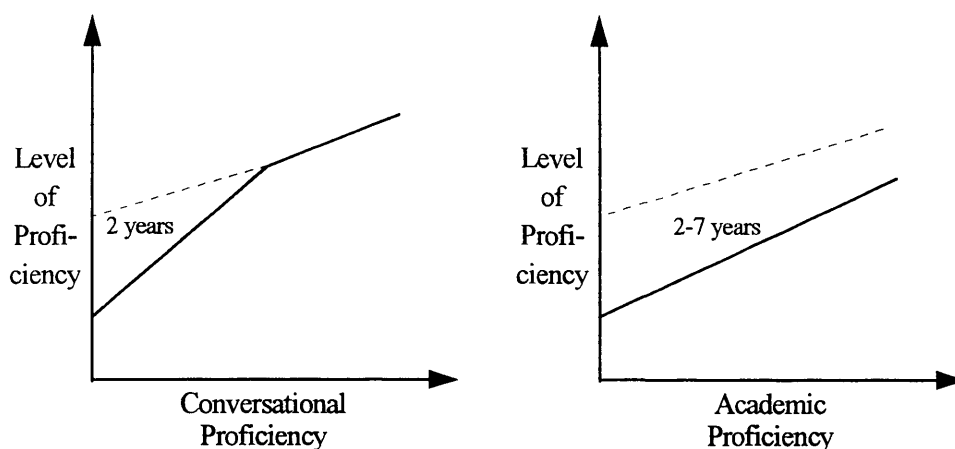
**Figure 5.2 Length of time required to achieve age-appropriate levels
of conversational and academic language proficiency**
(based on Cummins, 1989)

Paying attention to language problem. Many students indicated that they had vocabulary difficulty, some reported that they had grammar difficulty, and a few said that they had English phobia. A substantial number of male and low-scoring students indicated that vocabulary difficulty was the main concern. No high-scoring students reported that they had English phobia, whereas many low-scoring students thought they were afraid of English. This kind of finding need to be noted by teachers in Taiwan.

Notes in the reading journals showed that slow and recalcitrant readers would note down vocabulary, new words that were independent from English texts but were very often coded with a KK symbol[54] and Chinese translation. Whereas no assimilated readers made any vocabulary notes. Such linguistic difficulty also reflects on slow reading speed. Several recalcitrant readers read English texts in an extremely slow speed. One spent one and a half hours reading one page; an other spent 2 hours and 10 minutes reading 3 pages. Similarly, slow readers seemed to feel insecure for skipping over new words, as they noted down much

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[54] K.K. (J. S. Kenyon and T. A. Knott) symbols are a set of phonetic alphabets used to represent pronunciations of American English. Each symbol stands for only one speech sound and each speech sound has only one symbol to represent it.

vocabulary. Not only did some of them keep notes of vocabulary, its KK symbol and Chinese translation, they also wrote down one or two example sentences. It is obvious that they must have spent much more time than the other readers in consulting the dictionary, which in turn, would definitely slow down the speed of reading and likely hinder reading comprehension[55].

Stanovich (1980), Eskey and Grabe (1988) proclaim that what differentiates good readers from poor readers is the automaticity in decoding. Readers with automatic decoding skills spend less time at low-level processing and thus have more time employing higher-level strategies to make sense of the meaning of the text. In other words, good readers read fast; they do not slow down to guess from context. That is because they have adequate vocabulary enabling them to decode texts fluently and rapidly, or as termed by Stanovich (1980) automatically. Therefore, it is crucial to develop students' bottom-up skills. Eskey (1988) puts it well that "language *is* a major problem in second language reading, and that even educated guessing at meaning is no substitute for accurate decoding" (p. 97).

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[55] According to Eskey and Grabe (1988: 233), "many readers of a second language (even some of those who read well in their first language) try to read word by word, a strategy that effectively destroys their chances of comprehending very much of the text."

PART III

Conclusions

This final part of the thesis summarises the findings of this research and discuss the implications for teachers as well as students on encouraging free voluntary reading. Areas offering potential for further research in the field of free voluntary reading are also identified.

Chapter 6

Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary results of the study

Free reading implications

Suggestions for future research

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"If we concentrate upon giving knowledge, we are limited to that which we have acquired ourselves and which we have time to impart. If we encourage students to develop reading and research skills, we provide them with a key to the world."

...............*Morris and Stewart-Dore (1984: 27)*

"Continue in the things that you learned."

...............*2 Timothy 3:14*

Introduction

The above advice is what the apostle Paul wrote to young Timothy about the need to continue to progress in the good things that have been known. It is the same for free voluntary reading. Its importance and benefits have been declared in previous chapters; the conditions for ensuring its success is also highlighted. Considering that learning to read is a gradual process, to a EFL reader, mastering the skill takes longer. Thus, it is crucial for both the teacher and students to recognise the need to carry on free voluntary reading until "good things" happen. An impressive example[56] is cited by Krashen (1994) in his paper, *The pleasure hypothesis*:

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[56] During the process of writing the thesis, the author also observed two successful cases. One was a friend's child, Hao, and the other is the author's nephew, Mung-huan. Hao and Mung-huan are about the same age. Hao is one year older than Mung-huan. Both of them like free reading. Hao is studying in the UK. The teacher assigns him to read one book each day, and he likes it. He particularly likes to read to the author every time the author visits his family, probably because he knows that the author was an English teacher before. For a long period of time, Hao had been reading books with big and few words, and his progress was not very obvious. After about three years of schooling, he was suddenly found reading stories that contained more than 180 pages and over 200 words a page. He read fluently although there was no knowing how much he understood the stories. The author once asked him questions about a story he was reading to her. He had obtained the big picture of what happened in the story. He not only read but wrote. He was able to write poems and greeting words on Christmas or birthday cards.

Unlike L2 reading in Hao's case, Mung-huan reads Chinese reading material. The author mentioned to Mung-huan's mother about her research and the importance of free reading. Unexpectedly, she started to read to him when he was about four years old. Soon after he was able to read by himself, his mother introduced him to the public library to expand his taste. At the age of five, he could read every letter the author wrote home. Before entering the elementary school, he devoured everything: fiction, non-fiction, or even the words on a box of facial tissue, which happened to be placed near him. He not only read but remembered. He could explain to his pilot uncle in detail how an aeroplane flew. His uncle admitted that he himself could not

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Assigned at mid-year to teach a sixth-grade class of remedial students, Mrs (Ann) Hallahan shocked her new students by reading to them on her first day of class. The book was *Where the red fern grows*.

A hardened, street-wise, proud group (mostly boys), they were insulted when she began reading to them. "How come you're reading to us? You think we're babies or something?" they wanted to know. After explaining that she didn't think anything of the kind but only wanted to share a favourite story with them, she continued reading *Where the red fern grows*. Each day she opened the class with the next portion of the story and each day she was greeted with groans. "Not again today! How come nobody else ever made us listen like this?"

Mrs. Hallahan admitted to me later, "I almost lost heart." But she persevered, and after a few weeks (the book contained 212 pages), the tone of the class's morning remarks began to change. "You're going to read to us today, aren't you?" Or " Don't forget the book, Mrs. Hallahan."

"I knew we had a winner," she confessed, 'when on Friday, just when we were nearing the end of the book, one of the slowest boys in the class went home after school, got a library card, took out *Where the red fern grows*, finished it himself, and came to school on Monday and told everyone how it ended." (Trelease 1983: 9).

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explain as clearly. He also read the classical literature brought back by his father from Mainland China, no matter whether they were written in simplified Chinese characters on the traditional, more complicated characters used in Taiwan. He demonstrated an interest in a range of different types of text. It was hard to believe a kindergartener sitting in a sofa reading before dinner. He was also seen reading while eating, before sleeping, and right after waking up. Right now, he is studying in the elementary school. During a recent visit, he complained to the author that the books used in school were very easy and boring. During three-year exposure to books, his reading proficiency is up to the level of a junior high school student.

These two anecdotes show that continuous reading ensures quantitative comprehensible input and results in the acquisition of the target language.

6.1 The general research contributions

The main aim of this research is to investigate features of free voluntary reading activity of Taiwanese university students. An understanding of these features is clearly a prerequisite for English teachers concerned with the promotion of effective free voluntary reading and/or development of independent readers. In addition, it sets the groundwork for future research on free voluntary reading in Taiwan.

Four main contributions of the work can be identified. First, it has brought together the widely-dispersed knowledge of free voluntary reading in L1 and L2 teaching and learning. These are commonly separated in the literature, so that, for example, voluntary reading studies often focus on L1 but rarely mention L2, even when some of the subjects are bilingual learners. Thus, researchers can have a general idea as to its theoretical framework and benefits. Second, the study has analysed the current interests of students' reading habits, as well as individual differences in terms of needs and language proficiency. This strengthens the importance and necessity for promoting free voluntary reading programmes. Third, this research study has discussed some issues which are considered crucial in ensuring the success of free voluntary reading programmes. The fourth contribution of this research lies in the analysis of the Taiwanese students' perceptions, habits and problems about extensive reading. This provides teachers with information about how to develop an effective free voluntary reading programme in EFL at the university level. The following sections summarise the findings of the research and, from there, derive implications as to what the roles of teachers and students should be when implementing a free voluntary reading programme.

6.2 Conclusions and recommendations

Analysis of the data revealed findings in three areas: (a) perceptions of reading, (b) reading habits, and (c) reading problems. They are summarised as follows:

6.2.1 Perceptions of reading

1. *Liking reading:*

   In general, the majority of students liked reading in English. Many students indicated that free reading was the favourite part in their programme. Larger number of students reported that they liked reading in Chinese, and only 2 students gave negative answers.

2. *Reading benefits:*

   The students perceived the benefits derived from reading were improvement of reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing style, spelling and grammar, in that order. All of the mean performance ratings increase after the programme, and significant benefits were found in grammar. This suggests that the experiment had brought awareness to the benefits that free reading are designed to yield. Further, many participants were aware of these benefits.

3. *Free reading program:*

   The results obtained suggest that the programme has drawn students' attention to free voluntary reading in English. For example, the percentage of reading for pleasure increased dramatically, and more than half of the students indicated that they would continue free reading after the program.

6.2.2 Reading habits

1. *Time for free voluntary reading:*

   Most of the subjects believed they had adequate time to read. After the experiment, significantly less students felt that they had sufficient time to read.

The low return rate of the reading journals as well as the infrequent notes in those that were returned showed that the students did not give priority to completing their journal entries, nor, it can be concluded to free reading in English. An indication that the university students might not see the need to read in English and might feel they have no time in their busy lives for reading. This suggests that free voluntary reading needs to be propagated and promoted.

2. *Frequency and amount of time:*

The university students indicated that they read Chinese reading material more often than English reading material. Newspapers were read the most often, either in English or Chinese. Students reported reading English newspapers about once or twice a week and Chinese newspapers once or more than once a day. Books, magazines and comics then followed in frequency. Whilst English books were read about once or twice a month, Chinese books were read once or twice a week on average, but many students reported reading more than once a day. Magazines and comic books in both English and Chinese were read once or twice a month. Although the students claimed that they read newspapers more often, analysis of journals revealed that few notes were related to newspapers and more notes were kept for books and magazines (Students may have been less conscious of reading newspapers when completing their journals). With regard to the amount of time spent on reading each type of English reading material, most time on average was spent on book reading, whereas comic reading required the least time. The results show that the subjects did not read much both in terms of frequency and amount of time. In order to trigger the desire to read, more self-selected reading should be encouraged.

3. Writing activities after reading:

Many students reported that they did not like to note down good sentences. A higher proportion of students indicated this after the experiment. When asked their opinions about the free reading programme, keeping a journal was the main dislike cited. Many students reported that they did not like keeping notes and several indicated that they did not know how to keep notes, even though examples were provided. Perhaps the negative experience of note keeping resulted in the great difference on the opinion of noting down good sentences between two questionnaires. This negative association of writing may have important implications few voluntary reading research since the journal was in a sense compulsory.

4. Discussing stories:

Most students were not used to talking with someone about something they had read, a strategy proclaimed to be beneficial for the learner to use the language gained from reading. Activities that enhance discussion of stories should be added to a free reading programme.

5. Purpose for reading:

The students seemed to equate reading with study rather than with problem solving. The most frequently mentioned purpose was for intellectual and/or academic pursuits. Reading for problem solving was not valued by the students. After the free reading programme, a large proportion of responses described the value of reading for pleasure and the percentage reading for study decreased dramatically. However, reading done for study was still seen to be more prevalent than reading for pleasure in free voluntary reading.

6. Reading preference:

The range of texts preferred by the students was much more diverse in Chinese than in English. For the university students in the study, the most preferred types of Chinese text included newspapers, magazines and classics.

Least popular was material related to study and biography. Presumably because of the provision of reading material, as well as limited language proficiency, the students restricted their English reading to a narrower range of preferences. Short stories and magazines were the most preferred English reading materials, and a substantial number of students liked to read material related to study. From the aspect of reading for learning English as a foreign language, that is predictable and reasonable. However, the students should be encouraged to read more widely and focus on meaning in order to increase their reading speed, expand recognition vocabulary. and learn to use different reading strategies to suit their purposes.

7. *Meta-cognitive strategies for being a good reader:*

"Like reading", "concentrate well", "read regularly" and "have lots of time for reading" were viewed as the important ways to become a good reader. Among these, liking reading was given the most weight. It is noteworthy that no one valued the strategy of "selectively read books of my interest only", and few saw virtue in having many good books available. Even drill or repetitive strategies were seen as a better means to be a good reader than these two. It is likely that many university students have inaccurate or incomplete ideas about what strategies are essential for being a good reader. It is therefore suggested that the students should be guided and encouraged to read for pleasure rather than solely or mainly for study in order to help them acquire the target language in a natural and effective way.

8. *Provision of reading:*

Reading materials were most often obtained through purchases, presumably because book ownership is the most effective means of ensuring the availability of books and implies a commitment to reading as a source of learning and leisure (Books printed in Taiwan are considerably cheaper than those published in Europe or America). The results suggest that an increase in

the use of libraries should be encouraged and the collections of reading material made available also need to be expanded in order to cope with students' needs and interests.

9. *Selection strategies:*

Content was a basic criterion for the selection of a book by the university students. Most of them utilised strategies of "subject appeal", "met with before" and "recommendation by others" to choose books. However, it would have been better if a wider range of selection criteria (e.g. format, difficulty, cost) had been included in the questionnaire.

10. *Test attainment:*

The results of the post-test were general better than those of the pre-test, but surprisingly subsequent comparison of the mean scores for each part revealed no significant differences. However, the difference on the first part was marginal. The lack of significant improvement in the test may characterise a relatively short duration of the reading programme in the study. There are many indications that a longer time period would have yielded a larger number of significant results. Besides, if time permits, a proficiency test would be a better means to evaluate subjects' overall proficiency.

11. *The differences between gender groups:*

- More female students than male students indicated that they could not concentrate on reading well. Female students also reported that they did not have time to read, the main reason for stopping reading. For male students, vocabulary difficulty was the major concern.

- In respect of purposes of reading, reading for getting a job was valued by male students, whereas more female students reported that they read for pleasure.

- As for both English and Chinese reading preferences, female students liked romance and classical literature. In contrast male students preferred short reading material. Among these, comics were ranked first.

- A similar pattern of popularity for both gender groups in meta-cognitive strategies was revealed. Male students gave more weight to having much time for reading and having a lively imagination.

- The main difference between gender groups in ways of selecting reading material was that more male students read the books that had been seen on TV or movies.

- Male students preferred borrowing books from friends and the school library. Female students liked purchasing books.

- Female students outperformed male students on both pre- and post-tests. However, it is noteworthy that male students made greater gains, and their differences gradually narrowed.

12. The differences between continuity groups:

- More continuous students reported that they were able to find books they liked to read, and that they had a lively imagination.

- Reading for pleasure was more likely to be described as a reading purpose by continuous students than by discontinuous students.

- In respect to reading choices in English, discontinuous students gave priority to short articles, such as short stories, comics, and books of humour. Continuous students preferred magazines, short stories and classics. The pattern of Chinese reading choices was slightly different. Continuous students gave higher priority to Chinese classics, and Chinese newspapers were more popular to discontinuous students.

- More continuous students gave priority to concentrating well. However, larger differences between continuous and discontinuous students were found with having a lively imagination and reading a lot of books. Continuous students supported the strategy of having a lively imagination, but discontinuous students saw virtue in reading a lot of books.

- "Met with before" was a criterion for the selection of a book by the majority of continuous students, whereas only a few discontinuous students used criterion to select books for free reading.

- Continuous students improve substantially between pre- and post-tests. A statistically significant difference was found on part 1 of the tests. Continuous students had higher mean test scores as compared with discontinuous students. The difference was significant with post-tests.

13. The differences between score groups:

- A substantial number of low-scoring students read primarily for study purposes. Distinct patterns existed: reading for pleasure was given higher weight by high-scoring students and reading for the purpose of getting a job was valued by low-scoring students.

- Distinctive English reading patterns were found in high-scoring and low-scoring students. Newspapers, film and TV tie-ins were ranked within the top-five list of high-scoring students but were given low priority by low-scoring students. Clear contrasts were also found in Chinese reading material between score groups. The choices favoured by low-scoring students were romance, humour and short stories. It is noteworthy that comics and material related to study were preferred by low-scoring students when they were written in English but by high-scoring students when in Chinese. Similarly, English short stories and newspapers were

more popular for high-scoring students, but Chinese short stories and newspapers were given more weight by low-scoring students.

- A much higher frequency of responses with regard to "no time to read" was reported by high-scoring in comparison with low-scoring students. For low-scoring students, "don't know what to read", "vocabulary difficulty" and "English phobia" seemed to trouble them more. The results suggest that low-scoring students were more likely to have English language problems. Initial concern should therefore be given to improving their language proficiency and reading skills.

- In respect to meta-cognitive strategies, high-scoring students gave more weight to concentrating well and discussing stories.

- Low-scoring students preferred borrowing books from friends and the school library. High-scoring students liked purchasing books. It is thus predictable that high-scoring students read books on best seller lists; comparatively fewer low-scoring students did so.

- Both high-scoring and low-scoring students made similar gains on the post-test as compared to pre-test scores. The gap between them remained large.

14. The differences between university groups:

- The students at University A preferred longer reading material, such as classics, film and TV tie-ins, whereas the students at University B liked shorter reading material (e.g. short stories, humour and comics).

- The main differences between university groups was that much more students at University A read books "recommended by the teacher".

- University B students made substantial improvements in test performance. On the other hand, the mean scores of University A students decreased. However, there were no significant differences between students at these two universities. Even though the students at University B made greater gains, overall University A students still outperformed University B students.

6.2.3 Reading problems

In regard to free voluntary reading, the Chinese students were confronted with three main problems in reading English: vocabulary difficulties, faulty reading habits and negative attitudes, and inability to locate suitable reading material.

Vocabulary problem. The university students, as pointed out in the previous chapter, reported some language problems. Among them, vocabulary difficulty was the most frequently indicated problem. A substantial number of students referred to it as one of the major reasons that stopped them from reading continuously for their own enjoyment. Additionally, many students, in particular slow and recalcitrant readers, noted down a great deal of vocabulary in their journal. This suggests that the texts that they were reading were loaded with too many unfamiliar words, so that they had to look up new words in a dictionary while reading, which would presumably further slow down their reading.

Vocabulary problems and slow reading speed are reciprocal. As pointed by Nuttall (1996: 62), "students who keep looking up new words read much less effectively. Every time you break off to consult a dictionary, you slow down your reading and interrupt your thinking, which should be following the development of thought in the text." Slow reading speed not only hinders reading comprehension but is likely to be a differential influence on the enjoyment of free reading. Consequently, unenjoyable texts may affect the motivation to read more. Reading little is likely to impede the acquisition of a large vocabulary, as

vocabulary is best acquired in rich linguistic contexts through reading itself (McCarthy, 1990).

As for vocabulary difficulty, it is crucial to let students recognise that it is possible to comprehend a text without understanding every word, and encourage them to read extensively as most vocabulary is acquired naturally and gradually by being frequently encountered in context. However, if there are too many unfamiliar words in a text, it is better to change to another text that is more suitable for their language level.

Faulty reading habits and attitudes. Faulty reading habits and negative attitudes render vocabulary problems worse. Evidence from journal notes and questionnaire surveys show that students were accustomed to a close and careful reading style and often expected the teacher to assign reading homework. If the best way of improving vocabulary is reading extensively (Nuttall, 1996), then these habits and attitudes are not good foundations for developing an effective and independent reader, who will choose to read and benefit from free voluntary reading (see Section 1.1.3.1 for the benefits associated with free voluntary reading).

Several reading habits and attitudes were found to deprive the students from reading for pleasure. One of these is lack of flexibility in reading. The survey reveals that the students concerned usually read material that was related to study. Their notes included many good English sentences, unfamiliar new words, English grammar, etc. It is obvious that most of them read for study, for learning the target language, but did not read for pleasure. Such an intensive and slow reading habit results makes free reading hard work. Some students seemed duty-bound to finish whatever they had started, no matter how unnecessary and how difficult the task was for them. After working so hard on free reading, several of them expressed their disappointment and frustration about not making greater progress during the four-month experiment.

Apart from lack of flexibility in reading and inappropriate expectancy for making progress in a short time, the existence of passive learning attitudes and habits could be deduced from reading journals, responses given in the survey and written comments as well. Few students read throughout the experiment, even though they admitted that they liked reading for their interest and at their own choice. Some, as mentioned earlier, worked too hard to enjoy free reading and inevitably lack the desire to continue to read. A large number of students did not read or did not read much in English, as they did not give priority to free voluntary reading in their leisure time. There was some indication that the students were not prepared to be involved in such an active and independent reading activity: many admitted they were lazy, several claimed that they did not take free voluntary reading seriously, a few asked for the teacher to assign reading homework, and many reported that "no one asked them to read" was the reason that stopped them from reading continuously. This shows the importance of teacher's encouragement and support for the English reading development of these students. They are not autonomous readers.

It is important to make students aware that efficient readers vary the speed of reading over a wide range according to their purposes of reading, according to the kind of material being read, and according to the ease or difficulty of the text. They need to be informed that they require exposure to English for a longer time to achieve native-like academic language proficiency (e.g. reading and writing) as compared to conversational communicative proficiency. The point is made clear by Nuttall (1996), who emphasises that "students who read a lot will not become fluent overnight, and it may take a year or two before you notice an improvement in their speaking and writing; but then it often comes as a breakthrough. They will progress at increasing speed and far outstrip classmates who have not developed the reading habit" (p. 128). In addition, reading is usually a private and individual process. It is learnt through practice, not taught. Therefore, the

teacher should guide and encourage students to undertake active and independent reading.

Inability to locate suitable reading material.   The third identified problem, not knowing what to read, is likely to be influenced by vocabulary difficulty and to steer from passive learning habits and negative attitudes. Limited proficiency in vocabulary may restrict students' ability to read second language texts successfully, which in turn confines their choices of reading material and their knowledge of the range of choices available. On the other hand, a passive learning attitude is likely to strengthen their dependence on the teacher to recommend or assign reading material for them to read, rather than to develop their ability to choose the right material for themselves such dependence, initially, seems to be a major feature of traditional Chinese attitudes to learning. Selecting L2 reading material is an essential study skill and requires practice. Students need to learn how to use scanning and skimming, for example, to choose material and make their selection more suitable for their interest and level. These students will need to be taught to read in such flexible ways.

As "do not know what to read" was one of the most common reasons given for reading difficulties, it highlights that students, in particular inexperienced students, should be guided and encouraged to develop strategies to make book choices.

6.2.4   Summary

Table 6.1 presents the relation of research questions depicted in Section 1.4 to findings of the research in Chapters 5 and 6.

Table 6.1   Relation of research questions to findings

Research questions	Main findings	
	Section	Item
1. What are the factors claimed to influence the development of voluntary reading by the university students?	6.2.3 5.1.1-5.1.2 5.6	
2. Which books do students prefer for their free voluntary reading and which criteria influence their choices?	6.2.2 5.1.5	6, 9
3. Is reading for pleasure given priority by the university students among their reading purposes?	6.2.2.	5
4. What do the university students perceive about being a good reader? Do their beliefs influence their reading habits?	6.2.2 6.2.1 5.1.3	7, 1-4 1
5. Do L1 (Chinese) and L2 (English) have an effect on the reading preference and reading frequency?	6.2.2 5.1.4	6, 2
6. What are the differences in voluntary reading activities between comparison groups varying in gender, continuity, the grammar test, and university?	6.2.2 5.2 - 5.5	11-13

6.3   Implications for free voluntary reading

The findings of this study have some important implications for free voluntary reading research and implementation.

Regardless of the term "voluntary", this is not to imply that students will read voluntarily when told to do so, especially in an EFL environment with many passive learners. Education and on-going promotion are the two prime concerns to ensure the success of free voluntary reading programmes.   Before the implementation of a free voluntary reading programme, education of the target population (i.e. students and teachers) is needed to clear out some blurred notions, faulty habits and attitudes toward free voluntary reading. This would mean discussion, explanation, and classification of such key terms as "reading", "voluntary", "skill", "habit", "strategy", and "journal".   Even after the establishment of the programme, periodic promotion and discussion of concepts is required to maintain interest and awareness.

6.3.1 The role of the teacher

Reading is a gradual and personal process. It is necessary for the teacher to prepare students to become independent readers by gradually releasing his responsibility to students over time (see Figure 6.1).
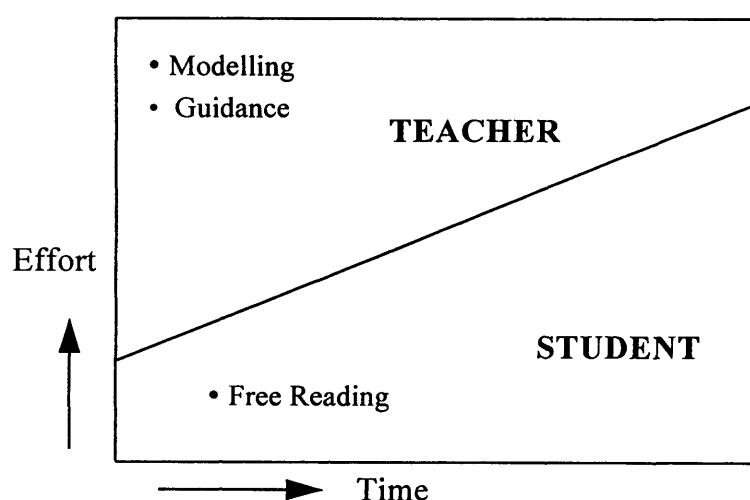
Figure 6.1 Proportion of responsibility for free reading

In general, the teacher of free voluntary reading should be a supporter, who knows when scaffolding is needed to help students move to the 'next step'. The efforts of developing voluntary readers should be made at least to the same extent as attempts to teach students to derive an understanding of texts being explored. The teacher's responsibilities may include:

- *Introducing free voluntary reading.*   Considering that traditional approaches have led to students' dependence on the teacher, such an active student-centred activity requires thorough introduction. Modelling and guidance and classification of concepts are also needed to ensure understanding and to create interest.

- *Generating interest in reading.* The most obvious motivation for fostering students' interest in reading is the encouragement of reading in the areas of their hobbies and interests. Here are some other suggestions to get students interested in books.

    a) Providing time for students to get involved in reading ;

    b) Playing cassette recordings or video tapes of books and stopping at a tantalising point;

    c) Asking students to dramatise some scenes from stories or extracts;

    d) Encouraging students or inviting visitors to talk about their favourite books;

    e) Making a library tour;

    f) Introducing the use of the Internet on searching for information;

    g) Scheduling discussion sessions or book presentation of current reading for discussing stories;

    h) Introducing easy and short reading material;

    i) Providing lists of suggested reading.

- *Making students aware that not all texts need be read in their entirety.* It is necessary to consistently remind students that they need only read to obtain a general idea, as many students are accustomed to close and careful academic reading.

- *Encouraging students to develop a range of reading strategies.* In practice, this would mean that, on occasion, teachers in Taiwan would need to make specific efforts to model reading in ways which could counter, or complement, the notion of the text as a source of language with notions of reading for meaning and reading for enjoyment.

- *Encouraging students to continue to read.* Short-term free reading programmes are less effective so students should be encouraged to become involved in reading as long as possible.

- *Expecting that reading skills may develop slowly after exposure to a large amount of interesting, comprehensible input.*

6.3.2   The role of the student

- *Taking an active part in reading.*   The long-term effects of passive or traditional learning are evident in the dependence of many Taiwanese university students on the teacher.   Therefore, students need to realise that reading is a personal and individual process.   They should first of all try to take charge of their own free reading.

- *Flexibility.*   An effective reader is not confined to slow and intensive reading.   Students need to employ a variety of appropriate reading strategies for their purposes, probably taking up teachers' examples and suggestions on this point, i.e. it is present context in Taiwan to expect students to learn such reading skills, and altitudes independently.

- *Attention on meaning rather than language.*   The habit of treating English reading as studying frequently results in the student's focusing on language, rather than on meaning.   This not only slows down reading speed but also hinders reading comprehension and enjoyment.   Again students will need to take up teachers' suggestions and examples on this point.

- *Choosing the right rather than the difficult material.*   In order to sustain interest in reading, it is better to start with easy texts and gradually build up the level of difficulty.   Students need to realise that some aspects of reading can, in fact, develop through "easy" reading material.

6.3.3 Programme promotion

The introduction of the free reading programme had resulted in an increase in the university students' awareness. It was noticed that many started to read, but before long, most of them lost their enthusiasm for free reading. Further analysis also reveals that they still retained a few inaccurate attitudes and habits, which probably caused interruption of free reading. This suggests that the introduction was incomplete. Not enough attention was paid to ensuring the subjects understood the programme's aims and objectives, what kind of reading material should be read, how that material could be obtained, and what benefits would accrue to them as a result of continuing free reading. Further, on-going promotion of free voluntary reading to demonstrate its importance might be needed in order to clear out faulty reading habits and sustain students' interest and confidence. This would seem to be previously responsibility of the readers; the teachers will need to encourage and sustain the programme at regular intervals. Also activities with short-term goals (such as book presentations or showing journal extracts in class) need to be built into the normal teaching schedule at regular intervals.

6.3.4 Co-operation between researcher and teacher

It was easy to find a teacher praising the intentions of the free reading programme, a blessing to have him/her commit himself/herself to help. However, it was desperately difficult to implement the experiment in his/her class without cutting out the reinforcement activities, for he/she had fewer hours than the norm in order to give time to cultivate students' reading habits. Teachers have their own syllabuses, lesson plans, and tight schedules and do not require the addition of extra work.

The need for a research project to be flexible and opportunistic was recognised, but as Robson (1993: 296) stresses, "the contest between what is theoretically desirable and practically possible must be won by the practical."

There have been a few published studies supporting the importance of free voluntary reading in EFL contexts and even less research undertaken in Taiwan to manifest its benefits. The difficulty of obtaining the teachers' support was reasonable. However, teachers could make an attempt to devote more of their energies and resources to the encouragement of development and voluntary book reading, since the programme was easily scheduled and carried out and, as shown here, brings some general language benefits. All it needed was an enthusiastic reader teacher to guide his students to enjoy free reading.

6.4   Reflections and suggestions for further study

Questionnaires, tests, reading journals, and some interviews were used in the research project. With hindsight, interviews could have focused on particular readers as in-depth case studies. From the quantitative point of view, the difficulties of access to students meant that only a few students could be interviewed and at the time of research it was felt that this number was too limited for statistical analysis. However, in retrospect, although the number of interviews was small, later comments from students give further insights into the voluntary reading process, into students' attitudes to reading, and into a number of negative factors which clearly constrain students' reading for pleasure. These factors included "laziness", seeming lack of motivation, difficulty with vocabulary, and "English phobia". Such insights could have been further explored in a qualitative approach in this study and this aspect should be taken up in future research. Further exploitation of the interviews and increasing the number of interviews could have led to an interesting qualitative exploration of differences in attitudes and experiences between continuous and discontinuous readers, and might even have led to an elaboration of the analysis to explore a possible emergent continuum between the two. This could have provided a much richer interpretation of the statistical results through complementary qualitative analysis.

The reading journals provided feedback and information for the teachers. They also offered a reading record for students to monitor their own reading and were an incentive for them to read and to have something to write when they understood they were expected to write about their reading. From the research viewpoint, the journal was intended to serve the purpose of getting students to express themselves about their reading and it was expected that this would include evidence of affective responses and thus yield further indications of the development of students' attitudes to the material they were reading. It is not uncommon to meet difficulties in research projects of this kind (e.g. getting

access in Chapter 3). Regarding the journals, the students seemed to have perceived journal keeping in a different way to the researcher. It seems that many students perceived the voluntary reading programme in terms of study and study reading (despite repeated verbal and written explanations from the researcher and the teachers). Hence, in writing journal entries, students not only seemed to be reluctant to answer open-ended questions, but seemed not to know what to write or how to write notes (despite the fact that they were shown systematic examples of how the journal should be kept). Many students recorded grammar point from grammar textbooks, new vocabulary and exemplary sentences looked up in the dictionary, as if they were studying grammar and vocabulary. Only a few students showed affective responses to their reading although this might have been expected if they were indeed reading for pleasure (see Appendix I).

On such evidence, in retrospect, it seems that at a deep level the students were not really reading for pleasure and neither they nor their teachers really appreciated the essence of the voluntary reading programme with its emphasis on comprehensible input and reading for enjoyment and pleasure. Rather, voluntary reading was seen as study reading and the journal keeping was seen as study writing. The element of pleasure and affective responses seems to have been missed (even though the voluntary reading programme in this research, as demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 5, did show benefits especially for continuous students).

A methodological insight can be derived from the above. This was not clearly seen by the researcher at the time of conducting the research. This insight is that research of this kind does not only depend on an appropriate design and overcoming practical constraints on feasibility and access but also depends on how other participants (the teachers and participating students) see the research project, how they interpret key concepts, such as "reading for pleasure", "voluntary reading", "reading for study in English", and on their perceptions of the benefits of reading for pleasure in another language. This gap in perceptions

could be interpreted as a cultural gap between the research 'culture' held by the researcher and the reading 'culture' held by the teachers and students. The research culture was, of course, predicated on current western perceptions of leisure reading. Yet apparently this was not shared by the participants in Taiwan who, it may be concluded, based their involvement on their perceptions on study habits associated with Chinese attitudes to foreign language learning. These Chinese attitudes themselves probably stem from learning to read Chinese, which in general demands close attention to vocabulary and probably engenders close attention to the text. If this is transferred to reading English, as seems likely, then the extensive reading which is desirable for the FVR programme can now be understood to have been difficult for linguistic and cultural reasons.

The key role of other participants' interpretation of research was in this case heavily mediated by the teachers. Although they agreed to take part (and other did not), the nature of their participation and the influence on participating students was severely underestimated by the researcher at the time. In fact, the teachers needed far more preparation to develop a sound understanding of the project and relevant concepts than was given at the time.

Sadly, this programme, because of a seeming lack of enthusiasm and commitment by the teachers and therefore perhaps by the students, did not really break the vicious circle regarding reading for pleasure. This circle seems to have involved the cycle of frustration shown in Figure 3.2 rather than the cycle of growth.

It can be concluded that the prime point at which to break the circle is the teacher and teacher trainer. "Readers are made by readers" (Nuttall, 1996: 229) and reading for pleasure may be conveyed by enthusiasm from teachers, i.e. caught not taught. In the future, closer attention should be paid to the role of the teacher and teacher trainer as mediators to develop voluntary reading.

All of these points indicate a fundamental dilemma with the concept of voluntary reading which is that voluntary reading may need to be developed through an

organised programme which has elements of instruction, demonstration, exemplification and modelling, certainly in the initial stage (see Figure 6.1). Therefore, in a sense, this project has not been about voluntary reading as such but has focused on eventual voluntary reading, i.e. on the stages that students may pass through en route to free voluntary reading. Such stages would be usefully researched by closer examination of the continuous and discontinuous groups with particular consideration of how discontinuous readers might continue to read and read for pleasure.

The vicious circle can be broken by giving students confidence and pleasure in reading in English. To do this, teachers will initially need to give students easy and accessible texts to read. Yet it seems that teachers in Taiwan are very reluctant to this because, like their students, their mental model of reading is based on study reading, i.e. students are to read increasingly difficult texts with ever-challenging vocabulary. Using graded readers might be considered to offer one solution to the problem, but as shown in Section 3.3.3 this is not easy at present.

While carrying out this study, a number of areas offering potential for further research were identified. They are discussed below.

1. This research has been hampered by the fact that the duration was relatively short. The teachers agreed to implement the free reading programme for one semester. For free reading effects to be fully revealed, a longer time period is almost certainly required. It is suggested that any similar study should last for more than one year.

2. Due to time constraints, the teachers did not carry out designated reinforcement activities. It would be useful to investigate any differences resulting if reinforcement activities were administered, composed with a control group's programme without such activities.

3. The results show that English and Chinese voluntary reading patterns varied across comparison groups. It is anticipated that reading purposes, reading habits, and reading problems will not be the same. Therefore, it would be useful to extend this study to encompass more Chinese reading habits and attitudes in order to identify more differences between L1 and L2 reading. Again, a comparison study between English and Chinese free reading programmes can be suggested.

4. Many educators claim that teachers shape students' reading attitude. A survey into teachers' reading habits and attitude would be useful to justify this assumption and an investigation of subsequent influences on students.

5. The Internet is gradually influencing the way people live and work. Many people are using it to access information. Further research to examine the relationship between the Internet and free voluntary reading activity would be of interest.

6.5 Personal PostScript

From theoretical perspectives, free voluntary reading is in line with Krashen's theory of second language acquisition (see Section 2.1) as it encourages reading for enjoyment (i.e. comprehensible input and high motivation) and stresses no evaluation of students' performance (i.e. low anxiety). It is also compatible with the essence of linguistic and social reading theories (see Sections 2.2 and 2.4). Since free voluntary reading is to choose reading material at one's level, it reduces the major reading problem in the L2 - linguistic deficiency. In addition, its ultimate aim is to develop the habits of reading for pleasure, which is in agreement with social accounts of reading. Considering English language teaching and learning in Taiwan, free voluntary reading can not only balance the unevenness of focusing on reading for studying (see Sections 1.1.1.3, 2.3, 5.6, etc.) but also correct negative transfer of L1 reading habits (see Section 2.3).

After evaluating the literature and relevant theory and taking into account the language teaching and learning environment in Taiwan, the author intended to carry out a free voluntary reading research project which might be a new field in Taiwan but would benefit both teachers and students there. During negotiation of access to subjects, the author came to understand the difficulty of conducting a research project with a theoretically sound but practically infeasible design. As described in Sections 3.2.1, 4.2.12, and 6.3.4, no matter how good the intentions of the free reading programme were, no matter how valuable it would seem to benefit all the participants, yet still there were many difficulties and disappointment occurring at the stages of access negotiation and programme implementation. In attempting to bridge the ideal and the real, the theoretical and the practical, the design conception and what is feasible, there is much to be learned for the teacher and researcher on both professional and personal levels.

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APPENDIX A : PROPOSAL

Free Reading Proposal

(This was given to the university teachers during
the process of attempting to negotiate access
to the subjects for the experiment.)

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Contents

Introduction

English is important for people in Taiwan. It is a tool for getting information quickly, for negotiating with clients, for pursuing further education, and for competing with others for the chance to get a job or study abroad. There is no doubt that learning English meets the needs of Taiwanese, but the question is how English teaching can be made compatible with the needs of learners.

Deductive grammar teaching is broadly adopted in the classroom and is viewed as the most efficient and effective method to improve students' grammatical competence. From high schools to universities most students formally studied English for an average of eight years; however, the result is far beyond their expectation. Deliberate instruction, on the contrary, is likely to make students focus on form, not on meaning, too much if they are eager to learn the rules, or feel bored to listen to the explanation of the rules and then do the drills. Even though grammar courses are most of the time dull, adult students still see the need to develop grammatical competence through grammar teaching because they believe it assists them to learn more rapidly and efficiently. As to the teacher, the complexity of grammar rules is somehow too hard to explain clearly and grammar teaching is time-consuming if the teacher tries to make grammar teaching more interesting.

The battle lies in whether formal instruction will help students to enhance their language proficiency. In arguing for the value of formal instruction, researchers pointed out instruction can help to prevent the premature fossilisation that an excessive emphasis on the performance of communicative tasks may bring. Some empirical studies, in contrast, reported direct instruction did not help the development of grammar (Krashen 1982; Smith 1983; Krashen 1984). More studies showed that experimental free reading groups outperformed control groups in grammar (Elley, Barham, Lamb, and Wyllie 1976; Krashen 1984; Hillocks 1986) and writing style (Applebee 1978; Krashen 1978, 1984, 1988; Kaplan and Palhinda 1981; Janopoulos 1986; Salyer 1987). Since writing needs to be concerned with grammatical correctness, good writers are assumed to have better grammatical competence.

My interest is to test whether massive quantities of pleasure reading in intermediates', rather than beginners', own areas of interest will help them to acquire grammatical competence. My assumption is that deliberate instruction focuses on learners' consciousness of grammatical process and forms will enhance beginners to acquire the second language, while intermediates, who have captured the essence of grammar, need to immerse themselves in free reading to enhance high levels of proficiency.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis is to investigate if more comprehensible input in the form of reading is associated with better grammar development. The sub-hypothesis is to find out whether a free reading program and reinforced activities can narrow the gap between students competence and performance in grammar.
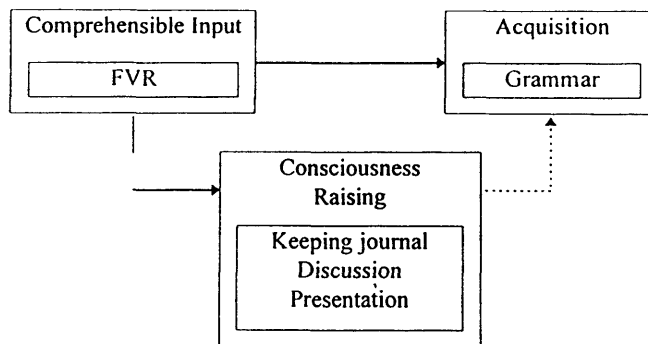
Method: Free Voluntary Reading (FVR)

Background and Objectives

The FVR project is based on Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which predicts that more comprehensible input results in more language acquisition. The best way to get lots of comprehensible input and improve the knowledge of English is to live among English speakers, but in Taiwan students do not often encounter the foreign language outside the classroom, so the next best way is to read extensively in it.

Comprehensible input gained in reading may contribute to language improvement, for free reading is the reading of large amounts of material in the second language for personal interest in the second language (Comprehensible Input) and without the addition of productive tasks or follow-up language work (Filter Theory). In other words, it is to ensure meaningful and interesting input that students choose books of their choice to read for pleasure. No tests and assignments, furthermore, help to reduce their anxiety and thus lower their affective filter and permit more input.

Much research has proved that FVR helped to bridge the gap from the beginning level to truly advanced levels of language proficiency, whether the first language (L1) or the foreign language (FL), so it is especially suitable for intermediate students who have built up basic language abilities and are able to direct their own learning. They can read for pleasure, they can continue to improve in English without teachers' help. Reading texts offer the best chance for students to develop their language proficiency, for the material convey the messages they might meet in an English-speaking environment and compose of lots of beautiful sentences with absolutely correct grammar. That is to say, language improvement, including grammar development, is the natural by-product of reading. Since every text and every reader requires different treatment, FVR enables individuals to choose material to their own needs and undergo language development at their own pace. However, what may be crucial is not simply reading a lot but rather reading selectively for problem solving and for meaning. Encouraging uses of the language developed from their selective reading may, furthermore, foster consolidation of the language ability rather than just a feel for the language.

Comprehensible Input		Acquisition
FVR	→	Grammar

Consciousness
Raising

Keeping journal
Discussion
Presentation

The major objective of the project is, therefore, to investigate the hypothesis that free voluntary reading helps university-level students the acquisition of grammar in a second language. At the same time, reinforcement activities, such as keeping a record, holding discussions and book presentations, are used to raise students' consciousness and to facilitate students the acquisition of grammar indirectly because these activities encourage uses of the language of reading.

In view of the general perception that grammar competence of most Chinese adult students is better than their performance. Over time, both competence and performance can be assumed to improve; the hypothesis here is that the gap will narrow with FVR.

Competence

G
R   FVR &
A   Reinforcement
M   Activities
M   Performance
A
R

TIME
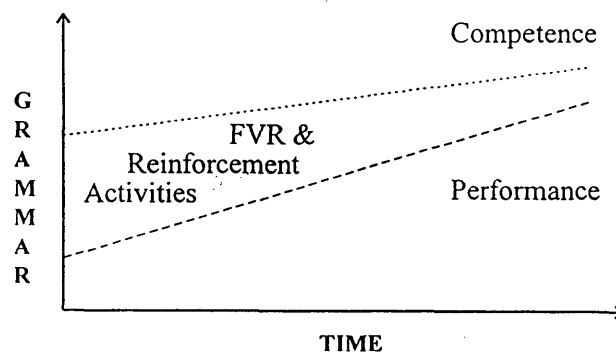
Design

The project is designed for intermediate university students, who show understanding of grammatical structure and a range of texts. The project is planned to run for one semester (about 3 - 4 months), and hopefully to have as many students as possible to join the project. Because FVR is a complement to the regular language arts classes, the students need not be informed that they are in an experiment. Free reading takes place outside the classroom, but some activities, such as mini-discussions (or free talking) and oral/book presentations, are designed to help students exchange their reading findings, facilitate the selection of material

for further reading, and motivate students to read more for enjoyment. These reinforcement activities can be arranged in the class, where students can be grouped easily to share their findings and opinions. In addition, students are asked to keep a record every day as a self-report to reveal how much and what sort of material they read and, moreover, how they feel about the material. Hopefully, keeping a record can serve as an indirect way to develop their reading habits.

At the beginning of the semester, questionnaire I is given to find out what sort of books students like and help the teacher to recommend appropriate books for them and group them while at discussion sessions, whereas questionnaire II is handed in at the end of the semester as their self-evaluation and their reactions about the project. The benefits of questionnaire II are 1) to survey their general perceptions about how they read English reading material, 2) to reveal how they access to reading material, and 3) to evaluate the research project.

Control Testing

Pre- & Post- Tests:

Two tests (pre-test and post-test) are given at the beginning and the end of the semester to evaluate students' progress. They should be informed that the scores of these tests will not influence their final scores of their English courses.

Before the experiment all students are given a pre-test of proficiency in grammar. The SAME test is given to all students again at the end of experimental treatment. The pre- and post- tests are administered in class and each one takes about 45 minutes to complete. The results obtained from these tests are used to compare the grammatical proficiency before and after the experimental treatment, and as a measure to assess the effect of FVR on the grammatical competence and possible variation between good and poor readers.

Oral Presentations:

While pre-test and post-test measure students' grammar competence, taped book presentations are evaluated in order to measure their grammar performance. Three taped oral presentations are arranged to evaluate students' active grammar before, during and after the experiment. They should be asked to prepare their

presentations for 5 minutes about the title, the author, summary or their comments of the book they have read. On that day, the teacher has to assemble 3 - 4 students with same reading interest into a group, ask each student to present his speech in his group, and tape their oral performance. Students should be asked to report their names before giving their presentations while taped.

The first presentation is administered during the first week of the semester, but the teacher should ask them to talk about the topic assigned to them rather then the book they read, for they might not finish any book. After students have read some books and shared insights in group discussions, the second presentation is assigned in the middle of the semester and the last presentation at the end of the semester. Both of them are book

presentations. Students can talk about their favourite book or author, or about the topics they have talked about in group discussions. The teacher, also, can suggest specific topics, such as news, fairy tales, relating to students' reading, to motivate students to express their opinions and evoke their interests.

Book presentations
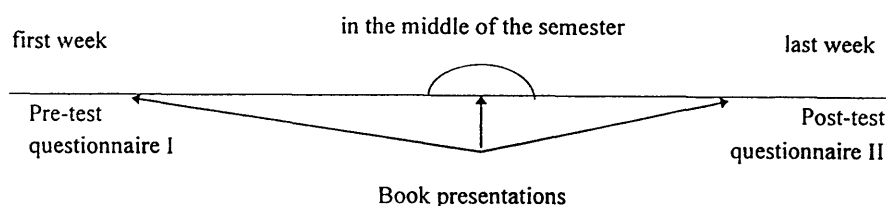
Experimental Treatment

Free Voluntary Reading:

Apart from taking the 2 tests, students are free to select any printed material they like, and to change a new one whenever they wish. Because many students are quick to enthuse but can often be equally quick to lose that enthusiasm, the introduction of the right book at the right time can encourage independent reading. Since it is impossible and time-consuming to ask teachers to have all of them read, the book list coded in levels of vocabulary and kinds of books is to assist students on selecting books of their interests and abilities and to advise teachers on making appropriate recommendations to students. However, graded readers are just one of the choices and they are used to motivate students to read at the beginning stage. After sharing books with others and asking recommendations from the teacher, students should gradually be able to choose any kind of texts they feel interested in and enjoy it.

Keeping Journal:

To promote the comprehension of text and to get more accurate self-report data, students have to use journals to take notes and add their own reflections after each reading. Notes can include new vocabulary or exemplification, quotations, statements, summaries, questions raised during reading, students' own feelings or comments about the characters, the setting, their expectations and results. The

journal gives students the chance to interpret text and therefore to reinforce what they have read. Moreover, it creates a visible, permanent record which allows students to interact personally with text. The teacher needs to check their journals every day to ensure record keeping and encourage students to read more and to share books with others.

Mini-discussions:
Opportunities are provided for students to communicate their personal findings through sessions of mini-discussions (free talking) and book presentations.

Discussion of books they have read (with or without the teacher) is encouraged for about 5 minutes a day during the class, so that students can share their reactions about their reading matter with one another and, at the same time, they can be informed and guided on their selections for future reading.

Limitations

Reported leisure reading is not so accurate, so checking the students' record every day is an additional way to ensure and reconfirm the data. Besides, providing access to books is necessary to make free reading more desirable. The teacher should, therefore, introduce students to access to libraries or bookstores and ought to encourage students to share books with others.

Data Analysis : **All analyses will be performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) statistics package.**

To compare the differences before and after the experiment:
1. Data gathered from pre- & post-tests will be calculated to compare the differences of students` grammar and reading scores before and after the experiment.
2. Three prepared oral presentations arranged at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the semester will be taped and evaluated.

To compare the differences between good and poor readers
1. Because journals will show students' reading records and therefore distinguish good and poor readers, the top 25% readers and the bottom 25% readers will be chosen to compare their differences in tests, oral presentations, and their performance in other classes if available.
2. These data can also be used to identify what characteristics good readers have and what kind of books they read.

To analyse whether FVR and reinforcement activities help to narrow the gap between students' performance and competence.

Good and poor readers` grammar test scores and oral presentations will be drawn on performance first. Comparison will be made on the differences of the pre-test and the first oral presentation, and of the post-test and the last oral presentation.

APPENDIX B : Questionnaire I & II

Questionnaire I:

A. Please write in the class, date, **the total number of students in the class,** your name, and record started and finished time for students to complete the chart.

Class		No of Students	
Date		Started Time	
Teacher		Finished Time	

B. Please fill in numbers of students present and absent and absentees' names.

No of students present	
No of students absent	

Names of students absent

(1)	(2)
(3)	(4)
(5)	(6)
(7)	(8)
(9)	(10)
(11)	(12)
(13)	(14)
(15)	(16)

Notes:
1. Please make sure you have collected all the copies of the questionnaire you handed out.
2. Please remember to ask those absentees or new students to fill in the questionnaire when they are present.

Questionnaire I

A. Please Tell Us Who You Are and What Class You Are In:

Name			University	
Sex	Male	Female	Class	
Age			Time	

B. Please Tell Us about Yourself and Your Reading Habits When You Read in <u>English</u>:

We would like to know more about you and your reading habits, which will help us to group you with people of the same interest and recommend appropriate books to you. Your information is crucial to the free reading program, so please complete the questionnaire by choosing the appropriate response, which <u>first comes to your mind</u>.

1. Have you ever done reading in English in your free time (<u>apart from your course texts or material related to your work</u>)? (Please circle number)

1	Yes	2	No (Go to 18)

The following statements ask about your experience of reading English material <u>in your free time</u>. Please <u>circle one number</u> in each row to indicate if you agree or disagree with the statements below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I don't know
2. I have time to read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
3. I can concentrate on reading well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
4. I can read uninterruptedly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
5. I like reading English material.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
6. I have a lively imagination.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
7. I have done lots of written exercises, such as summaries and essays of the texts I read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
8. I have learned lots of words from reading.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
9. I can find books I like to read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
10. I think reading benefits my reading comprehension.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
11. I think reading benefits my writing style.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
12. I think reading benefits my grammar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
13. I think reading benefits my spelling.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
14. I think reading benefits my vocabulary.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
15. I think reading benefits my general English proficiency.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
16. I often talk with someone about something I have read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8

17. Do you still read some English material in your free time (<u>apart from your course texts or material related to your work</u>)? (Please circle number)

1	Yes (Go to 19)	2	No

18. Why don't you read English material (<u>apart from your course texts or material related to your work</u>) in your free time? (Please circle the reason(s) you agree with, but if you have more than 5 answers please circle only the top 5 reasons.)

1	No books match my needs	2	Grammar difficulty	3	Vocabulary difficulty
4	No books match my interest	5	English phobia	6	No books available
7	Don't know what to read	8	Don't like reading	9	Don't have time to read
10	No quiet reading atmosphere	11	No one asked me to read	12	No need to read
13	Others (Specify)			14	I don't know.

19. Do you think you need to be able to read in English? (Please circle number)

1	Yes	2	No (Go to 21)	8	I don't know

20. Why do you think you need to be able to read in English? (Please circle the reason(s) you agree with, but if you have more than 3 answers please circle only the top 3 reasons.)

1	To solve a problem	2	For study
3	For information	4	For work (Getting or holding a job)
5	For promotion in job	6	For pleasure
7	For course requirements	8	For increasing knowledge
9	For exam	10	To kill time
11	Other (Please specify)		

21. What kind of English material do you like to read -- or what kind of English material do you think you would like to read? (Please circle the item(s) you agree with, but if you have more than 5 items please circle only the top 5 items.)

1	Film & TV Tie-ins	2	Science fiction	3	Classics
4	Adventure / Thriller	5	Crime / Detection	6	Romance
7	War	8	Westerns	9	Mystery/Horror/Ghost
10	Humour	11	Short stories	12	Biographies
13	Comics	14	Material related to work/study	15	Magazines
16	Newspapers	17	Other (Please specify)		

22. In your opinion, what strategy would you utilise for becoming a good reader? (Please circle the item(s) you agree with, but if you have more than 5 items please circle only the top 5 items.)

1	Have lots of time for reading	2	Have lots of written exercises
3	Learn how to sound out words	4	Do much reading for homework
5	Have many good books available	6	Like reading
7	Concentrate well	8	Learn the meaning of lots of words
9	Have attempts at difficult articles	10	Have a lively imagination
11	Talk with someone about something you read	12	Read a lot of books
13	Selectively read books of my interests only	14	Read regularly
15	Other (Specify)		

C. Please Tell Us about Yourself and Your Reading Habits When You Read in <u>Chinese</u>:

23. Do you like reading? Please circle the one best describes your general attitude toward reading in Chinese.

1	Strongly agree	2	Agree	3	Slightly agree
4	Slightly disagree	5	Disagree	6	Strongly disagree

How often do you read the Chinese material for your enjoyment in your free time? (Please circle one number in each row.)

	More than once a day	Once a day	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month	Less than once a month	Never
24. Newspapers	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Magazines	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Comics	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Different kinds of books	1	2	3	4	5	6

28. What kind of Chinese material do you like to read for enjoyment? (Please circle the item(s) you agree with, but if you have more than 5 items please circle only the top 5 items.)

1	Film & TV Tie-ins	2	Science fiction	3	Classics
4	Adventure / Thriller	5	Crime / Detection	6	Romance
7	War	8	Westerns	9	Mystery/Horror/Ghost
10	Humour	11	Short stories	12	Biographies
13	Comics	14	Material related to work/study	15	Magazines
16	Newspapers	17	Other (Please specify)		

Thank you for giving your time for this questionnaire.

問　卷　一

A. 首先請填寫下列基本資料

姓　名		性　別	□ 男　　　□ 女
年　齡		班　級	

B. 請填寫問題1-22，您的回答將可幫助我們把您與有相同興趣的同學分成一組，也可讓我們推薦適合的書籍給您。請選出第一個映入腦海的答案。

1. 你曾經閱讀過課本外的英文刊物嗎？（請打 ∨ ）
　　□ 1. 有　　　　　　□ 2. 沒有（接問題18）

問題2-16，是嘗試了解您過去英文閱讀的經驗，請圈選符合您觀點的號碼。

	非常同意	同意	有些同意	有些不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不知道
2. 我有時間做課外閱讀	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
3. 我總能專心閱讀	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
4. 我閱讀時不會受干擾	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
5. 我喜歡閱讀自己有興趣的英文刊物	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
6. 我有豐富的想像力	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
7. 閱讀後，我喜歡記下精采的句子	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
8. 從閱讀中，我學會了許多生字	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
9. 我能找到自己喜歡的書籍閱讀	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
10. 我認為課外閱讀對我的閱讀能力有幫助。	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
11. 我認為課外閱讀對我的寫作有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
12. 我認為課外閱讀對我的文法有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
13. 我認為課外閱讀對我的拼字能力有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
14. 我認為課外閱讀對增加字彙有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
15. 我認為課外閱讀對我整體英文能力有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
16. 我時常和人們談起我所讀過的書籍	1	2	3	4	5	6	8

17. 你是否仍有英文閱讀的習慣（課內書籍不算）？請打 ∨
　　□ 1. 有（接問題19）　　　　　□ 2. 沒有

請 翻 頁

18. 你沒有或不再閱讀英文刊物（課內書籍除外）的理由是：（請選出（∨）你的理由，若多於5個理由，請選出前5個理由）
    - ☐ 1. 沒有我想要念的書籍
    - ☐ 2. 文法太難
    - ☐ 3. 字彙太難
    - ☐ 4. 沒有我有興趣的書籍
    - ☐ 5. 英文恐懼症
    - ☐ 6. 沒有英文刊物可念
    - ☐ 7. 不知該念什麼
    - ☐ 8. 不喜歡閱讀
    - ☐ 9. 沒時間念
    - ☐ 10. 沒有安靜的讀書環境
    - ☐ 11. 沒人要我念
    - ☐ 12. 不需要念
    - ☐ 13. 其他（請註明）_____

19. 你認為你有必要閱讀英文刊物嗎？（請打∨）
    - ☐ 1. 有
    - ☐ 2. 沒有（接問題 21）

20. 你閱讀英文刊物的理由是：（若多於 3 個理由，請選出（∨）前 3 個理由）
    - ☐ 1. 解決問題
    - ☐ 2. 求學進修
    - ☐ 3. 獲取資訊
    - ☐ 4. 未來找工作
    - ☐ 5. 殺時間
    - ☐ 6. 興趣
    - ☐ 7. 課程需要
    - ☐ 8. 增加知識
    - ☐ 9. 考試
    - ☐ 10. 其他（請註明）_____

21. 你比較喜歡或你想你會比較喜歡哪一類英文刊物？（若多於 5 類，請選出（∨）你最喜歡的 5 類）
    - ☐ 1. 原著小說
    - ☐ 2. 科幻小說
    - ☐ 3. 文學名著
    - ☐ 4. 冒險、懸疑小說
    - ☐ 5. 犯罪、偵探小說
    - ☐ 6. 愛情小說
    - ☐ 7. 戰爭小說
    - ☐ 8. 西部小說
    - ☐ 9. 神祕、恐怖小說或鬼故事
    - ☐ 10. 幽默小品
    - ☐ 11. 短篇小說
    - ☐ 12. 傳記
    - ☐ 13. 漫畫
    - ☐ 14. 與課業相關的刊物
    - ☐ 15. 雜誌
    - ☐ 16. 報紙
    - ☐ 17. 其他（請註明）_____

22. 你認為好讀者的條件是：（若多於 5 項，請選出（∨）你最贊同的前 5 項）
    - ☐ 1. 有時間閱讀
    - ☐ 2. 多做寫作練習
    - ☐ 3. 閱讀時念出聲來
    - ☐ 4. 多一些閱讀作業
    - ☐ 5. 擁有許多好書
    - ☐ 6. 喜歡閱讀
    - ☐ 7. 能專心閱讀
    - ☐ 8. 字彙能力強
    - ☐ 9. 多閱讀艱澀的文章
    - ☐ 10. 有豐富的想像力
    - ☐ 11. 多與人們談論閱讀過刊物
    - ☐ 12. 多讀些書
    - ☐ 13. 只閱讀自己有興趣的書
    - ☐ 14. 定期閱讀
    - ☐ 15. 其他（請註明）_____

C. 問題 23-28 是關於您的中文閱讀：

23. 你喜歡閱讀中文刊物嗎？（請打 ∨ ）
　　□ 1. 非常同意　　□ 2. 同意　　□ 3. 有點同意
　　□ 4. 有點不同意　□ 5. 不同意　□ 6. 非常不同意

你閱讀下列中文刊物的頻率是：（請圈選）

	一天多於一次	一天一次	一禮拜一、二次	一個月一、二次	少於一個月一次	從來沒有
24. 報紙	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. 雜誌	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. 漫畫	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. 其他書籍	1	2	3	4	5	6

28. 你喜歡的中文刊物是：（若多於 5 種，請選出（∨）前 5 種）
　　□ 1. 原著小說　　　　□ 2. 科幻小說　　　　□ 3. 文學名著
　　□ 4. 冒險、懸疑小說　□ 5. 犯罪、偵探小說　□ 6. 愛情小說
　　□ 7. 戰爭小說　　　　□ 8. 西部小說　　　　□ 9. 神祕、恐怖小說或鬼故事
　　□ 10. 幽默小品　　　　□ 11. 短篇小說　　　　□ 12. 傳記
　　□ 13. 漫畫　　　　　　□ 14. 與課業相關的刊物　□ 15. 雜誌
　　□ 16. 報紙　　　　　　□ 17. 其他（請註明）＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

繳交前，請您檢查是否已回答每一問題，謝謝！

Questionnaire II

A. Please write in the class, date, your name, **the total number of students in the class,** and record started and finished time for students to complete the questionnaire.

Class		No of Students	
Date		Started Time	
Teacher		Finished Time	

B. Please fill in number of students present and absent and absentees' names.

No of students present	
No of students absent	

Names of students absent

(1)	(2)
(3)	(4)
(5)	(6)
(7)	(8)
(9)	(10)
(11)	(12)
(13)	(14)
(15)	(16)

Notes:
1. Please make sure you have collected all the copies of the questionnaire you handed out.
2. Please remember to ask those absentees to fill out the questionnaire next time they are present.

Questionnaire II

The Free reading program is designed to encourage you to read a range of material for pleasure and for language development. It is, in other words, to develop your reading habit and therefore to promote your own English proficiency to advanced level. In order to upgrade the program to the requirement of students with different backgrounds, it is very useful for us to have your opinions since you have just completed the free reading program.

Please complete the following questionnaire choosing the appropriate response which first comes to your mind and making any comments or suggestions you feel relevant.

First, please tell us who you are and what class you are in:

Name				University	
Sex	Male	Female		Class	
Age				Time	

The following statements ask about your experience of reading English material of your interests in your free time during the semester. Please circle one number in each row to indicate if you agree or disagree with the statements below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I don't know
1. I have time to read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
2. I can concentrate on reading well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
3. I can read uninterruptedly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
4. I like free reading.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
5. I have a lively imagination.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
6. I have done lots of written exercises, such as summaries and essays about texts I read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
7. I have learned lots of words from reading.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
8. I can find books I like to read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
9. I think free reading benefits my reading comprehension.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
10. I think free reading benefits my writing style.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
11. I think free reading benefits my grammar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
12. I think free reading benefits my spelling.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
13. I think free reading benefits my vocabulary.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
14. I think free reading benefits my general English proficiency.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
15. I often talk with someone about something I have read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
16. I will continue free reading after the end of the semester.	1	2	3	4	5	6	8

17. What kind of English material do you usually read for enjoyment during the semester? (Please circle your favourite kind/kinds of English material. If you have read more than 5 kinds of books for enjoyment, please only circle the top 5 favourites.)

1	Film & TV Tie-ins	2	Science fiction	3	Classics
4	Adventure / Thriller	5	Crime / Detection	6	Romance
7	War	8	Westerns	9	Mystery/Horror/Ghost
10	Humour	11	Short stories	12	Biographies
13	Comics	14	Material related to work/study	15	Magazines
16	Newspapers	17	Other (Please specify)		

18. How did you select the books you like to read <u>during the semester</u>? (Please circle your way(s) of selecting books. If there are lots of ways, please only circle the top 3 ways.)

1	Recommended by classmates/friends	2	Recommended by the teacher
3	Seen on TV or movies	4	Subject appeal
5	Read another in same series	6	Cover looked interesting
7	Read another book by same author	8	Title sounded interesting
9	Met with before coming to the Centre	10	Read this book before
11	The book was on best seller list	12	A gift
13	Other reason (Please specify)		

How often do you read the English material for your enjoyment in your free time <u>during the semester</u>? (Please circle number.)

	More than once a day	Once a day	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month	Less than once a month	Never
19. Newspapers	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Magazines	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. Comics	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Different kinds of books	1	2	3	4	5	6

How long on average do you spend reading the English material for your enjoyment in your free time <u>during the semester</u>? (Please circle number)

	More than 3 hours	1-3 hours	1/2 - 1 hours	15-30 minutes	Less than 15 mins.	Not Available
23. Newspapers	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Magazines	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Comics	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Different kinds of books	1	2	3	4	5	6

27. Where did the English material you read for enjoyment <u>during the semester</u> come from? (Please circle the sources. If your books come from lots of different sources, please only circle the top 3 sources.)

1	Public library	2	Gift	3	Borrowing from friends
4	Personal Purchase	5	School	6	Other (Please specify)

28. Why did you choose these books / magazines / newspapers you read during the semester? (Please circle the reason(s) why you read these English material. If there are lots of reasons, please only circle the top 3 reasons.)

1	To solve a problem	2	For study
3	For information	4	For work (Getting or holding a job)
5	For promotion in job	6	For pleasure
7	For course requirements	8	For increasing knowledge
9	For exam	10	To kill time
11	Other (Please specify)		

29. Do you read continuously during the semester? (Please circle number)

1	Yes (Go to 31)	2	No

30. Why did you stop reading English material continuously in your free time during the semester? (Please circle the reason(s) you agree with, but if you have more than 3 reasons please circle only the top 3 reasons.)

1	No books match my needs	2	Grammar difficulty	3	Vocabulary difficulty
4	No books match my interest	5	English phobia	6	No books available
7	Don't know what to read	8	Don't like reading	9	Don't have time to read
10	No quiet reading atmosphere	11	No one asked me to read	12	No need to read
13	Others (Specify)			14	I don't know.

31. Which book did you like best during the semester? However, if you don't have any favourite books, go to 33.

32. What did you like about it? (Please circle the reason(s) why you like the book. If there are lots of reasons, please only circle the top 3 reasons.)

1	Amusing	2	Interesting	3	Exciting
4	Informative	5	Character-identification	6	Being made to feel sad
7	Being frightened	8	Unpredictable	9	Rewarding
10	Other reason (Please specify)				

33. Which book did you like the least during the semester? However, if you don't have any dislikes, go to 35.

34. What did you not like about it? (Please circle the reason(s) why you did not like the book. If there are lots of reasons, please only circle the top 3 reasons.)

1	Boring/repetitive	2	Easy	3	Long
4	Complicated	5	Childish	6	Difficult language
7	Puzzling	8	Weird	9	Frustrating
10	Other reasons (Please specify)				

35. Did you ever recommend books / magazines to your classmates during the semester? (Please circle number)

1	Yes	2	No (Go to 37)

36. Have any of your classmates started reading the book / magazine you recommended to them during the semester? (Please circle number)

1	Yes	2	No

37. Which parts of the free reading program did you enjoy most? (Please circle the one that you liked most.) If you don't have any favourite parts, go to 39.

1	Keeping a journal	2	Book presentations	3	Mini-discussions
4	Sharing books	5	Free reading	6	The teacher's encouragement
7	Other (Specify)				

38. Why did you like it best?

39. Which parts didn't you like? (Please circle the one(s) you didn't like.) If you don't have any dislikes, please go to 41.

1	Keeping a journal	2	Book presentations	3	Mini-discussions
4	Sharing books	5	Free reading	6	The teacher's encouragement
7	Other (Specify)				

40. Why did you think so?

41. Has the free reading program made any difference to your reading in Chinese? (Please circle number)

1	I read less in Chinese than before.	3	I read more in Chinese than before.
2	I read the same amount in Chinese as before.	4	I don't know.

42. Please offer some suggestions or comments for us to improve the free reading program. (Continue on reverse if necessary)

Thank you for giving your time for this questionnaire.

<center>問　　卷　　二</center>

你所參與的課外閱讀計劃是為了鼓勵您多閱讀自己有興趣且能增進語文能力的刊物。換句話說，是為了藉著英文閱讀習慣的培養，而達到英文能力提昇的目的。我們十分珍惜您在參與計劃後的感想，請回答下列各項問題，圈選（○）或勾出（ˇ）第一個映入腦海的回答，並歡迎在空白處寫下您的意見與建議。

首先，請填寫您的基本資料

姓　　名		性　　別	□ 男　　　□ 女
年　　齡		班　　級	

問題1-16是有關您參與課外閱讀計劃，閱讀自己有興趣刊物的經驗。

	非常同意	同意	有些同意	有些不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不知道
1. 我有時間做課外閱讀	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
2. 我總能專心閱讀	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
3. 我閱讀時不會受干擾	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
4. 我喜歡閱讀自己有興趣的英文刊物	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
5. 我有豐富的想像力	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
6. 閱讀後，我喜歡記下精采的句子	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
7. 從閱讀中，我學會了許多生字	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
8. 我能找到自己喜歡的書籍閱讀	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
9. 我認為課外閱讀對我的閱讀能力有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
10. 我認為課外閱讀對我的寫作有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
11. 我認為課外閱讀對我的文法有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
12. 我認為課外閱讀對我的拼字能力有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
13. 我認為課外閱讀對增加字彙有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
14. 我認為課外閱讀對我整體英文能力有幫助	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
15. 我時常和人們談起我所讀過的書籍	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
16. 課程結束後，我會持續閱讀英文刊物	1	2	3	4	5	6	8

<div align="right">請 翻 頁</div>

17. 參與課外閱讀計劃期間，你通常閱讀哪一類刊物？（若多於 5 類，請選出（ˇ）你最常讀的 5 類）

☐ 1. 原著小說 　☐ 2. 科幻小說 　☐ 3. 文學名著

☐ 4. 冒險、懸疑小說 ☐ 5. 犯罪、偵探小說 ☐ 6. 愛情小說

☐ 7. 戰爭小說 　☐ 8. 西部小說 　☐ 9. 神秘、恐怖小說或鬼故事

☐ 10. 幽默小品 　☐ 11. 短篇小說 　☐ 12. 傳記

☐ 13. 漫畫 　☐ 14. 與課業相關的刊物 ☐ 15. 雜誌

☐ 16. 報紙 　☐ 17. 其他（請註明）_____

18. 你如何選擇參與計劃中所喜歡念的刊物？（若多於 5 種方式，請選出（ˇ）5 種最常用的方式）

☐ 1. 同學、朋友推薦 　☐ 2. 老師推薦

☐ 3. 看過原著的電視或電影 ☐ 4. 主題吸引

☐ 5. 看過同系列作品 　☐ 6. 封面有趣

☐ 7. 讀過同一作者的書籍 ☐ 8. 書名有趣

☐ 9. 以前聽過或見過這本書 ☐ 10. 以前讀過

☐ 11. 暢銷書 　☐ 12. 禮物

☐ 13. 其他（請註明）_____

你閱讀這些刊物的頻率是：（請圈選號碼）

	一天多於一次	一天一次	一週升一、二次	一個月一、二次	少於一個月一次	從來沒有
19. 報紙	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. 雜誌	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. 漫畫	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. 其他書籍	1	2	3	4	5	6

每次平均閱讀這些刊物的時間是：（請圈選號碼）

	一天多於一次	一天一次	一週升一、二次	一個月一、二次	少於一個月一次	從來沒有
23. 報紙	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. 雜誌	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. 漫畫	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. 其他書籍	1	2	3	4	5	6

27. 你所閱讀過的刊物是打哪兒來？（請打ˇ）

☐ 1. 市立圖書館 　☐ 2. 禮物 　☐ 3. 向朋友借的

☐ 4. 自己買的 　☐ 5. 學校 　☐ 6. 其他（請註明）_____

28. 你選擇這些刊物是為了：（請打 ∨ ）
　　☐ 1. 解決問題　　　☐ 2. 求學進修　　　☐ 3. 獲取資訊
　　☐ 4. 未來找工作　　☐ 5. 殺時間　　　　☐ 6. 興趣
　　☐ 7. 課程需求　　　☐ 8. 增加知識　　　☐ 9. 考試
　　☐ 10. 其他（請註明）_____

29. 在參加課外閱讀期間，是否一直保有閱讀習慣？（ 請打 ∨ ）
　　☐ 1. 有（接問題 31 ）　　　☐ 2. 沒有

30. 你間斷英文閱讀的原因是：（請打 ∨ ）
　　☐ 1. 沒有我想要念的書籍　　☐ 2. 文法太難　　　☐ 3. 字彙太難
　　☐ 4. 沒有我有興趣的書籍　　☐ 5. 英文恐懼症　　☐ 6. 沒有英文刊物可念
　　☐ 7. 不知該念什麼　　　　　☐ 8. 不喜歡閱讀　　☐ 9. 沒時間念
　　☐ 10. 沒有安靜的讀書環境　　☐ 11. 沒人要我念　　☐ 12. 不需要念
　　☐ 13. 其他（請註明）_____

31. 參與課外閱讀期間，你最喜歡的刊物是 _____
（ 若沒有特別喜歡的刊物，請接問題 33 ）

32. 你喜歡這一刊物是因為它：（請打 ∨ ）
　　☐ 1. 有趣　　　　　　　　☐ 2. 刺激　　　　☐ 3. 提供豐富的資訊
　　☐ 4. 和自己個性遭遇類似　☐ 5. 情節可憐　　☐ 6. 恐怖
　　☐ 7. 劇情曲折，超乎想像　☐ 8. 念完後有許多收獲
　　☐ 9. 其他（請註明）_____

33. 參與課外閱讀期間，你最不喜歡的刊物是 _____
　　（ 若沒有不喜歡的刊物，請接問題 35 ）

34. 你不喜歡這一刊物，是因為它：（請打 ∨ ）
　　☐ 1. 無聊／情節重複　☐ 2. 太簡單　　☐ 3. 太冗長
　　☐ 4. 情節太複雜　　　☐ 5. 太孩子氣　☐ 6. 用字艱深
　　☐ 7. 看不懂　　　　　☐ 8. 荒謬　　　☐ 9. 讓人洩氣
　　☐ 10. 其他（請註明）_____

35. 你是否曾推薦刊物給同學？（請打 ∨ ）
　　☐ 1. 是　　　　　　☐ 2. 否（接問題 37 ）

請 翻 頁

36. 有沒有同學念你推薦的書籍或雜誌呢？（請打 v ）
    ☐ 1. 有 　　　　　　　☐ 2. 沒有

37. 整個課外閱讀計劃，你最喜歡哪一部份？（如果沒有喜歡的部份，接問題 39 ）
    ☐ 1. 日誌記錄　　☐ 2. 讀書報告　　☐ 3. 迷你討論　☐ 4. 書籍分享
    ☐ 5. 自由閱讀　　☐ 6. 老師鼓勵　　☐ 7. 其他（請註明）_____

38. 你喜歡的理由是 _____。

39. 你最不喜歡的是哪一部份？（如果沒有不喜歡的部份，接問題 41 ）
    ☐ 1. 日誌記錄　　☐ 2. 讀書報告　　☐ 3. 迷你討論　　☐ 4. 書籍分享
    ☐ 5. 自由閱讀　　☐ 6. 老師鼓勵　　☐ 7. 其他（請註明）_____

40. 你不喜歡的理由是 _____。

41. 你覺得英文課外閱讀有沒有影響你中文閱讀？
    ☐ 1. 中文閱讀比以前少　　☐ 2. 中文閱讀和以前一樣多
    ☐ 3. 中文閱讀比以前多　　☐ 4. 不知道

42. 請提供您的寶貴意見與建議

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

繳交前，請您檢查是否已回答每一問題，謝謝！

APPENDIX C : Teacher's Questionnaire

Teacher's Questionnaire

Your opinions about the free reading program will help to upgrade the program to meet the needs and abilities of students. It is very important to have the suggestions and comments from you since you just ran the program.

How often did you ...? (Please circle number)

	Every day	Every 2 days	Once a week	Twice a week	Twice a mon.	Once a mon.	Once a semester	Never
1. check students' journals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2. administer mini-discussions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3. administer book presentations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

How much time on average did it take for ...? (Please circle number)

	More than 30 mins	20-30 mins	15-20 mins	10-15 mins	5-10 mins	Less than 5 mins
4. checking students' journals	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. each mini-discussion	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. each book presentation	1	2	3	4	5	6

7. How did you motivate students to read more? (Please circle the statement(s) you agree with, but if you have more than 5 answers please circle only the top 5 statements.

1	Read aloud brief passages from a book, stop the story at a suitably tantalising point.
2	Show new books to class and talk a little about each one.
3	Get a student to talk about his favourite book.
4	Invite visitors to talk about books.
5	Encourage students to talk about their reading matter to share their reactions with one another.
6	Group students and enable them to undertake common tasks.
7	Play cassette or video tape related to one of the graded books to evoke students' interest.
8	Discuss books or authors with students.
9	Talk about what I am reading with students.
10	Refer to books as I teach.
11	Other (Please specify)

Did you have difficulties conducting ...?					If yes, what difficulties did you have?
8. journal checking	1	Yes	2	No	
9. mini-discussions	1	Yes	2	No	
10. book presentations	1	Yes	2	No	

11. Please offer some suggestions or comments about the role of FVR (free voluntary reading) in improving reading and grammar. (Continue on reverse if necessary)

Thank you for giving your time for this questionnaire.

APPENDIX D : Test

Pre-Test   (FORM D4P4D4)

A. Please write in the class, date, **the total number of students in the class**, your name, and record started and finished time for students to complete the test.

Class		No of students	
Date		Started Time	
Teacher		Finished Time	

B. Please fill in numbers of students present and absent and absentees' names.

No of students present	
No of students absent	

Names of students absent

(1)	(2)
(3)	(4)
(5)	(6)
(7)	(8)
(9)	(10)
(11)	(12)
(13)	(14)
(15)	(16)

Notes:
1. Please make sure you have collected all the copies of the test you handed out.
2. Please remember to ask those absentees or new students to make up the test when they are present.

Pre-test

TIME 50 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES
Write your name, your student ID number, your department and the class you are in in the spaces at the bottom of this page. Write your name and your English score of the Entrance Examination on the answer sheet.

This paper requires you to complete **all three sections**.

For each question write your answer on the **separate answer sheet**. Write clearly in pen in the numbered spaces provided.

You may write on the question paper if you wish, but you must **transfer your answers to the separate answer sheet** within the time limit.

At the end of the examination you should hand in both the question paper and the answer sheet.

Department ....

Class ....

Chinese Name...

Student ID No...

This question paper consists of 3 pages. [Turn over]

Session I: **Form D4**

For questions 1-15, read the article below and then decide which word on the bottom part best fits each space. Put the letter you choose for each question in the correct box on your answer sheet. The exercise begins with an example (0).

CARROT ADDICTION

Eating carrots may be as (0) ... as cigarette smoking and every bit as difficult to give up, according to recent research. (1) ... it has been known since (2) ... 1900s that excessive carrot intake can turn the skin orange, the psychological effects of (3) ... behaviour are only just coming to light. One woman patient (4) ... was eating a kilogram of raw carrots a day had to be treated in a psychiatric hospital. Another woman started consuming huge quantities of carrots (5) ... pregnant and managed to stop for 15 years after the baby was born. The habit resumed (6) ... an illness when she resorted (7) ... buying and eating carrots secretly. Switching to (8) ... vegetable helped reduce her (9) ... . She now survives happily (10) ... a carrot-free diet. Another case concerns a man who sought help to (11) ... tobacco. His wife advised him to replace smoking (12) ... eating vegetables. He was soon consuming up (13) ... five bunches of carrots a day. The man abandoned the carrot habit. (14) ... , he resumed smoking. The research suggests that the psychological dependence arises not only from the carotene (15) ... in the vegetable, but also from some other ingredient. He says that the withdrawal symptoms are so intense that the addicts get hold of and consume carrots even in socially unacceptable situations!

0	A	addictive	B	addiction	C	addicted	D	addict
1	A	Because	B	When	C	Although	D	As
2	A	an early	B	the early	C	early	D	earlier
3	A	some	B	another	C	such	D	any
4	A	whom	B	which	C	what	D	who
5	A	when	B	if	C	once	D	though
6	A	owing to	B	despite	C	after	D	because of
7	A	with	B	to	C	from	D	in
8	A	an	B	a	C	the	D	another
9	A	dependent	B	depend	C	depending	D	dependency
10	A	on	B	with	C	without	D	for
11	A	give out	B	give over	C	give up	D	give away
12	A	with	B	for	C	over	D	to
13	A	in	B	for	C	with	D	to
14	A	Otherwise	B	However	C	Therefore	D	Besides
15	A	contained	B	containing	C	contains	D	contain

Do not forget to put your answers on the answer sheet.

Example: | 0 | A |

Session II: **Form P4**

In most lines in the following text, there is one unnecessary word. It is **either** grammatically incorrect or does not fit in with the sense of the text. For each numbered line **16-29**, find this word and then write it in the space on your answer sheet. Some lines are correct. Indicate these lines with a tick (✓) in the box. The exercise begins with three examples (0).

HAY FEVER

0 Hay fever is the most common allergy there is. It is widespread among children and teenagers,

0 although they often grow out of it. You are also prone to hay fever if you have another allergy and, as

0 like other allergies, it seems to run in families. That what's more it's on the increase - studies

16 throughout the Europe show a steady growth in the number of sufferers in the past 20 years.

17 Hay fever has a little to do with hay. It's actually caused by pollen from trees, grasses and weeds

18 which is are dispersed into the air during spring and summer. When sufferers come into contact with

19 pollen-laden air, since their immune system starts working overtime and releases histamines and other

20 chemicals which trigger all the classic hay fever symptoms - a stuffy, runny nose, a sneezing, an itchy

21 or sore throat and watery eyes. Although the hay fever season peaks in June and July, some of people

22 are allergic to tree pollens are released in February and March, and others react to weed pollens that

are around from spring to autumn.

23 Weather is all-important. It determines on when the hay fever season starts and how much pollen is

24 in the air each day. The cooler and drier the spring, the later the season. Pollen counts are lower on

25 dull, damp days - when less pollen is being lifted off the plants - and higher on hot, dry days. Wind

26 dilutes pollen, so sufferers should make for the coast where sea breezes blow the pollen away.

27 Mountain regions are another haven as their climate and altitude keep counts low. Cities also have

28 lower pollen counts than country areas. In low-lying grassland regions the count can be five times

29 higher than in the cities, although there's now evidence that city pollutants can bring on hay fever

symptoms.

Do not forget to put your answers on the answer sheet.

Examples:

0	✓
0	as
0	That

Session III:

For questions 30-35 read the following regulations for workers about what to do in case of fire. Use the information to decide which word best fits each space in the revised informal instructions. Put the letter you choose for each question in the correct box on your answer sheet. The exercise begins with an example (0).

Form D4

EXTRACT FROM COMPANY REGULATIONS

PROCEDURES IN CASE OF FIRE

Should a fire commence and be observed then a decision must be taken as to whether it is feasible to make an attempt to extinguish it. It the person who discovers the fire makes the judgement that it cannot be tackled alone, then the fire bell should be rung.

In order to reduce the possibility of death or serious injury through fire, the management has decided, after due consultation, to recommend that every employee, on hearing the fire bell ring, should cease whatever activity he or she is engaged in and vacate the room in order to effect an escape via the route shown below.

In the event of any employee discovering the stairway blocked or smoke filled, he or she should use the fire escape forthwith and under no circumstances think about making use of the lifts. It is imperative that no employee returns to the building unless authorised to do so.

The fire officer on each floor has the duty to ascertain that all personnel have vacated the rooms and that all doors and windows have been closed.

REVISED INSTRUCTIONS

FIRE - WHAT TO DO!

If (0) ... a fire start, decide whether you can try to (30) ... . If you can't tackle the fire alone, ring the fire bell.

| 0 | A you see | B you saw | C there is | D there was |
| 30 | A put out | B get out | C put it out | D get it out |

We have (31) ... to the staff before deciding what should be done to reduce the risks from fire. (32) ... you hear the fire bell, (33) ... what you're doing and get out of the building by the route shown.

31	A said	B told	C talked	D informed
32	A Unless	B Since	C Though	D If
33	A forget	B no matter	C check	D stop

If you find the stairs blocked or filled with smoke, use the fire escape immediately and don't even (34) ... using the lifts. Don't go back for any reason unless you have permission.

| 34 | A try | B decide | C consider | D attempt |

The fire officer for each floor will (35) ... that everyone has left the building and that the windows and doors are closed.

| 35 | A prove | B allow | C make sure | D find out |

Do not forget to put your answers on the answer sheet.
Example: ░0░ ░A░ ░░░ ░░░

No:

ANSWER SHEET   Pre-test

Please enter your name and your English score of the Entrance Examination.

Chinese Name:	
English Score :	

Put one letter for each question in the correct box.

Section I					
1		6		11	
2		7		12	
3		8		13	
4		9		14	
5		10		15	

Write the word you think should be deleted, or tick (✓) if the line is correct, for each question in the correct box.

Section II					
16		21		26	
17		22		27	
18		23		28	
19		24		29	
20		25			

Put one letter for each question in the correct box.

Section III					
30		32		34	
31		33		35	

Post-Test (FORM D4P4D4)

A. Please write in the class, date, **the total number of students in the class,** your name, and record started and finished time for students to complete the test.

Class		No of students	
Date		Started Time	
Teacher		Finished Time	

B. Please fill in numbers of students present and absent and absentees' names.

No of students present	
No of students absent	

Names of students absent

(1)	(2)
(3)	(4)
(5)	(6)
(7)	(8)
(9)	(10)
(11)	(12)
(13)	(14)
(15)	(16)

Notes:
1. Please make sure you have collected all the copies of the test you handed out.
2. Please remember to ask those absentees to make up the test next time they are present.

Post-test

TIME 50 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your name, your student ID number, your department and the class you are in in the spaces at the bottom of this page. Write your name on the answer sheet.

This paper requires you to complete **all three sections**.

For each question write your answer on the **separate answer sheet**. Write clearly in pen in the numbered spaces provided.

You may write on the question paper if you wish, but you must **transfer your answers to the separate answer sheet** within the time limit.

At the end of the examination you should hand in both the question paper and the answer sheet.

Department ....

Class ....

Chinese Name...

Student ID No...

This question paper consists of 3 pages.　　　　[Turn over]

Session I: Form D4

For questions 1-15, read the article below and then decide which word on the bottom part best fits each space. Put the letter you choose for each question in the correct box on your answer sheet. The exercise begins with an example (0).

CARROT ADDICTION

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0	A	addictive	B	addiction	C	addicted	D	addict
1	A	Because	B	When	C	Although	D	As
2	A	an early	B	the early	C	early	D	earlier
3	A	some	B	another	C	such	D	any
4	A	whom	B	which	C	what	D	who
5	A	when	B	if	C	once	D	though
6	A	owing to	B	despite	C	after	D	because of
7	A	with	B	to	C	from	D	in
8	A	an	B	a	C	the	D	another
9	A	dependent	B	depend	C	depending	D	dependency
10	A	on	B	with	C	without	D	for
11	A	give out	B	give over	C	give up	D	give away
12	A	with	B	for	C	over	D	to
13	A	in	B	for	C	with	D	to
14	A	Otherwise	B	However	C	Therefore	D	Besides
15	A	contained	B	containing	C	contains	D	contain

Do not forget to put your answers on the answer sheet.

Example: | 0 | A |

Session II: **Form P4**

In most lines in the following text, there is one **unnecessary** word. It is either grammatically incorrect or does not fit in with the sense of the text. For each numbered line 16-29, find this word and then write it in the space on your answer sheet. Some lines are correct. Indicate these lines with a tick (✓) in the box. The exercise begins with three examples (0).

HAY FEVER

0   Hay fever is the most common allergy there is. It is widespread among children and teenagers,

0   although they often grow out of it. You are also prone to hay fever if you have another allergy and, as

0   like other allergies, it seems to run in families. That what's more it's on the increase - studies

16   throughout the Europe show a steady growth in the number of sufferers in the past 20 years.

17   Hay fever has a little to do with hay. It's actually caused by pollen from trees, grasses and weeds

18   which is are dispersed into the air during spring and summer. When sufferers come into contact with

19   pollen-laden air, since their immune system starts working overtime and releases histamines and other

20   chemicals which trigger all the classic hay fever symptoms - a stuffy, runny nose, a sneezing, an itchy

21   or sore throat and watery eyes. Although the hay fever season peaks in June and July, some of people

22   are allergic to tree pollens are released in February and March, and others react to weed pollens that

    are around from spring to autumn.

23   Weather is all-important. It determines on when the hay fever season starts and how much pollen is

24   in the air each day. The cooler and drier the spring, the later the season. Pollen counts are lower on

25   dull, damp days - when less pollen is being lifted off the plants - and higher on hot, dry days. Wind

26   dilutes pollen, so sufferers should make for the coast where sea breezes blow the pollen away.

27   Mountain regions are another haven as their climate and altitude keep counts low. Cities also have

28   lower pollen counts than country areas. In low-lying grassland regions the count can be five times

29   higher than in the cities, although there's now evidence that city pollutants can bring on hay fever

    symptoms.

Do not forget to put your answers on the answer sheet.

Examples:

0	✓
0	as
0	That

Session III: Form D4

For questions 30-35 read the following regulations for workers about what to do in case of fire. Use the information to decide which word best fits each space in the revised informal instructions. Put the letter you choose for each question in the correct box on your answer sheet. The exercise begins with an example (0).

EXTRACT FROM COMPANY REGULATIONS

PROCEDURES IN CASE OF FIRE

Should a fire commence and be observed then a decision must be taken as to whether it is feasible to make an attempt to extinguish it. It the person who discovers the fire makes the judgement that it cannot be tackled alone, then the fire bell should be rung.

In order to reduce the possibility of death or serious injury through fire, the management has decided, after due consultation, to recommend that every employee, on hearing the fire bell ring, should cease whatever activity he or she is engaged in and vacate the room in order to effect an escape via the route shown below.

In the event of any employee discovering the stairway blocked or smoke filled, he or she should use the fire escape forthwith and under no circumstances think about making use of the lifts. It is imperative that no employee returns to the building unless authorised to do so.

The fire officer on each floor has the duty to ascertain that all personnel have vacated the rooms and that all doors and windows have been closed.

REVISED INSTRUCTIONS

FIRE - WHAT TO DO!

If (0) ... a fire start, decide whether you can try to (30) ... . If you can't tackle the fire alone, ring the fire bell.

| 0 | A you see | B you saw | C there is | D there was |
| 30 | A put out | B get out | C put it out | D get it out |

We have (31) ... to the staff before deciding what should be done to reduce the risks from fire. (32) ... you hear the fire bell, (33) ... what you're doing and get out of the building by the route shown.

31	A said	B told	C talked	D informed
32	A Unless	B Since	C Though	D If
33	A forget	B no matter	C check	D stop

If you find the stairs blocked or filled with smoke, use the fire escape immediately and don't even (34) ... using the lifts. Don't go back for any reason unless you have permission.

| 34 | A try | B decide | C consider | D attempt |

The fire officer for each floor will (35) ... that everyone has left the building and that the windows and doors are closed.

| 35 | A prove | B allow | C make sure | D find out |

Do not forget to put your answers on the answer sheet.

Example: | 0 | A |

No:

ANSWER SHEET   Post-test

Please enter your name.

Chinese Name:	

Put one letter for each question in the correct box.

Section I

1		6		11	
2		7		12	
3		8		13	
4		9		14	
5		10		15	

Write the word you think should be deleted, or tick (✓) if the line is correct, for each question in the correct box.

Section II

16		21		26	
17		22		27	
18		23		28	
19		24		29	
20		25			

Put one letter for each question in the correct box.

Section III

30		32		34	
31		33		35	

Session I: Form D3

For questions 1-15, read the article below and then decide which word on the bottom part best fits each space. Put the letter you choose for each question in the correct box on your answer sheet. The exercise begins with an example (0).

THE LANGUAGE OF TEARS

The ability to weep (0) ... a uniquely human form of emotional response. Some scientists have suggested that human tears are (1) ... of an aquatic past - but this does not seem very likely. We cry from the moment we enter this world, for (2) ... of reasons. Helpless babies cry to persuade their parents that they are ill, hungry or (3) ... . (4) ... they develop they will also cry just to attract parental attention and will often stop when they (5) ... it.

The idea that having a good cry can do you good (6) ... a very old one and now it has scientific validity since recent research into tears (7) ... that they contain a natural painkiller (8) ... enkaphalin. (9) ... fighting sorrow and pain this chemical (10) ... you to feel better. Weeping can increase the quantities of enkaphalin you produce .

(11) ... , in our society we impose restrictions (12) ... this naturally healing activity. Because some people still regard it as a sign of weakness in men, boys in particular are admonished when they cry. This kind of repression can only increase stress, both emotionally and physically.

Tears of emotion also help the body (13) ... itself of toxic chemical waste, for there is more protein in them than in tears (14) ... cold winds or other irritants. Crying comforts, calms and can be very enjoyable - consider the popularity of the highly emotional films (15) ... are commonly called 'weepies'. It seems that people enjoy crying together almost as much as laughing together.

0	A	was	B	is	C	has been	D	will be
1	A	the evidence	B	evidence	C	an evidence	D	evidences
2	A	the number	B	number	C	a number	D	numbers
3	A	comfortably	B	comfortable	C	uncomfortably	D	uncomfortable
4	A	As	B	Before	C	Since	D	While
5	A	get	B	got	C	are getting	D	will get
6	A	are	B	is	C	were	D	was
7	A	shows	B	show	C	has shown	D	have shown
8	A	called	B	calls	C	call	D	calling
9	A	With	B	By	C	Without	D	For
10	A	has	B	helps	C	lets	D	keeps
11	A	Consequently	B	Namely	C	Similarly	D	Unfortunately
12	A	upon	B	in	C	over	D	with
13	A	be rid	B	ridded	C	rid	D	rids
14	A	resulted in	B	resulted from	C	resulting in	D	resulting from
15	A	what	B	who	C	which	D	when

Do not forget to put your answers on the answer sheet.

Session II: Form
  P1

In most lines in the following text, there is one unnecessary word. It is either grammatically incorrect or does not fit in with the sense of the text. For each numbered line 16-29, find this word and then write it in the space on your answer sheet. Some lines are correct. Indicate these lines with a tick (✓) in the box. The exercise begins with two examples (0).

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

0   English has for more than a century and a half been called a

0   world language. The number of people who speak it as for their

16   mother tongue has been estimated being at between three

17   hundred million and four hundred million. It is recognised as an

18   official language in countries in where 1.5 billion people live.

19   In China, the importance which attached to learning English is

20   such so that a televised teaching course drew audiences of up

21   to 100 million. But this spread of English throughout the world

22   is being relatively recent. In the late sixteenth century English

23   was spoken by just under five million of people. The arrival of

24   English in North America was the key step in its world-wide

25   expansion. The United States is a huge commercial market and

26   this one has tended to promote the English language in many

27   of other nations. About eighty per cent of the data stored on

28   the world's computers is believed as to be in English and

29   nowadays the insufficient knowledge of English can be a problem

     in business.

Do not forget to put your answers on the answer sheet.

Examples:	0	✓
	0	for

APPENDIX E : Journal

Free Reading Journal

Free Reading Journal

(Please fill in the chart)

Name	
Age	Sex female male
School	
Class	
Teacher	

Journal Sample

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Mon. Feb. 27	17:40 | 18:00	p.1	As the disease progresses, they suffer increasing memory loss, disorientation and personality change.

Author & Title	
The Times Nov 7 "Reagan revels his suffering from Alzheimer's"	"When the Lord calls me home, whenever that may be, I will leave with the greatest love for this country of ours and eternal optimism for its future." The traumatic later stages of Alzheimer's placed a heavy burden on the patient's family.

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Tue.			

Author & Title	

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Wed. Mar. 1	20 mins	p. 26 | p.32	Approval for drugs to treat some lifethreatening diseases has been speeded up in recent years. HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

Author & Title	
Scientific American March 1995 Faster Evaluation of Vital Drugs	

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Thu. Mar. 2	10:20 | 11:40	p. 358 | p. 395	No man ought to be brought to trial without sufficient evidence that some fair people might conclude beyond a reasonable doubt that he is guilty. (p.366) The terror is over; the sleepless early-morning hours I spent trying to catapult myself ahead in time, envisioning a life of mindless toil during the day, and nights working like half the other inmates on my endless train of *habeas corpus* petitions and, finally, the wary fearful hours of half-sleep on some prison bunk, awaiting whatever perverse terror the night would bring - that horror is past me. (p. 385)

Author & Title	
Scott Turow Presumed Innocent	

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Fri. Mar. 3	15 mins	p.395 | p.401	On this point, she means to say, there must not be even a thought that she might yield. Nothing turned out the way I expected. I never understood the reality of any of it until the trial. Until I sat there. Until I saw what was happening to you, and finally felt how much I didn't want that to be happening.

Author & Title	
Scott Turow Presumed Innocent	

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
S & S Mar. 4/5	about 30 mins	p. 402 | p. 421	Presumed Innocent raises serious questions about the legal system, about its casual corruptions and inequities, about the public and private motivations which often determine matters of life and death.

Author & Title	
Scott Turow Presumed Innocent	

If you want to have your journal back, please fill in the following chart. Your journal will be sent to you after the data have been collected.

University:

Name:

Age:	Sex: Male Female

Mailing Address:

Phone number:

If you have any enquiries about reading or even about studying in the United Kingdom, contact me at the following address. I will try my best to answer your questions.

Maggie Tsai
12 Prince Philip Ave.
Wharley End, Cranfield
Bedford, MK43 0SX
United Kingdom
Tel: 44-1234-751670
Fax: 44-1234-752110
email: L.C.HO@cranfield.ac.uk

Journal Sample

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Mon. Feb. 27	17:40 ⎮ 18:00	p. 1	As the disease progress, they suffer increasing memory loss, disorientation and personality change.

Author & Title	
The Times Nov 7 "Reagan revels his suffering from Alzheimer's"	"When the Lord calls me home, whenever that may be, I will leave with the greatest love for the country of ours and eternal optimism for its future." The traumatic later stages of Alzheimer's placed a heavy burden on the patient's family.

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Tue. Feb. 28	about one hour	p. 395 ⎮ p. 421	Nothing turned out the way I expected. I never understood the reality of any of it until the trial. ... Until I saw what was happening to you, and finally felt how much I didn't want that to be happening. (p. 395)

Author & Title	
Scott Turow Presumed Innocent	Presumed Innocent raises serious questions about the legal system, about its casual corruptions and inequities, about the public and private motivations which often determine matters of life and death.

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Wed. Mar. 1	8:00 ⎮ 8:20	p. 26 ⎮ p. 32	Approval for drugs to treat some lifethreatening diseases has been speeded up in recent years.

Author & Title	
Scientific American March 1995 Faster Evaluation of Vital Drugs	HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

WEEK 18

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Thu.			

Author & Title

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Fri.			

Author & Title

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
S. / S.			

Author & Title

WEEK 1

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Mon.			

Author & Title

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Tue.			

Author & Title

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Wed.			

Author & Title

APPENDIX F : A letter to students

To the learner

Reading is the key element to improve your English ability:

You can improve your English by reading. In fact, reading is one of the best ways for the majority of English native speakers to acquire the language. It is not just advanced learners who benefit - even beginners can be quick to catch on to the advantages of reading. Reading develops not only your knowledge, but also your language proficiency, because:

• **it strengthens your vocabulary ability**
Reading helps you to recognise words and, moreover, to associate words with meanings.

• **it improves your reading ability**
The more you read, the better you understand. The better you understand, the more enjoyable reading is, and the faster you read. As a result, your reading comprehension improves.

• **it offers you lots of beautiful and powerful applications of language**
In addition to the correctness of English usage, reading presents lots of beautiful and powerful exemplification. Short as an essay in a news magazine, you will appreicate the wisdom of the writer for coming up with such spectacular sentences.

• **it leads to thinking and ideas, which should develop your communication in speech or writing**
Reading provides lots of input. Topics such as pollution prevention, human relationships, economic development, or even superstitious phenomena, are covered in different kinds of reading material. The input gained from reading makes you retrospect your beliefs and values, and helps you to express your viewpoint in communicative or writing occasions. In other words, your linguistic competence comes from your literary competence.

What to read and how to read:

Reading can be quite easy. Yes, much easier than you think. There is no time or place restriction. You can read anytime and anywhere, and you don't need special skills or equipment. All you have to do is pick up the reading material you feel interested in and read them regularly, no matter when you are waiting for a bus, taking a break, using the bathroom, or before you are going to sleep. The key is to be honest with yourself about what you really enjoy: news magazines, comic books, newspapers - it really doesn't matter what you read as long as it genuinely interests you, because that is the only certain way to motivate yourself to read.

Remember to record what you read every day and write down your own feeling about the reading in the journal. You could summarise the story, keep notes of new vocabulary or exemplification, record your own feelings about the characters, the setting, your expectations and results, or you could evaluate the book by examining whether it was enjoyable or easy to read. If you think the book is very interesting and worth reading, you may introduce it to your friends and other classmates. Your teacher will check your journal every day in order to encourage your progress. Besides, sessions of free talking and book presentations will be arranged so that you can talk to classmates about books and hear them talk about books, and show your interesting books to one another.

Don't worry too much about vocabulary, because the meaning will become clear to you as you read continuously for a little while. Working with your classmates will also extend your understanding, so why don't you talk about what you have read with your classmates and give you a chance to share ideas, reactions, and interpretations? However, if the book you are reading includes so many new words that you don't understand the whole story, change to the other book. Pick up the one you feel interested in keeping on reading and trust yourself; you can read without necessarily understanding every single word. Reach for the dictionary only if you think there are some key words which prevent you from getting the point of the story.

If you still have difficulty finding books meeting your level, graded readers have been simplified and coded in levels of vocabulary will be more manageable for you to start with. Series of readers, like "Oxford Bookworms" and "Oxford Progressive English Readers", containing a variety of fiction in 5 - 6 graded stages, will offer you the opportunity to enjoy reading and progrss from grade to grade.

Read regularly and you will benefit for life:

You are no doubt busy, but it is perfectly possible if you do some English reading every day. Keep on reading for a few months, you should achieve a very marked increase in your reading, writing style, vocabulary and grammar. We hope the free reading program will not only help you to build up your English proficiency, but will also give you a source of profit and enjoyment that will last throughout your life.

Happy reading!

APPENDIX G : Teacher's Checklist

Teacher's Checklist

At the beginning of the semester
Pre-test:
☐ Give the pre-test and ask those who are absent or just transferred to the class to make up the test.
☐ Collect all copies of the pre-test.

Questionnaire I:
☐ Give questionnaire I, which helps to group students with similar interests at discussion and/or oral presentation sessions and to recommend books in areas of their interest.
☐ Collect all copies of questionnaire I, and make sure everyone has completed the questionnaire.

Rules and regulations:
☐ Introduce the importance and benefits of free voluntary reading.
☐ Ask students to start reading for at least 30 minutes a day and keep a journal every day.
☐ Hand out journal
☐ Ask students to fill in the chart on the cover page.

Oral presentation*:
☐ Choose a topic for the first oral presentation and ask students to prepare a 5-minute free speech for the topic.
☐ Arrange the first oral presentation during the first week of the semester.
☐ Assemble 3-4 students with same reading interest into a group.
☐ Ask each student to present his speech in his group and, at the same time, tape students' oral performance within each group.

During the experiment
Free Reading:
☐ Recommend reading material appropriate to individuals and suggest access for students to locate the books they like.
☐ Check journal each class meeting.
☐ Encourage students to read more and share books.

Mini-discussion / Free Talking* (used as a warm-up activity at the beginning of each class meeting) :
☐ (Optional) Suggest some topics (such as popular authors / books they have read) for each group, which is used as a way to motivate them to express their opinions and evoke their interest.
☐ Administer short discussion for about 5 minutes at the beginning of each class meeting.

Book presentation* :
☐ Arrange a book presentation in the middle of the semester and ask students to prepare for the presentation. They can talk about their favourite books / authors, or about the topics they have shared insights in group discussions.
☐ Administer group presentation and tape each student's performance.

At the end of the semester

Book presentation* :

☐ Arrange and tape the last book presentation.

Questionnaire II:

☐ Hand out questionnaire II, make sure everyone has it filled out, and remember to collect all copies of the questionnaire II back before they leave.

Journal:

☐ Collect back everyone's journal. (If any student wants to have his journal back, please ask him to leave his name, mailing address, and phone number on the first page, so that I can send back his journal after the data have been collected.)

Post-test:

☐ Give post-test and make sure those who are absent have made up the test before they DISAPPEAR.

* Oral/Book Presentations and Mini-discussion / Free Talking, though optional, are highly recommended to be administered when time permits in order to involve students more on the program and to encourage the use of the language learned from their free reading.

APPENDIX H : Recommended Book List

Recommended Books

The listed graded readers are based on the difficulties of vocabulary and sentence structure, categorized into 6 levels (Table 1), and coded into 12 kinds of books (Table 2). Therefore, students are easy to locate the kind of book they like with appropriate level. However, these recommended books are use at the first stage when students don't know what books to start with. They are supposed to develop independence gradually and know how to search for suitable books for themselves.

Table 1

Levels	Words
Starter Level	400
Beginner Level	600 - 700
Elementary Level	1000 - 1100
Pre-intermediate Level	1400 - 1600 - 1800
Intermediate Level	2100 - 2200
Advanced Level	2500 - 3100 - 3700 - 5000

Table 2

Number	Kinds of Books
1	Human Interest
2	Film & TV Tie-ins
3	Science Fiction
4	Classics
5	Adventure / Thriller
6	Crime / Detection
7	Romance
8	Western (E) / War (A)
9	Mystery / Horror / Ghost
10	Humour
11	Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T)
12	Non-fiction

Starter Level

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
400	Rowena Akinyemi	Love or Money?	Molly is very rich. One person cannot wait to inherit Molly's money when she dies, so on her 50th birthday, Molly is going to die...	Oxford Bookworms						●						
400	Tim Vicary	Mary Queen of Scots	Her tragic life and death	Oxford Bookworms											T	
400	Tim Vicary	Mutiny on the Bounty	Captain Bligh faces mutiny in the South Seas	Oxford Bookworms					●							
400	Jennifer Basssett	One-way Ticket	Three stories about adventures on trains.	Oxford Bookworms	●				●						S	
400	Tim Vicary	The Coldest Place on Earth	In the summer of 1910, a race began to cross over the ice to the South Pole. Some of the travellers never returned to their homes again.	Oxford Bookworms											T	
400	Tim Vicary	The Elephant Man	The tragic and true story of Joseph Merrick, who disfigured from birth, rejected by his mother and laughed at just because he was ugly.	Oxford Bookworms		●										
400	W W Jacobs (Diane Mowat)	The Monkey's Paw	A visitor brings a strange present for the Whites: a monkey's paw - and it has mysterious, frightening powers...	Oxford Bookworms									●			
400	Jennifer Bassett	The Phantom of the Opera	Everybody is afraid of the Phantom of the Opera, the ghost that lives somewhere under the Opera House - but who has actually seen him?	Oxford Bookworms		●							●			
400	Jennifer Bassett	The President's Murderer	Who killed the President and why?	Oxford Bookworms					●							
400	Rowena Akinyemi	The Witches of Pendle	Fear and superstition in seventeenth century Lancashire	Oxford Bookworms									●			

1. Human Interest 2. Film & TV Tie-ins 3. Science Fiction 4. Classics 5. Adventure / Thriller 6. Crime / Dection
7. Romance 8. Western (E) / War (A) 9. Mystery / Horror / Ghost 10. Humour 11. Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T) 12. Non-fiction

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
400	Rowena Akinyemi	Under the Moon	2522AD...and the earth is dying	Oxford Bookworms			●									
400	Tim Vicary	White Death	Sarah is mistakenly charged with drug smuggling. Can her mother and an old boyfriend find the real criminal to save Sarah?	Oxford Bookworms					●							

Beginner Level

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
600	Elizabeth Laird	Anna and the Fighter	Anna finds she is sharing the train compartment with a dangerous-looking man.	Heinemann Graded Readers	●						●					
600	Alwyn Cox	Dangerous Journey	Four members of a team making a geological survey find themselves trapped deep in a forest.	Heinemann Graded Readers					●							
600	Nick McIver	Dear Jan - Love Ruth	Ruth's parents are determined to keep Ruth and her lover apart.	Heinemann Graded Readers							●					
600	Philip Prowse	Death of a Soldier	A young British soldier faces with harsh reality of urban warfare in Northern Ireland.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●							
600	Mike Esplen	Marco	Marco resents working on his father's farm. Wanting freedom and money, he decides to leave home.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●							
600	John Milne	Money for a Motorbike	How is poor Stuart going to get the money to buy the bike he desperate to own?	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●	●						
600	John Escott	Newspaper Boy	Two adventure stories about a newspaper delivery boy who wants to be a detective.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●					S	

1. Human Interest   2. Film & TV Tie-ins   3. Science Fiction   4. Classics   5. Adventure / Thriller   6. Crime / Dection
7. Romance   8. Western (E) / War (A)   9. Mystery / Horror / Ghost   10. Humour   11. Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T)   12. Non-fiction

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
600	T. C. Jupp	Rich Man, Poor Man	Old Adam gets a money order from his son, but his trouble comes when he wants to cash the money order.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●						●					
600	Elizabeth Laird	The Garden	A young girl goes into the country to search for happiness among the plants and flowers that she loves.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●											
600	Elizabeth Laird	The House on the Hill	When Paul wins first prize in a competition, he becomes convinced he will have everything he wants.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●						●					
600	John Milne	The Long Tunnel	Three university students intrude a crime base without electricity or a telephone nearby.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
600	Norman Whitney	The Sky's the Limit	Max Price works for Friendship Services International, but he doesn't know what FSI does.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●		●							●		
600	Norman Whitney	The Truth Machine	Professor Verity has invented a machine which compels its subjects to tell the truth.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●		●							●		
600	Stephen Colbourn	The Wall	Jarrad desires to find out what is on the other side of the wall.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●		●									
600	Ramon Ribe, Neus Serra and Nuria Vidal	This is Barcelona	A fully illustrated profile of the 1992 city for the Olympic Games.	Heinemann Guided Readers												●
600	Philip Prowse	This is London	London past and present; its history, places to visit, travelling and shopping.	Heinemann Guided Readers												●
600	Betsy Pennink	This is New York	A lively, fully illustrated account of America's largest city.	Heinemann Guided Readers												●
600	Betsy Pennink	This is San Francisco	This book provides an informative portrait of the Golden Gate city.	Heinemann Guided Readers												●

1. Human Interest   2. Film & TV Tie-ins   3. Science Fiction   4. Classics   5. Adventure / Thriller   6. Crime / Dection
7. Romance   8. Western (E) / War (A)   9. Mystery / Horror / Ghost   10. Humour   11. Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T)   12. Non-fiction

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
600	T C Jupp	Winning and Losing	Peter's grandmother sacrifices everything for him to study, but her efforts are almost ruined.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●											
700	John Escott	Dead Man's Island	There is one room in Mr. Ross house which is always locked. Carol watches and listens and learns what it is behind the locked door.	Oxford Bookworms					●							
700	Reg Wright	Earrings from Frankfurt	A mystery about stolen jewellery	Oxford Bookworms					●				●			
700	Tim Vicary	Grace Darling	The is the true story of Grace Darling - a girl who rescued a wrecked ship on a stormy night.	Oxford Bookworms											T	
700	Harry Gilbert	The Year of Sharing	A futuristic fantasy about humans and animals	Oxford Bookworms			●									
700	O Henry (Diane Mowat)	New Yorkers	O. Henry's famous short stories give us vivid pictures of the everyday lives of these New Yorkers.	Oxford Bookworms	●											
700	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Clare West)	Sherlock Holmes Short Stories	In these three of Holmes's best stories, three visitors bring their troubles to the greatest detective.	Oxford Bookworms		●				●					S	
700	Joyce Hannam	The Death of Karen Silkwood	This is a true story happening in Oklahoma, where Karen Silkwood lived and worked ... and died.	Oxford Bookworms		●										
700	Peter Dainty	The Love of a King	The sad story of King Edward VIII, who wanted to marry a woman he loved, but his country said 'No!'	Oxford Bookworms											T	
700	Rosemary Border	The Piano	The story of a poor farm boy finds an old piano and rises to become a famous pianist.	Oxford Bookworms	●											

1. Human Interest   2. Film & TV Tie-ins   3. Science Fiction   4. Classics   5. Adventure / Thriller   6. Crime / Dection
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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
700	Michael Duckworth	Voodoo Island	When James starts building houses on an old graveyard, he disturbs the dead, with terrible consequences...	Oxford Bookworms									●			
700	Jennifer Bassett	William Shakespeare	What was Shakespeare like as a man? We know the facts of his life, but we can only guess at his hopes, his fears, his dreams.	Oxford Bookworms											T	

Elementary Level

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1000	Tim Vicary	Chemical Secret	John's new job was like a poison inside him. It changed him and blinded him, so that he couldn't see the real poison until it was too late.	Oxford Bookworms					●							
1000	Mary Shelley (Patrick Nobes)	Frankenstein	Frankenstein takes parts from dead people and builds a new 'man'. But this monster is frightening and he learns how to kill.	Oxford Bookworms			●						●			
1000	H E Bates (Rosemary Border)	Go, Lovely Rose	Three stories about people who seem perfectly ordinary, but as we get to know them better, we see that their feelings are not at all ordinary.	Oxford Bookworms	●										S	
1000	Tim Vicary	Justice	A gripping terrorist drama set in contemporary London	Oxford Bookworms					●							
1000	Eric Segal (Rosemary Border)	Love Story	A love story of how Oliver and Jenny meet, get married, make a home together, and learn that they don't have much time left.	Oxford Bookworms			●				●					

1. Human Interest　2. Film & TV Tie-ins　3. Science Fiction　4. Classics　5. Adventure / Thriller　6. Crime / Dection
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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1000	Tim Vicary	Skyjack	Will the Prime Minister beat the hijackers before they find out who the important passenger is?	Oxford Bookworms					●							
1000	Edgar Allan Poe (Margaret Naudi)	Tales of Mystery and Imagination	These famous short stories by the master of horror explore the dark world of the imagination.	Oxford Bookworms									●		S	
1000	Tim Vicary	The Bronte Story	The three famous novelists and sisters - Charlotte, Emily and Anne Bronte.	Oxford Bookworms											T	
1000	Michael Dibdin	The Last Sherlock Holmes Story	The great detective returns to hunt Jack the Ripper	Oxford Bookworms		●				●						
1000	Oscar Wilde (Jill Nevile)	The Picture of Dorian Gray	Henry leads the young Dorian Gray into a world where anything can be forgiven - even murder - if it can make people laugh at a dinner party.	Oxford Bookworms				●					●			
1000	Harry Gilbert	The Star Zoo	The Book of Remembering says that there were once many animals on the Earth, but that was before the Burning, a long, long time ago...	Oxford Bookworms			●									
1000	Saki (Rosemary Border)	Tooth and Claw	Conradin hates his aunt. Every night he prays to the wild animal he keeps to do one thing for him.	Oxford Bookworms	●										S	
1000	Retold by John Escott	As the inspector said...	Five intriguing stories from the golden age of crime writing	Oxford Bookworms								●			S	
1000	Desmond Bagley (Jennifer Bassett)	Wyatt's Hurricane	Only David believes that Hurricane Mabel will hit San Fernandez, so nobody will pay attention to the arriving danger.	Oxford Bookworms					●							

1. Human Interest 2. Film & TV Tie-ins 3. Science Fiction 4. Classics 5. Adventure / Thriller 6. Crime / Dection
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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1100	Charles Dickens, (F H Cornish)	A Christmas Carol	Ebenezer Scrooge is cold-hearted and friendless, but he is suddenly reformed on Christmas Day.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●								
1100	John Landon	Claws	Larry joins an expedition to search n for the legendary and fearsome Toruk in northern Afghanistan.	Heinemann Guided Readers			●		●				●			
1100	M Hardcastle, (P King)	Don't Tell Me What to Do	Tom joins the group to search for lost diamonds in the sunken ship.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●	●					
1100	Mary Shelley (Margaret Tarner)	Frankenstein	One of the most inventive and famous horror stories ever written.	Heinemann Guided Readers		●		●					●			
1100	David Evans	Lady Portia's Revenge and Other Stories	Portia sets out to seek revenge on the man who destroyed her happiness.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●	●					S	
1100	Zane Grey (Florence Bell)	Riders of the Purple Sage	A romantic thriller from the founding father of western storywriting.	Heinemann Guided Readers						●		E				
1100	John Milne	Road to Nowhere	After a new road is built, Faisal's terrible dreams of water and death come true.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●						●					
1100	M R James (Stephen Colbourn)	Room 13 and Other Ghost Stories	Five short ghost stories about the experiences with visitors form the world of ghosts and demons.	Heinemann Guided Readers									●		S	
1100	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Anne Collins)	Silver Blaze and Other Stories	Sherlock Holmes and his assistant, Dr Watson, help the police with the strange cases.	Heinemann Guided Readers							●				S	
1100	Bram Stoker, retold by John Davey	Tales of Horror	Three tales by one of the masters of horror story writing.	Heinemann Guided Readers									●		S	

1. Human Interest   2. Film & TV Tie-ins   3. Science Fiction   4. Classics   5. Adventure / Thriller   6. Crime / Dection
7. Romance   8. Western (E) / War (A)   9. Mystery / Horror / Ghost   i0. Humour   11. Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T)   12. Non-fiction

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1100	Arthur C Clarke (Helen Reid-Thomas)	Tales of Ten Worlds	Ten short stories which are to provide readers with an exciting introduction to science fiction.	Heinemann Guided Readers			●								S	
1100	John Milne	The Black Cat	The death of a visiting archaeologist leads Salahadin to investigate the whereabouts of a priceless statuette.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
1100	Armstrong Sperry (Stephen Colbourn)	The Boy Who Was Afraid	The islanders don't believe that Mafatu is fit to rule the island on his father's death, so he sets off to confront his greatest fear- the sea.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●							
1100	Oscar Wilde (Stephen Colbourn)	The Canterville Ghost and Other Stories	Three short ghost stories by one of most witty and popular writers of the nineteenth century.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●		●			●	●	S	
1100	Norman Whitney	The Cleverest Person In the World	A modern fable about a young genius.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●											
1100	W Somerset Maugham (John Davey)	The Escape and Other Stories	Eligible bachelor, Roger Charing, finds an artful way to avoid a promise of marriage.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●	●	●				S	
1100	Richard Prescott	The Flower Seller	After making an innocent mistake, Clive and Andy find themselves under threat of death.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
1100	Bill Naughton (Peter Hodson)	The Goalkeeper's Revenge and Other Stories	Five short stories set in the North of England.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●									●	S	
1100	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Stephen Colbourn)	The Hound of the Baskervilles	Sherlock Homes and Dr. Watson are once more called in to solve a strange mystery.	Heinemann Guided Readers		●				●			●			

1. Human Interest 2. Film & TV Tie-ins 3. Science Fiction 4. Classics 5. Adventure / Thriller 6. Crime / Dection
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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1100	Evelyn Davies and Peter Town	The Man With No Name	Mary finds a deserted jet aircraft with music on and food fresh. What has everybody gone?	Heinemann Guided Readers			●						●			
1100	Francis Selormey (John Milne)	The Narrow Path	A beautifully written story of a young boy growing up in Ghana.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●											
1100	Oscar Wilde (F. H. Cornish)	The Picture of Dorian Gray	After Henry meets Basil's protege, Dorian, he gets to know the whole truth and the terrible secret.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●					●			
1100	R Scott-Buccleuch	The Promise	When their son is born, an old woman predicts that he will make Pedro and Maria rich and happy.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●	·					●					
1100	John Steinbeck (Michael Paine)	The Red Pony	A moving story of three tragic incidents in a young boy's life as he grows up on a farm in California.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●				E			S	
1100	Victor Canning (F Pers)	The Runaways	The story of a relationship between a wild cheetah and a young boy.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●							
1100	Norman Whitney	The Stranger	What special orders do visitors get from the stranger's shop?	Heinemann Guided Readers							●		●			
1100	W Somerset Maugham (John Milne)	The Verger and Other Stories	An illiterate verger is dismissed by the new vicar. But his fortune changes when he opens a shop.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●					●	●				S	
1100	S Hill (Margaret Tarner)	The Woman in Black	A ghost story set in a lonely house on bleak and foggy marshland.	Heinemann Guided Readers									●			
1100	R L Stevenson (Stephen Colbourn)	Treasure Island	A classic adventure story of 12-year-old Jim Hawkins's searching for Captain Flint's treasure.	Heinemann Guided Readers		●		●								
1100	Robert C O'Brien (Peter Hodson)	Z for Zachariah	Ann is alone in an isolated valley after an atomic war. One day a stranger walks into her valley...	Heinemann Guided Readers	●		●									

1. Human Interest 2. Film & TV Tie-ins 3. Science Fiction 4. Classics 5. Adventure / Thriller 6. Crime / Dection

7. Romance 8. Western (E) / War (A) 9. Mystery / Horror / Ghost 10. Humour 11. Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T) 12. Non-fiction

Pre-intermediate Level

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1400	*Magdalen Nabb (Diane Mowat)*	*Death of an Englishman*	*Florence was full of Christmas shoppers and half the police force was on holiday. The murder became more complicated at such a very inconvenient time.*	*Oxford Bookworms*						●						
1400	*Sue Leather (Rosemary Border)*	*Desert, Mountain, Sea*	*Three true adventure stories about three determined women and their travels.*	*Oxford Bookworms*					●						●	
1400	*R L Stevenson*	*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*	*Horror and the dark side of the soul*	*Oxford Bookworms*									●			
1400	*C S Forester (Rosemary Border)*	*Mr Midshipman Hornblower*	*It is 1793, Britain is at war with France. But the hardest battles are fought by Hornblower within himself.*	*Oxford Bookworms*					●							
1400	*Dick Francis (Rowena Akinyemi)*	*Reflex*	*A thriller from the world of horse-racing*	*Oxford Bookworms*					●							
1400	*George Eliot*	*Silas Marner*	*An adopted child brings a miser greater joy than his lost gold*	*Oxford Bookworms*	●				●							
1400	*Raymond Chandler (Rosalie Kerr)*	*The Big Sleep*	*General Sternwood asks private detective Philip Marlowe to get the blackmailer off his back.*	*Oxford Bookworms*						●						
1400	*Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Patrick Nobes)*	*The Hound of the Baskervilles*	*Sherlock Holmes solves an old mystery.*	*Oxford Bookworms*		●				●			●			
1400	*Mary Steward (Diane Mowat)*	*The Moonspinners*	*Nicola comes to a village where no one can be trusted, and she becomes involved in a murder mystery that puts her own life in danger.*	*Oxford Bookworms*					●	●			●			

1. Human Interest   2. Film & TV Tie-ins   3. Science Fiction   4. Classics   5. Adventure / Thriller   6. Crime / Dection

7. Romance   8. Western (E) / War (A)   9. Mystery / Horror / Ghost   10. Humour   11. Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T)   12. Non-fiction

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1400	John Buchan	The Thirty-nine Steps	Richard Hannay is on the run in this famous thriller, filmed by Hitchcock	Oxford Bookworms		●			●							
1400	Jerome K Jerome (Diane Mowat)	Three Men in a Boat	This famous book has been making people laugh all over the world for 100 years.	Oxford Bookworms	●									●		
1400	Lewis Carroll	Alice's Adventures in Wonderland	The classic children's story about Alice's adventures when she follows a rabbit in a hurry down a rabbit hole.	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●		●	●							
1400	Jane Austen	Emma	Emma hopes to arrange a match for Mr Elton, only to find that he aspires to Emma's own hand.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								
1400	Charlotte Bronte	Jane Eyre	Jane, a poor orphan who has become a governess, seems to have found happiness at last.. But who is the mad woman hidden in the attic?	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●		●			●					
1400	Louisa M. Alcott	Little Women	The story of the four March sisters making the most of hard times while their father is away at war.	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●		●								
1400	Edited by David Foulds	Tales from the Arabian Nights	The wonderful tales of Aladdin, Ali Baba, Sinbad and others, which kept a King listening for a thousand and one nights!	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●			●						S	
1400	Jack London	The Call of the Wild and Other Stories	Exciting adventure stories about the people and animals who live in America's frozen North.	Oxford Progressive English Readers					●						S	
1400	Eleanor Estes	The Lost Umbrella of Kim Chu	The adventures of a little girl from New York's Chinatown, who must find her father's lost umbrella.	Oxford Progressive English Readers					●						S	

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1400	R. L. Stevenson	Treasure Island	A classic adventure story of 12-year-old Jim Hawkins searching for Captain Flint's treasure.	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●			●							
1600	W Somerset Maugham (D R Hill)	A Marriage of Convenience and Other Stories	Why did the middle-aged Frenchman suddenly need to get married?	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●	●	●				●	
1600	Nevil Shute (D R Hill)	A Town Like Alice	After the war, Jean hears that Joe is alive, so she sets out to find him.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●						●					
1600	Dick Francis (Stephen Colbourn)	Banker	A fast-paced thriller set in the world of horse racing.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
1600	Philip Prowse	Bristol Murder	Peter discovers that the young hitchhiker he picks up might involve in a murder.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
1600	Bram Stoker (Margaret Tarner)	Dracula	The most famous horror story about the Lord of Vampires, Count Dracula.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●					●			
1600	W Somerset Maugham (Rod Sinclair)	Footprints in the Jungle and two Other Stories	Bronson is found dead. But although the police have their suspicions, nothing can be proved.	Heinemann Guided Readers						●			●		S	
1600	Susan Hill (Jim Alderson)	I'm the King of the Castle	Edmund resents the new housekeeper and her son and starts a war of attrition against her son.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●											
1600	Richard Chisholm	Meet Me in Istanbul	Tom Smith flies to Istanbul to meet his fiancee but finds out she was killed in a car accident a week ago.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
1600	Daphne Maurie (Margaret Turner)	My Cousin Rachel	Philip's guardian dies a year after he married his cousin Rachel. Philip wants to find out if she killed him.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●			●					

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1600	Frederick Forsyth (Stephen Colbourn)	No Comebacks	A rich playboy hires an assassin to kill the husband of his lover.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●						S	
1600	Chinua Achebe (John Milne)	No Longer at Ease	Achebe uses the fall of Obi to depict the birth of a powerful, disillusioning age of corruption.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●								
1600	D R Sherman (John Milne)	Old Mali and the Boy	Jeffrey, a 12 year old fatherless boy, finally persuades Old Mali to take him to the dangerous jungle.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●								
1600	Charles Dickens (Margaret Tarner)	Oliver Twist	A poor young orphan boy is brought up in an awful workhouse and runs away to London.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●								
1600	Jane Austen (Margaret Tarner)	Pride and Prejudice	Finding husbands for five daughters brings Mrs Bennet the problems of family and money - and there's a scandal to cope with as well.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●								
1600	J Shaefer (John Milne)	Shane	This is a retold version of Schaefer's classic western hero, Shane.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●				E				
1600	George Elio (Margaret Tarner)	Silas Marner	An adopted child brings a miser greater joy than his lost gold.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●								
1600	Leslie Caplan	Tales of Goha	These seven short fables follow the adventures and practical jokes of mischievous court jester, Goha.	Heinemann Guided Readers										●	S	
1600	F S Fitzgerald (Margaret Tarner)	The Beautiful and Damned	Before winning a court case inheriting his grandfather's fortune, Anthony is a broken man.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●			●					
1600	Richard Prescott	The Bonetti Inheritance	After Roberto inherits the family farm when his father dies, his uncle forces him to sell the land to him.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●		●					

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1600	John Milne	The Case of the Lonely Lady	Terry has dreams of becoming a private detective. When he inherits some money, his dreams come true.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
1600	Wilbur Smith (Margaret Tarner)	The Diamond Hunters	Benedict hates his adopted brother for his success in business, in sport and with women.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●							
1600	Elizabeth von Arnim (Margaret Tarner)	The Enchanted April	A delightful and romantic story about four women rediscover love and happiness.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●			●					
1600	Wilbur Smith (Margaret Tarner)	The Eye of the Tiger	A retold version of a thrilling adventure story by one of the most popular writers of fiction.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●							
1600	Josephine Tey (Margaret Tarner)	The Franchise Affair	The Sharpes are accused of kidnapping. However, the villagers don't believe their story.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●					•	
1600	F S Fitzgerald (Margaret Tarner)	The Great Gatsby	Fitzgerald's famous love story about Nick as the intermediary between the reunited lovers.	Heinemann Guided Readers	·			●			●					
1600	W Somerset Maugham (Philip King)	The Hairless Mexican and The Traitor	Two stories about Ashenden's works as an intelligent agent.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●						S	
1600	John Steinbeck (Michael Paine)	The Moon is Down	A small town in an imaginary European country is invaded during the war.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●	●						
1600	John Steinbeck (Michael Paine)	The Pearl	A poor diver finds the greatest pearl in the world but loses his happiness.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●							
1600	John Milne	The Queen of Death	A detective searches for the answer to the riddle of an ancient curse.	Heinemann Guided Readers						●	●					

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1600	Aleksandr Puskin (Stephen Colbourn)	The Queen of Spades and Other Stories	A young army officer is determined to discover Countess Fedotovna's secret of winning at cards.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●		●		●		S	
1600	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Anne Collins)	The Sign of Four	Sherlock Holmes is asked to find out who has sent his client a pearl every year for six years.	Heinemann Guided Readers						●						
1600	Piers Plowright	The Smuggler	Fame is wanted by the police and by the head of a rival gang after a gold statue is stolen and his boss is killed.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
1600	Geoffrey Matthews	The Space Invaders	Trying to steal the most valuable crystal, Varon is trapped and unable to return to his spaceship.	Heinemann Guided Readers			●		●							
1600	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Anne Collins)	The Speckled Band and Other Stories	Three more intriguing cases for Sherlock Holmes.	Heinemann Guided Readers						●					●	
1600	Thomas Hardy (Margaret Tarner)	The Three Strangers and Other Stories	Three mysterious strangers burst in upon a christening celebration in a shepherd's hut one bleak evening.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●					●	●	●	
1600	Philip Prowse	The Woman Who Disappeared	A tongue-in-check story of the adventures of a Los Angeles private detective.	Heinemann Guided Readers					●	●						
1600	Chinua Achebe (John Davey)	Things Fall Apart	The simply and movingly told story about the Ibo tribe in Nigeria.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●								
1600	James Vance Marshall (Jim Alderson)	Walkabout	A delicately told story of a young adolescent girl's meeting with a boy from another culture.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●							
1600	Bessie Head (Margaret Tarner)	When Rain Clouds Gather	This semi-autobiographical novel, from a famous novelists, tells the story of a village in Botswana.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●			●					

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1800	Josephine Tey	Brat Farrar	An young man returns from the dead and inherits the family house and fortune.	Oxford Bookworms					●							
1800	Charles Dickens	David Copperfield	The joy and sorrows of a young man growing up in Victorian England	Oxford Bookworms				●								
1800	Sara Paretsky	Deadlock	A case for V. I. Warshawski, the glamorous female private eye from Chicago.	Oxford Bookworms						●						
1800	Thomas Hardy (Clare West)	Far from the Madding Crowd	When Bathsheba falls in love with one suitor, she learns that love brings misery, pain and violent passions that can destroy lives.	Oxford Bookworms				●								
1800	Retold by Rosemary Border	Ghost Stories	A collection of weird and blood-curdling stories	Oxford Bookworms									●		S	
1800	Charles Dickens	Great Expectations	Pip falls in love with the beautiful cold-hearted Estella although she is cruel to him.	Oxford Bookworms	●			●			●				-	
1800	Ruth Prawer Jhabvala	Heat and Dust	A love story set in India; now a famous film	Oxford Bookworms		●					●					
1800	Isaac Asimov	I, Robot	The world of the future is peopled by robots	Oxford Bookworms			●								S	
1800	Buchi Emecheta	The Bride Price	Aku-nna falls in love with a man who everyone says is not a suitable husband for her.	Oxford Bookworms	●						●					
1800	Colin Dexter	The Dead of Jericho	Detective Inspector Morse investigates an attractive woman hanging, dead, form the ceiling of her kitchen.	Oxford Bookworms						●						

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1800	*Mary Stewart*	*This Rough Magic*	*An out-of-work actress on her holiday on Corfu island which is full of smuggling and danger.*	*Oxford Bookworms*					●							
1800	*Emily Bronte*	*Wuthering Heights*	*The tragic love of Catherine and Heathcliff*	*Oxford Bookworms*		●		●			●					

Intermediate Level

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2100	*Charles Dickens*	*A Christmas Carol*	*Scrooge receives a visit from the ghost of his late partner in business. As a result, he wakes up on Christmas morning an altered man.*	*Oxford Progressive English Readers*				●								
2100	*William Shakespeare*	*A Midsummer Night's Dream and Other Stories from Shakespeare's Plays*	*A collection of stories of love and adventure, in which the characters are not always who they seem to be.*	*Oxford Progressive English Readers*				●	●		●					
2100		*Flying Heads and Other Stories*	*A collection of strange and terrifying stories from all over the world.*	*Oxford Progressive English Readers*									●		S	
2100	*Jonathan Swift*	*Gulliver's Travels - A Voyage to Lilliput*	*Gulliver is taken prisoner by the inhabitants of the island who are no more than six inches high.*	*Oxford Progressive English Readers*				●	●							
2100	*O. Henry*	*Life Without Katy and Other Stories*	*This lively collection of stories from the USA shows us that ordinary life can be full of surprises.*	*Oxford Progressive English Readers*	●										S	
2100	*Joseph Conrad*	*Lord Jim*	*Jim is a brave and strong leader in his Malaysian village home. But what is the dark secret in his past?*	*Oxford Progressive English Readers*				●								

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2100	Charles Dickens	Oliver Twist	Oliver is alone in a threatening city, where thieves are the only people willing to be his friends - at a price. But one day, an old man decides to give him a chance.	Oxford Progressive English Readers	●			●								
2100	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle	The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes	Four exciting mysteries for Holmes and Watson to solve.	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●							●		S	
2100	G. K. Chesterton	The Dagger and Wings and Other Stories	some of the strange mysteries investigated by Father Brown, a clever little priest who turns out to be a greatest detective.	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●							●		S	
2100	Edited by David Foulds	The Golden Touch and Other Stories	Ancient Greek stories about kings and gods, monsters and magic.	Oxford Progressive English Readers											S	
2100	Rudyard Kipling	The Jungle Book	The classic story of a child who grows up among wolves and learns the laws of the jungle from an old brown bear and a partner.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								
2100	D. H. Howe	The Stone Junk and Other Stories	A collection of magical short stories from Asia.	Oxford Progressive English Readers											S	
2100	David McRobbie	The Talking Tree and Other Stories	A tree that talks, a greedy princess, a dragon, a ghost and men from outer space - these make up an unusual collection of stories.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●							S	
2100	Lewis Carroll	Through the Looking Glass	More of Alice's adventures as she makes her way across the chessboard.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2200	Charles Dickens (Margaret Tarner)	Bleak House	A story about three latest victims to be caught up in the monolithic court case of Jarndyce vs Jarndyce.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●			●					
2200	Charles Dickens (Florence Bell)	Great Expectations	Pip falls in love with the beautiful, cold-hearted Estella although she is cruel to him.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●			●					
2200	Peter Abrahams (Rod Nesbitt)	Mine Boy	A story which vividly describes the hardships endured by a young Zulu migrant worker.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●											
2200	John Steinbeck (Martin Winks)	Of Mice and Men	The tragic story of two migrant labourers in America in the 1930s.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●				E				
2200	Charles Dickens, retold by Margaret Tarner	Our Mutual Friend	Dickens' sinister story of murder and intrigue set in London in the 1860s.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●			●					
2200	Mary Webb (Florence Bell)	Precious Bane	A girl and her brother work hard to make the family rich, but once they are rich her brother becomes greedy for gold - the precious bane.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●			●				•	
2200	Daphne Maurier (Margaret Tarner)	Rebecca	A young girl falls in love with Maxim. After they get married, Rebecca, Maxim's late wife, still dominates him and the house.	Heinemann Guided Readers				●	●		●		●			
2200	W Somerset Maugham (John Milne)	The Creative Impulse and Other Stories	Mrs Forrester is a selfish and cold woman with no respect for her husband.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●										S	
2200	John Steinbeck (Margaret Tarner)	The Grapes of Wrath	The story of the lives of a farming family as they travel across America in the Great Depression.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●								

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2200	Elechi Amadi (John Davey)	The Great Ponds	The story of a ruinous feud between two villages in Eastern Nigeria in the days before the Europeans arrived.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●											
2200	Thomas Hardy (Margaret Tarner)	The Return of the Native	A story of fatal love and jealousy set against the wild moorland background of Dorset.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●			●			●					
2200	Ngugi Thiong's (Margaret Tarner)	Weep Not, Child	Political events and personal tragedy are destined to shatter Njoroge's hopes and beliefs.	Heinemann Guided Readers	●				●							

Advanced Level

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2500	John Briley (Rowena Akinyemi)	Cry, Freedom	This is a story of a man's fight with the government of South Africa. It is a story of people who are not afraid to die for freedom.	Oxford Bookworms		●									·	
2500	Reginald Hill (Rosalie Kerr)	Deadheads	Young Patrick used to watch his great-aunt cuts the deadheads off the rose bushes with a sharp knife. Yet many years later, somebody tells the police that Patrick is killing people.	Oxford Bookworms						●						
2500	Maeve Binchy (Jennifer Bassett)	Dublin People	These stories written by a famous Irish writer are full of affectionate humour and wit, and sometimes a little sadness.	Oxford Bookworms	●									●	S	
2500	Charlotte Bronte (Clare West)	Jane Eyre	Jane, a poor orphan who has become a governess, seems to have found happiness at last. But who is the mad woman hidden in the attic?	Oxford Bookworms		●		●			●					

1. Human Interest 2. Film & TV Tie-ins 3. Science Fiction 4. Classics 5. Adventure / Thriller 6. Crime / Dection
7. Romance 8. Western (E) / War (A) 9. Mystery / Horror / Ghost 10. Humour 11. Short Stories (S) / True Stories (T) 12. Non-fiction

Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2500	John Wyndham (Patrick Nobes)	Meteor	In this collection of four of his famous science fiction stories, John Wyndham creates visions of the future that make us think carefully about the way we live now.	Oxford Bookworms			●								S	
2500	Alistair Maclean (Margaret Naudi)	Night Without End	The survivors a crashed airliner are lucky to be rescued by three scientists from a nearby weather research station. But the rescue quickly turns into a nightmare.	Oxford Bookworms					●							
2500	Charles Dickens (Richard Rogers)	Oliver Twist	Poor Oliver finally find some friends, but later he finds out what kind of friends they are, and what kind of games they play.	Oxford Bookworms	●			●								
2500	Jane Austen	Pride and Prejudice	Finding husbands for five daughters brings Mrs Bennet the problems of family and money - and there's a scandal to cope with as well.	Oxford Bookworms				●								
2500	Thomas Hardy (Clare West)	Tess of the d'Urbervilles	This is the tragic story of a girl's life, stained by men's desires and by death.	Oxford Bookworms		●		●								
2500	Desmond Bagley (Ralph Mowat)	The Enemy	A young woman is walking home when a stranger throws acid into her face. Then her father disappears. Who wants to harm her family?	Oxford Bookworms					●							
3100	Charles Dickens	A Tale of Two Cities	France and England are at war. Some people who were friends become enemies. But strange things happen in such turbulent times.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								

1. Human Interest   2. Film & TV Tie-ins   3. Science Fiction   4. Classics   5. Adventure / Thriller   6. Crime / Dection
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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3100	Mark Twain	Adventures of Tom Sawyer	Favourite stories about Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn's exciting adventures.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●	●							
3100	Jules Verne	Around the World in Eighty Days	Phileas Fogg must get around the world in time to save his twenty thousand pounds. But someone is trying to stop him.	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●			●							
3100	Oscar Wilde	Canterville Ghost and Other Stories	Oscar Wilde's hilarious ghost story, together with many of his best-loved tales.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●		●			●	●	S	
3100	Charles Dickens	David Copperfield	.Things start to go very wrong for young David after his mother marries the cruel Mr. Murdstone.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								
3100	Bill Lowe	Fog and Other Stories	Stories of mystery and surprise.	Oxford Progressive English Readers									●		S.	
3100	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle	Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes	More strange mysteries for the great detective to solve. Will they be his last?	Oxford Progressive English Readers									●		S	
3100	Charles Dickens	Great Expectations	The classic story of poor, uneducated Pip, who believes he deserves more.	Oxford Progressive English Readers	●			●		●						
3100	Charles Dickens	Pickwick Papers	The Pickwick Club is a place for people to report their journeys and observations of characters.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								
3100	Daniel Defoe	Robinson Crusoe	After his ship is wrecked, Robinson Crusoe finds himself alone on a desert island. He has to learn to survive and make himself comfortable over the long years.	Oxford Progressive English Readers					●							

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3100	Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3100	Edited by David Foulds	Tales of Crime and Detection	The police and an assortment of private detectives are out to solve the strange mysteries in this exciting collection of short stories.	Oxford Progressive English Readers						●			●		S		
3100	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle	The Hound of the Baskervilles	When the body of sir Charles Baskerville is found in his garden, there are no signs to explain his death. Did he die of fright?	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●				●			●				
3100	William Shakespeare	The Merchant of Venice and Other Stories from Shakespeare's Plays	Antonio's ships have been wrecked, that the debt has not been repaid when due, and that	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●							S		
3100	S. f. Stevens	The Missing Scientist	A British scientist who holds top-secret knowledge is kidnapped, and Inspector Roberts must find him.	Oxford Progressive English Readers									●				
3100	Stephen Crane	The Red Badge of Courage	A young soldier learns about both cowardice and courage on the battlefields of American Civil War.	Oxford Progressive English Readers								A					
3100	Charles Dickens	Two Boxes of Gold and Other Stories	A collection of Dickens's best short stories, including tales of murder, mystery, ghosts and magic.	Oxford Progressive English Readers						●			●		S		
3700	Guy de Maupassant	A Night of Terror and Other Strange Stories	A collection of Mupassant's classic tales of terror and madness, in which people face the worst of their fears.	Oxford Progressive English Readers									●		S		
3700	Robert Louis Stevenson	Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Other Stories	What is kind Dr. Jekyll's terrifying secret? And who is the evil Mr. Hyde? Find out in the first of three exciting horror stories.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●					●		S		

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3700	Thomas Hardy	Far from the Madding Crowd	When Bathsheba falls in love with one suitor, she learns that love brings misery, pain and violent passions that can destroy lives.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								
3700	Jules Verne	Journey to the Centre of the Earth	Amazing discoveries and terrible dangers await the brave adventurers who find the secret route to the centre of the earth.	Oxford Progressive English Readers			●		●							
3700	H. Rider Haggard	King Solomon's Mines	In remotest Africa, Alan has some amazing adventures in his search for King Solomon's treasure.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●	●							
3700	William Shakespeare	Othello and Other Stories from Shakespeare's Plays	Kings and soldiers, ill-fated lovers, a long-lost child, and a treacherous friend all feature in this collection of stories from the great playwright.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●							S	
3700	Edgar Allan Poe	Tales of Mystery and Imagination	Eight classic stories of terror and evil, from the master of horror.	Oxford Progressive English Readers									●		S	
3700		The Gifts and Other Stories	Stories of mystery, surprise and adventure from all around the world.	Oxford Progressive English Readers	●				●				●		S	
3700	F. S. Fitzgerald	The Great Gatsby	Fitzgerald's famous love story about Nick as the intermediary between the reunited lovers.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●			●					
3700	Wilkie Collins	The Moonstone	A precious but cursed Indian jewel, the Moonstone, brings death and sorrow to the Herncastle family.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3700	Wilkie Collins	The Woman in White	A drawing teacher meets a mysterious woman dressed in white. Who is she? What is her connection to the teacher's new pupil, a beautiful heiress?	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●					●			
3700	Jules Verne	Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea	An extraordinary adventure leads Professor Arronax and his team into an exciting exploration of the world under the sea.	Oxford Progressive English Readers			●		●							
5000	Bram Stoker	Dracula	The most famous horror story about the Lord of Vampires, Count Dracula.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●					●			
5000	Mary Shelley	Frankenstein	Frankenstein creates a man from dead bodies, but when he doesn't get the love he needs, the man becomes a monster.	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●		●					●			
5000	Robert Louis Stevenson	Kidnapped	The gripping adventure story of a Scottish boy who finds himself on the run with a famous Jacobite leader.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●	●							
5000	Jane Austen	Pride and Prejudice	Finding husbands for five daughters brings Mrs. Bennet the problems of family and money - and there's a scandal to cope with as well.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								
5000	F. Scott Fitzgerald	The Diamond as Big as the Ritz	A boy's visit to a fabulously rich friend seems like a dream, but it begins to turn into a nightmare.	Oxford Progressive English Readers					●						S	
5000	Thomas Hardy	The Mayor of Casterbridge	Twenty years before, Michael did something disgraceful. And now his past has caught up with him.	Oxford Progressive English Readers				●								

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Words	Author	Title	Abstract	Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
5000	Saki	The Stalled Ox and Other Stories	Saki's witty stories of English high society.	Oxford Progressive English Readers	●										S	
5000	Jerome K Jerome	Three Men in a Boat	This famous book has been making people laugh all over the world for 100 years.	Oxford Progressive English Readers	●									●		
5000	Emily Bronte	Wuthering Heights	The famous love story of Catherine and Heathcliff. Can such a love born on the wild Yorkshire Moors find peace?	Oxford Progressive English Readers		●		●			●					

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APPENDIX I :

EXAMPLES OF THE READING JOURNAL

I. Examples of recalcitrant students' reading journals:

WEEK

Date	Time	Pages	Notes	Author & Title
Mon, Oct 30				
Tue, Oct 31				
Wed, Nov 1				

WEEK

Date	Time	Pages	Notes	Author & Title
Thu, Oct 26	14:00 – 16:00	P.1 – P.20	如果我們主宰的每一刻鐘都有意義的重複，或們休會像那無知到近十字架，被釘放在永恆。在那永恆的回歸的世界裏，無一可承受的身重，一個句點。	米蘭·昆德拉 《生命中不能承受之輕》
Fri, Oct 27	20:00 – 22:00	P.254 – P.275	我們習照完報此地，無一要收是世紀中造者等的情節，就在這清醒的時候，從此的關所。	魯迅 《魯迅代表作》
S./S. Oct 28/29	11:00 – 16:30	P.1 – P.47	要少信靠著的心一班，對於不外盡力所能作。（一）這人人喊所要說的，（二）這人人喊的要聽隨。	張愛玲 《張愛玲》

I. Examples of recalcitrant students' reading journals:

I. Examples of recalcitrant students' reading journals:

WEEK 3

Date	Time	Pages	What I Read
Mon. 7/24	20:30 ~ 21:10	10	When I perceive that men As plants increase.
			What I Thought
			I call not me to justify the wrong
Author & Title			
Tue. 7/25	23:00 ~ 23:30	11	What I Read
			By chance, or natures changing course, untrimmd.
			What I Thought
			I never say that it was false of heart.
Author & Title			
Wed. 7/26	23:10 ~ 23:40	17	What I Read
			My love shall in my verse ever live young.
			What I Thought
			Or I shall live your epitaph to make
Author & Title			

WEEK 2

Date	Time	Pages	What I Read
Thu. 7/20	23:00 ~ 23:30	6.	Music to hear, why hearst thou music sadly!
			What I Thought
			My love is as a fever longing still.
Author & Title			
Fri. 7/21	20:00 ~ 21:00	7. 8	What I Read
			No love toward others in that bosom sits
			That beauty still may live in thin or thee.
			What I Thought
			Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war.
Author & Title			
S. / S. 7/22	21:00 ~ 21:30	9.	What I Read
			You had a father; let your son say so.
			What I Thought
			My glass shall not persuade me I am old.
Author & Title			

I. Examples of recalcitrant students' reading journals:

WEEK

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Mon.			1. Still waters run deep.
			2. The only man who never makes a mistake is the man who never does anything
Author & Title			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Tue.			1. Share and share alike
			2. If you think you can, you can.
			3. Will there be anything else?
Author & Title			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Wed.			1. ⌠ drivers license ⌡ passport
			2. there is no turning when one will get rich
Author & Title			

WEEK

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Thu.			1. Health is better than wealth.
			2. keep track of = find news about
Author & Title			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Fri.			1. Have an appointment with.
			2. ⌠ on business ⌡ on vacation
			3. ⌠ actor ⌡ actress
Author & Title			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
S. / S.			1. You can't sell the cow and drink the milk.
			2. county → 縣
Author & Title			

II. Examples of slow students' reading journals:

WEEK 1

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Thu.	1/8	11	1. meddle ['medl] 干涉 / meddle in 干涉… / meddle 干涉 陵事 / 2. butcher ['butʃə] 屠夫 / 3. fearful ['fiəfl] 惊恐的 / be fearful of … 惊恐 / 4. lick [lɪk] 舔 / give a lick and a promise… 马马虎虎[做] / 5. meanwhile ['mi:n hwaɪl] 其間 / 6. shake →shake… shake 使[抖]震動 / 0 divide up 分割[组]

Author & Title: SHAHRYAR THE KING

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Fri.	1/8	11	1. fall…… / 0-fall away 消失 / 0-fall on/upon 攻擊 / 2. fall short 未滿足標准 / 3. fall in love with 愛上 / 4. fall through 失敗 / 5. fall of 滅亡 / 0 fall out 爭吵

Author & Title: SHAHRYAR THE KING

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
S./S.	1/9	12	1. cross [krɔs] 划掉 / 0 to cross out …划掉 / 2. out of one's mind 不清醒… / 3. stubborn ['stʌbən] 頑固的 / be is as stubborn as a mule. / 4. witness ['wɪtnɪs] 目擊者 / 0 bear witness to… 證明 / 0 作介紹詞 of 或 to 連用 / He is a witness of/to the accident.

Author & Title: SHAHRYAR THE KING

WEEK 2

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Mon.	7/1	12	1. give and take 還話 互相遷就 / 2. give away 送送 / 3. give in 讓步 / 4. give up 放棄 / 5. give off 發放 / 6. give back 歸還 / 7. be given to 愛好 / 8. farewell [fɛə'wel] 告別 / 9. look [lʊk] 人種 / 0 look up 尊敬 / 10. walk…… / 0 take a walk / 0 walk into 遇上 / 0 walk away from … 走開離開

Author & Title:

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Tue.			1. walk out on 遺棄 / 2. walk out 罷工 / 3. walk of life 行業 / 4. in order 按順序… / 5. take…… / 0-take down 寫下 / 0-take back 拿回 收回 / 0-take over 接管 / 0-take away 奪去 / 0-take one's time 從容不迫 / 0-take for 認為

Author & Title:

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Wed.			0-take up with 開始交往 / 0-take up 開始從事 / 0-take after 長得像… / 1. beat off 擊退 / 2. beat down 打倒 / 3. beat about 搜索 / 4. beat…… / 0-beat out 打出 / 5. repent [rɪ'pent] 懊悔 / She repented / 6. out of someone's beat 非某人本行 / He is a witness of/to the accident.

Author & Title:

II. Examples of slow students' reading journals:

WEEK 2

Date	Time	Pages	What I Read
Thu. 7/13	18:00 ~ 19:00	P.21	It was no small irony that Robert Granville's second son and eventual heir played a part in restoring the monarchy in 1660.

Author & Title		What I Thought
Separate word	(1) irony 反諷 (2) monarchy 君主政体 (3) restore 恢復	
Explain		

Date	Time	Pages	What I Read
Fri. 7/14	20:00 ~ 21:00	P.30	The bronze head is of Ethiopia who later became Countess of Warwick Ethilda was the sister of Sir Anthony Eden, British Prime Minister in the 1950s.

Author & Title		What I Thought
Separate word	(1) Warwick 瓦立克 (2) Prime 最初的 (3) Minister 部長	
Explain		

Date	Time	Pages	What I Read
S./S. 7/15 7/16	20:00 ~ 21:00	P.32	Despite the alarming proximity of its enemy, Mauduit did little to prepare for the defence of Warwick Castle.

Author & Title		What I Thought
Separate word	(1) Despite 不管 (2) alarm 警告 (3) proximity 接近 (4) enemy 敵人	
Explain		

WEEK 3

Date	Time	Pages	What I Read
Mon. 7/17	7:00 ~ 7:00	P.6	As befits a maritime nation, the South Transept holds a place of honour for Flaxman's elaborate memorial to Admiral Horatio Viscount Nelson.

Author & Title		What I Thought
Separate word	(1) befit 適合 (2) maritime 海岸的 (3) Transept 教堂的翼部 (4) elaborate 精致	
Explain		

Date	Time	Pages	What I Read
Tue. 7/18	7:00 ~ 7:00	P.11	The Chapel of Modern Martyrs (18) commemorates all known Anglican Martyrs who have died for their faith since 1850.

Author & Title		What I Thought
Separate word	(1) chapel 教堂 禮拜堂 (2) commemorates 紀念 (3) faith 信仰	
Explain		

Date	Time	Pages	What I Read
Wed. 7/19	7:00 ~ 7:00	P.14	The South Choir Aisle contains a bronze effigy of the distinguished historian and former Bishop of Line: Mandell Creighton who died in 1901.

Author & Title		What I Thought
Separate word	(1) Choir 唱詩班 (2) Aisle 側廊 (3) bronze 青銅 (4) effigy 肖像 (5) distinguished 出名的	
Explain		

II. Examples of slow students' reading journals:

WEEK

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Mon. Feb. 12	20:00 ~ 21:00	P1 ~ P40	dwarf /dwɔːf/ n.矮子,侏儒, diamond /diamond/ a.鑽石的,n.鑽石 - The Seven dwarfs were going to work in the diamond mine. cottage /'kɒtidʒ/ n.小屋,村舍 - When the dwarfs opened the door of their cottage, they saw there was work to do. sweep /swip/ v.打掃,清掃 - He swept/swept/ the stairs. squirrel /'skwɜːl/ n.松鼠 - A squirrel dusted the corners. mop/mɒp/ v.拖把,v.用拖把擦洗 - Grumpy mopped the floors. pick /pik/ v.採,摘 - Dopey and his friends picked flowers for the table. He waved good-by to me.
Author & Title		
WALT DISNEY'S Snow White Visits the Seven Dwarfs			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Tue. Feb. 13	20:00 ~ 21:00	P1 ~ P40	magpie / 'mæg.piː/ n.鵲, nest /nest/ n.巢 - He flew to a tall tree where an angry old magpie had a nest. swoop /swuːp/ 向下猛衝 class /tʃæs/ v.追逐,跟蹤 - Finally Bluebird and his friends swooped down and and chased. royal / rɔɪəl/ a.皇家的, carriage /'kærɪdʒ/ n.四輪馬車 - Then Snow white and the Prince arrived in their royal carriage. They had left their little house a mess. Things were out of place. "I am glad we did something special for dear Snow White," He waved good-by to me.
Author & Title		
WALT DISNEY'S Snow White Visits the Seven Dwarfs			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Wed. Feb. 14	14:00 ~ 15:00	P1 ~ P4c	puppy /'pʌpɪ/ n.(狗)小狗 - All of Ladys and Tramp's puppies had to stay home. paw /pɔː/ n.腳爪 (貓狗等的) - You will get paw prints on the window. wag /wæg/ v.搖動 - Then he turned around and wagged his tail. feel /fiːl/ v.觸,摸 - Scamp Aunt Sarah feel/felt/ the puppies. puddle / pʌdl/ n.水坑 - They walked by a big puddle. fire station = fire house 消防站 - Soon they came to be fire station (fire house).
Author & Title		
WALT DISNEY'S Scamp Saves the House			

WEEK 3

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Thu. Feb. 7	10:00 ~ 11:00	P1 ~ P40	thirsty /'θɜːstɪ/ a.口渴 - He was hot and thirsty. crank /kræŋk/ n.柄 - He turned the crank. shovel /'ʃʌvl/ n.鏟 - They got shovels and some very sticky syrup. syrup /'sɪrəp/ n.糖漿. trip/trip/n.滑跤 toe /təʊ/ n.腳趾 trap/træp/陷阱 - set a trap - He was sticky from the tops of his ears to the tips of his toes. stick /stik/ 黏住 粘,戳 /刺,黏住 leaves /liːvz/ n.樹葉 furious /'fjʊərɪəs/ a.狂怒的
Author & Title		
WALT DISNEY'S Brer Rabbit Saves His Skin			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Fri. Feb. 8	21:00 ~ 22:00	P1 ~ P40	mischief /'mɪstʃɪf/ n.傷害,惡作劇 - That's mischief number one. blame / blem/ v.責備,歸咎 - Now he will blame the Three Little Pigs for the broken windows. meanwhile - 其時,同時 - Meanwhile, Li'l Wolf and two of the little pigs were playing. empty /'emptɪ/ a.空的 - He saw a empty house. nail /neil/ v.釘牢 shut /ʃʌt/ v.蓋 關閉 - But the front door and windows were nailed shut.
Author & Title		
WALT DISNEY'S The Big Bad Wolf and Li'l Wolf			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
S./S. Feb. 9	21:00 ~ 22:00	P1 ~ P40	trip /trip/ v.絆倒,跌倒 - He tripped and fell into the well. vine /vaɪn/ n.藤,蔓 (植物) - They made a long, strong rope from some vines. let down 放下 - He let down the rope into the well. pop /pɒp/ 突然 - He popped both pigs into his sack. juicy /dʒuːsɪ/ a.多汁的 - He wanted to take the juicy pigs home, too. upstairs /ʌp'steəz/ adv.向樓上 - He raced upstairs to his desk.
Author & Title		
WALT DISNEY'S The Big Bad Wolf and Li'l Wolf			

III. Examples of assimilated students' reading journals:

WEEK 5

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Mon. Feb 4	22:00 – 24:00	P90 – P105	The description of that unfriendly nurse reflects the chilliness in the world. The only dependable people is ourself. People extort your love too much, if you give your love to others, then you receive love from them.
Author & Title			John Steinbeck "East of Eden"
Tue. Feb 6			It is awful not to be loved. It is the worst thing in the world. Don't ask me "why I labour that, I just honour it." Makes you ..... makes you mean and violent and cruel. But that's the way Cal has always felt all his life. P91
Author & Title			John Steinbeck "East of Eden"
Wed. Feb 7			Will just keep on feeling guilty and alone unless you believe you helped him. P102 I tried to believe it was born in me, and I couldn't help it, but that is not so. P104.
Author & Title			John Steinbeck "East of Eden"

WEEK

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Thur. Feb 1	22:03 – 22:24	P72 – P81	What is a unreasonable thing. All people in it seem to lose their human and the town to control of themself. Only people who lack of sympathy and conscience would stir up .... these politician stir up wars, people that often lose perspective to respect them.
Author & Title			John Steinbeck "East of Eden"
Fri. Feb 2	22:12 – 22:30	P81 – P89	The love with actual action is real love. The love that the people you love can feel is the best. Love if when your love somebody but he doesn't accept you, must be painful.
Author & Title			John Steinbeck "East of Eden"
S. / S.			
Author & Title			

III. Examples of assimilated students' reading journals:

WEEK 2

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Thu. Nov 1? 3-r	9:00 - 14:00.	pg 1 - pg 79	This novel is talking about a girl whose mother has already dead. and when the teacher want her to do one assignment. she decided to talk about her mother. And this novel is talking about the adventure that she had when she was trying to find some information about her mother.
Author & Title			
"My Girl 2" By Patricia Hermes			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Fri. Dec	11:00 - 15:00	pg 1 - pg 133	Talks time when the wars of the Roses happen which divided the people of England. Richard Shelton realises that he is surrounded by danger, lies and murder. He found the man of the black arrow, outlaws come and are fighting against the evil and cruel Sir Daniel Brackley.
Author & Title			
"The Black Arrow" By: R.L. Stevenson.			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
S. / S.			
Author & Title			What I Thought

WEEK 3

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Mon. Jan 29 1996	9:00 - 16:00	pg 1 - pg 330	Talking place at Embarcadero Hospital located at San Francisco. This novel is talking about 3 doctors whom some firm background. and this novel is talking about each problem that each of them facing everyday at the hospital.
Author & Title			
"Nothing lasts forever" By: Sidney Sheldon.			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Tue. Feb 17 1996	13:00 - 19:00	pg 1 - pg 440	Happening in Spain. A new firm Trevellise suddenly thrive into a hostile world. May Ing age abandoned for the safety of the convent. Unwittingly they become pawns in a battle between the charismatic Jaime miro, leader of the outlawed Basque nationalists, and the ruthless Colonel Ramon Acoca of the Spanish Army.
Author & Title			
"The Sands of Time" By Sidney Sheldon.			

Date	Time	Pages	Notes
Wed. March 3 1996	11:00 - 11:15	pg 14 - pg 18	After your examination result you have to enroll where you want to go. If you want to continue to university. which one should you choose. In this article, it was said that, in order to about the best option we have to know surely our own priorities. arrive who and which this the basic one.
Author & Title			
"After your Exam Result" article			
'After your Exam Result what do you know"			