Annotated Bibliography of Works on Extensive Reading in a Second Language

George M Jacobs and Willy A Renandya
Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)
Regional Language Centre (RELC), Singapore

Julian Bamford
Bunkyo University, Japan

This is the second part of a two stage annotated bibliography. The first part, published in Volume 12 no 2, included a list of categories related to extensive reading teaching and learning. These categories refer to books and articles which are listed in full in this issue. In this bibliography we have attempted to compile references and abstracts for works of various kinds related to the use of extensive reading in second language education. Our key criterion is accessibility. Dissertations, and conference papers listed here are available through ERIC, and articles appear in readily available journals such as Reading in a Foreign Language. The bibliography offers a classification that may be of value to the teacher or researcher in reading in a foreign language, and that may assist course development.

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

We feel it is timely to present a bibliography in Reading in a Foreign Language for many reasons. Firstly, more and more researchers and practitioners recognise the value of reading research in illuminating foreign language learning as a whole: how learners process vocabulary, how they draw on their schema to process texts, and how L1 skills transfer to L2.

Secondly, old orthodoxies are returning in new form, for example reading aloud in the classroom, and looking at literary varieties of language as sources of extensive reading. We would hope to air these debates especially where they appear controversial or fossilised.

Thirdly, reading continues to take on board insights from other disciplines, such as psychology and socio-cultural studies. Ideally a good bibliography would look outside the professional mainstream at materials which stem from other disciplines.

Fourthly, we would like Reading in a Foreign Language to serve as a central meeting point where information on developments in reading can be collated, new debates can be identified and opened up, and contacts can be made. With a view to this central meeting point we are inviting bibliographic suggestions that fall into the categories identified by the authors. Suggestions for new categories would also be welcome.

AUTHORS' NOTE

1. When there was no abstract and we wrote one, this was noted by *. These abstracts may incorporate the authors' words.
2. When there was no abstract and we used the introduction to the piece, some part thereof, or something from another part of the work as the abstract, this was noted by **.

3. When the abstract came from ERIC, this was noted by ***.
To search the ERIC Database and order ERIC Documents ERIC on the Internet visit their Website at http://edrs.com.

4. When the author wrote an abstract especially for this bibliography, this was noted by ****.

5. When an abstract accompanied the article, chapter, paper, or book, that abstract was used. No asterisk accompanies such abstracts.

6. When a work might be difficult to find, this is noted by a #. For a copy of such works, email Julian Bamford at bamford@shonan.bunkyo.ac.jp. Tell him your address and how you wish the copy to be mailed (express, standard airmail, surface mail). He will inform you of any copying and mailing charges.

7. The works in italics report or review empirical investigations.

SUBJECT INDEX
To make it easier to find works on topics of interest, we have categorized the works in the bibliography by topics. This cross-referencing is not comprehensive, but we offer it for whatever assistance it might bring.

ADAPTING TEXTS
These works examine the adapting and simplifying of reading materials for L2 learners.


AFFECT
Extensive reading has been discussed and studied in terms of its impact on such variables as attitude toward reading and motivation to read.


CLASS READERS
One form of extensive reading is when teachers guide the whole class in reading the same book (a class reader). Work with class readers can support and complement individually-selected reading done by students outside the classroom, and can link reading with other areas of the language-learning curriculum, such as speaking, listening, and writing.


COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT HYPOTHESIS
Based on the theories of Stephen Krashen, extensive reading has been investigated as a source of comprehensible input for L2 acquisition.


GRAMMAR
These works investigate the incidental acquisition of grammatical competence through reading.


HOW TO
These works describe a variety of extensive reading programs in which students individually choose their own reading materials. There are suggestions on such matters as orienting students, setting up libraries, and organizing post-reading activities. Many of the suggestions link extensive reading with other areas of the language-learning curriculum, such as speaking, listening and writing.

LEARNER AUTONOMY

Extensive reading lends itself to learner responsibility and initiative, encouraging students to take a greater hand in their own learning, and moving learning away from the sole use of teacher-fronted instruction.

Abersold & Field, 1997; Dupuy, 1997b; Dupuy, Tse & Cook, 1996; Gee, 1999; Hsui Yan, 1994; Jacobs, Davis & Renandy, 1997 (Chapter 17); Krashen & Cho, 1995; Lai, 1993a; McQuillan & Conde, 1996; Rivers, 1972; Rodrigo & McQuillan, 1999; Yu, 1995.

L2 LEARNING

These are works that contain theories, discussions, and investigations into the role that extensive reading can play in L2 learning. (See also Comprehensible Input Hypothesis.)


READING ABILITY

These works contain theories, discussions, and investigations into the role that extensive reading can play in improving L2 reading ability.


READING FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

Extensive reading can have a role in preparing students for L2 academic study, including the special demands of reading in tertiary education.


READING MATERIALS

These works present options and suggestions, sometimes including bibliographies, for assembling collections of books and other materials suitable for extensive reading. Two subgroups included here are works concerned with language learner literature (books written or adapted for L2 learners, also called graded readers) and works about student-made reading materials.

VOCABULARY

These are investigations and discussions of how vocabulary may be learned incidentally while reading. Some of these studies investigate ways of making incidental learning more efficient, perhaps by supplementing it with intentional learning.


WRITING

These are studies of the impact of extensive reading on L2 writing ability.


YOUNGER LEARNERS

Unlike most works in this bibliography which are concerned with extensive reading by young adults and adults, these works are studies and descriptions of extensive reading programs with younger learners.

Anderson, 1996; Cheah, 1996; Cheah, 1997; DiMarzio & Constans, 1996; Elley, 1984; Elley & Mangubhai, 1981; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Gee, 1999; Hickey, 1991; Jacobs, Davis & Renandya, 1997 (Chapters 7.9, 10, 12, 13); Lipp, 1990; MacGillivray, Tse & McQuillan, 1995; McQuillan, 1996; Parker & Turner, 1987; Parrott, 1987; Samways, Whang, & Pippitt, 1995; Strong, 1996.

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY


* While most of this book is not about extensive reading, the following parts are relevant: The beginning of chapter 1 asks teachers to think about the role of reading in their life, past and present, and also about the influence of family, community, school, culture, and individual characteristics in defining the role of reading. Pages 43-44 discuss an approach to reading instruction based on extensive reading. It includes an account by a teacher of a reading course she taught based on extensive reading. One of her reasons for choosing this approach was to give students more
psicholinguistics has influenced development of language teaching policies to the extent that many language teachers have advanced a more semantic, social, and communicative view of language. An extension of this approach suggests that reading for pleasure from appropriate second language (L2) texts provides subconscious and progressively more difficult L2 input much like that essential for native language (L1) acquisition. The process is enhanced, it is proposed, by the interest and interest engendered by the texts. This hypothesis is supported by psychological principles of learning. The L1=L2 hypothesis suggests that L2 learning, like L1 acquisition, follows a highly predictable pattern. It is concluded that if the conditions of L1 acquisition are approximated by extensive L2 reading (i.e., substantial unconscious, comprehensible input), the L2 learner can achieve a native-like communicative competence in a formal instructional setting.


This paper is an overview of graded readers. It first outlines the characteristics of the graded reader, and its contribution to foreign language teaching. Second, suggestions are made as to the use of graded readers so that their potential may be maximized. Third, the grading systems themselves are analyzed, as are the levels of published titles in terms of their readability. Next, the article presents a detailed bibliography of most available titles—from beginner to intermediate levels—of interest to secondary level and adult learners. And finally, practical advice is given for setting up a library of graded readers.


This article argues that all students must engage in extensive reading if they are to become skillful and fluent. “Automaticity of ‘bottom-up’ (word recognition) processes upon which comprehension depends is a consequence of practice.” The authors list characteristics of successful extensive reading programs, including “Reading is its own reward. There are few or no follow-up exercises to be completed after reading.” They also argue that simplified materials are an appropriate choice for students whose level of L2 proficiency makes it very difficult to read texts written for native speakers.

This book about methodology argues for the important role that extensive reading can play in foreign language programs from the elementary stages onwards.

“It is by pursuing the activity of extensive reading that the volume of practice necessary to achieve rapid and efficient reading can be achieved. It is also one of the means by which a foreigner may be exposed to a substantial sample of the language he may wish to learn without actually going to live in the country to which that language is native.” (pp. 92-93).

These ideas were to become standard practice in the field with the publication of Christine Nuttall’s Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language (1982). Broughton et al. explain how to use class readers and how to set up class libraries. For the latter, they favour easy graded readers where fewer than one word in every hundred is unfamiliar.


This book is designed to “help students who are fairly proficient in English, but not completely at home in the cultures of English-speaking countries, to find books that they can read with a maximum of pleasure and a minimum of frustration”.


This book is a sequel to Brown (1988). Types of books included in the annotated bibliography include picture books, word books, legends, fables, folktales, fairy tales, and non-fiction. Books are cross referenced by location and ethnic background, and by topic.


This article describes the rationale and structure of a research project about the effectiveness of reading in foreign language acquisition. The article focuses on two issues: the initial stages of the project (which has been very much influenced by a similar one carried out by Elley and Mangubhai, 1983); and some aspects of the backgrounds of the pupils involved. In the first stages of the project, pupils in fifteen Hamburg schools were provided with class libraries, and tests were administered to both ‘reading’ groups and ‘non-reading’ groups. Both groups will be tested again, in two years’ time. The background information about the pupils.
suggests that reading is, in fact, more popular amongst them than might be supposed, but that the provision and organization of reading materials in school fall far short of pupils' needs and interests.


Language Learning, 18, 61-75.

Three propositions which bear upon second language learning are defined: (1) Some students need or desire only to be able to read and it is legitimate to design courses for such students which omit training in oral skills unless these help with reading. (2) Passive linguistic knowledge can develop far ahead of active ability, and this fact can be exploited when teaching reading by not demanding the simultaneous ability to write. (3) A number of examples suggest that grammar, lexicon, and phonology can be learned in greater independence of one another than is often assumed. It follows from these three propositions that it might be worthwhile experimenting with courses which first teach the recognition of grammatical forms, then the recognition of lexicon, but which minimize both phonology and active production of sentences in the new language. Techniques by which this could be accomplished would have the added advantage of avoiding the childish level of materials with which even adult students must usually contend when beginning a foreign language.


Students who wish to read French and who are willing to omit instruction in the spoken language have learned successfully by using texts that are mixtures of French and English. The texts begin with English words in French word order, and in subsequent passages a few French words are substituted for the English words. Later the proportion of French gradually rises. The method has the advantage that adult students can practice from the beginning with adult materials. They need never be subjected to the French equivalent of "Dick and Jane". The method also allows a relatively systematic introduction of grammatical material, another advantage for the adult student, and it allows a good many aspects of the language to be absorbed relatively unconsciously through extensive exposure to written materials. Its major disadvantage is the unesthetic appearance of the mixed texts. The method violates a number of widely held assumptions about second language instruction but reasons exist for doubting all these assumptions.


* This chapter describes a method for teaching reading to L2 beginners in French. Learners begin with reading L1 translations of L2 texts written with L2 word order. Gradually, students are introduced to similar texts with an increasing quantity of L2 vocabulary. Examples are provided. Advantages and disadvantages of the method are discussed. The author explains the rationale for the method by attempting to debunk four assumptions about L2 acquisition: (1) the primacy of oral over written language; (2) the integral unity of a language; (3) invariable boundaries separate different languages from one another; (4) language production goes hand in hand with comprehension.


*** This article discusses the need for extensive reading in FL teaching. It suggests a test which shows whether a student has actually read the material or has simply gained a superficial knowledge of it. It discusses advantages and disadvantages of multiple-choice. Finally it suggests test exchange for interested teachers. A test on Steinbeck's "The Pearl" is included.


This article argues for the need for both intensive and extensive reading in an EAP reading curriculum, and further argues that a principled curricular approach to combining both is through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Given the need for academic preparation programs that focus on college and university requirements so that students are taught literacy skills which are transferable to academic contexts, this paper argues that both intensive and extensive reading are necessary to prepare students for the tasks and texts they encounter in college. Intensive reading with a focus on skills/strategies instruction has been shown to yield positive effects on second language reading. At the same time, students need the practice of extensive reading in order to orchestrate, coordinate and apply intensively acquired skills/strategies over the larger texts and multiple reading sources that are required in all academic course work. TBLT, which focuses on specific tasks, such as evaluated products in academic contexts (e.g. test-taking, report writing), allow students to acquire relevant skills and strategies in the context of tasks they will eventually encounter in academic courses. Furthermore, TBLT provides a principled approach to the determination of relevant content.

* This piece is a response to Ng (1996), which appeared in the same issue of this journal. The author connects Ng's discussion of the changes inherent in Brunei's RELA project with those involved in Singapore's REAP project (see Mok, 1994), on which RELA was somewhat based, and stresses the need to investigate socio-cultural factors for their effect on second language acquisition. She also emphasizes learning from and building upon current literacy practices in a given context, rather than seeking to eliminate them and begin from scratch.


* This chapter takes a socio-cultural perspective in examining the Whole Language approach in lower primary English language instruction in Singapore, a development which began in the 1980s. Extensive reading was an important part of this approach. Returning to these classrooms in 1996, the author found that some of the positive changes of the 1980s were now less visible. For instance, library corners did not always have the variety of books that once existed. The author cautions that the increasing introduction of technology, well on its way in Singapore schools, should build on what is worth from the past, rather than wiping it out and starting over.


* This article begins by discussing why many L2 acquirers do little reading in their L2: lack of confidence that reading will help; incorrect views of how to go about L2 reading; and difficulty in obtaining suitable books. Next, four female Korean immigrants to the U.S. participated in a study in which the researchers found that providing learners with the right texts (the Sweet Valley Kids series) boosted the quantity of their reading and increased their L2 proficiency.


* This article reports a case study building on previous work on the English language development of Koreans who came to the U.S. as adults (Cho & Krashen, 1994; Krashen & Cho, 1995). The participant in the study had lived in the U.S. for five years but had had little interaction in English and, though an avid reader in Korean had never read a book in English. She was introduced to the Sweet Valley Kids series and told her reading would be voluntary, i.e., she could read as much as she liked, and if she did not like a book she was not obliged to finish it. Within one year, the participant did an impressive amount of reading - more than one million words - of that series and of more difficult material. At the same time, her L2 competence increased, based on the level of the books she read and on her estimation of her own proficiency level.


* The author proposes that setting up a class library is a good way to bring books to students' attention. Among the suggestions given for setting up such a library are: survey students about their reading preferences; provide short introductions to the books and a worksheet to guide students in selecting suitable books; establish a procedure for recording which books students are reading and which ones they like, but avoid post-reading tasks that make reading a chore; and have a student library monitor to help maintain the collection.


*** An Eastern Michigan University course in Spanish for special purposes with an emphasis on technology was intended to serve students of business, international trade, and technology, but the actual enrollment came largely from the department of foreign languages and bilingual studies. However, significant diversity in scientific preparation and aptitude and in language proficiency was still found in the course population, both undergraduate and graduate. The courses have since been designed for a broad target group, with emphasis placed on translation from Spanish to English and limited English-to-Spanish translation practice. The course content includes fundamental technological and scientific terminology in a variety of fields (mathematics, physics and sub-fields, chemistry, biology, and automotive and computer technology). The methodology used involves extensive readings, vocabulary review, translation, oral reports, and examinations. Instructional materials at varying linguistic levels and from a variety of fields are used. Student evaluations of the course have indicated satisfaction with the amount of learning in varied fields and with their newly acquired ability to translate technical texts. Student dissatisfaction relates to learning vocabulary in fields unrelated to career goals, text difficulty, and the instructor's lack of technical knowledge in some fields. Course outlines are appended.

**This chapter argues that proficient second language users acquire most of their vocabulary knowledge through extensive reading. For beginners, however, this presents a problem: How can they learn words through extensive reading if they don’t have enough words to read extensively? Coady proposes that this dilemma can be overcome in two stages. First, learners should be given explicit instruction and practice in the 3,000 most common words in the language, to the point of automaticity. Second, they should then be allowed to engage in reading tasks they find enjoyable. Of critical importance is the careful selection of reading materials: Drawing on Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, Coady urges curriculum designers to adopt an approach in which there is comprehensible input, adequate and supportive feedback, and, above all, material that the learner finds interesting.**


***This study investigates the application of Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, studying the relationship between exposure to the target language and language acquisition within the context of the English-as-a-foreign-language secondary classroom in Spain. The project studied the effect of additional reading instruction with emphasis on reading for pleasure. Series of graded readers were made available to students in the experimental group who were asked to write short reports to which teachers responded. An average of 15 hours of after school reading was completed by students in the experimental group. Student achievement was evaluated via the short form of the English Language Skills Assessment (ELSA), a multiple-choice cloze test, a dictation test, the Spaw test (vocabulary), and a self-assessment measure. The difference between control and experimental groups was not significant. The following possible explanations are provided: reading does not correlate with greater achievement in a second language; the treatment provides either inadequate or insufficient input to support Krashen’s hypothesis; the length of the study was insufficient to show significant results; the measurement tools used were inadequate to capture differences.***


* This paper describes a one semester reading class of adult, lower intermediate level, ESL students in the U.S. The class emphasized student-selected pleasure reading, supplemented with teacher-supplied magazine articles. Students began the course wishing to use traditional methods to improve their reading, such as looking up unknown words and asking about grammar. However, with the author’s guidance, such practices decreased dramatically or vanished. Students were not tested on their reading nor were they asked to write book reports. Instead, students wrote and responded to questions about the texts they had read, or, optionally wrote journal entries. As the course progressed, more and more students wrote journal entries and the length of these entries increased. The author concludes, “Pleasure reading gave the results that we, as reading and language teachers, want: language development in terms of reading, writing, and comprehension, and confidence. The goal was accomplished in an environment that was fun, relaxing, and interesting for all involved.”


Forty-three international university students, currently living in the United States, filled out a questionnaire probing years of English study, length of residence (LOR) in the US, free reading habits in the first and second language, and TV watching. Despite the fact that subjects reported little reading in English, this variable was a significant predictor of TOEFL test performance. In addition, English study in the home country and length of residence in the US were also related to TOEFL scores.


The brief ELT background and description of the reading programme’s design and aims are first given. The paper then identifies the main problem areas in implementation and describes the broad approaches used to address them. Specific problems and the programme’s response to them, relating to both Class Readers and Class Libraries are examined. Finally some conclusions are reached in the light of our experiences, which may have implications for the design and implementation of similar programmes.

* Simplification is often used to create extensive reading materials for L2 students. The author begins this chapter by stating that “Simplicity is difficult”. He goes on to describe some of the issues involved in simplification of language and its relation to authenticity. In conclusion he states, “In teaching our concern is with simplification, not with authenticity. Everything the learner understands is authentic for him. It is the teacher who simplifies, the learner who authenticates.”


During the last fifteen years, extensive reading programmes (ERPs) have been growing in popularity worldwide as a significant support to the teaching of English, whether in L1, ESL, or EFL. The Edinburgh Project in Extensive Reading (EPER) has done much to promote the aims and methods of extensive reading, and has successfully developed programmes in countries with such varied learning contexts as Malaysia, Tanzania, Hong Kong, and the Maldives. And yet, it seems that ERPs have not been adopted as readily as they might have been. This article considers the benefits of extensive reading, examines some of the reasons for its failure to ‘take off’, describes two programmes with which the writer has been intimately involved, and offers teachers some leading questions to help them develop their own programmes.


* This article reports a questionnaire study of 175 U.S. undergraduates’ attitudes toward studying L2 literature. These students were enrolled in sixth-semester introductory foreign language literature courses. About two-thirds of respondents reported a positive attitude toward literature study. Variables found to be significantly related to attitude toward literature study were: amount of leisure reading done in the L2, role of literature in the home, and preferred learning style. The authors recommend that reading instruction allow students to give their own interpretations of what they read and that Sustained Silent Reading, in which students select what they read, be done once or twice a week.


This article contains practical suggestions for running an extensive reading programme. These suggestions include: how teachers can work together to grade the books so as to make it easier for students to select appropriate books; how the use of class readers can build skills that enhance students’ out-of-class reading; and writing and speaking activities to use with class readers. The author concludes by emphasizing two points: the need for careful planning, and the value of time spent on extensive reading.


* This book is a collection of activities for teaching second language reading, including activities on reading for main ideas, scanning, assessment and evaluation, and reading rate. Part 1 consists of 13 activities for extensive reading, including ones by authors of other works in this bibliography, such as Bamford and Mason.


* The book, comprising 15 chapters, is divided into three main parts. The first part is the more theoretical. It begins with an explanation of what extensive reading (ER) and various related terms, such as free voluntary reading, mean. Then it discusses the importance of affect and how ER can improve learners’ attitudes toward reading. It reviews research on ER, and considers the place of ER in the second language curriculum. The second part argues for the use of what they call language learner literature, works written or rewritten especially for language learners, e.g. simplified versions of well-known works. Day and Bamford go on to illustrate what is involved in creating good language learner literature. Further, the book’s appendix provides a 49-page bibliography of recommended works of this type. The last and longest part of the book describes the nuts and bolts of running ER programmes, including setting up the programme, finding and organising the materials, orienting the students to the programme, creating an on-going community of readers, evaluating the programme, and, last but not least, the role of the teacher. The authors conclude by emphasising that although successful ER programmes differ in many regards, they all have one element in common: teachers who put their heart, soul, and mind into making the programme a success.


* This article addresses the problem of how to encourage students to read extensively in an L2. The article begins with an explanation of what extensive reading is, the materials to be used, and the benefits that can be derived from incorporating extensive reading in L2 instruction. The authors also discuss such matters as selecting reading materials, considering the impact of culture on reading, orienting students to read extensively, integrating extensive reading into the curriculum, following up on students’ reading, and role modeling by teachers.

During the process of first language development, children learn new vocabulary incidentally from listening and reading situations. While it has been claimed that the same is true for second language learners, there is a paucity of empirical evidence. This paper reports the results of an investigation whose purpose was to determine if Japanese EFL students could learn vocabulary incidentally while reading silently for entertainment in the classroom. The findings demonstrated that such incidental vocabulary learning did occur for both high school and university students.


* This article describes a technique for increasing literacy skills of L2 children and their families. Teachers put together book bags, each of which contained a story appropriate to the children's reading level, a toy that matched the story, and a blank journal with a question related to the story written on the opening page. Children took the bags home to read the book with their family, play with the toy, and write in the journal. The bags circulated among the class, with each new borrower adding an entry to the journal.


* This article describes how students first read one or two myths and legends before working in groups to write stories, legends, and myths either from their own culture or which they had invented. These texts then were shared with fellow students.

Dunning, B. D. (1988). Young adult literature as a bridge to academic success. TESOL Newsletter, 23(6), 1, 10-11.

* This article proposes that L2 students can benefit from reading books written for young adult native speakers. Among the suggested benefits of reading such books are their modern themes, fast pace, relatively short page length, uncomplicated plots, and contemporary language. Sources of recommended titles are provided.


** This article focuses on the use of a different approach to reading in the intermediate foreign language classroom. It is an approach which exposes students to a great variety of texts which they self-select and read during their free time. After briefly reviewing the literature on free reading, and outlining the rationale for its use, the author reports the reactions of two intermediate foreign language classes to the free reading approach, as well as their opinions regarding the impact of this approach on developing the language they study. A majority of students (87%) reported that the free reading program had helped them develop their overall language competence and indicated that it had been most beneficial in expanding their vocabulary and increasing their reading comprehension. Students (94%) also reported that the free reading program had helped them become confident readers in French, and 82% of them indicated that they were more likely to read for pleasure in French after participating in this program.


Looking for a way to bring students to read voluntarily in their second language and enjoy it? This article discusses a reading approach through which students are exposed to many books which they self-select and discuss in their literature circles, and reports the reactions of 49 French students towards this approach.


By examining the preferences of 49 intermediate-level students of French as a foreign language concerning two classroom activities (grammar instruction and practice, and extensive reading) this study replicates and expands a previous study (McQuillan,1994) by surveying students studying a different language, and presenting the reasons behind their choice. Similar to McQuillan (1994), students in this study overwhelmingly found extensive reading to be not only more pleasurable but also more beneficial for language acquisition than grammar instruction and practice. Students explained that while reading was fun, interesting, and beneficial for language acquisition, grammar instruction and practice was dull and boring, and its effects small and short-lived.


In this paper, the author reports on an alternative reading approach for the intermediate foreign language class. It is an approach through which students are exposed to a great variety of books that they self select and discuss in their literature circles. After discussing the general principles of literature circles, the author will proceed to discuss how this approach can be implemented in the classroom.

* The authors begin by giving reasons why ESL students are reluctant to read for pleasure in English: students believe reading is not an effective way of learning; they believe L2 reading should focus on form, not meaning; and students do not know how to choose appropriate reading material. The article describes an extensive reading program that tried to overcome student reluctance to read for pleasure. First, students were informed of research that suggests extensive reading can greatly enhance SLA. Next, the authors helped students understand the difference between intensive and extensive reading. The authors also assisted students in choosing books by such means as surveys of student interests, booktalks, book displays, and book lists. Students participated in a number of activities: SSR (sustained silent reading) in class, literature circles, reading logs, book reviews, and critic’s corner. The authors recommend that in keeping with the link between extensive reading and learner initiative, students negotiate how they will be graded for their extensive reading course.


* The EPER database, begun in the early 1980s and updated periodically, currently has entries for about 3,500 English-language graded readers, both in print and out of print. Each book is assigned to one of EPER’s 8 readability levels, from beginning to advanced. The database thus consolidates the various series from various publishers into one overall system of levels. Database entries also include such information as recommended reader age (adult, secondary, primary), genre, regional setting, sex of the main protagonist, and a quality rating on a 5-point scale. At different times, it has been possible to order (directly from EPER) Booklists drawn from the database. The Booklists, copyrightied by EPER according to the year compiled, have included: complete lists (all books both in and out of print); current/standard lists (all books in print, now about 1,600 titles); recommended titles (those in print that score 4 or 5 on the quality scale, currently about 600 titles), and customized lists to customer specifications (e.g. books suitable for primary-aged readers). Further details of and information from the database can be found in Hill & Thomas, 1988, 1989, 1993, and Hill, 1997. A version of the Recommended Titles Booklist appears as an appendix to Day and Bamford, 1998.


* This book consists of 15 chapters divided into four parts. Part 1 begins with a discussion of what extensive reading is and its benefits to students. Other topics in Part 1 include finding suitable materials for extensive reading and descriptions of programmes in a variety of countries. Part 2 is the book’s longest section. It goes into detail on programme management, including class readers and library readers, storage and security of books, official endorsement, training of staff, monitoring, and evaluation. Part 3 concerns the classroom teacher’s role in extensive reading, and Part 4 describes what EPER can offer educators wishing to implement extensive reading.


* This chapter begins with a description of how reading is taught in Fiji and of the Tate Oral English Program based on audio-lingual principles and used widely in the South Pacific. Next, data are presented indicating that the cloze procedure may be valid for assessing L1 and L2 reading. The author then explains why he supports two changes to the teaching of reading in Fiji: more books in schools and an instructional approach that encourages students to read more. Elley presents data in which the variable that correlated most strongly with reading scores – after removing variance accounted for by home background – was the size of the students’ school library. Many primary schools were found to lack well-stocked libraries, or even not to have libraries, in part due to the absence of indigenous children’s literature in written form. Second, he argues that the audio-lingual approach’s delay in the introduction of reading generally and in the introduction of specific structures in reading until they have been taught orally is unfounded, especially in light of work, mostly by the 1970s, by students of reading such as Clay, Goodman, and Smith. Instead of books chosen for their controlled use of selected grammatical structures, he suggests a reading programme based on high interest stories in order to encourage reading by primary school students. The editors’ postscript to the chapter includes a discussion of the relative place of oral and written forms of language in L2 education.


This article outlines a set of recent little-known empirical studies of the effects of “book-floods” on students’ acquisition of a second language in elementary schools. In contrast to students learning by means of structured, audiolingual programs,
those children who are exposed to an extensive range of high-interest illustrated story books, and encouraged to read and share them, are consistently found to learn the target language more quickly. When immersed in meaningful text, without tight controls over syntax and vocabulary, children appear to learn the language incidentally, and to develop positive attitudes toward books. In some cases, the benefits are found to spread to other subjects and languages. Implications are drawn for language policy in developing countries and some support is established for such concepts as “comprehensible input” and “whole language” approaches to language acquisition in schools.


* This chapter reports findings from a study organized by the IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement). Data were collected in 1990 and 1991, involving 210,000 students and 10,000 teachers from 32 education systems from all over the world. The chapter focuses on those findings of particular relevance to developing countries, where the language of school is not the native language of many of the students. Among the author’s conclusions is that “instructional programs that stress teacher-directed drills and skills are less beneficial in raising literacy levels than programs that try to capture students’ interest and encourage them to read independently.”


In many countries of the world, English is learned formally by pupils as a second or foreign language. Much of the instruction in schools is aimed at teaching one English structure at a time, in the belief that the learners will be able to put these discretely learnt structures together in real communicative situations. That learning for communication is slow and for the amount of time devoted to it relatively unproductive and often bereft of any enjoyment is not surprising. In the schools of the South Pacific, the situation is not different. In this report, the authors explore an alternative, more enjoyable approach to promoting the acquisition of English at the primary school level. The approach capitalizes on children’s love for stories and the belief that effective learning takes place at the point of interest. Children in rural schools of Fiji were exposed to a variety of high-interest illustrated storybooks and encouraged to read and discuss them regularly. The report describes how the children’s language progress was carefully monitored to investigate the effects of the new approach. The results were positive and sufficiently encouraging to give new hope to pupils and teachers of English in many contexts, and to provide sound empirical support for the contribution of reading to general growth.


Five critical differences between first and second language learning were identified and discussed. It was hypothesized that the effect of these differences in formal education could be virtually eliminated by means of a reading program based on the use of an abundance of high-interest illustrated story books. A sample of 380 Class 4 and 5 pupils from eight rural Fijian schools with very few books was selected, and each class was provided with 250 high-interest story books in English. The 16 participating teachers were given directions in two different methods of encouraging the pupils to read the books. Pre- and posttests were given to all pupils and to matched control groups of 234 pupils who followed the normal structured English language program, which puts little emphasis on reading. Posttest results after eight months showed that pupils exposed to many stories progressed in reading and listening comprehension at twice the normal rate, and confirmed the hypothesis that high-interest story reading has an important role to play in second language learning. After 20 months, the gains had increased further and spread to related language skills.


* The first 20 pages of this book explain what extensive reading is and provide ideas for teaching English as a second language via extensive reading. The remaining approximately 125 pages present guides for teaching 18 different books. The guides include explanatory notes and a range of activities focusing both on content and on language.


*** Includes a brief description of the English-language proficiency level expected of ninth-grade Israeli students and introduces a tabular guide to various English readers, along with their basic vocabulary ranges.

* This article begins by stating that, owing to the view of language as speech, reading and writing are given a secondary role, even though they may be more important for many advanced L2 students. Furthermore, the differences between spoken and written forms of language mean that development of proficiency in the spoken form of a language will not be sufficient in promoting proficiency in the written form. The article goes on to review work by Goodman and others on the reading process, before suggesting a model reading program. This involves both intensive and extensive reading “moving back and forth between close-in-class analysis and the synthesis that reading in quantity provides”. Three points are emphasized in the model program: materials that are neither too difficult nor too easy; although too easy is preferable to too difficult; content of the reading should match students’ needs; and reading material must be available in large quantity. Reading labs, stocked with graded readers, provide one means of providing this quantity.


* Reviewing the research presented in the book’s previous chapters, the author concludes that because reading is such a complex, interactive, and multifaceted process, sustainable progress can only be via a large quantity of reading of texts of increasingly greater difficulty.

“Unless students can somehow be induced to develop a serious interest in some kind of reading that leads to a long-term reading habit, all talk of teaching reading becomes meaningless. There is much that can be done to help students along, and to wean them from counter-productive strategies, but providing appropriate material to read, that is, material which the students themselves find interesting or useful at a level which is largely comprehensible to them, should always be the teacher’s first priority.”


* This article explains why intrinsic motivation is crucial for reading, what factors increase and decrease intrinsic motivation to read, and how to design a reading program that promotes intrinsic motivation. Suggestions include encouraging students to stop reading a book they are not enjoying, using enjoyable and non-threatening means of checking on students' reading, and allowing students to do extensive reading in a comfortable place, one not associated with serious studying.


* This paper opens by emphasizing the need for students, who have a wide variety of interests, to find books that interest them if their reading is to progress. Twenty-eight writers produced 64 English language books for Malaysian students in the third and fourth years of primary school. Students were then asked to rate these books. The 20 top-rated books were published and distributed to schools in various parts of the country for further rating by pupils. Results of this second rating exercise showed no evidence of differences in the rating of students related to whether they lived in urban or rural areas, were of different ages, or according to the book’s difficulty level. Further, females and males rated the books about the same, except for one book about choosing dresses that was more popular with females. Very brief summaries are provided of the twenty books that students especially liked.


*** This article describes the role of reading-writing workshops for second-language classrooms as a flexible way to organize a class for literary instruction. In this environment, students can choose among integrated social activities involving reading, writing, speaking and listening without feeling pressure to exhibit a polished performance every time.


* This article presents ideas for encouraging a love of reading among ESL students at elementary and middle school level. The author begins by emphasizing the crucial nature of affective variables in reading, not only in determining attitude toward reading but also for increasing comprehension. In addition to attitude, these affective variables include motivation, beliefs, perceived task control, and perceived competence. Suggestions for enhancing affect include: open tasks in which students have opportunities for choice, challenge, control in organizing and planning, collaboration, connecting to the world beyond the classroom, understanding of why they are doing the task, and self-evaluation; ways of making easy books acceptable and difficult books accessible; allowing students to choose what they read and helping them learn how to choose wisely; and a low-risk environment in which teachers act as facilitators and role models rather than evaluators, classmates
are supportive, and time and space is provided for students to read and to share with one another about their reading.


* This chapter considers issues of approach, design, and procedure in L2 reading instruction. Under approach, two claims made that are relevant to extensive reading are “Reading requires practice—time on task” and “Reading requires purpose—motivation (interest, need)”. Under design, the author discusses how extensive reading provides what he calls a “Critical Mass of Knowledge” of both language and of the world. This critical mass supports reading as well as overall L2 proficiency. Thus, extensive reading is part of the design for reading instruction at all proficiency levels, including elementary. Suggestions for procedures include extensive reading done outside of class with materials selected less for their authenticity than with consideration for their being challenging but not too difficult, so as to build students’ confidence. By reading such materials, students are more likely to develop effective reading habits.


* This article reports a study in which 101 students in an ESL program at a U.S. university were individually interviewed to collect data on 44 variables concerning the students’ language learning background prior to entry into the program. These data were analyzed for relationships between the variables and students’ TOEFL scores and sub-scores. The researchers highlight the relatively high correlation between extracurricular (extensive) reading and TOEFL score and the lack of a direct correlation with TOEFL scores of hours of formal instruction and quantity of oral language use. When multiple regression analysis was conducted, “[O]utside reading emerged as the most important, indeed the only, factor with a significant effect on TOEFL scores.”


* The large majority of this book is devoted to describing activities that can be used to accompany class readers. These are divided into pre-reading, while reading, after reading, and a section on “changing frame” with activities in which students are asked to view the text from a different perspective. For instance, if the class is reading Silas Marner, they could try to see the story from the point of view of an adoption committee, charged with deciding to whom to grant adoption rights. An eight-lesson sample scheme of work is also provided.


A three-month extensive reading programme using graded readers was set up involving one experimental group and two control groups of ESL in the UK. The programme, inspired by Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, was designed to investigate whether extensive reading for pleasure could affect an improvement in subjects’ linguistic skills, with particular reference to reading and writing. The results showed a marked improvement in the performance of the experimental subjects, especially in terms of their writing skills. A number of recommendations are made regarding the setting up of extensive reading programmes.


The article describes an experiment into the effect of a 90 hour extensive reading programme using graded readers on the language development of a group (N=25) of learners of English as an L2 in Pakistan. Results show significant gains in both fluency and accuracy of expression, though not in range of structures used. It is suggested that extensive reading can provide learners with a set of linguistic models which may then, by a process of over-learning, be assimilated and incorporated into learners’ active L2 repertoire. The results are discussed with reference to a related study by the same authors in an ESL context in the UK.


Most courses in English for academic purposes concentrate on teaching traditional reading comprehension skills at the intensive level, and do not offer help to the students with the area of reading which frequently causes the non-native student the greatest difficulty in his English-medium university courses: the sheer volume of reading required, which often overwhelms the foreign university student. At Universiti Sains Malaysia there was a particular need for a course which would help students to develop extensive reading strategies and offer them sufficient opportunity to practice these in a controlled situation. The course which was developed used overhead transparencies keyed to a tape recording in the skill development stages, and proceeded to real university textbooks. At WESL Institute of Western Illinois University, the concept of a course in extensive reading skills was retained, as was the use of the overhead projector as a presentation technique, but the course which was developed was rather different, as a response to differing student needs and as a result of background research into psycholinguistic theories of the reading process, coupled with experience gained from the use of the first course.

This article reports a study in which 100 Japanese university students participated. The researcher investigated the effects of extensive reading on students’ proficiency in English. Pre- and post-tests were used, but there was no control group. The extensive reading programme involved students in reading self-selected books and writing reports on these books. The teacher provided feedback on these reports. The researcher states that those students who read more experienced significantly greater improvement in reading ability and vocabulary knowledge, although not in text reading comprehension. Questionnaire data suggest that the students believed the extensive reading programme had helped improve their English and that the teacher’s comments on their book reports were useful. The study also investigated reading strategy use among students of varying proficiencies.


This article describes how group rewards were used to increase motivation in a reading class of 50 second-year students at a women’s junior college in Japan. The class was built around the reading of a novel during the semester, with students reading a certain number of chapters per week as homework and discussing those chapters in class. Early in the semester, many students did not seem to be reading the assigned chapters, absenteeism was high, and when asked to discuss the chapters in groups, many students did not participate. In hopes of improving the situation, the teacher organized students into permanent groups of about five. At first, groups were given questions to answer about the chapters and were rewarded based on the order in which groups correctly completed all the questions. Later in the semester, groups wrote questions for other groups to answer and were rewarded on the quality of their questions, their ability to answer other groups’ questions, and other groups’ inability to answer their questions. Grades for the course were assigned by totaling groups’ weekly scores, with some minor individual adjustment if a student was particularly diligent or particularly unparticipatory. The author reports that while some students continued to lack motivation, overall the reward system was a success as the class “became a scene of active group cooperation and communication”.


* This book contains eight chapters. The first explains how graded readers are written by means of lexical, structural, and information control, and discusses issues related to such simplification. The next chapter describes how using graded readers can help learners develop knowledge of language and language use, improve their reading skills and strategies, and enhance their attitudes toward reading. Ideas for selecting graded readers for student use are presented in chapter three, followed by


* This paper reports the successful experience of using extensive reading as a major component of a required course on English Reading for first-year students at a Japanese Junior College. The report includes: how extensive reading was introduced to students (“We’re going to read. And read. And read and read. And by July, you’ll have read over 500 pages of English”); how students obtained books to read (mostly from the graded reader collection in the college’s library), follow-up assignments (short reaction reports with no marking for grammar), teacher feedback on the reports (usually with a rubber stamp that says “OK” or with a short note, and how teachers went about getting new books for the collection.


*** Maintains that cursory reading of original literary texts should have no place in foreign language teaching in the intermediate grades. Discusses “edited” versions of texts, and the weaknesses thereof. Gives a review of reading texts available in series, and discusses methodological problems.


*** This article discusses the use of extensive silent reading, its purpose, place in the course, methodology and choice of appropriate texts.


* This article describes how film was used to generate enthusiasm for extensive reading in a high intermediate/low advanced ESL course at a U.S. university. Criteria are provided for choosing appropriate books and films with accompanying activities. These include students writing discussion questions, comparison of book and film versions, acting out scenes, and assigning members of the class to write out what given characters say in the film. Another activity involves turning off the sound...
having students work in pairs in which one could not see the screen. One partner 
waits and describes the action to the other.

The problems of second language readers of Irish in the elementary school are 
analysed. The results of a survey of 50 9-year-old children’s attitude to Irish reading 
are given, as well as a discussion of their parents’ attitudes and difficulties in this 
area. The low frequency of the children’s Irish reading and their restricted access to 
Irish materials has inevitable repercussions on their L2 reading ability. The effect 
of supplying tapes to accompany leisure books in Irish was explored. It was found 
that such taps considerably increased the children’s motivation to read, resulting 
in more frequent reading of a taped compared to a non-taped book. There was a 
significant increase in frequency of reading even in the case of a book which was 
perceived to be difficult by the children. In addition to the marked improvements in the 
motivation to read, there were indications that the tape facilitated comprehension 
and increased the children’s reading rate and accuracy of pronunciation. These 
benefits indicate that the provision of tapes to accompany leisure readers is an 
important form of environmental support for second language reading, and an 
especially useful tool to increase exposure to a minority language in particular.

* This survey bring up-to-date and expands on previous surveys of graded readers 

Hill, D. R. (1997b). Graded (Basal) readers—choosing the best. The Language 
* The first part of this paper contains one-paragraph reviews of many major graded 
readers series for learners of English, based on the work of the author and his 
colleagues at the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading. The second part of the 
article provides guidelines on choosing graded readers. These guidelines include: 
setting up a system for measuring the difficulty level of the books, as different 
publishers use different systems; judging the quality of the titles in terms of the 
appearance of the printed page and the quality of the writing; seeking variety as to 
genre, setting, and sex of protagonists; and obtaining student feedback on teachers’ 
initial choices.

The Language Teacher, 21(5), 17-20.
* The author’s advice on setting up extensive reading programmes is to “think big 
and start small”. Unless educators think big, programmes are likely to die within a 
few years, resulting in “sad piles of worm-eaten books”. Planners must:

“Set up systems for selecting, ordering, classifying, cataloguing, storing, lending, 
returning, checking, repairing, and replacing books: ... You must work out a 
methodology that teachers can employ to raise not only the quantity of books your 
students read but also the quality of their comprehension and appreciation. You 
must fix targets of attainment and establish the keeping of records that enable you 
to monitor and evaluate the success of the programme.”

This is indeed a big task, but the author concludes that, “The books are there waiting 
to be used. The students are there waiting to read them. The work of bringing them 
together is very worthwhile.”

42(1), 44-52.
* This article presents a survey of twelve series of English language graded readers. 
The following characteristics are considered: covers, page length, size and look of pages, illustrations, vocabulary and syntax control, glossaries, introductions, pre- 
reading questions, chapter headings, type of book (story, play, poetry, or long fiction), 
genre (fiction - animal, fable, general, romance, spy, science fiction, sport, thriller, 
or western - and non-fiction - animal, biographical, cultural, geographical, historical, 
scientific, or sport), setting, period, gender of protagonist, sensitive issues, readability 
level, interest rating, and age of readership.

42, 124-136.
* This article continues the authors’ survey of graded readers, examining the twelve 
series, rating them, and describes strengths and weaknesses of each.

Journal, 43, 221-231.
* This article presents a review of seven series of graded English language readers. 
A set of categories modified from the authors’ 1988 surveys of graded readers is 
used.

Hirsh, D., & Nation, P. (1992). What vocabulary size is needed to read 
unsimplified texts for pleasure? Reading in a Foreign Language, 8(2), 689-696.
The types of vocabulary in three short novels were analyzed to determine the text 
coverage of the most frequent 2,000 words of English, and the vocabulary needed 
to gain 97-98% coverage of the running words in each text. It was found that the 
most frequent 2,000 words do not provide adequate coverage for pleasurable 
reading and that a vocabulary size of around 5,000 word families would be needed to do 
this. The study also showed a need for graded readers at the 2,600- and 5,000-word
level and unsimplified texts. The feasibility of preteaching vocabulary and intensive reading of unsimplified texts were also examined.


This replication study demonstrates that second language learners recognised the meanings of new words and built associations between them as a result of comprehension-focused extensive reading. A carefully controlled book-length reading treatment resulted in more incidental word learning and a higher pick-up rate than previous studies with shorter tasks. The longer text also made it possible to explain incidental learning growth in terms of frequency of occurrence of words in the text. But the general frequency of a word was not found to make the word more learnable. Findings also suggested that subjects with larger L2 vocabulary sizes had greater incidental word learning gains. Implications for incidental acquisition as a strategy for vocabulary growth are discussed.


** The author discusses SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) programmes for secondary school students. "For an SSR programme to be viable, it needs to offer guidance for individual reading ability and interests, as well as provide opportunities for readers to explore, appreciate, and think through their readings, while simultaneously affording choice and pleasurable experiences in reading. This paper discusses a modified SSR programme (MSSR) that I have developed and used successfully in the secondary classroom. ... The programme can also be modified and adapted for use in primary classrooms."


* This article describes a program designed to help primary and secondary school students who have yet to develop a love for reading. The program combines self-selected silent reading with reading aloud by the teacher, sharing with partners, and monitoring of individual and class reading. Among the sharing activities presented are: retelling all or part of the book, reading aloud favorite parts, and answering thinking questions about the book. It is stressed that these sharing sessions should be conducted in a non-judgmental, relaxed setting. Among the proposed benefits of such sharing is that students "need to be given an opportunity to express what excites or impresses them, to question what they have read, and to think individually and as a corporate body about their reading."


* This article stresses that students need to read for a real purpose, rather than focusing on reading as a tool for teaching language. These authentic purposes will vary and include finding main points, mastering content, relaxation, and finding specific information. Different reading strategies will be appropriate to these different purposes. The focus of this article is on helping students develop the flexibility to use a variety of strategies when they read independently. These strategies include: surveying, skimming, scanning, phrase reading, and identifying the genre of a text.


**** # This study compares the ER programs at two universities in Osaka, Japan. One ER program was less successful than the other. The results on a reading comprehension test between the intensive reading and extensive reading classes were reported, and the ways to a successful ER program are discussed.


** This book contains 17 chapters. A few look at extensive reading for all learners, but most chapters focus in on extensive reading for second language learners. Below, from the book's introduction, are summaries of all the chapters.

In Chapter 1 (pp. 1-10) "Encouraging Students to Read More in an Extensive Reading Programme" Vivienne Wai-Sze Yu provides us with insights into the design of a large-scale extensive reading programme involving 149 Hong Kong secondary schools. Key components of this design include the full integration of extensive reading into the curriculum, an adequate supply of books that match students' reading levels and interests, an easy-to-use, quick feedback system which lets students check their own comprehension, teachers who act as facilitators and enthusiasts for the programme (including reading at the same time as students), and the creation of an overall reading culture in the schools.

In Chapter 2 (pp. 10-24) "'First World - Third World': Two Extensive Reading Programmes at Secondary Level" Faridah Tup and Lydia Shu describe extensive reading programmes at their schools in Singapore and Cameron, respectively. While the income levels of their countries differ greatly, their extensive reading
programmes share common elements. These include a system for grading the books, tests to diagnose students' reading levels, regularly scheduled time for uninterrupted sustained silent reading, strategies for helping students to read, and methods of monitoring of students' reading. How these elements are implemented differs with the particularities of the school and the country.

In Chapter 3 (pp. 25-29) "Collecting Materials for Extensive Reading" Propitius M Lituanas shares some of the strategies she has used to find materials for a classroom extensive reading programme in the Philippines. In developing countries finding adequate materials is very often a major difficulty. Faced with this difficulty, Lituanas did not give up. Based on her experience, she suggests turning for help to former and current students, libraries, fellow teachers, parents, businesses, foundations, community organizations, and government officials.

In Chapter 4 (pp. 30-43) "Transforming a Non-Reading Culture" Robin Smith describes how an extensive reading programme in Brunei Darussalam helped to bring about a change in the whole way secondary students thought about reading. Whereas previously students read to memorize without necessarily understanding, extensive reading helped them read for meaning and to read for pleasure, not just for classwork. Smith explains the various strategies that he and his colleagues used. These strategies included reading aloud, setting up a self-access room, obtaining appropriate materials, and communicating with fellow teachers, parents, and with educators at the primary schools from which the students came.

In Chapter 5 (pp. 44-54) "Organizing School Wide Reading Campaigns" Jeffrey Jurkovac explains the strategies his school in Colombia uses to organize an annual campaign to encourage extensive reading of multi-cultural literature. Jurkovac provides a detailed time line of the various tasks to be performed before and during the campaign. Additionally, there are calendars of various events planned to excite students and their family members to actively participate. Jurkovac also includes a list of books that describe other fun activities to promote extensive reading.

In Chapter 6 (pp. 55-64) "Promoting Active Reading Strategies to Help Slow Readers" Hong Sau Kuan addresses one of the key obstacles to successful extensive reading programmes. Good readers already enjoy reading. Thus, it is not difficult to motivate them to become active participants in extensive reading. Indeed, many of them do extensive reading on their own, regardless of what is happening at school. In contrast, slow readers may dislike reading. Thus, even a well-organized extensive reading programme with large quantities of appropriate materials may not succeed in enticing these reluctant readers to participate. To remedy this concern, Hong describes how she has used various strategies to increase the proficiency of slow readers in a Singapore primary school and, thereby, enhance their interest in reading.

In Chapter 7 (pp. 65-80) "Buddy Reading" Sim-Goh Muye Luan, Laura Cockburn, and Shona Isbister describe a peer tutoring programme used to promote reading in Singapore primary schools. Some students and parents worry that peer tutoring benefits only the tutees. However, Sim-Goh, Cockburn, and Isbister explain that the tutors benefit also both cognitively and affectively by the application of their knowledge and skills. The chapter illustrates various aspects of Buddy Reading, including: a pair reading script; a guide, a checklist, and a programme for the training of tutors; and instruments for monitoring and evaluating the programme. The chapter concludes with the authors' plans for future development of the programme.

In Chapter 8 (pp. 81-89) "Reading Across the Curriculum" Tan Aik Ling and Ken Geok Yang share their experiences in guiding a bilingual, Singapore secondary school extensive reading programme. While extensive reading is often thought of as involving strictly the reading of fiction, this schoolwide programme has students reading materials from across the curriculum, with all the content areas contributing. In this way, the programme attempts to broaden students' reading interests. Pupils track their own reading, with teachers following up by such means as thinking questions.

In Chapter 9 (pp. 90-97) "Let's Talk about Books: Using Literature Circles in Second Language Classrooms" Jeff McQuillan and Lucy Tse describe how they encourage international students studying at a US university to read for pleasure by the use of small, self-selected, student groups which meet regularly to discuss books which students themselves have selected. Although students are working in their Literature Circles without direct instruction from teachers, McQuillan and Tse believe that teachers still have valuable roles. These roles include helping students form groups, advising students on which books to read, assisting with comprehension problems, unobtrusively observing group progress, and assuring students that pleasure reading can indeed promote language acquisition.

In Chapter 10 (pp. 98-108) "Extensive Reading through Book Clubs: How Book Clubs Have Changed Lives" Margaret H Hill and Leigh Van Horn discuss how students in a US juvenile detention center became hooked on books via their teacher's use of a strategy which brought groups of students together to talk about high interest books. According to Hill and Van Horn, a key ingredient of the Book Club strategy lies in the group discussions. These are real discussions which relate reading to students' lives and values, not exercises where students try to find the right answer defined in advance by the teacher. The authors report that as a result of this meaningful interaction, Book Club helps students bond with one another in a pro-social way.

In Chapter 11 (pp. 109-119) "Reading Aloud to Students as Part of Extensive Reading" Tien Huay Yong, Saraswathy Idamban, and George M Jacobs writing
from Singapore describe how reading aloud can be integrated into an extensive reading programme. Reading aloud, the authors believe, can help students develop a love for reading, introduce them to new books and genres, increase their language proficiency, improve their listening comprehension, and teach students how to read aloud. Yong, Idamban, and Jacobs provide suggestions on how to choose material for reading aloud and on how to read aloud.

In Chapter 12 (pp. 120-127) “Partnerships in Reading and Writing” Ted Rodgers describes a peer tutoring programme in Malaysia in which older students first read along with their younger partners. Later, the older student leads their partner to write a book in which the younger student is the main character. After a teacher edits the book, the older partner then illustrates it. Finally, the book is presented to the younger student, to be read again and again. Rodgers explains how the programme was set up and includes a sample of how two students worked together to create a book.

In Chapter 13 (pp. 128-143) “Using the Internet for Extensive Reading”, Beverly Derewianka from Australia describes a wide range of techniques and resources for using the vast reaches of the Internet to find and generate materials for extensive reading. Among the many techniques and places on the Internet which Derewianka advises students and teachers to explore are: Keypal, the Internet equivalent of penpals; Chatrooms, where the fingers do the talking and the eyes do the listening; Learning Networks, which link students and teachers working together on a particular task or project; and Discussion Lists and Newsgroups, global forums for people with like interests to share ideas.

In Chapter 14 (pp. 144-160) “Student-Created Reading Materials for Extensive Reading” Colin Davidson, Dianne Ogle, Denise Ross, Jakki Tuhaka, and Ng Seok Moi describe a wide range of strategies they use for helping students in a New Zealand primary school to generate materials for themselves, their teachers, and their fellow students to read. Such student-generated materials help achieve the teachers’ goal of encouraging their students to “write like readers and read like writers”, because once you have written a book or other text of your own for a real audience, your whole view of the reading-writing process changes.

In Chapter 15 (pp. 161-170) “The Reading and Writing Connection: Community Journal” Anita Lie describes an extensive reading programme in Indonesia which encourages students to read literature by use of a community journal, an adaptation on dialogue journals. After students have read a literary work of their choice, they write a journal entry summarizing the work and giving a personal reflection on it. Peers then write responses on the entries. Many experts on extensive reading believe that a key element of successful programmes is the participation of teachers as active readers. In keeping with this concept, Lie participates in the community journal in the same way as her students.

In Chapter 16 (171-180) “Handcrafted Books: Two for the Price of One” Beatrice Dupuy and Jeff McQuillan explain how U.S. students of French as a foreign language create extensive reading materials by writing and illustrating texts. A key advantage of these materials is that because they are created by students’ own classmates, the texts are likely to meet two criteria for extensive reading materials: comprehensibility and interest. Dupuy and McQuillan provide guidelines for the writing, illustrating, and publishing of the Handcrafted Books, as well as an example book.

In Chapter 17 (pp. 181-186) “Extensive Reading and Loneliness in Later Life” Donna Rane-Szostak explores the reasons why studies show that older people in the US who read extensively do not appear to suffer the loneliness often associated with our later years. She believes that extensive reading offers them with a feeling of competence, purpose, and enhanced self-esteem. While the other chapters in this book discuss extensive reading for children and young adults, this final chapter points out that extensive reading provides benefits for one’s entire life. Thus, Rane-Szostak further motivates those of us working with the young to guide them to become life-long readers, and reminds us not to neglect our own reading habits.


* This study investigated whether either L1 or L2 pleasure reading is positively correlated with L2 writing proficiency among 79 graduate students at a U.S. university who were non-native speakers of English. Data were collected by asking students to write a composition on one of three open-ended topics. They were then asked to provide data on their age, sex, L1, years of English study, and time spent weekly on pleasure reading in their L1 and in English. Writing proficiency was found to positively correlate with quantity of time spent on L2 pleasure reading but not on L1 pleasure reading or a combination of L1 and L2 pleasure reading.


* This chapter describes an approach to teaching reading to high intermediate-advanced level L2 students taking a comprehensive skills course. The author suggests that such a course use content themes to simulate a regular university course. Authentic materials are combined with L2 textbooks to create theme-based units that require students to read analytically. These units consist of both core readings used for intensive reading and supplementary readings available for extensive reading. The latter provide students with greater reading quantity, as well as with
the responsibility of self-selecting materials. A key rationale for extensive reading is that "the more students read, the better readers they become (and the better they read, the more they enjoy reading)". The extensive reading component also provides a place for texts too long to be read in class. The author suggests that students do activities based on their extensive reading and keep a log of these activities, as extensive reading is viewed as required course work.


* This article emphasizes the power of stories for promoting L2 acquisition, but points out that learners with low levels of proficiency in the L2 will have difficulty comprehending most available stories. Sandwich stories - ones that combine L1 and L2 vocabulary - are proposed as a solution for children ages five to seventeen learning English in China. The article describes how to make and use sandwich stories, and how to design a sandwich story syllabus that fits students' developmental level, interests, and needs.


With more than 3.6 million presecondary schoolchildren (below 13 years of age) learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in mainland China, publishers have acted quickly to reap profits from this sector of the school market. Drop into any average-size bookstore and you will have no trouble at all collecting 20 to 30 kinds of EFL textbooks for children, almost all of which are advertised as being the latest in communicative language-teaching (CLT) and having "communication" as their main aim. Today, almost 20 years after CLT was first introduced into China, EFL practitioners in the Chinese mainland have generally come to agree with the idea of teaching English as communication. However, CLT textbooks are problematic in the primary EFL classroom. Communicative techniques fail to work and information gaps are found to be not "worth filling" at all. This article presents a discussion of two problems with current CLT textbooks for EFL children in China, followed by an explanation of the rationale for the use of stories and sandwich stories, as well as a demonstration of sandwich stories being used in the classroom.


* This article discusses a technique for creating extensive reading materials for low proficiency level second language learners that addresses a key concern: how to create engaging materials given such learners' very restricted vocabulary size. Sandwich stories combine L1 and L2 vocabulary, using the L1 vocabulary for items thought to be beyond the current level of students' knowledge. Thus, sandwich stories allow for a balance, resulting in materials that are both interesting and comprehensible. The author discusses the history of and rationale for sandwich stories, how to make them, and how to move beyond them.


* This study investigated why some second language acquirers do not use reading to develop their second language proficiency. Data came from interviews of five adult female native speakers of Korean living in the U.S. All were dedicated readers in Korean but did not use extensive reading to improve their English for several reasons: English courses in Korea had emphasized grammar and drills; reading instruction in Korea had focused on word-by-word reading, emphasizing the need to understand every word, and utilizing materials that were often difficult and boring; and their EFL teachers had not told them of the benefits of extensive reading. Based on the interviews and attempts at encouraging the study's participants to engage in extensive reading, the authors recommend that such reluctant L2 readers need easy access to a wide variety of books, guidance as to what books to choose, information on the benefits of extensive reading, and help in overcoming ineffective reading strategies they may have learned at school.


Recently the study of English for the purpose of communication has increased in importance in Japan. Use of graded readers for individualised reading helps improve students' English reading skills. In this paper, we will report on a study of this method. Using 220 graded readers divided into four levels, we offered 300 freshman and sophomore English students an opportunity to read graded readers over a period of four to six weeks. According to the results of reports on the books and a questionnaire administered at the end of the study, many students have a desire to read English books. 60% of the students who did read books chose elementary level (less than 1,000 words) books and 27% read low-intermediate level (less than 2,000 words) books. Extra credit points helped motivate students to read. Of the students who did not read any books, the most frequently expressed reason was that they were too busy. It is important to increase the number of books and the variety of topics available so all students can find books that are in familiar fields or of interest. We conclude with a brief discussion of how such a program could be improved, based on the results of our survey.