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PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM LETRAS-INGLÊS

EFL READING TEACHERS' PROCEDURES

IN FLORIANÓPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY

Por

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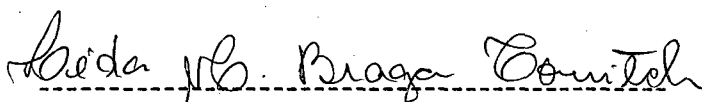
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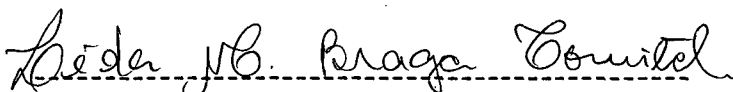
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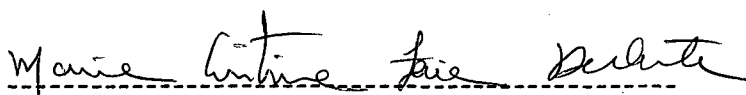


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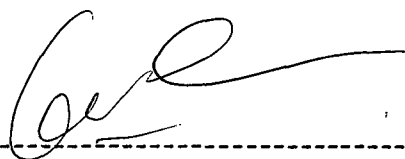
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ABSTRACT**EFL READING TEACHERS' PROCEDURES
IN FLORIANÓPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY****DANIELA GOMES DE ARAÚJO NÓBREGA****UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA****2002**

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The objective of this study is to analyze what EFL teachers do in their reading lessons and investigate what learning objectives they tend to emphasize in their instruction and the type of response they incite in their students. Twenty EFL teachers and 120 students from public schools in Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil, participated in the study. The data for

this study came from an interview with 20 teachers, from 12 hours of classroom observation and from the application of a questionnaire to the 120 students that attended the classes observed. Results concerning the interview revealed that the majority of the teachers tended to emphasize vocabulary study, pronunciation through reading aloud, more passive than active reading tasks and questions that deal with comprehension at the literal level. With regard to classroom observation, findings showed that Teacher A tended to base his/her reading lessons in light of a more traditional pedagogy to reading instruction, one that seems to be more in line with the direct approach, with the bottom-up model for reading and with a more testing-focused methodology. As for teacher B, results demonstrated that the teacher seemed to be more aware of training students to practice reading strategies by applying that encouraged cooperative learning. Results about students' questionnaires indicated that the students from both schools where classroom observation took place seemed to believe that the main learning objectives in the teaching of EFL reading are vocabulary study and pronunciation of words. According to them, it is through translation that they can comprehend what they read in English. This study, therefore, was an attempt to describe the profile of EFL teachers in the teaching of reading and to determine the type of response they tended to motivate in their students at Secondary Education in two educational institutions in the south of Brazil.

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RESUMO**EFL READING TEACHERS' PROCEDURES
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Professora Orientadora: Dr. Lêda Maria Braga Tomitch

A finalidade deste trabalho é analisar o que os professores de Inglês fazem em suas salas de aulas de leitura e investigar quais os objetivos de aprendizagem que eles enfatizam no ensino de leitura, e qual o tipo de resposta que eles estimulam nos alunos. Vinte professores e 120 alunos de escolas públicas de Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brasil, participaram da pesquisa. Os dados deste estudo vieram de entrevistas com estes vinte professores, de doze horas de observações de aulas com dois dos vinte entrevistados, e a aplicação de um questionário a estudantes que assistiram às aulas observadas. Os resultados da entrevista revelaram que a maioria dos professores procura enfatizar o estudo do vocabulário, pronúncia através de

leitura em voz alta, mais atividades de leitura passiva do que ativa e questões que lidam com compreensão no nível literal. No que diz respeito à observação de sala de aula, os resultados mostraram que o(a) professor(a) A procura basear suas aulas seguindo uma pedagogia mais tradicional do ensino de leitura; ensino este que se assemelha com a abordagem direta, o modelo ascendente de leitura é com a metodologia focalizada na testagem. Sobre o(a) professor(a) B, os resultados demonstraram que este(a) professor(a) parece ser mais consciente em treinar os estudantes para praticar as estratégias de leitura aplicando atividades que encorajam a aprendizagem cooperativa. Os resultados referentes aos questionários dos estudantes indicaram que eles parecem acreditar que os principais objetivos de aprendizagem no ensino de leitura em Inglês como Língua Estrangeira são o estudo do vocabulário e a pronúncia das palavras. De acordo com eles, é por meio da tradução que eles podem entender o que eles lêem em Inglês. Este estudo, portanto, foi uma tentativa de descrever o perfil dos professores de Inglês no ensino de leitura e também determinar o tipo de respostas que estes professores costumam motivar nos seus estudantes do ensino secundário de duas instituições educacionais do sul do Brasil.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The idea for carrying out the present study emerged from the researcher's awareness of the problems teachers of English usually face in the instruction of reading at secondary education in Brazilian public schools. Up to the current moment, many studies have been concerned with elementary, secondary and university students, particularly regarding cognitive and metacognitive research in EFL reading. Throughout my experience as a teacher, I could observe that the teaching of reading in English seems to be grammar and vocabulary-based, and that the focus of text comprehension is usually left apart in the classroom. Thus, I have decided to study EFL teachers' pedagogical practices in the instruction of EFL reading at secondary public schools of Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, in order to determine the type of response they instigate in their students.

1.1 Context of Investigation

Studies in the area of EFL teaching have been mainly concerned in investigating causes that might influence failure of the foreign language learning and teaching at Brazilian public schools (Almeida Filho, 1991; Celani, 1991). Both Almeida Filho and Celani found that aspects such as low wages, lack of material for all students, too large groups to teach, few classes per week, materials unrelated to students' reality, lack of definition of goals, lack of instructional methods and of quality in teacher training programs seem

to be the most common problems teachers complain about within the teaching context. As for reading instruction in English, recent studies have dealt with the analysis of teachers' and students' conception of reading (Manara, 1999) and students' modes of reading in reading classes (Coracini, 1995). However, few questions have been raised in terms of teachers' instructional procedures in EFL reading classes.

In a study carried out by Grigoletto (1995) with secondary public students in São Paulo, Brazil, she found out that students are still treated as passive subjects in FL reading lessons. Research in the teaching of EFL reading has observed that textbooks have been used as the principal source of knowledge for either vocabulary gaining or any other linguistic aspect that teachers (or the textbook itself) consider relevant to the students learning (Coracini, 1995b). Moreover, it is not uncommon to find teachers who pose literal questions that do not help learners interpret what the writer wants to convey (Oliveira, 2000). Other studies have revealed that teachers usually design activities that do not demand critical thinking in students, therefore the activities are often aimed at illustrating grammatical, syntactic and vocabulary items in the text probably resulting in less strategic readers (Bernhardt, 1991; Coracini, 1995a and Manara (1999)). Furthermore, Coracini (1995a) found that translation activities, often regarded as comprehension activities, are usually recursive devices to explain unfamiliar words and that ideology, culture, values and other sources of information are not taken into account.

In order to overcome the problems mentioned above, the idea of implementing more reading practice at Secondary Education has been raised

by the National Curriculum Parameters (PCN from now on), created and approved by the Ministry of Education in 1998. From then on, reading has received a great deal of attention at Brazilian public schools as EFL is a requirement for all university courses. Since the publication of the Ministry of Education's guidelines for foreign language teaching, there is a growing consciousness among EFL teachers in applying the communicative-oriented methodology as the most effective for teaching reading. However, very few teachers have put these theoretical perspectives into practice and their concepts about a good foreign language class do not exactly represent their own teaching practices (Amadeu-Sabino, 1994; Pinto & Matos, 2000).

The reality described above at Brazilian public schools has called researchers' attention to the need of implementing a new approach to reading instruction in English, named the interactive approach. Under the interactive view, what teachers do in the classroom is as important as students' behavior (Smith, 1981; Pearson, 1992). Rumelhart (1984), Meurer (1991) and Aebbershold and Field (1997) state that the reading process is a result of an interaction between the new information encountered in the text and previous knowledge readers bring to the text to construct meaning. Thereby, these authors suggest that a good EFL reading teacher should bear all these factors in mind when preparing a reading lesson plan.

The interactive type of reading instruction regards reading as a dynamic practice and advocates that meaning derives from the interaction between the reader's perceptions about what s/he reads and the writer's beliefs. From this perspective, students/readers are considered active builders of meaning. For this to happen, the more teachers understand that reading involves this writer-

text-reader interaction, the more they will be able to give learners appropriate reading instruction (Smith, 1981; Carrell, 1988; Davies, 1995; Stahl & Hayes, 1997). Furthermore, learners' knowledge about reality cannot be ignored during instruction. Students' background knowledge (or schemata), context, what students already know about language, their expectations about reading, their interests and needs will serve as decisive elements for the organization of an effective reading class in English (Carrel & Devine, 1988; Meurer, 1991; Lynch, 1996). Therefore, teachers' instructional directions should lead students to the study of language awareness, culture, and praxis of reading strategies for reading comprehension and critical thinking (Meurer, 1991; Aebbershold & Field, 1997; Tomitch, 2000).

My interest in studying the role of the teacher in the EFL learning/teaching process at Florianópolis public schools is twofold. First, I attempt to analyze the procedures used by EFL teachers in their reading class. Second, I intend to determine the type of response teachers motivate in their students regarding the teaching of reading.

1.2 The study

This research analyzes the reality of the teaching of reading in EFL at some Florianópolis public schools based on some teachers' methodological practices and students' responses of their reading classes. As for teachers, this study probes: 1) the type of reading model they adopt, 2) whether they follow a teacher-centered or learner-focused procedure, 3) the type of reading approach they use in class, 4) types and purposes of questions they pose to

students, and 5) the kind of reading tasks they apply to the texts used in class. As for students, this study investigates their responses in relation to the instruction of EFL reading they receive.

Therefore, this work is designed to address the following questions:

1. Are teachers' procedures teacher-centered or learner-focused?
2. Are reading tasks active or passive?
3. Does instruction have a teaching or testing focus?
4. What types of questions do teachers pose and what are their importance in reading classes?
5. What type of response do students give to teachers' instruction?

1.3 Significance of the study

The present research extends Manara's study (1999) in district schools of Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil, regarding the instruction of reading in EFL at secondary education. She found out that students from district schools of Florianópolis are poor readers because they tend to "construct meaning word by word" (p.67) and they do not use reading strategies effectively probably because of the teaching emphasis on the study of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

So far, studies in the area of reading in English have brought up theoretical discussions for a better teaching (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1988; Eskey & Grabe, 1988; Paris, Wasic & Turner, 1991; Coracini, 1995b; Aebershold & Field, 1997; Stahl, 1997; Pressley, 1997). Theory does serve to

underlie possible solutions which make the teaching of EFL reading much more effective. But less has been developed in terms of the teaching praxis in the FL classroom context where the reading skill should be part of instruction.

This study differs from previous studies since its objective is to help trace the profile of EFL reading teachers in Brazilian public schools. The present research aims at investigating the methodological practices used by EFL teachers in reading instruction. It may, therefore, serve as a future reference for teacher development courses for the instruction of reading in English at Secondary Education.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one introduces the reader with information about the context of investigation, the study, the research questions and the significance of the study. Chapter two reviews some of the literature about EFL reading instruction. Chapter three describes the methodology used in this study. Chapter four reports and discusses the data collected. Finally, Chapter five presents final remarks, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research, and pedagogical implications for the teaching of reading in EFL.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews some of the literature related to the models of reading and their effects on the instruction of EFL reading, to the types of instruction: teacher-centered or learner-focused; to the methodology used: teaching-focused versus testing-focused; to the types of reading tasks, and to the types of questions used in reading classes. The literature reviewed here will be the basis for the researcher to delineate the type of reading model and instruction teachers of English adopt in their reading classes, the teaching procedure used and its purpose, the kind of reading tasks they apply to the texts used in class, and finally, the types of questions teachers pose and how they apply them in the classroom.

2.1 Models of Reading and their effects on reading instruction

Particularly interested in studying how children process reading in their minds and how teachers should facilitate learning to read for children, Smith (1981) believes that it is the teachers' role to help students make sense of the written language by providing constant reading practice to students. In his own words, "to learn to read children need to read" (p.5). He goes on saying that materials and methods are not the only solutions for reading instruction problems. Smith (1981) points out that the more teachers understand the nature and models of reading as well as the existing methods for teaching

reading, the more they can decide when, how and why to use particular methods and techniques to facilitate the process of learning to read.

A 'model' refers to a theory or a set of systems that explains what goes on in the mind when a reader comprehends or does not comprehend texts (Davies, 1995). The three most common models of reading that attempt to describe how reading occurs in the readers' mind are the bottom-up, the top-down and the interactive models. Each of them presents different insights about the way comprehension is achieved, and has different implications for how reading comprehension instruction should be dealt with. In the next subsections, I describe each of the three models of reading and how they affect reading instruction.

2.1.1 The bottom-up model and EFL reading instruction

Created by Gough in 1972, the bottom-up model of reading argues that "meaning is derived from the visual input" (as cited in Samuels, 1972, p.192). In this type of processing mode, reading involves a series of word perceptions in which the reader constructs meaning from the smallest textual units, the lower level sources of information, such as phonemes and words up to higher-level stages, such as syntactic and semantic meaning (Coracini, 1995; Davies, 1995; Aebershold & Field, 1997; Carrell, 1988). Also called data-driven processing, reading in this model is considered a decoding process, consisting of reconstructing the author's message from the recognition of letters and words to general information. According to this model, readers go from

specific information (printed words) to general information (global meaning), i.e., they rely on the orthographic, lexical and syntactic features that are encountered in a text to achieve comprehension (Carrell, 1988; Meurer, 1999).

With regard to instruction, this type of model reflects a phonic-based approach to reading. In the words of Davies (1995) “the sequence of instruction starts from letters to sounds, to words, to sentences and finally to thinking and meaning” (p. 58). The purpose of this type of instruction is to aid students in becoming acquainted with language-decoding skills, such as vocabulary items and grammar. The teaching of decoding and vocabulary are the anchors of this kind of instruction.

Carrell (1988) discusses two areas of pedagogy that can help SL readers improve their bottom-up skills - grammar and vocabulary - in reading. According to her, teachers should include in EFL reading the teaching of cohesive devices (substitution, ellipses, conjunction and lexical cohesion) to spell out for students how ideas are coherently constructed in a text by these linguistic elements. As for the development of vocabulary and word recognition, Carrell points out that “teaching vocabulary may mean teaching new concepts, new knowledge” (pp. 242-243). She says that simply presenting a list of unfamiliar words and their respective meanings does not guarantee success in learning the meaning of words and the concepts behind them. Along with a background knowledge-development program, pre-teaching vocabulary seems to increase learning from text if key words are to be taught with basis on contextual clues.

Against the bottom-up model of reading, Smith (1981) argues that reading “must always be actively initiated and directed by the reader”(p. 9). He believes that the complex nature of reading involves much more than recognizing words from print. Reading occurs when readers’ hypotheses can be confirmed or rejected with information encountered in the text. It is through the interaction between the reader’s prediction and the textual information that, according to Smith, reading makes sense.

2.1.2 The top-down model and EFL reading instruction

The top-down model has been known as an alternative to the bottom-up one. Developed by Goodman in 1967, this model argues that the reader, rather than the text itself, is at the core of the reading process. That is, the readers’ anticipation and prediction are the driving forces in this model of reading. Also named conceptually-driven, this model advocates that readers go from general to more specific information; readers bring syntactic, semantic, background knowledge and lexical sources of knowledge to interpret texts (Goodman, 1970; Meurer, 1991).

With regard to instruction, teachers that follow the top-down model consider thinking and meaning at an early stage. Predicting and inferring meaning become part of the top-down processing strategy to reading comprehension instruction (Carrell, Devine, & Eskey, 1988; Davies, 1995). The sequence of instruction starts from readers’ prediction and assumptions about the topic of a given text, to attention to words. In case students present some ‘reading problems’, for example, insufficient background knowledge, it

can be assumed that improving background knowledge can improve comprehension and learning from text (Eskey & Grabe, 1988; Devine & Eskey, 1988).

Carrell (1988) provides a discussion in terms of the teaching of top-down reading skills to SL students. She suggests that content and quantity are the most important determinants in the reading program and that the teachers' job is to make the subject matter interesting to the students. Also, she stresses the need to implement interesting readings to the students so that they can develop awareness in some area of interest, and hence improve comprehension and learn from texts.

2.1.4 The interactive model and EFL reading instruction

There has been a common sense among reading researchers that the interactive model is "the best description of the reading process" (Aebbershold & Field, 1997, p. 20). Created by Rumelhart in 1977, this view of reading argues that reading is a continuous interplay between the bottom-up and top-down processes (Pearson, Roehler, Dole, Janice & Duffy, 1992; Carrell et al, 1988; Samuels & Kamil, 1984; Coracini, 1995). According to Rumelhart, syntactic, lexical, semantic and orthographic sources of information operate simultaneously during reading and the interaction among these sources can influence readers' comprehension.

Grabe (1988) clarifies distinct concepts of the term 'interactive' and its implications for ESL reading research. Initially, the author remarks that reading can be regarded as an interactive process and an interactive model. It

is an interactive process as it refers to the interaction between the bottom-up and top-down processing modes. It is considered a model because it involves the drawing of inferencing and prediction from the part of the reader, a view already discussed in the top-down model, as explained by Goodman (1970). In Grabe's words, "interactive models of reading assume that skills at all levels are interactively available to process and interpret text" (p. 59). For example, the writer-text-reader interaction takes place by the time the reader confirms or rejects his/her hypotheses by making use of the top-down processing mode, and checking whether s/he understood the conveyed message by means of the bottom-up processing mode. That is, both the vocabulary presented in the text and the grammatical components function as sources to support reader's text comprehension.

Another use of the term interactive implies textual interaction. This type of interaction has to do with the ability to recognize text genres, different text types, and the relation between the linguistic elements with the context of the texts . In other words, textual interaction deals with coherence and cohesion in a critical perspective of reading. Aspects such as the places where texts are produced, the time when they were produced, the social roles of the writer and reader and the purposes to produce the texts enter into play in textual interaction (Meurer, 2000). Concerning the pedagogical implications to EFL reading, in the teaching of textual interaction both linguistic structures and vocabulary have to be taught in combination as they may occur in distinct text types. By doing so, teachers can develop students' awareness in terms of who is writing, what is said and for what purposes the text is written. This way, reading is oriented under a critical perspective.

As regards instruction, teachers that pursue the interactive model of reading take into account the students' background knowledge, expectations about EFL reading, needs, as well as motivation, in order to prepare their FL reading lesson plan (Grabe & Eskey, 1988; Gaskins & Gaskins, 1997). Under this perspective of instruction, teachers should consider both the lower-level and higher-level processes of information. The learning of vocabulary and grammar study (lower-level sources of information); context and the students' prior knowledge (higher-level sources of information) and the issue of critical reading are fundamental assets used to aid students interpret texts. Therefore, as suggested by Grabe (1988), effective EFL reading instruction depends on the teachers' ability to not only provide practice of useful reading strategies but also orient students on how to perform high and low level thinking operations before, during and after reading.

According to Paris, Wasik and Turner (1991), the development of strategic reading reflects the use of cognitive strategies, constant practice, metacognitive development and the issue of motivation toward reading. Reading strategies involve preparing to read, constructing meaning while reading, and reviewing and reflecting after reading. As part of the instructional move, preparing to read concerns setting a purpose for reading and activating relevant prior knowledge to EFL reading. In a part of instruction named constructing meaning while reading, some examples of the main reading strategies worked in class are: identifying main ideas, making inferences and text inspection, i.e. looking backward and forward in the text to spell out difficult information encountered in the texts.

One of the pedagogical implications raised by the interactive model of reading is the teaching of post-reading activities that exploit the issue of critical reading. Paris et al. (1991) report some studies about explicit training for lower-level students with reference to summarization and self-management instruction to develop skills in summarizing text information as part of the reflecting after reading (post-reading activity). They sustain that “until strategies become routine, students may be unable to use and monitor them simultaneously” (p. 615). These studies conclude that students who plan before writing, use text structure as a support to select and generalize relevant information to write information in their own words, and to monitor the text to evaluate their understanding are more-capable summarizers, thereby more-capable readers.

Advocator of the interactive model of instruction, Pressley (1997) asserts that if the development of comprehension is multicomponential, consequently the teaching of comprehension skills must be the same. According to Pressley, comprehension instruction, also called strategic instruction, aims at a) teaching how to decode; b) motivating students to become fluent readers through extensive reading; c) helping students to learn word meanings using contextual cues; d) helping them to learn how to organize ideas from the text itself; e) activating or building relevant schemata to the interpretation of texts. By following these procedures in reading instruction, teachers encourage students to become independent, self-regulated and critical readers.

2.1.5 Schema Theory and Reading models

One important contribution to reading studies provided by the interactive model is the concept of schemata (theory of knowledge) and its relation to the reading process (Eskey & Grabe, 1988; Meurer, 1991; Aebershold & Field, Carrell, 1994) and to FL reading classroom contexts.

Schema theory (theory of knowledge) explicates that the use of prior knowledge facilitates comprehension since any previous knowledge serves as basis for a new planned construction of meaning (Wilson, 1981; Rumelhart, 1984; Carrell, 1987; Carrel & Eisterhold, 1988; Meurer, 1991; Aebershold & Field, 1997).

Rumelhart (1984) provides an analysis of a schematic-theoretical model of reading in the light of a study about how readers (re)construct interpretations in the context of story comprehension. He discusses how schemata – packets of knowledge that readers have available in memory – influence the process of text comprehension positively. In his view, skilled readers use their schemata to make inferences. In the words of Rumelhart, “a reader of a text is presumably constantly evaluating hypothesis about the most plausible interpretation of the text” (p. 3). On the other hand, when a reader fails to identify the configuration of hypotheses (schemata), the text will not appear to be understandable.

Using Rumelhart’s (1984) words:

the process of comprehension is very much like the process of constructing a theory, testing it against the data currently available, and as more data becomes, specifying the theory further- i.e., refining the default values (p. 7).

Samuels and Kamil (1984) discuss how the reader's schemata or knowledge already stored in memory functions in the process of interpreting new information and the extent to which this new information becomes part of the stored knowledge. They explain that the readers' structure of schemata can positively influence the role of inferences, allocation of attention and remembering in reading comprehension. For example, when the schema is meaningfully activated by a reader, then inferences take place. Also, the authors argue that the schema operates whenever a person's reading is designed to learning. Finally, the schema is a source to reject or select relevant information to report when recalling a passage.

According to Carrell (1994), schemata can be classified as content and formal schemata. Content schemata are related to the concept of prior knowledge; knowledge readers have about the semantic content of texts, whereas formal schemata refer to the knowledge readers have concerning the rhetorical structure of texts (ways different genres are organized in texts). Content schemata (typically top-down) affect text comprehension since they allow readers to draw inferences in texts having their pre-existing knowledge and response as the main supports to interpret texts. According to research on schemata and reading, the recognition of text structure can minimize future problems in the comprehension of foreign language texts. As this characteristic serves as a vehicle for determining the layout of the text, readers might be more prepared to at least identify the purpose of the text. Thus, comprehension can be achieved more effectively.

Meurer (1991) discusses the concept of schemata and their relation to text comprehension. He not only explains the notion of schemata, the schema-

related notions of bottom-up and top-down processing, the relation between schemata and text structure, the role of schemata in inferencing, but also discusses relationships between context and activation of schemata with reference to reading in a non-native language. He asserts that the role of inferencing is particularly important in the identification of non-explicit information in texts because readers understand texts by means of their schemata. He goes on saying that the rhetorical structure (related to formal schemata) is also a fundamental part of the reader's schemata and this influences text comprehension positively. Some implications are that when a reader recognizes the author's text structure, text comprehension will depend on the top-down processing mode. When a reader is not able to recognize the author's text structure, text comprehension will depend on the bottom-up processing mode.

Regarding reading in a non-native language, Meurer reviewed some studies showing that L2 readers do not use context in the same way as L1 readers use. Supported by other studies about L2 readers' reading performance (Hudson, 1982; Carrell & Wallace, 1983 as cited in Meurer, 1991), Meurer claims that "linguistic knowledge is just one determinant of reading performance" (p. 179) and that, as shown by other studies, problems that appear in L2 reading performance seem to be the result of lack of either the linguistic knowledge of the language or of general prior knowledge.

Grabe and Eskey (1988) discuss that the notions of conceptual knowledge, inference and schemata are crucial elements for the organization of any reading lesson plan, especially when teachers deal with students that have reading problems in terms of content. A way to develop content-based

skills (top-down skills) is by activating or building background knowledge which can be accomplished by using pre-reading activities, defined as organized methods, text mapping strategies and by teaching prediction (Carrell et al, 1988). These techniques can help preview text content. In building background knowledge, teachers should use analogies, illustrations, present necessary vocabulary and structures, provide semantic content for lower-level readers and comparisons to build bridges between what students already know about the topic and what they may need to know in order to understand and learn from a given text (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Pearson & Anderson, 1984; Tablieber, 1985; Tomitch, 1988). All of these procedures mentioned above should call students' attention about the process of understanding what goes on when reading a foreign language text. In the next section, I draw on the types of instruction and their respective approaches to reading.

2.2 Types of Instruction: Teacher-centered versus learner-focused

The procedures used by the EFL reading teachers seem to reflect both the objectives of their reading classes and the model of instruction on which the reading is based. Some instructional models have the teacher as a source of knowledge and direction; others see the teacher as a facilitator for learning. Stahl (1997) examines different instructional models in reading and analyzes the extent to which each of them defines teachers' role in the instruction of reading in English.

In his first chapter, Stahl (1997) cites Garcia and Pearson's (1991) division of approaches to reading named as: direct instruction, explicit instruction, cognitive apprenticeship instruction and whole language instruction. Each of these approaches mirrors either a teacher-centered or a learner-focused procedure and I develop them in the following section.

2.2.1 Teacher-centered procedure: direct and explicit approaches to reading.

According to Stahl (1997), the teacher-centered procedure can be identified with the direct and the explicit approaches to reading. Two common procedures are usually displayed by teachers who follow these types of approaches. First, teachers tend to control the purposes of the lessons. Second, the modeling and practice of reading come primarily from the teacher in the classroom. However, there are some other features that may distinguish these two types of methodological procedures.

The direct approach, which was based on behavioral roots, was developed to teach decoding. Therefore, reading is viewed "as a process composed of isolated subprocesses, and 'reading instruction' as using a set of procedures to teach students each of these sub processes" (Stahl, 1997, p. 8). Teachers who pursue the direct approach: 1) aim at the teaching of cognitive strategies used in reading, 2) teach language components in isolation and out of meaningful context, and, 3) stimulate students to use the strategies taught automatically while reading. One of the beliefs held by teachers and students

who follow the direct approach is that the act of EFL reading cannot be assumed if readers do not understand words first (Grigoletto, 1995).

The explicit explanation approach takes into account the process of decoding as strategic and focuses on the teaching of a single strategy one at a time. That is, teachers who use this approach contend that students will use the strategy taught when required to do it. Stahl (1997) suggests that “the responsibility for using a strategy lies largely with the teacher; by the end, the student executes the strategy independently” (Stahl, 1997, p. 3). In the classroom context, it is the teacher who controls the activities. S/he determines purposes for the reading activities only at the beginning. The main objective of the explicit approach is to “teach comprehension strategies in a manner that students would transfer [gradually] to ‘real’ reading tasks” (Stahl, 1997, p. 3).

In a study concerning teachers’ procedures in the L2 reading class, Bernhardt (1991) analyzed textbooks in French as a foreign language and concluded that, by following teachers’ manuals, teachers usually adopt a teacher-centered procedure. Teachers tend to:

- 1) pre-teach the vocabulary which consists of pronouncing the words for the students and then having the students pronounce the words in response as they look at the English translation, 2) assign reading selection for homework, 3) design activities in the form of oral reading and then questions and answers, 4) call students’ attention to pronunciation errors, 5) focus on vocabulary exercises, direct content questions and syntactic exercises derived from or based on texts (p.176).

In presenting a cognitive and metacognitive strategy for student questioning instruction, Ciardello (1998) names the teacher-centered procedure as the ‘Teachquest training model’. He describes the teacher as the main agent who models and reinforces all necessary structures of questioning

training in the classroom. It is the teacher who identifies, classifies and generates divergent thinking questions. Furthermore, the teacher monitors students' progress and determines if reinforcement activities are made necessary.

Not only the analysis of reading materials (textbooks) but also of L2 reading lessons have shown that teachers usually tend to favor the teacher-centered procedure. Teachers as authorities and sources of knowledge are the principal features that govern this procedure. Pronunciation correction, activities in the form of oral reading and teacher-decided questions are the predominant objectives in most L2 reading lessons. In the next subsection, I describe the role of the EFL reading teacher under the cognitive apprenticeship and whole language approaches to reading.

2.2.2 Learner-focused procedures: the cognitive apprenticeship and whole language approaches to reading.

The cognitive apprenticeship approach focuses on the teaching of various reading strategies simultaneously. Here, the responsibility for learning is gradually transferred from the teacher to students; social interaction thus serving as a mediator. Supported by Vigotsky who argues that knowledge is socially constructed, this type of instruction sustains that "teachers and students work together to comprehend increasingly complex text" (Stahl, 1997, p. 5). Instead of a teacher-dominated classroom, teachers aim at scaffolding learning using the students' prior knowledge. That is, the instructional moves involve co-operative learning, reciprocal teaching,

collaborative problem-solving, and conversational discussion groups. As for the role of the teacher, s/he assumes a position of mediator of information and assistant of classroom reading activities.

Gaskins and Gaskins (1997) make it clear that teachers' pedagogical practices should be considered as a reflection of the students' needs and interests in the classrooms. At Benchmark school, place where Gaskins and Gaskins based their study, both teachers' procedures and the school ideology are centered on the whole language and cognitive apprenticeship approaches to reading. As "the orientation is toward learning, students are willing to take risks" (p. 145). All lesson plans in Benchmark School are designed to help students become self-regulated readers, learners, thinkers and problem solvers. In order to achieve these outcomes, teachers are supposed to take into account the notion of the reading process, students' schemata along with the students' expectations, needs and interests when organizing their reading lesson plans.

The whole language approach shares many characteristics with the cognitive apprenticeship view of instruction. Reading tasks are seen as a whole, they stress high-level thinking operations and make use of social interaction. However, whole language instruction assumes a more communicative approach to reading instruction. Teachers' praxis are in response of the students' needs as an effort to make students use language to communicate since the beginning level. The teacher's role is to provide an environment in which learners can observe that the language they are taught is functional, to motivate them to become interested in reading and writing, and to support students' learning to read and write (Stahl, 1997).

Lynch (1996) proposes some dynamics involving questioning instruction to the text, in group work, as a way to create a learner-focused procedure. As an outset, he claims that there is a need for teachers to consider three comprehension resources to plan the reading lesson: background knowledge, context and knowledge of the language. Without these components, teachers cannot raise students' awareness about the difficulties that may appear when they read any text. The following subsection discusses different types of methodology adopted by teachers and the purposes for using them in class.

2.3 Teaching-focused versus testing-focused methodology

The instructional approaches discussed above have different concepts of reading and, therefore, describe the EFL reading class as being either teaching-focused or testing-focused.

Based on discussions about metacognitive research related to reading and its implications for reading instruction, Garner (1992) gives priority to the creation of teaching-focused programs that improve reading comprehension. The author stresses that the teacher's job is to 'teach' rather than 'test' students' reading comprehension. He asserts that teachers have to entice students to read independently and "emphasize why a particular routine is used, how to use it, and how to know when it has to be used well" (p. 250). Following Garner's (1992) observation, Brumfit (1980) asserts that it is through the teaching-focused instruction that teachers can orient students in group discussion, for example, by stressing the process of understanding and

interpreting texts. By doing so, teachers are meant to motivate students to find out their own kind of response.

Testing-focused instruction, on the other hand, aims at “testing” the students’ performance in reading through comprehension questions. As pointed out by Brumfit (1980), this kind of instruction, which is very similar to what the direct view of instruction proposes (as presented in subsection 2.2.1), aims at developing the mastery of language skills, at the teaching of letters and words one at a time, at finding out if the students understood the text or not, and at raising questions which are used to test students’ response. Also, students’ answers should be expected by the teacher who, in turn, provide the right answer for each reading task. Students’ answers should be those that teachers consider to be the right ones.

Current EFL reading research claims for the need to implement training programs that emphasize the teaching-focused methodology. It can be advocated that the objectives assumed by the teaching-focused methodology are very much related to what the whole language and cognitive apprenticeship approaches to reading sustain. They favor the teaching of reading strategies by means of co-operative learning among the teacher and students, the teacher is always a facilitator and mediator of information, and the group discussions not only aim at integrating students’ world knowledge to the text information but also allow them to interactively exchange ideas. In the next subsection, types of reading tasks applied to texts and their objectives in the reading classes will be described.

Active versus Passive reading tasks

Florence Davies (1995), in her book *Introducing Reading*, lists the most common passive and active reading tasks which are encountered in classroom reading settings.

Recent research in reading has found out that it is more common to encounter passive than active reading tasks in EFL/ESL textbooks. Reading activities, such as comprehension questions, true-false statements and multiple-choice exercises, are outlined as passive because they tend to lead students to use the bottom-up processing mode. Hence, students develop a passive behavior as a result of practice of exercises that involve literal comprehension, and that do not explore the use of strategies and critical thinking (Tomitch, 2000).

However, research in ESP textbooks contradicts the assumption held of research in EFL/ESL textbooks. Ferreira (unpublished paper) investigated the types of reading tasks encountered in three units of three ESP textbooks. She found out that there are many active reading tasks in these textbooks, and that some passive reading tasks, such as true/false questions, cannot be seen as totally passive tasks. Contrary to Davies' (1995) list of passive reading tasks that presents true/false questions as passive reading tasks, Ferreira argues that true/false questions cannot be considered so passive if students are requested to justify their answers.

Based on Davies's (1995) framework, the following subsections present the characteristics of passive and active reading tasks found in textbooks, and discuss their teaching implications in EFL reading classes.

2.4.1 Passive tasks

According to Davies (1995, p. 143), passive reading tasks, typically involving individual silent reading are:

- multiple-choice exercises
- comprehension questions
- gap completion exercises
- true/false questions
- vocabulary study, for example, find synonyms/antonyms
- dictionary study
- 'speed' reading
- renumbering of sections of text on page.

In a study carried out in Brazilian secondary schools, Coracini (1995b) concluded that teachers tend to explore more passive tasks. According to her, teachers appear to emphasize the use of the bottom-up model to the exclusion of the top-down and interactive models. She observed that students are usually required to have a word-perfect reading. The text constitutes the place of knowledge and it is used as a pretext to study grammar and vocabulary. That is, teachers understand that reading serves to teach the pronunciation of words. The practice of reading strategies, students' prior knowledge and critical reading are not taken into account in passive reading tasks (Coracini, 1995b; Tomitch, 2000).

The use of questions in the teaching of reading in English can also determine the type of reading task teachers tend to focus in classes. Tomitch (2000) discusses that questions that foster literal comprehension can be

classified as passive tasks. Following the same line of discussion but using another term, Coracini (1995) argues that didactic questions (same as literal questions) tend to lead students to depend on the teachers' voice. Both Tomitch and Coracini seem to agree that these questions develop a passive behavior on students for three reasons. First, they require students to look for explicit answers in the text, as a consequence, students have the tendency not to justify the answers in their own words. Second, there is no concern about the contribution of students' prior knowledge and the role of inferring implicit meaning when completing the tasks. Third, these questions do not provide room for discussion with colleagues because the answers are strictly based on the text. Fourth, these questions "do not contribute to the development of a strategic reader" (Tomitch, 2000, p. 8). Not only are reading strategies but also critical reading are left apart in passive reading tasks. In the next subsection, examples of active reading tasks will be mentioned and the purposes that underlie their use in reading classes will be tackled.

2.4.2 Active reading tasks

According to Davies (1995), active tasks are contextualized reading activities which involve students in social interaction, and raise students awareness about the role of reading. She thereby favors the use of active tasks more than passive reading tasks. As Tomitch (2000, p. 84) observes, "active reading tasks require readers to read between the lines and engage in an interactive reading with the passage in order to fulfil them".

In applying these types of activities in class, teachers are expected to encourage students to dialogue with the text so that they can look at the text more analytically without simply answering specific comprehension questions. Students who are engaged in active tasks tend to discuss possible interpretations by adding their own opinions and checking their hypotheses with other classmates interactively.

According to Davies' (1995, p. 144), active reading tasks:

- typically make use of authentic and challenging texts;
- contextualize reading;
- provide students with a rhetorical or topical framework for processing and analyzing the text;
- frequently involve an oral reading of the text by the teacher or a student followed by silent reading and rereading of the text;
- involve students interacting with the text and each other;
- involve students in direct analysis of the text instead of indirect question answering;
- frequently involve the transfer of information from text to a visual or diagrammatic representation.

As a consequence of these features, active reading tasks change the nature of students' interaction with texts in the following ways:

- Students make their hypotheses explicit;
- Hypotheses are evaluated by other students and checked against the text;
- There is discussion about alternative interpretations;

- Students ask questions about what they do not know instead of answering questions to which they know they answer or which may be seen to be irrelevant;
- If necessary, the teacher can adopt a role of informant rather than of inquisitor;
- Students learn to be critical in their reading of a text.(Davies, 1995, p.144)

2.4.3 Active reading tasks and Instruction

The importance of exploiting the use of active reading tasks is also seen in Silberstein (1994), with emphasis on strategic comprehension instruction planned in light of the readers' goals and specific characteristics of texts. The steps of instruction include the teaching of four reading strategies named: skimming, reading for thorough comprehension, scanning and critical reading. In skimming texts, students are guided to obtain the general sense of the text content whereas reading for thorough comprehension allows students to paraphrase the author's intention. In scanning, the emphasis is given to specific words or expressions that can reinforce the students' arguments. At the latest stage, through critical reading, students can draw inferences and identify implicit relations that can assist them to construct a meaningful interpretation.

Lynch (1996) makes suggestions about the organization of classroom reading tasks by means of interactive comprehension strategies. He argues that reading is "the interplay between three main comprehension sources: background knowledge, context, and knowledge of the language" (p.125) and thus he suggests three reading tasks that consider such comprehension

sources. They are: think-aloud interpretation, reciprocal teaching and modifying a text. In the thinking-aloud interpretation, students have the text in front of them to explain their own interpretation. Organized in group work, the thinking-aloud interpretation makes teachers compare and analyze students' routes to comprehension. In other words, this task allows teachers to observe how aware students are of the textual clues which would pass unnoticed in the individual reading. In the reciprocal teaching, students also work in groups and take turns as instructors, guiding others in their reading of a text. By doing so, students compare and discuss their individual answers with the comprehension questions provided by the course book. In the modifying text task, which also involves the writing skill, students have to modify a difficult text into an easy one, by discussing in groups which non-important information has to be eliminated in order to shorten the original text.

The studies reviewed in this section showed the importance of the use of active reading tasks for raising students' awareness about the role of texts, of different reading strategies that need to be used depending on the text type, and of students' own role as active interpreters to create meaning and learn from texts. In the following section, I describe types of questions and their respective functions in the instruction of reading in English.

2.5 Types of questions

One of the aspects of questioning in the teaching of reading in EFL is the use of display and referential questions, and the type of objective

provided by them. Pearson and Johnson (1978) investigated whether teachers instruct their pupils to generate comprehension questions and concluded that “the issue is not whether or not to use questions, but how, when and where they ought to be used” (p. 154). As suggested by Pearson and Johnson’s (1978) taxonomy of questions, teachers should be aware of when and how to address textually explicit, textually implicit and scriptally implicit questions to the students, always having in mind that all these questions have a purpose to be pursued in the instruction of reading. In the following subsections, I describe the role of the above mentioned questions and explain their functions supported by studies in the area of reading instruction.

2.5.1 Literal questions

Pearson and Johnson (1978) explain that textually explicit questions (also named literal or display questions) are those used to elicit students’ answers concerning literal comprehension. For example, when pupils identify the age feature of some character from the text, this means that their answer came from textually explicit questions. This type of question only serves to confirm factual information and does not incorporate the role of drawing inferences and predictions for answering questions. Yes/no questions constitute one of the examples of textually explicit questions.

Oliveira (2000) investigated the extent to which “critical thinking is being fostered by question-asking in Portuguese reading comprehension texts for secondary students” (p. 41). She found out that reading comprehension textbooks tend to explore textually explicit questioning and the reasons that

underlie its use is “related to the political ideology of a country”(p. 48). First, “the teacher-centered approach, very much used in the traditional pedagogy”(p. 48), has given priority to the display of factual questions by the teacher. There is more concern with the delivery of information rather with learning. Second, there is more emphasis on the teachers’ point of view than the students’. As a result, students are more encouraged to expose answers that are in the text rather than explain their types of answers. Thus, the text is treated as an end in itself, but not as a source of information used to develop new ideas .

In a study carried out by Coracini (1995) in FL lessons, she concluded that students seem to answer what teachers require them to do. Students rarely pose a different answer as an attempt to discuss with classmates or with the teacher. Coracini classifies the questions used by teachers in two types: didactic and communicative. In the *didactic* questions(also called the literal), student’s voice relies on teachers’ questions. According to the author, the didactic questions such as chain questions (‘perguntas encadeadas’), multiple-choice (‘de múltipla escolha’), gap completion (‘com lacunas’), followed by explanation (‘seguida de uma explicação’), question and answer by the teacher (‘pergunta e resposta pelo professor’) and initiative questions (‘perguntas iniciativas’) aim at cheering up the classroom. These questions seem to develop a passive behavior of students since there is no place for engagement and reflection during instruction, and the answers are strictly based on the textbook. Contrary to this type of question, communicative questions seem to rely on students’ voice, both in terms of content and answers given by them. As these questions are similar to those used in daily

situations, they encourage discussions in class and teachers do not expect students' answers to be correct; there is negotiation of information rather than teachers' domain on students' answers. The next subsection is devoted to the description and discussion of the use of referential questions in EFL reading classes.

2.5.2 Inferential questions

There are two types of questions from Pearson and Johnson's (1978) framework which can be considered inferential questions: textually implicit and scriptally implicit questions. Textually implicit questions "have answers that are on the page, but the answers are not so obvious" (p. 57). In this sort of question, the questions and answers are textually derived but the relation between them is implicit. Hence, students are encouraged to elicit inferences based on a sequence of events found in the text. In turn, scriptally implicit questions are the ones that have their answers from readers' prior knowledge and which are not expected by teachers. When students use their 'script' – term used by Pearson and Johnson instead of schema – they relate their background knowledge to what they identify in the text in order to confirm their hypotheses.

In a study directed to middle school, junior high, secondary and postsecondary content areas, Ciardello (1998) proposes instruction based on research on cognitive and information processing which aims at promoting students questioning instruction. In his view, student's questioning instruction is one of the means to aid students exercise reading

comprehension effectively. This type of teaching focuses on the need for teachers to develop cognitive (comprehension-fostered) and metacognitive (comprehension-monitoring) strategies in student questioning instruction.

Ciardello lists the thinking operations used by readers as their cognitive strategies used for explaining, stating relationships, comparing and contrasting ideas in the whole text. Conversely, metacognitive strategies serve as a form of self-checking if the material was understood. He asserts that teachers should be attentive to “how to train our students how to ask knowledge-seeking and hypothesis-generating questions” (p. 212). Ciardello believes that if teachers often ask questions in class, their students will be less able to search for questions of their own interest. As a result, students will be dependent on teachers’ guidance as well as their questions to think. On the other hand, if teachers help students generate their own questions, it will be their questions that will lead them to make inferences, to capture what is important and non-important in a text, and associate their schemata to interpret texts meaningfully.

Some of the above reported studies concluded that the overuse of textually explicit questions by teachers tend to build up a passive behavior in students (Coracini, 1995a; Oliveira, 2000). The former reported on the use of literal and inferential questions (Pearson & Johnson, 1978) and others have raised the problems caused by the use of literal/display questions in reading classes (Coracini, 1995; Oliveira, 2000). What happens in Brazilian secondary school, for example, is that literal/display questions are often raised by teachers and students are usually oriented to expose or copy plain answers from the text (Coracini, 1995a). As an attempt to remedy this situation of

reading classes, Ciardello (1998) proposes student questioning instruction. He believes that once students generate their own questions, they will be more equipped to understand the text. When teachers train students to make their questions, these teachers want students to predict, to make inferences and to associate text information with their schemata to interpret the text.

It is through the foundation provided by studies examined in this chapter that I will try to construct the profile of EFL reading teachers at Florianópolis public schools. The suggestions expressed by the whole language model of instruction, the teaching-focused methodology, the interactive model of reading, and the active reading tasks inspired this researcher to look into the most common procedures EFL teachers adopt in their reading classes.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This chapter introduces the participants involved in the research (teachers and students of English) and describes how the research was carried out. In the section participants, information concerning teachers and students' background is provided. In the data collection section, the instruments and the procedures used in each stage of the research are outlined.

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study were twenty teachers of English plus a hundred and twenty students from public schools, in Florianópolis, in the southern state of Santa Catarina, Brazil.

Teachers

Twenty teachers from different public schools were chosen to take part in the first part of the research. Of the twenty teachers, sixteen were from "Rede Estadual de Ensino de Florianópolis" while the other four were from "Colégio de Aplicação da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)". Eight teachers taught English at junior high school, level that ranges from the 5th to the 8th grades. The other twelve teachers taught at both junior high

school and high school; level that ranges from the 1st to 3rd grades. From the twenty teachers interviewed, two were then selected to be observed during their EFL reading classes. Teacher A was from “Colégio de Aplicação” and teacher B was from “Colégio Estadual Getúlio Vargas”. The criteria for the selection of the two teachers were the following: a) availability to participate in the study; b) teaching reading at least twice a week; c) the teaching of one of the teachers should be more traditional while the other communicative; d) the teachers had to teach both junior high school and high school classes, since EFL reading is one of the requirements of schools for students’ success in learning and entering the university.

It is my objective in this work to trace the profile of such teachers in the instruction of EFL reading, by analyzing their teaching practices and the type of response they elicit in students.

Students

The students who took part in this study came from two different public schools: “Colégio Estadual Getúlio Vargas” and “Colégio Aplicação” and were from different grades, namely 7th and 8th grades of junior high school and 1st, 2nd and 3rd levels of high school respectively. The students attended the observed classes of the two selected EFL teachers.

These students had been studying English since the 6th grade. In the previous grade (5th), students had been given the choice to three foreign languages which are French, English and Spanish. In public schools, all students have either two 50-minute classes or two 45 minute-classes a week.

Each school has a different number of hours/classes in its curriculum organization. These students receive instruction on three skills, reading, listening and writing, using materials provided by the teacher or from the book the school adopts. This study is concerned with the procedures used for the teaching of the reading skill only.

3.2 Data Collection and Procedure

3.2.1. Teachers' interview

Data collection was made through an interview with twenty teachers and class observation of two of these teachers. A thirteen-question questionnaire (see Appendix 1), written in English, was used in an interview with the teachers. This interview was tape recorded. The questionnaire had open-ended questions giving teachers the opportunity to vary answers according to their teaching reality. The questions were divided in four categories: 1. classroom dynamics; 2. type of reading instruction; 3. type of reading tasks; 4. type of questions in instruction. The objectives of the teachers' interview were to find out:

1. The type of classroom dynamics used in EFL reading classes;
2. The teaching procedures practiced by the selected teachers;
3. The type of reading instruction used;
4. The type of reading tasks applied in EFL reading classes;
5. The type of questions used in classes.

The aim of the interview was to gain a broader view of teachers' perceptions and procedures in EFL reading instruction at public secondary schools.

In order to obtain the teachers' interview, initial personal contact was made between the researcher and the teachers in their work place. The meetings took place in their respective schools, and once at UFSC, day in which they had a conversation course. The interview was conducted in April (from the 9th to the 20th).

Before the interview, the researcher introduced herself and gave teachers a brief explanation about the research. The researcher pointed out that the interview aimed at investigating what they do in their EFL reading classes, and that it was going to be part of a project developed for the researcher's Master course. After that, teachers were given the questionnaire, used in the interview, to read in advance.

The interview with each teacher lasted from fifteen to twenty minutes and was tape recorded to ensure that all information was accurately gathered. As seven of the twenty teachers preferred to use their mother tongue to express their views frankly, they were interviewed in Portuguese.

3.2.1.2 Classroom observation

The reading class observation was made through note-taking. While the observed teacher carried out his/her class, I was taking notes about his/ her instructional moves having as a base the research questions used in the

interview (see Appendix 1). Teacher A, from “Colégio de Aplicação”, and teacher B, from “Colégio Estadual Getúlio Vargas”, were chosen to be observed. A total of 12 hours of classes were observed from each teacher.

Different levels of schooling were observed. In Teacher A’s classes, from “Colégio Aplicação”, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd levels of high school were analyzed. In Teacher B’s classes, from “Rede Estadual de Ensino – Escola Getúlio Vargas”, the 7th and 8th levels of junior high school were investigated.

Before the class observation took place, the researcher and the respective teachers arranged the days and time for the observation. During the observation stage, the researcher introduced herself to the students in the classroom and told them that she would not interfere in their class. After that, the researcher initiated the observation through note-taking. The questions used in the interview stage served as a checklist to verify whether oral information given by teachers were covered in their EFL reading classes.

3.2.1.3 Students’ Questionnaire

As for the students, a nine-question questionnaire (see Appendix 2), written in Portuguese, was given to a hundred and twenty school students from different grades and schools to answer immediately after the researcher had completed the 12 hours/ class observation with each teacher. The questionnaire was designed to allow for an exploration of the students’ perceptions about their reading classes. The questionnaire was organized and answered in Portuguese for two reasons. First, since Portuguese is the

students' mother tongue, the respondents could express their opinion with freedom and also more precisely. Second, it was made in written form instead of orally due to the large number of students in each classroom: 20 or more students. Although the questionnaire was prepared in Portuguese, students were free to answer it either in English or Portuguese.

The objective of this questionnaire was to identify (1) if students enjoy their EFL reading classes; (2) the types of reading activities they like most; (3) how they participate in class; (4) what they consider relevant in their EFL reading class; (5) which ways they prefer to read: individually or with classmates; (6) if they like the way the reading class is taught; (7) if they enjoy the topics of texts read in class; (8) if they use what they learn in class outside the school and (9) if they had been given opportunity to choose more than one foreign language to study.

The last stage of data collection was the application of questionnaires to students of EFL reading classes. The questionnaires were given to the students on different dates appointed by the teachers. The application of the questionnaire took place when the researcher finished the 12 hour-class-observation with each teacher. Group A students, from "Colégio Estadual Getúlio Vargas", were the first to answer the questionnaire (May 23rd, 2001) while group B students, from "Colégio Aplicação- UFSC", answered the questionnaire on May, 28th, 2001.

As the researcher already knew the students from the class observation stage, there was no need to introduce herself. There were three steps followed at this stage. First, the researcher explained to all students about her research. Second, she told them that she wanted to see their opinion about their EFL

reading class and told them that they could answer the questionnaire either in Portuguese or English (see Appendix 2). Third, the questionnaire was distributed and students were given enough time to finish answering the questions. If a student had any doubt concerning any of the questions, the researcher oriented him/her to answer appropriately. The aim of the students' questionnaire was to identify the students' affective response¹ in relation to their EFL reading classes.

¹ Students' responses in relation to interest and motivation.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents and analyses the results obtained in this study. In order to organize the discussion, the results are shown as the research questions are answered. The data obtained are a result of the answers to the teachers' interviews, the notes taken during classroom observation and the answers to the students' questionnaire. The research questions posed in this study are: 1. Are EFL teachers' methodological procedures from Florianópolis public schools teacher-centered or learner-focused? 2. Are reading tasks active or passive? 3. Does instruction have a teaching or a testing focus? 4. What types of questions do teachers pose and what are their importance in the reading class? 5. What type of response do students give to teachers' instruction?

Before answering the research questions, it needs to be mentioned here the frequency and amount of time dedicated to English classes and to the teaching of reading in English (see results on Tables 1, 2 and 3 next page). Results were obtained through questions number two and three of the questionnaire (2. How many hours a week do you have with each group? and 3. How many hours a week do you teach reading in English?) Findings that referred to materials used in reading classes were acquired through the answers to question number four of the questionnaire (4. Do you adopt any

specific material? If so, what do you use? If not, where do you base your classes?). Eleven out of the twenty teachers interviewed said they use textbooks along with extra material. The books mentioned were: 1) Impact (4 teachers), 2) Cambridge World Wide (4 teachers), 3) Password by Amadeus Marques (2 teachers) and 4) Dynamic (1 teacher). Nine out of the twenty teachers, in turn, said they just use photocopies. The sources usually include lyrics of songs, texts from the internet, newspapers and magazines such as 'Time', 'Newsweek', 'Get to the Point', 'Discovery' and 'Coleção Horizontes' (see results on Table 4 below). Results concerning the identification of materials used in EFL reading classes served only to situate the researcher in the classes observations.

	Number of teachers	Percentage
1 hour and a half a week	02	10%
2 hours a week	14	70%
3 hours a week	04	20%

Table 1 – Frequency and Amount of time devoted to English

	Number of teachers	Percentage
Three times a week	03	15%
Twice a week	17	85%

Table 2 – Frequency of the English class

	Number of Teachers	Percentage
30 minutes a week	09	45%
20 minutes a week	03	15%
50 minutes a week	08	40%

Table 3 – Amount of time devoted to the teaching of EFL reading

Materials	Number of Teachers	Percentage
Impact	04	20%
Password	02	10%
Dynamic	01	5%
Cambridge World Wide	04	20%
Extra material only	09	45%

Table 4 – Materials used to teach reading

4.1.1) Are EFL teachers' procedures from Florianópolis public schools teacher-centered or learner-focused?

In order to answer the first research question, I will make reference to Stahl's criteria (1997) about teacher-centered and learner-focused types of methodological procedures. Bernhardt's (1991) and Grigolito's (1995) findings in L2 reading classes will also serve as relevant examples for the discussions.

Teachers' Interview

The first research question aimed to investigate if teachers pursue a teacher-centered or learner-focused procedure by looking into: 1) the objectives of their EFL reading lessons; 2) the type of approach to reading they use and the instructional moves they follow; and 3) the type of reading model they emphasize in class. These three aims were analyzed and discussed in light of the answers to question number nine and six of the questionnaire (9. What is emphasized in the reading tasks? 6. What are the methodological procedures used in the classroom? Describe all steps you follow in the reading class).

The objectives of EFL reading classes varied from teacher to teacher. Some of the answers are shown below (my translation):

"I emphasize the teaching of cognates"

"The teaching of grammar and fluency of oral reading are more important in my classes"

"I aim the teaching of text comprehension"

"I emphasize the teaching of vocabulary and text comprehension"

"I aim the teaching of pronunciation and explore some comprehension questions"

"I emphasize the teaching of oral reading fluency"

"The objective is to give enough practice of reading strategies and to exploit text comprehension"

While exposing the aims of their reading classes, 12 out of the 20 teachers interviewed mentioned some drawbacks that make their lessons difficult to be managed. First, they claimed that the size of the classroom is a big problem (they often face classrooms with 30 or more students) and the students usually make noise during class. As one of the teachers said *"it's difficult to work with reading because of the noise"* (my translation). The 12 teachers also claimed that the teachers, therefore, are the ones in charge of deciding all the procedures in class, and students are there only to follow their rules. According to 2 teachers, *"students have to do what I want them to do"* and *"students have to understand my commands"* (my translation).

Another drawback mentioned by teachers is the lack of interest from the part of the students in relation to reading. As two teachers that teach for the 7th and 8th grades said (my translation):

"I feel ridiculous because students don't show any interest at all".

"I avoid working with reading because the students aren't interested at all"

One of the three teachers claimed that EFL reading is not part of the program in the 7th and 8th grades in that school mainly because of the students' lack of interest. Consequently, as s/he said "*most of the teachers of the school adopts the teaching based on grammar and vocabulary studies because it is easier to work with*".

One teacher, in turn, stated that different levels of proficiency found in the same classroom is another feature that limits his/her practice in classrooms. S/he said that there are students in the 8th grade that do not even know the verbs 'to be' and 'to have'. As in his/her own words, "*students in my class are from different levels. How can I teach reading, then?*" According to this teacher, s/he focuses on a grammar-based teaching more as an attempt to group the students in the same learning level. Another teacher said that: "*low-level students are not able to read between the lines, so I think it's really difficult to teach reading*".

These findings are not surprising and corroborate Almeida Filho's (1991), results. In a study involving EFL teachers in Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil, Almeida Filho concluded that teachers are discouraged to teach efficiently because of factors such as low wages, too large groups to teach, lack of students' interest about reading and also because of lack of materials. In the present research, it appears that some of the reasons for teachers to assume a teacher-centered procedure are due to the lack of students' interest about reading, large groups to teach, and different levels of language proficiency encountered in classes.

Twelve out of the twenty teachers said that they model and practice reading aloud as the first procedure. They claimed that if pronunciation is the

main objective in the EFL reading class, reading aloud is paramount. In another teacher's words, "*If they listen, they understand*" (my translation). As a second procedure, these teachers ask students for a silent reading, which is often interrupted whenever students have difficulty with unknown vocabulary. Students' oral repetition is a common procedure that comes after the silent reading. The last procedure occurs when the students are asked to answer reading comprehension questions, either raised by the teachers or by the textbook, generally assigned as homework.

It might be said that because their instructional procedures are mostly related to a phonic-based approach to reading, these teachers tend to guide students to rely on the bottom-up reading model. According to the answers given, the 12 teachers appear to give priority to oral reading, pronunciation, vocabulary study and exercises that deal mostly with textually explicit comprehension. As pointed out by Stahl (1997), teachers who pursue a teacher-centered procedure tend to model and practice reading, commonly follow the direct approach to reading and also emphasize the bottom-up model of reading in reading classes. From the results obtained, it seems that vocabulary knowledge precedes text comprehension, a view assumed by the bottom-up reading model. Thus, from the discussion above it seems that these 12 teachers tend to adopt a more teacher-centered procedure

These findings seem to replicate Bernhardt's (1991) results. She found that in most American schools, teachers that simply follow the teacher's manual tend to pronounce the words for the students and ask them to repeat after the teacher's oral reading, call students' attention to pronunciation errors and design activities in the form of oral reading. According to

Bernhardt's (1991) findings, American teachers focus on vocabulary exercises which are based on the texts. This fact also corroborates Grigoletto's (1995) findings. In a study concerned with the organization of FL reading classes, Grigoletto observed that reading aloud is the initial procedure followed by explanation about content and vocabulary that teachers judge as unknown by the students. Thus, it seems that the direct approach to reading, the one that emphasizes fluent oral reading as well as vocabulary and grammar study, is meant to be also the favorite in FL classes in Brazilian schools.

The other 8 teachers out of the 20 said that they explored reading strategies during instruction, and followed the type of instruction as suggested by the interactive model of reading. As a first procedure, they often raised open-ended questions to students (also called warm up questions as part of pre-reading activities) to make students give opinions about the content of the text that they are going to read. Then, they present illustrations to help students predict the content of the text. General discussions are raised during this type of procedure with the whole class. The next step is silent reading and if the students present some difficulties concerning vocabulary, the teachers encourage them to find out words from the context. If looking up words from the context does not help, the teachers provide dictionaries which are used as a final alternative to facilitate comprehension in EFL reading. These teachers claim that the act of reading is interactive in the sense that students are always negotiating meaning with the author, confirming their hypotheses, and sharing information encountered in the text with other classmates. In two teachers' words, "*students have to find answers by themselves*" (my translation) and "*I expect any type of answer*"(my

translation). The follow-up activities are either worked in the classroom in group work, in pairs or assigned as homework, which is done in written form.

These teachers seem to be conscious of the role of students' schemata in EFL reading (Rumelhart, 1984; Carrell, 1994; Tomitch, 1988). According to 4 out of the 20 teachers, it is important to make a bridge between the students' world knowledge and text information during the reading classes. As one of them said, "*I try to make a bridge with students' reality in my classes*" (my translation). None of the teachers mentioned the importance of calling students' attention to different types of texts during their instruction, another facilitative aspect for EFL reading (Meurer, 1991; Carrell, 1994). It seems that they give more emphasis to the top-down model according to their responses. This seems to happen probably because they emphasize the students' prior knowledge more than any other linguistic aspect (i.e. vocabulary study) as a major source of information during their classes.

It could be concluded that the teacher-centered procedure adopted by 12 out of the 20 teachers seems to be initially a result of the problems they encounter at schools with students. Too large groups to teach, low wages, scarce time to update their teaching, students' lack of interest about reading are the most frequent reasons exposed by them. Consequently, reading aloud and studying grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are the main core in their teaching. However, 8 out of the 20 teachers attempt to adopt a more learner-focused procedure. As these 8 teachers said that they normally teach in small groups and update their teaching, they seem to consider the students' needs and interests when preparing their lesson plans. Based on their responses, the teaching of reading strategies, the development of students'

top-down skills and text comprehension are the main purposes of their reading lessons.

Classroom Observation

It is important to remember that Teacher A, from the state school 'Colégio Estadual Getúlio Vargas' who teaches for junior high school and high school levels, and Teacher B, from 'Colégio Aplicação at UFSC (Federal University of Santa Catarina) who teaches for the last level of junior high school (8th grade) and high school, were 2 out of the 20 teachers chosen to be observed. Each observation consisted of 12 hours and the questions used in the interview served as guidelines in the observation of the two teachers' instructional procedures. It was through note takings and direct observation that the instructional procedures reported by the teachers during the interview in their reading classes could be analyzed.

Teacher A

The class observation was carried out with junior high school, particularly in the 6th and 7th grades of junior high school, and 1st level of high school, with the same teacher. Observation was completed with 1 group of the 6th grade (3 classes were analyzed), 2 groups of the 7th grade (3 classes were investigated with the 1st group while 5 were with the 2nd group) and 1 group of the 1st level of high school (2 classes were observed). It is important to mention a few things related to this particular classroom context. First, no textbook was adopted in class; classes were covered through extra materials

from the book 'Password' by Amadeu Marques' 'Read and Tell', and from internet sources. Second, there was a large number of students in the three grades: there were 40 in the 6th grade and 30 students in the 7th grade. Third, classes were usually carried out in the students' native language – Portuguese – and each reading class took 25 minutes.

Regarding the teacher's instructional procedures, the pre-teaching of vocabulary was always the first phase of the reading class. Teacher A always read orally just once and translated into Portuguese a list of vocabulary that the students would see in the text. It is relevant to mention that it was the teacher who always started the reading of such words which aimed at the teaching of pronunciation. As Bernhardt (1991) said, "this act of pre-teaching consists of pronouncing the words for the students and then having the students pronounce the words in response as they look at translations" (p.176). It could be noticed that the students expected the teacher to translate into Portuguese during instruction so that they could understand what was going on in the activity.

Based on Stahl's classification for types of instruction (1997), the oral reading followed by Teacher A fits the direct model of instruction. According to Stahl (1997), the teacher who pursues the direct model of instruction, models and practices reading first by emphasizing the teaching of language components in isolation. Teacher A's class gives priority to the teaching of vocabulary and pronunciation. In this case, the language component, which was shown rather than taught, was the vocabulary necessary for text comprehension. It seems that it was a vocabulary lesson not a reading lesson. Skimming, scanning, guessing and prediction strategies were not taught. The

students copied the words from one section to another in order to complete tasks involving renumbering of sections, for example. It might be concluded that this teacher tends to adopt a teacher-centered procedure in class. These results corroborate Grigoletto's (1995) findings about L2 classes. According to her, teachers and students who pursue the direct model believe that reading comprehension cannot be achieved if readers do not understand words first.

The information given by Teacher A in the interview in relation to the procedural steps in EFL reading instruction was partially covered in the observation. As s/he said during the interview, s/he started reading the text orally and then asked students to repeat it. One of the objectives of this task was to correct the students' pronunciation. However, it could be noticed that s/he rarely applied the pre-reading strategy named 'brainstorming of ideas' in the few classes observed, as s/he said s/he does in the interview. Most of the time, the teacher distributed a text to the students and began the oral reading calling the students' attention to pronunciation errors. In 2 out of the 12 classes observed, the teacher said what the topic was going to be; not working previously with prediction and inferencing. Next, the teacher asked the students to silently read the text in order to answer some comprehension questions which were always written in Portuguese. After that stage, the teacher read aloud and translated the text immediately. At that point, the teacher asked the students what they did not understand in terms of words and, when there was any sort of doubt, the teacher always used translation to help students comprehend word meanings and the text itself.

However, it was noticed that in other 2 out of the 12 of his/her reading classes, s/he elicited the students' general knowledge about the content of the

text as the first step. For example, as one was about 'Solidarity', the teacher asked the students the meaning of that word in Portuguese. At that point, the teacher did not introduce relevant vocabulary but s/he asked the students to read the text paying attention to the cognate words. After this explanation stage, the teacher read the text aloud having the students follow the reading silently and then s/he started translating the text into Portuguese. Although the text was in English, the questions were written in Portuguese and the answers should be given in Portuguese. It can be said that, in this context, the students' world knowledge did serve as a facilitative resource of information to understand the text. But it was observed that the teacher's voice appears to be more present than the students' voice throughout the lesson.

This procedure of oral reading by the teacher, followed by the students reading silently can be explained in light of the bottom-up model of reading (Samuels, 1972). This type of instruction reflects a phonic-based approach to reading, and the students become accustomed to pronouncing the words before reading the whole text (Davies, 1995). Therefore, text comprehension in this classroom context is bound to be sound-based. (Davies, 1995). Since the students seem to be so acquainted with reading word by word, sometimes sentence by sentence (lower-level processing mode) to answer the comprehension exercises, they might fail to search for contextual clues, for example, when they deal with vocabulary problems. In this regard, reading is defined as only a perceptual ability to recognize the words in the text, as supported by the bottom-up model of reading (Carrell, 1988; Brumfit, 1980). It could be noticed that pronunciation of words precedes the ability to read in this reading class. This method of reading adopted by Teacher A does not

make the students read but pronounce words. While I was observing Teacher A, I could notice that some students were reading aloud to themselves to answer the comprehension exercises.

It was also noticed that the teacher did not exploit awareness about different text genres, top-down skills to activate or construct background knowledge, bottom-up skills to raise the students' awareness about the role and relation of textual elements in the text. It could also be observed that the presentation of vocabulary and explanation of the reading activities were given through translation. Furthermore, translation was constantly used to correct students' answers.

From the results above, it could be concluded that Teacher A pursued the traditional pedagogy to teaching EFL reading. Teacher A did not explore the different reading strategies that deal with prediction and inferring meaning before reading which are essential for the activation or construction of background knowledge in the process of understanding texts (Carrell, 1988; Tomitch, 1988; Goodman, 1970; Meurer, 1991). Furthermore, it was observed that translation into the students' native language was very much used as a device to both explicate the lessons and direct the reading activities.

Teacher B

The EFL reading classes observed from Teacher B were conducted in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd levels of high school. It was observed 2 groups of 1st level (2 classes were investigated with the 1st group and 3 classes with the 2nd group), 1 group of 2nd level (4 classes were analyzed) and 2 groups of 3rd

level (3 classes were observed with the 1st and 2nd groups). Classes were held three times a week and the reading lessons normally took 30 minutes from each class. Teacher B adopted the 'World Wide Cambridge' textbook and sometimes brought in extra materials from the Internet as complementary sources. Moreover, all classes were conducted in English. With respect to the number of students in the classroom, there were 18 students in the 1st level of high school, 24 students in the 2nd level of high school and 15 students in the 3rd level of high school.

In most of the reading classes observed, Teacher B adopted the instructional procedures suggested by the whole language model of instruction (Stahl, 1997). S/he provided activities that dealt with reading strategies such as skimming, scanning and reading for the gist. There were times in which the teacher explored more top-down skills or bottom-up skills which, following the interactive theory of instruction in EFL reading, should interact with harmony during instruction. Also, Teacher B organized his/her classes in light of the students' needs and interests, as said in his/her own words "*I try to make a bridge with students' reality in my classes*" (my translation).

Very common in the beginning of his/her reading classes, Teacher B always raised open-ended questions before asking the students to read the text. These warm up questions served as a brainstorming about the topic that they were going to read. This first phase of the class could be defined as a pre-reading activity which dealt with the activation and/or the building up of relevant schemata necessary to read the text (Carrell, 1988; Paris, Wasik & Turner, 1991). As claimed by Paris et al (1991), this initial phase is used to

prepare the students to read. It was observed, therefore, that the teacher was interested in helping the students develop top-down skills. Teacher B usually made references to pictures and asked the students what they might expect in the text by reading the title, for instance. As could be observed, this procedure had a positive effect on the students' behavior – they became more interested in what they were going to read.

It was during the reading that the students read the text individually and silently; the first reading practice came from the students themselves. It was also noticed that whenever the students faced vocabulary problems or lack of text comprehension, the teacher explained the word meaning using mimicry or oriented the students to look for contextual clues in the text. For example, s/he oriented his/her students to analyze the morphological structure of unknown words in order to guess their function in the context. Translation into the students' native language was the last mechanism used by the teacher to help the students read and comprehend the texts.

Another characteristic observed in Teacher B's class was the orientation in relation to post-reading activities. Depending on the time, s/he usually exploited vocabulary study, pronunciation or grammar focus with reference to the text the students read. At that point, also depending on the objective of the reading class, Teacher B encouraged the students to relate their content schemata to what they read (Carrell, 1994). It could be noticed that this type of procedure created a pleasant atmosphere of discussion among the students. Nevertheless, one aspect this teacher did not include was the teaching of text structure (i.e., the rhetorical organization of texts).

The reading instruction procedure used in this class matches the interactive model of reading (Rumelhart, 1984; Samuels & Kamil, 1984). This type of instruction reflects the communicative approach to learning and allows the students to connect text information with their reality through class discussions in small groups. A good example of this fact could be observed in 1 of the 12 reading classes in which the topic of discussion was about Dinosaurs. That day, the teacher distributed a text with information about the Dinosaurs' characteristics and the students got enthusiastic about it because they had seen a documentary film on TV about that. It could be claimed that Teacher B often was concerned with bringing texts that were somehow in accordance with the students' needs and interests. As sustained by Gaskins and Gaskins (1997), the students' interest and needs should serve as the one ingredient to the teacher's reading lesson plan.

This constructive interaction among the students and the teacher in the negotiation of text meaning encountered in Teacher B's class is sustained by the interactive model of reading and the whole language type of instruction (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Grabe, 1988; Stahl, 1997; Aebershold & Field, 1997). As it could be noticed in his/her class as well as during the interview, the teacher explored practices of reading strategies according to the reading purposes, oriented the students to be aware of top-down and bottom-up skills, focused on the teaching of general meaning and also on the importance of developing critical awareness toward the text.

Based upon what was presented above, it could be said that Teacher B tends to adopt a learner-focused procedure since, according to the teacher's report in the interview, it is the students that have to come up with the text

comprehension. As mentioned in the interview and confirmed through direct observation, s/he sustains that his/her role is not only to orient the students to make efficient use of all reading strategies available to achieve comprehension of different texts but also to make them aware that meaning is not exclusively found in the printed words and that they themselves have to be in constant dialogue with the texts to construct meaning.

It could be said that translation, presentation of vocabulary, pronunciation correction, development of lower-level skills, and oral reading were the principal aims of Teacher A's reading class. However, the teaching involving the activation of students' schemata was rarely done. These characteristics encountered in Teacher A's class lead me to conclude that s/he adopts a teacher-centered procedure. On the other hand, the teaching of reading strategies, text comprehension, development of students' top-down and bottom-up skills, silent reading and critical reading were the main purposes of Teacher B's classes. These features led me to conclude that Teacher B adopts a learner-focused procedure. Nonetheless, it could be said that in both reading classes the teaching of different text genres was not fulfilled which, according to the literature about the instruction of EFL reading is one facilitative instrument to aid students accomplish text comprehension better (Carrell, 1988).

4.1.2) *Are the reading tasks used by these EFL teachers active or passive?*

Teachers' interview

It is through questions number seven, eight and nine of the teachers' questionnaire: 7. What types of reading tasks do you apply to the texts used? 8. How are these activities organized? 9. What is emphasized in the reading tasks?) that the researcher could identify a) the types of reading tasks the teachers apply to the texts used; b) how these reading tasks are organized in terms of classroom dynamics; and c) the emphasis given in working with the reading tasks.

In order to answer the second research question, I will make reference to Davies's (1995) framework about passive and active reading tasks along with Bernhardt's (1991), Tomitch's (2000), Ferreira's (unpublished paper), and Paris et al's (1991) findings about reading activities in EFL and ESP reading contexts.

The findings of the present research showed that teachers tend to overuse passive reading tasks during instruction. Results are shown on Table 5 and 6 below:

Passive reading activities	Number of teachers
Questions that deal with literal comprehension	11
Grammar study	13
Oral reading	13
Translation activities	13
True/false statements	9

Table 5 – Types of Passive Reading Tasks

Active reading activities	Number of teachers
Questions that deal with implicit comprehension	11
Text interpretation	12
Writing summaries	4

Table 6 – Types of Active Reading Tasks

There were 11 teachers who said that they followed the teacher's manual and that open-ended questions (comprehension exercises), were mostly used as post-reading activities. Bloom (1965) in Davies (1995) states that comprehension exercises usually involve the selection of short texts and "the design of a series of questions that may be more or less open or closed, and more or less literal and inferential (Bloom, 1965) but frequently requiring relatively short answers" (p. 22). One of the teachers said that "*comprehension questions are exercises strictly based on the text on which the focus is vocabulary and grammar study*" (my translation). They claimed that "*the students' answers should be accepted based on what teachers wish to listen to*" (my translation). From these answers, post-reading activities are meant to explore text-based answers and do not involve critical reading. According to Paris et al. (1991), however, post-reading activities should usually involve reviewing and reflecting after reading. Summarizing text information could be categorized as one example of post-reading activity.

Thirteen out of the twenty teachers claimed that most activities applied in class were those that emphasized grammar study, oral reading and translation activities. They claimed that the objective of the tasks was for students to identify and use the same grammatical structure the text presents. That is, according to these teachers, the reading tasks are grammar-focused. They also claimed that reading tasks should be used to enlarge the students'

vocabulary, and that work with vocabulary should precede the interpretation of texts. As pointed out by one of the teachers: “*vocabulary gaining precedes interpretation*” (my translation). According to 9 teachers, they often bring exercises to class that deal with synonyms and antonyms in the form of multiple-choice and/or true/false statements exercises sometimes as a pre-reading activity or post-reading activities. Furthermore, they claim that oral reading is part of the reading classes and one of the learning objectives is to practice the right pronunciation of words. Based on Davies’s (1995) framework, these tasks could be classified as passive taking into account that they mainly emphasize vocabulary study, grammar and pronunciation (i.e. practice of decoding skills in reading). See some of their answers below (my translation):

Answers that point to the use of Passive reading tasks:

“I emphasize vocabulary and oral participation²”

“I work with grammar and cognate words”

“I believe that vocabulary gaining precedes interpretation. I emphasize vocabulary and pronunciation”

“Oral reading”

“To improve vocabulary”

“Vocabulary and pronunciation”

“There’s more emphasis on oral reading and pronunciation”

Another type of reading task used by the same 13 teachers is translation. One of the teachers said that s/he translated the text into the

² participation in group discussions, for example, during the teaching of EFL reading.

students' mother tongue so that the students could understand the text. S/he asserted that it was easier to work with translation since the students are used to that type of procedural instruction. According to these teachers, it is the students that ask for translation during instruction.

These results provide additional support to the majority of findings about reading tasks in L2 classes. By analyzing EFL textbooks, Tomitch (2000) found that most of the EFL textbooks analyzed presented passive reading tasks, which do not help the students develop strategic reading. A major characteristic of these reading activities is that they do not emphasize the praxis of strategies such as guessing and prediction. Furthermore, they explore a word-perfect reading, i.e. they force students to rely on the perceptual aspect of reading reflecting the bottom-up model of reading (Davies, 1995).

Three major implications regarding the use of passive reading tasks arise from this perspective on instruction. First, the teacher tends to call students' attention to form rather to content, particularly when it comes to correct pronunciation. Second, a great part of the students in class become inactive. As 13 teachers said, the objective of reading tasks is oral reading, therefore only those students who read aloud in class are doing the activity. Third, most vocabulary lessons are meant to teach words that may or may not be related to the text.

As for answers concerning the use of active reading tasks, some of the teachers' answers are shown below (my translation):

Answers to the use of active reading tasks:

"I work with main idea identification and summaries"

"I emphasize comprehension questions"

Eleven out of the 20 teachers said that they work with questions that deal with implicit comprehension as a way to motivate students *"to find answers by themselves"* (my translation). Twelve out of the twenty teachers claimed that the emphasis they give in class is on text interpretation. According to them, although it is hard to do, it is by raising students' awareness about the topic that they try to encourage them to associate text information with their own reality. Although vocabulary and grammar study were also considered essential in their teaching of EFL reading, these teachers said they try to motivate students to read between the lines, to see what is relevant or not in the text, to get the main idea and to learn how to guess the meaning of unknown words (particularly key words) from context. Four teachers, in turn, said that they worked with summaries in class as part of follow-up activities. They claimed that the objective was to let students be creative. By asking them to either end a story or write a summary in accordance with what they read before, they would allow students to be critical in a way that they could agree or disagree with what the author suggested, and this could be noticed when they were reading them aloud to the whole class.

In general, results indicate that most of the teachers tend to focus on passive reading tasks. They still believe that vocabulary understanding precedes reading comprehension and they usually avoid the students'

participation during instruction. As a result, the students' answers (mostly to comprehension exercises) are bound to be text-based. Very few teachers take into account the students' background knowledge as one of the characteristics necessary to accomplish reading tasks. Furthermore, none of the teachers said that they call students' attention about formal schemata (text structure) and different genres in the teaching of reading in EFL (Meurer, 1991).

In terms of the organization of classes (also named classroom dynamics), the analysis draws on answers to question number eight of the teachers' questionnaire (8. How are these activities organized?). I also have drawn on Davies's (1995) framework of reading tasks to classify the teachers' organization of the reading tasks and to discuss its relevance to instruction in EFL reading. See Table 7 below:

Classroom Dynamics	Number of teachers
Class activity	5
Pair work + individual work	4
Group work + pair work	3
Class activity + individual work	2
Group work	2
Pair work	1
Group + individual + pair work	1
Group work + individual work	1
Pair + individual + group + class activity	1

Table 7 – Classroom Dynamics

The most common form of classroom dynamic cited was the one involving all students in class named by the teachers as 'class activity'. According to 5 teachers, class activity is the one that involves all students in oral reading repeating after the teacher. This type of procedure might

represent the direct approach to reading and the bottom-up model of reading since fluency of oral reading and mastery of decoding skills, although not mentioned by the teachers, are priorities in reading classes. Pair and individual work are other prevailing types of classroom dynamics. Four teachers argued that the students should be used to working individually, i.e., they should try to find answers by themselves and to share and discuss with other colleagues in pair/group work. Only one said that s/he varies the dynamics each class by including group work, pair work, class activity or individual work. According to this teacher, the way s/he organizes the dynamics depends on the type of tasks applied to the texts used and also on the level and interest of the group. The teachers who cited pair, individual and group works as part of the dynamics probably emphasize the interactive model of reading and the whole language approach to reading. From their answers, they seem to believe that students' interaction with colleagues during the tasks is necessary as knowledge should be socially negotiated in reading.

Classroom observation

Teacher A

Results showed that there was much more emphasis on passive rather than active reading tasks. The reading tasks Teacher A applied in his/her classes are shown below on Tables 8 and 9:

Passive reading tasks
Yes/no questions
True/false statements
Find synonyms and antonyms
Dictionary study
Remembering of sections of the vocabulary
Gap completion
Identification of textually explicit ideas in paragraphs

Table 8 – Passive Reading Tasks used by Teacher A

Active reading tasks
Introduction to Vocabulary in pre-reading activities
Match the columns

Table 9 – Active Reading Tasks used by Teacher A

Teacher A did not have a textbook and s/he always provided the students with photocopies of texts which were usually organized under three parts. The first part consisted of the introduction of vocabulary. The second part, which referred to exercises that dealt with scanning and skimming, involved: a) the identification of text information, b) vocabulary exercises defined as vocabulary study, for example, find synonyms/antonyms, c) dictionary study, d) gap completion exercises, e) and renumbering of sections of text on page (Davies, 1995). The third part involved the actual reading of the text, followed by reading comprehension exercises. These exercises

usually involved yes/no questions and wh-questions. In most comprehension exercises, the students' role was to find the answers in English from the text to the pertinent questions. In the vocabulary exercise, the usual type was to match the synonyms with antonyms or, to translate expressions from Portuguese into English and vice-versa.

This first part that dealt with the introduction of vocabulary could be seen as a pre-reading activity³. According to Paris et al. (1991), pre-reading activities are used to help students preview text content by looking at pictures, examining the titles or subheadings, or skimming the text. The pre-reading tasks in Teacher A's classes normally consisted of presenting the meanings of words and expressions to the students in two parts. The first part referred to the subtopics of the main topic. The second part consisted of presenting the examples of each subtopic. These activities could be regarded active since they function to build or activate vocabulary knowledge necessary to understand the content of the text. However, one of the aims of the pre-reading task was to make students repeat orally the target vocabulary after the teacher's oral reading. It appears that the teacher translated the words and expressions into the students' native language emphasizing the concept of reading as word-perfect reading (Davies, 1995).

In general, Teacher A's pre-reading activity might be considered more passive than active, since there was very little emphasis in engaging the students to elicit information, infer meaning and read beyond the surface words (Davies, 1995; Tomitch, 2000). As could be observed, the teacher

³ This type of pre-reading activity involved prediction and inferencing from the students' prior knowledge, therefore it was considered active.

rarely used pictures, for example, that could serve as important tools to help students read and understand the text.

The second part of the reading class sometimes involved exercises about renumbering of sections of the vocabulary. Two different texts had exercises involving tasks in the form of “match the information exercise”. In some exercises, the objective was to identify the necessary information that would answer the numbered questions. It is relevant to mention here that these exercises only required the students to number the answers according to the questions. Thereby, these tasks can be considered more passive as they mostly required students to copy words, sentences or numbers from the texts to the questions.

Another example of a passive task was dictionary study. In a text whose topic was ‘Organ Donation’ the students had to find out the synonyms/antonyms and associate the correct meanings of the words in two ways. In the crossword exercise, the students had to write the correct words based on the given definitions. In the match the columns exercise, the students had to associate the given words in the left column with their respective meanings that were located on the right side. For this exercise, there were some small pictures beside the words that served to help the students visualize them, a feature that seems to be closer to the objectives of active reading tasks.

The third part of the reading class involved the reading of the text which was normally done in pairs. Teacher A often asked students to read a short text in order to answer some comprehension exercises that always followed the text. As observed, most of the students read the text orally the

same way their teacher read aloud to them before. This type of reading – to read aloud line by line and sometimes word by word - could be noticed among the students as they were responding the exercises with their classmates. Another interesting characteristic found at this stage is that the comprehension exercises did not involve the students to identify main ideas. One type of reading task observed can illustrate this point. A text whose topic was about “Saint and Beautiful Catarina- come here to enjoy this dream” dealt with the identification of main ideas. The text was presented in the form of five separate paragraphs. The students’ task was to write the main ideas of each paragraph (the main ideas were already presented in the exercise). The students copied the sentences from the text to answer what the comprehension activities asked for. It might be said that this exercise is passive since it did not require students to infer meanings or analyze grammatical relations among sentences in order to write the main idea.

From the discussion above, it can be said that the activities Teacher A applies to the texts used might be classified as more passive as they did “not involve readers in a deep reading of the text” (Tomitch, 2000, p.84). The teacher failed to activate or build up the students’ prior knowledge and also failed to use reading strategies that dealt with prediction and inferencing before reading (Meurer, 1991; Rumelhart, 1984).

Results show that the reading tasks used by Teacher A emphasized reading as a mechanical process. This could be seen as the students’ aim was to copy the answers from the text most of the time. The passive reading tasks worked in this class fostered the lower- level process of identifying words

from text. Therefore, the reading tasks did not develop basic reading skills and strategies.

Teacher B

Findings indicate that Teacher B explored active reading tasks. In most of his/her classes, the reading tasks were divided in three distinct stages: pre-reading, reading and post-reading. As Teacher B reported in the interview, s/he provides enough praxis of reading strategies to the students, and that could be confirmed through class observation. Teacher B's reading tasks are shown on Table 10 below:

Active Reading Tasks
Prediction and guessing
Word completion
Table completion
Text completion (sentence completion)
Writing summaries

Table 10 – Active reading tasks used by Teacher B

In preparing the students for a reading assignment, Teacher B usually explored the theme of the text through pre-reading activities. There were two stages at this point. The first stage dealt with the contextualization of reading through prediction or the guessing of text content. The second stage was designed to vocabulary study before reading the text. After the pre-reading

activity stage, lessons were usually followed by the reading of the text and post-reading tasks.

In the first stage, Teacher B normally raised open-ended questions to the students so that they could guess/predict what the text would be about. The reading activity at this phase could be classified as active (Davies, 1995). Either by using the book or by means of discussions, the teacher used some illustrations from the book to help the students elicit the theme of the text. Strategies such as prediction and inferencing could be recognized in so far Teacher B elicited students' personal responses. Further, it could be observed that Teacher B often created opportunities for students to develop top-down skills (Smith, 1981; Carrell, 1988; Eskey & Grabe, 1988; Devine & Eskey, 1988). S/he provided the students with a topical framework for processing the text so that s/he could help them "think about relevant background information and to make predictions about the text" (Paris et al., 1991, p.611). As said in his/her own words, "*I explore the students' understanding of the world*" (my translation).

In the second stage of the pre-reading task, Teacher B usually used vocabulary exercises from the textbook to teach the students how to relate written information with visual aids. This activity could also be considered active. Exercises involving word completion and table completion were some examples of pre-reading activities worked in class. But, the most common activity was semantic mapping which gives graphic descriptions of the relations of key words and expressions in the text (Paris et al., 1991). In pairs, the students had to associate the meaning of useful words – the key words and expressions - to their respective pictures. As Teacher B said "*I*

encourage the students to guess word meaning from context and from pictures, too." (my translation). This pre-reading stage might have served to set a purpose for reading which was to help the students use the text in order to confirm or refute their initial predictions (Paris et al., 1991; Davies, 1995) about vocabulary.

During the reading itself, which was always done individually and silently by the students, two reading strategies were explored: reading for thorough comprehension and summarization. First, the students were required to read for comprehension in order to paraphrase the author's message. As Silberstein (1994) argues, this stage of reading demands that the students state the main ideas by using their own words. Second, Teacher B asked the students to relate their previous predictions to what they had found in the text in order to summarize the main points (Paris et al., 1991). It appears that this type of activity involved more scriptally implicit comprehension than textually explicit comprehension (Pearson & Johnson, 1978), due to the fact that the students had to write a short summary of the text by using their own interpretation of the content of the text.

The last step of the reading lesson, which was done in the following class, was for the students to understand specific verbal tense through reading. This class was mainly devoted to post-reading activities. The aim of the exercise was for the students to study a certain grammatical aspect, for example, Past Perfect, seen on the text already read in the previous class. Although it involved grammar, the first part of the task could be defined as active. A good example of this could be found in the activity called "reconstruct the plot development putting all actions in order" (3rd level of

high school). First, done in pairs, the students had to put the actions of the story in chronological order. The second part of the reading task could be regarded as more active as it was related to summarization. Still in pairs, the students had to give continuation to the story. This activity can be included in a task named text completion.

It is important to say at this point that Teacher B often called the students' attention to the role of grammatical elements as another tool for text comprehension. For example, as already suggested, one of the texts explored in the 1st level of high school was about "Dinosaurs". As the reading was asked to be done as homework, the students were asked to answer six questions in the text in one sentence. Before distributing the text, Teacher B explained to the students about connectives and their importance to make sentences coherent. Initially, this activity involved the reading strategy scanning because students had to locate specific information (connectives) from each paragraph based on what each question required. In order to do the activity, students were asked to look at the types of connectives used in the paragraphs so that they could state the type of information for each paragraph. This task could be regarded active since a certain aspect of grammar was not studied isolated from the context of reading. Students had to pay attention to the global coherence of the paragraphs in order to determine if some connectives were appropriate or not for responding the questions.

The critical reading stage could be noticed in the following class when students were asked to give their information about the content of text. The whole meaning of the text was constructed as Teacher B, along with his/her students, were trying to come up with one possible interpretation for the

question, for instance, "Which animals were not Dinosaurs?". In other words, as each student was giving his/her opinion about the topic, it could be seen that text meaning was constructed by the students. This type of interaction which was constantly noticed in this class often led students to be critical in their reading of the text.

It could also be observed that the post-reading activities in Teacher's B class were mostly developed to foster reflective reading. The post-reading activities were always presented in written form. The prevailing activities of the three levels of high school were table completion, text completion involving the students to finish a paragraph or a story, and writing summaries (Davies, 1995). According to Lynch (1996), post-reading activities that involve the writing skill, such as modifying texts, "requires the learners to think about the relationship between a reader's background knowledge and the information the writer needs to include in the text" (p.130). Often engaged in small groups, the students tended to continue the story by adding their personal suggestions turning the task into a fun activity when comparing their stories to one another.

Results show that passive reading tasks tend to be more common in Teacher A's classes whereas active reading tasks seem to be more frequent in Teacher B's classes. Questions that involve textually explicit comprehension, emphasis on vocabulary activities, lack of prediction, inferring and illustrations in pre-reading tasks were the pertaining characteristics encountered in Teacher A's reading lessons. Exercises that comprise both textually explicit and scriptally implicit comprehension, focus on text comprehension, practice of prediction, inferring and illustrations in pre-

reading tasks, grammar study as a mainstay for text comprehension and critical reading were frequent devices used in Teacher B's reading classes.

4.1.3) *Does instruction have a teaching or testing focus?*

Teachers' interview

Through the teachers' answers to questions six and thirteen of the questionnaire (6. What are the methodological procedures used in classroom? Describe all the steps you follow in the reading class. 13. How is the evaluation of reading comprehension done ?), the researcher could see the teachers' focus of teaching, i.e., whether instruction was teaching or testing - focused. In other words, to what extent the teachers' practices lead to test students' reading ability or to develop (the same as to teach in this context) the use of reading strategies. In order to discuss the third research question, I will refer to Garner (1992), Brumfit (1980) and Lynch's (1996) considerations.

Based on the answers about how the 20 teachers interviewed evaluate reading comprehension, results, as shown on table 11 and 12 below, indicate that more EFL teachers adopt a testing than a teaching-focused instruction.

Evaluation of Reading Comprehension	Number of teachers
Based on the written test	4
Through class observation and comprehension questions	4
Oral reading fluency	5
Based on comprehension exercises	3

They think it is hard to do	4
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Table 11– Evaluation of EFL Reading Comprehension

Focus of teaching	Number of teachers
Testing-focused	12
Teaching-focused	04
No specific focus ⁴	04

Table 12 – Focus of Teaching

Five out of the twenty teachers asserted that they evaluate students' reading comprehension in relation to their oral participation in class. As said by one of the teachers, *"if they listen to me, and repeat the text orally, it means they understood the text"* (my translation). 1 out of the 5 teachers argued that once the students' follow the teacher's command, which in turn follows the teacher's manual, the answer is considered correct. 4 out of the 20 teachers said that the evaluation is based on the written tests. These facts indicate a testing-focused instruction where the teacher is on control of the classroom, and the students are only expected to complete the tasks the teachers want them to do in a limited period of time (Brumfit, 1980; Coracini, 1995a).

The testing-focused type of instruction could also be identified by looking into the objectives of EFL reading classes. Three out of the twenty teachers said that the evaluation of reading comprehension is based upon the answers to the comprehension exercises that are related to the content of the text. They claimed that once the students identify relevant information in order to answer the comprehension exercises, which are frequently provided in textbooks, the evaluation is then accomplished. 4 teachers, however, claimed that it is hard to evaluate reading comprehension in EFL because the

⁴ The teachers whose answers were 'It's hard to do' did not specify their teaching focus.

majority of students do not know English. In this case, it could be concluded that as these teachers do not know what to do, they do not evaluate the reading skill. This fact goes against what Brumfit (1980) and Garner (1992) discuss in metacognitive research for reading instruction. They claim that the function of evaluating the comprehension of reading should not be to test the students' response through questioning. In addition, they say that before testing students, teachers should train them to use reading strategies for each reading task. Without enough training of strategy use, students might not be able to observe why a particular strategy has to be used, how and for what objectives. The simple fact of asking students to look for answers in the text, as revealed by the teachers' interviewed, are not decisive procedures to evaluate EFL reading comprehension. Training (or teaching) along with practice is what determines the efficiency of reading strategy use, thus of EFL reading comprehension.

On the other hand, the teaching-focused instruction seems to be closer to what the whole language type of instruction and the interactive model of reading suggest for the teaching of reading in English (Samuels & Kamil, 1977; Eskey & Grabe, 1988; Aebbershold & Field, 1997). The text becomes a platform for negotiation of meaning when the students are encouraged to ask each other questions, and when the teacher is a conductor of information. By getting students to generate questions in reading tasks, for example, teachers can direct students' attention to the process of understanding a FL reading (Lynch, 1996) as long as they ask questions of their interest. According to Gaskins and Gaskins (1997), students' interests are one of the driving forces used by those teachers who pursue the teaching-focused instruction. Hence,

what determines a teaching-focused instruction is the orientation that considers systematic practice and explanation about reading strategies in EFL reading classes along with the students' praxis of reading under group discussions.

Four teachers claimed that the evaluation of reading in English should be based on class observation and comprehension exercises that deal with textually implicit comprehension. It could be said that these teachers follow the teaching-focused instruction for two reasons. First, they said that they do not teach reading strategies. Second, they provide enough practice for students to become aware of the need for using skimming, reading for the gist and scanning strategies in different texts. Here are some of the teachers' answers (my translation):

"I try to foster classroom discussions in group and pair work as an attempt to make students give their opinions about what is going to be read in class"

"I work with skimming, scanning, that is, with the reading strategies in class"

By providing reading tasks which involve students in classroom discussions in groups, these teachers seem not only to be training students to bring their own knowledge to the text, but also seem to call students' attention to practice different reading strategies in order to accomplish different reading objectives (Smith, 1981; Davies, 1995). According to these 4 teachers, as long as they observe that the students are using the reading strategies effectively and actively participating in the discussion, it might mean that they are getting progress with reading comprehension. Practice is

the key word within this type of instruction. Testing the students' answers is a step ahead of the students' praxis of reading strategies (Brumfit, 1981).

Results show that oral fluency in reading, written test, and finding out whether students understood the content of the text were the basis for the 12 out of the 20 teachers who pursue the testing-focused instruction. Class observation of students' participation, practice of reading strategies and of reading were mentioned as usual procedures by 4 teachers that seem to adopt the teaching-focused instruction.

Classroom observation

Teacher A

There are four major factors that contribute to outline Teacher A's focus of instruction as being testing-focused. They are: 1) the teacher's instructional procedure, 2) the model of instruction and of reading followed by this teacher, 3) types of reading tasks applied to the text used, and 4) the kinds of questions used in the reading class.

The evaluation of EFL reading comprehension was mostly text-based in Teacher A's classes. Whenever the students' answers were wrong, the teacher usually provided the answer based on just the content of the text. The students' personal responses were not taken into consideration. Moreover, there was no involvement with the teaching of reading strategies. As it could be noticed, the students were simply asked to answer comprehension exercises after the reading of the texts. Furthermore, in all Teacher A's classes observed, the procedure was reading aloud as well as correcting

pronunciation. All the results mentioned above go against Munby's (1979), Garner's (1992) and Brumfit's (1980) beliefs who argue that the teacher's role is not to 'test' the students' type of response (through questioning, for example), but as pointed out by Munby (1992), " (...) in most comprehension lessons we should be concerned in *helping* the pupil to understand the text, *not in finding out* if he has understood or not" (p.144).

Other aspects in Teacher A's classes pointed to a testing-focused type of instruction. Teacher A tended to adopt the teacher-centered instructional procedure and this could be verified according to the model of instruction and of reading s/he pursued. The teaching was very much centered on the Direct model of instruction and on the bottom-up view of reading. Reflected by both the overuse of passive reading activities and literal questions in the class, the emphasis was on the delivery of information and on the mastery of sounding out words during reading. The learning of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar were prime objectives.

Teacher B

According to what Teacher B said in the interview plus the results from the class observation, it could be seen that s/he primed the learner-focused procedure leading to the teaching-focused type of instruction. Teacher B's main worry was to give the students systematic information about reading strategies and how to make use of them to improve their understanding about the text. This fact comes along with what Garner (1992) suggests in reading programs. Garner argues that teachers should provide constant reading

practice as well as “emphasize why a particular routine is used, how to use it, and how to know when it has to be used well” (p.250). The evaluation of EFL reading comprehension in Teacher B’s classes includes activities such as writing summaries by involving translating information from reading to writing. Very much based on the students’ participation, the writing of summaries require the students to relate their world knowledge to the text information.

Teacher B’s reading class could be defined as teaching-focused in light of the practices followed in class. Teacher B tended to provide co-operative learning through active reading tasks where the students, in small group work and/or pair work, had to solve problems while reading. Moreover, it could be noticed that Teacher B usually made students be aware of different reading strategies. Practice of reading was a very much observed feature in Teacher B’s reading lessons whatever tasks the students were involved in. As Garner (1992) claims, the teaching of strategy use promotes learning goals as the students tend to improve their abilities to read efficiently, as long as they discover by themselves the meanings that underlie the texts.

Another pertaining characteristic found in Teacher B’s class was the way in which the teacher tried to call students’ awareness about the interaction between text-derived information and background-derived meanings during instruction (Eskey & Grabe, 1988). The interplay of these two types of knowledge could be observed as part of Teacher B’s reading lessons. According to Eskey and Grabe, “an interactive model of reading assumes that skills at all levels are interactively available to process and interpret the text” (p.224). As for the Teacher B’s classroom context, it

appears that s/he motivated the students to work with lower-level and higher-level sources of information, i.e. students' background knowledge and input derived from the printed page, to better comprehend what they read. It was observed that whenever some students had doubts about the topic, the teacher often attempted to build up this source of knowledge by adding information or asking any other student in class to contribute. When the students had vocabulary problems, for instance, the teacher usually helped them to look for contextual clues or illustrations presented in the book to understand the whole meaning of the sentence or the paragraph.

Teacher B's type of position in class could be considered as another important feature that served as a reference to analyze his/her teaching-focused instruction. Since s/he could be defined as a mediator or facilitator of information, Teacher B always helped the students understand the text by considering what they can bring to the text and by giving them the necessary skills to interpret texts meaningfully (Munby, 1980; Wilson, 1983). It could be said that Teacher B's EFL reading class aims at directing the students' attention to the process of understanding a FL, that is, it is a place where the students are expected to make sense of reading, to gain familiarity with written language, to learn from text (Smith, 1981) and to negotiate text interpretation.

The teaching of vocabulary, pronunciation, oral reading⁵, the emphasis on the bottom-up model of reading, little planned instruction in terms of training reading skills and strategies are the pertaining features encountered in Teacher A's classes. Consequently, it could be concluded that s/he follows

⁵ repeating the teacher's reading aloud individually or with other colleagues.

the testing-focused instruction. However, the teaching of reading strategies, orientation toward learning, practice of reading, and co-operative learning between the teacher and students are the prevailing characteristics in Teacher B's classes. Thus, this teacher seems to pursue the teaching-focused instruction.

4.1.4) What types of questions do teachers pose and what are their importance in the reading class?

Teachers' interview

In order to discuss the fourth research question, I will refer to Pearson and Johnson (1978), Oliveira (2000), Coracini (1995) and Ciardello's (1998) findings in questioning research. It was through the answers to questions number ten and eleven of the questionnaire (10. What sort of questions are used in the reading instruction: inferential – when answers are not explicitly stated in the texts- or literal – when answers are right there in the texts? 11. What are these questions used for ?) by the 20 teachers that the researcher could analyze the types of questions teachers pose during instruction and their importance in the EFL reading class. (See Tables 13 and 14 below for results).

Types of questions	Number of teachers
Literal questions	4
Inferential questions	5
Both questions	11

Table 13 – Types of questions

Reasons to pose questions	Number of teachers
To reflect in English	4
For students to give different opinions	1
To make students talk	4
To make a bridge with students' reality	4
To raise students awareness about general comprehension	1
To check the content of the text	7
To help them understand the text	1
No reply	2

Table 14 – Purposes for raising questions

Eleven out of the twenty teachers said that they pose both textually explicit and scriptally implicit questions. However, they stated that they tend to emphasize the textually explicit questions more, particularly in comprehension exercises, which the principal objective is to check whether students understood the content of the text or not. Some of their answers are stated below (my translation):

Reasons for posing scriptally implicit questions:

I ask students to try to find the message behind the text”

There are moments that I ask students to check text information and to give their own opinions”

I use referential questions to make students talk.

Referential questions are used to raise students' awareness about the topic.

Reasons for posing textually explicit questions (my translation):

Literal questions are those about the text content”

Literal questions are used for students to complete the reading tasks”

It seems that what worries these teachers is to see whether the students get the information encountered in the text, a fact already mentioned by Coracini (1995b). As said by one of the teachers, *"I accept the answers that are right according to the text"* (my translation).

Five teachers said that they use scriptally implicit (referential) questions as they believe they are the ones that foster students to make a link between what the writer wants to convey and how they (students) can contribute in the reading. Here are some of their answers concerning the aims of posing scriptally implicit questions (my translation):

"They are used to raise students' awareness about the topic"

"I want students to give their own answers based on what they read"

"These questions are used to exploit their understanding of the world".

"I use these questions to activate students' knowledge on the topic".

"To keep conversation going in the classroom".

These five teachers said that *"inferential questions serve as warm-up questions"* (my translation). What these teachers might mean is that by raising the scriptally based questions they can help students understand that what they already know about the topic serves as their initial hypotheses about the content of the text. One of the teachers said: *"they are used for bridging text information with the students' reality"* (my translation). Another teacher said that *"by raising referential questions I try to encourage students to bring their previous knowledge to the text"* (my translation).

Two teachers, however, answered differently. They argued that they have no supporting structure to work with EFL reading in classrooms.

According to these teachers, the text they use in class serves to teach grammar and vocabulary.

Results also showed that 4 out of the 20 teachers cited textually explicit questions as the most common in their instruction. Here are some of their reasons to pose textually explicit questions (my translation):

“ I want students to check factual information ”.

“Students have to check text information”

“ I want to see if students understood the text ”

From the findings obtained, it appears that the majority of the teachers seems to be aware of teaching students how to consider both literal and implicit comprehension when reading a foreign text, although there was a considerable number of teachers who believe that the content of the text has to be more questioned in classes through literal questions.

Classroom observation

Teacher A

It could be noticed that what Teacher A does in his/her EFL reading class is not exactly what s/he said in the interview. This evidence corroborates what recent EFL and ESP classroom research say about the topic (Moraes, 1992; Amadeu-Sabino, 1994). Not only in relation to the teaching of English but also for instruction in ESP reading, Amadeu-Sabino (1994) and Moraes (1992) found that what teachers said in an interview does not confirm their pedagogical practices.

When asking Teacher A about what type of questions s/he used in his/her classes, s/he said that:

“I mix up different questions in class. I use literal questions to check text information and I use referential questions to ask students for different opinions about the text” (my translation)

From class observation, however, results showed that the use of textually explicit questions (Pearson & Johnson, 1978) are much more common than scriptally implicit questions. See results on Table 15 below along with Teacher A’s mostly used questions.

Teacher A	
Literal questions	48
Inferential questions	07

Table 15 – Types of questions used by Teacher A

Textually explicit questions

Yes/no questions:

Were the animals in the film very common?

Was the movie a love story?

Did Tony watch the film?

Wh-questions

What’s AIDS?

What causes AIDS?

Which are the symptoms of AIDS?

What’s Solidarity?

How to be solidary?

What organs can be transplanted before death?

What can you donate to a school?

What can you do to make the world more fraternal?

As could be observed in Teacher A's reading classes, textually explicit questions were more explored in written exercises. Also, these questions were usually posed by the teacher during instruction when s/he was explaining the activity. Yes/No questions and wh-questions were the most numerous types. Mostly used before the reading itself, wh-questions were sometimes used to elicit students' responses. In this case, wh-questions were scriptally implicit questions. During and after reading, yes/no questions were more used. It could be said that these questions seemed to be used to recall factual information from the text. As could be observed, the answers provided by the students, particularly for questions such as 'what's solidarity?' and 'what's AIDS?', were explicitly stated in the text (Pearson & Johnson, 1978). According to Pearson and Johnson (1978) and Ciardello (1998), scriptally implicit questions are used for helping students to activate their schemata to interpret texts meaningfully and to prepare for the reading. As could be observed in Teacher A's instructional directions, it seems that one of his/her objective was to make a bridge between the students' schemata and the content of the text they were going to read.

During reading, Teacher A tended to explore textually explicit questions mostly. Encountered both in the reading comprehension exercises and in questions formulated by the teacher, the textually explicit questions had two main objectives: check word meanings and factual information from

the text. As could be observed in Teacher A's classes, his/her emphasis seemed to be strictly related to the content of the text, as a result students' answers were usually based on the teacher's voice. Here, what s/he said in the interview seems to corroborate his/her pedagogical praxis. It could also be noticed that from this phase on the text was regarded as the principal source of information. This fact corroborates Oliveira's (2000) and Coracini's (1995b) findings. According to them, textually explicit questions focus on the teacher's point of view, they let students expose the answers but not justify them, and the students seem to answer what the teacher requires them to do by assuming a passive attitude toward the questions.

The overuse of textually explicit questions affect negatively the students' behavior toward reading comprehension (Ciardello, 1998). Most of the students seemed to depend on translation to answer both the teacher's questions and the comprehension questions. It was also observed that the students asked the teacher to translate what the activity was about and, in many cases, they depended on the teacher to complete the tasks. It could be noticed that these students often waited for the teacher's corrections to copy them in their notebooks.

Teacher B

Results showed that Teacher B used scriptally implicit and textually implicit types of question more than textually explicit ones. See table 16 below:

Teacher B	
Literal questions	34
Inferential questions	45

Table 16 – Types of questions used by Teacher B

As it was said in the interview as well as observed in his/her class, it was through the use of such questions that Teacher B attempted to motivate oral discussions among the students. Often raised by the teacher, it was noticed that the teacher's scriptally implicit questions were designed to develop general comprehension of the text. Why-questions, wh-questions were the questions that the teacher explored more often in the beginning of the reading class. Teacher B's questions are shown below (my translation):

"What's cleaning equipment?"

"Do you all have pets? What pets? How do you talk to them?"

"Have you ever had a humorous or adventurous journey?"

"Do you like to read about funny stories? Why?"

"What's the story about?"

"What does 'acro' mean?"

Scriptally implicit questions were always explored by the teacher at the beginning of the EFL reading class. Either written on the board or orally said, the scriptally implicit questions were usually used during the pre-reading activities and their aim was twofold. First, they were used for opening discussion with the whole class. Second, these questions were used to brainstorm students' opinions about the content of the text. According to Pearson and Johnson (1978), when the teacher exposes scriptally implicit questions,

[...] a reader gives an answer that had to come from prior knowledge (it is not there in the text) to a question that is at least related to the text (that is, there would be no reason to ask the question if the text were not there)(p.162).

It could be noticed that the use of scriptally implicit questions served for the students to link their content schemata about the topic of the text to what they were going to read in the text (Meurer, 1991; Carrell, 1988). Therefore, the driving-force of this type of question, as pointed by Ciardello (1998) and observed in Teacher's B class, was to make the students predict, hypothesize, infer, reconstruct, value, judge, defend and/or justify their answers. These strategies could be identified during most of the EFL reading classes as the students actively participated by defending their points of views to one another.

Textually explicit questions were often used during the reading of the text by the students and scriptally implicit questions were sometimes used as part of the post-reading activities by the teacher. When used by the students, the most common was 'What does this word mean, teacher?' to check word meaning while they were doing either their silent individual readings or summaries. Furthermore, there was not any observed moment during the post-reading activities which the students raised scriptally implicit questions. The students principal concern was about unknown vocabulary. As pointed out by Coracini (1995b), students seem to depend on the teacher to carry on any sort of activity.

The use of textually implicit questions by Teacher B had one particular reading purpose: grammar study through the text. Usually applied after the students' silent reading and as part of post-reading activities involving

vocabulary and grammar study, Teacher B seemed to develop metacognitive strategies (comprehension-monitoring) at this moment of instruction. In asking “*what does this phrasal verb here mean*”?, Teacher B wanted to check whether the students understood the words or sentence connections in order to discuss the principal idea of the text. It is obvious that the checking of word meanings in this classroom context was not apart from the text content. When Teacher B dealt with vocabulary study (such as in the teaching of phrasal verbs) s/he attempted to call the students’ attention to associate the meaning of phrasal verbs with contextual clues so that they could complete reading tasks. Furthermore, s/he always suggested to his/her students to avoid overusing dictionaries whenever they found unfamiliar words in the text. It could be observed that the use of the dictionary was made available when both illustrations and contextual clues did not help them understand a word meaning.

One interesting finding is that Teacher B did not provide opportunities for students’ questioning. In his article, Ciardello (1998) argues about the importance of teachers creating room for student questioning as one of the means to “stimulate divergent thinking and encourage independent learning” (p.212). Although Teacher B encouraged the students to search for contextual clues and illustrations in order to help them answer any question, it could be noticed that s/he did not motivate student questioning. Teacher B provided necessary corrections, made the students check their initial hypotheses through peer cooperative practice in small groups with questions usually provided by the textbook. As in his/her own words, “*I expect that the students think and understand the target language without my pressure*”.

According to Ciardello's (1998) standpoint, student questioning serves to self-check learning through summarizing and clarifying. This sort of procedure can be identified under the Request Procedure (Manzo, 1969, cited in Tomitch, 1988). Commonly used as a pre-reading activity, the Request Procedure consists of building or activating students' schemata by teacher and students taking turns at asking questions they would like to have answered in the text. As also suggested by Coracini (1995b) about FL reading classes, it is through the students' own questions rather than the teachers' that they can monitor text comprehension efficiently. As could be observed in Teacher B's classes, questions were mostly posed by the teacher himself or herself either to open the reading or after reading when students were asked to complete reading tasks. The warm-up questions were often posed by the teacher. It seems that students tended to answer rather than raise questions in classes.

It could be observed that Teacher B was aware of how to handle questions in EFL reading instruction. It seems that s/he recognized that all types of questions have to let the students think before, during and after reading. Therefore, Teacher B's job seems to be let the students find out the necessary information to comprehend the text by teaching them how to associate textual and non-textual resources of information to reach different reading goals.

It could be concluded that scriptally implicit questions before reading and the use of textually explicit questions during and after reading were the most exploited in Teacher A's classes. Because of this, it could be noticed that students were more accustomed to answer factual text information rather

than looking for textually implicit answers in which their prior knowledge was required. The use of both textually explicit and scriptally implicit questions before, during and after reading could be verified in Teacher B's classes. As could be observed, students were more acquainted with dealing with questions that required them to add their world knowledge. Training students to generate their own questions, however, seems to be avoided by both teachers' practices.

Students' Questionnaire

4.1.5 What type of response do students give to the teachers' instruction?

First of all, it is important to remember that questionnaires were distributed to 120 Florianópolis public school students from "Colégio Estadual Getúlio Vargas" – 68 students - (CE from this time on) and "Colégio Aplicação –UFSC" – 52 students - (CA from this time on) where the EFL reading observations took place. The main thrust of the above question was to investigate the students' response in relation to their teachers' instruction.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 2) probed (1) if students enjoyed the EFL reading classes; (2) the types of reading activities they liked most; (3) how they participated; (4) what students regarded as important in the reading class; (5) how they preferred to read; (6) whether they liked the way in which the reading instruction was taught; (7) whether students liked the subjects read in class; (8) if they used what they learned in class outside the classroom, and (9) if they had been given opportunity to choose more than one FL to study.

The first question of the students' questionnaire consisted of identifying if the students liked their reading class in general. According to Table 17 (see below), the majority of students from both schools enjoy their reading class, although there were 19 students from CE that had a different opinion. In both groups, their reasons seems to be linked to the teaching that primes pronunciation, as sustained by the explicit model of instruction (Stahl, 1997) and the bottom-up view of reading (Samuels and Kamil, 1978; Carrel, 1988; Aebershold & Field, 1997;). Here are some of the students' answers (my translation):

Students from CE: *"Yes, because I can practice pronunciation"*

Yes, because reading enriches vocabulary and helps in conversation"

Students from CA: *" Yes, because it helps in word pronunciation"*

" Yes, because I can learn how to pronounce word"

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	percentage
Yes	71.1%	54.4%
No	11.5%	28%
More or less	17.4%	17.6%

Table 17 –(question 1) – *Do you like your EFL reading class?*

The second question referred to the types of reading tasks the students enjoy most. The answers varied from school to school (see Table 18 below for the results).

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Types of reading activities	percentage	percentage
Translation	7.6%	25.75%
Question/answers	10.7%	16.95%
Music	7.6%	3%

Dialogs	13.4%	00
Read the texts in group	51.1%	4.4%
Matching exercise	00	4.4%
Read and interpret	00	20.5%
No reply	9.6%	25%

Table 18 -(question 2) – What type of reading task do you enjoy most?

Some of the students' answers are presented below (my translation):

Student from CE: *"I like to translate because I think the texts are cool"*

" I like the exercises that have questions because they're interesting"

"I like to answer the questions because I know what I learnt"

"I like to translate because I can learn more vocabulary"

"I like to read and translate"

Student from CA: *" I like the activities that involve contemporary topics because they are more attractive"*

"I like to read dialogues because there is more interaction with the whole class"

"I like to translate because I can learn more words"

"I like to interpret the text and do a funny activity based on the interpretation"

"I like to answer comprehension questions because I can see if I understood the text"

"I like to interpret the text because it calls our attention to the details"

"I like group work because we can learn more with other opinions"

"I like all types of activities"

According to the findings, it seems that CA students' response reflect the type of instruction they receive. Most of the students from CA, where active reading tasks were mostly used in class, prefer to read in group work where text meaning is negotiated (Davies, 1995). As one of the students said *"I like to read dialogues because there is more interaction with the whole class"* and *"I like group work because we can learn more with other opinions"* (my translation). However, 4 students seem to prefer to translate into Portuguese in order to understand and to do the reading activities. As said by one of them, *"I like to translate because I can learn more words"*. According to these students, it seems that without the understanding of all the words in the text, they cannot read, and neither do the reading activities.

CE students' responses seem to reflect the type of instruction they are used to. Fifteen out of the sixty eight students believe that without translation they can not understand EFL texts and that it is through translating into Portuguese that they can learn more vocabulary. As one of them said *"I like to translate because I can learn more vocabulary"*. Based on this type of answer, it seems that reading activities are very much related to the teaching and learning of vocabulary. This fact corroborates Grigolletto's (1995) findings. She found out that there is a tendency for EFL teachers to believe that reading can be only accomplished if readers understand words first.

Fourteen out of the sixty eight students, however, seem to prefer activities that involve "read and interpret texts". As one of them said *"I like*

to interpret the text because I understand the text better” (my translation).

According to the literature in reading comprehension, any type of EFL reading task deals with text interpretation, be it literal or inferential. In the case of the present study, only the matter of affective response was taken into consideration to analyze students’ feedback in relation to the teaching of reading. Some of the answers are shown below (my translation):

“I prefer to read and interpret because I like to read”

“ I like to read and interpret because it is interesting”

“I like to read and interpret because it’s cool”

The third question was to find out whether the students participated or not in the EFL reading class, and if so how they participated. The answers are shown below on Tables 19, 20 and 21 respectively:

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	Percentage
Yes	96%	76%
No	4%	24%

Table 19- (question 3) –Students’ participation in general

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	Percentage
Actively	21.4%	37.5%
More or less	57.2%	25%
Very little	21.4%	37.5%

Table 20-(question 3) – Students’ participation in terms of frequency

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	percentage
Silent Reading	40%	42%
Helping the teacher to translate texts	3%	16.1%
Answering the teacher’s questions	00%	16.1%
Paying attention to the teacher	17%	13%
Reading when	17%	6.4%

the teacher asks		
Listening and reading	11.8%	6.4%
No reply	11.4%	00%

Table 21-(question 3) – Students' participation in terms of actions

From the results obtained, the majority of students from both schools prefer reading silently and individually. Few students seem to enjoy helping the teacher translate texts and responding the teacher's questions (particularly those from CE). This last procedure was not found with students from CA. Concerning frequency, three out of the sixty eight students who cited 'actively' probably mean that they follow the teacher's instruction. As said by most of them *"I do what the teacher asks me to do"*(my translation). However, five students whose answers were both 'more or less' (3 students) and 'very little'(2 students) did not expose their reasons.

These results partially reflect the type of instruction the students receive. There are a few students, in both schools, who prefer to pay attention to the teacher and just read when the teacher asks. In both cases, this sort of behavior was more noticed in students from CA than from CE. Either receiving passive or active instruction, these few students seem to adopt a passive role in class. Considering that CE students are normally given traditional reading instruction, their responses seem to mirror this type of teaching. This might occur due to the constant instruction on translation on texts, reading aloud (when the teacher asks them to repeat orally his/her reading) and answering teacher's questions. In saying that they prefer to read aloud when the teacher asks and to pay attention to the teacher, a few students from CA seem to assume a passive role in class. It could be said that

their responses do not corroborate their sort of instruction, which seems to be organized in the light of active tasks.

The fourth question was used to verify what the students considered as important in the EFL reading classes. The two most common learning objectives cited by the students from both schools were pronunciation and vocabulary study. But very few cited being interested in studying grammar through the readings (Coracini, 1995 a, 1995b). See results on Table 22 below:

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Reading purposes	Percentage	Percentage
Vocabulary and Pronunciation	41%	30%
Grammar study	0.0%	3%
Text comprehension	21%	9%
Reading aloud	6%	6%
Discussions	6%	0.0%
Learning	4%	9%
The written tests	4%	0.0%
Texts chosen by the teacher	6%	2%
Dialogues	4%	3%
Everything the teacher presents	8%	17%
Teacher's help	0.0%	7%
Anything	0.0%	7%
No reply	0.0%	7%

Table 22-(question 4) – What do you consider important in your reading classes?

Results indicate that the majority of students, from both schools, believe that the learning objective in EFL reading is to study the vocabulary and pronounce words correctly to understand what they read. This reading

purpose might mirror CE students' answers as they are used to receiving instruction under the perspective of vocabulary study and pronunciation. Reading for them consists of sounding out words from print, an objective very much related to what the direct model argues (Stahl, 1997). However, CA students' responses do not reflect the teaching they receive because their teacher seems to give more priority on text comprehension and discussions in their reading classes, some of the purposes that the whole language approach to reading sustains. According to this type of approach, text comprehension is socially constructed and high level thinking operations, such as prediction and anticipation, are the initial stages for reading (Carrell, 1988; Stahl, 1997; Aebbershold & Field, 1997; Meurer, 1991). For CA's students, reading serves to learn more words and their meanings so that they can read correctly.

The fifth question aimed at identifying how students preferred to read in class. Findings are shown on Table 23 below:

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	Percentage
Individually	32%	28%
With colleagues	61%	60.2%
Both	7%	7.3%
No reply	00%	4.5%

Table 23-(question 5) – Which do you prefer in the reading class, to read individually or with your colleagues?

In both schools, the majority of students preferred to read with their colleagues instead of individually. But it was noticed during my observations that there were many students that did not read in groups. In CA, for example, the students usually enjoyed working together, they did the activity required by the teacher and the topic was of their interest. However, this was not noticed in CE. While some students listened to the oral reading of others,

some of them underlined unfamiliar words, others just copied from their colleagues and others did not read at all. One particular student expressed him/herself about the class by saying to another colleague “*I don’t know how to read nor to speak in English, how can I understand this?*” (my translation).

The sixth question probed the students’ responses toward the EFL reading instruction they received. From both schools, a great number of students said that they were satisfied with the type of instruction they received (see results on Table 24 below). They argued that the instruction was “*important*” and “*cool*” (my translation), that the teacher explained well and s/he was funny sometimes, and that the EFL reading classes were usually “*interesting and dynamic*” (my translation). However, many students from CE stated a negative response. They claimed that the teacher did not teach, that the topics were “*boring*” and “*childish*” (my translation) and that the teacher did not explore reading. They claimed that the teacher often concentrated on grammar study and vocabulary work. One particular student said that it would be better if the teacher avoided asking them to translate into Portuguese all the time. According to him/her, this type of procedure made the students not think in the language.

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	percentage
Yes	60%	51.4%
No	10%	36.7%
More or less	12%	8.9%
No reply	10%	3%

Table 24 (question 6) – Do you like the way in which the reading class is taught?

The seventh question dealt with the topics read in class and investigated whether students liked them or not. Results showed that a great

number of students from both schools seemed satisfied with what they read in class. Only at CE, however, a reasonable number of students showed dissatisfaction with the topics read (see results on Table 25 below).

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	percentage
Yes	63%	50%
No	21%	30%
More or less	16%	16%
No reply	00%	4%

Table 25-(question 7) – Do you like the topics read in your reading class? Why?

Here are some of the students' responses (my translation):

"Because the texts are not difficult"- from CE

"Because they are very interesting" – from CE and CA

"Because they are topics that we discuss outside classroom"- from CA

"Because they are cool to read"- from CE and CA

"Because they are funny"- from CA

"Because I can practice the pronunciation"- from CE

"Because I can use in the Internet at home"- from CE

According to what the majority answered, it seems that the topics are related to their interests and needs. For these students, reading in English at school fulfil their needs since they can use in their lives, as said by two of them *"I like the topics because I use in the internet at home"* and *" Because they are topics that we discuss outside classroom"* (my translation). These responses suggest that the teacher tend to use materials which are closer to the students' reality and, therefore, s/he appears to motivate the students with reading maybe due to the fact they consider the topics *"interesting"* and *"cool"* (my translation).

Concerning the 'no' answers, their reasons appear to suggest that the teacher did not use authentic or challenging texts in the reading class (Davies, 1995). They also claimed that most of the topics dealt with in class were not related to their needs and interests. Against this view, Gaskins and Gaskins (1997) claim that all teacher's steps involved in EFL reading classes should bear in mind the students' needs and interests, by also including the issue of relevance of material.

Here are some of the students' answers (my translation):

"The topics are boring" - from CA and CE.

"The topics are not interesting" - from CA and CE.

"The topics are foolish" - from CE.

"The topics are not so well explained" - from CE.

"They are not of my interest" - from CA and CE.

"The topics are about unreal things" - from CA.

According to the students' answers above, it seems that the teacher does not consider what the students like or not to read. This reality corroborates Grigoletto (1995) and Coracini's (1995b) findings in EFL reading lessons. According to their results, issues such as culture, values, ideology and students' personal information are not taken into account in most EFL reading classes. The text is simply managed to teach grammar and vocabulary, regardless of its topic. If one of the problems found in most EFL reading classes, as said by the teachers' interviewed and by the students, is the lack of motivation in relation to EFL reading, one of the solutions might be in the right choice of texts according to the level of students. The texts should be realistic so that the students fulfill their reading needs and should

be challenging in a way that the students can do something useful with the text (Davies, 1995; Silberstein, 1994).

The eighth question probed whether the students think that what they read in EFL classes can be used outside the classroom context, and where and in which ways. From both schools, the students appear to be conscious of the EFL reading utility outside classroom. Their answers seem to be based on their interests be it involving leisure or professional matters. Results are shown on Table 26 below:

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	percentage
Yes	92%	77%
No	3.8%	9.9%
More or less	4.2%	5.8%
No reply	00%	7.3%

Table 26-(question 8) – Do you think that what you learn in the classroom can be useful outside the classroom?

As far as leisure is concerned, most of the students state that English is in every single situation they are in, for example, when they listen to music, watch movies at the cinemas, and read foreign magazines. As for reasons involving further studies, their main worry is the *Vestibular* (*University Entrance Examination*) demands and consequently, their future jobs. They argue that, without English, they could either fail in the *Vestibular* or in the search for their future jobs. Two out of the six students from CE that said ‘no’ and ‘more or less’ to question 8, justified their answers saying that they might need to read or to speak in English whenever they would look for a job or when any tourist comes to them to ask for information. In fact, the students present several reasons to read in English. Thus, it is the teacher’s

role to find out more and more about their students' reading needs and try to deal with EFL reading in a more practical and enjoyable way.

As for the ninth question, the students were asked if their schools offered more than one foreign language in the curricula, and if so, why they have chosen to study the English language. Results showed (see below) that both schools offered more than one foreign language, although the students did not explicit the foreign languages in their answers.

Results are shown on Table 27 below:

<i>Colégio Aplicação</i>		<i>Colégio Estadual</i>
Answers	percentage	percentage
Yes	84%	61.7%
No	12.8 %	32.2%
No reply	3.2%	6.1%

Table 27- (question 9) – Did you have any choice of studying different foreign languages at school? (Why did you chose English?)

What they said in their answers, in fact represents the English language demands of our 'globalized world' (Pinto & Matos, 2000). Not only English is seen by the students as a "Universal Language" (my translation), but also the most required language for the *Vestibular* and for the market labor in Brazil. The choice of English as part of the curriculum has educational, political and cultural reasons as pointed by the Brazilian Ministry of Education in the 'National Curricula Parameters' (PCN, 1998). According to the PCN, the teaching/learning of EFL at schools has to be considered and exercised as a valuable instrument for the students' future works. And, as shown by the results obtained, this is the high school students' main concern in EFL reading classes.

From the findings obtained, it could be concluded that the majority of students, from both schools, 1) enjoys the reading classes in English; 2) likes to participate in the classes reading silently but enjoys reading with colleagues more; 3) likes the way the EFL reading class is taught; 5) seems to be satisfied with the topics read in class; 6) considers the utility of what they learn in the classroom in their lives mainly because of the Vestibular requirements, their future plans and the demands of the Brazilian market labor; and 7) states that they had a choice of studying a foreign language at school. However, it seems that CE students' answers seem to reflect more their type of teaching than CA students' responses. What CE students mention as learning objectives (pronunciation, reading aloud, helping the teacher to translate texts and answering the teacher's questions) is also the emphasis of their teacher's reading lessons. Although a considerable amount of CA students state the same reasons, such learning objectives do not reflect the instruction in EFL reading they usually receive, a type of teaching centered on strategies use to achieve text comprehension.

CHAPTER V

Final remarks, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research, and some pedagogical implications are described in this final chapter.

5.1 FINAL REMARKS

The present study had as its main objectives to analyze teachers' instructional procedures in the teaching of reading in EFL in Florianópolis public schools and to investigate what type of response they incite in their students.

Regarding the results obtained from the interview with 20 teachers, findings showed that most of them seem to pursue the traditional pedagogy concerning the teaching of reading in English. In other words, most of them 1) seem to adopt a teacher-centered procedure in which the text itself tends to be seen as the major source of knowledge; 2) tend to apply more passive reading tasks; 3) evaluate the comprehension of reading in English mostly in written tests and what usually matters is whether students' answers are text-based; and 4) appear to be conscious of displaying both literal and referential questions during their reading lessons. Through the interview, it was noticed that many teachers were not aware of the importance given in relation to the practice of reading strategies. Results indicate that 12 out of the 20 teachers seem to adopt a teacher-centered procedure initially because of the lack of students' interest about reading, the large number of groups to teach and the

different levels of proficiency encountered in the same classroom. For these 12 teachers the teaching emphasis was on reading aloud, pronunciation correction, vocabulary study and exercises that gave priority to textually explicit comprehension. However, 8 out of the 20 teachers interviewed seem to be more aware of the teaching of reading strategies, the development of students' top-down skills and the instruction in relation to text comprehension, aspects that are more related to the learner-focused procedure. As for reading tasks, findings show that most of the teachers tend to focus on passive reading tasks. This finding might be due to the teachers' beliefs that 1) vocabulary knowledge precedes reading comprehension, 2) students' answers to comprehension exercises should be text-based, and 3) grammar study, fluency of oral reading and translation activities are prime objectives in their reading classes, aspects of teaching that reflect the bottom-up model of reading. In relation to testing versus teaching-focused methodology, results indicate that 12 out of the 20 teachers interviewed tend to give emphasis on oral reading, written tests, and exercises that are mostly text-based, features that outline the testing-focused methodology. Finally, regarding types of questions and their objectives in reading classes, results show that the majority of teachers seem to be aware of teaching students how to consider both literal and implicit comprehension in EFL texts probably because they want students to distinguish questions that require text information only and those that demand students' world knowledge.

With regard to class observation, the aim was to analyze 2 EFL teachers' methodological practices and the objectives of reading classes outlined by each of them. Findings showed that the two teachers observed

pursued different objectives in their reading classes, therefore each of them presented different instructional directions. Teacher A's classes, from CE, could be defined most of the time as following the traditional pedagogy to the teaching of reading. Although there were some instances in which s/he considered students' prior knowledge during instruction, vocabulary study, comprehension at the literal level and pronunciation were the main goals in his/her classes, a fact that supports previous studies (Coracini, 1995; Grigoletto, 1995; Manara, 1999). Teacher A's classes seem to be more in line with the Direct approach to reading, the bottom-up model of reading and the testing-focused type of instruction. However, Teacher B's instructional procedures, from CA, seems to follow what the interactive model of reading, the whole language approach to reading and the teaching-focused instruction suggest for a better teaching. According to the results, Teacher B tends to explore illustrations, the title, students' world knowledge and prediction in pre-reading activities, and s/he seems to be alert to the teaching of key words in contextualized reading tasks and to the instruction toward critical reading particularly in post-reading activities.

Results of students' questionnaires indicated that most of the students from both schools where class observation took place seem to have the same opinion about the learning objectives in EFL reading. According to them, it is through translation that they can understand what they read and that the main purpose in reading in English is to gain vocabulary knowledge and learn how to pronounce words correctly. In terms of the question 'what type of response do students give to their instruction?', the conclusion arrived is that most of the CE students' answers seem to mirror the type of instruction they receive.

This may be due to the fact that they were more familiar with the teaching that emphasizes vocabulary work and pronunciation correction. But the same assumption can not be transferred to the CA students' reports. As could be observed, the instruction they received tends to be devoted to the praxis of reading strategies and emphasized more the comprehension of general idea of the English texts. According to students that were oriented under this learning objective, vocabulary study and pronouncing words are what they consider important in the teaching of EFL reading

5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Some limitations need to be taken into account when interpreting the results :

1. The teacher from Colégio Aplicação only offered the researcher the opportunity to observe levels 1, 2 and 3 of high school. According to him/her, it was with those levels that s/he was working with reading more often.

2. The teacher from 'Colégio Estadual Getúlio Vargas' allowed me to observe the levels of junior high school and one level of high school since they were the ones s/he was teaching at the moment the research was carried out.

3. Since this study investigated EFL reading lessons in the junior high school level with only one teacher and the high school level with just another teacher, future studies need to be developed with teachers in the same levels of schooling.

4. Class observation was carried out in a limited period of 12 hours/class. Therefore, it should be devoted more time to observe the teaching of reading in English in future works.

5. The number of EFL teachers involved in the research came just from a few public schools of the state of Santa Catarina, in Brazil. Extensive research in other educational institutions, from other Brazilian states, and with other EFL teachers need to be further developed.

6. The students that took part of the research may not represent all students in *Rede Estadual de Ensino de Florianópolis* since they were from two public educational institutions.

These limitations of study may serve as suggestions and stimuli for future research in the area of teaching reading in EFL.

5.3 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Research in reading in the first language has observed that there is a tendency for beginners to rely on the bottom-up processing mode (Smith, 1981). The same view can be seen according to research in reading in English as a Foreign Language (Coracini, 1995; Grigoletto, 1995; Manara, 1999; Tomitch, 2000). With respect to instruction, theorists have argued that teachers should direct students to read actively. That is, teachers should show students that reading 1) is devoted to the search for acquiring more information by means of practice; 2) directs the development of global meaning; 3) is related to discussion and that the text serves as a trigger of new ideas; 4) refers to the learning of vocabulary and grammar, and that they function as linguistic devices to help us understand the text; 5) has to do with

the interplay between old knowledge and the new information encountered in the text, and 6) has to make sense above all (Carrell, 1984; Aebbershold & Field, 1997; Gaskins & Gaskins, 1997). Therefore, the teaching of reading in English should be devoted to 1. study vocabulary and grammar in contextualised tasks, 2. develop the basis for learning about and reflecting on a new foreign language, and 3. develop interest in students to become strategic and critical readers.

The present study has confirmed the researcher's expectations about the teaching of reading in EFL in public schools. The instruction in reading in English, according to most of the teachers interviewed and Teacher A in classes observations, tend to emphasize vocabulary study, pronunciation through reading aloud, more passive reading activities and exercises that deal with comprehension at the literal level. Very few teachers, however, seem to be conscious of training students to practice reading strategies by applying reading tasks that promote cooperative learning. It could be observed that many of the teachers seem to be de-motivated to manage the teaching of reading in English as interactive as possible due to, for instance, unfavorable teaching conditions (such as lack of material and many classes to teach). In fact, it is not easy to point out miracle solutions to resolve any type of problem in the reading pedagogy. Recent research has shown that there are some alternatives that can improve the teaching of reading in English (Ciardello, 1998; Tomitch, 2000) therefore, teacher training programs should be organized in light of what current research in the teaching of EFL reading suggests as better practices. As a result, it can be said that the pedagogical

practices involved in the teaching of reading in English have to be renewed constantly at Secondary Education in Brazilian educational institutions.

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APPENDIX 1 – TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA
CENTRO DE COMUNICAÇÃO E EXPRESSÃO
DEPARTAMENTO DE LÍNGUA E LITERATURA ESTRANGEIRAS
CURSO DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM INGLÊS
ORIENTADORA: PROF. DRA. LÊDA MARIA BRAGA TOMITCH
MESTRANDA: DANIELA GOMES DE ARAÚJO NÓBREGA

O presente questionário é parte integrante do projeto de Mestrado com a finalidade de investigar os procedimentos dos professores de língua Inglesa nas aulas de leitura do ensino médio das escolas públicas de Florianópolis.

Questionário dirigido aos professores de Inglês da rede pública de ensino de Florianópolis.

1. Which grade do you teach for?
2. How many hours of a week do you have with each group?
3. How many hours of a week do you teach reading in English?
4. Do you adopt any specific material? If so, what do you use? If not, where do you base your classes?
5. If you adopt a specific textbook, how much do you deviate from it? Do you include any extra material? If so, what exactly does this material include? What is the source of this material?
6. What are the methodological procedures used in the classroom? Describe all the steps you follow in the reading class?
7. What types of reading tasks do you apply to the texts used?
8. How are these activities organised?
9. What is emphasised in the reading tasks?

10. What sort of questions are used in the reading instruction: inferential (when answers are not explicitly stated in the texts) or literal (when answers are right there in the texts)?
11. What are these questions used for?
12. Is there any opportunity for participation and autonomy given to students during the classes? How is this actually accomplished in the classroom?
13. How is the evaluation of reading comprehension done?

APPENDIX 2 – STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA
CENTRO DE COMUNICAÇÃO E EXPRESSÃO
DEPARTAMENTO DE LÍNGUA E LITERATURA ESTRANGEIRAS
CURSO DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM INGLÊS
ORIENTADORA: PROF. DRA. LÊDA MARIA BRAGA TOMITCH
MESTRANDA: DANIELA GOMES DE ARAÚJO NÓBREGA

O presente questionário é parte integrante do projeto de Mestrado com a finalidade de identificar os tipos de respostas providos dos alunos referente as aulas de leitura de Inglês do ensino médio nas escolas públicas de Florianópolis.

1. Você gosta das aulas de leitura em Inglês? Por quê?
2. Quais são as atividades de leitura que você mais gosta? Por quê?
3. Como você participa da aula de leitura em Inglês?
4. O que é que você considera importante nas aulas de leitura em Inglês?
5. O que você prefere na aula de leitura em Inglês: ler individualmente ou com seus colegas?
6. Você gosta da maneira como a aula de leitura é ensinada? Por quê?
7. Você gosta dos assuntos lidos na aula de leitura em Inglês? Por quê?
8. Você acha que o conhecimento adquirido na sala de aula de leitura em Inglês pode ser útil fora da escola? Onde e como?
9. Você teve opção de escolha em língua estrangeira na escola? Caso positivo, por que escolheu o Inglês?

APPENDIX 3 – A SAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPTION OF TWO TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS

ANSWERS

INTERVIEW WITH TEACHER 1

R: Para que série você ensina?

T 1: Eu leciono para a 5^a, 6^a e segundo grau.

R: Quantas horas por semana você ensina para cada grupo?

T 1: Tenho 3 aulas por semana/ 3 aulas da... 1 hora e meia...2 horas e meia por semana.

R: Quantas horas por semana você ensina leitura em Inglês?

T 1: Ah, eu não tenho um programa de aula leitura hora, entendeu? Mas num todo, uns vinte minutos por semana, quintas e sextas.

R: Você adota algum material específico?

T 1: Impact.

R: Você inclui algum material extra? E o que este material inclui? E o qual é a fonte deste material?

T 2: Além do Impact, que é o livro didático deles, eu tiro também a parte textual do Password, às vezes sim...às vezes sim, mas não é certo não, começamos com o Impact agora, então, até então, cada aula era um tipo de texto diferente, ilustrando a ..., cada foco de matéria tinha uma ilustração com livros diferentes, agora não, agora eu estou seguindo o Impact para dar sequência ao livro e forçar também os alunos a adquirirem o livro e vê o que o livro oferece, né?// ele inclui fita cassetes, fita de vídeo, cartazes e xerox. Eu tenho algumas fitas do 'Hello' e do 'Step', então, eu ilustro isso, isso aí é

o tipo de ilustração, já trabalhei com filmes pra ver se eles fazem adaptação da linguagem falada com a linguagem escrita, entendeu? Mas o filme não funcionou, então...

R: E quais são os seus procedimentos metodológicos na sala de aula? Você pode descrever os passos que você segue na aula de leitura?

T 1: Primeiro, geralmente, eu leio o texto 2 a 3 vezes e os alunos ficam ouvindo. Depois, eu leio frase a frase pausadamente e os alunos repetem. Como é aula de leitura, faço alguns passos, primeiro leio o texto todo e depois leio o texto para os alunos repetirem, às vezes até palavra por palavra, às vezes frase por frase, quando é palavra por palavra, depois eu vou juntando 2 ou 3 palavras e aí eu junto as frases. Depois deste processo, eu tomo a leitura com todos eles e depois cada um separadamente, então primeiro faço a leitura em grupo e depois a leitura individual.

R: Que tipo de atividades de leitura você aplica aos textos usados?

T1: Eu trabalho a leitura mais para eles pegarem a pronúncia, pegarem a desenvoltura da leitura porque logo depois disso aí, principalmente com o Password, ele vem com a interpretação. Então, eles têm que interpretar...eu faço isso aí para que eles possam, aliás, antes eu dou o histórico do contexto antes deles pegarem a tradução, eu conto a história do contexto, então eles vão lendo, e sabendo mais ou menos do que se trata, depois eles vão fazer o trabalho da interpretação. Então, para fazer esta atividade de leitura, automaticamente estão fazendo o trabalho de dedução e interpretação. Dificilmente eu trabalho a tradução. Eu prefiro trabalhar a dedução. Por exemplo, cognatos eles pegam rápido. Os que não são cognatos, eu geralmente chamo a atenção de alguma coisa para ser interpretada a realidade do texto.

R: E como estas atividades são organizadas?

T 1: Elas não são organizadas (risos) porque eu não faço um trabalho diferente do cotidiano da aula, tá? Eu dou a sequência normal, a leitura não tem uma aula a parte. Ela faz parte de um todo. Então, quer dizer, é leitura, e depois um debate oral a respeito do texto, e temos a interpretação, entendeu? Não é passo a passo. Passo a passo se dá numa mesma aula em que eu faço a leitura, interpretação, passo exercícios para eles e às vezes introduzo a parte gramatical.

R: O que é , então, enfatizado nas aulas de leitura?

T 1: Com as 5^a e 6^a, eu enfatizo muito cognato para dali eles poderem pegar a interpretação. A base do meu ensino, agora estou estranhando o Impact porque ele não trabalha muito a interpretação, é a interpretação do texto.

R: Que tipo de perguntas são usadas na instrução de leitura? Inferencial (aquelas em que as respostas não estão explícitas no texto) ou literal (quando as respostas estão logo ali no texto)?

T 1: Mais de caráter referencial porque eu acho que este tipo de pergunta leva o aluno a raciocinar, criar conceitos, abstrair o que está no texto e ao mesmo tempo interferir no texto prá dar respostas.

R: E pra que estas perguntas são utilizadas?

T 1: Não tem uma mais utilizada... de acordo com o procedimento, de acordo com o material que eu tenho em mãos, entendeu? Não sigo uma linha, entendeu?

R: Existe alguma oportunidade de participação e autonomia dados aos alunos durante as aulas? Como isto é , de fato, realizado?

T 1: Eu trabalho com turmas de 25 alunos, 30 alunos, então quer dizer, se eu for pensar na minha didática de sala de aula eu dou, dentro da minha visão de possibilidade, para o contexto. Agora, se fala assim, especifica isto aí? Não tem jeito de especificar porque cada aula é um contexto. Um dia a gente prepara uma aula e a turma toda está virada, bagunçada....às vezes o aluno....éé até no debate eles conversam, principalmente entre eles, há muita conversa entre eles. Mas no todo, não tem jeito pra dar atividades específicas, de fato, não tem sentido pra dar porque na prática de sala de aula é muito subjetivo. Nas 5^a e 6^a, os alunos se interessam muito pela língua Inglesa e eles têm uma boa participação. A participação é feita mais no nível de perguntas como 'como fala isso aqui?', 'o que significa isto aqui?' 'como pronuncia isso aqui?'. Daí, eles falam a palavra em Inglês, eles pedem que eu repita com eles...esse tipo de participação, sim...eles até pedem pela parte visual das gravuras, então eles deduzem muitas coisas pela gravura e eles comentam muito, apesar que minha aulas são bem autoritárias e eu sou bem ditador. Disciplina é uma coisa que eu não peço, eu exijo.

R: A última pergunta. Como é feita a avaliação de compreensão de leitura?

T 1: O meu sistema de avaliação, no todo, seja em qualquer tipo de aula, seja parte gramatical, leitura ou interpretação, eu avalio o aluno do dia a dia, na execução dos exercícios, no interesse, no aprendizado, nas dificuldades, é no dia a dia. Especificamente, eu não aplico prova. Eu avalio o aluno na disponibilidade e na abertura para o aprendizado. Esse é o primeiro ponto que eu avalio. Eu posso pedir ao aluno prá repetir e ele pode dizer 'não, não vou repetir porque não quero falar isso aí'. E eu não falo. Agora, tem aluno que vem e diz que essa palavra não lhe interessa, e eu não vou repetir porque

se eu quiser, eu tiro da cabeça. Tem esse tipo de aluno. Há um trabalho feito prá esse tipo de aluno também. Mas no meu sistema de avaliação, eu avalio global e considero o dia a dia do aluno e a disposição do aluno para aprender, referente a cada aula.

INTERVIEW WITH TEACHER 2

R: Which grade do you teach for?

T 2: from 5th to 6th grades

R: How many hours a week do you have with each group?

T 2: 2 hours and a half

R: How many hours a week do you teach reading in English?

T 2: almost 1 hour

R: Do you adopt any specific material?

T 2: Impact, Impact book

R: Do you include any extra material? And what does this material include?

T 2: No, we make extra material. Mainly exercises and texts, texts comprehension exercises. Our book hasn't many texts. So we get texts from other books, for example, 'Get to the Point', 'Discovery', and 'Password'.

R: What are the methodological procedures used in the classroom? Describe all steps you follow in the reading class?

T 2: First, we discuss about what we're going to read: the subject. After, I show... I give them the material. After that, they do a first reading and... and they try to discover the main subject of the text. Third, we make a list of cognate words, words that they know and after that, I give...I give them

questions in Portuguese to...to answer in Portuguese. After that, we discuss the text and I give them questions in English.

R: What types of reading tasks do you apply to the texts used?

T 2: Mainly text comprehension exercises.

R: How are these activities organised?

T 2: Individual, sometimes in pairs, but mainly individual.

R: What sort of questions are used in the reading instruction: inferential (when answers are not explicitly stated in the texts) or literal (when answers are right there in the texts)?

T 2: referential

R: What are these questions used for?

T 2: Umm...agora eu vou responder em Português. Na nossa escola, a gente trabalha com sócio interacionismo. Então, a gente procura levar textos pro aluno que trabalhe, com os temas transversais. Então, a gente prefere questões que levem outro tipo de discussão e não só a resposta literal. Na verdade, a gente trabalha com a intertransversalidade: uma transversalidade interagindo com outras disciplinas.

R: Is there any opportunity for participation and autonomy given to students during the classes? How is this actually accomplished in the classroom?

T 2: Sim, os alunos participam nas minhas aulas ativamente. Quanto a questão da autonomia, acho que os alunos, quando estão fazendo os exercícios, têm uma certa autonomia para responder as perguntas.

R: And how is the evaluation of reading comprehension done?

T 2: ai....pra ver se o aluno consegue compreender as ordens que eu tô passando, o que está sendo pedido prá eles retirarem do texto. E como a gente

trabalha basicamente com a compreensão de textos, se ele fizer o que for proposto e achar o que proposto, você supõe que ele está conseguindo fazer.