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**EXTENSIVE READING AS A BREAKTHROUGH IN A
TRADITIONAL EFL CURRICULUM: EXPERIMENTAL
RESEARCH IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN TAIWAN**

by

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Language Teaching**

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To Amanda, my beloved;

Dorea, Andrew & Matthew, heritages of the Lord.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance Procedure

BNESC: Books for Native English Speaking Children

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ER: Extensive Reading

ESL: English as a Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

GR: Graded Readers

IR: Intensive Reading

KET: Cambridge Key English Test

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

MNS: Materials for Native Speakers

SB: Skills-Based Method

SPSS: Statistic Package for Social Study

TB: Text-Based Method

T-test: Two-Tailed Test

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*- Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it:
Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.-
Psalms 127: 1*

First and foremost, I, as a Christian, commit this thesis to praise the LORD who sovereignly has led me and my family in the journey to this completion. May He only be glorified. Looking back at the past few years as a research student, there are many people who have contributed directly or indirectly to I whom owe thanks, and to the following in particular.

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ABSTRACT

The main focus of this research was to examine the effects of extensive reading on junior high school students' language proficiency and learning attitude development, compared with those who received the current reading IR (grammar/translation-based) instruction. The potential of graded readers and books for native English speaking children in English learning was also investigated. The research aimed at finding evidence to support the adoption of extensive reading in the school syllabus in Taiwan, and to raise the awareness of educational authorities about the desirability of adopting ER in the school curriculum.

The study was carried out using a three-phase procedure: the baseline study, study one and study two. The main purpose of the baseline study was to ensure that the selected books met students' interests. Based on the finding of the baseline study, a class library of 62 graded readers and 62 books for native English speaking children respectively was set up. Three Grade-2 classes were randomly assigned to two experimental groups: GR group (who were given graded readers), BNESC group (who were asked to read books for native English speaking children), and one control group (who were left to use the textbook they used in the current lessons), participated in each study. Apart from their normal English lessons (three 45-minute lessons per week), one extra 45-minute lesson was allocated for study one, but the number of lessons in study two was increased to two. The two experimental groups in the two studies were asked to write a reading record after reading a book, and the groups in study two were involved in three activities (student progress wall-chart, student group discussions and teacher participation).

The pre-post 2 × 3 factorial design was to measure and compare the effects of the three different treatments on the dependent variables involved. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods was used in the data collection in order to consolidate the findings. The study incorporated the instruments of a language proficiency test, a reading speed test, an attitude questionnaire, reading records and teacher reports.

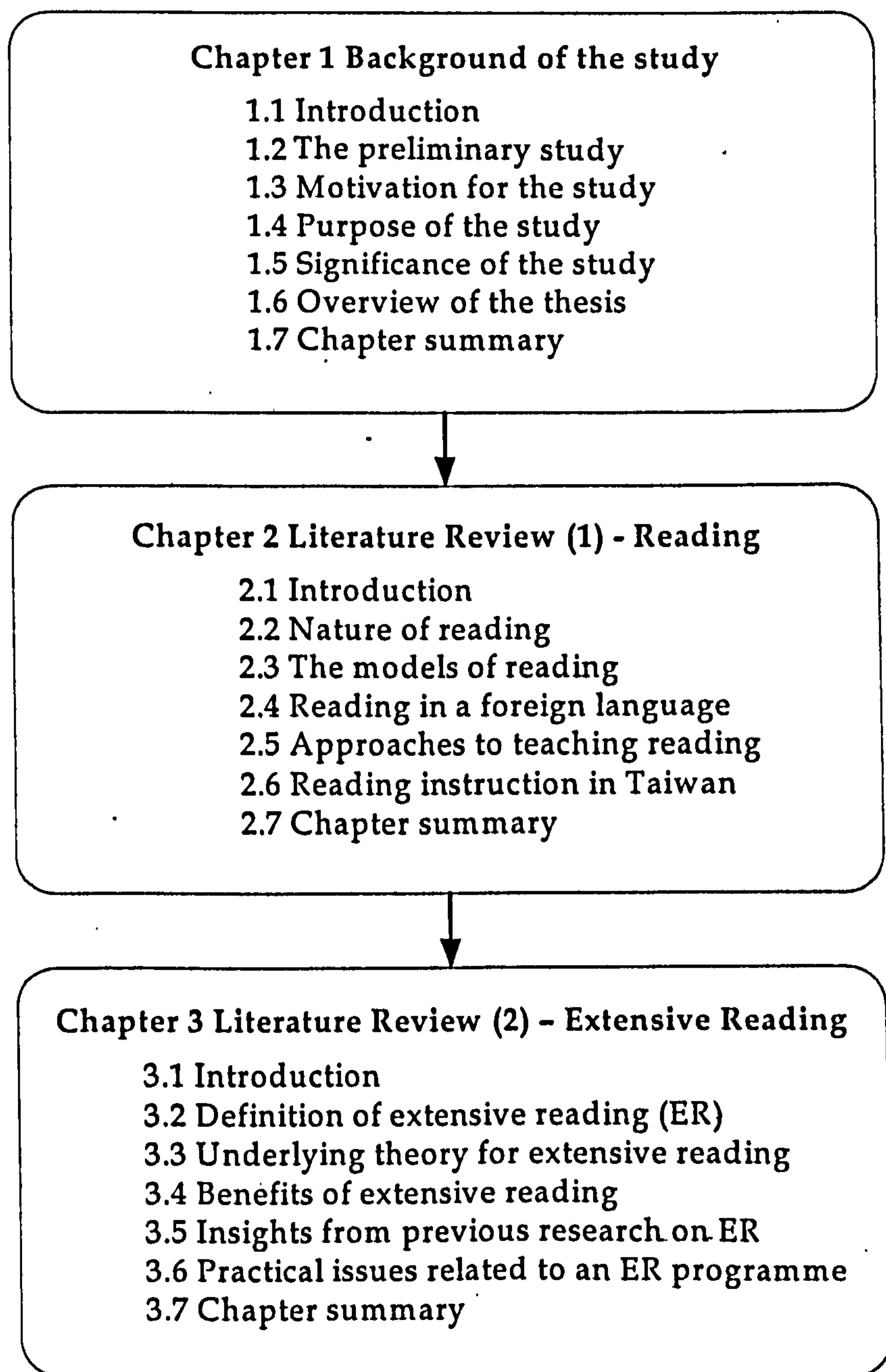
The results of the study consistently showed that extensive reading is more effective on improving all the variables mentioned than the current IR instruction. While the

positive outcomes stand in line with the results of previous studies, this study also gave insight into the use of the materials, the amount of reading time and accompanying activities. The findings indicated significantly the strength of the graded readers (GR) approach on students' language learning in all circumstances. The effects of reading books for native English speaking children (BNESC) proved positive only when the amount of time per week given to ER was doubled. Moreover, the results appeared to be contrary to the widely held belief that reading interesting books is alone sufficient to improve student attitudes. In fact, with this level and type of learners, without accompanying activities ER appeared to take away their enthusiasm. Once collaborative activities were introduced, ER showed great potential for improving language, proficiency, reading ability and attitudes toward reading.

The findings demonstrate the potential of ER for improving students' language proficiency and learning attitudes. Thus, they provide support for integrating ER into the English curriculum for improving current learning and teaching approaches. Moreover, the findings indicate the desirability of investing in ER as paving the way for students' long-term development. Implications of this study can be deduced in several aspects: the adoption of ER, the need of book provision, the need of reading strategy training, the use of authentic reading materials, the amount of reading time and the use of accompanying activities.

PART I THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This part describes the theoretical perception on which this study is based. The concept of reading is first reviewed. Then the focus moves to the notion of extensive reading, and related theories and previous studies are discussed.



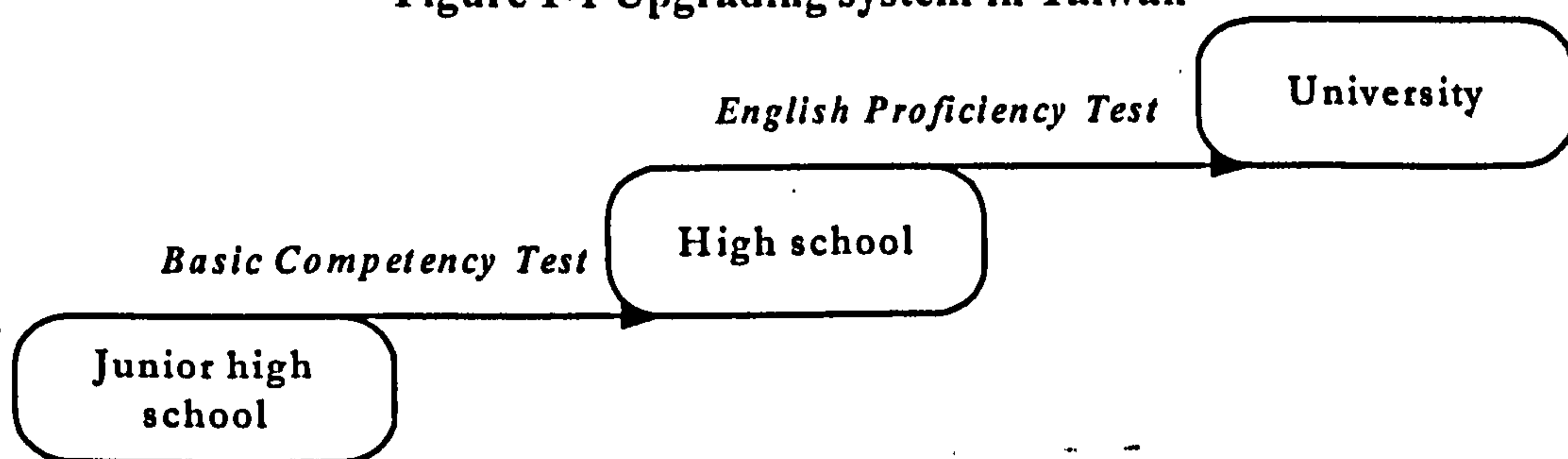
1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In wresting with life's challenges, the Stockdale Paradox (you must retain faith that you will prevail in the end *and* you must also confront the most brutal facts of your current reality) has proved powerful for coming back from difficulties not weakened, but stronger – not just for me, but for all those who've learned the lesson and tried to apply it. - Collins, J. (2001, p. 86) -

1.1 Introduction

In the national curriculum in Taiwan, basic education is compulsory for the first twelve years from primary to secondary (junior and senior high school) level. At the moment, English language is taught as a foreign language (FL) to pupils from grade-5 in primary to senior high school, which corresponds with a textbook (published by the National Institute of Compilation and Translation, NICT) with abundant exercises. It is also a main subject in school tests and both high school and university entrance examinations (Arden-Close 1999). Although the national entrance examinations for high school and university were abolished in 1999, the educational system in Taiwan is still dominated by tests as figure 1-1 shows.

Figure 1-1 Upgrading system in Taiwan



The mainstay of the English component in these tests is measuring syntactic, semantic and lexical analyses of short passages (Chern & Chi, 1988). Thus, in English lessons, teachers have not only to accomplish the tasks in the textbook to achieve the objectives of learning English laid down by the Ministry of Education, but also instruct students to acquire the essential skills and knowledge required to get high scores or grades in the examination (Sheu 2001a). As a result, English teaching is often focused on a close study of the language itself, and reading instruction is a particular case of

on a close study of the language itself, and reading instruction is a particular case of this.

A typical teaching procedure would be for the teacher to begin by asking students to turn to the reading page in lesson X in their textbook. The teacher would then read the reading text out, and then, before explaining its grammatical rules and translating it into Chinese, will point out new vocabulary and tell students its meaning (pupils listen and write notes silently).

This teaching procedure is commonly seen in reading lessons in secondary schools in Taiwan. Pupils are asked to follow teachers' instructions to comprehend texts containing approximately 100 words in the textbook. These are constructed linguistically for foreign language learners. In other words, students have not been guided in strategies to work out the overall meanings the texts intend to convey (Chern & Chi 1988), for example, by looking at clues from the context, recalling their existing knowledge. Instead, they are trained to understand texts by analysing linguistic features/units closely. For most secondary students, reading instruction becomes language analysis and an exam-preparation activity, and reading for meaning and pleasure still remains a mystery. As Susser and Robb (1990) point out, such intensive reading instruction is not reading practice but language study. This type of pedagogic practice may prove successful in terms of scoring highly on linguistic analysis-types of reading test, but an appropriate reading ability is hardly developed in those who are taught through this method of intensive reading. Inevitably, lack of reading practice in their learning process hampers students' ability to read extensively and fluently in their daily lives (Chern & Chi 1988). It is not surprising that most university freshmen in Taiwan fail to read in an appropriate way for the demanding reading tasks in higher education (Arden-Close 1999).

In my personal exchanges with secondary school teachers in Taiwan, they say that an inflexible syllabus with an obligation to complete the textbook prevents any attempt to practise other methods of instruction in their English lessons. Few studies on ELT relative to these constraints have been undertaken at secondary level in Taiwan. Thus, its insufficiency has not been recognised and information about how to ameliorate the current teaching situation is not yet available. Moreover, demanding work-loads (i.e. correcting students' homework and preparing drills) often occupy teachers' leisure time, and consequently, they are not able to update their ELT knowledge and teaching ability.

Although they could try out new methods after completing tasks in the textbook, their lack of knowledge and training inevitably makes them at a loss as to what to do.

Adding these factors together, I was motivated to conduct research to demonstrate the benefits of other teaching methods in language learning, and to raise the authorities' awareness of widening the range of methods of instruction in the school syllabus. I planned to acquire up-to-date ELT theories and methods, and to become a teacher trainer in the future so that I could help teachers to improve their professional practice. In order to achieve these goals, I decided to go overseas to learn something from others' experience.

In the Diploma and MA course in CELTE at University of Warwick, UK, I found sadly that the grammar/translation-based teaching methods in secondary schools I experienced in Taiwan were out of keeping with the times, and with much that has been learned in recent years about foreign language acquisition (see 2.4), especially in junior high schools. This discovery reinforced my determination to widen my understanding of English language teaching and teaching ability, and to bring appropriate teaching methods back to Taiwan.

In the courses of ELT Methodology and Applied Linguistics, I was impressed by the notion of extensive reading (ER) and was persuaded by research results that an ER programme appears to be the best option for improving reading instruction in Taiwan. Having this in mind, I made an attempt at designing an ER programme as a complementary course in a junior high school as my project in the professional practice module of the MA course. Having done this, I recognised that the implementation of an ER programme involves several challenges which have to be approached with caution, including student reading preferences, student and teacher attitudes toward participating in such a programme and integration of the programme into the existing school curriculum. Thus, I decided to explore these issues in my MA dissertation (Sheu 1999) and treat it as an exploratory step for doctoral study in order to contribute an appropriate teaching approach to English instruction in Taiwan.

1.2 The preliminary study

Prompted by the factors just mentioned above, an investigation of the existing teaching situations was conducted looking into Taiwanese junior high school student

and teacher perceptions of reading in English and of an extensive reading programme.

The main research areas were:

1. Student and teacher reading experiences.
2. Student and teacher reading habits in English.
3. Students' problems when they are reading in English.
4. Student and teacher perceptions of student wants and needs in reading materials.
5. Student and teacher perceptions of extensive reading
6. Student and teacher attitudes toward extensive reading.

Fourteen teachers and sixty five grade-two students in two junior high schools in Taiwan were asked to fill in a survey questionnaire. The results can be summarised as follows:

- English instruction relied heavily on textbooks and related activities, and reading other materials inside and outside the classroom was rarely encouraged by teachers.
- Students and teachers appeared to have different interests in reading materials in English. Whereas teachers were in favour of reading newspapers and magazines for pleasure, students read mainly textbooks for further study.
- Slightly more than half of students also read other materials in English outside the classroom and the reasons for reading were mainly for interest/pleasure. However, when they read, they tended to read word by word carefully, and unknown words were their main problems.
- With regard to student reading wants and needs¹, storybooks, cartoons and magazines were the students' favourite materials, and movies/TV programmes and computers were their popular titles. They identified that they would have to read newspapers, magazine and cartoons in the future.

¹ By definition, "a want" defines how the learners themselves would like to use the language and "a need" means what the learner needs to do in English (Robinson 1991).

- Most of teachers agreed with the idea that they knew what their students wanted and needed. When they were asked to identify them, they were correct in terms of the students' wants, but did not know the needs.
- Students agreed that it was not necessary to understand every word of the text in order to understand a text. Also, teachers knew that it was not essential to understand every sentence in order to understand a text. However, this knowledge did not appear to affect classroom practice.
- An extensive reading programme was not commonly known or experienced by students or teachers. Most of them said that they would like to participate in an ER programme and to read for pleasure. On the whole, those who had experienced ER found it to be an enjoyable and successful experience.
- Since most junior secondary schools do not have a school library, an extensive reading programme could serve as a method of providing books. Teachers appeared to be more enthusiastic about having more books in the schools than students were.

To sum up, the results indicated optimistic evidence for the implementation of extensive reading programmes in junior high schools in Taiwan. In that, students and teachers were enthusiastic about participating in such a programme. Moreover, they gave insights into the students' reading interests and habits, and into their perceptions of extensive reading. Two implications for further research were deduced. Firstly, in order to capture and maintain student interest in reading, careful attention should be paid to the book selection in relation to student expectation. Secondly, given the fact that current intensive reading instruction has substantial influence on students' approaches to reading, strategy training would play an important role in enabling students to read extensively. These factors will be taken up in the design of the present study.

1.3 Motivation for the study

The study was motivated by a number of factors. First, from 1999, the Ministry of Education proceeded to announce several schemes of curriculum reform (e.g. the abolition of the national examinations, the assignment of English textbook selection to schools, and the introduction of English learning in primary schools). Local educational

authorities, school administrators and teachers were given greater freedom in their own teaching situation. This created an appropriate opportunity for the introduction of an extensive reading approach in mainstream ELT in Taiwan. Or at least its values could be recognised and considered when new teaching methods are considered.

Secondly, empirical research has worldwide demonstrated in the last two decades that an extensive reading programme serves as a means of improving not only reading ability but also other aspects of English learning (e.g. grammar, writing and vocabulary) at all levels from young children to adults, and for both L1 (Cline & Kretke 1980; Krashen 1993b; Moore, Jones & Miller 1980; Pilgreen 2000; Watkins & Edwards 1992) and SL/FL around the world (Cho & Krashen 1994; Cunningham 1991; Davis 1995; Elley & Mangubhai 1981; Hafiz & Tudor 1990; Kembo 1993; Walker 1998). More recently, ELT writers have reasserted the value of ER, for example, Day and Bamford (1998:xiii) state that

‘Extensive reading not only helps students learn to read in the second language, but also leads them to enjoy reading. This encourages them to continue reading long after formal study of the second language is over. In addition, extensive reading, at the very least, consolidates students’ learning of the second language and at best, increases their proficiency.’

Nuttall (1996:62) also says that “an extensive reading programme is the single most effective way of improving both vocabulary and reading skills in general”. Their arguments support strongly the theory that an extensive reading programme can make up for the insufficiency of current reading instruction in Taiwan. In spite of demonstrations of the benefits of extensive reading in many Asian countries, e.g. Japan (Mason & Krashen 1997b; Robb & Susser 1989), Hong Kong (Lai 1993a; Tsang 1996), Malaysia (Raj & Hunt 1990) and Singapore (Davis 1995; Elley 1991; Ng & Sullivan 2001), not only has extensive reading been neglected in the English language curriculum in Taiwan, it has lacked basic recognition in English language teaching circles in Taiwan. Unfortunately, little research has been undertaken in Taiwan to demonstrate its benefits, especially at secondary school level. This research therefore was undertaken in response to the need for an exploratory study to investigate the possibility of implementing an extensive reading programme in junior high schools in Taiwan.

Thirdly, given that secondary schools have not realised the importance of learner autonomy, they do not consider developing resources for more independent learning or

including learner awareness or training exercises in their teaching. Sheu (2001a:8) points out that “unless these conditions are remedied or teachers adopt appropriate activities, learner autonomy will remain a bird-in-the-bush rather than a bird-in-the-hand”. The reported effect of ER on learner autonomy development in recent research (see 3.4.2.3) provides another incentive to this study.

Fourthly, ideas in ELT literature should also be taken into account regarding book selection. Graded readers (GR) written with lexical, structural and information control are the main materials used in studies on ESL/EFL extensive reading programmes. However, with all the same intentions as graded readers – “entertainment, information, learning to read, and becoming hooked on books” (Day & Bamford 1998:61), Aebbersold and Field (1997) argue that books for native English children (BNESC) should be included as extensive reading resources. In fact, research as yet has not investigated the effects of BNESC on EFL learning, and thus, it is pertinent to address this issue in an experimental way.

Fifthly, an issue raised from a study by Arden-Close (1999) needs to be considered. He reported that university freshmen in Taiwan retrospectively on their earlier learning had great enthusiasm when they started to learn to read in English in junior high schools. However, because of the teaching methods (i.e. examination-oriented learning, Chinese translations and dull textbooks), their initial enthusiasm was gradually lost. These problems gave the alarm over the current ELT situation at secondary level, and therefore opened the doors to adopt new teaching methods in the secondary school syllabus.

Finally, this study was also stimulated by personal experience in observing the remarkable progress of my 6 year-old daughter. While I undertook MA studies, she attended Cannon Park Primary School, Coventry. In the school reading scheme, she brought home a reading book every day (whether it was new or not) from her school for nearly two years. To check her progress, I randomly chose three different types of books² - Taiwanese junior high school textbook, a children's Bible and a storybook, and then I asked her to read and explain the meanings. Surprisingly, she had no problem in reading out loud and comprehending the meanings except for some few items of

² "The English Textbook for Secondary School" 1997 Taiwan: National Editing Board (NEB), "The Children's Illustrated Bible" Hastings, S. 1994. London: Dorling Kindersley and "Little Pilgrim's Progress" Taylor, H.L. Chicago: Moody Press.

grammar and vocabulary. Moreover, the level of books she read was higher than other native English classmates. As a result, I came to the view that ER programmes could be appropriate in developing students' English language proficiency, reading comprehension and attitudes toward reading in junior high schools in Taiwan, and should be included in the school syllabus so as to provide students and teachers with an opportunity to explore the English written world.

More than two years have passed since I did the MA study, and I am more convinced by my daughter's progress since then. Her reading speed is faster than I could have thought possible; for example, it took three days for her to read 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'³, and the reading habit is more significant than I would expect; for instance, she would like to read books rather than to watch TV, and almost every night, she sits on the bed reading books. Sometimes, I even have to force her to put down her books and sleep. Most FL readers like myself will envy her progress and wish to acquire similar competence to hers.

These factors triggered the motivation for conducting this study. It is hoped that this study might unveil the desirability of developing the school curriculum. In particular, the researcher hopes to push headteachers with a campaign for the adoption of ER that leads EFL learning and teaching learners to greater success in the national curriculum in Taiwan.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The fundamental purpose of this study was to raise the awareness of educational authorities about the desirability of adopting ER in the school curriculum. Its aims were threefold. The first and main aim was to help junior high school students in Taiwan improve their reading ability and attitudes toward EFL reading. It also attempted to compare the effects of the ER approach with the intensive reading (IE) approach used in current reading instruction. This particular research approach provides measurable data of a kind likely to persuade authorities to support and fund innovation. Thirdly, it intended to address the effects of books for native English speaking learners in developing learners' language proficiency and attitudes. To achieve these goals, the

³ The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (1950), published by C. S Lewis Pte Ltd. This book is the second volume of the Chronicles of Narnia, one of C. S Lewis's famous novels. It has 171 pages.

study was to design an experiment which employed two different instructional approach - ER focusing on reading English books and IR studying texts in the secondary school textbook. Moreover, the ER treatment was further divided into two different types of input – reading graded readers (GR) and reading books for native English speaking children (BNESEC). The study focused on:

1. Investigating the effects of an ER programme on language proficiency (including vocabulary, grammar and reading comprehension).
2. Examining the effects of the ER programme on the students' reading speed.
3. Investigating the effects of an ER programme on attitudes toward reading and English learning.
4. Ascertaining the potential of EFL GR and BNESEC on the students' development of language proficiency, reading speed and attitudes toward reading and English learning.
5. Comparing these effects of the two ER groups with the effects of the IE group.

1.5 Significance of the study

The significant contribution this study should make to the field of ELT, especially in the Taiwanese context, can be divided into three interrelated aspects: educational policy, language learning, reading instruction and research in extensive reading.

1.5.1 Educational policy

The first significance of this study lies in educational policy as follows:

1. The study has been undertaken with a view to raising Taiwanese educational authorities' awareness of the insufficiency of the current ELT situation. It highlights the need to revise the national curriculum policy to include improved methods of teaching and learning. It also suggests a need for EL teacher training to improve teaching ability and raise awareness of up-to-date information about ELT resources and support.
2. The study might give the educational authorities and ELT teachers in Taiwan insights into one of several teaching methods not only for developing learning but also for fostering learner autonomy, the ER approach. It calls for the

inclusion of ER in the school curriculum at all levels in Taiwan as well as the inclusion of how to organise an ER programme in teacher training programmes.

3. The study highlights the importance of experiencing real reading practice in the students' learning process. It therefore might increase awareness of the need to set up school libraries which could create substantial access for students in Taiwan to English materials. There are other countries which tend to take the same approach to reading in class as Taiwan and these points might usefully apply in those contexts.

1.5.2 Reading instruction

The second area on which this study could bring influence to bear relates to reading instruction.

1. The study might give insights for ELT teachers in Taiwan about the insufficiency of rote exercises or repeated drills which dominate current reading instruction. It might give teachers the opportunity to review their teaching routines, and to consider the adoption of alternative teaching methods. It therefore could set an example for them to seek alternatives to use in their English lessons.
2. The study offers persuasive evidence of the effectiveness of extensive reading on students' language learning. It could offer an alternative for teachers to try out ER with students or in their own schools.
3. The study might give EFL teachers in Taiwan insights about the importance of providing reading materials in their students' learning process. It calls for creating or increasing students' access to English materials. In this regard, it could increase their awareness of the availability of a wide range of reading materials, including books for native learners and EFL graded readers.
4. Since reading texts in secondary school textbooks in Taiwan are short, this study also raises the importance of including longer reading texts so that students have an opportunity to practice reading and develop effective reading strategies for these.

1.5.3 Research in extensive reading

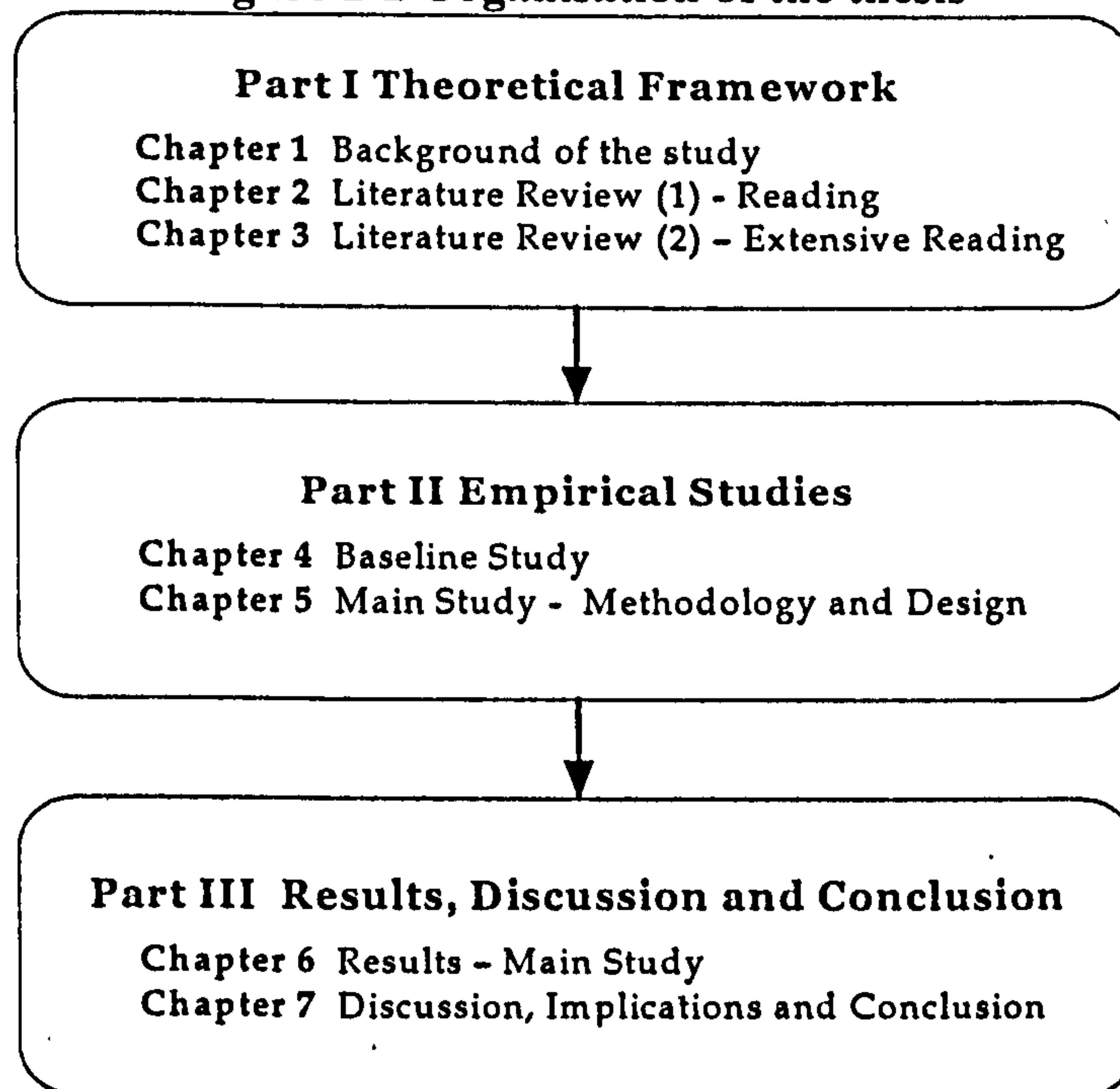
This study also contributes to research in extensive reading as follows:

1. The study adds its contribution to the understanding of extensive reading. It adds to the growing database of research in reading as well as in reading instruction methods.
2. As the ER approach resulted in the better development of language proficiency and attitudes, this study supports and adds to the evidence of other studies that have demonstrated the significant effects of ER on improving reading ability. In particular it provides an original, contextually based study in Taiwan.
3. The study attempts to reveal the effects of collaborative activities in an ER programme on attitude development. It therefore contributes to our understanding of using collaborative activities for enhancing students' motivation in reading.
4. The study also gives insights, more specifically, on the issue of using books for native learners in ER programmes in EFL settings. It unveils the values of native English materials as EFL graded readers, and the factors involved in ensuring their effectiveness.
5. By its use of a multifold approach in data collection and analysis combining quantitative and qualitative modes, the study might set an example for further research in Taiwan. The use of experimental research itself is also a contribution to the field of ELT in Taiwan, where research is seldom conducted in secondary schools and those studies which do exist rely on a single research method.

1.6 Overview of the thesis

The organisation of this thesis reflects the research schedule that was involved in implementing an extensive reading programme and probing its effectiveness. The thesis is divided into three parts: the theoretical framework, the empirical studies, and results and conclusions as the following figure.

Figure 1-2 Organisation of the thesis



Chapter One has described the context of the current study from a personal and professional perspective. First, I explained my personal reasons for taking on the research within the general context of the educational system in Taiwan. Specifically, my study was based initially on the findings of my MA dissertation which served as a preliminary investigation into students' and teachers' perceptions of an extensive reading programme in junior high schools in Taiwan. Then, I stressed the rationale (motivation and purpose) of this study and its potential for ELT in general, with particular reference to Taiwan, followed by an overview of the thesis. It ends with this chapter summary.

Chapter Two presents an overview of the nature of reading as defined by professionals and researchers over the years. It first looks at the nature of reading, and the process and factors therein, followed by a discussion of models of reading. Then, the focus is on significant elements in relation to reading a foreign language (FL). After describing approaches to teaching reading, the final part is devoted to comment on current reading instruction in Taiwan.

Chapter Three discusses the concept, theory and benefits of extensive reading. These are essential components with regard to the implementation of research on extensive reading. Previous studies in this field are then presented. Their findings, which reveal insightful data for the present study, led me to consider issues in the

integration of an ER programme, book selection and programme evaluation. Since student motivation to read is an important factor in the success of the programme, the strategies which could encourage student participation are discussed.

Chapter Four is assigned to the description of the baseline study, consisting of two parts: a questionnaire survey and the pilot study. The first part starts by describing the rationale, purpose and research questions of the survey, and then is divided into three phases (i.e. 1st pilot, 2nd pilot and main survey) according to the times when data were collected. According to the findings, a sample set of graded readers and books for native English speaking children was selected and the organisation of the ER programme was established. Moreover, several implications for the main study are made at the end of this chapter. The second part reports the results from the pilot study. A close examination of the suitability of selected books and the organisation of the ER programme was the main focus in the pilot study. The purpose of the pilot study was to examine whether the selected books met students' interests and to discover what suggestions they would make about the books and the programme, and also whether the language proficiency tests were appropriate to measure subjects' language improvement.

Chapter Five explains the relevance of using an experimental research paradigm in this research. In order to accommodate important information emerging from Chapter Three, I point out methodological problems evident in previous studies, and then describe the considerations I have taken into account in the design of the present research. After formulating the research questions, the research hypotheses were established for the main study. The hypotheses are presented in the form of null hypotheses: there is no interaction between the intensive reading group and the extensive reading groups. If the assessment of reading comprehension and speed is straightforward, no obvious interaction is expected to emerge. However, if interaction appears, this suggests that the ER programme has a significant effect on reading comprehension and speed performance. This chapter further describes the methodology of the main study in detail. The research design has taken the pilot study findings into consideration, and special attention has been paid to making sure that intervening factors are under control as much as possible.

Chapter Six will present the results of Study one. The chapter starts the presentation of quantitative results by discussing the descriptive statistics and then inferential

statistics in the dependent variables involved in the study. This is followed by the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) which is used to test the difference between the two experimental and control groups. Then the qualitative results are presented, with the intention to lend support or to refute the findings of the quantitative analysis and to filter out other differences not discernable through the quantitative analysis. It reports on students' book journals, records of collaborative activities and open-ended questions on the information they would like to give on the ER programme.

Chapter Seven summarises the study. Findings are first discussed by answering the research question (listed in 5.4), and a discussion of issues which would be crucial to the effectiveness of ER programmes. Then, implications are deduced for pedagogy as well as future research studies. After that, limitations of the study are highlighted and suggestions for extending this study are given. The chapter ends with concluding remarks.

1.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has attempted to provide information about the context, motivations, purpose and significance of the study. Section 1.1 emphasised that a grammar and translation-based approach (known as intensive reading, IR) has dominated ELT instruction in secondary schools in Taiwan. In addition, no room is given for reading practice in English lessons, despite the fact that students lack ability to read extensively and effectively which is crucial for further education. This section has made it clear that extensive reading seems to be an appropriate method for improving current reading instruction. Section 1.2 highlights the results of a survey on the ELT situation in Taiwanese junior high schools which served as a preliminary investigation for the current study, and is followed by sections on the motivation (1.3), purpose (1.4) and significance (1.5) of the study. The chapter ends with an overview of the framework on which the thesis is constructed. The next two chapters are assigned to review the theoretical framework of the study: (1) the concept of reading, and (2) the dimensions of extensive reading.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW (1) - READING

A deeper understanding of the reading process and how students learn to read a second language can offer a stronger theoretical rationale for second language reading programs and instructional approaches.

- Day, R. R. and Bamford, L. (1998, p. 11) -

2.1 Introduction

Since people read differently, how people approach a text and comprehend it is a process still under investigation, and assumptions about the process of reading are being made and being examined. It is generally believed that fluent and effective reading of a foreign language (FL) requires not only sufficient knowledge of the language, the text and the world, but also capable use of reading strategies (including top-down and bottom-up) (Carrell 1988). In order to increase these categories of knowledge and capabilities, learners have to have access to a variety of reading materials and read them intensively and extensively (Nuttall 1996). Reading for different purposes provides learners with opportunities to practise their strategies (Wallace 1992). Learners have to devote a considerable amount of time to achieve a level which allows them to read fluently and effectively (Aebbersold & Field 1997). Experiencing reading at the early stage of learning would have a great impact on progress. A deeper discussion of the nature of reading can provide a foundational rationale for any reading instruction or programme:

This chapter is an overview of reading. It sets out to establish a theoretical foundation for the desirability of including an extensive reading approach in reading instruction. It begins by pinpointing the fact that no uniform definition of reading has been reached and highlights what scholars or researchers have suggested as to the nature of reading (2.2). Then, a description of the available models of the process of reading (i.e. bottom-up, top-down and interactive processes) is presented in section 2.3. In section 2.4, the elements in relation to reading a foreign language (FL) are discussed. After that, section 2.5 provides a sketch of two approaches (intensive and extensive) to help students to learn to read. Finally, section 2.6 gives details of the current reading

instruction in Taiwan with the aim of building up a base for the extensive reading approach.

2.2 Nature of reading

For a number of years, the challenge to understand the reading process (first language/L1, second language/L2 or foreign language/FL) has increased remarkably and the fact that no sooner has one researcher fallen than another steps into the breach reflects the complicated expansion of understanding the reading process. Substantial attempts at synthesizing insights about reading have been made, and yet none has succeeded in achieving a definition which has been universally accepted. Since we cannot see what is going on in readers' minds when they read, "reading comprehension is considered to be a complex behaviour which involves conscious and unconscious use of various means (e.g. knowledge inside or outside the reader) to comprehend the meaning which the writer intends to express" (Johnston 1983:17). This invisible and complex mental nature of the reading process is still under investigation.

Although no one general theory of reading has been accepted, the results and findings of numerous studies have established a broad consensus and have contributed to our understanding of reading both in theory and practice. The following is a list of present definitions of reading:

- "Reading is a process whereby one looks at and understands what has been written" without grasping everything in a written text (Williams 1984:2).
- Reading means "reacting to a written text as a piece of communication" (Wallace 1992:4).
- Reading is the process of "making sense of a text" (Nuttall 1996:12).
- "Reading is what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text" (Aebersold & Field 1997:15).
- "Reading is the construction of meaning from a printed or written message" (Day & Bamford 1998:12).

All these definitions are centred on the two necessary entities - a text and a reader (Alderson & Urquhart 1984; Rumelhart 1977). On the one hand, a written text which contains a message (an idea, a fact or a feeling) the writer wants to share, can mean anything from reading a few words, one sentence (road signs, advertisements), to thousands of words or hundreds of sentences (magazines, novels) (Aebersold & Field 1997). For different audiences and purposes, reading texts are written differently and contain certain distinguishing characteristics which can promote or hamper readers' comprehension (Grabe 1993). For example, when buying a washing machine, one expects to find instructions which are easy to follow and understand so that the machine can be operated step by step. The characteristics include:

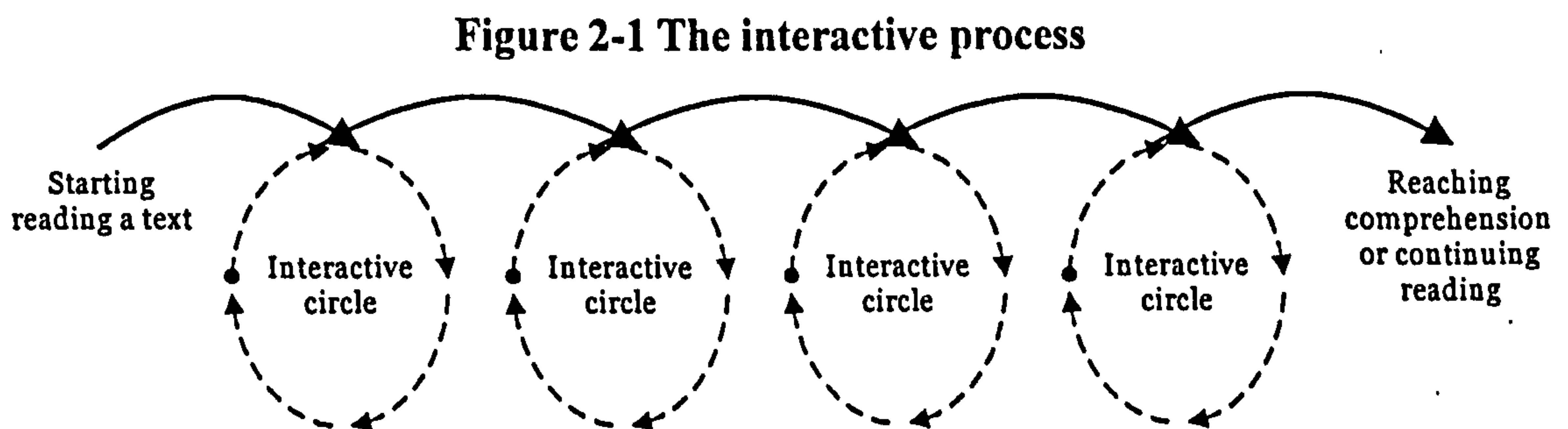
1. Rhetorical structure is "a term frequently used in writing to describe the organisation of information in texts...fairly conventional: description, classification, comparison, contrast, cause and effect, process, argument, and persuasion" (Aebersold & Field 1997:11).
2. "Sentence length and complexity are text features that can influence comprehension and can signal the type of text" (*ibid.*:12). For example, syntax and grammar in an academic textbook are often complex, as are logical connectives and lexical cohesion, but simple sentences or even few words are used in a personal note.
3. "Cohesion is the way the ideas and meaning in a text are related to each other" (*ibid.*:13). It shows how words, sentences and paragraphs work together to build meaning. Phrasal conjunctions are part of this. For example, 'in other words' is used to restate the same idea more clearly or specially.
4. "If there are many unfamiliar words that are key words, comprehension of the text begins to break down" (*ibid.*:13). For instance, because of its terminologies, most people would find it difficult to understand an article in a biochemistry journal, explaining a laboratory technology in detecting a particular virus. Density of unfamiliar vocabulary is therefore another significant characteristic.
5. "Another vocabulary factor that readers contend with is the several possible meanings of any one word" (*ibid.*:14), like the word 'right' in these three sentence: '*You are right*', '*He looks to his left, then to his right*', and '*That's your right!*'.

These characteristics are very important features of a text. Some can help readers to realise the type of text so that they can predict what they might be reading; others remind readers to bring aids (schematic knowledge or strategies) to solve difficulties they might encounter. Unfamiliarity with these characteristics could cause reading problems and consequently, hinder reading comprehension.

On the other hand, given the fact that once written, a text itself does not change, readers play a dominant role in working out the meaning of a text. That is, reading is not an one-way process, in the sense that a reader has “only to open his mind and let the meaning pour in” (Nuttall 1996:5). In fact, readers have to be active to gather as much information as they can from inside their heads and the text so as to predict, create, review and work out what the writer wants to convey (Grabe 1993). This indicates that they are involved in an interactive way in a reading process.

2.2.1 Reading as an interactive process

In the reading process, whenever and wherever difficulties appear, readers enter the interactive circle immediately shown in Figure 2-1.



In the circle, they might have to call on their knowledge about the world and the language, past experiences, and expectations of overcoming the difficulties of comprehension (Carrell, Devine & Eskey 1988; McDonough & Shaw 1993). On this count, it is “the interaction between the text and the reader that constitutes actual reading” (Aebersold & Field 1997:15). Take reading a newspaper article entitled ‘UN team finds only ruins at nerve gas site’ (The Daily Telegraph, December 5, 2002, p.17) as an example. Looking at the title will be the first interactive circle. If uncertain about its meaning readers might have to make predictions or formulate some idea

about what the article is about, and as they carry on reading their predictions or ideas will be confirmed or corrected, or they will continue to predict (2nd interactive circle). If familiar with the information in the title they have already recalled their knowledge about the conflict in 1994, and they will bring historical information to the rest of the article (2nd interactive circle). The process continues thus, to 3rd circle, 4th, 5th... This illustrates what happens when people look at a text and use whatever means available to them to minimise the difficulties in order to get the information they want or to understand what the writer intends to express.

This process explains what happens when people encounter problems in reading. Since people read for different reasons and read differently, this process is influenced by a number of factors, and these should receive due attention.

2.2.2 Factors influencing reading

The factors which influence the interactive process above relate to three aspects: 1) purpose and manner of reading; 2) reading strategies; and 3) schematic knowledge (Aebersold & Field 1997).

2.2.2.1 Purpose and manner of reading

It is true that people read different texts for different purposes, that is, their purpose will determine what type of text they would like to read. Wallace (1992:6-7) defines three common reading purposes:

- (a) Reading for survival is an immediate response to a situation. For example, one has to read the instructions carefully and understand every detail in order to make a machine function properly; but on another occasion, one scans a telephone directory quickly for a particular person's or company's contact number.
- (b) Reading for learning is to learn something new or widen our knowledge. This could be strictly reading practice taken place in an EFL lesson, or reading a handbook about creating your own web site at home.
- (c) Reading for pleasure is for one's own sake. This takes different forms, for instance, reading a magazine while travelling to work on a bus or a train, or

relaxing in bed reading one of your favourite writer's novels before going to sleep.

As can be seen from the examples given above, reading purposes will affect the ways in which people read texts as follows (Lunzer & Garner 1979; Pugh 1978 cited in Hedge 2000:195):

- Receptive reading is undertaken, for example, when a reader wants to enjoy a short story...
- Reflective reading involves episodes of reading the text and then pausing to reflect and backtrack...
- Skim reading is used to get a global impression of the content of a text.
- Scanning involves searching rapidly through a text to find a specific point of information...
- Intensive reading involves looking carefully at a text...

2.2.2.2 Reading strategies

When readers try to understand a text by means of guessing unknown words, analysing the context, they are actually using reading strategies. It has been suggested that successful readers are more effective in using strategies than poor readers (Anderson 1991). Whether readers are capable of adopting effective strategies, has a great impact on comprehending a message.

2.2.2.3 Schematic knowledge

This refers to the knowledge readers bring to tackle a text (Cook 1989; Klapper 1991; Widdowson 1983). 'The way we interpret depends on the schemata activated by the text; and whether we interpret successfully depends on whether our schemata are sufficiently similar to the writer's' (Nuttall 1996:7). There are several types of schemata:

- (a) Content/topic schema is the knowledge of what a text is about (Carrell & Eisterhold 1983; Wallace 1992). For instance, readers need to know the regulation system in British football Premier League in order to understand why West Ham is 'fighting for survival' in a newspaper report.

- (b) Sociocultural knowledge is the knowledge of a particular culture, event or country (Hedge 2000). For example, readers have to know what happened on 30th January in 1972 and to have some knowledge of the conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland in order to understand a report on 'The Bloody Sunday Inquiry'.
- (c) Formal/genre schema is an understanding of the rhetorical organisation of a text (Carrell 1984; Cook 1989). For example, 'A Battle Between Long and Flat' is the title of a report in a Taiwanese newspaper about two candidates in a mayoral election. 'Long' and 'Flat' were the nicknames Journalists gave to the two competitors. It was a specific style and form for journalists in Taiwan to use 'battle' for emphasising a well-matched competition between the two candidates as expressed in a contrast-comparison text.
- (d) Linguistic schema is the knowledge of how texts are constructed and what discourses are (Aebbersold & Field 1997, Wallace 1992). An example for this is 'To use email you type a message into your computer, (you) add an address, and then (you) send it.' Readers must realise that the two 'you'⁴ are missing.
- (e) General knowledge is the universal knowledge of the world around us (Hedge 2000). Taking 'When needs must, the devil drives!' as an example, readers can recall their own knowledge about the general meaning of 'needs' (something necessary) and 'the devil' (something wrong and/or bad), and then consider what the meaning is when these two concepts are put together. They can guess its meaning as in the case of needs or emergency, people must do something even though they know it is wrong.

Up to the present point this chapter has discussed the ways in which readers approach, tackle, work out and understand written texts and the factors which influence reading comprehension. "In looking for the ways to describe the interaction between reader and text, researchers have also created models that describe what happens when

⁴ This is called Nominal Ellipsis cohesion. Bloor and Bloor (1995:98) define three types of Ellipsis cohesion: 1) Nominal Ellipsis permits the omission of Head Nouns in a Nominal Group; 2) Verbal Ellipsis is the omission of lexical verb and occurs both positively and negatively 'in common in all short form answers and responses'; and 3) Clausal Ellipsis is replacement of a group or clause.

people read” (Aebersold & Field 1997:17). This will be discussed in detail in the following section.

2.3 The models of reading

Over the past few decades, views have differed on models of the reading process. Researchers have investigated it from different angles and then devised models to present the reading process (Barnett 1989; Carrell, Devine & Eskey 1988; Grabe 1993; Nuttall 1996), including bottom-up, top-down and interactive models.

2.3.1 Bottom-up model

Because of the weight of evidence that some people do read letter by letter, Gough’s (1972) phrase - one second of reading, is the prototype model of the uncompromising bottom-up approach. He claims that through such a process, readers read the characters in milliseconds and decode them into phonemic units. Based on Gough’s idea, the bottom-up model (Carver 1978; LaBerge & Samuels 1974 cited in Samuels & Kamil 1988) represents reading as a decoding process of recognizing contextual units (letters and words) and language features. It assumes that a reader “constructs meaning from letters, words, phrases, clauses and sentences, sequentially processing the text into phonemic units that represent lexical meaning, and then building meaning in a linear manner” (Hudson 1998:46). When readers read, they concentrate on identifying individual words by connecting such recognition with lexical data stored already in their mental memory. Thus, the focus of this approach is on readers’ rapid decoding of text and word recognition (Field 1999). Bottom-up strategy refers to a decoding process in which readers reconstruct the author’s intended meaning “by recognizing the printed letters and words, and building up a meaning for a text from the smallest textual units at the bottom (letters and words) to larger units at the top (phrases, clues...)” (Carrell, Devine & Eskey 1988:2-3).

2.3.2 Top-down model

In a well-known characterization of reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game, Goodman (1967) states that readers bring knowledge to their reading, and then predict the meaning, sample the text, and confirm the prediction. As Hudson (1998:47) points

out, Goodman's notion "favors the cognitive efficiency entailed in a reliance on existing syntactic and semantic knowledge". Smith (1971) is also associated with Goodman's theory, and addresses the role of short-term and long-term memory. He asserts that prediction and use of context play important roles in operating memory during reading, and emphasizes the function of background knowledge (i.e. schemata) in a person's construction of meaning. Both concepts unfold a gateway for the advent of the top-down model.

The top-down model refers to the process of predicting meaning by means of context clues or certain kinds of prior knowledge and assumptions, of confirming these predictions by the following messages, and of checking back when new or unknown information appears. In this way, therefore, reading is viewed as an active process in which a reader brings to the text not only knowledge of the language, but also past experiential and background knowledge (Field 1999).

2.3.3 Interactive model

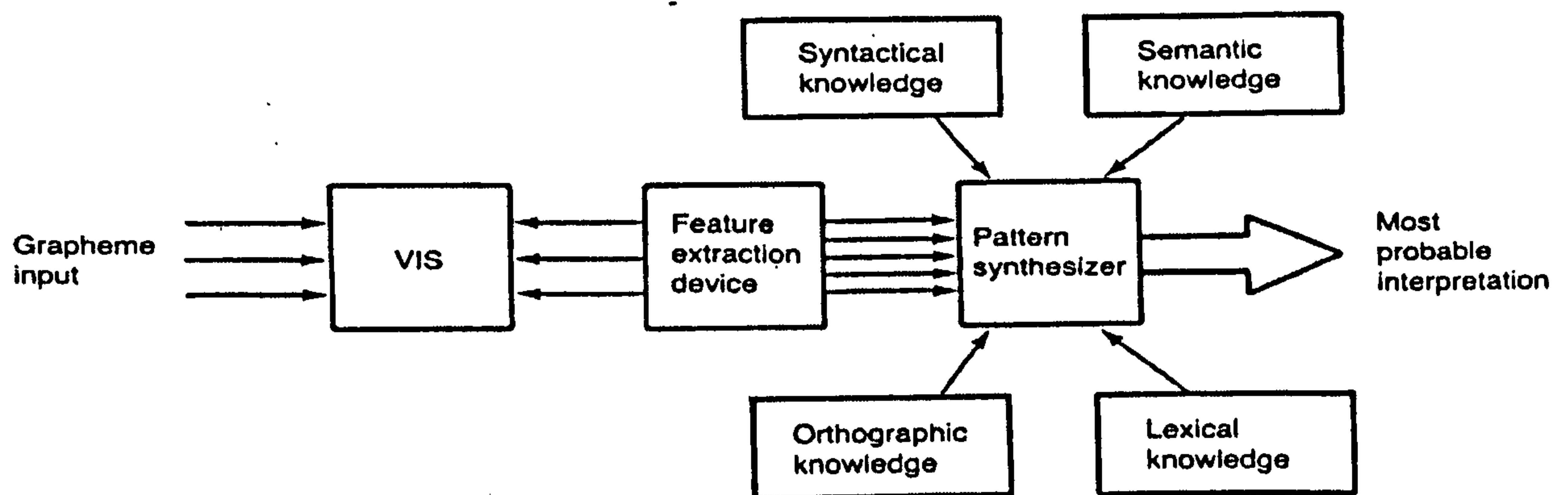
In fact, either of model on its own, whether bottom-up or top-down, is inadequate and insufficient to explain the process of reading, because the former underestimates the contribution of the reader, and the latter does not seem to consider FL readers' constraints, e.g. poor proficiency, or a lack of linguistic knowledge or skills. Consequently, an integrated model appeared, that is, the 'interactive model' (Carrell, Devine & Eskey 1988; Eskey & Grabe 1988).

The term 'interactive' suggests that "efficient and effective reading – be it in a first or second language– requires both top-down and bottom-up strategies operating interactively" (Carrell 1988:4). The interactive model involves both "an array of lower-level rapid, automatic identification skills" (i.e. bottom-up model) and "an array of higher-level comprehension and interpretation skills" (i.e. top-down model) (Grabe 1993:213). Eskey (1988:96) refers to such a process as "the interaction between information obtained by means of bottom-up decoding and information provided by means of top-down analysis, both of which depend on certain kinds of prior knowledge and certain kinds of information-processing skills". Obviously, the interactive model involves "the application of higher order mental processes and background knowledge as well as the text processing itself" (Hudson 1988:48). Thus, the interactive model

seems to assume that proficient readers are not only good at comprehending a text but also at recognising linguistic forms. A distinct feature in the interactive model is that readers use their skills at all levels interactively to process and interpret texts so as to compensate for the deficiency (Stanovich 1980).

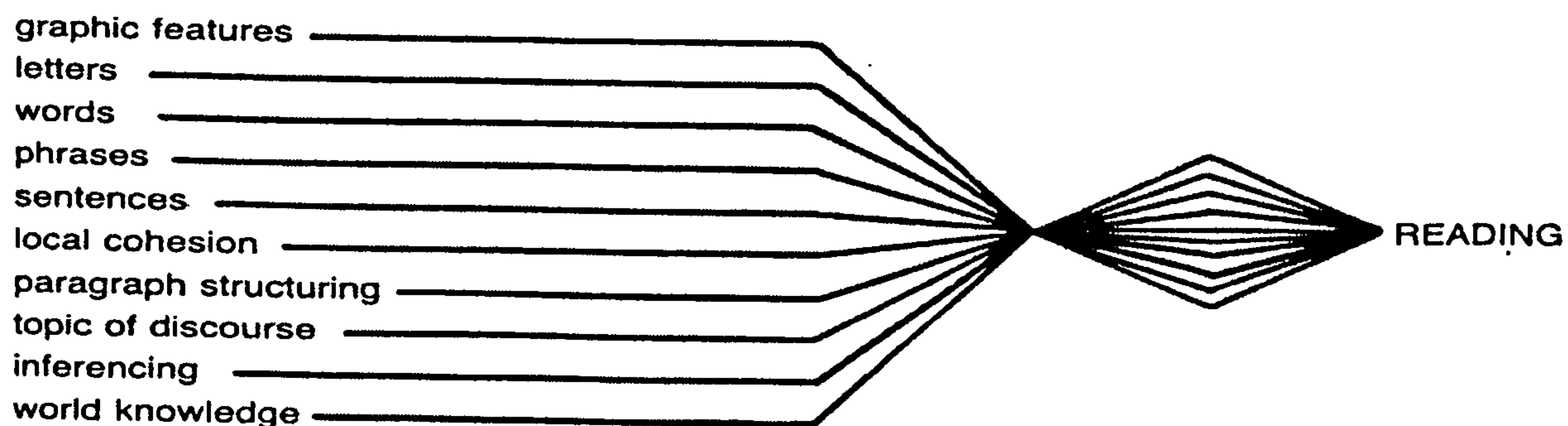
By using the figure below, Rumelhart (1977:588) illustrates that successful reading involves both a perceptual and a cognitive process. He posits that a reader interacts with sensory, semantic and pragmatic information in a non-linear manner in the synthesizing process. As each of these knowledge sources is involved in processing the text, the message centre permits these resources to interact with each other. As a result, each of these knowledge sources exerts an influence upon the text processing and the ultimate interpretation of the text.

Figure 2-2 Rumelhart's model of reading



The interactive model can be viewed as a process of pattern synthesis "using information that is simultaneously applied from knowledge sources such as feature extraction, orthographic knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, syntactic knowledge and background (or semantic) knowledge" (Hudson 1998:50). This summary can be represented by Grabe's interactive parallel processing sketch in Figure 2-3 below (1988:59). The sketch allows us to incorporate the insights into what elements are involved in comprehending texts and the components of measuring comprehension.

Figure 2-3 Grabe's simplified interactive parallel processing sketch



To sum up, theoretical discussions on the nature (2.2) and models of reading (2.3) help us to know how people read and what they can do to solve difficulties in reaching comprehension. This provides a fundamental ground for diagnosing the insufficiency of current reading instruction in Taiwan (see 2.6), and organising and preparing measures to make up the deficiency. It should be pointed out that due to the impressive progress in understanding the L1 reading process, most current theory of FL reading is shaped by the development of research on L1 learners. However, Grabe (1993:216) claims that FL reading “is influenced by factors which are normally not considered in L1 reading research”, it is therefore important to recognise differences between the two languages which cause difficulties for FL reading.

2.4 Reading in a foreign language

Goodman's (1973:27) assertion that “the reading process will be much the same for all languages” has led L2 research to investigate to what extent the L1 reading ability can transfer to learning to read in a FL. The outcomes raise one crucial question - whether FL reading is a language problem (FL proficiency) or a reading problem (transfer of L1 reading ability) (Carrell 1991).

2.4.1 FL proficiency

Before L1 children start learning to read they already possess a fair degree of language proficiency, especially oral competence and vocabulary. In addition, having been immersed in natural learning circumstances, they have also developed appropriate strategies and inferential skills. In this connection, Clarke (1988) argues that in order to read a FL learners have to reach a threshold level of language proficiency. Research

(Cohen, Glasman, Rosenbaum-Cohen, Ferraral & Fine 1988; Devine 1988; Field 1985) has also found a significant correlation between proficiency and reading comprehension. These points indicate that learners' language proficiency is an important factor in FL reading (Aebersold & Field 1997; Paran 1996).

As for FL proficiency, Clarke and Silberstein (1977:145) have also asserted "our students' efficiency in using reading skills is directly dependent upon their overall language proficiency - their general language skills". This critical interaction of language proficiency and reading ability is now generally accepted. Eskey and Grabe (1988:226) also claim that "Reading requires a relatively high degree of grammatical control over structures that appear in whatever readings are given to [L2] students". Devine (1988:269) comments that "second language readers must reach a level of general language competence in order to read successfully in the target language". So what are the factors which cause learners' problems in learning to read? Yorio (1971:108) gives a full account of the incidence of FL learners' insufficiency in linguistic ability as follows:

1. a reader's knowledge of the foreign language is not like that of the native speaker;
2. guessing or predicting ability necessary to pick up the correct cues is hindered by imperfect knowledge of the language;
3. wrong choice of cues or the uncertainty of the choice makes associations more difficult;
4. due to unfamiliarity with the materials and lack of training, the memory span in a foreign language in the early stages of its acquisition is usually shorter than in one's native language; recollection of previous cues, is therefore more difficult than in the mother tongue.

Based on these inabilities, Yorio (*ibid.*:108) argues that "the reader's knowledge is not like that of the native speaker; the guessing or predicting ability necessary to pick up cues is hindered by the imperfect knowledge of the language". As a result, FL reading problems are due to poor FL language proficiency and inadequate FL knowledge, and interference from the native language, which inhibit the use of essential textual cues in reading, particularly at beginning levels. Yorio's view is supported by Ulijn and Kempen (1976), and Ulijn (1978), who assert that the only difference between L1 and

FL reading is conceptual knowledge, i.e. the knowledge of the subject area and the meaning of the vocabulary. Paran (1996:30) holds a similar view, saying “automaticity of word recognition is indeed a major attribution of the L1 reader’s reading behaviour”. Their arguments support that in order to read effectively and fluently in a FL as in L1, learners have to reach a threshold level of FL proficiency (Alderson 1984; Hudson 1998).

It has been suggested that such a threshold level is influenced by learners’ training background (Grabe 1993), that is, how FL learners have been instructed to read their L1. For example, Malaysian (Hamp-Lyons 1983) and Taiwanese (Sprenger 1975) students have been taught to understand every single word when they read. Hebrew and Arabic speakers use different strategies in L1 reading from those in English (Marbe 1979), and in Chinese culture, reading strategies are not included in L1 reading instruction (Field 1985). Moreover, Cziko’s (1978) research provides strong evidence that poor FL readers are unable to use their good L1 reading strategies. Clarke (1979) also has found that lack of FL language proficiency would limit the transfer of L1 reading skills to FL reading, and suggests that FL proficiency plays a more significant role in becoming an effective and fluent FL reader than the influence of L1 reading ability.

2.4.2 Transfer of L1 reading ability

Apart from learners’ linguistic ability and educational experiences, when they start learning to read FL learners are often mature, and thus, have got advantages in conceptual and factual knowledge about the world (i.e. schemata). The fact that there are those who are linguistically proficient but still read slowly with poor comprehension indicates that FL reading is also directly related to problems in reading ability. This view has been strengthened by work on eye fixations like MacNamara’s (1970) and Oller’s (1972), who claim that FL readers concentrate on small sections of text, and then their memories are overburdened and they fail to comprehend the meanings. Clarke’s (1979) study has indicated that good L1 readers were still better in FL than those who were poor in L1. Hudson (1988:184) concludes that “the good L1 readers maintained an advantage over poor L1 readers at their proficiency level when they both were reading L2”. Rigg’s (1988) study showed that reading failure in a foreign language could be considered as directly attributable to poor reading in the native language.

These various studies suggest that the transfer of good reading strategies from the first language to learning to read in FL does occur and that, when it occurs, it is advantageous to learners.

Having considered issues of FL proficiency and transfer of L1 reading ability, it seems sensible to consider Klapper (1991). Comparing Clarke's (1979) idea (i.e. language competence ceiling) with Cummins' (1979) threshold level of linguistic competence, Klapper (1991:27) concludes that there are "two types of poor FL readers: 1) poor L1 readers, and 2) good L1 readers who are unable to transfer their L1 ability to the FL because of their problems with the FL".

However, there is also the complicating factor of the effect of L1 knowledge. While people bring a variety of knowledge to comprehend FL texts (see 2.2.2), it is true that they bring their knowledge of L1 to the transfer of L1 reading ability in FL reading. Thus, the differences between the languages will influence the effect of such a transfer. It has been suggested that "language processing differences and the social context differences" might cause transfer problems for FL learners (Grabe 1993:216), and thus, are worth discussing here.

2.4.2.1 Language processing differences

The first related issue relates to language processing differences. Since languages are developed and used differently, and thus, consist of a number of variations (lexicon, syntax...). Coady (1979) and Jolly (1978) point out that any misunderstanding or false interpretation can mislead FL readers, and cause interference in the transfer of L1 reading ability to FL reading. Grabe (1993) divides the language processing differences into three aspects as follows:

1. Orthographic differences can be examined in three areas: direction-of-reading, punctuation and spacing of written forms, and shallow and deep orthographic structure.
2. Orthographic influences mean the language writing systems: logographic, syllabic and alphabetic.

3. Linguistic differences refer to syntactic and discourse features. Mitchell, Cueto & Zagar (1990) have found that strategies to decode such features were more language-specific than universal. Regarding discourse features, Carrell (1984) states that the understanding of such features is culturally dependent according to the organisational structures of the texts.

These differences in the orthographic system have often been cited as another distinctive factor for causing FL reading difficulties. Since the existing languages can be categorised as logographic languages (e.g. Chinese) and alphabetic languages (e.g. English) (Lee, Stigler & Stevenson 1986), an attempt should be made to describe differences between the two categories.

In English, an alphabetic language, each symbol carries a speech sound and phonetic decoding is necessary in English reading. This is called the “grapheme-phoneme recognition process” (Lee, Stigler & Stevenson 1986:128). For beginners, such phonetic interpretation of the written symbol is essential for developing reading ability. Such a decoding ability can help them learn to read and spell, and as a result, vocabulary acquisition is possible by reading or phonetic decoding. The term vocabulary is also called words, “referring to the total stock of meaningful units in a language – not only the words and idioms, but also the parts of words which express meaning”, such as affixes (Crystal 1995:118). Basically, there are three types of affix: 1) prefixes occur before the root or stem of a word (in-, non-, super-...); 2) Suffixes occur after (tion-, ship-...); and 3) infixes occur with (no system of it but people construct occasionally). Moreover, the use of compounding (flower-pot), conversion (a bottle vs to bottle), and other processes of word-building (e.g. abbreviation PC, OK) play a crucial role in English vocabulary (Crystal 1995).

On the contrary, in logographic languages such as Mandarin Chinese in Taiwan (Lee, Stigler & Stevenson 1986),

zhuyin fuhao, a phonetic spelling system, is used to assist the child in pronouncing characters. *zhuyin fuhao* is a set of 37 symbols for which there is consistent grapheme-phoneme correspondence. The pronunciation of any Chinese character can be represented by more than three of these symbols... Markers indicating the four tones of Mandarin Chinese are further aids to pronunciation. (p. 1128)

Each symbol has a single morpheme or a minimum meaningful linguistic unit. A character consists of one symbol, or often more than one symbol and a word are directly linked with meaning. There is no grapheme-phoneme recognition in Chinese reading; Chinese characters can be divided into six orthographic groups (Leong 1973:385-386) as follows:

1. Pictographs (象形) are characters based on pictures of objects.
2. Ideographs (指事) or diagrammatic characters indicate the idea or ideas they are meant to convey.
3. Compound ideographs or suggestive characters (會意字) are those formed on the basis of associations of ideas suggested by their constituent parts.
4. Loan characters (假借) are those adopted for new characters on the basis of identity of sound.
5. Phonetic compounds (形聲) form by far the largest category, comprising at least 80 per cent of the characters.
6. Analogous characters (轉注) are mainly new characters patterned after old ones so that they are analogous in meaning but do not share the same sound.

Basically, most Chinese characters (e.g. 評 meaning *to comment*, pronounced ping) consist of two components: a radical or a signific which determines the meaning (i.e. 言 meaning *to speak*), and a phonetic which suggests the pronunciation (i.e. 平 pronounced ping). However, it is not always the case; for example, in the character 柏 (meaning *cypress*, pronounced bor) the left radical means *tree* and indicates that the character might be a kind of tree. But the pronunciation of the right component is bai. In other cases, there is no relation between the meaning and pronunciation and the two components, such as 信 (meaning *trust*, pronounced xing). The left part of the character means *person* (pronounced *ren*) and the right is pronounced yen (means *word*) (Lee, Stigler & Stevenson 1986).

In summary, it is clear from the discussion above that there are some language processing differences among languages (e.g. phonetic spelling system), and these differences will cause FL reading difficulties. On the other hand, languages also share some similarities (e.g. lexical construction). This supports Alderson's (1984) view that reading is a universal process and should be similar across languages, and thus FL

reading relates to the transfer of L1 reading ability. Such a transfer should consider whether readers are willing to employ their L1 reading ability, and this is related to the role of reading in their societies (Pica 1987).

2.4.2.2 Social role of L1 reading

Susser and Robb (1990:170) mention that cultural tradition would have a negative influence on L1 transfer, that is, “some cultures have no (L1) literacy - or their tradition of what reading is supposed to be is different from what we posit for English”. Grabe (1993:219) describes the role differences between societies:

Students who come from cultures where written material represents “truth” might tend not to challenge or reinterpret texts in the light of other texts, but will tend to memorize “knowledge”...In contrast...literacy in academic settings in developed countries exists within the context of a massive amount of print information. Students come to assume that any source of information can be balanced against alternative sources, and come to expect that challenging a text is a normal academic activity.

The social role of reading in Taiwan is that of the first situation in the foregoing description. Sprenger (1975:77) give a full picture of reading instruction in Taiwan by saying that “reading is considered a type of activity the student learns automatically as he makes efforts to familiarize himself with the characters of his language”. Students are asked to read books which teachers think are important to their students, and students have to do their best to memorize all essential knowledge they need in their study and lives. As a result, students rely on teachers’ ordinance and concentrate on absorbing the information. Under such instruction, people have not developed an ability or habit of criticising and reflecting on what they read. Thus, the passive social role of reading in Taiwan contributes to the transfer of L1 reading ability to FL reading.

2.4.3 Summary

In short, having discussed above the issues involved in FL reading, it seems evident that on the one hand “L2 reading problems are due to inadequate knowledge of the target language” (Devine 1988:262-3); on the other hand, “there is some evidence for some transfer of reading ability from L1 to L2” (Susser & Robb 1990:172). This means that the answer to whether FL reading is a language problem or a reading problem

varies for individuals and texts, and on many occasions FL reading is affected by both problems.

The preceding sections have reviewed reading in general and FL reading from a theoretical point of view, in addition to insights from both L1 and FL reading research. Grabe (1993) gives a useful list of key characteristics of effective reading.

- Rapid means that in order to achieve a sufficient rate of connecting and inferring the gist to comprehend a text, readers need to keep up their reading pace.
- Reading is purposeful, because readers read certain materials for particular purposes. It is also true to say that a purpose will affect whether readers want to read a book or not, and the ways in which readers read the books. In this sense, reading for a purpose provides motivation which is an important factor in being good readers.
- Interactive refers to the interaction between readers and texts. In other words, readers use knowledge inside or outside their head, and skills simultaneously for working out the meaning of texts.
- Reading is comprehending. Although readers, sometimes, do not comprehend a text completely, at least, they expect to understand some parts of it.
- Flexible means that not everyone reads a text in same way, but in a range of ways. It is almost true that people read, even with the same book, in different ways from different angles. People may first focus on vocabulary, then the whole sentence, and then understand it; however, other people may just read line by line and then understand the message.
- Reading develops gradually. It takes time to become fluent readers, and in some cases, this is a result of long-term learning.

This summary indicates that reading cannot be broken down into a series of discrete steps that a teacher can teach in the classroom (Eskey 1973). Alderson and Urquhart (1984) also argue that reading should be reading practice, but not language exercises which focus on studying vocabulary and grammar. We as teachers should always bear these elements in mind in our teaching settings and in planning our teaching lessons/programmes in particular. An understanding of the theoretical perspectives on

reading could widen our knowledge about what is involved in the reading process. The issue is how we as teachers can help our learners to learn to read or improve their reading ability.

2.5 Approaches to teaching reading

Traditionally speaking, there are two approaches by which teachers can apply their knowledge about reading in lessons or teaching situations: an intensive reading (IR) and extensive reading (ER) approach (Nuttall 1996; Aebbersold & Field 1997).

2.5.1 Intensive reading (IR) approach

IR is assigned to help students understand how meaning is constructed and produced, that is, to create access to texts under the guidance of a teacher or a task which requires them to work on various selected aspects of the texts for maximum comprehension (Wallace 1992). This can be achieved by skills-based (SB) method, or text-based (TB) method, or both (Nuttall 1996). On the one hand, the focus of the SB approach, referred to IR(SB) afterwards, is on building learners' reading skills/strategies for understanding textual, rhetorical and cultural features to comprehend texts. Such skills/strategies as finding the main idea, skimming, inferencing, schema-building and metacognitive skills, are commonly taught in most FL classrooms. On the other hand, in the TB approach, referred to IR(TB) afterwards, "the text itself is the lesson focus, and students try to understand it as fully as necessary, using all the skills they have acquired" (Nuttall 1996:38).

The IR(TB) method has been criticised as being language study, but not reading practice (Susser & Robb 1990). Moreover, the use of short texts, lack of training in reading long texts, short supply of class time and no choice of texts in the IR approach could hamper learners from becoming competent readers. This leads us to consider what is normally thought of as alternative – the extensive reading (ER) approach.

2.5.2 Extensive reading (ER) approach

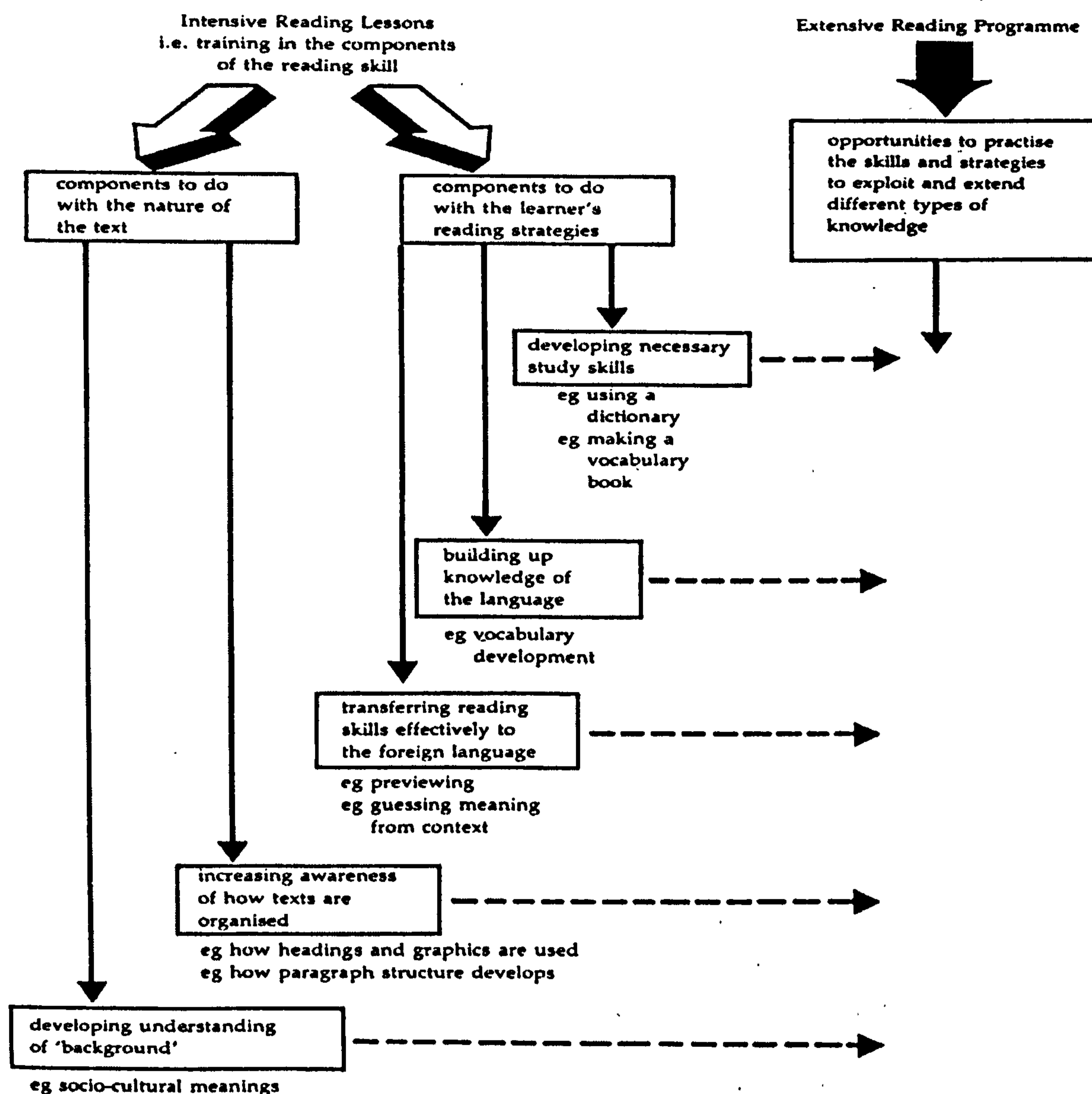
An ER approach means that students read a large quantity of text of their own choosing and acquire language proficiency for general comprehension. The first

emphasis is reading a large quantity of text; in order to do that, learners have to derail from a detailed decoding process as well as increase their knowledge of the language and the world (Klapper 1991). The second emphasis is the freedom of choice which can increase learners' interests in reading and then enhance their learning motivation (Bay & Bamford 1998). The third emphasis relies on the appropriate level of language which allows learners to manage the language so that they can read at a reasonable speed, and consequently, increase the flow of their reading to become fluent readers (Nuttall 1996). The final emphasis focuses on reading for comprehension of main meaning which involves students in an interactive process (Aebersold & Field 1997). In other words, in order to understand cultural information, learners have to recall their schematic knowledge (e.g. cultural information, terminology of a specific subject), and also make use of their existing linguistic knowledge, for example, they use logical connectives to know the cohesion tie between clauses or sections of text (2.2.2).

The distinction between IR(TB) and ER is an essential issue. While IR(TB) concentrates on close study of texts and the features of written language, ER involves substantial exposure with the aim of practising different knowledge or strategies more effectively and independently on a range of materials. Hedge (2000:203) explains clearly the relationship between IR(SB) and ER in Figure 2-4.

As we can see, the two approaches tackle teaching reading from different angles, and consequently, produce different outcomes. On the one hand, in the IR(SB), students can acquaint themselves with a basic knowledge of English language and written texts, and essential skills/strategies for reading. On the other hand, the ER approach can create a rich-written-input environment in which learners can read for meaning and pleasure, practise skills/strategies they learn in the IR(SB), experience real reading and build their schemata knowledge. Therefore, both the IR(SB) and ER approaches should be treated as complementary to each other and should be included in any EFL lessons, syllabus or situations. If the two approaches could be combined, learners are more likely to become competent readers.

Figure 2-4 The relationship between IR and ER



2.6 Reading instruction in Taiwan

As mentioned in the background section (1.1), the IR(TB) approach currently dominates the mainstay of EFL instruction in Taiwan, and many other countries. The reasons which cause this phenomenon include:

1. Traditional education in Taiwan is "heavily formalistic, with rote memory, standardized lectures and regurgitational exams" (Mendel 1970:48). In other words, learning vocabulary and grammar by heart are taught exclusively in reading lessons in secondary schools. For students, reading is considered complete only when all unfamiliar words have been checked and translated into Chinese (Chern 1993).

2. The objective of learning to read is to pass entrance examinations which lead to junior high schools, colleges, or universities. This reinforces the fact that the unique role of IR approach in reading instruction in Taiwan is a means to an end, but nothing else (Arden-Close 1999).
3. In English lessons in schools, pupils are forced to analyse texts containing approximately 100 words in the textbook in which texts are constructed linguistically for FL learning. The full language exercises in the textbook are exactly the same as Susser and Robb's (1990:161) description of traditional Japanese instruction which "implies close study of short passages, including syntactic, semantic, and lexical analyses and translation into L1 to study meaning". That is, students are forced to study reading texts which are actually unrealistic and artificial.
4. Confined to the teaching method and material in reading lessons, students lack opportunity to experience reading practices in real life as with L1 reading. That is, teachers tend to spend most of their lesson time on decoding skills rather than giving students an opportunity to read at length in class.

Instructed in these ways, learners' reading problems occur in many aspects of English learning. The first problem is a failure to read in an appropriate way (effectively and fluently) in their educational study and their understanding is less than we might expect them to have, and their reading speed is considerably slower than that of L1 (Chern & Chi 1988). This is due to the lack of reading practice in their reading lessons. The second problem is a result of lack of introduction about the complexities of the reading process or any guide on how to cope with problems (Spranger 1975). Thus, reading strategies are rarely seen as being as important as identification of words, and students are given little chance to develop their own strategies of reading. Moreover, since students are not taught and trained to practise essential strategies for FL reading, they are not capable and confident to use them when they read. The third problem results in their negative attitudes toward English learning and reading in particular (Arden-Close 1999). The possible causes are the aim of reading lessons which are used entirely as a preparation for tests, and the textbook to which students' reactions are uniformly negative - unrelated to life and boring (Arden-Close 1999). To put up with

such a learning situation for six years, it is not surprising that after being frustrated by one problem or another, most Taiwanese university freshmen have not the enthusiasm that they used to have when they started to learn English in secondary schools.

To sum up, despite the fact that a combination of the IR and ER approach would help learners to promote their language proficiency, reading instruction in Taiwan is monopolized entirely by the IR approach, including the philosophy, materials, method and assessment, aimed at one end – passing Basic Competency Test at present (i.e. the national entrance exams in the past). There is strong indication of the insufficiency of the current reading instruction in secondary schools in Taiwan, and the ER approach can counteract “a tendency among foreign language learners always to regard a text as an object for language studies and not as an object for factual information, literary experience or simply pleasure, joy and delight” (Simensen 1987:42). This very fact supports the desirability of adopting the ER approach for improving the current teaching situation. Ironically, the considerable amount of successful research and growing interest in ER in many countries, such as USA, UK, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore (see 1.3, 3.2 & 3.5), has received very little attention among English teaching professionals in Taiwan. It has therefore not made any impact to date on the development of the school curriculum.

2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has attempted to describe the complexity of reading as an interactive process in which readers use whatever internal or external resources are available to them to understand reading texts for whatever purposes they aim at (2.2). To achieve this, models of how the reading process works were given in 2.3, before discussing the issue – is reading a language problem or a reading problem? (see 2.4) Considering the negative influence of current reading instruction on students' language and attitude development in 2.6, Section 2.5 was the first step towards opening the gate to the secret garden of extensive reading. The next chapter is assigned to exploring the territory of extensive reading. It firstly examines the concept, the underlying theory and the benefits of extensive reading. There follows an enumeration of evidence drawn from previous studies on ER programmes so as to build up practical implications for this study.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW (2) - EXTENSIVE READING

The idea that students who read a great deal tend to become better readers gained prominence, along with the notion that the best way to develop reading ability is not through isolated skill and drill practices, but by reading itself.

–Pilgreen, J. L. (2000, p. 4) –

3.1 Introduction

Eskey (1986), Grabe (1993) and Smith (1985) advocate reading for developing reading ability, which means that learners must read extensively, if they would like to become competent readers in L1 or SL/FL in particular. The assumption behind this is that the more readers acquaint themselves with reading, the more reading capability they will develop. Many teachers would admit the importance and benefits of reading in language learning, but they are often reluctant to give their students materials to read individually and independently, because of constraints to do with the availability of books, appropriate level of language in reading materials, limited class time and low pupil motivation (Ellis & McRae 1991). Is there a way for students to read English books enjoyably and effectively? Most EFL teachers would wish for one.

However, the answer is now a matter of fact, not fancy. A considerable amount of research has demonstrated evidence of the benefits of ER in improving learners' language proficiency and their attitudes toward reading in particular. In response to what they perceive as a lack of attention to ER, Grabe (1993) and Williams and Moran (1989) recommend that in FL reading instructions, ER should be encouraged. As mentioned in 2.6, the IR approach is the mainstream of EFL reading instruction in Taiwan, and the ER approach has received comparatively little attention, and as a result, teachers and instructors know little about its pedagogy and effectiveness. So, what is ER? Is there a theory behind it? Where exactly can the evidence be located? What elements are involved in an ER programme? As Susser and Robb (1990) point out, the answers to these questions are the essence of ER, and have to be understood before applying ER to our teaching programmes.

Taking this view, this chapter aims at expanding our knowledge of extensive reading, its concept, characteristics, theoretical underpinnings and benefits, as well as evidence from experimental research, in order to draw out tried means or practical implications for the study. This chapter starts by defining the notion of extensive reading (3.2) and discusses theories from the literature (3.3). Then, the benefits ER can bring to FL learners are discussed in section 3.4, and the following section (3.5) is assigned to getting insights into practical issues from previous research with particular reference to the secondary level. Based on the theoretical and practical discussion, the final section (3.6) raises a number of practical implications for on-going study.

3.2 Definition of extensive reading (ER)

As cited in Day and Bamford (1998), Harold Palmer (1917) nearly a century ago was the first person to use “extensive” for “abundant reading” in conveying how reading should be taught in secondary schools. By extensive, he meant “rapid” (1964:111) reading “book after book” (1917:137) in which the focus was on the meaning, but not the language itself. Day and Bamford (1998:5) interpret Palmer’s concept as taking “on a special sense in the context of language teaching: real-world reading but for a pedagogical purpose”.

In the 1950’s, Michael West (1955), when he was creating supplementary readers, referred to the aim of reading extensively as “to confer greater facility in the use of the vocabulary already gained, to give the child a sense of achievement and a taste of the pleasure to be derived from his accomplishment” (p. 45). Then, Bright and McGregor (1977) defined extensive reading as reading a quantity of L2 materials over a certain length of time.

In the last twenty five years, a considerable amount of literature and research have been devoted to amplifying the meaning and use of L1 extensive reading, but comparatively, FL extensive reading has been little studied, and as a result, we know little about either its pedagogical aspects or its effectiveness. Recently, an increasing number of researchers and FL instructors have turned to ER as a means of facilitating their students’ acquisition, perhaps because of the results of second language acquisition research on the implications of input in the learning process (Hedge 2000).

Krashen (1993b) certainly included ER in his discussion of input which is comprehensible meaningful and relevant (see 3.3).

ER has been given a variety of names in both L1 and SL/FL situations: Book Flood, Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), Extensive Reading Programme (ERP), Free Voluntary Reading (FVR), Pleasure Reading, Reading for Pleasure, Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), Sustained Uninterrupted Reading for Fun (SURF), Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) (Day & Bamford 1998; Krashen 1993b; Pilgreen 2000; Robb & Susser 1989), and these programmes have been implemented successfully in a number of countries, such as USA, UK, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Among them, various general definitions emerge as follows:

- ER as reading a quantity of L2 materials over a certain length of time (Bright & McGregor 1977).
- “Extensive reading involves encouraging learners to read a range of materials, read them quickly and well, for pleasure and for language development” (Ellis & McRae 1991:5).
- “An extensive reading programme is a supplementary class library scheme, attached to an English course, in which pupils are given the time, encouragement and materials to read pleurably, at their own level, as many books as they can, without the pressures of testing or marks” (Davis 1995:329).
- “Extensive reading is the reading, without overt instruction, of large amounts of material for pleasure and information” (Jacobs, Davis & Renandya 1997:ii).
- “In Extensive Reading all the learners are reading different materials at their own ability level, which builds reading fluency and reading confidence because the learners select what they want to read” (Waring & Takahashi 2000:3)

What all of these different interpretations emphasise is that ER is to provide a situation in which learners can read a large quantity of texts in their own time and at their own pace, and meaning, confidence and fluency are the main foci. Although no consensus emerges, the definitions above all contribute to the understanding of the domain of ER and reveal the important characteristics of ER which is the main theme of the following section.

3.2.1 Characteristics of ER

The important characteristics of ER have been identified as follows (Bamford & Day 1997, Hedge 2000, Krashen 1993b; Nuttall 1996, Swarbrick 1998):

- Accessing a variety of interesting materials;
- Reading a large quantity of printed materials;
- Having freedom to choose or change books;
- Reading at one's own pace for pleasure or information;
- Creating a tension-free and enjoyable environment;
- Having no extra activities or homework attached to the reading;
- Giving opportunity to experience real-life reading.

All these characteristics are drawn from the common factors found in successful ER programmes and centre on experiencing real-life reading rather than on studying language. They indicate that ER can create an input-rich, self-controlled, enjoyable and pressure-free environment. By being immersed in these circumstances, students are able to take full advantage of ER to develop into competent readers. In other words, the advantages that ER can bring are the reasons why ER should be promoted.

3.2.2 Why extensive reading?

It can be said that the characteristics above are essential components of ER and represent what ER is focused on, though there has been debate on the issue of 'extra activities' particularly at the school level. Why do they play important roles in helping learners to become fluent and confident readers? In other words, why should learners read extensively? The reasons can be summarised as follows (Bell 1998; Elley 1991; Lituana, Jacobs & Renandya 1999; Waring & Takahashi 2000; Yu 1993):

1. Having an access to a wide range of materials, students' exposure to the language will increase, and because of meeting a substantial amount of information, their knowledge of the world will also increase.

2. Learners can choose books which are within their current reading ability so that the input is comprehensible, that is, they are immersed in meaningful texts. Then, they “will be processing words faster and *building the automatic recognition of words*” (Waring & Takahashi 2000:7). As they read faster and their vocabulary increases, they read more and understand more. Thus, language acquisition occurs and their language competence will be enhanced.
3. Once reading becomes meaningful and manageable, learners will become confident and be motivated to read and read more, and will then realise that reading can be enjoyable and fun. When students are interested in reading, they are more likely to carry on reading, and then reading will become a routine activity, that is, learners will develop a reading habit.
4. Being repeatedly exposed to meaningful and manageable texts, students not only can consolidate the language they have learned, but they can also acquire new vocabulary, the grammatical patterns in text and discourse structures of the written language.

These reasons indicate that in a meaningful and enjoyable reading atmosphere, learners' language will develop naturally. The assumptions behind this are that without comprehending the overall meaning of texts, reading is meaningless and learners gain no benefit; without access to a large quantity of reading, learners' schematic and linguistic knowledge increases little and they have little opportunity to develop reading capability; without interesting and attractive books, learners' attention will not be netted and the incentive to read is not boosted (Early 1991); without enjoyment, students have little interest in reading; without motivation, learners become reluctant and learning progress is slow. All these centre on incidental language learning that refers to language proficiency and attitudes which the readers do not intend to learn from ER, but do develop (Krashen 1994). The incentive to start this is the comprehensible input and this leads us to consider the theory underpinning ER.

3.3 Underlying theory for extensive reading

Extensive reading has been particularly related to Krashen's theory of comprehensible input (Hill 1992; Tudor & Hafiz 1989). For Krashen (1981), acquisition

possesses a more dominant position than learning. By acquisition, he means that learners acquire the language subconsciously in a similar way to the method by which children develop ability in their first language. In contrast, learning means the conscious process when learners receive the rules of structure and conventions of usage. Based upon this distinction, he (*ibid.*:100) hypothesises that the “condition for language acquisition to occur is that the acquirer understands (via hearing or reading) input language that contains structure a bit beyond his or her current level of competence”. In other words, the comprehensible input has to contain elements that are slightly beyond “ i ”, that is, “ $i + 1$ ”. The main characteristics of the Comprehensible Input Hypothesis can be summarised as follows (Krashen 1982:21-22):

- We acquire by understanding language that contains structures a bit beyond our current level of competence ($i+1$) where i is the student’s current level of acquisition. This is done with the help of context or extra-linguistic information.
- When communication is successful, when the input is understood and there is enough of it, $i+1$ will be provided automatically.
- Production ability emerges.

Krashen (1981) concludes that language acquisition occurs only when comprehensible input is available, that is, a learner may be able to acquire the language in terms of understanding the input or receiving comprehensible input. With more and more of such input, the learner is repeatedly exposed to words, expressions, structures and aspects of discourse. With each exposure, the learner adds to his or her mental mapping of these features and how they are used in the target language (Ellis 1995). Then they develop their “interlanguage” system in which they make and test hypotheses about rules of the language in order to “make sense of language input and impose a structure on it” (Hedge 2000:11). Batstone (1996:273) explains that “Once learners process this system, input becomes part of learning process known as intake”. Of course, learners will not assimilate all the input received, but they will pay more attention to those which are comprehensible. This type of comprehensible intake is called ‘noticing’ and helps learners process meaning, recognise the relationship between meaning and form, and then internalise the language (Hedge 2000; Swain 1985). Because “it takes time for learners to progress from initial recognition to the point

where they can internalize the underlying rule” (Batstone 2000:273), the input must occur frequently so that students can draw meaning from the input they attempt to access and acquisition eventually take place (Hedge 2000; Krashen 1988; Ying 1995). There is some strong evidence that the primary requisite for significant acquisition is substantial comprehensible input (Krashen 1988; Nation 1997).

Building on Krashen’s (1982) Comprehensible Input Theory, Hafiz and Tudor (1989) claim that, in order for acquisition to occur, “a number of conditions have to be satisfied: learners need to be exposed to large amounts of L2 input which is meaningful, interesting or relevant, not grammatically sequenced, and this in a tension-free environment” (pp.4-5). However, as mentioned in 2.6, teaching reading in the classroom in Taiwan very often focuses on studying the language in order to help students to get good scores in examinations, but not on working out the meaning of the message. Therefore, the pressure derived from examinations precludes students being exposed to a rich reading environment for their own interest. Consequently, the input is limited and acquisition develops slowly.

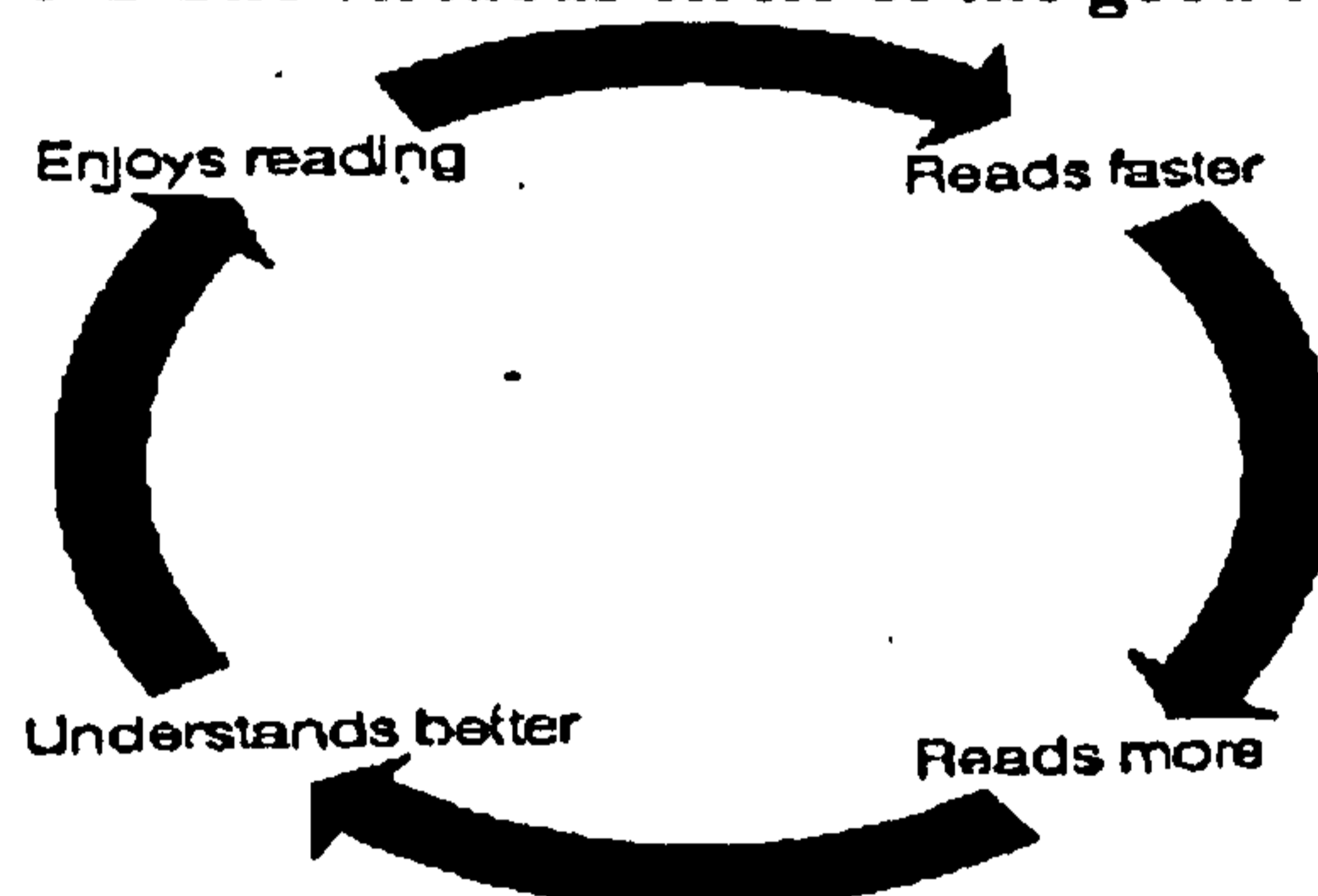
Integrating Krashen’s (1982) Comprehensible Input Theory with Hafiz and Tudor’s (1989) claim, an extensive reading programme seems to be one evident possibility for providing junior secondary school students in Taiwan with an environment within which they can approach large quantities of written materials in the FL for personal interest reading, without worrying too much about tests. Within such an input environment, what benefits will learners who read extensively gain?

3.4 Benefits of extensive reading

The rationale for adopting extensive reading is based on the fact that intensive reading alone does not necessarily help learners to be active readers and to be able to read fluently, frequently and voluntarily (Barrett & Datesman 1992). By exposure to favourite materials in their own time, at their own pace and level, extensive reading should be able to remedy the shortcomings of intensive reading. As far as its characteristics, reasons and theories are concerned, the ER approach appears to be the most appropriate option for developing competent readers and improving the current teaching situation in Taiwan (see the discussion in 2.6). It assumes that in pleasurable and meaningful circumstances, learners’ reading ability and attitudes toward reading will

improve. A considerable amount of research evidence has shown the effects of ER on FL development as on L1 learners (Bell 2001; Davis 1995; Elley 1991; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Hayashi 1999; Lai 1993a; Nation 1997; Robb & Susser 1989; Tsang 1996). Among them, Stephen Krashen in particular, by reviewing research worldwide in his book, *The Power of Reading* (1993b), points out the positive effects and importance of Free Voluntary Reading (FVR, his term for ER) and advocates the desirability of the adoption of FVR in schools. Nuttall (1996) provides the following figure, demonstrating that the most promising value of ER is to help our students enter “the virtuous circle of the good reader” (p.127).

Figure 3-1 The virtuous circle of the good reader



The figure shows that when students can choose books which are interesting and appropriate to them, they will understand and enjoy reading and then they will read faster and want to read more. The more they read, the more they will understand and enjoy, so they read faster and want more. In this virtuous circle, the benefits our learners can receive might rely on two areas: language proficiency and reading ability, and affect.

3.4.1 Language proficiency and reading ability

The first area in which learners can gain from ER is that a large quantity of comprehensible input and reading practice contribute to English language acquisition (Bamford & Day 1998). Research on extensive reading has consistently claimed that ER is a highly beneficial method of improving reading ability and improving various aspects of language learning as discussed below. Some of these studies will be analysed in detail later in 3.5.

3.4.1.1 Reading comprehension

Theory and research highlight learners' improvement in reading ability as the most valued gain. The argument is that by reading for interest, information and general comprehension, students' overall reading skills will improve, and then they will find it easier to read continually. With more exposure and practice, they will find that it is easier to read more with appropriate understanding, and then their reading speed increases and they can come to read for pleasure (Hudson 1998; Swarbrick 1990). Most research on ER has reported students' improvement in reading comprehension (e.g. Elley 1991; Elley & Mangubhai 1981, 1983; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Krashen 1993a; Lai 1993a; Mason & Krashen 1997b; Pilgreen & Krashen 1993; Susser & Robb 1989; Tudor & Hafiz 1989).

3.4.1.2 Vocabulary

In L1 acquisition research, reading has been seen as one of the main ways of acquiring new vocabulary and learners who read more learn more words (Nagy, Herman & Anderson 1985). Krashen (1989), and Wodinsky and Nation (1988) believe that L2 vocabulary is learned incidentally while reading and argue that ER in which learners are exposed to items frequently and repeatedly can accomplish this acquisition. Studies report that their subjects learned vocabulary incidentally (Day, Omura & Hiramatsu 1991; Elley 1989; Pitts, White & Krashen 1989), developed an adequate spelling ability (Polak & Krashen 1988), gained in vocabulary recognition (Cho & Krashen 1994; Horst, Cobb & Meara 1998), or acquired vocabulary knowledge (Critchley 1998; Haynes & Coady 1993). Moreover, by exploring in an English input-rich environment, learners become able to begin reading with automatic recognition of words (Koda 1996) and students deepen their knowledge of vocabulary (Huckin, Haynes & Coady 1993; Nation & Coady 1988).

3.4.1.3 Schematic knowledge

One advantage, as Day and Bamford (1998:18) quote Harris and Sipay's (1990) statement, is that 'a wide reading not only increases word-meaning knowledge but can also produce gains in topical and world knowledge that can further facilitate reading comprehension'. Take the newspaper article on the UN inspection in Iraq in 2.2.1 as an

example. Apart from recalling their existing knowledge of the conflict, new information would expand readers' knowledge of the development of the weapon inspection. If they continued to follow newspaper reports they would know more about the relationship between the UN and Iraq. By the final inspector report to the UN Security Council, they would acquire a great quantity of global knowledge, including the inspector reports, material breach, the UN Security council, the coalition of USA, UK and Spain, French and Russian vetoes over the war... That is to say, reading extensively will enrich learners' knowledge in three aspects: 1) being aware of current events in the world, matters of travel, history and politics; 2) being aware of social trends; and 3) extending knowledge of human nature (Hill 1992).

3.4.1.4 Reading speed

Concentrating on individual words and expressions in order to grasp their meanings has kept many students' reading slow and disfluent, associated with less overall reading, poor comprehension and leading to frustration (Rasinski 2000; Richard 1982). Aiming at reading materials which are appropriate to their language levels for meaning, ER can provide a situation where learners can keep their own reading pace and understand a text simultaneously (Anderson 1999; de Lopez 1993). Gradually, they can read more and their reading speeds increase. Lai's (1993a) study demonstrated that two experimental groups made significant improvement in a reading speed test while maintaining global comprehension of the text read. Echoing Lai's report, Bell (2001:9) also found that "learners in the extensive reading group would achieve significantly faster reading speeds than subjects in the intensive group" and he concluded that ER would help learners to achieve much greater gains in speed.

3.4.1.5 Reading strategies

By experiencing language in context within a topic-rich situation, learners learn to adopt different strategies (top-down and bottom-up) for comprehending the meanings from different types of passages. Research has reported that, as a result, learners were more skilful in comprehending reading texts, and developed more effective reading (Elley & Mangubhai 1981; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Huang & van Naerssen 1987; Janopoulos 1986; Lai 1993b). Among them, Hayashi's (1999) study showed that

students who read extensively developed their efficiency of strategy use and she states that “extensive reading is beneficial for improving reading skills, rather than just teaching reading strategies” (p.129).

3.4.1.6 Language competence and skills development

Several researchers reported that subjects improved their ability in other areas in the target language. For example, writing (Elley & Mangubhai 1981; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Janopoulos 1986; Lai 1993a; Mason & Krashen, 1997b; Tsang 1996), listening and speaking (Cho & Krashen 1994; Elley & Mangubhai 1981) and grammar (Elley 1991, Elley & Mangubhai 1981; Nation 1997).

To sum up, gains the learners might make in various aspects of language learning can be summarised as follows:

- Improvement in reading comprehension: Elley 1991; Elley & Mangubhai 1981, 1983; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Hudson 1998; Krashen 1993a; Lai 1993a; Mason & Krashen 1997b; Pilgreen & Krashen 1993; Susser & Robb 1989; Tudor & Hafiz 1989.
- Vocabulary acquisition: Cho & Krashen 1994; Crithley 1998; Day, Omura & Hiramatsu 1991; Elley 1989; Haynes & Coady 1993; Horst, Cobb & Meara 1998; Huckin, Haynes & Coady 1993; Koda 1996; Krashen 1989; Nagy, Herman & Anderson 1985; Nation & Coady 1988; Pitts, White & Krashen 1989; Polak & Krashen 1988; Wodinsky & Nation 1988).
- Enriching learners’ schematic knowledge: Day & Bamford 1998; Harris & Sipay 1990; Hill 1992.
- Improvement in reading speed: Anderson 1997; Bell 2001; deLopez 1993; Lai 1993a; Rasinski 2000; Richard 1982.
- Reading strategy development: Elley & Mangubhai 1981; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Hayashi 1999; Huang & van Naerssen 1987; Janopoulos 1986; Lai 1993b.
- Writing: Elley & Mangubhai 1981; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Lai 1993a; Mason & Krashen 1997b; Tsang 1996.

- Listening and speaking ability: Cho & Krashen 1994; Elley & Mangubhai 1981.
- Grammar: Elley 1991; Elley & Mangubhai 1983; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Nation 1997.

3.4.2 Affect

Given that freedom in choice can stimulate motivation to read, and interesting materials foster a positive attitude, it has been suggested that ER has an impact on such personal variables as attitude toward reading or language learning, motivation to read and learning autonomy (Hunt 1970). Bamford and Day (1997) claim that extensive reading is a means of developing positive attitudes toward reading and increasing motivation to read. This section discusses the possible effects of ER on learner affect: motivation, attitude, learner autonomy and collaboration.

3.4.2.1 Motivation

Crookes and Schmidt (1991:489) provides a clear definition that “Motivation refers to the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid, and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect”. This model of motivation, defined as cognitive motivation, relates to the intrinsic/extrinsic motivation theory of Deci and Ryan (1985) and claims that learners who are interested in learning tasks and outcomes for their own sake (intrinsic), rather than for rewards, are likely to become more effective learners. In this sense, intrinsic factors serve as an incentive to stir up learners’ motivation (Dörnyei 2001). Allowing learners to follow their own interests in choosing what they like to read from a great quantity of materials at an appropriate level, ER can stimulate their intrinsic motivation. Cho and Krashen (1994), Constantino (1995), Elley (1991) and Gallik (1999) reported that there was a motivation growth among their learners in ER programmes. In particular, Mason and Krashen’s (1997a) study showed that unmotivated EFL students in Japan clearly enjoyed the ER programme.

3.4.2.2 Attitude

Having a free choice of what, when, how and where to read, learners do not feel forced to read (Day & Bamford 2000; Constantino 1995). Moreover, focusing on meaning and pleasure will change students' perception of reading for studying and testing (Anderson 2000). Consequently, reading is not a phobia in language learning any more. Instead, students can read freely and become eager repetitive readers (Renandya, Rajan & Jacobs 1999). Such a positive attitude becomes a powerful force for continued reading and success in their own learning (Pilgreen & Gribbons 1998). Camiciottoli (2001), Cho and Krashen (1994) and Elley (1991), report that the subjects developed positive attitudes toward reading and language learning.

3.4.2.3 Learner autonomy

Little (1991:4) describes autonomy as a "capacity – for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action". Dickinson (1995:174) clarifies that "taking their own learning responsibility, being able to control their own learning and perceiving their learning outcomes" are three vital factors in enhancing learners' motivation. The factors discussed by these two authors can be divided into two components: ability refers to knowledge about choices for their learning and the necessary skills for putting decisions into practice, and willingness to reach objectives (Littlewood 1996). In other words, after students are made aware of what options (e.g. materials, strategies) they have in reading, they can set up their reading goals and take responsibility for their own reading process; then learners will value their own study and move away from dependence on teacher-fronted instruction, and eventually, develop an independent reading habit (Hopkins 1997). Nation (1997) points out that by giving freedom of choosing or changing books and recording their progress, ER provides an opportunity for enhancing EFL learners' autonomy. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of ER on learner autonomy development (Camiciottoli 2001; Jacobs, Davis & Renandya 1997; Lai 1993a; Nation 1997; Yu 1995). Renandya, Rajan & Jacobs (1999:54) conclude, "one of the greatest rewards in conducting this study (on ER) was in seeing the initially not-so-eager readers gradually develop a healthy reading habit".

3.4.2.4 Collaboration

Since “it is a constant challenge for teachers to adapt their teaching to suit all the levels in a mixed class” (Hill 1992:16), an extensive reading programme enables teachers to use activities which involve learner collaboration, that is, they encourage one another to read and share what they have read with others (Jacobs, Davis & Renandya 1997). Hayashi’s (1999) concludes that ER accompanied by activities such as story telling promotes her students’ collaborative work, and extends their understanding of the story and expressive skills. Other research also provides evidence for the improvement in this aspect (Dupuy, Tse & Cook 1996; Jacobs, Davis & Renandya 1997; Lai 1993a).

In short, the personal influences ER might make on learners are:

- Increasing learners’ motivation: Cho & Krashen 1994; Constantino 1995; Elley 1991; Gallik 1999; Mason and Krashen 1997a.
- Developing positive attitudes: Anderson 2000; Camiciottoli 2001; Cho & Krashen 1994; Constantino 1995; Dupuy, Tse & Cook 1996; Elly 1991; Pilgreen & Gribbons 1998; Renandya, Rajan & Jacobs 1999.
- Fostering learner autonomy: Camiciottoli 2001; Jacobs, Davis & Renandya 1997; Hopkins 1997; Lai 1993a; Nation 1997; Renandya, Rajan & Jacobs 1999; Yu 1995.
- Involving learners’ collaboration: Dupuy, Tse & Cook 1996; Hayashi 1999; Hill 1992; Jacobs, Davis & Renandya 1997; Lai 1993a.

In summary, the benefits of ER in EFL learners’ language proficiency, reading ability and affect are evident. The major merit of ER lies in the fact that it can start the virtuous circle (Figure 3-1 above) at any point. It should also be noticed that this discussion has indicated a close interrelationship between these benefits. Now we should look in more detail at evidence derived from research undertaken into ER.

3.5 Insights from previous research on ER

Since Palmer, a pioneer of foreign language teaching, first applied the idea of extensive reading in FL pedagogy (1917), most studies on L1 and L2 extensive reading have been undertaken in the USA and European countries. Despite this, a trend towards the use of FL extensive reading emerged among Southeast Asian countries about a decade ago, specifically in Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong (see 1.3 & 3.2). Most recently, Jacobs, Renandya and Bamford (2000) in SEAMEO Regional Language Centre (RELIC) in Singapore compiled an annotated bibliography of works on extensive reading in a second language. It has provided abstracts of works related to the use of extensive reading. In addition, a considerable number of research papers on extensive reading specifically undertaken in the context of Japan have appeared in the two journals (i.e. the *Language Teacher* and *JALT Journal*) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT).

For furthering our consideration on how best to investigate the implementation of an extensive reading programme in junior high schools in Taiwan, this section enumerates empirical evidence derived from studies on ER. Moreover, the areas, both in research methodology and programme design, that could be improved in further studies will be pointed out.

3.5.1 Philippine extensive reading programme (Lituanas, Jacobs & Renandya 1999)

Given that English teaching situations in poorer countries suffer from lack of reading materials, low teacher salaries and inadequate teaching ability (Greaney 1996), ER has often been less successful in those contexts. The article reported a study designed to investigate the effectiveness of an ER programme for remedial learners at a Philippine secondary school.

1. Research question: two null hypotheses were set up as follows.

- There is no significant difference in the pre-test reading proficiency scores of the control and experimental groups.
- There is no significant difference in the post-test reading proficiency scores of the control and experimental groups.

2. Subjects and procedures: sixty first-year secondary school students (30 males and 30 females, aged 13-14) participated in this study for 6 months. Using a matching-pairs method (IQ, sex, socio-economic status, reading level and past achievement), the students were randomly divided into two groups: the experimental remedial reading class and the control class. Both groups attended a 40-minute regular English lesson and a 40-minute remedial reading lesson for six months. In the regular English lessons, both groups followed the same syllabus, but received different treatments in the remedial reading lessons. The control group received normal English lessons and studied a textbook, but in the experimental group, pupils chose books and spent 18 minutes in reading and another 18 minutes in doing post-activities (answering questions, role play, retelling stories, mock interviews and adding new vocabulary to a personal notebook). The remaining 4 minutes were for classroom management.

Two reading proficiency tests were conducted two months before the experiment began and immediately after the experiment had finished: the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI)⁵ and the Gray Standardized Oral Reading Test (GSORT)⁶.

3. Findings: in the pre-test, the T-test results show that no significant difference was found between the two groups. Thus, the first null hypothesis was accepted. However, after six months, there was a statistical significance in the mean scores between the two groups, and therefore the second hypothesis was rejected.
4. Limitations: the following design issues arise from the study:
- The reading tests used in this study were for L1 students, but not for FL learners.
 - The pre-test was carried out two months before the experiment began. It is unclear whether the results of the pre-test would have differed if it had been conducted just before the experiment began.

3.5.2 Self-selected reading (Mason & Krashen 1997b)

Three experiments undertaken by these researchers reported the effect of extensive reading on EFL learners. In extensive reading students did self-selected reading with

⁵ Johnson, M. S., Kress, R. A., & Pikulski, J. J. (1987).

⁶ Gray, W. S. (1967).

only minimal accountability, writing brief summaries or comments on what they had read.

3.5.2.1 Experiment 1: Extensive reading and reluctant students of EFL

1. Research questions: this experiment “investigated whether so-called ‘bad students’ or failures in English as a foreign language (EFL) could improve with an extensive reading treatment” (p.92).
2. Subjects and procedures: the subjects were two intact EFL reading classes in a Japanese university. The experimental group consisted of year 2 to 4 students who had failed EFL classes. The control group was second year students in a normal class. Both groups attended a 90-minute lesson per week. In the first semester of the year, the two classes received normal English lessons (vocabulary, grammar and translation). From the second semester, while the control group continued the normal instruction, the experimental group was given 100 graded readers to read, and was asked to read at least 50 and write short summaries and keep reading journals. A one-hour 100-item cloze test was used as pre- and post-tests, and 28 students were randomly selected from each group for the data analyses.
3. Findings: the experimental group began the semester far behind the control group on a cloze test, but they had nearly caught up with them by the end of the semester. Moreover, the degree of development in the experimental group was more significant than the control group.
4. Limitation:
 - Only one measure was used (i.e. a 100-item cloze test) in the study.
 - No investigation into subjects’ preferences or interests and attitude had been administered before the programme.

3.5.2.2 Experiment 2: Extensive reading in a prestigious university and a junior college

1. Research question: this experiment was to “establish the reliability of the effect of extensive reading with two additional groups” (p.93).

2. Subjects and procedures: two classes from the English literature department at a university and two from a junior college participated in this study, and the classes in each institute were divided into an extensive reading group using 100 graded readers and a regular group receiving traditional instruction. But, the experimental group at the university was asked to read authentic texts from the second semester. The experimental groups were also asked to keep a reading record (writing a summary and reflections). This study used the same cloze test as in experimental 1. “In addition, the experimental students wrote a summary of the first book they read, and repeated this procedure with a different book at the end of the academic year” (p.94). The summary writing was marked with good, average or not good by three native speakers. The students also answered a short questionnaire assessing their achievement.
3. Findings:
 - Extensive readers outperformed traditionally taught students both at the university and the college. Their performance was statistically significant.
 - “In every case, more summaries were classified as ‘good’ in the post-test than in the pre-test” (p.94) and the improvement was also significant.
 - In the questionnaire results, the vast majority of the students felt their writing had improved and agreed that reading helped them improve their writing.
4. Limitations: the lack of the following information has limited the value of the project to other researchers:
 - There was no information on how much time was spent and how many books the students in the experimental groups had actually read.
 - No investigation into subjects’ preference or interests and attitude had been administered before the programme.
 - The researchers gave no indication what the criteria were in selecting the materials in which their subjects were interested.
 - The student writing development might be a result solely of the writing activity they did.

3.5.2.3 Experiment 3: Extensive reading with writing in the target language.

1. Research question: this study was designed to test “the effects of writing in the first language vs writing in the second language” (p.98).
2. Subjects and procedures: three groups spent 3-4 hours per week in this study, divided into ER English response group (wrote their reading responses in English), ER Japanese response group (wrote their summaries in L1, Japanese) and comparison group (worked on cloze exercises, read 32 4-page stories and took a vocabulary test). The measures of pre- and post-tests were a 100-item cloze test, a reading speed test, a 50-multiple choice question reading comprehension test, and a summary in English.
3. Findings:
 - In the cloze test, the two ER groups made more gains than the comparison group, but the improvement was only significant in the ER English response group. Gains made by extensive readers who wrote in Japanese were greater than groups with which they were compared, but the difference was not significant.
 - The two ER groups performed better in the reading comprehension test, whereas there was no statistical significance in the results.
 - The results of the writing and reading speed showed that the two ER groups made more gains, but the ER Japanese group improved more significantly than the other two groups.
4. Limitations: However, the following limitations should be taken into account in future research:
 - There was no information on how much time was spent and how many books the students in the experimental groups had actually read.
 - No investigation into subjects’ preference or interests and attitude had been administered before the programme.
 - The researchers gave no indication what the criteria were in selecting the materials in which their subjects were interested.
 - The study did not describe how many students were involved.

3.5.3 EPER project (Davis 1995)

By describing the effectiveness of the Edinburgh Project in Extensive Reading (EPER, Hill 1992) in countries with varied learning contexts such as Malaysia and Hong Kong, Davis's study investigated the effects of extensive reading and some of the reasons for its failure to start. It described two programmes undertaken in Singapore and Cameroon, in which he had been closely involved, and offered some suggestions to help teachers develop their own programmes.

3.5.3.1 Singapore project:

1. Project aim: the project was to assist selected schools in improving pupils' English skills.
2. Subjects and procedures: forty of the weakest secondary schools in the Singapore schools system participated in the project for five years, from 1985 to 1990. Pupils were pre-tested by cloze diagnostic tests for assessing the students' initial reading level. They helped teachers to guide pupils to appropriate levels, and served as an incentive for pupils to promote their reading levels during the year.

As part of school policy, those schools were able to get reading materials for every class, and those materials were available for students to take home. Each school adopted silent reading which involved the whole school in reading for twenty minutes each day. Moreover, the teachers were also asked to write reading diaries so that the researcher could monitor their concerns and give appropriate support and advice.

For checking pupils' progress, teachers used questionnaires and pictorial representations, which allowed pupils to show their achievement. One of the motivational strategies that teachers used was the wall-display competition, which indicated what pupils had read. Reading diaries provided teachers with the details of books pupils had read. This helped teachers to monitor an individual pupil's progress and to give supervision if necessary.

3. Findings: this project "succeeded in raising the schools' English language pass rate at O-level above the national average" (p, 331). Motivational strategies, such as wall-display competitions and end-of-year continuous assessment marks, were

successful and useful in creating an enthusiastic reading atmosphere and in encouraging pupils to read.

4. Limitations: However, it would have been more adequate if the following limitations had been considered:

- No investigation into subjects' preference or interests or attitude was administered before the programme.
- The researchers gave no indication what the criteria were in selecting the materials in which their subjects were interested.
- There was no information on the amount the subjects had actually read.
- There was no investigation into whether the subjects' attitudes changed or not.
- The students were allowed to take books home and read; therefore, the input outside the project was not controlled.

3.5.3.2 Cameroon project:

1. Project purpose: this project aimed at introducing the cheapest possible extensive reading programme into Cameroon English-medium secondary schools.
2. Subjects and procedures: one book collection containing 85 books was given to each pilot school. The books were intended for Form One Level, were written especially for the African cultural context, and were pre-graded and colour-coded by the project team. Grading and selecting of books were greatly facilitated by the EPER's Standard Booklist (Hill 1992), based on nine criteria (Hill 1997:58-59) as follows.
 - How acceptable is the language in terms of accuracy and style?
 - How much support is offered for understanding the language?
 - How much support is given to the process of reading?
 - How well do they prepare learners for reading unsimplified texts?
 - Are they (graded readers) a good read?
 - How interesting are they (graded readers)?
 - How well do these simplified versions reflect the original texts?

- How much help is offered for developing literacy appreciation?
- How well do graded readers prepare for reading the original texts?

A literature scheme or class readers scheme supplemented the programme. In the first year, all pupils took a diagnostic test. From the result, a sliding scale gave a starting reading grade to each pupil. Motivational strategies, such as book promotion and group sharing activities, were employed, but reading displays were not. Questionnaires, reading diaries, one-to-one interviews and class reading charts were also used as monitoring techniques.

3. Findings: no information on the outcomes of this project was given.

3.5.4 Summer extensive reading programme (Lai 1993a)

This study was conducted on secondary students in a 4-week summer extensive reading programme in Hong Kong. Graded readers and short passages were used to supply comprehensible input to 226 subjects from Hong Kong secondary schools.

1. Research question: the study investigated the effects of such a programme on learners' reading comprehension, reading speed and writing development.
2. Subjects and procedures: the subjects were secondary 1-3 (S1-3) (grades 7-9) students aged 11-15 with the majority being 13. They were of a wide range of English abilities and they came from different schools. The total number of the subjects was 126 in 1988 (S1), 88 in 1989 (S2) and 52 in 1991 (S3). They had to pay for the 4-week course. The course ran for 2 hours and 30 minutes, 5 days a week. The students worked under the guidance of a teacher for the first half of the time and then read graded readers on their own. 40 books were provided, and a number of activities (i.e. book report form, story retelling, a wall chart, singing songs, reading aloud, playing language games, puzzle solving and book exhibition) were used. At the start of the course, the subjects were given two tests, the Standardized Reading Test and a self-designed reading speed test, to assess their reading ability; then according to the results, they were grouped into 20 students in each class. At the end of the course, the subjects were asked to take the Standardized Reading Test, the reading speed test and to fill out a questionnaire evaluating the course. For S3 subjects, they were asked to write an essay on "My Family" at the start and at the end of the course.

3. Findings: results showed that there was improvement in all three areas tested for these subjects who had reached a certain level of proficiency. Depending on teachers' emphasis, the quantity of reading done had a significant relationship to reading comprehension gains in one course and to reading speed in another course as summarised below:
 - Comparing the scores of the Standardized Reading Test (pre- and post-), the experimental subjects made an improvement in reading comprehension.
 - From the results of the reading speed test, two groups (S1 and S2) increased their reading speed while they still maintained global comprehension.
 - In writing performance, students increased in the number of words written, and improved in terms of accuracy and the content.
4. Limitations: it should be pointed out that two main problems arise from this study:
 - The two criteria for selecting materials were reported as interest level and language appropriateness, but there was no information on how the criterion of interest level was arrived at.
 - There was no control group in the research.

3.5.5 Book-based programmes (Elley 1991)

3.5.5.1 Study One: Fiafia (Fun) Programs in Niue

1. Research question: the programme aimed at comparing the effects of a non-audiolingual (shared-books) and audiolingual programmes (the Tate Syllabus⁷).
2. Subjects and procedures: in 1978, all Class 3 pupils (8-year-olds) in the six primary schools of Niue in the South Pacific received the normal audiolingual Tate Syllabus. These children were learning English as a second language in a post-colonial situation. In 1979, the same children participated in the Fiafia (means Fun) programme. The pupils (N=114) were interviewed and tested for English language proficiency (including reading comprehension, word recognition and oral language)

⁷ "The Tate syllabus (1967, 1971)... "a typical audiolingual program, based upon the kinds of structuralist principles advocated by C.C. Fries and L. Bloomfield... presumes that language is a set of habits to be learned systematically, item by item, using methods of imitation, repetition, and reinforcement" (Elley 1991:377).

at the beginning and end of 1978 and 1979.

The Fiafia programme is based on the 'Shared Book Experience Approach (SBEA)' (Holdaway 1979) in which a total number of 48 books was located for teachers to share the reading experience with pupils. The class worked with one story about five or six times until all the children were familiar with. Discussion about the stories and follow-up activities (drawing of the story, group murals, vocabulary games, reading aloud in pairs) were also adopted.

The Fiafia programme teachers attended a two-week in-service course on the SBEA at the beginning of 1979. The measures of students' development included a reading comprehension test (35 multiple-choice items), a word recognition test (50 graded words), and an oral language test and attitude interviews.

3. Findings: the Fiafia groups were well ahead in all three language tests, and the performance in the word recognition test in particular was significantly superior. Moreover, the Fiafia groups hold more positive attitudes toward the treatment than those of the Audiolingual groups. This was also supported by the instructors and administrators. A further school-by-school analysis showed that extensive use of the shared-book method made a more positive impact on students' performance than that of minimal use.
4. Limitations: the following issues have to be pointed out.
 - The same children were used as the control group for one year and as the experimental group in the following year.
 - The study compared the children at a different based proficiency of language.
 - There was no information on how much time was spent and how many books the students in the experimental groups had actually read.

3.5.5.2. Study Two: The Fiji Book Flood

This study was described in detail in Elley & Mangubhai (1983) (see the section on Book Flood Project in 3.5.8).

3.5.5.3 Study Three: Reading and English Acquisition Program (REAP)

In 1985, the Ministry of Education in Singapore adopted a new programme, the Reading and English Acquisition Program (REAP), for teaching English to the first year of schooling. As Ng (1987) reports, the aim of this programme is to improve levels of literacy in English and the promotion of enjoyment in reading and learning.

1. Research question: this programme was to compare the effectiveness of REAP with non-REAP (audilingual approach as described in 3.5.5.1).
2. Subjects and procedures: the REAP was first introduced in 1985 to the P1 level (6-year-old), in 30 schools (90 classes) and systematically expanded over three years to 132 schools in 1987. In-service teacher training was undertaken simultaneously in the form of using tape-slide presentations and printed guideline notes, and visits to classrooms. By using questionnaires and a checklist for teachers and administrators, the collected data were used to compare REAP pupils with non-REAP pupils in three comparative methods as follows:
 - Sample of 512: 256 children from 12 REAP compared with 256 children from 13 non-REAP in terms of testing five times on a variety of oral and written English tests.
 - P1 Survey: 2500 P1 (6-year-olds) REAP pupils were tested on a written test, and the results were compared with those of a comparable control group.
 - P3 Survey: 350 P3 children from 19 REAP were tested on another test, and their results were compared with those of a matched group of non-REAP pupils from the same schools.
3. Findings: the results of the REAP pupils compared with non-REAP pupils showed significant superiority in reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, listening skills and writing composition in all tests. Moreover, they developed positive attitudes toward books as they enjoyed reading them, and the teachers also held positive attitudes toward the REAP programme.
4. Limitations: there were two limitations in this study.
 - No statistical analyses on the pre-tests were carried out to discern if any of the groups differed at the beginning of the experiment.

- There was no information on how much time was spent and how many books the students in the experimental groups had actually read.

3.5.6 SRA reading laboratory⁸ (Robb & Susser 1989)

This paper described a one-year experiment comparing reading development in two reading instruction approaches (skills-based and extensive reading) in Japan.

1. Research questions: the study aimed at answering the following questions (p.241):
 - (a) Can extensive reading alone improve students' reading ability?
 - (b) Are skills better learned when specifically taught?
2. Subject and procedure: a total number of 125 Japanese college freshmen (English majors) were divided to receive one of the approaches. The skills-based group relied on a 269 page textbook in which each of its 12 chapters contained two reading sections (2-4 pages). Students in this group were asked to read the texts individually and do the exercises for different reading skills. An additional section of the text was set as homework and to check whether students have done the homework, a quiz was carried out at the beginning of the next lesson. By contrast, the ER group spent most of each class time in reading modules from the SRA Reading Laboratory Kits 2c and 3a followed by answering questions, checking answers and recording scores on the SRA progress card. As to their homework, students were required to read 500 pages as a minimum from a class library which contained readers for American teenagers, as well as writing a short summary in a notebook.
3. Measurement: "As a pre-test, Form X of the Multiple Skills Series Midway Placement Test (Boning 1977) was administered during the freshman orientation and the first two weeks of class" (p.242). "At the end of the experimental period, Form Y of the Multiple Skills Series Midway Placement Test was administered as a post-test" (p.244).

⁸ The Scholastic Reading Aptitude (SRA) Reading Laboratory Kits is an internationally acclaimed method of teaching students how to read. The goal of the SRA module was to give students intensive exposure to new vocabulary, grammatical structures, and to teach successful reading and studying skills. There are 9 grades and each Kit contains 144 Power Builders Story folders, an answer key card for each Power builder, five copies of My Own Book Student record book, and a Teacher's Handbook. This series is published by Science Research Associates, Inc., Chicago, IL.

4. Findings: results showed that there were no significant differences between the groups regarding 'Getting the main idea' and 'Making inferences'. However, in 'Understanding the important facts', 'Guessing vocabulary from context' and 'Reading speed', the experimental group scored significantly higher than that of the skills-based group. With respect to their attitudes toward the improvement and classwork, no difference was found in the groups. One surprising finding is that there was a significant difference in the experimental group's attitude toward writing practice as homework. Their report concluded that "by reading what they choose and (more or less) enjoying their homework, students' motivation to learn will increase, which will in turn benefit their eventual acquisition of the target language" (p. 248).
5. Limitations: the following three points should be noticed:
 - No investigation into subjects' preferences or interests and attitude was administered before the programme.
 - There was no information about how much time was allocated for the experiment (i.e. how many classes per week and how much time per class).
 - The researchers gave no indication what the criteria were in selecting the materials in which their subjects were interested.
 - There was no information about teachers' attitudes toward the experiment.

3.5.7 Extensive reading programme (Hafiz & Tudor 1989)

A three-month extensive reading programme, inspired by Krashen's Input Hypotheses (1982), was designed to investigate whether extensive reading for pleasure could effect an improvement in subjects' linguistic skills, with particular reference to reading and writing.

1. Research question: the programme examined whether "extensive reading for pleasure could effect an improvement in subjects' linguistic skills, with particular reference to reading and writing" (p.4).
2. Subject & procedure: a total number of 46 Pakistani English-born children (10-11 year old) in Leeds in the UK participated in this study, and were divided into three groups: one experimental group and two control groups. The experimental group

attended an hour programme voluntarily after school, 5 days a week. Students were free to choose any book they wanted and change it at any time, and dictionaries were also available to them. Apart from a weekly oral report, no extra tasks or language exercises were set. Before and after the experiment, all three groups were given NFER (National Foundation for Education Research) Tests of Proficiency in English, including Reading Two, Reading Three (Part 1 and 2), Writing Two (Part 1 and 2) and Writing Three (Part 1 and 2).

3. Findings: the scores in all 7 tests of the experimental group were higher than the control groups after the experiment and showed a statistically significant level of improvement, especially in the writing tests.
4. Limitations: the following design issues arise from the study:
 - This study was carried out in an already input-rich environment, and thus the effect of ER was in doubt.
 - The experimental group was self-selecting and highly motivated and there was no information about attitudes in the control groups. Thus, whether students' attitudes have any impact on their language development is unclear.
 - The experimental group spent more time on English and thus received more input, whatever its nature.
 - There was no investigation into whether the subjects' attitudes changed or not.
 - The subjects had some aids (dictionaries and teachers' help). No investigation into the use or the effect of these aids was carried out.
 - There was no information about the amount the subjects had actually read.

3.5.8 Book flood project (Elley & Mangubhai 1983)

During the 1970's, the Fiji Ministry of Education used book-based programmes in separate experiments in the Solomon Islands and Fiji secondary schools. The results indicated dramatic improvements in pupils' external examination pass rates. Also, a national survey of reading in Fiji in class 6 (12-13 year olds) showed that access to books in school was an important factor in distinguishing between good and poor

readers. However, the difference between schools with and without libraries was less certain.

1. Research questions: the authors re-conducted a 'Book Flood' in a set of rural primary schools, where English language standards were low and resources meagre, to examine differences between good and poor reader improvement.
2. Subjects and procedures: class 4 and 5 children (9- to 11-year-olds) in 12 rural Fiji schools (6 Fijian and 6 Indian) participated in a one-year book-based programme in 1980. Based on their pre-test scores and racial composition, the schools were assigned to one of three groups: shared book, silent reading and control. 250 books were provided to the two experimental groups over 8 months, and all kept inside the classrooms (book corners or classroom libraries).

In the first reading in the shared book group, the teacher chose a high-interest story, and then introduced, discussed and read it to the group. Afterwards, the students were encouraged to read the book in small groups, in pairs or individually. Role playing, word study, art work and writing activities were also included. The silent reading group was to read books for 20-30 minutes each day accompanied by teachers' participation. No book reports and written exercises were given. The control group followed their SPC/Tate audio-lingual programme which consisted of two 15 minute oral English lessons each day and learning grammar and vocabulary from graded SPC readers or the Fiji Ministry's text 'Stories for Us'.

A sentence-completion test of 35 multiple-choice items was conducted to the two groups as the pre-test for reading comprehension. The post-tests were different as follows:

- Class 4: STAF reading comprehension (6 pages, and 32 multiple-choice items), English structure test (35 multiple-choice items), and word recognition test (50 graded words) or oral sentence repetition (28 sentences).
- Class 5: STAF reading comprehension (6 pages, and 32 multiple-choice items), STAF listening comprehension test (36 multiple-choice items), English structure test (20 open-ended items), and English composition test (completion of a short story).

3. Findings:

- Class 4: the Book Flood groups performed better than the control groups in all the tests, but a significant difference was found in the reading comprehension and English structure tests. When the comparison between the shared book and the silent reading groups was made, the differences were not statistically significant.
 - Class 5: the Book Flood groups achieved higher scores than the control groups in all the tests, but the differences between groups was significant in the reading comprehension and listening comprehension. When the shared book and the silent reading groups were compared, no statistically significant difference was found. In comparing the shared book with the silent reading groups, the significant differences favoured the former in all tests.
4. Limitations: the lack of the following information has limited the value of the project to other researchers:
- Different tests were used with different groups and in different years.
 - No information on the amount of reading was given.
 - No information about the exposure to English outside the experiment was discussed.

This section has reviewed 8 pieces of research on the effectiveness of ER in ESL/EFL settings to get insights into evidence for ER, characteristics of successful ER programmes and factors which could influence the effect of ER in research design, so as to ascertain practical implications for this study. To sum up, the findings demonstrated the value of ER in EFL learners' language and attitudes development. However, the review also revealed problems in research design and execution which undermined the research outcomes. The problems include lack of control of outside English exposure, the selection of reading materials, the use of collaborative activities and assessment methods. These raise some practical issues which have allowed us to take extra care about controlling the variables in developing the current study. These issues will be discussed in the following section, and in Chapter five where the design of the current study is discussed in detail.

3.6 Practical issues related to organisation of an ER programme

As mentioned in the previous two sections, extensive reading has an impact on personal variables, e.g. motivation to read, and the benefit to learners from reading extensively in terms of language ability (see 3.4). Studies on the effectiveness of ER have demonstrated the improvement of students' language ability and attitudes toward English learning (see 3.5). Once individual teachers recognise the fact that students could benefit from reading extensively, they are more likely to consider the adoption of an ER programme in their classes (Pickard 1996). However, the ER approach is a brand-new approach to those who currently view the teaching of reading as studying the language itself. Moreover, practical difficulties (e.g. availability of time and resources) in junior high schools will be the main constraints on the integration of an ER programme into the existing curriculum. Given factors of unfamiliarity and lack of confidence to meet the challenges, those who have the intention of applying extensive reading to their teaching situations might simply give up their ideal before taking any action. Therefore, without orientation to organising an ER programme, discussion about the benefits of reading extensively will remain mere theory. In order to build up the research framework of the main study, the rest of this chapter is devoted to discussing practical issues which should be taken into account prior to the implementation of an ER programme.

3.6.1 Curricular decision

When individual teachers would like to introduce an ER programme in their classes, the first challenge they have to face is how the ER programme can be integrated into the existing syllabus given that this is already tightly constrained in the school (Hill 1997). In effect, it involves a decision to spare time from the already-crowded syllabus. As Brines (2001), and Day and Bamford (1998) suggest, there are four possible ways in which such a programme can be established in an existing syllabus: an independent lesson, a part of the existing English lesson, a voluntary additional course to the existing course and an extracurricular activity.

- An independent lesson: this is a part of the compulsory language learning syllabus. This lesson provides a similar resource to other normal school lessons;

for example, this could vary from “a single 50-minute period once a week to five times a week for 50 minutes each meeting” (Day & Bamford 1998:41).

- A part of the existing English lesson: this means integrating the ER programme into the existing English lessons. A certain amount of time (e.g. 10 or 20 minutes) in English lessons is set aside for the ER programme.
- A voluntary additional programme to the existing syllabus: it is an optional supplement, and not a formal part of the school syllabus. Students are encouraged to join and given freedom to leave the programme. The time can be allocated at lunch, break or club time or a short time after school before students go home (Miyake 2000).
- A leisure-time activity: this is a self-improvement activity and not a formal part of the school syllabuses. Students choose a book that they like and take it home to read entirely in their own time for pleasure. They are given freedom to change books whenever they want.

It should be noticed that there is no particular formula to follow in making curricular decisions on implementation. Teachers should consider the school setting and their teaching situations to choose the most appropriate method for their students (Pike 1997). Once the way of carrying out an ER programme is decided, the issue of book selection for extensive reading has to be considered.

3.6.2 Books for extensive reading

In order to encourage students to read, the materials provided for extensive reading must be interesting to students and must be at the right level of language proficiency, so that students can be stimulated to read for pleasure without difficulty. This suggests that interesting books at a proper language level form a powerful incentive, and correct selection is crucial to the success of an ER programme. Thus, the selection criteria should largely depend on students' interests (i.e. suitability), their prior knowledge of content schemata and their language levels in relation to the readability of the text (Hedge 1985; Hill 1992; Nuttall 1996).

3.6.2.1 Suitability of books

Klapper (1992:54) points out that “if we move too far from learners’ natural sphere of interest we run the risk of making extended reading a meaningless chore”. Clary (1991), and Gentile and McMillan (1997) also assert that students’ wants will be a more powerful incentive than any others; this implies that a successful programme depends on providing students with motivating materials and involving them in a variety of interesting activities. The premise is that the text must interest and attract students. This is a powerful incentive to help students enter a “virtuous circle of a good reader” (see Figure 3-1 in 3.4), i.e. the students read what they like and want to read more, and then read more. Consequently, students’ reading habits are developed and their attitudes to reading improve. Therefore, it is very important for teachers who are going to select books for an ER programme, to find out what types of materials/books their students would like to read.

In addition, for hooking the students and reeling them into reading extensively, the selected books should be interesting, attractive and suitable for our target group (Day & Bamford 1998; Hill 1992; Nuttall 1996). Since “successful reading is determined on the one hand by the students’ abilities, knowledge and interest, and on the other hand by the language, content and presentation of the reading book” (Hedge 1985:37), suitability and readability should be taken into consideration so as to select adequate materials for an ER programme. Another factor which needs to be considered is the appearance of the books including cover page, layout, illustration, and print size, etc., because this has an influence on the readers’ decision in choosing books to read and in assisting the process of reading. For example, picture or less-textual books are more attractive and easier for some students.

There are many ways in which students’ reading preferences can be identified, i.e. selecting from a list of recommended series (e.g. the EPER’s standard booklist), interviewing students, observing students’ reading habits (i.e. L1 and L2), discussion with students, and a student questionnaire on reading preference.

1. The list of recommended series: having analysed available readers, Hill’s state-of-the-art work on Graded Readers (1997, 2001) provides teachers with useful information about finding appropriate books for their students. The tremendous

database of EPER (Hill 1992) gives teachers valuable information about assessment of the features that make a book a good read, especially level of language difficulty as the following table shows (Hill 1997:67).

Table 3-1 EPER levels

Student level	EPER level	Word count	Salient features
Near Beginner	G, F	300-500	Artwork on every page
Elementary	E	800-1,000	4-5,000 words
Intermediate	D, C	1,200-1,600	6-12,000 words
Upper	B, A	1,800-2,200	14-22,000 words
Advanced	X	2,500-3,500	25-35,000 words

In addition, publishers of graded readers also edit guidelines for using their readers, e.g. Oxford Bookworms: Guidelines for Authors (Hedge & Bassett 2000) and Heinemann Guided Readers Handbook (Milne 1977). Since publishers tend to publish materials that may interest learners at a particular age, they may be able to provide teachers with information on books which are popular with certain ages and types of student. Moreover, the list of best-selling books can also guide teachers to determine what books their students may like to read.

2. Observation of students' reading habits (i.e. L1 and L2): comparing the materials they read in English and in Chinese, we will find out what they really like to read. Moreover, the teachers could keep an eye on the materials the students usually carry with them, or pay attention to what they talk about to find out what students actually read.
3. A questionnaire: to enable teachers to elicit more information about students' reading, Day and Bamford (1998) recommend a questionnaire on reading preference to be answered by the students who will participate in the ER programme. In order to avoid yielding uncertain or unreal answers, a combination of ranking and open-ended questions is a better design than using a single type of question as the following example.

Table 3-2 Sample of a combination of ranking and open-ended questions

	4: I like it very much; 3: I like it; 2: I don't like it; 1: I don't like it at all (Circle an appropriate number)				And why? (Please give reasons for your choices)
(1) Storybooks	4	3	2	1	
(2) Textbooks	4	3	2	1	
(3) Songs/poems	4	3	2	1	
(4) Biographies	4	3	2	1	
(5) Newspapers	4	3	2	1	
(6) Plays/comics	4	3	2	1	
(7) Reference books	4	3	2	1	
(8) Cartoons	4	3	2	1	
(9) Magazines	4	3	2	1	
(10) Other:	4	3	2	1	
(11) Other:	4	3	2	1	

4. Discussion with students: another method that teachers may employ is simply to ask their students what kind of materials they like to read. By doing so, teachers can get direct information from students, and can also ask for clarification if the answers are vague.

To the extent that each method can serve as a preliminary step of data collection, it can provide a basic picture of what students' reading preferences are. However, simply using one method could pose problems of validity and reliability. A cross adoption of these collection methods should be taken to establish appropriate criteria for book selection.

After discussing student interests in reading materials, another crucial factor in selecting the right books for students is that "the level of language difficulty should be appropriate to the students' competence in English" (Hedge 1985:v). In order to assess the level of the students, the students' language proficiency should be measured first, and then the readability of the books can be considered.

3.6.2.2 Students' Language Proficiency

If we give materials which are too difficult for our students, reading will become a meaningless chore. However, if the materials are too easy, the function of extensive reading in developing students' language competence might not operate. In order to provide the students with the right level of materials, we need to know students' language levels first. In other words, teachers have to have an idea of what vocabulary and grammatical structures their students are familiar with. It is also important to take

students' schematic knowledge (see 2.2.2) into account, because reading effectively requires an interaction between linguistic and schematic knowledge (as discussed in 2.3.3). If teachers know the class, they should be able to work out what materials are appropriate to their students. If not, they have to find it out. Since there is no language proficiency test at the entrance to the secondary school in Taiwan, and students have had different experiences in learning English, teachers need to find an appropriate method to measure students' level.

There are some possibilities open to the individual teacher in detecting students' language level. The simplest way to do this is to look at the vocabulary and structure lists supplied in the syllabus or the textbook. By doing this, we could estimate roughly the students' level.

Alternatively, we can adopt the pseudo-random (every *n*th word) construction procedure to develop our own cloze test (Nuttall 1996). The test is designed to identify students' level of reading ability, or the types of text which are adequate for our students. The most practicable way to do this is to take the first 250 words from a text which is at a similar level to the textbook. Then, every 7th or 10th word is deleted and replaced by a blank. The students are required to fill the gaps with words which closely fit the structure. Their responses are scored and calculated into percentages. The results can be interpreted by using Hedge's suggestion (1985:55) as shown in Table 3-3 below.

Table 3-3 Interpretation of cloze scores

%	Level	Advice about the book
60% and over	Independent level	should be able to work successfully
40-60%	Instructional level	needs teacher support
below 39%	Frustrational level	very unwise to use

Furthermore, depending on the student level, standard tests can also be used to measure students' language proficiency. For example, the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (UCLES) has produced a Five Level System⁹. In addition, teachers could use the EPER placement and progress tests, written by Dr Clive Criper,

⁹ The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) has developed a series of examinations, which span five levels. Within the five levels the Key English Test (KET) is at Cambridge Level One. The other four levels are: Preliminary English Test (PET)-Level Two; First Certificate in English (FCE)-Level Three; Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)-Level Four; Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE)-Level Five.

because it has “been found to be very accurate in assessing general proficiency in English language across many cultures” (Hill 1992:153).

By these methods, teachers can identify students’ language ability, but they also need to know which materials are at an appropriate level for their students. This notion leads us to consider how to identify the readability, i.e. the language level of materials.

3.6.2.3 Readability

As Sheu (1999) found, vocabulary (i.e. unknown words) was the main problem in reading among junior school students in Taiwan. The results of a questionnaire survey (see Table 4-2) also showed that low language proficiency and lack of effective reading strategies were the two most common difficulties for Taiwanese junior high students. If the students cannot understand the text or cannot read with enjoyment, they read perfunctorily or even do not want to continue reading (Nuttall 1996). In other words, failure to provide the materials at the appropriate language levels will diminish students’ motivation to read. To avoid this, we have to consider the readability of the materials.

With regard to assessing a book’s level, there have been several specific formulas to calculate the readability of a text as follows:

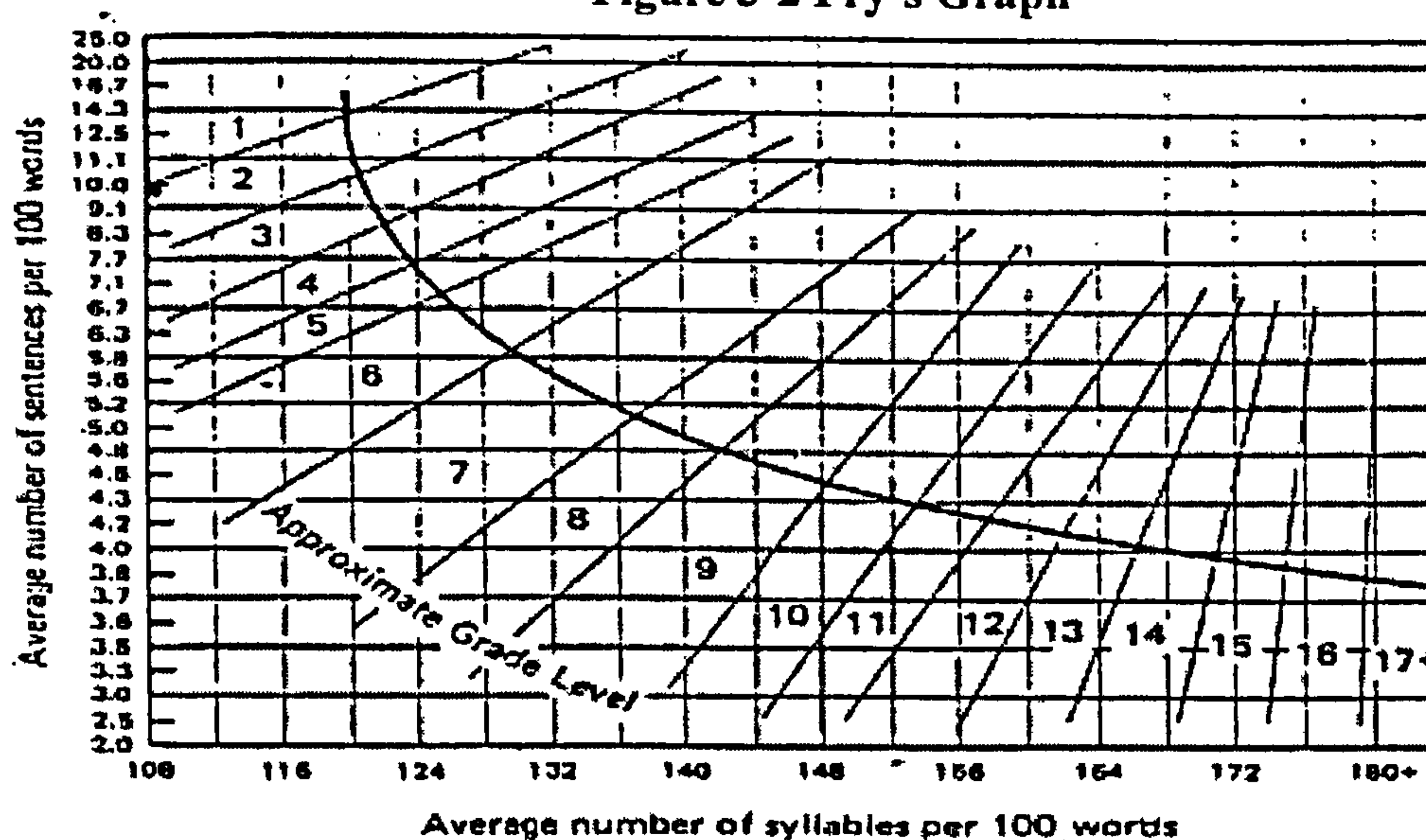
1. Cloze test: the structure and the procedure have been described in the previous section, but Heaton (1989) calculates the average percentage mark scored by the class first, and then interprets the result according to the following table:

Table 3-4 Interpretation of average mark

%	Level	Advice about the book
53% and over	Independent level	can be used by students working on their own
44-52%	Instructional level	Suitable for use with a class and the teacher
below 43%	Frustrational level	Far too difficult to use even with the teacher

2. The Fry Formula for Readability: a straightforward way to obtain a readability index is the Fry’s (1977:249) graph as follows:

Figure 3-2 Fry's Graph



The directions for using the graph are as follows (*ibid.*:249)

- Randomly select three sample passages and count out exactly 100 words each, beginning with the beginning of a sentence.
- Count the number of sentences in the 100 words, calculating the length of the fraction of the last sentence to the nearest one-tenth.
- Count the total number of syllables in the 100-word passage. If you don't have a hand counter available, an easy way is simply put a mark above every syllable over one in each word, and then when you get to the end of the passage, count the number of marks and add 100.
- Enter on the graph the average numbers of sentences and syllables; plot a dot where the two lines intersect. The area where the dots are plotted will give you the approximate grade level. The UK reading level is 5+ US grade.
- If a great deal of variability is found in syllable count or sentence count, putting more samples into the average is desirable.
- When counting syllables for numerals and abbreviations, count one syllable for each symbol. For example, 1945 is four syllables, IRA is three syllables, and σ is one syllable.

3. Lexicon reference: as Milne (1977:16) points out, writing for language learners has adopted “an intuitive approach to vocabulary control rather than relying on controls based on mechanical word counts or rigid word lists”. Thus, almost all English graded readers series are marked level with both a name and the amount of basic vocabulary used in the books (e.g. beginning level/400 words). Cambridge English Lexicon (Hindmarsh 1980) can be used to find out the reference to the lexicon known to our learners so as to ensure that the books we select are appropriate to our students’ vocabulary level.

The above three formulae are the most common methods used for measuring readability of texts. It should be pointed out that views of readability have been criticised in the past few decades because of ignorance of textual features (e.g. syntactic complexity) and reader variables (e.g. background knowledge) (Carrell 1987). The most common misuse of these formulae was “to produce a text at a pre-determined readability level, or to modify an existing text in an effort to simplify or lower the readability level of that text” (Carrell 1987:28). Davison and Kantor (1982) also cast doubt on the use of readability formulae to adapt texts in terms of word and sentence length. They point out that adapted texts can become harder to understand.

However, Carrell (1987:29) discerns a useful function by stating that “readability formulae were designed for prediction on already-existing texts, not production, and their use in production has been far less successful than their use in prediction”. Her argument provides evidence for the appropriate use of readability formulae in book selection for ER. In practice, since Fry’s Formula above is mainly for researchers, a combination of the cloze test and Lexicon reference may be useful for ordinary English teachers.

In sum, having considered suitability and readability, teachers should have these criteria in mind in starting to select and acquire books for the ER programme. Before doing so, we should consider what types of materials are available.

3.6.2.4 Types of materials

The fact that the book selection should meet learners’ interests and be appropriate to their language competence in English (Hedge 1985) is centred on the belief that

interesting books attract attention, stimulate motivation and most importantly, keep interest in reading (Day & Bamford 1998; Hill 1992). Thus the types of material selected play an indispensable role in the success of an ER programme.

There are two types of simplified texts available for teachers to choose: "texts simplified from the first language originals, and texts written specially for second language learners" (Day & Bamford 1998:56). These constitute what are commonly known as graded readers (GR).

These types of text, also termed "simple original" (Hill & Thomas 1988a:44), are produced specially for SL/FL learners by controlling vocabulary load, grammatical structures and the amount of information so as to match the language competence of the students reading them (Hedge 1985; Livingstone *et al.* 1987; Nation & Wang 1999). "This grading ostensibly ensures that learners can read with relative fluency without being overwhelmed by unfamiliar structure and vocabulary" (Bamford 1984:218). In other words, materials are graded in terms of vocabulary load, language structures, amount of information and visual aids (Hedge 1985; Wodinsky & Nation 1988).

Both types have as their most important virtue the fact that they are graded from beginning level to advanced level by "using only grammatical structures and vocabulary items appropriate to that level of study" (Bamford 1984:218). Thus, GR have been recommended by ELT professionals (Greenwood 1988; Hedge 1985; Hill 1992; Waring 1999) and by most publishers (Macmillan, Oxford, Penguin), as the most appropriate material for ER programmes. They have in particular been gauged as the one inescapable way of book provision for beginning and intermediate FL learners (Day & Bamford 1998).

However, Aebersold and Field (1997) indicate a third possible source of materials for ER, namely authentic books for native English speaking children (BNESC). As they note, "Making texts appropriate to the level of the readers is a common phenomenon in materials produced for L1 readers. Materials for native children...are written in modified English appropriate to their level of language mastery" (*ibid.*:49). In this sense, BNESC can be classified as the second type of text discussed above, written specially for learners, but in L1. Indeed, some books can be classified as simple originals, such as the poetry books in this study. Such materials could allow EFL students to practise reading the kind of books they will encounter outside the classroom (Breen 1985;

Darian 2001; Williams 1984). This could make EFL reading realistic and purposeful. Moreover, Nuttall (1996:177) points out that these materials “exhibit the characteristics of true discourse: having something to say, being coherent and clearly organized”. These merits suggest that authentic texts might be the best preparation for reading authentic materials, and for these reasons, Aebersold and Field (1997) believe that such authentic materials should be used in EFL settings. With all the same aims as graded readers – “entertainment, information, learning to read, and becoming hooked on books” (Day & Bamford 1998:61), BNESC could increase learners’ motivation and could be included in an ER programme. It would therefore be worth exploring their possible effectiveness.

As discussed in 3.4 and 3.5, experimental studies have showed the benefits of ER in various aspects of EFL learning (e.g. Bell 2001; Camiciottoli 2001; Hayashi 1999; Lai 1993a; Renandya, Rajan & Jacobs 1999), but they have focused entirely on GR, except in the Hafiz and Tudor (1989) study. The notion of using BNESC has hitherto had little impact on the design of ER programmes, and previous research has not attempted to address this issue. The perspective of the current study aims at investigating the possible roles of both GR and BNESC in language and reading development.

Having considered what types of materials are available for use in an ER programme, the next issue that we have to consider is how to choose. What features of books should we look at? What are the criteria for book selection? Are there any reviews which tell us the strength or weakness of books?

3.6.2.5 Material selection

Interesting texts function to arouse readers’ motivation to read and involvement in reading. Thus, the more accurate the selection criteria are, the more appropriate the books will be. By using the methods mentioned in 4.5.1, teachers are able to establish criteria for selecting books for the ER programme. The criteria could include topics/contents, level of the language and presentation (e.g. layout and the print) as discussed below:

1. Variety of text types and topics: a variety of text types offers opportunities for “exposing students to all kinds of texts that they are likely to encounter in their real life” (Nuttall, 1996:177). Moreover, various text types cater for different

background knowledge. However, we should be aware of the difficulties of cultural references, background knowledge and a different use of vocabulary, because these factors could also cause reading problems and demotivate learners. This reminds us again of the importance of the interaction of schematic and linguistic knowledge (2.3.3 & 3.6.2.2). As for the variety of topics, they can avoid culture-specificity which may hinder students' comprehension and they may be relevant to students' interests. In addition, if students are familiar with topics they can easily activate their previous knowledge.

2. Level of the language: too complex language may impede fluent, enjoyable reading. To deal with this factor, reading texts chosen should coincide with students' language proficiency. Otherwise, a text far above learners' language ability will cause disturbance to reading comprehension, and as a result, the language learning opportunities will slow down. In the worst instance learners may return to negative attitudes toward reading and language learning. In order to reduce the language difficulties and to build the students' confidence, a sensible decision will be to give the students materials which are at a slightly lower level than their language proficiency at the beginning of the programme (Carrell 1987).
3. Presentation of books/texts: this means how a text is presented, including front page, illustrations, length, quality of print, and size of print and book (Hashim 1999). These features can serve as a tool to aid readers' comprehension. They can also motivate readers to read and activate their knowledge.

As for reviews, there are several survey reviews of ESL/EFL GR (Hill 1997, 2001; Hill & Thomas 1988a, b; Thomas & Hill 1993) from the experts' point of view, and their comments serve as a superb resource for teachers to find out the strong and weak points of each series in order to select appropriate GR for their students. By contrast, BNESC has received little attention, and as a result, little information is available and their features are unclear. This is another perspective of this study.

Before collecting or purchasing the materials, teachers have to decide how many copies of books they need. But this cannot be done without a decision on how the ER programme is going to be carried out.

3.6.2.6 Extensive reading library

Bamford and Day (1997), and Barrett and Datesman (1992) suggest that in an ER programme students should be able to read materials individually and silently, or get into groups and share the books, or teachers can read aloud to students. The main concern is what method of organising extensive reading creates an accessible and a tension-free environment for students to read with pleasure (Brines 2001). To achieve this, teachers can use the school library or set up either a class reader or a class library as a means of resource provision (Bamford 1984; Dubin & Olshtain 1977; Hedge 1985; Nuttall 1996).

First of all, teachers can look at the resources available in the school. Obviously, the school library is a convenient and straightforward way to plan and organise the programme (Brines 2001). Kitao, Yamamoto, Kitao & Shimatani (1990) report that a school library can serve as a corner where students read books independently and silently. However, teachers should be aware of its drawbacks (Brusch 1991). For example, poor conditions like a limited number of books, out-of-date or dull books, a stuffy room, the lack of cooperation caused by having no qualified support staff, restricted opening hours, no proper ER programme in maintenance, etc. If these constraints exist it is very difficult for teachers to use the school library.

Another possibility has been widely recommended for its practicability (Hedge 1985): a class reader. Teachers choose copies of the same reader as a class set, to read aloud to students or to let students read on their own (Greenwood 1988). It has been pointed out that this allows teachers to adopt other supplementary activities (e.g. warm up activities), to give support to students and shared book experience (Holdaway 1979). However, several crucial factors have made this method problematic. First, finding a suitable level and topic which appeals to most students is always a difficult task, since each individual student is different from others in many ways (Mukundan, Hie & Ghani 1996). Moreover, students might lose their interest in reading because of the limited titles available (Nuttall 1996). In order to afford several sets to overcome this, expensive spending and allocation of extra funding are always inevitable and insurmountable for most teachers. Even if we can solve it, the forced reading pace could lead some students who read slowly to read perfunctorily.

A class library has been recommended by many teachers because of its effectiveness (Cliffe 1990; Malgwi 1999). It is a mini library in a class, which is a display or storage

area for different materials “suitable for the age and language competence of a particular class” (Livingstone, Pike, Tadman, Tunnacliffe & Kinf 1987:9). Students select books according to their own interests and ability, and take them away to read at their own pace in their seats, in the corner of the class or at home (Hedge 1985). Because of the free choice of materials, students’ reading interests are stimulated and students are encouraged to read books that they will read outside the classroom. This can help students to relate learning reading to their real life. Consequently, their reading habits for pleasure will develop. In addition, students are placed in a self-directed world in which they take the responsibility for their own reading. By doing so, they can apply the skills and strategies they learn and also develop their learning independence (Helgesen 1997).

However, in order to make books accessible and visible, teachers have to decide where the materials should be located (e.g. a box, a shelf, etc.) and how to display them. Moreover, if the school timetable is already crowded, a plan of possible time allocation is definitely needed. Also, the preparation of students’ attitudes and independent learning should be made in order to build motivation. Lack of proper consideration of these points will cause problems in conducting a class library successfully.

Once the practical issues above have been decided, the preparation of the books for the ER programme is on the way. Here, teachers have to work out how to get the books they need and to allocate the financial budget.

3.6.2.7 Acquiring Materials

In order to obtain sufficient materials for students, teachers need to secure funds (Nuttall 1996). One way to solve this problem is that by showing experimental results, teachers may convince educational authorities or planners to recognize “the enormous boost such a programme can give to their pupils’ command of the language” and make them “feel it is worthwhile committing the resources required” (*ibid.*:331). Another way is to co-operate with publishers or booksellers, donors in the community, parents, or even students. They are all possible sources of funds, support, and contributions, so they should be involved as far as possible.

One possible way is that teachers can adopt materials produced in English by local publishers, because students with cultural familiarity will have advantages in

understanding the meaning of the whole text. Since the benefits of extensive reading have not been recognized in Taiwan, there seem to be few local materials available for teachers to use in an extensive reading programme. One possible solution is adapted or simplified readers (Simensen 1987). In other words, teachers can adapt the materials they have either in Chinese or English to provide texts appropriate to their students' language levels. This, however, is a massive task requiring co-operation among a team of teachers over a long period of time.

To sum up, the process of organising an ER programme requires teachers to spend time and skill considering their school setting, teaching situation and the availability of resources. There are several possibilities which teachers could adopt to fit into their needs or to overcome their difficulties. Even so, students may still be reluctant when such an unfamiliar teaching idea is introduced to them. Thus, before implementing an ER programme, it is necessary to consider what strategies teachers can adopt to reduce student resistance and to promote their motivation in participating in such a programme.

3.6.2.8 How much should students read?

The assumption behind ER is that without access to a large quantity of reading, learners' knowledge will increase little and their reading progress will be slow. On this count, one has to devote a considerable amount of either time to reading or read a large number of texts in order to become competent readers. Extensive is the key word; the term "extensive" has been interpreted as reading a quantity of materials or reading over a certain amount of time, or both as the following examples show (cited in Susser & Robb 1990):

- 60 books a year (Bright & McGregor 1977:69).
- 50 pages per week (Paulston & Bruder 1976:202).
- An hour per evening (Krashen 1981:105).
- One reader per week (Bamford 1984: 260)
- One hour a fortnight in 5-hours of English per week in school (Hedge 1985:79).
- An hour of extensive for every hour of intensive (Williams 1986:44).

- 30 pages an hour (Hill & Thomas 1988a:50).
- 60 hours over 3 months (Hafiz & Tudor 1989:7).
- Four or five weeks over an average reader (about 80 pages) (Nuttall 1996:146).
- A book a week at her level of difficulty, or 90-120 minutes per week, or about 15 minutes per day (Waring & Takahashi 2000:10).

As can be seen, no absolute amount of reading or time can be set for ER. The variety of formulae above indicates that the appropriate amount of ER should depend on students' language level, teachers' ambition and ability, the availability of materials and time (Day & Bamford 1998). After the book selection has been made, the next issue teachers have to consider is what strategies might contribute to the success of ER.

3.6.3 Strategies for implementing an ER programme

Jacobs, Davis and Renandya (1997) and Susser and Robb (1990) have pointed out that ER programmes are not as effective as they could be. One of the reasons is often the lack of including essential strategies for ER (Gee 1999). Given the fact that students are not familiar with ER and are less motivated in English learning because of current reading instruction, the effect of an ER programme could be reinforced by careful strategies to introduce it, accompanying activities and teacher participation.

3.6.3.1 Introduction of ER

The students in Taiwan are used to a particular classroom method in the sense of reading with a lot of explanations on vocabulary and grammar, and translation. The texts used in the classroom "are either milked of every last drop of meaning by intensive study or employed as vehicles for presenting linguistic patterns" (Hyland 1990:14). They come to believe that such a method is only way to read and this seriously hampers their awareness of other types of reading they will have in their daily lives. Thus, before asking students to participate in an ER programme, it will be a crucial step to given them a clear idea about values of ER on their learning. This will tune the students in to a new learning method (Welch 1997). To do this, teachers can simply describe the concept and the usefulness of ER, demonstrate research evidence,

and “show the class new books” (Nuttall 1996:141). The aim of this introductory session is to raise student motivation and try to influence their attitudes (Wenden 1986).

3.6.3.2 Accompanying activities

Renandya, Rajan and Jacobs (1999) have pointed out that ER may well be insufficient without accompanying activities which could motivate FL learners. Moreover, Lai (1993a) has reported the valuable potential of such activities for the effectiveness of an ER programme. The most useful and practical ways of encouraging those who have low motivation are: ask students to keep a reading record, show students' reading achievement on a wall-chart, give extra marks to students after reading a certain book and having group discussions (Davis 1995; Lai 1993a; Mason & Krashen 1997b).

1. Reading record

Basically, this activity asks students to write down information about a book and their reflections or comments. This can encourage them to take control of their reading by recording the books they read, and reacting to what they read (Day & Bamford 1998). It also provides teachers with an opportunity to monitor students' reading and to evaluate the programme. A variety of points could be included in a record, such as basic information about a book, details of students' reading, students' reactions after reading, and so on (Dubravcic 1999). Having those data, students' reading records serve several functions as follows:

- Keeping track of students' reading process;
- Demonstrating students' comprehension of their reading;
- Identifying areas which need assistance and improvement;
- Monitoring students' reading progress;
- Presenting students' evaluation of their reading;
- Collecting students' suggestions.

It is very important to note that in writing reading records, students are allowed to use the Chinese language, English or both, depending on their ability and interest. Since the record is a note of the students' personal reflection, the focus should not be on the accuracy or correction of the language if they write in English. It is intended that the reading record could serve as an indication of the development of students' reading habits and attitudes (Day & Bamford 1998; Lai 1993a).

2. Wall-chart

Perhaps because of extrovert attitudes, students are often in favour of displaying their achievement visibly. The simplest way is to post a chart with students' name and the books they read, on the notice board or the classroom wall (Lai 1993a). When students finish reading a book and writing a record, they write data down on the chart themselves. However, as Day and Bamford (1998) state, the public display could humiliate those who are behind others. In order to deal with this problem, it can be replaced by a whole-class display which shows their gradual achievement as a whole. The reason for such a display is to stimulate students' motivation and, at the same time to show how the total number of books is gradually increasing.

3. Mark reward

When teachers announce rewards or punishments, whatever they are, students tend to do their best to complete the task in order to obtain or avoid them. Giving marks is one of the extrinsic rewards which are categorised as satisfaction, one of the course-specific motivational components (Dörnyei 1994). They serve as an initial impetus which encourages learners to learn more or perform better and to maintain this till they achieve their goal which will be the consequential motivation. Eventually, the virtuous circle of motivation is formed (Littlewood 1996, see Figure 7-2 in 7.3.5). Thus, awarding marks will be a good starting-point in motivating learners to read.

In junior high schools in Taiwan, teachers of each subject give each student a term-mark at the end of each semester. At the end of the academic year, the teachers calculate an average score as the final mark and then puts the students in a ranking according to their score. Students have to study hard in order to get marks as high as they can, because the more marks students get the higher position on the ranking they

will be. Thus, giving marks after reading a certain book can serve as an incentive or supplementary tool for stimulating students' reading interest (Muzerich 1995). However, it should also be made clear that such a reward is not the end of their reading. It is often true that when the focus on gaining marks for reading disappears, so does the important aspect of stimulating interest.

As students are given freedom to choose and to read, they are not under obligation to finish a certain book. Therefore, there should be no punishment for those who read less. However, marks subtracted can be used to tackle students' unacceptable behaviour. For example, if plagiarism is found in students' summary writing, one-point subtracted punishment will be given.

In order to keep a balance between excess and insufficiency, negotiation with students for the rules will be very useful because teachers can reinforce their encouragement and students can take the responsibility for their own reading.

4. Group discussion

Sharing is a joy that reading can bring to students, and another incentive which could encourage students' participation. A group discussion known as a "reading syndicate" (Parrott 1987:411), is designed to allow students to share their reading or reflections with their peers, or to exchange their feelings about the books they read. Also, by listening to others, they can have an idea about their choices for further reading (Ting 1996). Moreover, the teacher can provide more help in such an activity than in a formal class. However, since students are probably not familiar with such an activity, training or guidance/direction to the discussion is essential. In sum, the benefits of this activity can be summarised as follows (Parrott 1987).

- It produces a student-centred learning situation;
- It brings classroom interaction;
- It creates less tense classroom atmosphere;
- It gives an opportunity for everyone to participate.

3.6.3.3 Teachers' participation

There is no doubt about the impact teachers can make on a programme. Long ago, Bright and McGregor (1970) declared the importance of a teacher in an ER programme, asserting that "teacher's own enjoyment of books...pleasure in sharing it with pupils and daily interest are of the greatest importance. A teacher who does not read can hardly inspire others to do so" (p.69). Nuttall (1996) echoes this and states that

students follow the example of people they respect, and above all that of their teacher. If the teacher is seen to read with concentration, to enjoy reading and to make use of books, newspapers and so on, the students are more likely to take notice of her when she urges them to do the same. (p.229)

Therefore, being role models means that not only do teachers themselves read books, but also they participate in the programme with their students. This can take several forms: reading books aloud to students, sharing their reading reactions with students, introducing or recommending books to students, etc.

Having discussed the practical issues above, it is clear that organising an ER programme requires teachers to devote involvement to investigation, planning and decision-making. It is also unwise to think that such a programme can stand alone without accompanying activities. Teachers have to consider their own teaching situations and then make judgement on how these issues can be tackled so as to design an effective ER programme.

3.6.4 Programme evaluation

Having adopted these methods in an ER programme, teachers then need to be involved in an ongoing evaluation of the programme. In other words, we can know students' reading progress and their reflections about the books from their reading records. By observing the discussion groups, we can see their enjoyment in reading and sharing, and the interaction between them. We can also recognise unsuccessful areas, which need modification and improvement. As we can see, such an evaluation is a two-way process which enables teachers not only to adjust the operation of an ER programme, but also "to assess the quality, effectiveness, or general value of the program" (Johnson 1992:192).

However, in order to get a complete picture of the effectiveness of the ER programme, it is necessary to obtain objective and formal evidence to show its achievement, e.g. students' language improvement. Having this in mind, three common components are frequently included in an evaluation of an ER programme: purpose, stakeholder and method (Day & Bamford 1998).

3.6.4.1 Purpose

Purpose means what is going to be examined and why. Depending on the scale of the programme, purposes could be varied. Basically, three common purposes of evaluating an ER programme below can be defined, as Day and Bamford (1998:157) suggested:

- to see whether a program has achieved its goal;
- to see what other results a program might have had, apart from the intended ones;
- to identify aspects of a programme that might need change or improvement.

3.6.4.2 Stakeholders

As Rea-Dickins & Germaine (1992) point out, stakeholders are often identified by their working role within a programme, or by their contribution to the programme, and therefore may refer to individuals or groups. Stakeholders are those who are involved in the process of the evaluation. Obviously, teachers and students are the two main stakeholders in the evaluation of an ER programme, since they are the two main characters in the programme. Other possible stakeholders include the school administrators, parents or funding agencies if involved, because of the impact they might make on the programme.

3.6.4.3 Method

Before discussing the methods of evaluating an ER programme, it is pertinent to make a distinction between assessments and tests, since evaluation might mean one of them or both. On the one hand, to assess means evaluating students' progress by a variety of instruments (e.g. exams, classroom observation and homework), over a

period of time. On the other hand, testing is to give a single instrument to a group of students that measures one or more aspects of students' learning. The relation between them is that a test is a part of the whole assessment; assessment incorporates many instruments but a test is a single independent method (Aebersold & Field 1997). Teachers often use a test or a questionnaire, or both at the end of the programme, to see whether the purposes of the programme have been achieved. However, some on-going methods of collecting data during an ER programme could give insights into the operation of the programme. The following section is devoted to discussing different formats for evaluating the effectiveness of an ER programme, including test, questionnaire, reading records and classroom observation.

1. Test

Traditionally, as being "the most powerful and efficient tool" (Shohamy 1993:2), testing has been widely, formally and periodically used by teachers to assess students' reading comprehension. The main aim of using tests as a means of evaluating an ER programme is to measure students' growth in language ability after participating in the programme (Gorsuch 1997). In order to achieve this, such an instrument is normally given before and after the programme, and then the results of the two tests are compared to see the improvement in students' language proficiency, reading in particular.

However, since the effects of test methods have an impact on the students' performance, it is essential to know the relationship between a particular format and its effect on reading comprehension so as to enable us to select a proper test format to meet our needs (Hughes 1989). For example, if we want to measure students' overall comprehension of a text, we have to know which format is good for this purpose and which has negative effects on it. This also will ensure test validity and build up our confidence in adopting or rejecting the format. In order to choose a set of different formats which will produce adequate results, it is necessary to know the exact effects particular test formats could make. The foci of the test include reading speed, appropriate use of vocabulary and grammatical items and reading comprehension. The following three types of question formats are commonly used in reading tests: multiple-choice, gap-filling tests, and short answer and open-ended

questions. It should be pointed out that these tests require different preparation and administration. Moreover, the results may be calculated and interpreted differently.

- (a) Multiple-choice is the most popular method of testing reading comprehension, especially in many standardized tests, such as TOFEL. This type is also included in many EFL reading textbooks as exercises following a reading passage. The choices in a multiple-choice question consist of one correct answer and a variety of distractors. Such questions are quick to complete and score. However, they are very difficult to construct because they might include silly or subtle distractors (Heaton 1988). Moreover, teachers have no clue to know whether their students have guessed. In order to avoid these pitfalls, teachers have to spend considerable time, thought and skill in constructing this type of test (Day & Bamford 1998).
- (b) A gap-filling test is to select a passage and the teacher decides which words to delete, leaving at least five or six words between gaps according to the purposes of the test (Nuttall 1996). For example, if overall comprehension is intended, those words which seem to carry the main ideas should be deleted. This means that teachers have more control over what is tested to achieve their objective. In order to avoid having restorable gaps from the remaining context, it is necessary to give the test to other teachers to see whether they can refill the gaps. One problem with using this format is the need to train students in test-taking strategies (Hughes 1989), since otherwise the assessment of reading comprehension would not be dependable and valid.
- (c) Short answer/open-ended questions are questions which ask students to write the responses that they consider suitable. The *wh-* and *how/why* forms are used most frequently in this classification. Those questions often require a few words or a complete sentence in answer to questions about the reading (Jafaarpur 1987). This could reflect students' inferential understanding of a text and production of writing skills. The main concerns are whether students are being tested on writing ability, and whether lack of cultural knowledge creates difficulties for students in comprehending the text (Aebersold & Field 1997).

Teachers should recognise the usefulness of each format and then apply it to construct their own tests, as Weir (1988:96) suggested below:

Current research suggests that test format may have an undue effect on the measurement of trait. It seems sensible, therefore, to safeguard against possible format effect by including a variety of appropriate testing methods in assessing competence in the various skills.

To sum up, an integration of different test formats in a test seems to be desirable for teachers to get more general ideas about what understanding students have. Having discussed the traditional method of assessing reading comprehension, it is very important to keep in mind that comprehension is not a competence which can be tested once and for all, even if we have the right test (Kintsch & Yarbrough 1982). Given this, it is plausible for teachers to employ other methods in order to help students know how well they are understanding a text. Two classroom activities in particular are useful in the process of monitoring comprehension: reading records and observation (Aebersold & Field 1997).

2. Questionnaires

McKernan (1996:125) states that "The questionnaire approach to gathering data is probably the most commonly used method of inquiry", and a questionnaire survey is widely used to gather information about the attitudes and opinions of a target group. In constructing the questionnaire, we should write the questions precisely in accordance with the purpose of the evaluation. Or we should recast the purposes as statements to be responded to by the students (Cohen & Manion 1998). The format of question items can be ranking, multiple-choice, closed or open-ended, or a combination. Moreover, the use of the language in the questionnaire should be in the students' L1 because the questionnaire is not a test of students' language ability (Day & Bamford 1998). It should be kept in mind that the questions or statements should be simple and easy to understand.

Once the questionnaire has been prepared, a pilot of the questionnaire to a small group of students is essential in order to prevent any pitfalls and get genuine data (Nunan 1992). After the first trial, any necessary modifications should be made

before piloting it again or finalising it. One consideration about using a questionnaire is the retrievable rate, since this would certainly affect the success of the questionnaire.

Tests and questionnaires will form the main methods of evaluation but two further methods can yield useful feedback: reading records and classroom observation.

3. Reading records

A reading record can simply ask students to retell the story in their own words, write a summary of the story or a reflection about the story, or answer comprehension questions, or be a combination of these (Day & Bamford 1998). This can provide teachers with visible information about monitoring students' progress in reading and spotting those who need guidance (Bailey 1980). Students are involved in assessing their own reading comprehension, so that they can know how well they read and where they need improvement (Jones 1994). However, it takes time for teachers to read students' records in order to know whether their students read genuinely and what their reactions and suggestions are. Such time consumed in checking students' reading records will add a considerable burden on those who already have a heavy work-load.

4. Classroom observation

An observation can be carried out by various people at different times, with the intention of observing and monitoring students' reading. In the classroom, teachers will have many opportunities, such as interactions, sharing groups and group discussions, to observe and evaluate students' reading (Nunan 1989). During students' reading, teachers can take notes on how they read, what difficulties they encounter and how they tackle them, and how they comprehend. This can help the researcher to obtain first-hand and on-site data occurring inside the classroom.

However, students are always aware of having a strange face (i.e. an external observer) in the class and recognise being observed by the person. Their attention and performance are often distracted by this unanticipated behaviour. The teacher of the class can be the observer in order to avoid such interference, and by making direct

contact with the students in natural settings, can also collect genuine information about students' performance.

The notes taken during reading can serve as complementary or supplementary information needed for constructing further devices for data collection, such as interviews. In other words, the notes can provide rich information for the following investigation, and also cross-check data for reinforcing the findings.

As we have seen that these formats serve different purposes and have different evaluation applications to a particular situation, it is worth remembering that no single method can possibly be used for all the different purposes we have.

3.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the domain of ER and the issues related to the design of the current study. The first two sections (3.2 and 3.3) have defined the notion of extensive reading and its underlying theories (i.e. Krashen's Comprehensible Input), followed by a discussion of the benefits such an approach could have (3.4). In section 3.5, a range of state-of-the-art case studies from several countries has been presented so as to get more evidence of the effectiveness of reading extensively, to find guidance and advice on how to design an ER programme and to discover the potential and pitfalls of implementing research in this field.

Teachers or administrators need to develop ideas about how to plan an ER programme and what practical factors will affect the implementation (3.6). The factors include school setting, students' reading preferences, and book selection (i.e. suitability and readability) and book provision. For promoting students participation, which plays an important role in the success of an ER programme, several strategies are recommended in the subsequent section (3.6.3). The present study has taken these factors and strategies into consideration.

In terms of assessing the efficiency of an ER programme, the final section (3.6.4) is devoted to discussing the necessary ingredients which should be included in the process of evaluation. Apart from data collection (e.g. classroom observation) in the on-going process, a test and a questionnaire survey could be used to obtain evidence for the gains

from participating in an ER programme, with a specific focus on evidence such as the students' language improvement and the development of their attitudes.

The next chapter considers issues arising from the case studies presented here and formulates a research framework for the current study.

PART II EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Having reviewing theoretical background, this part gives details on which this study is constructed. It starts with describing a baseline study consisting of a survey on students' reading preferences for book selection, and a pilot study on finalising the study procedure and measurements. Then, the details of methodology and design of the main study are given.

Chapter 4 Baseline Study

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Rationale of the study
- 4.3 Aims of the study
- 4.4 Research questions
- 4.5 Research Methods
- 4.6 Results
- 4.7 Findings and implications for the main study
- 4.8 Chapter summary



Chapter 5 Main Study - Methodology and Design

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Rationale of the study
- 5.3 Aims of the study
- 5.4 Research questions and hypotheses
- 5.5 Research paradigms
- 5.6 Research design
- 5.7 Study one
- 5.8 Study two
- 5.9 Chapter summary

4 BASELINE STUDY

Education authorities like to see results quickly. It is most important to resist any pressure to implement a programme in all schools straightaway. There may be very strong political reasons why it is difficult to start the programme in some schools rather than all schools, but to start in all schools without a pilot programme is a recipe for disaster.

– David Hill (1992: 126) –

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters I have discussed the theoretical background as a basis for developing the study. Chapter One has stated the lack of attention to extensive reading in Taiwan and the intention of demonstrating the benefits of extensive reading on students' language learning. Chapter Two has shown that reading is a complex process and that intensive reading alone is insufficient to improve students' reading ability. In Chapter Three, the concept of extensive reading was described, and its values were discussed with particular reference to the findings of previous research. The literature review has suggested that reading extensively can result in improvement in various aspects of language learning and in attitudes (see 3.4), and previous research has consistently shown the effectiveness of extensive reading (ER) programmes at different ages and in many EFL settings (3.5). A key issue in the success of an ER programme centres on the reading materials used because interesting books attract attention, stimulate motivation and most importantly, keep interest in reading (Day & Bamford 1998; Hedge 1985; Hill 1992). Thus, it is essential to ensure that the selected books meet learners' interests so that they can be motivated to choose and to read the books.

Bearing this in mind, the baseline study aimed at securing that this essential condition was fulfilled before proceeding on to the main study. It focused on selecting appropriate books for the main study. This chapter starts with the rationale (4.2) and the aims of the study (4.3). Then, the research questions are highlighted in 4.4. The focus of section 4.5 is on a discussion of techniques used for collecting data of the current study, followed by the presentation of the findings (4.6). Finally, a summary of the findings and the implications for the main study are given in 4.7.

4.2 Rationale for the study

As the premise of successful ER programmes is to select books which are interesting to learners, the researchers of previous studies on ER tended to select books according to their own experiences, on the basis of assumptions about their students' reading preferences, by looking at popular topics or materials (Day & Bamford 1998), by using recommended list of series (e.g. the EPER's Standard Booklist, Hill 1992), or by observing students' L1 reading habits (Nuttall 1996). Research by Hafiz and Tudor (1989), Lai (1993a), Mason and Krashen (1997b), and Robb and Susser (1989), claimed that they provided books which met learners' interests and were appropriate to their English language proficiency, but no information was given about what was done to arrive at the selection made. As this researcher's review of the most quoted studies on ER (discussed in 3.5) has shown, there were two methodological problems:

- No questionnaire was conducted before the research on investigating essential information about learners' general preferences or interests and attitudes, and teachers' cognition.
- No information was given about whether learners found the provided books interesting.

Nunan (1989) has noted that the effectiveness of a programme could be seriously reduced if students' subjective needs and perceptions in the sense of reading or topic preferences are not recognised by teachers. Moreover, Klapper (1992:54) has also warned "if we move too far from our learners' natural sphere of interest we run the risk of making extended reading a meaningless chore". Thus, before implementing an extensive reading programme, it is essential to make sure that the books we provide will be interesting to the students (Worthy 2000). To achieve this, a questionnaire on reading preferences, to be answered by the students who will participate in the ER programme, serves as an appropriate tool to elicit possible criteria for book selection (Day & Bamford 1998). Because of its economy in design and its potential for collecting data from a wide population (Cohen & Manion 1998) the questionnaire survey is an effective instrument for collecting research data.

After establishing a list of books to be used in line with questionnaire findings, we may need to ascertain whether the books really meet our students' expectations. The

best way is to choose several books from the list as samples and ask students to review them. A close examination of the books selected by the students will provide essential advice on the further collection of books. This attempt is important in two aspects: it can ensure that the selected books meet our students' expectations, and student involvement can motivate them to choose and to read the books.

4.3 Aims of the study

The baseline was established to detect learners' reflections on the selected books and to elicit information in order to resolve issues in the main study design. The main purposes of the baseline study are explained below:

1. First, the baseline was to detect students' reading preferences using a questionnaire survey so as to establish criteria for the book selection.
2. The second aim was to find out whether the book selection was appropriate to students' reading interests by giving the students the selected books to evaluate.
3. Thirdly, the baseline study aimed at exploring the suitability and practicability of extra activities (i.e. giving extra marks after reading a certain book, recording progress on a wall-chart, listening to taped books and the teacher's participation in various ways) in encouraging students' participation.
4. The final aim was to detect factors which might cause problems in the implementation of the main study. For this reason, several variables were left uncontrolled. These included: programme time, use of the dictionary and group discussion. It was hoped that the findings would indicate areas where more control would be needed.

4.4 Research questions

In order to achieve the aims listed in 4.3, the focus of the study can be summarised in the following questions:

1. What are students' attitudes toward reading in English?
2. For what purposes do students read in English?
3. What difficulties do student experience in reading English?

4. Can we identify students' favourite reading materials and topics in English?
5. What are the features of books in English which will attract students to read?
6. Are the selected books interesting to the subjects in terms of appearance, topic and content?
7. What are the teachers' opinions about participating in an extensive reading programme, and their suggestions on possible ways of implementing an extensive reading programme?
8. What are the teachers' difficulties in setting up an extensive reading programme?
9. Are any activities which will encourage students' participation suggested by the students and the teachers?
10. Can we identify activities which would encourage subjects' participation?
11. Can we identify any intervening -factors within the school which should be controlled so that the continuum of the study would not be interrupted?

4.5 Research method

This baseline study was carried out in a three-stage process: questionnaires (4.5.1), book selection (4.5.2) and main data collection (4.5.3).

4.5.1 Questionnaires

4.5.1.1 Piloting

Before the main administration of the questionnaires, a pilot survey was tried out to ensure clarity of wording of the questions and of the directions for completion. The piloting survey was expanded on the basis of suggestions made by Sheu (1999) and was planned to be a first trial, which would be followed by a series of revisions. The first piloting was carried out on two grade-2 classes (n=78 students) and 6 teachers in Chin-Hwa junior high school in Taiwan during the second semester of the academic year 1999-2000. Students and teachers suggested shortening the questionnaires, rewording some questions and reducing the scale. On the basis of feedback, the questionnaires were modified for the second pilot.

In the second pilot, 144 students aged 13-14 and 6 teachers in Chin-Hwa and Chung-Shan junior high schools in Taiwan answered the modified questionnaires during the first semester of the academic year 2000-2001. It should be pointed out here that the results of the pilot questionnaires yielded almost the same findings as the main questionnaires as summarised below.

1. The students held a negative view about learning English. The teachers' opinions about their students' learning of English were more positive than the students'.
2. The students and the teachers agreed about which textbook-related practices they undertook inside and outside the classroom as most frequent activities for improving their reading ability.
3. Reading for pleasure was an uncommon leisure activity among students.
4. The students had different tastes (i.e. types of books and topics) in reading books in Chinese and in English, and also held different opinions about the reasons for choosing books.
5. The students read books in English outside the classroom, but they read mainly for study. While reading, they said that linguistic difficulties were their main problems.
6. The students were more uncertain about the availability of books in English in the school library than the teachers.
7. The students and the teachers were positive about participation in an extensive reading programme. However, they also viewed the method of implementing the programme differently (i.e. the length and the time).
8. The students viewed having an award as the greatest incentive for encouraging their participation; however, the teachers reported that involving students in reflective activities would increase their students' motivation.
9. The teachers reported that supplementary teaching resources and teacher training are needed.
10. The teachers in the two schools took different views on predicting the possible difficulties in setting up an extensive reading programme.

4.5.1.2 Subjects

The subjects of the student questionnaire survey (in the students' native language, i.e. Chinese) were 763 grade-2 and 3 students, aged from 13 to 15 years old, from 10 junior high schools in Taiwan. They were all native speakers of Chinese. They have been studying English for 2 or 3 years and were at the elementary level. The proportion of the sexes was nearly equal (48.5% boys, 51.5% girls). Seventy nine teachers from the same schools also answered the teacher questionnaire in English. All the teachers were female and their teaching experience varied in a range of 1-20 years.

4.5.1.3 Materials

Two surveys were used in the study: the questionnaire for students (see Appendix 1) which was given in Chinese and the one for teachers in English (see Appendix 2). A brief explanatory letter with regard to the objectives of the study, the procedure to be followed and the information to be obtained was attached to each questionnaire. It took approximately 15 minutes for the students and the teachers to complete the questionnaire.

A first pilot survey enabled modified versions of the students' and the teachers' questionnaire to be used in this study. In order to obtain more accurate information, three methodological considerations were also taken into account in constructing the questionnaire as described below:

1. Question form - in order to get free-form responses which are potentially useful and insightful, open-ended questions were included.
2. Question format - the questionnaires adopted two types of question which detected students' attitudes toward the content of each item. One type asked students to choose three items from a list; the other type used a four-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree and the students were asked to circle the most appropriate number to indicate their negative or positive attitudes.
3. Question formulation - a four-point Likert-scale technique (i.e. strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree) was used in both questionnaires. Other types of scales (e.g. yes, probably, unlikely, and no, etc.) were also employed in the questionnaires. The "central" natural position was not given as an option, as it might obscure the results.

4.5.1.4 Procedures and data analysis

The questionnaires were administered to 763 grade-2 and 3 students and 79 teachers in 10 junior high schools in Taiwan during the second semester of the academic year 2000-2001.

The data were divided into two categories: closed questions and open-ended questions. For the former, the percentages of students' responses to each question were calculated. For the latter, the number of statements that related to a similar theme was assigned to a group and analysed qualitatively. The results were presented as descriptive statistics (i.e. frequencies).

4.5.1.5 Results

The results are presented descriptively using percentages and appear in this section only in accordance with the research questions in 4.4.

1. Students' reading interests, reading difficulties and reading purposes

27.1% (207 out of 763) of the students do not read books in English outside the classroom. As shown in Table 4-1, predictably, those who do, report reading materials related to study most frequently. Noticeably, approximately 40% of students also say that they read comics/ cartoons or newspapers.

Table 4-1 Reading interests in English

	Students (N=556)
Self-study reference books	306 (55.0%)
Magazines for language learning	249 (44.8%)
Comics/ Cartoons	226 (40.6%)
Newspapers	217 (39.0%)
Novels/Story-books	135 (24.3%)
Fiction	47 (8.5%)
Biography	25 (4.5%)
Poetry	16 (2.9%)

The numbers represent those who answer 'they like it and like it very much'.

Language problems shown in Table 4-2, personal factors and time constraints which will affect their reading have been pointed out by the students. They report that low language proficiency and having no idea of how to read are the two most common

difficulties when they read. These two difficulties may reflect how they read and probably what they have been taught in the classroom. The least common difficulty in the two areas is having no purpose.

Table 4-2 Reading difficulties in English

	Students (N=763)
Low language proficiency	465 (60.9%)
No idea of how to read	335 (43.9%)
No interest	295 (38.7%)
No confidence	277 (36.3%)
No time/too much homework	275 (36.0%)
Boring materials in English	128 (16.8%)
No suitable materials available	126 (16.5%)
Lack of background/cultural knowledge	120 (15.7%)
No companion	101 (13.2%)
No purpose	72 (9.4%)
Didn't answer	6 (0.8%)

The students reported that they read books in English for several reasons (see Table 4-3). Interestingly, the students perceived English reading as a means of getting information (58.5%) or learning something new (49.7%). As expected, study and exams played an important role in their reading. On the whole, the results indicated that when asked why they read in English, the students viewed it as not only a classroom activity but also an activity they did in their normal life.

Table 4-3 Students' reading purposes

	Students (N=763)
For getting information	446 (58.5%)
For further study	432 (56.6%)
For learning something new	379 (49.7%)
For passing exams	334 (43.8%)
For travelling overseas	329 (43.1%)
For developing a habit	317 (41.5%)
For getting a job in the future	263 (34.5%)
For pleasure	198 (26.0%)
For exploring the Internet	196 (25.9%)
For killing time	114 (14.9%)
Didn't answer	6 (0.8%)

When asked what they would like to read, the students said that their favourites were funny stories, famous TV programmes/films and detective stories as shown in Table 4-

4. They also pointed out that stories about animals/pets are the least popular topics. Overall, the results expressed that the students had a wide taste in reading topics.

Table 4-4 Students' popular topics

	Students (N=763)
Funny stories	591 (77.5%)
Famous TV programme/films	567 (74.3%)
Detective	563 (73.8%)
Adventure	528 (69.2%)
Mystery	495 (64.9%)
School life/Stories in other countries	478 (62.6%)
Romance	455 (59.6%)
Horror/Ghost	429 (56.2%)
Science fiction	413 (54.1%)
Stories about the people you like/know	380 (49.8%)
Animal/Pet	378 (48.5%)
Sports	344 (43.8%)

The numbers represent those who answer 'often and sometimes'.

2. Students' attitudes toward learning English and reading in English

In general, the students were moderately positive in their views of learning English; that is, 53.0% of them liked learning English. However, they held a slightly negative view about reading in English: 43.0% said that they liked reading in English.

Table 4-5 Students' attitudes toward learning English and reading

N=763	Learning English	Reading
I like it very much.	93 (12.2%)	42 (5.5%)
I like it.	311 (40.8%)	286 (37.5%)
I don't like it.	302 (39.6%)	361 (47.1%)
I don't like it at all.	54 (7.1%)	71 (9.3%)
Didn't answer	3 (0.4%)	3 (0.4%)

3. Students' reasons for choosing reading materials

Obviously, Table 4-6 shows that most students focus on the content and the level of the language of a book when they are choosing books in English to read. On the whole, the results indicated that personal interest and language considerations served as the two most important factors in the students' decisions. They also showed that the students paid less attention to physical features (e.g. the size of the book). It was not

surprising that the price of a book was the 4th most common reason, since the students bought books in bookshops themselves.

Table 4-6 Reasons for choosing books in English

	Students (N=763)
The content	613 (80.3%)
The level of the language	567 (74.3%)
Title	506 (66.3%)
Price	504 (66.1%)
The picture of the front cover	482 (63.2%)
The illustrations	447 (58.6%)
The quality of the print	397 (52.0%)
Popularity	378 (49.5%)
The length of the book	373 (48.9%)
Someone's recommendation	368 (48.2%)
The print size of the book	355 (46.5%)
The size of the book	276 (36.2%)
The writer	242 (30.4%)

The numbers represent those who answer 'often and sometimes'.

4. Possible ways of implementing an extensive reading programme

A class activity (33.0%) or a club time activity (27.1%) dominated the students' opinions about the way in which the ER programme could be carried out (see Table 4-7). As with the students' opinions, the teachers' views on the method of implementing the ER programme favoured a club time activity (29.1%) and class activity (20.3%). Also, as with the students' results, 44.3% of the teachers hoped their students could attend the programme at least once a week (44.3%) and read books for 15-45 minutes (53.2%).

Table 4-7 Ways of carrying out the programme

	Students (N=763)	Teachers (N=79)
Class activity	252 (33.0%)	16 (20.2%)
Club time activity	207 (27.1%)	23 (29.1%)
Activity after school	75 (9.8%)	13 (16.5%)
Summer and winter holidays	75 (9.8%)	12 (15.2%)
Leisure activity	74 (9.7%)	5 (6.3%)
Homework	28 (3.7%)	7 (8.9%)
Break time activity	18 (2.4%)	1 (1.2%)
No	3 (0.4%)	
Ticked more than 1 answer	23 (3.0%)	2 (2.5%)
Didn't answer	3 (0.4%)	

As for their attitudes toward participation in the ER programme, 68.7% of the students said that they would like to take part in the programme. If they took part in the ER programme, the most commonly acceptable involvement was attending the programme at least once a week (41.6%), and spending 15-45minutes on reading (51.6%). Regarding the resources in the school library, vast majority (85.6%) of the teachers admitted that English books were available to students, but only 12.4% of the students were aware of this opportunity.

5. Activities which may encourage students' participation

In Table 4-8, getting extra marks after reading a certain book as a reward was predictably the most common incentive for the students to participate in the ER programme. Noticeably, they also viewed teacher's participation as another means of encouragement. The three least favourite activities seemed to suggest that the students were not enthusiastic about being burdened with more work to do.

The teachers also saw giving an extra mark after reading a certain book as the most effective method for encouraging their students to take part in the ER programme (see Table 4-8). Probably, because of the show-off attitudes at the students' age, the wall-chart demonstration of the students' achievement could play an important role in the teachers' view. Interestingly, they did not view their own participation and the provision of taped-books as valuable activities in encouraging their students to read. On the whole, the teachers seemed to perceive those activities which required the students' involvement (e.g. a reading competition and oral reports) as practicable and workable.

Table 4-8 Activities which encourage students' participation

	Students (N=763)	Teachers (N=79)
Give extra mark after reading a certain book	581 (76.1%)	70 (88.6%)
Provide taped books	457 (59.9%)	46 (58.2%)
Have teacher's participation	402 (52.7%)	32 (40.5%)
Demonstrate their achievement on wall-display	328 (43.0%)	66 (83.5%)
Share experience with other students	274 (35.9%)	57 (72.2%)
Write a short essay	212 (27.8%)	59 (74.7%)
Set a reading competition	210 (27.5%)	63 (79.7%)
Give oral reports	143 (18.7%)	59 (74.7%)

The numbers represent those who answer 'certainly and perhaps'.

6. Difficulties in setting up an extensive reading programme

Table 4-9 shows that the teachers' perceptions pointed to time-constraints in and after the school as the most common difficulty in organising a new programme. The students' attitudes toward reading, and suitability and storage of books also need consideration. Surprisingly, the teachers were also worried about their own limited knowledge, but less concerned about the pressure of exams and the students' language proficiency.

Table 4-9 Teachers' difficulties in setting up an ER programme

	Total (N=79)
There is no spare time in the school syllabus/schedule	46 (58.2%)
Students don't have any interest in reading in English	44 (55.7%)
There are no suitable books/materials in English available	38 (48.1%)
There is no space to store books/materials in the classroom	28 (35.4%)
There is some pressure from parents concerning examinations	17 (21.5%)
Students don't have spare time after school	17 (21.5%)
I don't know how to organise and manage the programme	16 (20.3%)
Students cannot read properly because of their poor language proficiency	8 (10.1%)
Students don't have any interest in reading in Chinese	3 (3.8%)

4.5.2 Book selection

As discussed in 3.6.2.4, with all the same aims – 'entertainment, information, learning to read, and becoming hooked on books' (Day & Bamford 1998:61), both graded readers (GR) and books for native English speaking children (BNESC) could be used to improve EFL learners' reading ability and attitudes, and would therefore be worth including in ER programmes. In the previous section (4.5.4.1), students' opinions about the extensive reading programme were positive, and they would like to have the ER programme in the school syllabus. Moreover, when being asked to give suggestions and comments on the programme, the students wished to have more books on various topics in the class library. Thus, selecting more books became the first priority in the preparation of the main study. This section describes the processes of selecting books for this study. The first part discusses the criteria for book selection. Then, the detailed process of selecting books is described.

4.5.2.1 Criteria for book selection

As Williams (1986:42) states, “in the absence of interesting texts, very little is possible”. Thus, the criteria will derive from the students’ self-reports on reading preferences (see 4.5.1.5) and will be used to select the series of readers in the class library collection. In addition, the premise that the selected books are not only a source of pleasure, but also resources for language learning, is also taken into account. The criteria for book selection are categorised into variety of text types and topics, suitability of language and presentation (Day 1994).

1. Variety of text types and topics

A variety of text types offers opportunities for “exposing students to all kinds of texts that they are likely to encounter in their real life” (Nuttall 1996:177). Moreover, various text types cater for different students with different background knowledge. As for the variety of topics, they can avoid culture-specificity which may hinder students’ comprehension and they may be relevant to students’ interests. In addition, if students are familiar with topics they can easily activate their previous knowledge.

2. Suitability of language

Complexity of texts will impede readers’ continuity of reading and their comprehension will be affected. Readers with low FL proficiency will encounter much difficulty in reading and become discouraged. To deal with these factors, reading texts chosen should coincide with students’ language proficiency. Therefore, the readability of texts should be considered.

3. Presentation

Presentation of texts included cover page, illustrations, length, quality of print, size of print, and size of book. These features can serve as a tool to aid readers’ comprehension. They can also motivate readers to read and activate their knowledge.

4.5.2.2 Process of selection

The book selection was carried out using three formulae for readability as mentioned in 3.6.2.3.

1. Lexicon reference

Having taken the level of language of readers as a first consideration, 6 series of GR designed for starters or beginners (Table 4-10 below) were selected based on the EPER levels of language difficulty (see 3.6.2.1). This level of reader is intended for students with up to a 400 word lexicon. They were fully illustrated in colour and provided a variety of topics.

Table 4-10 Levels of graded readers (GR)

Series	Levels	Number of headwords
Oxford Bookworms	Starters	250
Oxford Bookworms Factfiles	Stage 1	400
Oxford classic tales	Level 1	100
Cambridge English Readers	Level 1	400
Heinemann ELT Guided Readers	Starter	300
Heinemann New Wave Readers	Level 1	300
Penguin Readers	Easystarts	200
Penguin Readers	Level 1	300

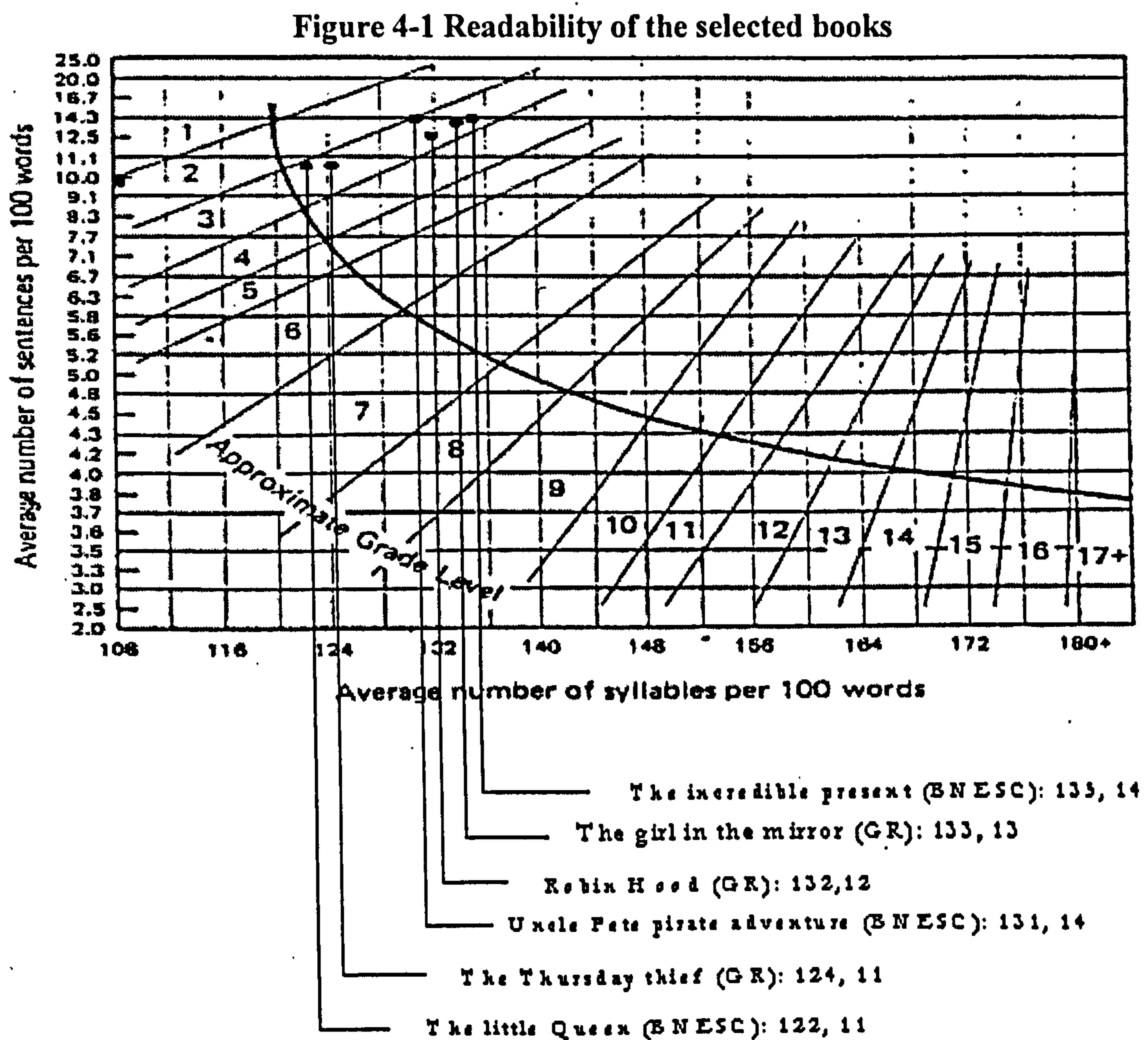
As for BNESC, the level of language and attractiveness of materials was the first consideration. Thus, books for L1 teenagers were excluded because the level of the language was too difficult for the students in this study and the lack of colourful illustrations also made them unattractive. Instead, books of colourful appearance for younger native English children were chosen (Cassady 1998). The care was nevertheless taken so that the topics would not be seen as too childish. For example, well-known fairy-tales which could well appeal to older learners. Then, four series of children's books were chosen as described in Table 4-11 below.

Table 4-11 Levels of books for native English speaking Children (BNESC)

Series	Level	Number of words
Ladybird	Starters	250
Oxford Primary	Stage 1	400
Usborne	Level 1	100
Walker	Level 1	400

2. Fry Formula

Taking Carrell's (1987:26) suggestion that "sampling variability is an especially important concern" into account, 3 GR and 3 BNESC were randomly chosen to measure their readability. The figure 4-1 below graphically showed the selected books were at a similar readability level.



3. Cloze test

(a) Method

One passage from a GR (refers to CG henceforth) and one passage from a BNESC (refers to CB henceforth) were selected for the cloze test. Every 10th word was deleted and replaced by a blank in the rest of the passages. However, as Carrell (1987:25) points out, the main problem with cloze test lies in the fact that "all n forms of an every n th

fixed-ratio deletion cloze are seldom equal in difficulty". Kintsch and Vipond (1979) suggest that tasks which require students' attention to both schematic and linguistic knowledge will reduce that problem. Thus, it was decided to adopt gap-filling tests that the *n* forms were carefully chosen in terms of syntax and lexicon, and the correct answers were provided as choice items. One passage from another GR (refers to GFG henceforth) and one passage from another BNESC (refers to GFB henceforth) were selected for the gap-filling test.

Two classes (N=53) took the cloze tests, and 30 minutes were allocated for the tests. Each class was given one cloze test and one gap-filling test: Class one - CG & GFG and Class two - CB & GFB (see Appendix 3). After the tests, the researcher marked the passage by giving 1 mark for each correct answer or for an answer which was synonymous or closely fitted the structure and style of the text. Then the percentages of correct answers were calculated and interpreted according to Heaton's (1989) interpretation (see 3.6.2.3).

Moreover, in order to know what problems the subjects had in understanding the texts and what suggestions they would give to deal with the problems, two open-ended questions were added at the bottom of the test paper.

(b) Results

The results of the tests are presented in Table 4-12. When we look at the result of the cloze tests (texts 1 and 3), it seems that the books are not at the right level for the subjects (i.e. 80% of the subjects scored below 39%). However, when they had answers to choose in the gap-filling tests, the students performed much better (50% of the subjects answered 61% correctly in GFG and 35.7% in GFB).

Table 4-12 Scores of the cloze test

		53% and over	44-52%	Below 43%
Class one	CG (N=15)		3/20%	12/80%
	GFG (N=10)	5/50%	3/30%	2/20%
Class two	GFG (N=14)	1/7.1%	2/14.3%	11/78.6%
	GFB (N=14)	5/35.7%	3/26.8%	6/42.9%

In response to what problems the subjects had in understanding the texts, 24 out of 53 subjects (45.3%) mentioned that unknown words were their difficulty in

comprehending the texts. Another two problems were grammar (9 students) and difficulties in understanding the overall meaning of the texts (7 students).

In answer to what suggestions the subjects would make to deal with the reading problems above, 17 students (32.1%) said they would like to ask their teachers for meanings, and 10 (18.9%) would consult a dictionary, and 4 wished to be given hints (translating new vocabulary into Chinese).

4.5.2.3 Phase of consultation and decision-making

The results showed that the selected books were above EFL elementary students' current language proficiency. Since the results of the cloze tests were not optimistic, it seemed to be appropriate to use the books once the students reached a threshold level or with those who were at higher proficiency level (i.e. high school). However, three factors had to be taken into account. Firstly, the results also showed that where clues were provided, students could guess the words. This gave some hope for comprehension. Secondly, there was a particular interest in researching ER with students at lower grades as this might be a crucial time to get students hooked on books. Thirdly, the selected graded readers were at the lowest level, so there are no other options available; in addition, a lower level of BNESC than those selected would be too childish in content for the subjects. Therefore, it was decided to carry out a 2-stage evaluation: teacher consultation and student evaluation.

1. Teacher consultation

Twenty books (12 GR and 8 BNESC) were chosen as samples and five teachers were invited to review them in terms of the language level and attraction of the books. They all agreed that the books would be at the right level for the subjects and the presentation of the books should be interesting to them.

2. Student evaluation

Based on the teachers' judgements, it was decided to move to the next stage of asking students for their opinions. This would be the decisive point. Based on the finding at the time, 26 GR and 31 BNESC were selected for the study.

4.5.3 Main data collection

4.5.3.1 Subjects

A total number of 86 students in I-Chia junior high school in Kao-Shiung county, Taiwan, participated in the pilot study. They are all native speakers of Chinese, aged from 13 to 16. Three grade-2 classes were randomly selected. About three fifths of the total were female students (N=55) and two fifths were male (N=31). They have four lessons (45 minute per lesson) of English per week.

4.5.3.2 Materials

A set of readers with 56 titles (i.e. 27 GR and 29 BNESC) was established (see inventory in Appendix 4). An evaluation sheet (see Appendix 5) was employed in this study. The students were asked to comment on the features (i.e. content, pictures and title...) of the books they chose by answering the evaluation sheet. The instructions and notes of the processes were also prepared (see Appendix 6). Moreover, a teacher's report (see Appendix 7) was also employed, in which my colleague described the process of each evaluation lesson, the students' participation and their responses, and gave comments or suggestions. All materials were given in Chinese.

4.5.3.3 Procedure and main data analysis

The study was carried out in May 2001. Due to the limited time in the lesson timetable and the busy school schedule at this time, two 45-minutes lessons were allocated and three grade-2 classes participated in the study. Students were asked to work in pairs, and they were allowed to discuss with their peers and to comment freely. Each individual student was given an evaluation sheet, and each pair was given a book to comment on according to the checklist on the sheet. They were given 5 minutes to look at the features of the book, to review the content and to dip into the reading. Then they wrote down their opinions or comments about the book. After that, they passed the book to the next pair and evaluated another book. Simultaneously, my colleague monitored the whole evaluation process and the students' participation by writing the teacher's report. Finally, she collected in all the evaluation sheets.

The data were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. In the quantitative analysis, subjects' responses were calculated to produce descriptive statistics, i.e. means.

In the qualitative analysis, students' and teachers' responses to each question were grouped in terms of addressing similar ideas. The percentage of each group was calculated.

4.6 Results

This section presents the results of the pilot study drawn from the students' book evaluation (see Appendix 8 for the details of the results) and teachers' reports. The first part discusses the results from students' evaluation. The main focus is to examine students' reflections about the selected books in accordance with the criteria listed in 4.5.2.1. The second part shows the teachers' reports on monitoring the process of book evaluation.

4.6.1 Students' results

1. Variety of text types and titles

On the whole, students gave most of the books a positive comment on the overall ranking. That is, they were satisfied with the books in the pilot study. They also found that the titles of the books were between interesting and about right, and this indicated that students appreciated the first impression when they see the books.

2. Suitability of language

The level of language of most books was between about right and difficult. Moreover, although few books were viewed as either a little bit short or long, the length of most books was between about right and a little bit short. The result is satisfactory.

3. Presentation

On the whole, students were satisfied with the presentation of the book. Firstly, the cover page of most books was between interesting and about right, and this indicated that they appreciated the first impression when they saw the books. Secondly, students' impressions on the illustration of the books are satisfactory, because they report that the illustration of most books is about right. Thirdly, students' opinions about the

quality of print of most books are satisfactory or above. Only two books (GR 4 and 12) were given the lowest score which meant that the quality of print was between satisfactory and not so good). Fourthly, students reported that the size of most books was about right. Finally, students felt that the size of print of the books was between about right and a little bit small.

4. Reflections on books evaluated

In response to their reflections on books they evaluated (see Table 4-13 below), interesting figures/picture on the cover page is the most common impression on books, mentioned by 59.6% of the students. This is followed by interesting illustration pointed out by 22.3% of the students. The other three common comments are attractive appearance (19.9%), interesting topic (19.9%) and content (15.1%). The result indicates that the students' first impression of the appearance of books is positive.

Table 4-13 Reflections on books evaluated

	Number of mentions (N=166)
Interesting figures/picture on the cover page	99 (59.6%)
Interesting illustration	37 (22.3%)
The books look interesting, exciting, funny	33 (19.9%)
Interesting topic	33 (19.9%)
Interesting content	25 (15.1%)
Size of the book and print, and the length	10 (6.0%)
The load of vocabulary	9 (5.4%)
The book is colourful	7 (4.2%)
Level of language	2 (1.2%)

5. Opinions about the ER programme

As shown in Table 4-14 below, it is worth noting that students give very positive responses to the ER programme, especially about the benefits of participating in the programme, interesting books. These responses also indicate that a new method of learning English is needed since they would like the programme to be included in the school syllabus. Moreover, they seem to enjoy the pressure-free atmosphere of the programme. In general, their views provide a positive encouragement to the main study.

Table 4-14 Students' opinions about the ER programme

	Number of mentions (N=166)
It's good	26
It's good for us to read and to obtain knowledge	23
This programme is interesting	23
I can improve my English proficiency	20
I can learn more sentences and words	20
I would like to have such a programme in the school	19
I like it, because no test and pressure	9
I have an opportunity to read books in English	9
It's reading only but no English lesson	9
There are beautiful illustrations in books	6
There are interesting contents in books	4
It's good for killing time	2
I like it because I can read books silently	2
It's boring	2
It's not difficult to read	1
No homework and report after the programme	1
I can develop a reading habit	1
I don't like reading books	1

6. Suggestions or Comments on the ER programme

Students' suggestions and comments are listed in Table 4-15 below. Along with their positive opinions, the students suggest more books on various topics with more pictures to be included for the main study in the programme. However, it is necessary to note that the language level of books should be taken into account in the future book selection since they also comment on the Chinese glossary and reading difficulties.

Table 4-15 Students' suggestions and comments on the ER programme

	Number of mentions (N=166)
More books	28
More illustration/picture in books	18
Chinese glossary	10
The level of the language could be more easy	9
I would like to have a book with the two languages	7
The length of the book is a little bit short	6
The size of the book is a little bit small	5
Too many sentences	3
The print size of the book is too small	3
The books are suitable for us to read	1
The length of the book is a little bit long	1
Accompany with games/activities	1
Content is a little bit difficult to understand	1
More time to read	1

4.6.2 Teachers' reports

The teacher's reports can be divided into three aspects as summarised below:

4.6.2.1 Students' participation

1. The students were willing to take part in the lesson, especially first year students. They were more enthusiastic than the other two classes, perhaps because the reading atmosphere was good in the first year class.
2. Some students asked their peers or teachers for the meaning of unknown words.
3. The students shared or discussed their books with their peers after reading.
4. After completing evaluation sheets, some students still wanted to read the books.
5. Some students reported that although some books were difficult to understand, they were very attractive and interesting to them.

4.6.2.2 Problems

1. The teachers found no difference between reactions of GR and BNESC because the students just looked at the cover page and did not pay attention to the type of books.
2. Some boys were lazy and did not want to evaluate books, instead they asked their partner to do the review. So, in other lessons my colleague asked students to go to the tables and look at books with her.

4.6.2.3 Suggestions and comments

1. Some words on the topics were difficult for the students to understand and this might not encourage them to read.
2. The teachers suggested translating the titles of books into Chinese and also labelling the genre of books on the cover page, so that the students could choose books which were really interesting to them.
3. Although giving extra marks might encourage students to read, one teacher raised difficulty in adopting this idea. The main concern was that the reward of an extra mark could not be integrated into the school marking system (the school tests) and

would be cancelled by the school authority. Therefore, she suggested eliminating this idea.

4.6.3 Summary of the results

1. On the whole, the selection of books is satisfactory. That is to say, the selected books are interesting to the students.
2. The results confirm that the most common incentive for students to read is to connect the selection of books with their personal interest (i.e. the titles and appearance).
3. The students' reflections on the projected extensive reading programme are very positive, and they are enthusiastic about participating in any future programme to be established. This is also confirmed by the teachers.
4. The students give a range of suggestions which would be incentives for them to participate and for the structure and nature of the programme (i.e. more books, more pictures in books, etc.).
5. The teacher reports that the students did not pay attention to the differences between the two categories of books (i.e. GR and BNESC).
6. For encouraging the students to read, the teacher suggests labelling the topic and the genre of books in Chinese on the cover pages.

4.7 Findings and implications for the main study

This section first discusses the results of the baseline study (4.7.1), followed by the discussion of the implications for the main study (4.7.2).

4.7.1 Finding of the baseline study

The results of the baseline study are presented and discussed below in response to the questions listed in 4.4.

Q1. Can we identify students' favourite reading topics in English?

Yes. The students reported that comics, detective stories, famous TV programmes/films, adventure and horror/ghost stories were their favourite topics. However, the people they like/know, animals/pets and sports were the least favourite topics, which nearly 50% of the students would like to read. On the whole, the results seemed to indicate that the students have a wide range of topics which interested them.

Q2. What are students' difficulties in reading and purposes for reading?

Low English language proficiency was the most common difficulty among the students. Moreover, the students' own capacities (i.e. having no idea of how to read, no interest and confidence) and learning environmental constraints (i.e. time) were other difficulties encountered by the students. As for reading purposes, for further study and getting information were the two most common purposes. Surprisingly, more than 40% of the students said that they read in English for learning something new, travelling overseas and developing a reading habit. This seemed to be an optimistic sign that the students viewed reading not only as a study-subject but also as a daily tool.

Q3. What are the features of books in English which will attract students to read?

The content and the level of the language were the two most common features which would attract the students to read. Moreover, title, cover page and illustration were another three common reasons for choosing books. This indicated that students' reading interest and the appearance of books are the two most important incentives for them in selecting books to read, and the students did not care much about the physical features, e.g. the size and the length of books, etc.

Q4. What are students' attitudes toward reading in English?

On the whole, the students' attitudes toward learning English and reading in English were slightly different. Their views about learning English (52.7% said they like it or like it very much) were more positive than those about reading in English (43.0% said so). This indicates that more than half of the students' attitudes toward reading in English were negative.

Q5. What are the teachers' opinions about participating in an extensive reading programme, and their suggestions on possible ways of implementing an extensive reading programme?

The teachers' responses to their participation in such a programme were very positive. A club time or a class activity were the two most common methods they suggested to carry out the programme. Surprisingly, they were not keen on the ideas of having the programme as a leisure activity or students' own time reading activity. As for the frequency and the length of the programme, nearly half of them suggested having the programme at least once a week and 30-60 minutes for each programme.

Q6. Are there any activities suggested by the students and the teachers which will encourage students' participation?

Several activities were suggested by the students and the teachers; however, except the favourite activity (i.e. giving extra marks after reading a certain book), they have very different views on the priority of the activities. Oral report, sharing groups, summary writing and a reading competition were highly recommended by the teachers, but the students' responses to these activities were low. Instead, they sought for teachers' companionship.

Q7. What are the teachers' difficulties in setting up an extensive reading programme?

To prevent obstruction in setting up the programme, it is essential to detect difficulties teachers might encounter. By the very nature of English instruction in junior high schools in Taiwan as mentioned in Chapter one, it was not surprising that the teachers' common difficulties were having no spare time in the school syllabus/schedule, parental pressure about their children's performance in exams and students' heavy load of study. Moreover, the teachers were also concerned about their own ability to organise such a programme, the lack of interest in reading in English among students, and the availability of suitable books and display-space in the classroom.

Q8: Are the selected books interesting to the subjects in terms of appearance, topic and content?

The results were generally satisfactory; that is, the initial selection of books was correct, and the further collection of books could continue on the same lines. However, there were some books which did not seem

to be appreciated by the students. These books should probably be eliminated from the class library in the main study.

Q9: Can we identify activities which would encourage subjects' participation?

The answer is 'yes'. The teachers reported that the students are willing to share and discuss their books with peers, and the students liked the idea of a wall-chart showing their achievement. The teachers also pointed out that after reading, the students concentrated on writing the reading record to register their own progress. However, the option of providing taped books was ruled out due to the fact that the audio equipment was not available in the school. In addition, for the marking system, the teachers suggested eliminating the idea of giving extra marks after reading a certain book because of practical problems.

Q10: Are there any interfering factors within the school which should be controlled so that the continuum of the study would not be interrupted?

Yes. Two factors do exist. First, the school/syllabus timetable is so tight that it is very difficult to spare one or two normal lessons for the programme. However, the lessons reserved for specific purposes (e.g. self-study, break and club time) could be used. Secondly, in the school schedule, there are two school tests in each semester (i.e. taking place in the middle and at the end of a semester). The lessons in the week before the test are devoted to preparing students for the test. So the programme in that week will be affected. Inevitably, the continuity of the programme will be interrupted by these two factors, and as a result, the time that students are exposed to reading in English will be reduced.

4.7.2 Implications for the main study

In relation to the aims of the baseline study (see 4.3), five implications for the main study are discussed in this section: book selection, training for ER, organisation of the ER programme, adoption of accompanying activities and awareness of the availability of English books in the school library.

1. Book collection

The first aim of the study was to find out whether the selected books are appropriate to participants' reading interest. The results (see 4.6.1) showed that the students were

generally satisfied with the selected books. Since the books were selected from several series, it was decided to collect all the series for the main study. In order to increase students' understanding of the story of books and interest, it seemed to be necessary to add a Chinese translation label of the title and type of book on the cover page of books before the start of the main study.

2. Training for ER

Students reported reading difficulties in respect of their own low language proficiency (vocabulary and grammar) and the lack of the idea of reading (see Table 4-2 in 4.5.1.5). This result suggested that they relied heavily on the studying skills they learnt in the current English lessons. This suggests strongly the necessity of introducing the concept of ER at the very beginning of the implementation of the ER programme so as to encourage students to read without grasping everything and to pay more attention to reading for meaning.

3. Organisation of the programme (timing, nature, length of time, when)

Due to the burden of the study load after school, organising the extensive reading programme as a homework or a leisure activity did not seem to be possible. As far as the school syllabus and schedule are concerned, it was difficult to spare time located for the programme from the limited English lesson time, as was confirmed by the teachers (58.2% of them commented on this, see Table 4-9). However, there are some lessons available for teachers to use for other academic or social purposes, such as school clubs and self-study. The teachers also suggested integrating the programme into such a period (see Table 4-7). The design of the main study should take this into consideration. Since teachers take students' performance in the school test as the first priority over other teaching objectives, the one-week interruption caused by the preparation for the test is inevitable.

4. Adoption of accompanying activities

As mentioned in the summary above (see Q6 and 9 in 4.7.1), promoting students' motivation in reading became an important task in the design of the main study. Since

there was a discrepancy over the students' and the teachers' perceptions of encouraging activities, the students' self-reports make it particularly important to select appropriate encouraging activities. Thus, four activities were selected for adoption in the main study: a reading record, a reading progress wall-chart, discussion groups and the teacher's participation and reading report. Although the idea of giving extra marks after reading a certain book and the provision of taped books was mentioned by the students in the survey, they were eliminated because of the practical difficulties in the school.

5. Awareness of the availability of English books in the school library

Although the teachers knew that books in English were available in the school library (see the 4th point in 4.5.1.5), they had not introduced this availability to their students, perhaps because the English instruction was heavily dependent on the textbook. Thus, this could raise students' awareness of learning resources in the school. Moreover, if books in English are available the school library and, utilization of its facilities will solve the organising problems of location and resource provision.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided detailed information about the baseline study, including its aims, research questions, methodology and findings. It presented the information on students' reading preferences and teachers' perceptions of the ER programme implementation (4.5.1.5). Then, the criteria for book selection (4.5.2.1) and the process of book selection (4.5.2.2) were described. It also examined in particular students' assessment of the selected books. Based on these findings, the final section highlighted important implications for the main study. In summary, the implications for the main study were as follows:

- All the series of the selected books would be collected and a class library would be used in the main study.
- Training for ER should be included at the beginning of the ER programme.
- The encouraging activities recommended by the students for increasing their motivation in reading and their participation in the programme should be adopted.

- The lessons designed for other academic or social purposes (i.e. school club and self-study) would be used in the main study;
- If the school library was available in the main study, the students should be given an introduction to the use of learning resources in it, and its facilities should be used.
- One intervening factor (i.e. one-week preparation for the school test) would affect the continuity of the main study.
- The teacher should participate in the ER programme serving as a model for encouraging students' participation.

5 MAIN STUDY – METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

In developing one's own philosophy on research, it is important to determine how the notion of 'truth' is related to research. What is truth? (Even more basically, do we accept that there is such a thing as 'truth'?) What is evidence? Can we ever 'prove' anything? What evidence would compel us to accept the truth of an assertion or proposition? - Nunan, D. (1992, p. 10) -

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Four presented a detailed baseline study examining a number of issues that were considered to be vital for the main study. The main aim was to ensure that the book selection was appropriate in terms of students' interests and the level of language. In addition, it was also intended to identify practical difficulties so as to deduce implications for the implementation of the main study. In the light of the baseline study, this chapter describes how the main study was structured to answer the research questions and in particular to test the specific research hypotheses listed in 5.4. The main aim of the study was to raise awareness in the educational authorities in Taiwan about the desirability of ER in the current English curriculum.

The first section (5.2) provides a rationale for the study. It focuses on issues in both theory and practice, followed by the aims of the study (5.3). Then information which the study seeks to investigate is presented (5.4). After giving an account of the research paradigms taken into account in the design of the study (5.5), the research design is described in 5.6. The research methodology (including the instruments, procedures and data analysis) of study one (5.7) and study two (5.8) are presented respectively.

5.2 Rationale of the study

The rationale for this study was based on both the literature review on extensive reading and the findings of experimental research. The theoretical review in chapter three has made an attempt to clarify extensive reading in terms of its definition and characteristics (3.2), underlying theories (3.3) and benefits (3.4). The results of the studies undertaken (discussed in 3.5) have shown evidence of the effectiveness of

extensive reading programmes on language learning at different ages and in many EFL settings. The reported benefits were manifold, especially in the following aspects:

- Improvement in reading comprehension.
- Development of positive attitudes.
- Increase in reading speed.
- Development of vocabulary acquisition.
- Increase in the knowledge of grammar.

However, the review also manifested shortcomings which have contaminated the quality and accountability of the quoted research. The most common problems can be divided into two aspects: theoretical and methodological problems.

5.2.1 Theoretical problems

The first problem relates to the amount of time that students spent on reading. Extensive reading (ER) has been defined literally as 'a large amount', but different definitions cited in 3.2 have given an insight into a wider interpretation of 'extensive'. However, the fact that "there is no agreement on how much extensive is" (Susser & Robb 1990:165) has caused confusion. A variety of formulae for the amount of reading and time used in ER research and programmes (discussed in 3.6.2.8) has raised more questions than it answered. Most experimental research has adopted one formula at a time, but has rarely examined whether different formulae have different effects on language learning and attitude development. Thus, although it was assumed that the more students are exposed to reading English materials, the more improvement they will make, the relationship between the amount of reading time and students' language development is unclear. Therefore, this study aimed at exploring this uncharted issue. A study of the relationship between these factors of time and amount of materials and an extensive reading programme seems essential and if the interaction between them is clearly identified, this will give insights into how programmes can best function. This will be taken into account in the research design (see 5.6).

The second problem relates to the type of materials used in ER research. Graded readers have in particular been used as the only type of reading materials in most ER research in FL settings. However, as discussed in 3.6.2.4, there is another possible source of materials for ER, namely authentic books for native English speaking children. "Making texts appropriate to the level of the readers is a common phenomenon in materials produced for L1 readers. Materials for native children...are written in modified English appropriate to their level of language mastery" (Aebersold & Field 1997:49). In this sense, books for native English speaking children (BNESC) could allow EFL students to practise reading the kind of books they will encounter outside the classroom. This could make EFL reading realistic and purposeful. Thus, Aebersold and Field (*ibid.*) believe that such 'authentic' materials could serve as an appropriate tool in developing EFL reading ability and a love of reading, and should be used in such settings. It would therefore be worth exploring their possible effectiveness. However, the notion of using BNESC has hitherto had little impact on the design of extensive reading programmes. This issue was addressed in 4.5.2.

A third problem is to do with measuring the improvement of students' reading speed. Bell (2001) suggests choosing a passage (approximately 450-500 words) with line numbers, then giving students 3 minutes to read, and when the time is up, asking them to mark the word they have reached with a cross (X). Then the number of words they have read is counted. The students' reading speed then was calculated in words per minute. The calculated formula is $RS = NWS \div Ms^{10}$. However, since "speed is worthless unless the reader understands what he reads" (Nuttall 1996:58), this procedure is hardly valid because it is difficult to measure students' overall comprehension if they do not finish reading the text within the limited time. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt tests which can measure reading speed and reading comprehension simultaneously. The details of developing the reading speed tests will be described in 5.7.4.1.2.

¹⁰ RS is reading speed (wpm); NWS is number of words the students have read; Ms is minutes spent in reading.

5.2.2 Methodological problems

Experimental research has been undertaken to demonstrate the effectiveness of ER on students' language learning and attitude development. However, the researcher's review on the most quoted research has commented on the problems these researchers have had while undertaking their studies (described in 3.5). The common limitations were summarised as follows:

1. No questionnaire on subjects' reading preferences and attitudes before the programme (Davis 1995; Mason & Krashen 1997b; Robb & Susser 1989).
2. No information about teachers' cognition (i.e. beliefs, knowledge, theories, assumptions, and attitudes) which might affect their behaviour (Davis 1995; Elley & Mangubhai 1983; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Lai 1993a; Mason & Krashen 1997b; Robb & Susser 1989).
3. An already English input-rich environment (UK), i.e. substantial exposure to English through school-day and social lives (Hafiz & Tudor 1989).
4. Highly motivated and self-selecting subjects (Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Lai 1993a).
5. Some aids, e.g. dictionaries (Hafiz & Tudor 1989).
6. No control group (Lai 1993a).
7. Only one type of question format, i.e. a cloze test for measuring language development (Mason & Krashen 1997b).
8. No information about the number of books the subjects had actually read (Davis 1995; Elley & Mangubhai 1983; Hafiz & Tudor 1989; Mason & Krashen 1997b).

The first two points relate to the baseline study and were discussed in 4.5.1. The next six points raise practical issues which will be considered in the research design of the main study in section 5.6. The last point is necessary for presentation of findings in the next two chapters (6 and 7).

If the above limitations are taken into account fully in the design of the current research, the quality and accountability of the findings will be promoted, and this will therefore provide more solid evidence for the value of ER in English language learning and teaching.

5.3 Aims of the study

In order to provide the educational authorities in Taiwan with evidence for the desirability of ER in the current English curriculum, the main purpose of the study was to improve Taiwanese junior high school students' language proficiency and their attitudes toward English language learning. It sought to investigate and compare the effects of three types of treatment (ER using GR, ER using BNESC and IR using the textbook) on language proficiency, reading speed and attitudes. It also intended to examine whether reading books for interest only has any positive impact on students' attitude development. Moreover, since a different amount of reading time was allocated for the two studies, the focus was also to identify the effects of these differences on students' language development.

5.4 Research questions and hypotheses

Based on the literature review and the findings of the baseline study, the study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. Do different reading instructional approaches have different effects on language development among EFL students?
2. Do different reading instructional approaches have different effects on reading speed development among EFL students?
3. Do different reading instructional approaches have different effects on students' attitude development among EFL students?
4. Do different amounts of reading time have different effects on the above effects among EFL students?
5. Are there any differences in the effects above between ER and BNESC groups?

In order to answer the above questions, the following null hypotheses were established:

1. There is no difference between the three groups in reading performance as measured by the vocabulary test after treatment.

2. There is no difference between the three groups in reading performance as measured by the grammar test after treatment.
3. There is no difference between the three groups in reading performance as measured by the reading comprehension test after treatment.
4. There is no difference between the three groups in reading speed performance as measured by the reading speed test after treatment.
5. There is no difference between the three groups in attitudes toward the treatment as measured by attitude scale after treatment.
6. There is no difference between the three groups in attitudes toward reading as measured by attitude scale after treatment.
7. There is no difference between the three groups in attitudes toward learning English as measured by attitude scale after treatment.

There are several ways which allow the researcher to answer the above questions and to test the above hypotheses. The decision on what methods to adopt depends on the researcher's knowledge of research paradigms (Nunan 1992). This leads us to consider what paradigms are available in the social sciences. Thus, the following section is devoted to understanding different paradigms, aiming at constructing the research framework.

5.5 Research paradigms

The paradigms available can be categorised into three models as follows:

1. Post-positivism: human behaviour can be predicted approximately, but never be fully understood (Nunan 1992).
2. Positivist: human experience is a self-controlled behaviour examined by natural science methods (Cohen & Manion 1998).
3. Interpretive: the focus is on the individual and the understanding of the world of subjective experience (Guba & Lincoln 1994).

The last two have been used widely in social science research. Positivist research aims at discovering causal relationships between different variables by using controlled and objective instruments, and as a result, placing little emphasis on individual behaviour (Cohen & Manion 1998). To prove or deny hypotheses, numerical data are collected for statistical analysis in order to reproduce or generalise the findings in context. Qualitative research seeks a dynamic and subjective reality through naturalistic data collection procedures for expanding our knowledge of phenomena by exploring the individual's subjective information (Guba & Lincoln 1994).

The quantitative approach of positivistic research and qualitative research should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Rather the researcher holds a belief that a combination of the two methods will best serve the purpose of the research (Hatch & Lazaraton 1991). On this count, the current research has taken the issue of triangulation into consideration, that is, we investigate a research issue from more than one perspective (Cohen & Manion 1998).

Miles and Huberman (1994:267) state that "triangulation is a way to get to the findings in the first place - by seeing or hearing multiple instances of it from different sources, by using different methods and squaring the findings with others it needs to be squared with". This means that when a cross examination using multiple approaches is employed in the process of data collection, genuine information in the data could be revealed (Cohen & Manion 1998).

Multiple approaches, such as surveys, interviews and observation are often used as a means of collecting in-depth data on complex behaviour (Nunan 1992). They are based on what appropriate answers to the research questions can be found and what insightful and reliable information can be gathered. In addition, multiple approaches can secure the collection of sufficient data for the present study and they can also prevent unanticipated loss of information. Thus, Denzin's (1970) five types of triangulation below (quoted in Cohen & Manion 1998) was chosen as a basis in designing the present study:

1. Time triangulation: the use of different sections and longitude for considering the process of change.

2. Sample triangulation: the use of different sets of people (e.g. individual and group). Sampling is a decision to collect the data from a portion of samples to represent the perceptions of the entire population about specific issues. Cohen and Manion (1998) also point out that combined sampling is more likely to obtain meaningful data than single sampling. A combination of the two sample approaches seems to be appropriate to gather representative information about the target group.
3. Researcher triangulation: the use of more than one researcher or investigator.
4. Method triangulation: the use of multiple methods (e.g. questionnaire survey and observation).
5. Theory triangulation: the use of a variety of theories to interpret the data.

The current study incorporated these five types of triangulation model in its design (see 5.6). To ensure that the data are collected as planned, a study adopting the triangulation approach is a series of interrelated activities that incorporate several procedures in the study design for detecting insightful data to explain the target phenomenon (Cohen & Manion 1998). Brown (1988:3) refers to cross-sectional examinations, namely statistical studies which look at “a group of people as a cross section of possible behaviors at a particular point or at several distinct points in time”. He further divides this type of study into two categories as follows.

1. Survey studies: they focus on a group’s attitudes, opinions, and/or characteristics, often through some form of questionnaire. Their main advantage is a substantial amount of information collection in a relatively short time.
2. Experimental studies: they are defined as a wide range of different possible methods which investigate people’s behaviour under controlled condition. The evident characteristics of this type are the flexible use of a variety of research methods and the logic of inferential statistics. This “enables us to make generalizations beyond the subjects we have studied to a wider population” (Numan 1992:20).

This study adopted both survey (4.5.1) and experimental procedures (see 5.6). In addition to knowing what statistical studies are, it is important to understand what make them differ from other studies. To this end, statistical research, then, should be (Brown 1988:4-5)

- **Systematic:** a study has a clear structure with definite procedural rules that must be followed.
- **Logical:** the rules and procedure underlying these studies form a straightforward, logical pattern – a step-by-step progression of building blocks, each of which is necessary for the logical to succeed.
- **Tangible:** Statistical research is tangible in that it is based on the collection and manipulation of data from the real world.
- **Replicable:** The researcher's proper presentation and explanation of the system, logic, data collection, and data manipulation in a study should make it possible for the reader to replicate the study (do it again under the same condition).
- **Reductive:** Statistical research can reduce the confusion of facts that language and language teaching frequently present, sometimes on a daily basis.

The above discussion provides useful information about research approaches available to the researchers in investigating the target phenomenon. The integration of the information into and nature and context of the current study in the following section triggers the first step of the research implementation.

5.6 Research design

The design of this study is to assess and compare the effects of three different treatments on language proficiency and attitude development among EFL students in two studies as Figure 7-1 below shows.

Figure 5-1 Variables of the study

			Attitudes
			Reading speed
			Reading comprehension
			Grammar
			Vocabulary
GR group	BNESC group	Control group	

A two-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance procedure) design was adopted in this study. The dependent and independent variables were:

1. The independent variables:

(a) Treatment:

- Extensive reading using graded readers (GR)
- Extensive reading using books for native English speaking children (BNESC)
- Intensive reading using the textbook

(b) Study

- Study one
- Study two

2. The dependent variables:

- Reading comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Reading speed

- Attitudes

In this design, a multiple approach was adopted as a means of investigating the problems raised from the research questions and providing insightful and reliable information. It incorporated Denzin's (1970) triangulation model (see 5.5) above in its design:

1. Time

As an experiment, the present study was carried in a 2-phase procedure (study one and two) in order to examine the improvement of students' language proficiency as well as change of attitudes. Adhering to the existing school syllabus, the phases corresponded with the school schedule and the lesson timetable in junior high schools in Taiwan. They were also determined specifically by the scheduled period of semesters. By doing so, information on the improvement of students' language proficiency and the development of their attitudes toward reading in English after treatment are duly recorded. The chronology of research phases was:

- Phase 1 Study one: September 2001 – February 2002
- Phase 2 Study two: January 2002 – June 2002

The reasons for this 2-study procedure were twofold.

1. It is commonly believed that the more learners read the more they will improve; however, it is unclear about the impact of different amounts of reading time on students' language development (as discussed in 5.2.1). Therefore, the 2-phase study is designed to investigate the differences in language performance when students spend different amounts of time in reading.
2. Experimental research has shown positive evidence for the effectiveness of accompanying activities (e.g. discussions, a wall-chart and playing games) on encouraging learners' participation and fostering their motivation (see 3.6.3). However, the differences between studies which adopt and do not include such activities have not been explored. Thus, the focus of the 2-study design is on

investigating the differences of ER studies with and without accompanying activities.

2. Sampling

This study adopts a cross section of the population, and individual sampling was adopted in the process of data collection as follows:

- Study one: 3 Grade 2 classes in I-Jea junior high school in Kaoshiung County
- Study two: 3 Grade 2 classes in Kando junior high school in Taipei County

The decision to carry out the study in junior high schools aimed at giving the students an opportunity to experience reading in their daily lives at the early stage of the learning process, so that they might develop good reading habits (Tomlinson 2000). They are also at a good age to get hooked on books. Researchers (see 2.4.1) have suggested that exposure to a good deal of English at this stage will support learners in reaching a threshold level of FL proficiency which will enable them to read fluently and effectively.

The choice of Grade 2 students as subjects in the main study needs more explanation. There are three Grades in junior high schools in Taiwan. Before year 2001, Grade 1 was the first year of learning English in the official education. This means that students with little English enter junior high schools from primary schools, whence they start to learn English from the alphabet, and basic vocabulary and grammatical rules. Thus, they will have a great difficulty in reading in English. In Grade 2, students continue their consecutive process of English learning. Through this period, students will gain greater knowledge of English. By the end of the grade 3, the students have to meet the requirement for entry to senior high schools. Consequently, the activities relevant to this requirement dominate the whole English curriculum in Grade 3. Having taken these factors into consideration, choosing Grade 1 or 3 as the participants in the main study was excluded because of the constraints described above.

The reasons for choosing the two schools should also be given. Since the study was implemented by class teachers, their backgrounds, training and attitudes would have a great impact on the success of ER programmes. The researcher first sought the

opinions of Taiwanese teachers who were doing the MA course in CELTE at University of Warwick. Two teachers were chosen because they taught grade 2 in their schools and had a great enthusiasm and understanding about carrying out ER. They also had a similar educational background (i.e. both held BA degrees in English literature and MA degrees in ELT) and teaching experience (i.e. 5 years in junior high schools). Because both teachers had a difficulty in locating a third class for the control group, they asked one of their colleagues to participate and use one of their classes as the control group in the research. The two control class teachers held BA degrees in English literature and had been teaching English in junior high schools for 4 years.

5.7 Study one

5.7.1 Subjects

Three grade 2 classes (Class 1 N=37, Class 2 N=37, Class 3 N=38) at I-Jea Junior High School in Kao-Shiung County participated in the study. They are all native speakers of Chinese, aged 13-14 years old. They have had at least a year of English language learning in their secondary education and are considered as having a medium attainment according to the previous terms' tests. They attended four one-hour lessons per week for two consecutive semesters (September-January and March-June) and there was one break of three weeks between the semesters. At the end of each semester, they took the school test before going up to the next grade. But these school tests are not part of the procedures involved in the current study. The total English lesson contact time over the period of one academic year amounted to approximately 135 hours, reduced only by local public holidays and the school test days.

5.7.2 Treatment

The 3 participating classes were divided into two experimental classes and one control class. The 3 classes were all of mixed ability and considered by school and participating teachers to be of the same general standard. The experimental and control groups were exposed to three different methods of reading in the classroom (see 5.7.2.1 and 5.7.2.2 below). In order to avoid obtaining results where no comparison would be valid because of different amounts of input time, the amount of time that the subjects were exposed to the treatment was controlled. The treatments were integrated into the

learners' on-going English language lessons. One lesson (45 minutes) per week was specifically allocated for the reading programme, amounting to approximately one fifth of the total class time (16 out of 98 hours). The following two sections describe the treatment assigned to each of the three groups.

5.7.2.1 Experimental groups

The two experimental classes were exposed respectively to two different inputs: one reading graded readers (GR), and the other reading books for native English speaking children (BNESC). A class library of 62 GR and 62 BNESC was established respectively (see 5.7.3.1). The readers were kept in a box in the teachers' room; they were taken into the classes before the periods set for the reading programme and were displayed on tables. During the reading time, the students were free to choose any book they would like to read or to change it for a new one if they wished. When they finished reading or changed a book, they were asked to complete the reading record. If they could not finish reading a book, the book along with their reading records was kept in a separate box for them to read in the next reading time. In order to avoid applying IR (TB) reading to study language and grasp everything in a reading text to ER (reading for meaning), the students were not allowed to use dictionaries; instead they were encouraged to ask their peers or the teacher for the meaning of unknown words. This may seem strange in terms of encouraging learner autonomy but the concern was that, the previous methodology experienced by students, they would try constantly to check the meanings of individual words. It would have been an impossible task for the researcher or teachers involved to design follow-up activities for 62 BNESC, so the students in the GR group were asked to leave the follow-up activities at the end of each reader and to concentrate on reading itself.

5.7.2.2 Control group

The control group, hereafter referred to as the 'intensive reading' (IR) group, was exposed to an entirely different teaching methodology from that used in the ER group. The students in this group were directed to review the reading texts in the textbook and complete the accompanying exercises therein. After answering the exercises, the students were allowed to use dictionaries for checking their answers. The types of the

exercises were True/False items, multiple choice questions and open-ended questions. The overall treatment of this group was to give the students time to cope with the unfamiliarity or difficulties of the texts raised from the previous lessons in terms of both the language and the content through the exercises attached to the textbook.

5.7.3 Instruments

Several data collection techniques were used before, during and after the experiment, including questionnaire surveys, language proficiency and reading speed tests, reading records and observation (see Table 5-1 below). Detailed descriptions of the instruments are given below.

Table 5-1 Research instruments

Study	Research Methods
1	Pre-questionnaire and pre-test
	Reading records
	Post-questionnaire and post-test
2	Pre-questionnaire and pre-test
	Reading records, wall-chart, teachers' reading reports, students' discussion groups and reports
	Post-questionnaire and post-test

5.7.3.1 Reading materials

To summarise information given in Chapter Four, the book selection was carried out through a three-phase process.

1. Based on the questionnaire survey on reading preferences completed by 763 junior high school students in Taiwan (Sheu 2001b), the criteria for book selection (see 4.5.2.1) were the appropriate level of language (i.e. beginning level) and attractiveness of materials (e.g. colourful illustration and artwork).
2. Graded readers at beginners' level, level 1 or stage 1 were chosen because they addressed both criteria. However, books for L1 teenagers were excluded because the level of the language was too difficult for the students in this study and the lack of colourful illustrations also made them unattractive. Instead, BNESC assessed by Fry's Graph (1977) as being at a similar readability level to the selected graded readers were chosen (4.5.2.2).

3. A baseline study of students' assessment of a sample collection of 27 GR and 29 BNEC was conducted in two different classes (4.5.3). The results of the baseline study (4.6) showed that students rated the selected books at or above the satisfactory level and showed interest in reading them.

On the basis of the findings, 28 GR and 23 BNESC were added to the class library. Thus, a class library of 62 GR and 62 BNESC was set up respectively (see book inventory in Appendix 4). In addition, taking the teachers suggestion discussed in 4.6.2.3 into account, it was decided to add a Chinese translation label of the title and the type of book on the cover page of all books.

5.7.3.2 Reading Records

As discussed in 3.6.3.1, reading records could serve as an indication of the development of students' reading habits and attitudes (Day & Bamford 1998). They could also give students an opportunity to express their opinions and reflections on the book they read (Lai 1993a). In this study, the student's reading record was used to obtain students' reflections after each reading. Thus, it included five sections: details of the book, information on their reading process, a summary of the story, reflections about the chosen book, and comments (see Appendix 9 for details).

Each student in the two experimental groups was given a reading record and received instruction before the treatment. In writing the reading records, the students could use either English or Chinese language depending on their ability and interest. Whether students had finished the chosen book or not, they were asked to keep up their records about their reading, reflections and comments. Since the record involved personal reflection, the focus should not be on accuracy or correction of the language if they wrote in English. It was also intended to examine any evidence of the development of the students' reading habits and attitudes. They were also asked to give their reflection on the books read by rating them on a 5 point-scale (0-4).

5.7.3.3 Language proficiency test

The language proficiency test was designed to compare the effect of the treatment on students' performance before and after the treatment. Most meticulous attention was paid to the differences of improvement in students' language proficiency between

the treatments.

Two language proficiency tests (see Appendix 10) were employed as the pre- and post-tests to measure students' language proficiency in the following aspects:

- Vocabulary: matching meanings with the correct words.
- Grammar: identifying the correct grammatical words.
- Reading comprehension: finding specific information and overall meaning.

5.7.3.4 Reading speed test

The two reading speed tests (see Appendix 11) were designed to measure reading speed before and after the treatment. More specifically, they attempted to examine progress in reading speed after the treatment and to identify the differences of improvement in reading speed between the treatments.

The most important consideration was that the texts used in pre- and post-tests should be as comparable as possible as to readability, familiarity of topic and text length. In order to achieve this, readability means that the language level of reading passages should be appropriate to readers' language proficiency. Then care was taken to make sure the topic areas would not be either too culturally biased or too familiar for the prospective subjects (Nuttall 1996).

With the above considerations in mind, 'New Year Around the World' (2000) published by Oxford University Press was first selected from several sources of reading materials. Six texts in the books were chosen, and then a detailed analysis of the texts was carried out to examine their comparability in text length and text difficulty indexed by the Flesch's (1948) readability formula using Read/PC. As a result, the average length of the texts was 244 words for text 1 (pre-test), and 245 words for text 2 (post-test), and the average readability was 1.75 and 1.87 respectively.

The calculation formula is " $x \div y \times 6 = z$ "¹¹ (Nuttall 1996:57). For example, if the number is 19 (i.e. this student has taken 3 minutes 10 seconds) and the text contains

¹¹ x is the number of words in the text; y is the number of ten-second intervals he/she spent to read the text; y is the number of ten-second intervals in a minute; z is the reading speed in words per minutes (wpm).

250 words, the equation will be: $250 \div 19 \times 6 = 79.2$. The student's reading speed is 79.2 wpm.

After texts were selected, reading comprehension questions were constructed. The main purpose of the questions was to ensure that students read the test with a certain degree of comprehension. Taking students' language proficiency into account, the first consideration was that the questions should be straightforward and easy to mark, so the multiple-choice question format was selected as Nuttall (1996) suggests. Since the passages were fairly short (250-300 words) and too few questions per passage would cause difficulty in calculating students' degree of comprehension, 7 questions on each text were produced (see Appendix 11 for test questions).

In order to ensure that students read the text with a reasonable speed and understood what they read, it was necessary to set up a score which adequately indicated comprehension. The general view is that there should be about 70 per cent of correct answers to the questions (Nuttall 1996).

5.7.3.5 Attitude questionnaire

In order to trace the development of the students' attitudes and reading habits, an attitude questionnaire in Chinese language was administered before and after the treatment (see Appendix 12). In completing the questionnaire, the students were asked to write the information, to rate their opinions on a 5-point scale (0-4), or to tick and give reasons for their choice.

5.7.4 Procedures

5.7.4.1 Piloting

As described in 4.5, the baseline study was conducted in May 2001 to examine the suitability of the selected books in terms of students' interests. Two grade 2 classes in a junior high school in Taiwan participated in the study. On the basis of the results (see 4.6), more books with a wider range of topics were added to the list; and the translation of titles into Chinese and the type of book in Chinese were labelled on the cover page. In the pilot study, the four data-collection instruments were also tested out, and then modified and readministered for the final version as described below.

5.7.4.1.1. Reading proficiency test

The pilot study aimed at ensuring test reliability and ascertaining the suitability of the test (i.e. Item analysis) for the main study, so that genuine language proficiency could be measured. Moreover, since the tests were developed for use in this study as pre- and post-tests, it was also essential to ensure the two tests were comparable, so that the language improvement could be shown.

Six sections (two on vocabulary, two cloze and two reading comprehension) in the sample papers of Cambridge Key English Test (KET, see 3.6.2.2) were selected.

1. First piloting

The first 20-minute pilot test was administered to a total number of 378 grade-2 students at 6 junior high schools in 6 different areas in Taiwan in May 2001. The six sections were divided into three sets: vocabulary & cloze, cloze & comprehension, and vocabulary & comprehension. The 6 classes were divided into three groups, each assigned to take one set of tests. The tests were scored and item analysis was computed using ITEMAN analysis.

The results were summarised as follows:

- **Difficulty and Discrimination:** On the whole, the tests were fairly difficult for junior high school students in Taiwan. Therefore, it was necessary to make it slightly easier. The texts were not presented in the order of difficulty, and the aim of discriminating between students was effectively achieved.
- **Reliability:** The reliability of the test was acceptable, except the post-test in the comprehension test ($\alpha=.099$).
- **Validity:** The tests have items focusing on a wide range of reading skills required for further studies. Therefore, the tests can be said to have content validity.

On the basis of the results, three modifications were made as follows:

- **Validity:** The tests have items focusing on a wide range of reading skills required. The discrimination of items in vocabulary text 2 is fairly good, but most of the items are too difficult. This is probably because the students were

not familiar with the topic. Therefore, in order to make the two vocabulary tests comparable as mentioned in section 1, the topic of vocabulary test 2 was changed from "the things you can see in the bathroom" to "the descriptions of public places" as in vocabulary test 1.

- 7 word classes were chosen to be tested in the cloze tests (i.e. pronoun, article, auxiliary, conjunction, preposition, adjective and determinant). However, 2 word classes (i.e. article and pronoun) had been missed in the cloze text 2, and therefore were added.
- Since most of the items are within a moderate range of difficulty and the discrimination is good, those items which were identified as problematic were modified.

2. Second piloting

Based on the finding in the first pilot, the tests were revised and administered again during the last month of the second semester in June 2001. Due to the limited number of participant schools, three classes were selected from those who were involved in the first pilot test and 107 junior high school students took the test. Avoiding repeating the same type of test, the selected classes were assigned to take a different type of test from the one they had had in the first pilot test as the following table shows. The results were as follows:

(a) Descriptive Statistics for individual tests

Table 5-2 shows that the tests were presented in the order of difficulty. In other words, in each test, vocabulary tests were the easiest and comprehension tests most difficult. This result was as expected.

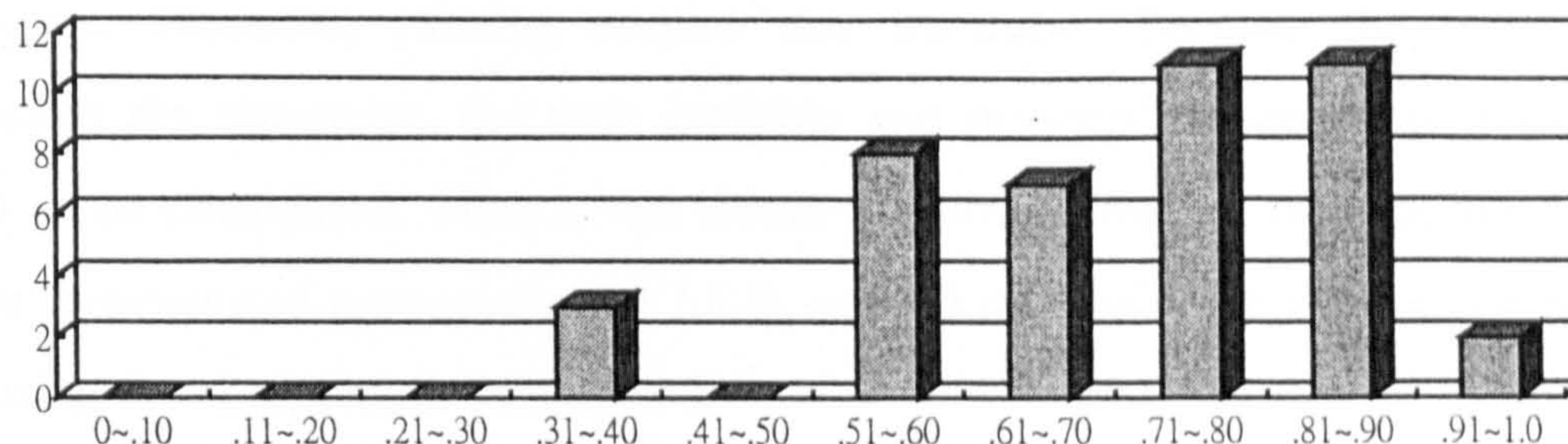
Table 5-2 Mean scores of different tests

	Test	Test	Test	Test	Test	Test
	Vocabulary	Cloze	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Cloze	Comprehension
Mean P	82.3	74.6	54.3	79.3	70.8	64.0
N of Items	6	7	7	6	7	7
Alpha	0.732	0.274	0.429	0.830	0.304	0.547
SEM	0.743	1.092	1.170	0.725	1.117	1.096
I/T cor.	0.665	0.441	0.475	0.750	0.424	0.524

(b) Distribution of items - Facility values

On the whole, many items were relatively easy (see figure 5-2). A large number of items produced high facility value (i.e. FV higher than .70 in 24 items).

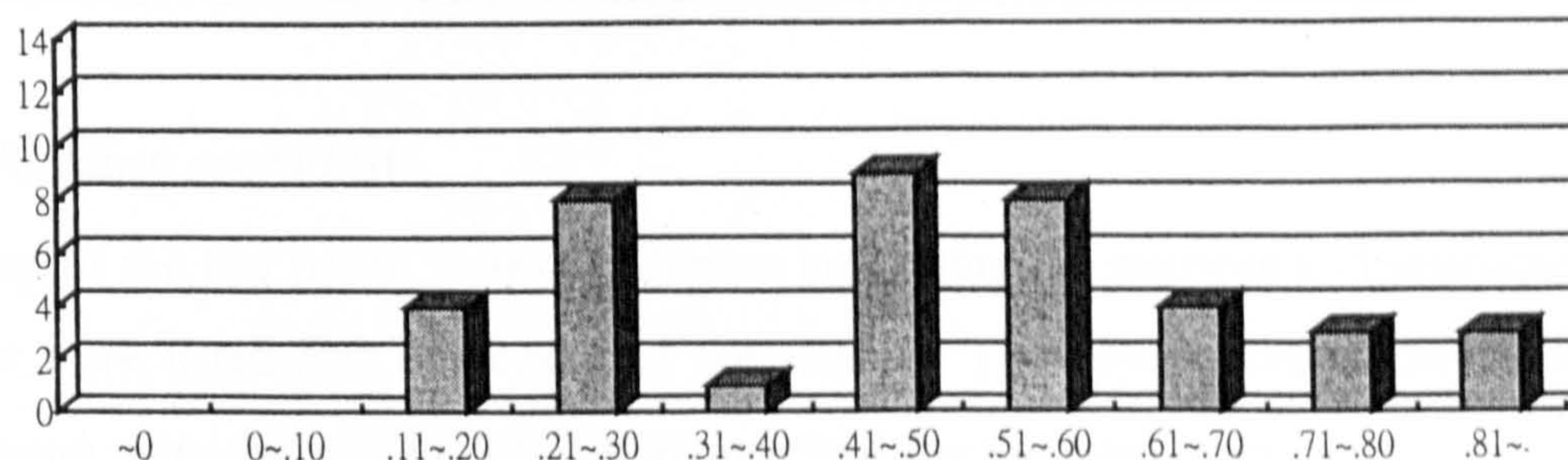
Figure 5-2 Distribution of items - Facility values



(c) Distribution of items - Discrimination index

In general, the discrimination is satisfactory. The majority of the items have Discrimination Indices higher than .30 as shown in figure 5-3.

Figure 5-3 Distribution of items - Discrimination index



(d) Summary of the results

- Difficulty and Discrimination: On the whole, the modification made to the 1st pilot test was satisfactory. That is to say, the revised tests were presented in the order of difficulty, and the aim of discriminating between students was effectively achieved.
- Reliability: The reliability of the comprehension test in the first pilot test was low ($\alpha=.099$); however, in the revised test, the reliability of the test was acceptable ($\alpha=.547$).

- **Validity:** The tests have items focusing on a wider range of reading skills which are required for further studies, and were made comparable. Therefore, the tests can be said to have content validity.

The selection of six sections of KET was intended to form a test to be used at pre- and post-stage. However, piloting revised this intention. Because the test was administered in the classroom, the time available and students' pre-conception about testing had to be considered. Then it was decided to divide the six sections into two sets of tests: pre-test and post-test (see 5.7.3.3), and 20 minutes were allowed for each test comprising the components in table 5-3.

Table 5-3 Summary of components

Part 1 Vocabulary
Matching 6 definitions to 10 items in a lexical set Test focus: reading and identifying appropriate vocabulary
Part 2 Grammar
Cloze passage with 7 multiple-choice questions (3 options) Test focus: reading and identifying appropriate structural word
Part 3 Reading comprehension
7 Right/Wrong/Doesn't say questions Test focus: reading for main idea(s) and details

5.7.4.1.2. *Reading speed test*

At the top of the test paper, notes in Chinese explaining the purpose and instructions for the test were listed (see Appendix 11 for details). The procedures of the reading speed test were using Nuttall's (1996:57) instructions for the class teachers:

- Explain the notes on the top of the test paper and the whole procedure to the students first. Make it clear that the results will not be used for counting assessment and grading, and also will not be made public. Therefore, cheating is pointless.
- Ask students to focus on reading itself, and advise them not to look at what the teacher and their classmates are doing, and also not worry about how much time they have spent. Remind them not to want to be faster than their peers, but to concentrate on reading only till they finish reading the whole text.

- (c) Then estimate how much time students will take to finish reading the text. For example, if it is about 5 minutes, write the following chart on the blackboard (the figures represent ten-second intervals). This should be done before the test.

1	2	3	4	5	6	(1 minute)
7	8	9	10	11	12	(2 minutes)
13	14	15	16	17	18	(3 minutes)
19	20	21	22	23	24	(4 minutes)
25	26	27	28	29	30	(5 minutes)

- (d) Prepare a timepiece that indicates seconds. When the test is started, stand the chart where every student can see it and keep count of the time. Wipe off the figures as each ten-second interval elapses till the last student finishes his reading.
- (e) When the student finishes reading, he/she immediately looks at the blackboard and writes down the number which has just been wiped off in the blank on the bottom of the test paper. For example, if it reads 20 21 22 23 24 25..., he/she writes 19 in the blank as (19).
- (f) Make sure that every student has written the number in the blank on the bottom of the test paper. Then, give them five minutes for answering the comprehension questions on the back of the test paper.

5.7.4.1.3 Reading records

The reading record was developed to elicit opinions and reflections on books read. The piloting was intended to ensure clarity of the statement and accessibility of the format. During the administration, the teacher asked students to read through the record question by question with her and explained where they had difficulty in understanding the language used. The students' responses suggested that the language and layout of the reading record were clear and thus would be appropriate for use in the study.

5.7.4.1.4 Attitude questionnaire

The main purpose of this pilot was to find out whether the language and layout of the attitude questionnaire were appropriate. Thus, the pilot questionnaire aimed to get students' comments on the need to reword any unclear statements. The students spent approximate 15 minutes in completing the questionnaire. The overall impression was that the questionnaire was clear and easy to understand, and thus it was assumed to be appropriate for the study.

To sum up, the piloting procedure can be summarised as follows.

Table 5-4 Summary of research schedule

Data	Instruments
May 2001	Baseline study & 1 st reading proficiency test piloting
June 2001	2 nd reading proficiency test piloting
July 2001	Reading speed test piloting
August 2001	Reading record & attitude questionnaire piloting
September 2001 - January 2002	Implementation of study one
February - June 2002	Implementation of study two

5.7.4.2 Introductory session

The literature review of Chapter Three (see 3.6.3.1) has shown the importance of acquainting students with the idea of ER for meaning and pleasure. The students' concern about language problems (vocabulary and grammar) also provided further evidence for the desirability of an introduction session of ER (4.7.2). It was thus decided to allocate a session for introducing students to the concept, procedure and benefits of ER programmes. It was also designed to administer the instruments for collecting data (i.e. pre-tests and pre-questionnaire). Before the study, the researcher prepared two handouts. The first included the definition and the research results of ER programmes (see Appendix 13). The definition was explained in a simple way by the teacher and the list of research studies was shown briefly on an OHP simply to explain how useful ER might be. The second included procedures of the study (see Appendix 14). One 45-minute lesson was specially allocated for the introductory section just one day before the study started. In the first 10 minutes, the teachers first displayed all the books on tables; then gave the students the two handouts and described the definition and the research results, followed by an explanation of the procedures and the reading

records. Then, the students were given 10 minutes to complete the attitude questionnaire. The last 25 minutes were for the language proficiency and reading speed tests.

Since the students were not familiar with summary writing, it was decided to include a 10-minute introduction on summary writing in the first lesson of the ER programme. This activity aimed at instructing the students on how to write a summary and what information should be included in it. It was also to help the students to begin the process of developing into autonomous learners. A handout was developed and used (see Appendix 15) in this activity and students were divided into 6 groups. First, the teachers asked students to write down the points which they thought might be included in a summary. Then, the 6 groups were asked to discuss their notes, and wrote down the common points arising from group discussion. By showing a sample summary, the teachers discussed and explained a possible organisation of the sample summary, and finally, showed the main points listed at the bottom of the handout.

5.7.4.3 Main data collection

The main data were collected from September 2001 to January 2002. The pre-questionnaire and the pre-tests were administered to the three grade 2 classes at I-Jea Junior High School in Tainan County, in the final week of September 2001, and the post-questionnaire and the post-test were conducted with the same classes in the final week of January 2002. During the period, the students were asked to keep a note of their reading progress and reflections in the reading record (see 5.7.3.2).

5.7.4.4 Data analysis

In order to answer the research questions and test the research hypotheses, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used as summarised below. All the test papers were marked by the researcher. All the marking was checked at least twice by the researcher before conducting the analyses.

1. Quantitative analysis

The quantitative data were loaded on to the computer and the following areas were analysed using SPSS (Statistic Package for Social Study) 10/PC. As indicated in 7.2, the significance level is set at $p < .05$, and $.005$.

- The calculation of pre-test and post-test mean scores of the three groups.
- The calculation of pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire mean scores of the three groups.
- The use of ANOVA to determine differences between the three groups in language proficiency tests and the reading speed test.
- The use of ANOVA to determine differences between the three groups in attitude questionnaires.

2. Qualitative analysis

The data obtained from student reading records were analysed qualitatively in order to examine student responses to the treatment. Part of the questionnaires was also analysed qualitatively to trace any change in student attitudes before and after the treatments.

5.8 Study two

5.8.1 Subjects

The subjects participating in this study were three grade 2 classes (Class 1 N=21, Class 2 N=21, Class 3 N=17) at Kan-Do Junior High School in Taipei County, Taiwan. Their social and educational background and the school schedule were similar to the subjects in study one (see 5.7.1).

5.8.2 Treatment

The grouping and treatment of each group in this study were similar to that of study one (5.7.2). However, the timing of one 45-minute lesson per week in study one was revised to be two 45-minute lessons of ER per week for the experimental groups while the control group continued using the textbook.

5.8.3 Instruments

The five instruments used in study one (described in 5.7.3) were also used in study two, but the time that students spend on reading was changed from one 45-minute lesson per week to two 45-minute lessons per week. Another change was the number of question items in the language proficiency tests. In study one, due to the limited time in the school timetable, the six sections derived from KET were divided into two sets (pre- and post-tests) and there were 20 question items in each set of tests (see 5.7.3.3 & 5.7.4.1.1). However, more time was allowed for the assessment in study two, and the two sets were integrated into one set (40 questions in total) to be used for the pre- and post tests (see Appendix 16). This was thought likely to produce more reliable results.

As discussed in 5.2 and 5.6, the study aimed at investigating the effects of an increase in the amount of reading time and the accompanying activities which could encourage student participation. Firstly, based on the results of the student questionnaire (see table 4-8) and the implications of the baseline study (4.7.2), three accompanying activities were adopted in the experimental groups in this study: a wall-chart for recording progress, student group discussions and teacher participation described below. In the first two activities, the students in the two experimental groups were first divided into 6 groups. In order to keep a balance between groups, the grouping was based on students' school-test performance and gender. Secondly, students' self-reporting on their reading problems in study one (see 6.4.1.2) indicated that the students did not adopt strategies in resolving these problems since reading strategy training was not included in their English lessons in the schools. Thus, they needed to be acquainted with the use of general reading strategies in order to read extensively with greater effectiveness. It was therefore decided to include a learner training session.

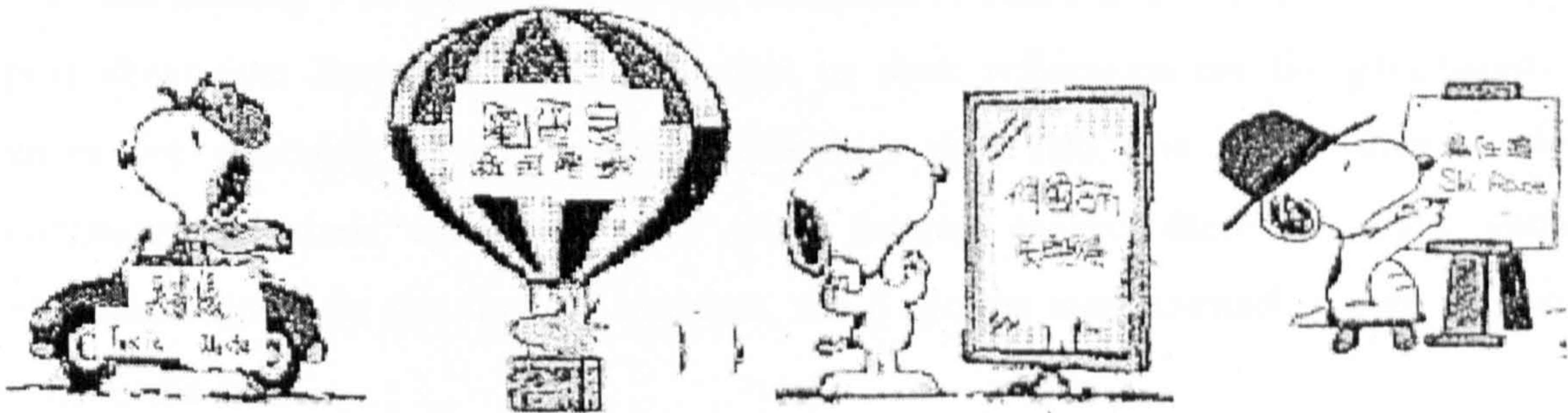
In order to ensure that teachers comprehended fully how the instruments worked, they received instructions for all the activities and the introductory lesson. They were invited to review these and make suggestions. Then after revising and rewording, the final versions were produced for the study.

5.8.3.1 Wall-chart

As discussed in 3.6.3.2, a suggestion has been made in the literature to use a wall-chart to demonstrate students' reading progress (Day & Bamford 1998; Lai 1993a).

This might simply show in a table students' names, the name of a book and the date when they finish reading it. However, this type of wall-chart could be unattractive to students. Thus, it was decided to adopt a different approach which asked students to design their group wall-chart. In other words, instead of recording their progress in a table form, the students chose their preferred design to be used in the group wall-charts. After reading a book, they wrote their names, the book's title and the date in the middle of the selected patterns or images as the following examples.

Figure 5-4 Image samples



The procedures for the wall-chart design were described as follows. One week before the study started, 15 minutes of the class time were allocated for the preparation of the wall-chart. First, the 6 groups were given 10 minutes to choose a category of favourite pattern or image (e.g. animals, transports, cartoon characters) and then decide the total number of the selected patterns or characteristics they would like to have in this category (this related to the number of books the group as a whole would probably read in the study). After that, each group was invited to report their decisions. If two or more groups had made the same choice, only one group kept it and the other group(s) chose something new. Then, each group was asked to work together (in the school or at home) and to draw, photocopy, clip and paste or used a computer (clipart) to make their group-wall-charts ready for the study. Finally, the first 5 minutes in the introductory lesson was allocated for the 6 groups to show their charts, and then the charts were put on the notice-board.

5.8.3.2 Group discussion

The students seemed to be keen on participating in group discussions (see table 4-8 in section 4.5.1.5). Also, as the teacher report in 4.6.2.1, students tended to talk to their

peers while reading and after reading. This provided optimistic evidence for including student discussions in the study. The main purpose of this activity was to give the students an opportunity to reflect on what they read, and to share their reading experience with their peers. Because this type of activity was not normally used in the English lessons, students were allowed to use Chinese in order to get used to it and express themselves freely, but they could speak in English if they wished. After discussion with the teachers, it was decided to allocate one 45-minute period every two weeks for group discussion. The first 5 minutes were for the teacher's reading report as mentioned in the next section (5.8.3.3). The 6 groups were first given 15 minutes to share their reading with their groupmates, and then 10 minutes to complete the group-report sheet (see Appendix 17) in relation to their reflections on the programme, reasons for choosing books, reading difficulties they had, the books they would recommend to their classmates and what factors caused them to make such recommendations. In the final 15 minutes, the 6 groups were invited to give a short report to the class.

5.8.3.3 Teachers' participation

As listed in table 4-8 in section 4.5.1.5, one of the activities which could encourage student participations was teacher participation. It was decided that in order to set up a model and to encourage student participation, teachers should participate in two ways. First, the teachers chose a book from the class library after students started reading, or brought their own to read while the students read. Secondly, in the group discussions, the teachers spent the first 5 minutes sharing her reflections on one of the books that she had read (i.e. what the book is about, what aspects of the book they like or dislike, etc.). In order to monitor student participation, reflection and interaction, after each ER lesson, the teachers also kept a programme report in which they recorded information about the process of the programme (see Appendix 7).

5.8.3.4 Learner training session

The students' reading problems in study one (see 6.4.1.2) indicated that they applied whatever skills they learnt in the current IR(TB) instruction to ER. As later discussion of results will show this resulted in negative development in motivation and attitudes.

The results indicated that study one underestimated the degree to which the students needed training. Thus, in order to help them be more effective in reading, attention in study two should be given to general reading strategy training, so that the students could read for overall meaning and pleasure. This might create a better environment for confidence and the development of autonomy (Ellis & Sinclair 1989). The introductory session in study two thus constituted learner training and its main aim was to enhance the students' motivation, build confidence, develop positive attitudes and independent reading, by raising student awareness of helpful reading strategies (Wenden 1991; Wenden & Rubin 1987).

As in study one (see 5.7.4.2), the first 10 minutes of the introductory session of the ER programme were allocated for the introduction on summary writing, and then the following 15 minutes were used for the strategy training. An exercise sheet which consisted of the three most common skills for ER (predicting, guessing and overall comprehending) was developed and used (see Appendix 18) in this exercise.

The first section on predicting required students to use or recall their knowledge of a particular theme, and to predict what would appear in the book. Thus, the students were asked to look at the title of the book and the picture on the cover page and then to write down what the story/plot of the book was about and what words would appear in the book.

The second part was to help students to guess the meanings of any unknown words from the context or the illustrations. The final part was to help students to get rid of the habit of reading as language study and checking everything for understanding, that is, to help them to develop reading for overall meaning and pleasure. It also aimed at helping students to deviate from the perception of the current IR(TB) lessons as the only method for learning. The students were asked to read and comprehend a passage without trying to understand everything. After that, the students were asked to answer the comprehension questions.

Based on the researcher's prediction on the students' vocabulary size, it was assumed that the students were unfamiliar with the words listed in the third section which were selected from the sample book. Then, by reading the whole sentence or paragraph in the text or looking at the picture, the students looked at the words and tried to guess their meanings first, and then matched the word on the left with the correct sentence

on the right. It was hoped that the students could learn to find clues or hints from the text or its features. In addition, since the students were not acquainted with these strategies, the teachers were advised to remind and encourage students to use these strategies in the ER programme.

5.8.4 Main data collection and analysis

The main data of study two were collected from February 2002 to June 2002. Three grade-2 classes in Kam-do Junior High School in Taipei County in Taiwan participated in the study. The questionnaire and the tests were conducted in the second week of February 2002 and then administered again at the end of June 2002. The study also involved an on-going process in which data were collected throughout its process (i.e. reading records, group discussion).

As to data analysis, the approaches adopted in study one were also used in this study (see discussion in 5.7.4.4). In addition, qualitative analysis was used to analyse the data collected from group-discussion reports and teacher reports. This was to investigate the students' reflections on the treatment.

5.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has given an account of the methodology and design of the main study. It has also presented the preparation of the materials for the study. The chapter started with describing the rationale (5.2) and aims (5.3), followed by the research questions and hypotheses (5.4). After reviewing the research paradigms (5.5), the design of the main study was outlined in 5.6. The overall organisation of the two studies was described respectively in the last two sections (5.7 & 5.8). To sum up, the methodology of the two studies is shown in the following table:

Table 5-5 Summary of the methodology of the main study

Study	Treatment	Time	Instrument
One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ER using GR 2. ER using BNESC 3. IR using textbook 	One 45-minute lesson per week for one semester	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language proficiency test 2. Reading speed test 3. Reading record 4. Attitude questionnaire 5. ER introductory lesson
Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ER using GR 2. ER using BNESC 3. IR using textbook 	Two 45-minute lessons per week for one semester	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language proficiency test 2. Reading speed test 3. Reading record 4. Attitude questionnaire 5. ER introductory lesson 6. Reading progress wall-chart 7. Students' group discussions 8. Teachers' reading reports 9. Learner training session

PART III RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This part first reports the results of the main study in relation to the effects of treatment, the hypothesis testing and the factors which contribute to the results. Then, findings are discussed in order to answer the research questions. Implications for ELT in general and especially in Taiwan will be given before drawing conclusions.

Chapter 6 Results - Main Study

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Language development
- 6.3 Reading speed improvement
- 6.4 Attitude development
- 6.5 Change in student participation
- 6.6 Improvement in students' summary writing
- 6.7 Students' satisfaction with the books read
- 6.8 Students' reasons for choosing books to read
- 6.9 Students' suggestions about treatment
- 6.10 Chapter summary



Chapter 7 Discussion, Implication and Conclusions

- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Research findings
- 7.3 Discussion
- 7.4 Implications
- 7.5 Limitations of the study
- 7.6 Recommendations for future study
- 7.7 Conclusion

6 RESULTS - MAIN STUDY

It is safe to assume that no statistical study is perfect. Each study is carried out, after all, by human being...this probably does not mean that you will begin to accept or reject studies as you encounter them but, rather, that you will be able to judge their quality and, therefore, their relative value to you and your teaching situation.

– Brown, J. D. 1988:x-xi -

6.1 Introduction

The main study aimed at examining the effects of an extensive reading programme on the language, reading, and attitude development of junior high school students in Taiwan. The study compared the effects of three treatments: reading graded readers, reading books for native English speaking children and studying short texts in the textbooks (5.3). It sought to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses listed in 5.4. It also attempted to identify the factors behind those effects and to explain the relationship between them. The data were collected through six instruments: the language proficiency test (5.7.3.3), the reading speed test (5.7.3.4), the attitude questionnaire (5.7.3.5), the students' reading records (5.7.3.2), the teachers' reports (5.8.3.3) and the group-discussion reports (5.8.3.2).

In order to answer the research questions and test the research hypotheses, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used. The results will be presented descriptively (i.e. means) and inferentially (i.e. two-tailed test, T-test), followed by the testing of the research hypotheses using Analysis of Variance procedure (ANOVA, SPSS 8.0). Then, the causes of the observed differences will be discussed by quoting the students' and teachers' exact statements. In quoting the students' comments, each extract is labelled by an ID code. The first two letters in the code stands for the study (S1 for study one and S2 for study two), the third refers to the group (G for graded readers, B for books for native English speaking children and C for control) and the second number stands for students' number in the group. For example, S1G10 denotes the graded readers group student number 10 in study one.

Section 6.2 reports the results of the language proficiency measure (consisting of three parts: vocabulary, grammar and reading comprehension tests). The second section (6.3) presents the results of the reading speed test. Then, section 6.4 will discuss the findings in relation to the subjects' attitude development. After that, the rest of the chapter tries to unveil the factors which cause development.

6.2 Language development

Language development was measured by a language proficiency test which was designed to measure knowledge of vocabulary, grammatical rules and reading comprehension (see 5.7.3.3). The results of the test are presented in this section. First, a comparison of the raw mean scores of the three groups in the pre- and post-test is presented. Then, the mean scores are adjusted using ANOVA and comparing across the groups.

6.2.1 Effects of treatment on vocabulary

Table 6-1 shows the total mean scores and the results of T-test of the two studies in the vocabulary test before and after the treatment.

Table 6-1 Raw means of the three groups in the pre-and post-tests

Vocabulary	Mean (pre test - post test)	Gains	sd	T-value
Study One				
GR group	3.45 – 4.18	+ 0.73	1.18	3.541**
BNEC group	3.88 – 3.47	- 0.41	1.37	-1.748
Control group	3.24 – 1.81	- 1.43	1.40	- 4.680**
Study Two				
GR group	3.60 – 7.33	+ 3.73	4.33	3.336**
BNEC group	3.82 – 6.00	+ 2.18	1.66	4.500**
Control group	4.92 – 7.08	+ 2.16	3.00	2.592*

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .005$

(a) Study one

The GR group achieved a remarkable improvement in the post-test, and this change was statistically significant ($t = 3.541, p < .005$). However, the BNEC and control groups did not show any improvement after the treatment, and their scores were lower

than when they started. Moreover, the drop in the control group was significant ($t = -4.680, p < .005$).

(b) Study two

The language test scores of all the three groups in the post-test were higher than that of the pre-test. The descriptive results also show that the improvement was statistically significant. However, it should be noticed that the improvement of the two experimental groups was much greater than the improvement achieved by the control group.

6.2.2 Effects of treatment on grammar

Table 6-2 below presents the results of the three groups in the pre- and post-grammar tests.

Table 6-2 Results of T-test of the pre-and post-tests

	Mean (pre-test - post-test)	Gains	sd	T-value
Study One				
GR group	3.94 - 4.21	+ 0.27	1.65	.953
BNESC group	3.71 - 3.71	0	1.92	.000
Control group	3.14 - 2.67	- 0.47	1.99	- 1.096
Study Two				
GR group	6.40 - 8.80	+ 2.40	2.53	3.674**
BNEC group	7.82 - 9.45	+ 1.63	1.21	3.317*
Control group	7.54 - 6.92	- 0.31	2.22	- .337

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .005$

(a) Study one

It can be seen that the GR group managed to increase their scores slightly, while no improvement is found in the BNESC group. However, in the control group, the scores of the post-test were lower. No statistical significance can be observed in the results.

(b) Study two

The pattern of the results of study two is similar to that of study one. After the treatment, the differences in knowledge of grammar between the two experimental

groups and the control group are distinctively clear. While the control group fails to make any increase after the treatment, the two experimental groups demonstrate a considerable gain and their improvement is statistically significant. What is more interesting is that the degree of significance in the GR group ($t = 3.674, p < .005$) is higher than that of the BNEC group ($t = 3.317, p < .05$).

6.2.3 Effects of treatment on reading comprehension

The results of the three groups in the reading comprehension test are shown in Table 6-3 below.

Table 6-3 Results of T-test of the pre-and post-tests

	Mean (pre-test – post-test)	Gains	sd	T-value
Study One				
GR group	2.67 – 3.30	+ 0.63	1.54	2.378*
BNEC group	2.71 – 3.56	+ 0.85	2.03	2.448*
Control group	2.57 – 2.14	– 0.43	1.47	– 1.337
Study Two				
GR group	5.20 – 7.33	+ 2.13	2.77	2.978*
BNEC group	8.00 – 10.00	+ 2.00	2.00	5.838**
Control group	5.69 – 6.15	+ 0.46	3.28	.507

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .005$

(a) Study one

The table shows that an increase in the mean score after the treatment appears in the two experimental groups, compared with a drop in the mean score in the control group. This means that a distinctive benefit of extensive reading is in learners' reading comprehension. Interestingly, the degree of the improvement in the two experimental groups is almost the same. This suggests that the improvement in the student reading comprehension test is not dependent on the types of materials they read, since the main focus of the treatment is reading for meaning.

(b) Study two

All the three groups made gains after the treatment. What is more interesting is that while the two experimental groups made a remarkable improvement, the degree of significance of the BNEC group ($t = 5.838, p < .005$) is greater than that of the GR

group ($t = 2.978, p < .05$). Although the control group manage to increase their scores after the treatment, the improvement is very slim. It may also be noted that despite the fact that the BNESC group started with a higher baseline in reading comprehension, the two experimental groups made similar gains.

6.2.4 Hypotheses testing

Null hypotheses one to three (5.4) were tested using One-way ANOVA. In the analysis, the treatment (GR, BNESC and control) was the independent variable and the students' scores were the dependent variables.

Hypothesis 01: there is no difference between the three groups of the study in vocabulary performance due to treatment types as measured by the language proficiency test before and after the treatment.

Table 6-4 below shows the results of ANOVA of the vocabulary test.

Table 6-4 ANOVA Results of the vocabulary test

Study	Test		Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
One	Pre-test	Between groups	6.070	2	3.035	2.445	.093
		Within groups	105.521	85	1.241		
		Total	111.591	87			
	Post-test	Between groups	73.155	2	36.577	21.205	.000**
		Within groups	146.618	85	1.725		
		Total	219.773	87			
Two	Pre-test	Between groups	13.340	2	6.715	.485	.619
		Within groups	498.159	36	13.838		
		Total	511.590	38			
	Post-test	Between groups	12.103	2	6.051	.459	.635
		Within groups	474.256	36	13.174		
		Total	486.359	38			

** $p < .005$

(a) Study one

Table 6-4 shows that there is a statistical difference in the vocabulary test in the pre-test ($F = 21.205, p < .005$), and thus the first hypothesis was not accepted. This means

that the type of treatment causes statistical differences between the three groups in the vocabulary test. In other words, the effect of GR treatment on students' vocabulary is higher than that of the BNESC and control groups.

(b) Study two

As can also be seen, there is no statistical significance in the vocabulary test after the treatment ($F = .459, n.s.$), and thus, the first hypothesis was not rejected. This means that if the amount of time that students are exposed to the treatment doubles, this has no effect on students' vocabulary acquisition.

Hypothesis 02: there is no difference between the three groups of the study in grammar performance due to treatment types as measured by the language proficiency test before and after the treatment.

The results of ANOVA of the grammar test are presented in Table 6-5 below.

Table 6-5 ANOVA Results of the grammar test

Study	Test		Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
One	Pre-test	Between groups	8.264	2	4.132	2.844	.064
		Within groups	123.509	85	1.453		
		Total	131.773	87			
	Post-test	Between groups	30.839	2	15.419	7.075	.001**
		Within groups	185.241	85	2.179		
		Total	216.080	87			
Two	Pre-test	Between groups	15.276	2	7.638	.803	.456
		Within groups	342.467	36	9.513		
		Total	357.744	38			
	Post-test	Between groups	42.924	2	21.462	4.109	.025*
		Within groups	188.050	36	5.224		
		Total	230.974	38			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .005$

(a) Study one

The results obtained from ANOVA above show no difference in the pre-test ($F = .064, n.s.$), but a statistical significance in the post-test ($F = 7.075, p < .005$). This

indicates that the second null hypothesis was rejected because of the difference between the three groups in the grammar test.

(b) Study two

Similarly to the findings in study one, a statistical significance appears in the post-test ($F = 4.109, p < .05$). This leads to a rejection of the second hypothesis. This suggests that the difference in the three groups is a result of the treatment.

Hypothesis 03: there is no difference between the three groups of the study in reading comprehension performance due to treatment types as measured by the language proficiency test before and after the treatment.

The ANOVA results of the reading comprehension test are shown in Table 6-6 below. In the two studies, while there was no significant difference between the three groups before the treatment, a statistical significance can be found in the post-test ($p < .005$). This indicates that the observed significance was due to the effects of the treatment.

Table 6-6 ANOVA Results of the reading comprehension test

Study	Test	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
One	Pre-test Between groups	.238	2	.119	.071	.931
	Within groups	141.535	85	1.665		
	Total	141.773	87			
	Post-test Between groups	27.702	2	13.851	9.349	.000**
	Within groups	125.923	85	1.481		
	Total	153.625	87			
Two	Pre-test Between groups	53.908	2	26.954	2.180	.128
	Within groups	445.169	36	12.366		
	Total	499.077	38			
	Post-test Between groups	91.282	2	45.641	7.861	.002**
	Within groups	209.026	36	5.806		
	Total	300.308	38			

** $p < .005$

6.3 Reading speed improvement

Subjects' reading speed improvement was measured by a reading speed test (see 5.7.3.3). This section is devoted to presenting the results of the reading speed test: a comparison of the raw mean scores of the three groups in the pre- and post-test will be presented first, followed by findings drawn from subjects' reading records. Finally, the fifth null hypothesis will be tested.

6.3.1 Effects of treatment on reading speed

Table 6-7 shows the results of the subjects' reading speed tests. All reading speeds in the table (i.e. mean and gains) are counted in words per minutes, wpm.

Table 6-7 T-test Results of the reading speed test

	Mean (pre test - post test)	Gains	sd	T-value
Study One				
GR group	70.72 – 98.94	+ 28.22	29.32	5.530**
BNEC group	79.98 – 118.46	+ 38.48	74.03	4.982**
Control group	75.24 – 107.50	+ 32.26	27.82	5.186**
Study Two				
GR group	51.1 – 77.8	+ 26.7	16.98	6.093**
BNEC group	62.5 – 91.1	+ 28.6	24.10	4.100**
Control group	62.3 – 87.1	+ 24.8	24.42	3.212*

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .005$

(a) Study one

Table 6-7 shows that the subjects' reading speed has increased between pre- and post-test, and there was a statistically significant improvement in reading speed in the three groups after the treatments. This indicates that both types of treatments (extensive reading and normal reading instruction) are effective in developing learners' reading speed. The statistical results showed that the BNEC group started with a higher baseline and made more gains than the other two groups. However, it should be noted that the GR group obtained the lowest score on the pre-test, an even more impressive result is that the level of significance in the GR group was higher than the other two groups. As to the results of the accompanying comprehension test, more than half (52.3%) of the students got 70% or above of correct answers, and 26.1% answered 50% to 70% correctly.

(b) Study two

The results of study two reveal a similar pattern to study one. The reading speeds of the three groups increased after the treatment, and there is a statistical significance in their improvement. It can also be noticed that the degree of increase in the two experimental groups ($p < .005$) was higher than that of the control group ($p < .05$). Regarding the comprehension test, 67.8% of the students scored 70% or above correct answers and 19.3% scored between 50 and 70%.

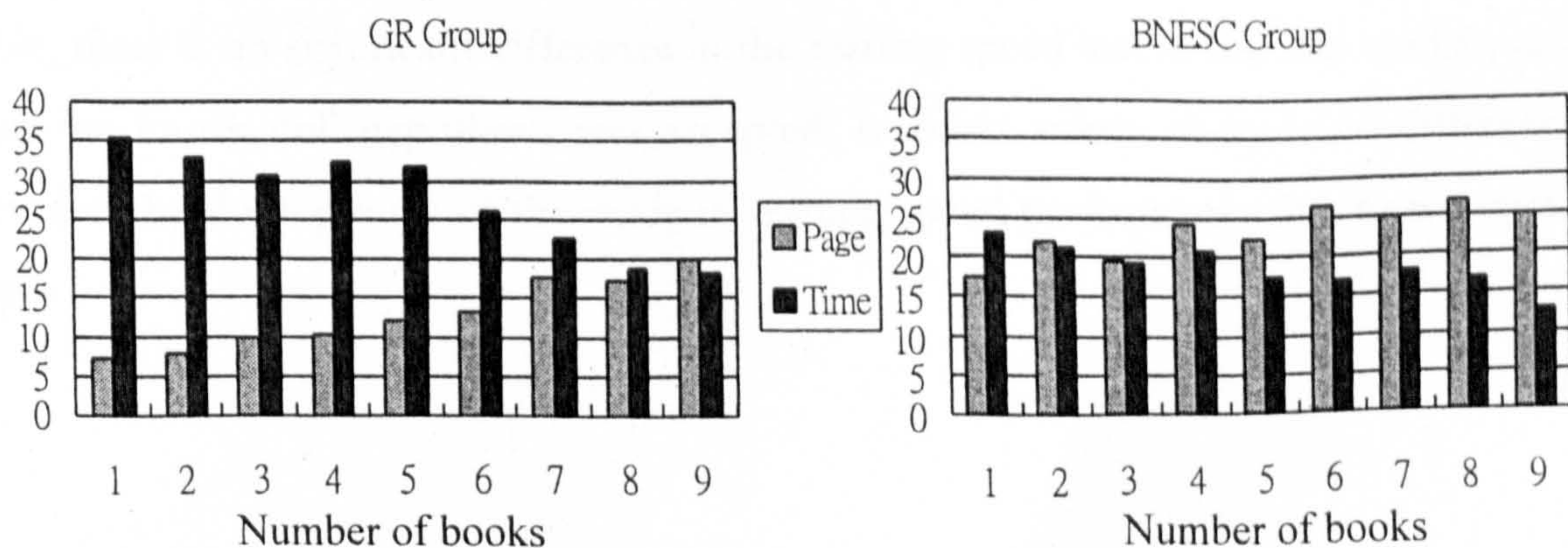
6.3.2 Progress of reading speed

In order to keep track of the students' reading progress, students were asked to write down how much time they spent on reading and how many pages they had read in the second part of the students' reading record. The data obtained from the students' reading records are presented and discussed below.

(a) Study one

Figure 6-1 shows the pages that the students read and the time they spent on reading each time from their reading records in study one. In the first book, the students in the GR group spent 35.4 minutes on reading only 7 pages, but in the 7th book, they took 22 minutes to read 18 pages. For the BNEC group, the students took 18 minutes to read 17 pages of the 1st book; however, in 17 minutes, they could read 27 pages in the 8th book. As can also be seen from the figure below, the number of pages and the amount of time developed gradually in the GR group, but they undulated in the BNEC group.

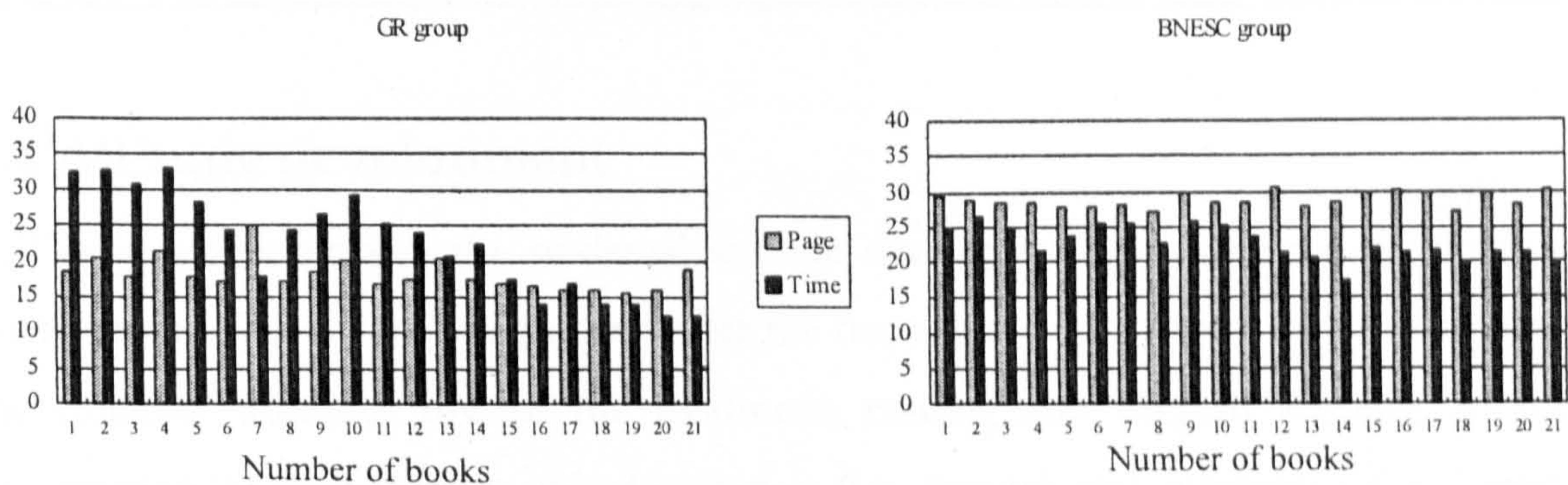
Figure 6-1 Number of pages students read and the time spent on reading (Study one)



(b) Study two

The students' progress in study two is presented graphically in Figure 6-2 below. The results show that the students in the two groups improved their reading speed in a similar way. In other words, while the number of pages in the last book remained similar to that in the first book, the time the students spent on reading that number of pages decreased, and in the GR group the decrease was dramatic. It is also clear from the figure that the number of pages and the time spent on reading undulated.

Figure 6-2 Number of pages students read and the time spent on reading (Study two)



6.3.3 Hypothesis testing

Null hypothesis four (5.4) was tested using the same procedure as in 6.2.4.

Hypothesis 04: there is no difference between the three groups of the study in reading speed performance due to treatment types as measured by the reading speed test before and after the treatment.

The ANOVA results of the reading test are shown in Table 6-8. As shown in the table, there is no significant difference in the reading speed test in the two studies, and thus the fourth null hypothesis was accepted. In other words, there is no difference between the three groups of the study in reading speed performance due to treatment types

Table 6-8 ANOVA Results of reading speed test

Study	Test	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
One	Pre-test	1082.432	2	541.216	3.091	.052
	Between groups					
	Within groups	12257.335	70	175.105		
	Total	13339.767	72			
	Post-test	4754.159	2	2377.080	2.615	.080
	Between groups					
Within groups	63623.517	70	908.907			
Total	68377.676	72				
Two	Pre-test	1175.375	2	587.687	3.081	.059
	Between groups					
	Within groups	6675.060	35	190.716		
	Total	7850.435	37			
	Post-test	1305.688	2	652.844	1.565	.223
	Between groups					
Within groups	14596.808	35	417.052			
Total	15902.496	37				

6.4 Attitude development

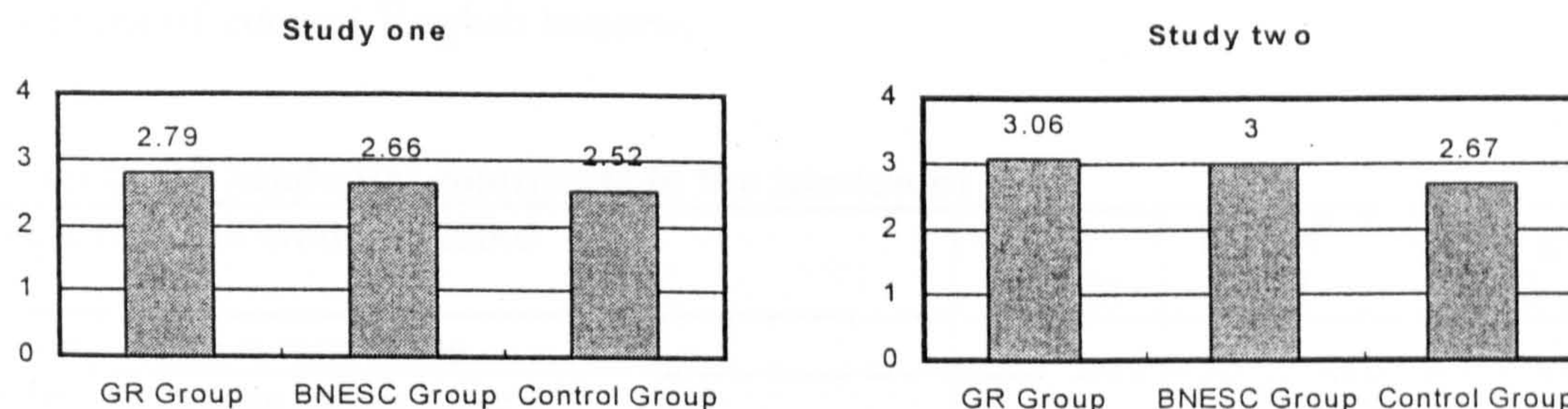
This section examines the students' attitude development by analysing the attitude questionnaire (see 5.7.3.5) before and after the treatment. It is focused on three aspects: the students' attitudes toward the treatment, reading and English learning. In the presentation of each aspect, the descriptive (i.e. means) and inferential (i.e. T-test) results are presented first, followed by the testing of null hypotheses five to seven (5.4) using the same procedure as in 6.2.4. Then, the reasons for the changes of the students' attitudes are discussed

6.4.1 Attitudes toward treatment

6.4.1.1 Effects of treatment on attitudes toward treatment

Figure 6-3 below graphically indicates the difference in subjects' attitudes toward the treatment. As can be seen, the GR group in the two studies held a more positive attitude than the other groups, and the highest mean score was attained by the GR group ($\bar{x} = 3.06$) in study two. Moreover, it also shows that subjects in study two seem to be more positive than those in study one. What is more interesting is that in the two studies, the highest mean score was attained by the GR group, followed by the BNESC group, and the lowest by the control group.

Figure 6-3 Mean scores of the students' attitude toward the treatment



6.4.1.2 Reflections on the features of treatment

Data from the students' questionnaires and group-discussion reports were analysed for important insights into their attitudes toward the treatment. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used in the data analysis.

1. Students' questionnaires

Since different question formats were used in the questionnaires, the data were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. In study one, the students' responses were first grouped by their similarity and then the percentages of each group were calculated. For study two, the data were calculated to produce descriptive results (i.e. means).

(a) Study one

Table 6-9 presents the students' reasons for their positive and negative reflections on the treatment. It shows the reactions to the two treatments (the two experimental groups and control group) are clustered differently and distinctly. For the two ER groups, the students' gave positive responses to the treatment received. They were pleased to have attractive and interesting books they could choose, and also to benefit from reading them as witnessed by their language improvement. However, the students in the control group appreciated only the effects of current reading instruction on improving their English proficiency.

Regarding the negative side of the treatment, the experimental groups highlighted their concerns about the language level of the books they read. They raised the issue of the lack of Chinese translation in ER relatively more often. On the other hand, the

control group did not appreciate the tests and exercises, and also was dissatisfied with the content of current English lessons.

Table 6-9 Students' comments to the treatment

Aspects that the students liked	GR (n=33)	BNEC (n=34)	Control group (n=33)
The programme is interesting	9	5	1
I am free to choose books I like	9	8	
I can read books in English	8	7	
The illustrations are interesting	8	7	2
I can improve reading ability	8	6	1
Stories are interesting	7	8	1
I can improve my English proficiency	6	8	13
There are no grammar exercises	5	7	
I know more about other countries	4	1	1
I can learn something new	4	4	1
I can discuss/share my reading with my classmates	1	1	
I can learn to write sentences			5
I can practise my conversation skill			1
Aspects that the students did not like	GR (n=33)	BNEC (n=34)	Control group (n=33)
Too much new vocabulary	6	12	2
Grammar is difficult	5	9	2
There is no Chinese translation	4	5	
Some sentences are too long and difficult to understand	2	3	
Monthly tests/textbook exercises	1		14
The programme is boring		1	4
English is difficult to learn			5
I do not like to remember vocabulary and grammar			4
I do not like to learn phonetic alphabets			3
Teacher teaches too much in one lesson			3
I do not have interest in reading			2

(b) Study two

The students were asked to indicate their appreciation of features of the treatment received by a 5-point scale (0-4). As presented in table 6-10, the results show that the students in the two experimental groups gave an above satisfactory level to all the features of the ER programme. Among these, the teachers' participation was given the highest rating and writing reading records the lowest rating. Moreover, the two groups also appreciated the treatment in terms of having no homework and no tests, and reading different stories. On the other hand, students in the control group were satisfied with 5 of the listed features in the treatment received. The Chinese glossary in the textbook was rated the highest. They said that they did not like to remember

vocabulary and grammar, do exercises, and have homework and test, and among these, having tests was rated the lowest.

Table 6-10 Rating results of the features of treatment (Study two)

Extensive reading	Means GR/BNESC	Intensive reading	Means Control
Teachers' participation	3.39 / 3.63	Chinese glossary in the textbook	2.80
No homework	3.39 / 3.44	Chinese translations	2.47
Group discussions	3.33 / 3.50	Reading aloud	2.44
Sharing reading with classmates	3.28 / 3.44	The topic of reading text in the textbook	2.27
No pressure of testing and marking	3.11 / 3.25	The content of reading text in the textbook	2.03
Reading different stories	2.83 / 2.76	Remembrance of vocabulary and grammar	1.73
Freedom of choosing books	2.78 / 2.94	Exercises/drills	1.63
Cover page and illustrations	2.75 / 2.68	Homework	1.43
Writing reading records	2.50 / 2.51	Tests	1.23

Rating scales are 4-like it very much, 3-like it, 2-satisfactory, 1- don't like it, 0-don't like it at all.

2. Students' group-discussion reports

The group-discussion reports were used in study two only. Student responses were written in Chinese and translated into English in the following discussion and the ID coding in quoting the students' responses below is the same as in 6.1. The students' responses to the ER programme were positive in two aspects: the books and benefits. First, they reported that the books read were attractive to them in terms of interesting stories and titles, and colourful cover pages and illustrations as the following extracts show (BNESC Group 2 report is given in Appendix 19).

Group 2 (GR class): *Our discussion comes to a conclusion that the books we read are very interesting because they are very similar to those we reading in Chinese. There are many different stories, including adventure and terror, and we like colourful illustrations because they are much better than black and white print we often have in Chinese. We all agree that the comic-strip pictures in Oxford Bookworms Starters are our favourite because apart from colourful illustrations, their layout (each illustration with few sentences in a speech bubble) has made the stories easy to follow and understand.*

Group 2 (BNESC class): *We can choose books we like and change those we don't*

like. Colourful cover pages and illustrations attract our attention, but in Chinese books, these features can only be found in cartoon and comic books. We also like the real pictures used in Oxford Factfiles and Penguin Readers, because they are real and are rarely used in Chinese books.

Group 4 (BNESC class): *Firstly, we are happy to read and to know the books that native English children will read, and we like the stories as well, especially adventures (because we often read folk or fable stories in Chinese). We all also agree that we like the colourful illustrations. Although sometimes we cannot understand vocabulary or grammar, looking at the pictures is fun. Moreover, the pictures are in the same sequence as the stories and sometimes we can look at the pictures without reading and understand the stories. One more thing is, compared with the textbook (one or two pictures only), there are many pictures in BNESC.*

Secondly, they liked the ER programme because they learnt vocabulary and their reading ability improved. However, they said they had to deal with difficulties in knowing new vocabulary, and understanding grammar and long texts. These appeared to have a backwash effect against their positive impression of the treatment. The results from the reports coincided with the findings in the students' questionnaires above. Group 5 in the BNESC class has the following words to say:

In this programme, we learn many new words which are not included in our textbooks and exercise books we buy from bookshops. Moreover, the length of books is much longer than that of our textbooks, and we have to read for meaning but not to use for studying. At the beginning, it took ages (normal 3-4 lessons) to finish a book, but in the end we manage to finish not longer than 2 lessons). Because we don't have to check grammar and vocabulary, and do exercises, the priority of understanding a story helps us read faster and better, we think. However, because we are asked to focus on overall meaning of a story and dictionaries are not allowed, we don't feel confident in reading and often stuck by unknown words and grammar. This makes this class no different from our normal English lessons. If we can manage these difficulties, we think reading will be more pleasurable and we'll get more benefits from it.

G1 (GR class) also reported:

By reading different stories, we feel that our reading ability improves and we learn new vocabulary and grammar. At the beginning, we found the books were difficult to read because of vocabulary and grammar, but, later on, the books were easier than before, and also we could look at the pictures for clues or overall meaning. If we had been taught the meanings of unknown words, our reading ability would have improved more.

In summary, the results from the two studies above give more insight into the fact that the students in the ER treatment were more positive to the treatment than those in the IR treatment discussed in 6.4.1.1. The results show that the students were motivated by having control over their own learning and freedom of choice, and being in a pressure-free learning situation. In other words, these main characteristics of ER play an important role in developing positive student attitudes. By contrast, given the fact that the students were forced to learn and loaded with drills and tests in the IR group, the students' positive attitudes were more likely to die away, and inevitably, they became negative. It is difficult to expect that the students taught in this way hold positive attitudes. On the whole, the findings appeared to indicate that students appreciated more being involved in reading practice on their own choices rather than in studying texts for language work.

6.4.1.3 Hypothesis testing

Null hypothesis five (5.4) was tested using the same procedure as in 6.2.4.

Hypothesis 05: there is no difference between the three groups in attitudes toward the treatment as measured by an attitude scale after treatment.

(a) Study one

As the results of ANOVA show in table 6-11 below, there is no significant difference in students' attitudes toward the treatment ($F = .239, n.s.$), and thus, the fifth hypothesis

was accepted. This means that the effect of the treatment on attitude development seems to be similar in the three groups.

(b) Study two

Table 6-11 shows that there is a statistical difference in students' attitudes toward the treatment ($F = 3.878, p < .05$), and thus the fifth hypothesis was not accepted. This means that the type of treatment causes statistical differences between the three groups in student attitude development.

Table 6-11 Results of ANOVA in students' attitudes toward the treatment

Study	Test		Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
One	Pre-test	Between groups	1.253	2	.627	1.454	.239
		Within groups	41.787	97	.431		
		Total	43.040	99			
Two	Pre-test	Between groups	1.396	2	.698	3.878	.028*
		Within groups	8.278	46	.180		
		Total	9.673	48			

* $p < .05$

6.4.2 Attitudes toward reading

6.4.2.1 Effects of treatment on attitudes toward reading

The T-test results on subjects' attitudes toward reading are shown in Table 6-12. In study one, surprisingly, the descriptive statistics show that the mean scores of the three groups in study one decreased after the treatment. In addition, we can notice that the most remarkable fall is found in the control group and the decrease was statistically significant ($t = -3.218, p < .05$). However, the table shows a different pattern of results in study two. It is clear that the mean score of the two experimental groups increased after the treatment and the improvement was statistically significant. The mean score of the control group decreased in the post-test.

Table 6-12 T-test Results of attitudes toward reading

	Mean (pre test - post test)	sd	df	T-value
Study One				
GR group	2.818 – 2.606	.6499	32	-1.875
BNEC group	2.853 – 2.529	.6382	33	-2.956
Control group	2.515 – 2.182	.5951	32	-3.218*
Study Two				
GR group	2.611 – 3.222	.6978	17	3.716**
BNEC group	2.462 – 3.000	.5189	12	3.742**
Control group	2.667 – 2.533	.6399	14	-.807

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .005$

6.4.2.2 Reasons for the change of attitudes toward reading

As shown above (6.4.2.1), in the two studies the students in the control groups held a negative impression after the treatment. However, the experimental groups developed differently in the two studies. That is, while in study one student attitudes were negative, student attitudes in study two were positive. Since the students were asked to give reasons for their attitudes toward reading in the attitude questionnaires, the data from the questionnaires were analysed for discerning the factors which caused that change. The students' responses were written in Chinese and translated into English in the following discussion. The ID coding in quoting the students' responses below is the same as in 6.1.

(a) Study one

As the students' attitudes were negative after the treatment in this study, the focus of this section is on the causes for that negative development. As discussed in 6.4.1.2, the students reported that their language problems were the main reasons for their negative attitudes toward the treatment. This appeared to have an effect on their attitudes toward reading. For example, S1B5 described how his attitude has become negative: *"At the beginning, I thought reading storybooks for native English speakers was interesting, but my reading was always interrupted by unknown words and grammar. At the end, this makes me feel unhappy about English reading"*. The same idea was given by S1B9 who complained *"To me, reading is a vocabulary and grammar problem-solving exercise. I haven't been taught how to do that, and of course I don't like English reading"*. In a similar view, S1G5 expressed the annoying burden of vocabulary: *"I like the books and the ER programme, but the vocabulary load has made reading become difficult. So I hate new vocabulary and don't like reading"*. S1B10 also

said: *“The only thing I don’t like in reading is new vocabulary, because I’m always stuck by unknown words”*.

S1B1 reported how he struggled to work out grammatical rules, stating *“There are many grammatical rule I haven’t learnt so far. Even though my teacher told me to neglect them, I could not understand the whole sentence or paragraph unless I knew the grammar. Oh, you know English grammar made me mad”*. S1G7’s lack of the knowledge of English language made him unhappy about reading, *“English books are cryptic beyond my understanding, no matter how interesting or attractive they are”*. S1G2 raised his concern about grammar difficulty by doubting native English speakers’ knowledge: *“I wonder if English people can remember all grammatical rules. If they cannot, how can I?”*.

(b) Study two

Interestingly, the students also raised the substantial effect of language problems on their attitudes toward reading as mentioned above. However, apart from the effects of free choice, interesting books and the pressure-free situation (6.4.1.1), they highlighted the fact that the teachers’ encouragement (reported in 6.5), group discussions (5.8.3.2) and the strategy training activities they received in the learner training session (see 5.8.3.4) had a positive impact on their attitudes toward reading. The students’ comments are given as follows:

S2G5: I am lucky because my friend’s English is the best in the class. When I have vocabulary and grammar problems, I simply do as the teachers suggests – ask my friend. That’s easy and I like it.

S2B6: Reading lessons are boring because of the repetition of vocabulary, grammar and translation. However, we don’t have to do them in the ER programme. Instead we are asked to enjoy reading the books I like. One thing that really make me happy in the ER programme is that I can chat with my classmates and express freely my opinions about the books I read. This is great because we are asked to be quiet during English lessons and aren’t allowed to speak unless we receive the teacher’s permission.

S2G8: In the group discussions, my groupmates shared their reading with me by

giving an overall view on the books, the meanings of new vocabulary and their recommendation or rejection. When I read the books they recommended, I could easily follow the stories and reading became enjoyable and meaningful. This is different from what I had experienced before.

S2G11: *In the past, I didn't know that the illustrations coincided with the plot/story. Now, I always look at the pictures first, and then read the texts. When I don't know words I try to find clues from the illustrations. I find this is very useful and it helps me read and understand more.*

S2B7: *At the beginning of the ER programme, the teachers told us to use strategies (these were new to us because we hadn't heard of them before) to cope with language problems and gave some exercises, but I doubted their effects and was not confident to do that. So I tried them in reading the first book by guessing the meaning of unknown words from the texts or illustrations, and then asked my teacher for correction. I found that sometimes they worked and sometimes they didn't. When I guessed correctly I felt it was rewarding and fun, but when I was wrong I learnt to do better next time. Now I believe they are very important and can build my confidence while reading.*

In short, the discussion above gives more insight into the factors which explain why the results in the two studies are different. The results indicate that students' negative attitude development was a direct result of language problems. In other words, reading materials which are slightly above students' language proficiency promote their language development, but hinders attitude improvement. The results also suggest that activities which enhance students' ability to cope with reading problems would reduce this tendency.

6.4.2.3 Hypothesis testing

Null hypothesis six (5.4) was tested using the same procedure as in 6.2.4.

Hypothesis 06: there is no difference between the three groups in attitudes toward reading as measured by the attitude scale after treatment.

(a) Study one

In table 6-13 below, the results of ANOVA show that there is a significant difference in students' attitudes toward reading after the treatment ($F = 4.178, p < .05$), and thus, the sixth hypothesis was not accepted. Although the effects of the treatment on attitude development were different between the groups, it should be mentioned that the effects were negative (6.3.4).

(b) Study two

The ANOVA results of study two show that there is a significant difference in the students' attitude toward reading ($F = 5.797, p < .05$), and thus the sixth null hypothesis was not accepted. This means that there is a difference between the three groups in students' development due to treatment types. More importantly, the effects were positive.

Table 6-13 Results of ANOVA in students' attitudes toward reading

Study	Test		Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
One	Pre-test	Between groups	2.294	2	1.147	2.822	.064
		Within groups	39.416	97	.406		
		Total	41.710	99			
	Post-test	Between groups	3.382	2	1.691	4.178	.018*
		Within groups	39.258	97	.405		
		Total	42.640	99			
Two	Pre-test	Between groups	.310	2	.155	.354	.704
		Within groups	18.842	43	.438		
		Total	19.152	45			
	Post-test	Between groups	3.920	2	1.960	5.797	.006*
		Within groups	14.537	43	.338		
		Total	18.457	45			

* $p < .05$

6.4.3 Attitudes toward English learning

6.4.3.1 Effects of treatment on attitudes toward English learning

(a) Study one

Table 6-14 shows the effect of treatment on student attitudes toward learning English before and after the treatment. In the GR group, the mean score remained the same after the treatment, but the mean scores decreased in the BNESC and the Control groups after the treatment. This means that no treatments had a positive effect on students' attitudes toward English learning.

(b) Study two

The table below shows that the mean scores of the two experimental groups increased after the treatment, and there was a significant difference in the statistical results. However, the mean score of the control group was lower after the treatment. It can be interpreted that the ER treatments were more effective in promoting students' positive attitudes than the IR treatment.

Table 6-14 T-test Results of attitudes toward English learning

	Mean (pre test - post test)	sd	df	T-value
Study One				
GR group	2.818 – 2.818	.5590	32	.000
BNESC group	2.853 – 2.324	.5066	33	-6.093**
Control group	2.606 – 1.939	.7360	32	-5.204**
Study Two				
GR group	2.778 – 3.222	.7838	17	2.406*
BNESC group	2.846 – 3.231	.5064	12	2.739*
Control group	3.000 – 2.933	.7988	14	-.323

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .005$

6.4.3.2 Reasons for the change of attitudes

Since the students in the two studies developed different attitudes toward English learning as shown above, data from student questionnaires were analysed in order to detect reasons for this phenomenon. The ID coding in quoting the students' responses below is the same as in 6.1.

Coinciding with their attitudes toward the treatment (6.4.1) and reading (6.4.2), language problems had a negative impact on the students' attitudes toward English learning no matter how curious and interested they were. Similar expressions to the comments in 6.4.2.2 were given in responses about causes of their negative attitudes.

However, those whose learning attitudes were positive reported various factors assisting their improvement. In other words, the experience in the ER programme warded off their reluctance, and promoted autonomy and collaboration as in the following quotes:

S2G1: "Before participating in the ER programme, I always waited for teachers to tell me what to do next. But now I realise that learning is my own responsibility and I have to do something for myself, not waiting for my teacher".

S1B4: "I used to rely on a dictionary and grammar books, and my English could not improve without them. But you know checking them was a really a burden and I could not have them with me all the time. From the experience of the ER programme, I try train myself to use learning strategies when I face difficulties, and I believe by doing so I will be weaned from that habit sometime in the future".

S1G5: "Although I still have to study vocabulary and grammar in English lessons (I still don't like it), I'm more enthusiastic in learning English than before because there are other ways to learn it and do better. This makes me feel confident".

S1B9: "I like learning English now because apart from English homework, I can do other things in relation to learning English for fun like watching Friends (American TV soap show). There is no homework or tests after that, and I learn as much as I can. It doesn't matter if I cannot understand it all. At least, I listen and see the stars I like".

S2B17: "I used to study English alone, but nowadays we (my classmates and I) always do homework together and help each other. We also watch English TV programmes/films or listen to English music, because we can ask each other 'What does she/he say?' 'What does that word mean?' 'What will happen next?'

Sometimes we speak in English (You know we laugh at our poor English), and we also try to imitate their (people in films) speaking and sounds (songs)”.

To sum up, the students' comments above shed more light on the effects of the ER programme on their learning attitudes. The findings explain the relationship between the treatment and student learning attitudes. That is, the way in which they had learned to approach reading has had an impact on the students' attitude development. One interesting outcome is that the experience of the ER programme has helped students to increase their awareness of learning methods and strategies.

6.4.3.3 Hypothesis testing

Null hypothesis seven (5.4) was tested using the same procedure as in 6.2.5.

Hypothesis 07: there is no difference between the three groups in attitudes toward learning English as measured by the attitude scale after treatment.

The ANOVA results of study one, shown in Table 6-15 below, indicate that there is a significant difference between the three groups in attitudes toward learning English after the treatment ($F=14.713$, $p<.005$), and thus the seventh hypothesis was rejected. However, it should be pointed out that the significance was not in relation to positive development (see 6.4.3).

There is no significant difference in students' attitudes toward learning English in study two ($F = 1.296$, $n.s.$), and thus, the seventh hypothesis was accepted. This means that the effect of the treatment on attitude development seems to be similar in the three groups.

Table 6-15 Results of ANOVA in students' attitudes toward learning English

Study	Test		Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
One	Pre-test	Between groups	1.187	2	.594	1.475	.234
		Within groups	39.053	97	.403		
		Total	40.240	99			
	Post-test	Between groups	12.811	2	6.405	14.713	.000**
		Within groups	42.229	97	.435		
		Total	55.040	99			
Two	Pre-test	Between groups	.414	2	.207	.428	.655
		Within groups	20.803	43	.484		
		Total	21.217	45			
	Post-test	Between groups	.865	2	.433	1.296	.284
		Within groups	14.352	43	.334		
		Total	15.217	45			

** $p < .005$

6.5 Change in student participation

As mentioned in 5.8.3.3, the teachers' reports aimed at recording what happened during the ER programme in relation to student participation, reflections and interaction, and teacher reaction.

In the early stage of the programme, when the students encountered language difficulties, they appeared to be passive and waited for the teachers' help, and also asked for the use of a dictionary. The teachers reminded them of the main aim of overall comprehension, and then encouraged them to use strategies (guessing or looking at pictures) taught in the introductory lesson, or write down the unknown words if they wanted to check their meanings. However, from the middle of the programme, the situation altered. The students' reluctance no longer existed and the request to use a dictionary was not heard. They tended to get into pairs, asked their partners for the meaning of unknown words, and discussed the part they could not understand or shared the stories with their peers. The students appeared to be active in dealing with reading difficulties by asking their peers for help. The following are some entries taken from the GR group teacher's reports (the Week 9 report is given in Appendix 20).

Week 2: The students complained that the books are too difficult in terms of grammar and vocabulary and urged to check dictionaries. I reminded them to the concept of ER, and encourage them to neglect the language problems and focus on overall meaning of a

story. They replied: "That's impossible", so I suggested them to use the strategies I taught them last week, and they could make notes on unknown words and check them at home if they really wanted to. Their reactions were anticipated since I didn't give them similar texts to read.

Week 6: *Today, my students came to choose books in twos and threes (I believed they talked about that and decided to read together beforehand), and I welcomed them with smiles. Soon after they read, you could hear one student saying "I know this one, it means...", or a conversation between the students "Where are you now? Here. So you have read this part, and what does this sentence mean? I think it means... ". I also heard two students sharing their reading "Do you like this book? Yes, it's thrilling and I always wonder what will happen next. Oh, thanks for your help, and it is much better than I read alone. No problem, you also help me with some words". When I said "Time's up", I realised that no one mentioned using dictionaries.*

Week 9: *In the last two weeks, the students automatically got together to read, but few students were still reading alone. So I encouraged them to join other pairs but they appeared to be reluctant. This week, I found surprisingly that some students read in groups in which they formed in the group-discussions. They also helped each other by reading together or looking at the pictures or clues inside the books. There is a problem, that is, they liked to talk (young teenage), and sometimes they were talking something different from the stories. So I have to ask them to go back to the books and to reduce their volume because I am worried about other teachers' complaints (too noisy).*

It was probably inevitable that some students appeared to read without attention, and in some cases, pretended to read books by turning pages. In order to help those who were reluctant to read, the teachers restated the benefits of ER and read books with them in the early sessions. Even though teachers suggested that students should ask their peers for meaning or should read books in pairs if they wished, discussion or interaction between the students were rarely observed. However, discussion and interaction increased gradually, and occasionally, the classes were bustling with noise and excitement so that the teachers had to calm the students down and ask them to go

back to reading books as the following BNESC teacher's reports show (The week 6 report is given in Appendix 20).

Week 2: I kept my eyes on those who did not concentrate on their English lessons. As I predicted they just turned the pages and when I looked at them they pretended to be reading. So I asked them to sit next to me. To others, despite I said that they were allowed to talk to each other or read together, strangely they still read individually and silently. Occasionally, you could hear light voices asking "Hey, what does this word mean?"

Week 6: The students knew in this reading programme they had to read but nothing else. Also, probably they didn't want to be asked to read next to me (I think), so they read. However, they read quietly, and in one or two occasions, they used hoarse voice to ask their peers for help. I felt they are starting to get used to the ER programme.

Week 10: Today is the first time that most students read in pairs. Those who read individually at the beginning were involved in pair discussions when they heard something interestingly or differently. I paid special attention to those whose proficiency were at the lower level and reluctant in reading, and I noticed that at the beginning of the ER programme they always asked others to read for them. Now, when they read they appeared to read themselves and discuss more with their peers.

6.6 Improvement in students' summary writing

In writing a summary, the students were free to write in Chinese or English language depending on their ability and interest as described in 5.7.3.2. The purpose was to monitor the students reading and it was thus not intended to check their writing progress. However, an analysis of the students' reading records indicated a change of their writing habits at the later stages of the ER programme. The following are some examples taken from the students' reading records.

In the first sample below, S1G2 used Chinese as the only language in his writing as the first entry taken at week 8, but then he started to write the characters' names in English (week 10), and shortly after that, attempted to write sentences in English (week 12):

- 1st entry, week 8:

有一天他們在比賽亦在山上誰最快最後跳出
虎比賽輸，他就不來。

- 2nd entry, week 10:

有天W:lf 跟班上百子人去郊遊，但下了
想去 zoo 看 animals. 但改去 museum.
很有趣...

- 3rd entry, week 12:

這本書在記一個叫吃 honey's Wmre, 另種
honey eat. 跑到 Rabbit's house 去, ate honey
eat 吃多了 pushed, But Poch was much 過. 60
很多人來幫忙, 最後出來了, 又 pulled 到
了 honey pulled.

S2G10 made a very impressive progress in her summary writing. She also began using Chinese entirely in writing her summary as the first entry (week 5) below shows. However, she gradually used English at week 7 (the second entry), and after week 12, she wrote the summary in English entirely (the third entry) throughout the rest of the study.

- 1st entry, week 5:

有一個學生他心煩坐車五年, 可是又因為
就他無法進出. 可是後來他還是
回來了.

- 2nd entry, week 7:

Tina 也是一位歌手, Her mother has grand
plans for her, 但是 Tina 不快樂. She wants
to get away from it all, and she 'disappears'
to the countryside to learn another way
of life.

- 3rd entry, week 12:

Rebecca and Sue like skiing. The sun's shining
There's lots of snow. They are good skiers.
But Mark and David are good skiers too.
And there is going to be a race.

Similar progress also appeared in S2B1's records. In the first two weeks, Chinese was the only language used as with other students (1st entry). Then, the second entry shows that a few English words appeared, but finally, she managed to write in English entirely in the final few weeks (3rd entry).

- 1st entry, week 2:

介绍恐龙(很多只)

- 2nd entry, week 6:

老虎是猫科动物, 人们喜欢猎杀老虎, 老虎的很多 thing.
老虎能在 Asia, 可以自己找 food and water, 也会吃动物.
老虎的 mother 会照顾 baby 2-3 年, until they are grown up.

- 3rd entry, week 11:

One day, Pooh saw a bee. Then Pooh followed
a honey bee into the woods. He saw a honey
tree. Then he called his friend Robin did a
favor to him. Robin gave a big balloon to Pooh.
When he got some honey, the balloon went down.
Pooh landed on top of Robin. And Robin said "silly old bear."

Through the above samples of the record entries, it appeared that the ER programme had a positive effect on the students' writing ability. It showed that the students' amount of writing, move to using English and degree of independence in writing gradually increased. It also indicated that the difficulty in writing in English would begin to resolve as they began to challenge it. Once the attempt was made, they

were more likely to continue confronting their difficulties. Furthermore, the fact that the summary writing has made learning real to them perhaps motivated the students to write in English.

6.7 Students' satisfaction with the books read

Student satisfaction with the books read was given in reading records. In addition, the group-discussion reports were examined for detecting the books they would recommend to their classmates and what factors caused them to make such recommendations.

(a) Students' reading records

After reading a book, the students were asked to estimate their satisfaction with the book by rating it on a 5-point scale (0-4) as mentioned in 5.7.3.2. The data were analysed quantitatively and the results are presented descriptively (i.e. means) in table 6-16 below.

Table 6-16 Mean scores of the students' satisfaction with the books read

	GR group		BNESC group	
	Study one	Study two	Study one	Study two
Overall rating	2.455	2.442	2.365	3.027
Cover/front page	2.650	2.693	2.884	3.256
Illustrations	2.641	2.713	2.864	3.241
Print quality	2.751	2.619	2.936	3.302
Note: 4-excellent, 3-good, 2-satisfactory, 1-not so good, 0-poor.				
Title	2.733	2.624	2.623	3.176
Content	2.668	2.654	2.498	3.157
Note: 4-very interesting, 3-interesting, 2-about right, 1-boring, 0-very boring.				
Length	2.507	2.499	2.975	3.263
Note: 4=too long, 3=a little bit long, 2=about right, 1=a little bit short, 0=too short.				
Size of book	2.622	2.782	2.815	3.286
Font size	2.576	2.644	2.835	3.359
Note: 4=too big, 3=a little bit big, 2=about right, 1=a little bit small, 0=too small.				
Level of language	1.899	1.732	1.542	1.620
Note: 4=too difficult, 3=a little bit difficult, 2=about right, 1=a little bit easy, 0=too easy.				

As can be seen in table 6-16, the students' overall impressions of the books read were above satisfactory. The students gave an above satisfactory level to the style and quality of the presentation of books, and also rated the title and the content at that level. The results show that students had rated the longer length, bigger size and longer font of the BNESEC. Regarding the language level of books, the students had the impression that the books were difficult for them. On the whole, it is interesting that the BNESEC group in study two rated the first nine features at the good level and thus, suggesting that the group was more satisfied with the books they read than the other groups.

(b) Students' group-discussion reports

The books that the students would recommend to their classmates and the reasons for such recommendations are shown in Table 6-17 below. The results showed that the most common reasons for their recommendations were interesting titles and stories. When they found that the books were easy to follow and understand, they would like to recommend them to their classmates. The colourful appearance also played a decisive factor in their recommendations. Finally, the books containing real pictures seemed to attract students' attention and interests.

Table 6-17 Reasons for students' satisfaction with the books read

Report	Recommended book	Reasons
GR	Mystery in London	Interesting adventure story
	Sara Says No!	Easy to understand
	A Song for Ben	Easy to understand, short story, interesting story
	Briefcase	Interesting story and illustrations; easy to understand
	The Ghost House	Interesting title and story; easy to understand
	Titanic	Interesting title and story; real pictures
	Goldilocks and Three Bears	Interesting title, story and illustrations; easy to understand,
	The Secret of Oldstone Hall	Interesting title, story and illustrations; easy to understand,
	Escape	Interesting title, story and illustrations; easy to follow and understand the story
	Girl on a Motorcycle	Interesting title, story and illustrations; easy to follow and understand the story
	Taxi of Terror	Interesting title, story and illustrations; easy to follow and understand the story
Drive into Danger	Interesting title, story and illustrations; easy to follow and understand the story	

BNESC	Tiger	Interesting story; real pictures
	Lost and Found	Interesting story; easy to understand
	The Treasure Chest	Interesting story; colourful illustrations
	Robin Hood	Interesting cover page and story
	The honey tree	Interesting story; colourful illustrations; easy to understand
	The lost key	Interesting story
	Too Much Honey	Interesting story; colourful illustrations
	101 Dalmatians	Interesting story; colourful illustrations
	Red Planet	Interesting story; colourful illustrations
	Dinosaur Alphabet	Interesting story; colourful illustrations; real pictures

6.8 Students' reasons for choosing books to read

In order to know the reasons for choosing books to read, the students in the two studies were asked to write down in reading records their reasons for choosing a book to read (5.7.3.5). In addition, the students in study two also discussed their reasons in the group-discussions and summarised them in the reports (5.8.3.2).

(a) Students' reading records

The students' reasons for choosing books are presented in table 6-18. Interesting title, illustrations and cover pages were the three most common incentives to the students in all the four groups in choosing books to read. Moreover, as could be expected, when the story of a book appeared to be interesting to them, they were more likely to pick it up and read. Perhaps because of the familiarity of the story, the students tended to look for the books that they had read in Chinese before. The results also show that to a certain extent, the students' decisions were influenced by the teachers' or their classmates' opinions. Interestingly, while the students in study one chose books randomly, those in study two paid attention to the books recommended by the teachers and their peers. This was probably a result of the teachers' sharing reports and the group-discussions, as discussed in the following section.

Table 6-18 Summary of the students' reasons for choosing books to read

	GR group		BNESC group	
	Study one (n=225)	Study two (n=175)	Study one (n=218)	Study two (n=172)
Interesting title	74	83	70	66
Interesting illustrations	55	120	38	80
Interesting cover page	42	108	44	89
Interesting story	40	56	48	95
I have read the book in Chinese already	36	33	24	29
Randomly choose	32	10	40	8
Teacher/classmates recommend	26	74	20	60
The story is short	21	15	16	8
The book looks good	18			
It looks special	7			2

(b) Students' group-discussion reports

The question asked in the students' group-discussion reports is 'What are your reasons for choosing books to read?'. The responses can be divided into four categories. First, students reported that the most common reason for choosing books to read was colourful cover pages and illustrations of books. In other words, the lavish use of colourful artwork attracted the students' attention and influenced their decisions in book selection. For example, Group 2 in the GR class wrote the following in the third week report.

When we chose books, we always looked at the cover pages. Colourful and lively pictures attracted our attention. Especially, we always chose a book whose cover picture presented a scene of the story rather than one of its main characters, like The Magician (a man with a black face and suit) and The Wrong Man (a photo of Ayers Rock at sunset).

Secondly, the students also said that they tended to choose the books whose title they were familiar with (they didn't say in what language, but presumably in their native language - Chinese) as Group 3 in the BNESC class commented in the second week report below.

We liked cartoon stories and we had already read or watched them in Chinese. So when we found "Sleeping Beauty", "Winnie the Pooh" we chose them, because we were familiar with the stories.

Thirdly, in the group-discussions the students would recommend books which they though would be interesting or appropriate to their peers. Thus, they would seek for books recommended by classmates first. If they could find such a book they were more likely to pick up that book as GR Group 1's tenth week report below describes.

If we found the books we read are interesting, we often mentioned them and gave reasons for that in the group-discussions. So we listened carefully to our groupmates' or other classmates' sharing, especially to our best friends, and decided to choose one book to read next time. But guess what, we have to be quick – locate and pick up; otherwise, our classmates will take it before our.

Fourthly, in book selection, the students would turn the pages to get a first impression of the language of the book. They would not choose it if the language appeared to be difficult or the print looked dense. For instance, Group 2 in the BNESC class reported the following at week 2.

When we found the cover page of a book interesting, we also turned the pages to see whether it was difficult to read or not. Also if there were many words or the pages were densely covered by words, we put it down and tried to find one which was less dense.

To sum up, with expectation, the results above indicated that the appearance of a book played an important role in attracting the students' attention. Lavish use of colourful artwork appeared to be the best option to influence them. Perhaps because of their limited language ability, they could not separate themselves from the knowledge of books in their native language, and also tended to plunge into their teachers' or classmates' suggestions. Otherwise, they just picked up a book without any great consideration.

6.9 Students' suggestions about treatment

Data from the students' questionnaires and the group-discussion reports were analysed to collect opinions about the aspects of the treatment which needed improvement.

1. Students' questionnaire

The students' suggestions for the improvement of ER project received are summarised in Table 6-19. The experimental groups would like to borrow books and read them at home or in their own time. This indicated that a change of the study-oriented environment they were in would be a good idea. Presumably, this would make them more comfortable and they could relax in a non-study situation. As far as their reading problems are concerned, the students also emphasised a need for accessible books at their language level. Alternatively, they preferred receiving instruction in vocabulary and grammar, or using a dictionary. Since they were acquainted with reading texts with a Chinese translation in their English lessons, as could be anticipated, they also mentioned having the same materials in the ER programme.

By contrast, the results highlighted the inadequacy of current reading instruction. The students in the control groups pointed out their wish to abolish tests, and to improve the current teaching methods and the textbooks. Moreover, they would like their studying load to be reduced so that presumably, they could do something related to real learning in the class-time or leisure activities (e.g. listening to English music or watching English films/TV programmes) they like.

Table 6-19 Students' suggestions for the improvement of treatment

	GR group		BNEC group		Control group	
	Study 1 n=33	Study 2 n=18	Study 1 n=34	Study 2 n=13	Study 1 n=33	Study 2 n=15
Borrowing books to read at home	15	12	10	15		
Reading books in the school library	12	15	14	16		
Teaching grammar and vocabulary first	8	10	6	8		
Making the texts of books simple/easy	8	12	16	16	4	5
Having bilingual Dictionaries	6	6	3	7		
Having more books	5	5	4	5		
Having Chinese translation	3	9	6	8		
Having more time to read	1	4	1	3		
Explaining the reading texts		4	1	4		
Having no tests					16	18
Changing teaching methods					14	15
Improving the textbook					16	15
Having no homework					14	16
Including more stories in the textbook					5	8
Including speaking exercises					3	2
Including listening exercises					3	2

2. Students' group-discussion reports

In the group-discussions, the question that the students were asked to discuss is 'What aspects of the programme do you think can be improved?'. The responses were similar to the findings in the questionnaires above, that is, downgrading the language level of books, the use of a dictionary and Chinese translation as the following examples show.

GR Group 3: *We had a substantial difficulty in vocabulary, and were often stuck by them during reading. We knew reading was for meaning and pleasure, but how could we understand a story if we haven't had enough vocabulary? Moreover, if we didn't know the meaning of new vocabulary we felt we haven't learned anything. So allowing to check dictionaries would make us confident and happy.*

BNESC Group 4: *There are many words and grammatical rules we haven't learned in our English lessons. If the language level of books could be at a little bit lower, it would be more appropriate to us. Or if the books can be accompanying with Chinese translation, it will make the books easier to read.*

GR Group 2: *In the introductory session, tell students words and grammar which are frequently used in the books they are going to read, so that reading difficulties in these aspects will be reduced.*

BNESC Group 2: *The books were difficult. So our suggestion is very simple: "to use books at lower level".*

Apart from these, one group gave a very interesting suggestion in relation to increasing co-operative work among students so as to promote their reading ability and motivate their participation as the following quote shows:

"Before the ER programme, I had an introductory section in which we were taught to practise reading strategies. Also, the teachers suggested we should read in pairs in order to help each other. These activities were very useful. We wonder whether more similar activities can be used in the ER programme. We discussed and found one might be good to use. First, the teacher should put a story on an OHP and read it with us. Anyone

of us can point out problems at any time, and other students can answer, or the teacher can explain if none of us knows. We conclude that an ER programme should include such co-operative activities so that reading will not become a monotonous routine.”

In brief, this section has revealed student consideration of what can be improved in an ER programme. In their opinion, the ways in which the effects of their reading problems can be minimised appear to be the first priority. Interestingly, the students recommended that ER should be in a reading-oriented environment and an out-of-class activity as an ER programme.

6.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the results of quantitative analyses of study one and study two. In particular it examined the development of language proficiency, reading speed and attitudes after the treatment. It also compared the effect of treatments (reading GR, reading BNESEC and studying the textbook).

In summary, the hypothesis testing of all seven variables in the study is summarised in Table 6-20 below.

Table 6-20 Summary of the hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Study	Evidence (F Value)	Results
01. Vocabulary	One	21.205**	Rejected
	Two	.459	Accepted
02. Grammar	One	7.075**	Rejected
	Two	4.109*	Rejected
03. Reading comprehension	One	9.349*	Rejected
	Two	7.861**	Rejected
04. Reading Speed	One	2.615	Accepted
	Two	1.565	Accepted
05. Attitudes toward the treatment	One	1.454	Accepted
	Two	3.878*	Rejected
06. Attitudes toward reading	One	(-) 4.178*	Rejected
	Two	5.797*	Rejected
07. Attitudes toward English learning	One	(-) 14.713**	Rejected
	Two	1.296	Accepted

(-) Negative outcome

The results show various effects of the treatment in all the variables. The effects of the treatment in the students' language development were distinctly significant, except in H01 in study two. Regarding the effect of the treatment on reading speed, no significant difference was found, that is, both ER and IR are equally effective in developing students' reading speed. The table also shows that the student attitude development depended on the type of the treatment received. In other words, ER accompanied by encouraging activities was more effective in developing a positive attitude toward reading than pure ER and IR. However, it should be noted that student attitudes toward learning English (H07) were not affected by the treatment.

The results of the study showed that extensive reading is more effective than the current IR instruction in improving all the variables mentioned. As to language development, a statistical significance was found in all three hypotheses tested in study one and in two hypotheses tested (grammar and reading comprehension) in study two (6.2.4). Regarding the treatment effect on students' reading speed, no significant difference was found (6.3.3). Section 6.4 presented the effects of the treatment on student attitudes, and it was found that ER accompanied by encouraging activities was more effective than the other two types of treatment (pure ER and IR).

In addition, discussion of the qualitative analysis in the rest of the chapter provided explanations for the factors which caused these effects. The results gave a fuller picture of how pleased the students were with the ER programme in terms of reading materials and pressure-free environment, as well as appreciating the teachers' participation as a model for their learning (6.4.1.2). Moreover, data from student reading records showed a tendency toward increase of English language and independence in writing which was an unanticipated outcome (6.6). In addition, it is also clear that language problems hampered the students' positive attitude development (6.4.2.2 and 6.4.3.2), and a need to help them overcome these hurdles is essential for the ER programme (6.9).

In sum, while these positive outcomes stand in a line with previous ER research, the findings gave more insight into the nature of the factors which caused these effects, and provided in-depth explanations for the differences shown so far in this study. The next chapter will further discuss the findings of the study, and deduce specific and wider implications for ELT situations.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As language teachers we are the most fortunate of teachers—all subjects are ours...We are limited only by our own caution, by our own hesitancy...we need not be tied to a curriculum ...We must adapt, innovate, improve..."

- Rivers, W, 1976:96 -

7.1 Introduction

In secondary schools in Taiwan, the type of innovation that could make the most significant difference is the introduction of new teaching methods into the current English curriculum. By demonstrating the effects of a new learning approach (extensive reading), compared with current reading instruction (grammar-translation based method), this study aimed at raising the awareness of educational authorities and instructors about the desirability of introducing useful contemporary teaching methods. In order to achieve this goal, the research first focused on the background in research studies and insights we have into extensive reading. Having pointed out the context and incentive for the study in Chapter One, the literature review on reading in Chapter Two discussed the components of the reading skill and teaching approaches in reading. The discussion indicated that learners would be effective and competent in reading when both IR is taught and ER approach is available. This suggested that current reading instruction, which included the IR approach only, was insufficient and thus the adoption of ER was needed to improve the current situation.

Chapter Three was devoted to presenting the value of ER through investigating underlying theory, research results, and the potential these point to. The review showed that learner involvement in ER might not only result in language proficiency development and reading development in particular, but also in an improvement in their attitudes. This provided further evidence for the desirability of establishing ER in junior high schools in Taiwan.

Having established the theoretical base, the second part of the thesis concentrated on the preparation (the baseline study) and implementation of the main experimental study. The baseline study in Chapter Four focused on book selection. The premise of

this was that any attempts to attract students to books would be wasted unless their reading tastes were first detected and books were selected accordingly. The baseline study was carried out in four phases: identification of students' preferences in reading, sample books selection, evaluation of the selected books and the book collection. The results of this study showed that the students appreciated the selected books. However, the study also raised a number of issues which had to be taken into consideration, such as students' inability to use effective reading strategies and lack of motivation, and limitations of the school syllabus time. These findings held useful implications for the main study.

In Chapter Five, the centre of the main study design was to examine and compare the effects of three reading instructional approaches – extensive reading (ER) using graded readers (GR), ER using books for native English speaking children (BNESC) and intensive reading (IR) using a textbook – on students' knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, reading comprehension and speed, and attitudes. Based on the insights from the literature review and in the light of the findings of the baseline study, a two-study experimental reading programme was set up for the main study. A number of data elicitation techniques and both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used.

The final part of this thesis, including Chapter Six and the current chapter, present the outcomes and implications of the main study. The results of the tests and the attitude questionnaires of the two studies are described in detail in Chapter Six. Here are some extracts. The three reading instructional approaches showed different strengths in students' language and attitude development. In particular, the results of statistical analysis revealed that significant differences between the groups were in favour of the ER groups. Almost all the null hypotheses were rejected, except H01 of study two. On the whole, the study verified that the ER approach was more effective than the IR approach in improving students' language proficiency and attitudes. The results also revealed that teacher role, summary writing and accompanying activities contributed to the development

This concluding chapter first discusses the research findings by answering the research questions (7.2) and then focuses more specifically on the issues which emerged from the study in relation to the existing literature and research knowledge (7.3). This is followed by the implications for both EFL pedagogy and research (7.4). Section 7.5

highlights the limitations of the study and the recommendations are presented in 7.6. This thesis ends with the researcher's final remarks about the study (7.7).

7.2 Research findings

This section reports the findings by answering the research questions listed in 5.4. Each question is first restated and then the answer is given based on research results presented in the previous chapter.

Question 1: Do different reading instructional approaches have different effects on language development among EFL elementary students?

The three reading instructional approaches examined in this study have different impacts on students' language development (6.2). The two-tailed test results showed that the ER groups made more gains than the IR groups in their language development after the treatment, especially in terms of reading comprehension (6.2.3). It is noticed that the ER groups in study two made an impressive improvement in vocabulary (6.2.1) and grammar (6.2.2). In particular, the results of the ANOVA test revealed that there were significant differences between the groups in favour of the ER groups (6.2.4). Moreover, almost all the null hypotheses were rejected, except H01 of study two. On the whole, the results of the study verified that the ER approach was more effective than the IR approach in improving students' language proficiency.

Question 2: Do different reading instructional approaches have different effects on reading speed development among EFL elementary students?

The results from the quantitative and qualitative analyses indicated that the students who received the three instructional approaches made a similar progress in their reading speed after the treatment. The T-test results (6.3.1) showed that the improvement in all three groups was statistically significant, and the degree of significance in the ER groups was higher than in the IR groups. However, when the results were compared across the groups, no difference was found (6.3.3). In other words, the effect of the three reading instructional approaches on reading speed development seemed to be the same. This result was different from Bell's (2001) study which claimed that the ER

groups made more significant improvement than the IR group in the reading speed test (as discussed 3.4.1.4).

Question 3: Do different reading instructional approaches have different effects on student attitude development among EFL elementary students?

The quantitative analysis examined student attitude development in three areas: attitudes toward the treatment, reading and English learning. The results showed that the ER groups held a more positive attitude toward the treatment than the IR groups (6.4.1.1). More importantly, when the ER treatment was accompanied by encouraging activities, there was a difference in student attitude change across the groups (6.4.1.3). The results also indicated different effects on student attitudes toward reading. In study one, while the student attitudes in all three groups became negative after the treatment, the ER (plus activities) groups of study two developed a positive attitude (6.4.2.1), and more specifically, the difference in reading attitudes was significant (6.4.2.3). The qualitative data analysis also confirmed that the students appreciated the ER (plus activities) treatment more than the ER (unaccompanied) and IR treatments (6.4.1.2). To a certain extent, this appreciation affected their attitudes toward reading (6.4.2.2) and English learning (6.4.3.2). In short, the results suggested that students' attitude development was dependent on the types of treatment they received.

Question 4: Do different amounts of reading time have different impacts on the above effects among EFL elementary students?

The results of the study seemed to provide a positive answer to this question as shown in Table 7.1 below. As can be seen from the table, the ER treatment was more effective in the development of the first three dependent variables when the time was doubled (i.e. in study two). In contrast, when the students in the control group received one extra IR lesson, they managed to gain in vocabulary only. The results indicated that the amount of reading time would have different impacts on students' language development. Regarding reading speed, irrespective of differences in the amount of time, the effect of the three instructional approaches was likely to be the same.

Table 7-1 Summary of T-test results

	Study	T-value		
		GR	BNESC	Control
Vocabulary	One	3.541*	- 1.748	- 4.680**
	Two	3.336**	4.500**	2.592*
Grammar	One	.953	.000	- 1.096
	Two	3.674**	3.317*	- .337
Reading comprehension	One	2.378*	2.448*	- 1.337
	Two	2.978*	5.838**	.507
Reading speed	One	5.530**	4.982**	5.186**
	Two	6.093**	4.100**	3.212*

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .005$

Question 5: Do different reading materials (GR and BNESC) have different effects on the above effects among EFL elementary students?

The results of the effects of GR and BNESC on students' language development are shown in Table 7.1 above, and the differences between them should take the amount of reading time into account. While the GR group improved in all the dependent variables after the treatment, the effects of BNESC were limited to reading comprehension when the time was less in study one. However, the different effect of type of material no longer existed in extended reading time. This is perhaps because it took time for the students to internalise the genuine discourses of BNESC (see 3.6.2.4), but the use and repetition of frequent linguistic units (words and structures) in GR made reading more accessible and acquirable (see 3.3). Regarding the effect of the two sets of materials on improving students' reading speed, the results showed that both materials were equally effective in this aspect.

In summary, the research questions posited in 5.4 have been answered by the results of the experimental research. The findings give insights in relation to what we know about ER. This is the focus of the next section.

7.3 Discussion

The literature review on extensive reading has suggested benefit in several aspects of language learning (see 3.4) and research has consistently reported the effectiveness and success of ER programmes in many countries (3.5). Given the fact that ER has received

little attention in English teaching circles in Taiwan, concern about whether an ER programme could be implemented successfully in Taiwanese secondary schools was the initiative of the study. In this study, student language and attitude developments were examined after a 4-month treatment. The study also sought to detect the factors which led to the change. In addition, it looked for students' suggestions in relation to the improvement of the ER programme. The issues which emerged from the study were: 1) the definition of extensive reading; 2) types of material; 3) language learning; 4) reading speed; 5) motivation; 6) learner autonomy; and 7) co-operative learning.

7.3.1 The definition of extensive reading

The discussion in 3.2 has shown that the definition of "extensive reading" has been variously interpreted in terms of how much time could be called extensive (3.6.2.8.). It is generally believed that the more time students spend on reading the more language improvement they will have. Previous research has adopted different time formulae in ER programme (see 3.5), but the actual effects of different amount of time have not been addressed and therefore are still unclear. This study attempted to explore any links between different amounts of reading time and language development (5.6).

The results showed that no matter how much time they read, reading GR materials would result in language development. However, when the reading time was a quarter (one 45-minute lesson per week) of normal English lessons in the school, the students who received the BNESEC treatment received benefit in their reading comprehension only. When the amount and frequency of reading time was doubled (two 45-minute lessons per week), positive effects of BNESEC appeared in all aspects of the variables measured. This seems to suggest that students need time to become familiar with BNESEC, to tackle them appropriately and feel confident in doing so. Although it was not the researcher's intention to define the meaning of ER time-wise, the findings of the study seemed to suggest that if the amount of reading time was equal to half of English lesson time in the school, this would be enough to reach the reading demands of ER and to benefit from it. Moreover, students should be exposed to reading as often as possible so as to be reading extensively. This sheds light into the relationship between ER and time in the context of the EFL learning situation.

To sum up, the results of the study stand in line with the widely held belief that an extended exposure to reading input can make a greater impact on language proficiency than a shorter experience. In order to reach the 'extensive' level, the amount of reading time should be extensive, and the exposure to reading should be frequent.

7.3.2 Extensive reading and types of materials

As for the availability of books for ER as discussed in 3.6.2.4, broadly speaking, Hill (1992:19) defines three types of materials to be consider for EFL learner:

- graded readers written for the EFL market;
- simple readers written for the ESL market;
- books written for various sections of the native-speaker community but which are in some sense "simple".

The first two types of materials, known as graded readers (GR), have been seen as the most appropriate material for ER programmes (Hedge 1985; Hill 1992) and research has reported its effectiveness in improving EFL learner proficiency (e.g. Bell 2001; Camiciottoli 2001; Hayashi 1999; Leung 2002). The results of this study stood in line with the findings of previous research, but provided further evidence that for EFL elementary learners, GR were also appropriate and effective in both limited and more extensive time.

Contrary to the substantial use of GR, the third type of materials (materials for native speakers, called MNS afterwards) has received little attention but its effect has been investigated in the current study. Taking the language level and appearances of books into account, books for native English speaking children (BNESC) were chosen for use in the current study (see 4.5.2 for details of the book selection). The results showed that although such material was of interesting appearance, its genuine discourses (i.e. cohesion and syntax), in a limited exposure to reading, were less effective in language development among EFL elementary learners. However, with extended time, BNESC made a similar positive impact on the learners' proficiency development as GR did (as discussed in 6.2). The students also expressed their appreciation of BNESC (see 6.7). In this aspect, the study accorded with Aebersold and Field's (1997) claim that such

materials could serve as an appropriate tool in developing EFL reading ability, and should be used in ER programme.

The different effects of GR and BNESC in this study suggest a difference in the way in which the two types of materials can be introduced. The results (6.2) showed that GR were effective on student language development despite variations in time devoted to it, and as discussed in question 5 in 7.2, the accessible and manageable texts of GR could serve perfectly as Krashen's comprehensible input (see 3.3). By contrast, as far as the students' language proficiency is concerned, genuine linguistic features could make reading a problem-solving activity and the students were compelled to rely on skills for language study learned in IR lessons. Therefore, it would be more beneficial for students to start reading GR, and then move to BNESC later on when they became more competent and confident readers. Such a phased reading programme certainly should be considered in ER provision.

It should be noticed that BNESC were one of a substantial variety of MNS (i.e. books, magazines and newspapers) and teachers should be aware of their availability and use them in ER. When such materials are considered, the premise is to take students' language proficiency and the language level of books into the first consideration. The best way to secure the book selection before collecting all the books teachers plan to use is to select some sample books and give them to students to reflect on as this study did (see 4.5.3).

In short, it is evident that GR could serve as a superior resource in ER programmes, but if carefully selected and introduced, MNS can be as effective as GR in developing learners' language proficiency. Moreover, with similar attractive features (i.e. a variety of choice, interesting stories and colourful artwork), MNS can capture and maintain student attention in reading.

7.3.3 Extensive reading and language learning

The literature and research reviews in Chapter Three gave weight to the role of ER in language development. In order to compare the ER approach with the IR approach, the study focused on examining language development in terms of vocabulary, grammar and reading comprehension which are the main elements in focus in current reading instruction. The results of the study showed that the ER approach is more

effective than the IR approach in all three elements measured (see Table 7-1), and this was similar to previous research findings. When the students' performance in each test was examined, interesting outcomes were found.

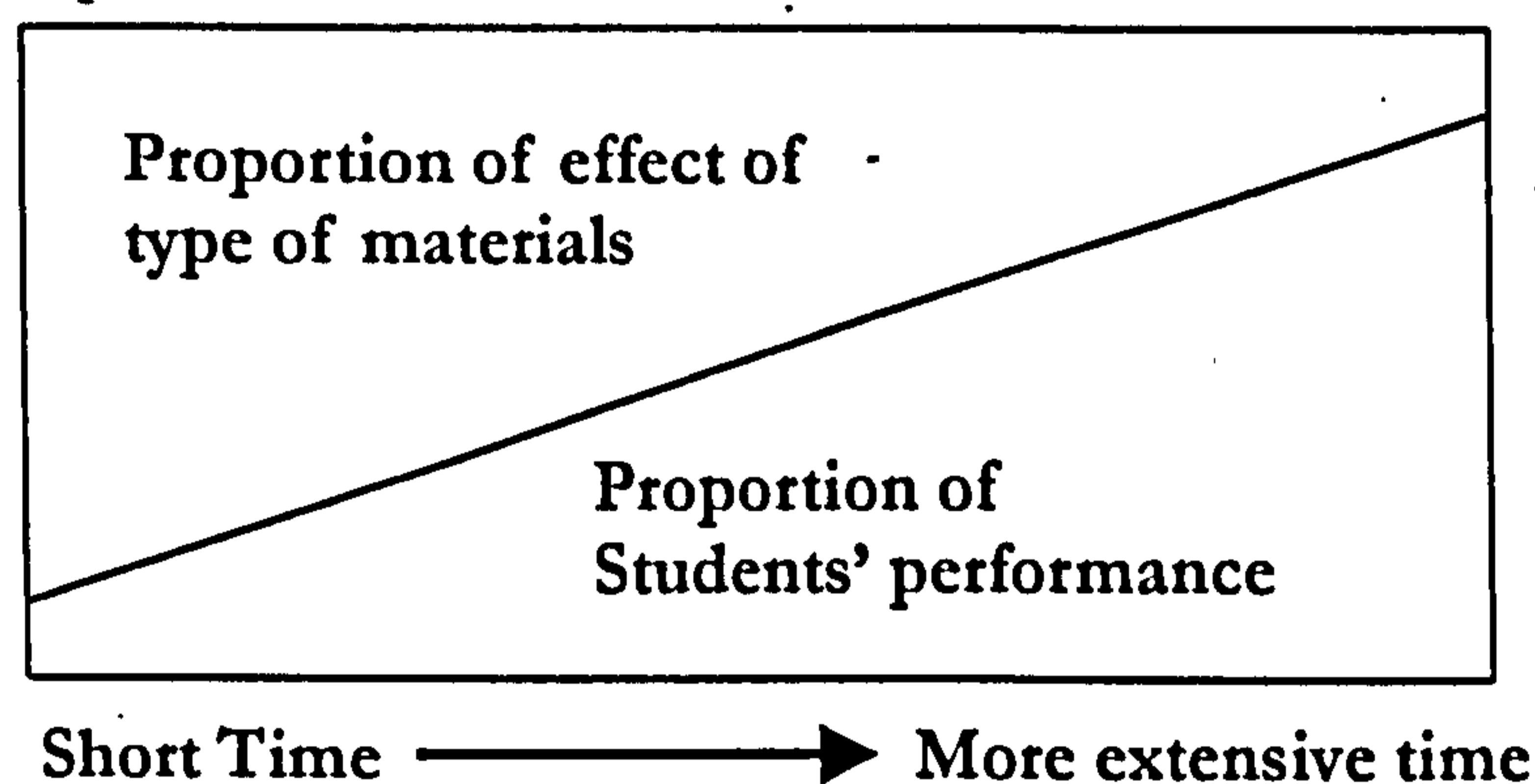
Firstly, it is clear that significant improvement in reading comprehension demonstrates the strength of reading for meaning which ER facilitates. By contrast, the current IR instruction in which the students rely on Chinese translation is less effective in developing their ability in reading comprehension. This result supports the widely held belief that reading for meaning would result in improvement in reading comprehension. The significant performance in the BNESC group in study two was surprising. In other words, when time was more extensive, students exposed to more authentic language or stories like BNESC came to perform better than those who read materials written specially for language learning as Aebersold and Field (1997), Nuttall (1996) and Williams (1984) argued (see 3.6.2.4). This demonstrated the significant role of BNESC in enhancing students' reading comprehension ability.

Secondly, student performance on the grammar test was of great interest, because the results showed that the IR approach which focused on grammar was less effective than the ER approach in this aspect. This indicated that the repetition of grammar exercises might have an unanticipated negative effect in mastering grammatical rules. The different performance in the two studies in the ER groups suggested that the students' significant improvement in grammatical knowledge came only if the amount of reading time reached half the time of the school English lessons.

Finally, contrary to Elley and Mangubhai (1983), Hafiz and Tudor (1989) and Lai (1993a) studies which reported that the effect of ER on developing learners' vocabulary was superior to that of IR (see 3.5), this study showed that when the exposure time reached the extensive level as defined in 7.3.1, the students' vocabulary knowledge in all the three groups grew and their improvements were statistically significant. Their findings perhaps resulted from the substantial reading time (one hour/per day, 5 days/a week in Hafiz & Tudor's study; 2 hours & 30 minutes/a day, 5 days/per week in Lai's study) and the longer programme length (one-year programme in Elley & Mangubhais' study). It should be noted that the two ER groups achieved a higher degree of improvement than the IR group. This appeared to indicate that to a certain extent, the ER approach was more effective than the IR approach on students' vocabulary development.

In summary, the results of the study demonstrated that the students were more likely to get benefits in their language development from the ER approach than from the IR approach. More importantly, when the reading time is limited, the students appeared to benefit more from reading GR materials which consist of most frequently used vocabulary. However, if students' reading input was extended, both GR and BNEC had a significant effect on students' language learning. It seemed that the effect of the ER treatment on students' performance was related to the amount of time they spent on reading as shown in Figure 7-1 below; the difference between the effect from GR and BNEC decreased with time.

Figure 7-1 Relationship between the effect of type of materials and students' performance



7.3.4 Extensive reading and reading speed

The argument behind ER and improvement of reading speed is that reading for overall meaning without the need to concentrate on each word or grammatical structure can gradually increase learners' reading speed. In testing this assumption, Bell (2000), Richard (1982), and Robb and Susser (1989) reported that intermediate learners (college or young adult students) who read extensively achieved significantly faster reading speeds than those who received the former instruction. Contrary to their findings, the results of this study revealed that the IR(TB) approach could make a positive impact on increasing secondary school students' reading speed. The reason for this difference in findings was probably because of the students' proficiency level. In other words, since EFL elementary learners were not far from the beginning of their learning process, either reading materials for meaning or studying texts for learning would result in reading speed development. However, when students' proficiency reaches a higher

level, the effect of ER in developing reading speed would be greater than that of IR(TB). This suggests that the inadequacy of IR(TB) in reading speed development would be reduced if learners were given an opportunity to experience reading for meaning and pleasure.

The different outcomes also relate to the relationship between reading speed and comprehension. As discussed in 5.2.1, one of the theoretical problems in ER research was lack of a method for measuring reading speed and comprehension simultaneously, and this issue was tackled in designing the research in 5.7.3.4. The results showed that more than 60% of the students got 50% or above of correct answers (see 6.3.1), and thus the students' improvement in reading speed could be seen as valid and genuine. However, there was no such measurement used in previous research (Bell 2000; Richard 1982; Robb & Susser 1989); therefore, the findings were less convincing. If comprehension measurement had been used in their studies, the results would give more insights into the effect of ER in reading speed improvement.

Another possible explanation for the different outcomes might depend on the type of the texts used in the speed tests. Nuttall (1996) points out that the topic areas of the texts in reading speed test should not be either too culturally biased or too familiar for the prospective subjects (as discussed in 5.7.4.1.2). Based on the teacher's preference, Bell (2000) selected a detective story and a magazine article published by the British press in the speed tests. It is possible that the texts would have caused cultural difficulties for the Yemen Arabic students in his study. However, in this study, the text selection was based on the assumption that the students had general knowledge about New Year around the world. This would be more appropriate for the students in the speed test and consequently, resulted in more reliable outcomes. On the whole, while EFL elementary learners seem to benefit in reading speed from either ER or IR, the study showed that the effect of ER on developing reading speed was greater than that of IR(TB).

Such improvement also related to the level of the text. The students' reading problems with vocabulary and grammar suggested that the language level of books they read was slightly above their current language proficiency, defined as "i plus 1 materials" (Krashen 1985). The results showed that such materials were effective in reading speed development; however, the use "i minus 1" materials has been suggested (Samuels 1994; cited in Day & Bamford 1998) so as to make reading more manageable.

If students are exposed to books containing a level of language slightly below their current proficiency, will they achieve similar development in reading speed to those in this study? And to what extent will their development differ from each other? Obviously, these issues need further investigation.

7.3.5 Extensive reading and motivation

Motivation has been seen as one of most powerful incentives in the success of language learning. Having freedom of choice and a pressure-free environment, the ER approach could increase students' motivation to read. This plays an indispensable role in oiling "the virtuous circle of the good reader" (Nuttall 1996:127) as discussed in 3.4). Research on ER (Cho & Krashen 1994; Constantino 1995; Dupuy, Tse & Cook 1996; Elley 1991; Robb & Susser 1989) has consistently supported the effect of reading interesting books on students' positive attitude development (see 3.4.2.2 and 3.5). The results of the qualitative analysis in this study also confirmed that the main characteristics of ER have a positive impact on change in attitudes (6.4.2.2 and 6.4.3.2). In addition, some teachers have adopted activities to support ER and reported the desirability of these activities in motivating students. For example, Susser and Robb (1990), and Renandya, Rajan and Jacobs (1999: 54) have suggested that "it may not be sufficient to simply provide books and ask students to read them".

In this study, when the ER treatment involved only reading activity, the students' appreciation of the treatment did not have any positive impact on their attitudes toward reading and English learning. While they appreciated reading interesting books and being in a self-controlled situation, their inability to cope with language difficulties drove their opinions to the negative side against reading and learning. It was reasonable to assume at the end of study one that the negative outcomes might result from an inappropriate language level of books rather than the ER treatment itself.

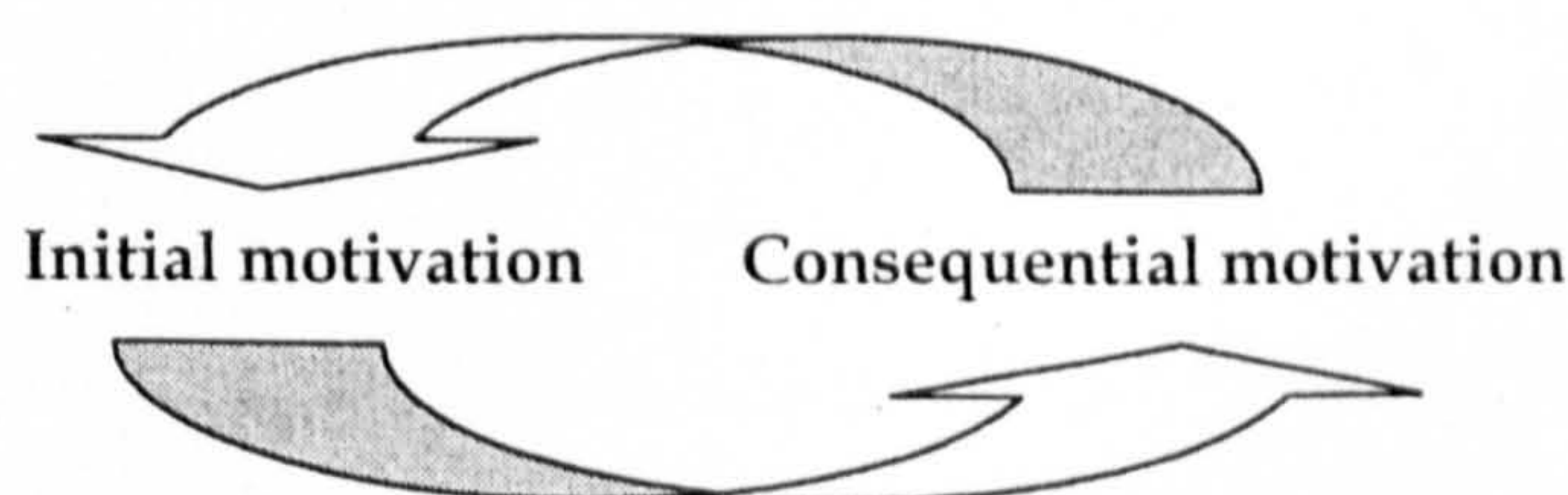
However, this assumption was rejected when the ER treatment was accompanied by several encouraging activities, i.e. teacher participation, group-discussion and the introductory awareness-raising session (5.8.3). In this treatment, while the students still encountered language difficulties, not only were their reflections on the treatment more positive, but also their attitudes toward reading and English learning became significantly positive after the treatment. Interestingly, the descriptive (means) results in

Table 6-10 in 6.4.1.2 also showed that while students rated teacher participation and having no homework as their favourite features of the ER treatment, they also gave a high rating to other accompanying activities; the group-discussions came second and the introductory session was third. Since co-operative work does not tend to occur in Taiwanese classrooms, the new experience in participating in these accompanying activities probably contributes to the positive comments.

Adding the above results together seems to suggest that students' motivation will not result simply from having a choice to read interesting books, as many researchers or instructors claimed. It is true that we cannot just give students books to read and expect that they will not have problems in reading them, even if the language level of the books is manageable. Without any help or other incentives, reading becomes a burdensome and monotonous activity, and students' enthusiasm in ER will eventually die away. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), cited in Dörnyei (2001:144), this phenomenon is called amotivation, and in it the reduction of students' motivation is not by a lack of initial interest, but by the individual's experiences of incompetence and helplessness in their learning. This was also the case with the students in the IR (control) group who became negative after the treatment.

However, a different picture came into view when students were trained to make use of essential skills/strategies, consolidated by their teachers' and classmates' collaboration. At the beginning of study two, the students' were introduced to the ER approach and were taught certain strategies for ER and practised them. During the study, they were also involved in activities which would encourage reading with peers and helping each other. This allowed them to tackle difficulties, increased their confidence and gradually fostered their love of reading. In this way, the students' initial interest was maintained by being involved in these activities and turned to consequential motivation which related to their progress and achievement (Littlewood 1996). Their motivation development became a virtuous circle as the following graph shows:

Figure 7-2 Virtuous circle of motivation



7.3.6 Extensive reading and learner autonomy

Although research has reported the effect of ER on fostering learner autonomy (Camiciottoli 2001; Jacobs, Davis & Renandya 1997; Lai 1993a; Nation 1997; Renandya, Rajan & Jacobs 1999; Yu 1995), it was not intended to examine such development in this study. The reasons were: 1) such an examination is complex and its scope is beyond this study; 2) since autonomy evaluation is still in a developmental stage (Sinclair 1998), examining autonomy in this study seemed impracticable.

However, a trace of autonomy development was observed in the analysis of student comments in the attitude questionnaires and group-discussion reports. The students reported that they became active and capable in working out their reading problems at the end of the ER programme (S2B7 in 6.4.2.2). They also realised the necessity and effectiveness of using strategies in their learning (S2G1 & S1B4 in 6.4.3.2), and applied the skills they had learned from the experience of ER in their exposure to English input in their daily lives (S1B9 & S2B17 in 6.4.3.2). The feedback supported the potential of ER for promoting autonomy in terms of being effective and independent in reading and learning. The suggestions made by students on borrowing books and reading them at home or in their own time (6.9) provided further evidence of autonomy development. This seems to show student awareness of reading in English as a leisure activity, thus indicating that they made a distinction between reading in the classroom which was a study-oriented exercise and reading books in a non-studying situation where they could have freedom of choice and be more comfortable or relaxed. These findings support Littlewood's (1996) claim that autonomy is a capacity consisting of ability and willingness, as discussed in 3.4.2.3.

The ER approach created an environment where the students were motivated, obtained essential knowledge, were trained in necessary skills, became more competent in reading and built confidence. These factors interacted and functioned together, and it was through this interactive process that the students started taking control of their learning and taking risks to explore other means of learning.

7.3.7 Extensive reading and co-operative learning¹²

Dupuy, Tse & Cook's (1996) and Jacobs, Davis & Renandya's (1997) studies reported that ER programmes accompanied by group activities promoted student ability in collaborative learning. The results of the qualitative analysis of the current study (in 6.4.2.2 & 6.4.3.2) revealed that ER with accompanying activities (i.e. the group-discussion and pair reading) resulted in cooperative learning in terms of working together and resolving reading difficulties. For example, S2G5 described how he followed his teacher's suggestion to ask his friend for the meanings of words and grammar he did not know: "*when I have vocabulary and grammar problems, I...ask my friend*". S2B17 pictured how her fellows and she cooperated in watching English media and learning English at the same time: "*We also watch English TV programmes/films or listen to English music, because we can ask each other...we also try to imitate their (people in films) speaking and sounds (songs)*". S2G8 commented on the contribution of her groupmates' opinions about the books they had read made to her reading: "*When I read the books they recommended, I could easily follow the stories and reading became enjoyable and meaningful*". Because the students were encouraged to work together, they realised the benefits of doing so and cooperated more with their peers in their reading; when the cooperation between them was established, their motivation was consolidated and their attitudes became positive. The students in this study also expressed their appreciation of the accompanying activities (see Table 6-10 in 6.4.1.2). These were obvious reasons behind the development of cooperative learning among the students.

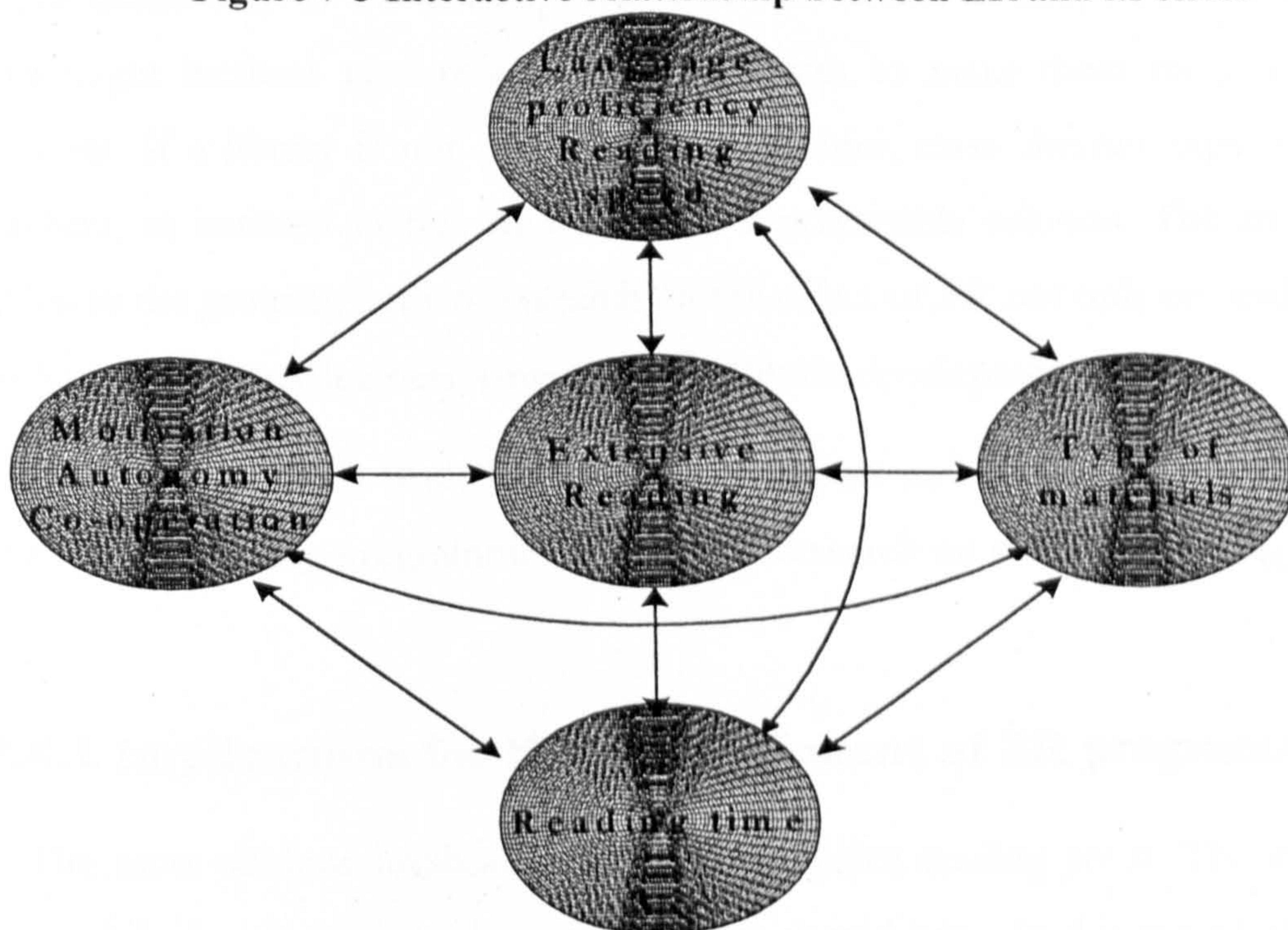
"Cooperative learning (CL) can be defined as a set of concepts and strategies for enhancing student-student collaboration" (Murphey & Jacobs 2000:231). Research has reported that cooperative learning associated with gains in other variables such as achievement, interpersonal skills, and attitudes toward school, self (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Sharan, 1980, Slavin, 1990). Apart from these overall gains, some studies also

¹² In recent years there has been debate on the precise definition of 'collaborative/cooperative learning'. In this thesis they are used co-terminously to refer to classroom work which encourages students interaction, decision making, and independence but which is set up initially by the teachers.

suggested that cooperative learning led to gains in thinking skills¹³ (Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Qin, Johnson, & Johnson, 1995), and in particular in promoting autonomy (Assinder 1991; Breen & Mann 1997; Harmer 1998; Lee 1998; Murphey 1995). It will be very useful and interesting for future research to investigate the relationship between ER and these gains.

In summary, this section has respectively discussed seven issues arising from the results of the study, and more importantly, the discussion has revealed the interactive relationship between the issues as Figure 7-3 shows.

Figure 7-3 Interactive relationship between ER and its effect



¹³ Lee, Ng and Jacobs (1998) define the term “thinking” as knowing how to act on information which one already has. Presseisen (1984) identifies five key skills: (1) *CAUSATION* - establishing cause and effect, assessment: predictions, inferences, judgements, evaluations; (2) *TRANSFORMATIONS* - relating known to unknown characteristics, creating meanings: analogies, metaphors, logical induction; (3) *RELATIONSHIPS* - detecting regular operations: parts and wholes, patterns, analysis and synthesis, sequences and order, logical deductions; (4) *CLASSIFICATION* - determining common qualities: similarities and differences, grouping and sorting, comparisons, either/or distinctions; (5) *QUALIFICATIONS* - finding unique characteristics: units of basic identity, definitions, facts, problem/task recognition.

7.4 Implications

One perspective of this study was to seek a way in which the current IR instruction could be improved, and a leading and an imperative implication is that the ER approach should have its place in the national curriculum in Taiwan. Furthermore, being a new kind of access to written English and a different type of language input from that of normal classes, an ER programme could also create a situation where learners experience reading as they might do in their daily lives. In addition, a self-controlled and pressure-free environment would also enhance learners' reading habits and the love of reading. Adding these together, educational and school authorities which focus mainly on one single teaching approach as in Taiwan might be persuaded of the desirability of the ER approach and take action to adopt ER. As a minimum, they might increase resources in school libraries to make them more attractive for students. If a library is not part of school facilities, class libraries organised by class teachers, as initiated in this study, will be a practicable solution. The study has also added to the growing body of research on the effect of ER not only on reading but also on EFL elementary learners' language and attitude development.

The findings of this study have a practical impact on two areas: 1) the establishment of extensive reading programmes and 2) ELT research on extensive reading.

7.4.1 Implications for the establishment of ER programmes

The most obvious implications are for extensive reading *per se*. The values of ER research have not received the attention they should have. In this regard, this study has shed more light on the nature of ER by resolving three issues: the amount of reading time for ER, the type of materials selected, and the use of accompanying activities. Since the current reading instruction focuses on language studying rather than reading practice, three issues also arise, first in relation to teacher role, second in relation to reading instruction and third in relation to teacher education.

7.4.1.1 Programme design

The main implications for ER programme design can be summarised as follows:

1. The need for a long period of time is an important factor in determining how successful ER will be. Exposing to reading frequently is another critical factor if students are to benefit from ER.
2. The criteria for book selection should be based on students' self-report on reading preferences. Given that there is a wide variety of materials for native speakers, it is desirable to include such materials whenever possible.
3. In an ER programme, it is necessary to allow room for activities which will encourage students' participation, such as group-discussion and peer-reading. More importantly, attention should be paid to teacher participation which can serve as a model.
4. There is a need to allocate time for training in strategies so that students are capable and confident when they read.
5. Since students receive grammar/translation-based instruction in most of their English lessons in school, teachers need to address the idea of reading for meaning and pleasure and to remind them to use strategies to cope with reading difficulties. In other words, current instruction needs to move from IR(TB) to IR(SB).
6. The ER programmes in this study were carried out in the students' classrooms. However, student suggestions on reading books in the school library should be taken into account in future programme and they should be allowed to borrow books and read whenever and whatever they prefer.

7.4.1.2 Amount of reading time needed for ER

A variety of suggestions on how much reading time learners should have in order to receive 'extensive' input have been made by scholars, professionals and instructors (in 3.6.2.8). Research has reported the effectiveness of different formulae ranging from 1 hour a day, 5 days a week for 3 months (Hafiz & Tudor 1989) to 20-30 minutes per day for 5 years (Davis 1995). As far as the different outcomes of the two studies are concerned, the results accorded with the widely held belief that the more time students spend on reading extensively the more language improvement they will have. For potential innovators this means careful consideration of many issues, including how to

provide in school/out of school ER, book provision for this, how to link reading undertaken in the two environments, whether parents can monitor and provide support, etc.

7.4.1.3 Use of books for native English speaking children (BNESC)

As compared to the controlled language and information in EFL graded readers (GR), books for native English speaking children although appropriately written for their age and cognitive level use authentic discourse, i.e. genuine cohesion and unedited information and organisation (see 3.6.2.4). This characteristic has been seen as one of the main disadvantages for the use of BNESC in ER programmes (Rivers 1981; Williams 1983), because “linguistically difficult texts are unlikely to be suitable for development of most reading skills” (Nuttall 1996:177). However, this study has shown that when the reading time reaches the extensive level (in 7.3.1), BNESC can make a significant contribution to EFL learning (see 6.2). In this respect, teachers should be aware of the impact of such books for language learning and the rich variety of materials available to them.

The students in the BNESC group also reported that colourful artwork was their main reason for choosing books to read. This suggests that in book selection, teachers should pay attention to the appearance of books since this plays an important role in attracting learners’ attention and maintaining their interest.

Since the students’ language learning and motivation appeared to be affected by the difficult level of language in BNESC, an imperative implication is that in selecting BNESC teachers have to take extreme care about the language level. If the choice of books is limited as in this study, more extensive reading time, raising awareness of useful reading strategies and the adoption of encouraging activities might reduce any possible negative effect of the language level.

When we come to consider the availability of survey information about BNESC, a further important implication emerges. Compared with the wide range of information about GR (see Hill 1997, 2001; Eastment 2002) available for teachers in book selection, survey reviews of BNESC are considerably limited. This is an obvious area for future investigation in the ELT profession. Individual teachers, librarians or schools can keep records of which books are popular, or ask students to comment on books they read in

their reading records as this study did. Such information could expand our understanding of the potential of such materials and also enable teachers to make the best use of them.

While the two types of materials demonstrated their effectiveness in vocabulary acquisition, they functioned differently on other aspects of language learning. Due attention should be paid to the connection between the availability of time for an ER programme and the effect of different materials. If individual teachers want to show the effectiveness of ER to their authorities for immediate funding or support, GR appear to be the best choice for this short term strategy. If ER is viewed as a long term development and funding is available, a combination of different materials would offer an ideal resource.

7.4.1.4 Encouraging activities

While study one involved reading without accompanying activities, study two adopted four activities for motivating students. The intention was to see on the one hand whether reading books for interest only has any positive impact on students' attitudes toward learning English and reading, and on the other hand what possible effects encouraging activities might have.

The results of study one showed that the students were happy to be involved in the ER programme and that they found the materials interesting. However, neither their views on learning English, nor their attitudes toward reading changed. This indicated that simply giving learners interesting books to read was insufficient to make much impact. By contrast, when activities which promoted students' participation (i.e. the group-discussions, reading reports and teachers' participations) and pair-reading were used in study two, their learning attitudes became positive and development was more significant in most variables measured. This demonstrates the value of adopting such activities in fostering students' passion for reading and learning, and they therefore should be included in ER programmes. It should be pointed out that research has reported the effectiveness of several accompanying activities, including creating reading materials (Davidson, Ogle, Ross, Tuhaka & Ng, 1997), role play or retelling (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Lituanas, Jacobs & Renandya, 1999) and playing games (Elly, 1991; Lai, 1993a). It is also worth mentioning that Jacobs, Davis and Renandya's (1997) book,

which includes successful ER programmes from 11 different countries, provides a superb resource on strategic activities to improve ER programmes.

The students' positive comments on the teacher and peer support while reading raised another interesting implication for ER programmes. Since the students were nurtured in a methodology with teachers explaining every point in a text, it is evident that in their first experience of independent reading, they need substantial support from both the teachers and classmates in coping with difficulties and building confidence. The prominent outcome appeared to be a positive development in the students' attitudes toward reading. Such support could also result in the improvement of language proficiency and co-operative ability. Thus, it is essential to realise the potential of teacher and peer support in language and attitude development and then adopt them in ER programmes.

7.4.1.5 Teacher roles

As discussed in 5.8.3.3, the teachers in this study acted as a role model in terms of becoming involved in reading and sharing their reading. The students gave positive responses to their participation (see 6.4.1.2) and thus raised an important issue in relation to teachers' role in ER programmes. In most ER programmes, teachers often act as managers who organise the programme, instruct procedures, monitor students' reading and evaluate their progress. In this way, they will be seen as keeping themselves at a distance. However, Day and Bamford (1998:136) warn us that "Teachers who tell their students how important and useful and enjoyable reading is, and yet are never seen reading may be undermining themselves". This indicates the importance of the teachers' role in modelling reading. As Bright and McGregor (1970:70) point out, 'one should not ask anybody to do anything one is not prepared to do oneself. If we expect pupils to read the books in their library, we have an obligation to read them ourselves'. Thus, 'teachers who read magazines, newspapers and books set a good example to their students and can point to their own experience as evidence of the value of extensive reading' (Hill 1992:132). When teachers read books themselves and enjoy reading, they are more likely to encourage their students and share their reading; when students realise that their teachers are avid readers and make use of English materials (e.g. books and newspapers), they are more likely to model themselves after their teachers. Thus, the teachers' model plays an influential role in stimulating students' motivation.

Dörnyei and Csizér (1998:215) point out that “student attitudes and orientations toward learning are, to a large extent, modelled after their teachers”. Keeping these points in mind, it is thus important for teachers to demonstrate their participation in ER programmes by reading books with students.

7.4.1.6 Learner Training

One important implication for learner training rises from the students’ substantial concern about vocabulary and grammar which was reported as their main problem in reading (see 6.4.1.2). Because the students had difficulties in coping with language problems, the reading texts became demanding, and compelled them to adopt the methods (i.e. focus on vocabulary and grammar for comprehension) they learnt in their English lessons. As a result, ER became a language difficulty solving activity and inevitably, the more books they read the more difficulties they encountered. In this aspect, the first priority in implementing an ER programme should be to train students in using effective reading strategies. In doing so, teachers should include one or several training sessions to help students become familiar with the strategies needed for ER and continue to encourage these throughout the programme. In particular, as S2B7 commented in 6.4.2.2, the strategy training should also enable students to look for clues (i.e. illustrations) from texts so as to cope with reading problems and allow them to focus on meaning. If students could detach themselves from their experience of language practice, eventually, they would be more likely to exercise their reading ability and to experience reading for meaning and pleasure. Failure to do so clearly contributed to the decline in the students’ attitude development.

It should be pointed out that the main aims of learner training are to help learners “become more effective learners” and “take on more responsibility for their own learning” (Ellis & Sinclair 1989: 2). To achieve this, Wenden (1985) has suggested including language awareness activities, learning strategies, study skills and opportunities for learner choice so as to help learners learn to learn. Although it is not the intention of this study to examine the connection between the ER approach and learner training, it is evident that there is a relationship between the two. These issues need to be taken into account in organising ER programmes.

7.4.1.7 Teacher training

Strategy instruction is a key to helping students become competent readers. Ideally, strategy training should be included in the textbooks, and students should be taught and trained to practise strategies. However, it may take time for publishers to introduce this innovation. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the importance of strategy instruction in students' learning, acquaint themselves with effective strategies, learn how to provide students with awareness-raising activities and how to help students practise strategies in their learning. Of course, this requires teaching ability and skills and this implies the introduction and training of ER in pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Regarding pre-service teachers, first, the teacher institutes or training centres should understand the importance of the ER approach and then include it in their teaching courses, especially in the ELT methodology courses. This accords with Grabe's (1993) voice calling educators' attention to the ER approach as one of their main teaching components. This is vital; otherwise, it is very unlikely that pre-service teachers will come across the concept of ER and apply it to their future teaching. This relates to the second point that student teachers should receive lessons on the concept and value of ER, and on applying this approach. They should be trained and given an opportunity to practise organising an ER programme, or at least they should be taught to encourage their learners to read extensively outside the classroom and should be able to give them advice when needed.

For in-service teachers, the authorities can hold a series of training activities. First, the in-service teachers can be invited to a conference or an introductory session given by an expert on the concept and value of ER, and practical ways and implications for organising an ER programme. Then, a trip to a public library can be organised so that the teachers can experience and learn how a library is organised and operated. Finally, the expert or the librarians can run a workshop or actually help in-service teachers to set up the school or class library and design procedures for a borrowing system. In addition, as this study showed the effects of co-operative activities, it is very important to instruct teachers in using such activities and possible options available to them, and then train or give advice in carrying out these activities. This can be done by setting up support groups or brainstorming sessions.

To sum up, the section has first pointed out how much time for ER is needed, and then discussed how the findings of this study regarding reading materials and accompanying activities could be applied to the ER approach. As the current study relates to classroom practice, the focus should also be on what implications ensue for teachers and learners from the decision to adopt an ER programme. First, teachers should act not only as instructors or monitors of student reading but also as models for their learning. This would certainly appreciate and motivate students. The study calls educational authorities' attention to pre- and in-service teacher training, and the need for students' strategy training as well. The ER approach will not be as effective as we might expect if these two issues have not been dealt with.

7.4.2 Implications for ELT research on ER

This study has contributed to the growing database in ER research. It provided further evidence for the benefits of ER in developing EFL elementary students' vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and speed, and the development of positive attitudes. However, the degree of improvement depended on the type of reading materials and the amount of reading time. In other words, when the reading time is limited, the use of GR would be beneficial; if the time is extended the effect of both GR and BNESC were equally great. It also presented the indispensable role of a careful plan on book selection, namely, an investigation of student reading preferences, the language level of books and students' appreciation of the selected books. Moreover, it indicated that when the ER approach adopted activities to encourage participation, the effect of ER in improving student attitudes toward English learning and reading in particular became positive and significant. In relation to this, teachers as models of reading and having no homework won the students' favour most. Furthermore, to a certain extent, the study suggested that the introductory session on reading strategies has a potential for the developments above. This was confirmed by the students' retrospective comments on the change of their attitudes toward reading.

In this study, a combination of data collection techniques was successful in eliciting essential information about the variables measured, and thus, should have important implications for research into ER which has similar purposes in investigating its values and the roles of variables such as time, materials and collaborative activities.

1. An analysis of students' wants and perceptions of reading played a fundamental role in designing the main study, and the success of the study. It would be desirable for future study to start from the students' wants as a first step in a diagnostic process.
2. The students reflected on the interest of the books selected by the researcher, which provided security for the researcher's decision and the students' expectation. This could also be applied to further research to allow subjects' participation.
3. The involvement of two studies allocated different amounts of time so that this study could make a significant contribution to ascertaining the effect of different time duration on the variables measured. This is a key variable in investigating ER.
4. The reading speed test within which student comprehension was measured as well as speed has made the findings more reliable and valid. This is a great improvement in procedures for testing reading speed, and thus should be recommended in future research.
5. Making the class teachers models and researchers in this study had a positive impact on student attitude development and treatment in particular. The teachers' observation and reports served as a useful tool for getting genuine information about the study. It is recommended that future research should consider employing the co-operation of the class teacher and students, rather than compelling students to work with outsiders.
6. The use of group-discussion, written reports and verbal reports as encouraging activities and data elicitation techniques were beneficial in tracing changing attitudes and discerning the causes. These activities also increase students' sense of ownership over their learning. Future research will benefit by including the methods in data collection.
7. The experimental research and the use of quantitative and qualitative analyses of this study have made a significant contribution to ELT research in Taiwan. The overall methodology highlights the value of statistical research and triangulation in detecting students' learning progress and factors underpinning and affecting students' learning process. Therefore, the researcher would

recommend that ELT research in Taiwan should make use of such approaches rather than relying heavily on one data elicitation technique or one data analysis approach.

To sum up, the results of this study raise a number of implications for research on ER. Standing in line with previous research, the results have revealed usefully the relationships between the variables measured in this study. This provides useful information for future ER research. The study also demonstrates the effect of specific data collection techniques used in the study, which might be utilised in future research. In particular, the study has set up an example of experimental research using multi-approaches in data collection and analysis for ER research in Taiwan.

7.5 Limitations of the study

This study showed some significant performance of the ER groups in the language tests and positive development in their attitudes, but such evidence should take a number of limitations into account. A discussion of these limitations will pave the way for extending this study into any future research. They can be divided into two aspects: 1) subjects, and 2) research methodology.

7.5.1 Subjects

The 171 subjects (112 in study one; 59 in study two) were year two pupils in two junior high schools in Taiwan (the reasons for this were given in 5.6). All of them were native speakers of Chinese aged 13-14 and their English proficiency was at elementary level. Some limitations emerge from this sampling in relation to sample size, language proficiency and L1 background.

First, the sample size in this study is rather too small to generalise the findings. If the number of subject was increased, it might be possible to decide whether the findings were more generalisable. In order to achieve generalisation, future research needs to be larger scale. Another limitation relates to the subjects' English language proficiency. The results showed that students' positive language and attitude development was influenced by their lack of language proficiency. Since the subjects in the present study

are EFL elementary learners, future investigations into the effect of ER on intermediate and advanced learners are needed. Finally, the subjects of this study were all Taiwanese with one language background and the same level of education. This avoided introducing other variables caused by different language backgrounds. However, it would be relevant to see whether the results of research on other language and educational backgrounds differ from the findings of this study.

7.5.2 Research methodology

The study has intended to use a combination of research methods to elicit required information about factors which contribute to student language and attitude development (see Chapter Five). The methods included teacher reports, introspection (student records), and written and spoken retrospection (questionnaires and group-discussion reports), and to a minor extent student products (reading records). However, more techniques (such as interviews) would yield more insights.

In order to control input variables, this study was carried out in the school classroom, but there is a limitation on the feasibility of ER implementation which is confined to classroom reading. Ideally, students should be given freedom to do ER whenever and wherever they like as the notion of ER implies. But this study was a research project. Since the current school timetable was already crowded, this also limited the availability of school time for the study. If more time was given, more data elicitation techniques (i.e. interviews) and assessment methods (i.e. writing test) could be used so that more information about the effect of the study could be revealed.

The reading project (both ER and IR) was carried out by the researcher's colleagues, the English teachers of the classes involved. The reasons were the convenience of project implementation and the students' familiarity with the teachers. However, different teachers might create different variables and this might lead to findings that the results were due more to teacher variables than the treatments. If the researcher himself was the teacher, the project would be more controlled, and thus, such an effect as teacher variables would be eliminated. This should be considered as another limitation of the study.

In line with good research practice, this section has described what areas this study has not been able to deal with. Having done that, it is reasonable to give suggestions for future research.

7.6 Recommendations for future study

Taking the discussion and limitations of this study into account, a number of issues have emerged which the present study has not been able to explore fully. But these are obvious directions for future research.

1. This study has focused on only the effect of ER on EFL elementary learners' language proficiency development. However, the literature suggests that the effectiveness of ER depends on a number of variables such as students' age, proficiency level, learning styles and gender. Future research may detect the relationship between ER and other variables.
2. The students in these two studies spent a total amount of 45 minutes and 90 minutes respectively each week on reading English materials. Would students exposed to a greater amount of reading time receive more benefits than this study and if so, what and how? This is an obvious area for future research.
3. This study was carried out for 4 months. What differences would be evident with a more prolonged period? Future research may consider incorporating such a factor and comparing it with the current study.
4. Although the reading materials used in this study which were slightly above students' current language proficiency, served as "*i* plus 1" materials (Krashen 1985), the results showed that such materials were effective in developing students' language proficiency. However, such materials appeared to have a negative effect on the students' attitude development. One of the suggestions to reduce such an effect is to use "*i* minus 1" materials (Samuels 1994; cited in Day & Bamford 1998), containing the level of language slightly below students' current proficiency. Future research may take this issue into consideration.
5. The teachers' reports and group discussions involved listening and speaking activities. If these were carried out in English, there appeared to be a possibility of students' improvement in listening and speaking. This should call

researchers' attention to investigating the effect of such activities on enhancing learners' listening and speaking ability

6. The analysis of reading records has incidentally discovered a trace of students' writing progress. In this case, the students were free to use either Chinese (L1) or English (L2) depending on their interest and ability. Would it make a difference if learners were encouraged to use L2 rather than L1? This issue calls for further investigation.
7. One of great gains of ER is students' reading habit development. In order to discern this effect, longitudinal research is needed. Due to the time constraint, this study has not explored this issue. This leaves the way open for future research.
8. Since the students reported their reading difficulties in vocabulary and grammar, the students suggested having Chinese translation in books so as to resolve these language problems. Future research might investigate what impact will this method have?
9. Since Information Technology (IT) has been become a hottest method used in language learning, reading on the Internet will be a useful option for ER programme. Will the effect of reading on the Internet differ from that of reading books? This is certainly an interesting area for future research.
10. The students suggested that in order to reduce their reading difficulties, they and the teachers could read books together by using an OHP (in 6.9). As yet, to the researcher's knowledge, this method has not been addressed. It would be very interesting to see its effect in future research.
11. Research has reported the benefits of using taped-books on many aspects of language learning and attitude development. Due to a lack of audio facility in the schools, this study ruled out the idea of using such materials. If practicable, such materials should be included in future research.
12. The literature suggests using a number of activities, such as group-discussions, reading on the Internet, writing students' own books, etc., to promote students' participation. This study has included three (teacher participation, a wall-chart and group-discussions) of them. Future research may wish to incorporate other activities and examine their effect on learners' attitude development.

7.7 Conclusion

This study has shown that ER programmes can be successfully implemented with ESL/EFL elementary learners in a traditional learning setting where the grammar/translation-based method monopolizes reading instruction. The effects of ER on language development and the values of creating a reading situation where students are able to choose and read for meaning and pleasure are significant. Obviously, these cannot be achieved by the current IR instruction. Since ER has received little attention in many ESL/EFL teaching situations like that of Taiwan, Davis (1995) is right to remind us as English language teachers of the inadequacy of excluding ER in our teaching situation by saying that

Any ESL, EFL, or L1 classroom will be the poorer for the lack of an extensive reading programme of some kind, and will be unable to promote its pupils' language development in all aspects as effectively as if such a programme were present (p. 329).

In the early stage of learning to read, access to a variety of interesting materials is essential for learners to gradually become competent readers and develop a healthy reading habit. An investigation into student reading preferences would certainly contribute to selecting appropriate books. However, we should also be aware that the level of difficulty of the materials might discourage the students from associating English reading with a pleasurable activity. This tendency could be reduced if students were trained to use effective reading strategies. Moreover, students were pleased to see teachers' role in modelling of reading, but with no stimulating activities (i.e. group-discussions and pair reading), reading itself could become tedious.

Adding together all the findings in this study, if learners are given the choice of reading materials which are interesting and linguistically appropriate to them, they will read with enthusiasm and their English proficiency will improve. If the reading time and their capability to use effective strategies increase, they will improve more. If other adequate collaborative activities are also employed, the love of learning is more likely to develop. The more of these conditions are met in an ER programme, the more benefits our students are likely to get, in terms of language development, love of reading and life-long habit.

Sheu's (2003) paper, 'Extensive Reading: New for Old in a Traditional Curriculum', does not exaggerate in suggesting that the current IR instruction in the current school

syllabus should be replaced by the ER approach. Instead, if intensive reading (serving as training students in essential language knowledge and skill) and extensive reading (serving as a means of practising the knowledge and skills received in the IR) can cooperate, learners are more likely to get most of the benefits that reading can bring to their learning. Surely this is something that those of us who teach reading should value.

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Appendix 1: Students' questionnaire



Centre for English Language Teacher Education

Questionnaire for Students on Extensive Reading

My name is Samuel P. Sheu, a PhD research student in English Language Teaching at the University of Warwick, England. At present, I am doing a study on extensive reading for junior high schools in Taiwan. The findings from this questionnaire data will be the basis for setting up an extensive reading project, and experimenting with this. I hope that you can spend the time to answer the questions in this questionnaire to help me with this research. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Please give me your personal experiences, opinions and ideas. All information will be confidential and will be used anonymously in writing up this research.

There are 3 parts to this questionnaire: *1) Personal Information; 2) Reading Habits and Interests; and 3) Attitudes towards an Extensive Reading Programme.* If the question asks you to tick, please tick the most appropriate box; in some questions you may tick more than one box. If the question asks you to circle, please circle the most appropriate box. If the answer asks you to give details, please write as fully as you can.

☺ Thank you very much. ☺

Samuel. P-H. Sheu, Email: elrcs@warwick.ac.uk

PART 1: Personal Information

1. School Name:
2. Academic year:
3. Student name/ID:
4. Sex: (Tick **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)
 Male Female

PART 2: Reading Habits and Interests

5. In general, do you like learning English? (Tick \surd ONLY ONE appropriate box)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) I like it very much. | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) I like it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) I don't like it. | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) I don't like it at all. |

Please give reasons:

.....

6. Apart from your school textbooks, which three of the following books or materials in English do you usually read on your own? (Tick \surd ONLY THREE appropriate boxes)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Biography | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Comics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Magazines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (5) Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> (6) Novels/Story-books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (7) Poetry | <input type="checkbox"/> (8) Reference books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (9) No, I don't read in English | <input type="checkbox"/> (10) Other: |

7. In general, do you like reading in English? (Tick \surd ONLY ONE appropriate box)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) I like it very much. | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) I like it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) I don't like it. | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) I don't like it at all. |

Please give reasons:

.....

8. Given the opportunity, how much do you LIKE to read the following topics in English? (Circle the appropriate number)

The number means: 4: I like it very much. 3: I like it.
2: I don't like it. 1: I don't like it at all.

	Very much		Not at all	
(1) Adventure	4	3	2	1
(2) Animal/Pet	4	3	2	1
(3) Detective	4	3	2	1
(4) Famous TV programmes/films	4	3	2	1
(5) Funny stories/Comics	4	3	2	1
(6) Horror/Ghost	4	3	2	1
(7) Mystery	4	3	2	1
(8) Romance	4	3	2	1
(9) Science fiction	4	3	2	1
(10) School life/Stories in other countries	4	3	2	1
(11) Sports	4	3	2	1
(12) Stories about the people you like/know	4	3	2	1
(13) Other:	4	3	2	1
(14) Other:	4	3	2	1

9. Given the opportunity to choose a book in English to read, will the following factors **influence** your decision? (Circle the appropriate number)

	The number means:			
	Certainly	Probably	Unlikely	Never
(1) The title	4	3	2	1
(2) The picture on the front cover	4	3	2	1
(3) The illustrations	4	3	2	1
(4) The length of the book	4	3	2	1
(5) The writer	4	3	2	1
(6) The size of the book	4	3	2	1
(7) The content	4	3	2	1
(8) The level of the language	4	3	2	1
(9) Price	4	3	2	1
(10) Someone's recommendation	4	3	2	1
(11) Popularity	4	3	2	1
(12) The print size of the book	4	3	2	1
(13) The quality of the print	4	3	2	1
(14) Other:	4	3	2	1
(15) Other:	4	3	2	1

10. Which of the following factors influence your decision to read books/materials in English? (Tick \checkmark the appropriate box; you may tick more than one box)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) No confidence | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Lack of background/cultural knowledge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Low language proficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) No idea of how to read |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (5) No interest in reading | <input type="checkbox"/> (6) No suitable materials available |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (7) No purpose | <input type="checkbox"/> (8) Boring materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (9) No time/too much homework | <input type="checkbox"/> (10) No companion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (11) Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> (12) Other: |

11. Are there any books or materials in English in your school library? (Tick \checkmark **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No, but I'd like the library to have books in English.
- (3) I don't know.
- (4) There is not a library in the school.
- (5) Other, please specify:

PART 3: Attitudes towards an Extensive Reading Programme

 Please read the information on extensive reading in the following box.

An extensive reading programme is a reading project in which the school provides various books on different topics. You can choose what you like to read at your own pace and in your own time for pleasure. This means that there are no exercises, marks or tests. Some studies show that students improve their English ability by taking part in an extensive reading programme. Students improve especially in reading comprehension and speed, and vocabulary learning.

12. Would you **LIKE** to take part in an extensive reading programme? (Tick \checkmark **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)

- (1) Certainly (2) Probably (3) Unlikely (4) Not at all

Please give reasons:

.....

13. If your teacher wants you to take part in an extensive reading programme, which **ONE** of the following ways would you prefer? (Tick \checkmark **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)

- (1) Activity after school (2) Activity in school club
 (3) English Class activity (4) Break time activity
 (5) Homework (6) Activity in summer or winter holiday
 (7) Leisure activity (8) Other, specify:

14. **How often** do you think you will read the books? (Tick \checkmark **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)

- (1) Almost every day (2) At least once a week
 (3) Only at weekends (4) Up to the teacher
 (5) Others, specify:

15. **How much time** do you think you will spend on reading **each time above in Q26?** (Tick \checkmark **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)

- (1) More than 60 minutes (2) 45-60 minutes
 (3) 30-45 minutes (4) 15-30 minutes
 (5) Less than 15 minutes (6) Other, specify:

16. Do you think the following activities will **encourage** you to take part in such a programme? (Circle the appropriate box)

	Certainly	Probably	Unlikely	Not at all
(1) Demonstrate your achievement on a wall-display	4	3	2	1
(2) Get an extra mark after reading a certain book	4	3	2	1
(3) Have taped books	4	3	2	1
(4) Give oral reports	4	3	2	1
(5) Take part in a reading competition	4	3	2	1
(6) Share experience with other students	4	3	2	1
(7) Write a summary or reaction report	4	3	2	1
(8) Have teachers' participation	4	3	2	1
(9) Other:	4	3	2	1
(10) Other:	4	3	2	1

Appendix 2: Teachers' Questionnaire



Centre for English Language Teacher Education

Questionnaire for Teachers on Extensive Reading

My name is Samuel P. Sheu, a PhD research student in English Language Teaching at the University of Warwick, England. At present, I am doing a study on an extensive reading programme for junior high schools in Taiwan. The findings from this questionnaire will be the basis for setting up an extensive reading project, and experimenting with this. I hope that you can spend the time to answer the questions in this questionnaire to help me with this research. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Please give me your personal experiences, opinions and ideas. All information will be confidential and will be used anonymously in writing up this research.

There are 2 parts to this questionnaire: 1) *Personal Information* and 2) *Opinion about an Extensive Reading Programme*. If the question asks you to tick, please tick the most appropriate box; in some questions you may tick more than one box. If the question asks you to circle, please circle the most appropriate box. If the answer asks you to give details, please write as fully as you can.

☺ Thank you very much. ☺

Samuel. P-H. Sheu, Email: elrcs@warwick.ac.uk

PART 1: Personal Information

1. School Name:
2. Teaching Academic Year: (Tick \surd the appropriate box; you may tick more than one box)
 - (1) Year 1
 - (2) Year 2
 - (3) Year 3
3. Your Teaching Experience: years months

PART 2: Opinions About An Extensive Reading Programme

Please read the following information on an extensive reading programme first.

An extensive reading programme is a reading project in which the school provides students with various books on different topics, so that they can choose what they like to read at their own pace and in their own time for pleasure. This means that there are no exercises, marks or tests. Some studies show that students improve their English ability by taking part in an extensive reading programme, especially in reading comprehension and speed, and vocabulary learning.

4. Given an opportunity, would you LIKE to take part in this kind of programme? (Tick \surd ONLY ONE appropriate box)
- (1) Certainly Probably (2) (3) Unlikely (4) Not at all
5. Which one of the following ways do you think this programme can be carried out in your school? (Tick \surd ONLY ONE appropriate number)
- (1) Activity after school (2) Activity in school club
 (3) English Class activity (4) Break time activity
 (5) Homework (6) Activity in summer or winter holiday
 (7) Leisure activity (8) Other, specify:
6. When would you like your students to spend time on this programme? (Tick \surd ONLY ONE appropriate box)
- (1) Almost every day (2) At least once a week
 (3) Only at weekends (4) No idea
 (5) It's up to students (6) Other, specify:
7. How long would you like your students to spend time at each session (1-6) in Question 20 above? (Tick \surd ONLY ONE appropriate number)
- (1) Less than 15 minutes (2) 15-30 minutes
 (3) 30-45 minutes (4) 45-60 minutes
 (5) More than 60 minutes (6) Other, specify:

8. Does the school library have books in English? (Tick \checkmark ONLY ONE appropriate box)
- (1) Yes.
 - (2) No, but I'd like the library to have books in English.
 - (3) I don't know.
 - (4) There is not a library in my school.
 - (5) Other, please specify:

9. How much will the following activities encourage your students to be involved in an extensive reading programme? (Circle the appropriate number)

	The number means:			
	Certainly	Probably	Unlikely	Not at all
(1) Demonstrate their achievement on a wall-display	4	3	2	1
(2) Give extra marks after reading a certain book	4	3	2	1
(3) Give oral reports	4	3	2	1
(4) Have your participation	4	3	2	1
(5) Provide taped books	4	3	2	1
(6) Set a competition	4	3	2	1
(7) Share experience with other students	4	3	2	1
(8) Write a summary or reaction report	4	3	2	1
(9) Other:	4	3	2	1
(10) Other:	4	3	2	1

27. Which of the following do you think will be the difficulties in setting up an extensive reading programme? And what would you suggest to deal with the difficulties? (Tick \checkmark the appropriate box in column 1; you may tick more than one box. Then write your suggestions in column 2)

1 (\checkmark)		2 Your suggestions
	(1) I don't know how to organise and manage the programme.	
	(2) Students don't have spare time after school.	
	(3) Students don't have any interest in reading in English.	
	(4) Students don't have any interest in reading in Chinese.	
	(5) Students cannot read properly because of their poor language proficiency.	
	(6) There are no suitable books/materials in English available.	
	(7) There is no spare time in the school syllabus/schedule.	
	(8) There is no space to store books/materials in the classroom.	
	(9) There is some pressure from parents concerning examinations.	

Appendix 3: Cloze Tests

CG Test

Uncle Pete gave Mary a big hug. He gave Zac (1)___ pirate handshake. He was very pleased to see (2)___. "Welcome aboard me hearties," he cried. "I'm glad you've (3) . I need your help.

Mary and Zac climbed onto (4)___ little pirate boat and sat down. "What's the (5) , Uncle Pete?" Mary asked. "I've lost my pirate pals," (6)___ Pete replied. "Listen very carefully and I'll tell you (7)___ it happened..."

"We were at sea when there was (8)___ fierce storm. My pirate pals fell overboard. They swam (9)___ a nearby island. I managed to stay on the boat. (10)___ storm finished, but I had drifted miles from (11)___ island. At last I reached home where I mended (12)___ damaged boat".

"You didn't quite finish mending your (13)___, Uncle Pete!" Mary and Zac cried together."

Taken from *Uncle Pete's Pirate Adventure*, London: Usborne Publishing.

GFG Test

a is making at now man does his sells says

Welcome to Middletown. It is Monday morning. Everybody is (1)___ the market. The market is busy. Today, there is (2)___ new man at the market. His name is Mister Fruit. (3)___ daughter, Sara, is helping him.

'Good morning,' Mister Fruit (4)___ to everybody. 'My fruit is cheap.'

Mister Fruit (5)___ polite. He is friendly. Everybody likes Mister Fruit. 'What a nice (6)___!' they say.

Mister Fruit is honest. He (7)___ not cheat. He always sells the correct weight. He (8)___ good, fresh fruit. He understands business.

Mister Fruit is (9)___ a lot of money. He has a good job (10)___.

Taken from *Sara Says No*, London: Heinemann.

CB Test

Alissa is reading. Her father calls to her. 'Alissa! Alissa!' Alissa (1)___ to the door. There is a car outside (2)___ house. Her father is talking to a fat man. 'Alissa,' (3) father says. 'My friend has work for you (4)___ the city. There isn't any work here in the (5)___ . You must go with him.'

The fat man smiles (6)___ Alissa. 'How old are you?' He asks. 'I'm twelve,' (7)___ says. The fat man laughs again. Alissa doesn't like (8)___ . She doesn't want to go with this man. She (9)___ to go to school in the village. She likes (10)___ . She likes reading.

'Your mother is packing your things. (11)___ must go to the city,' her father says. The (12)___ man gives some money to Alissa's father. Alissa's father (13) pleased and happy. Alissa is angry and afraid. Alissa (14)___ not want to go with this man. But she (15)___ obey her father.

Taken from *Alissa*, London: Heinemann.

GFB Test

up around she the there so presents room the lived
followed to she a

Lily lived in a big, old, dusty house. She (1)___ there with her Great Aunt Maud, who knitted things. (2)___ house had spiders under sofas and beetles between bed legs.

(3)___ Lily liked it.

It was Lily's birthday morning. (4)___ jumped out of bed, got dressed and ran downstairs. (5)___ she found a note. "Happy Birthday! Follow the arrows (6) find your presents." Beside it was a small arrow. Lily (7)___ the arrow upstairs. The trail took her all (8)___ the house.

Lily ended up in the sitting (9)___ . Great Aunt Maud was there. Lily's presents were there, too. (10)___ squished them and squeezed them. Then she lined them (11)___ , and piled them high. At last, Lily opened her (12)___ . The first present was a super long range telescope. (13)___ second present is a giraffe. The third present is (14) toy garage.

Taken from *The Incredible Present*, London: Usborne Publishing.

Appendix 4: Book Inventory

Graded Readers Series	Title
Heinemann Guided Readers (Starter Level)	*Alissa(1); *The lost ship(2); *Sara says no(3); Briefcase; Ski race; Lucky number
Heinemann New Wave Readers (Level 1)	*Sheela & the robbers(4); *A song for Ben(10); Fire; Brilliant; Photo finish; Star picture; Bookshop trick; L. A. detective; Free the dolphins; The music of love; Paradise island
Oxford Bookworms Factfiles	*New York(19); *London(20); *Animals in danger(21); *Flight(26); Football; Diana; Princess of Wales
Oxford Bookworms Starters	*Escape(16); *Taxi of terror(17); *Police TV (18); Drive into danger; Mystery in London; Robin Hood; Girl on a motorcycle; The fifteenth character; A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's court
Oxford Classic Tales (Elementary)	*Sleeping beauty(24); The secret of oldstone hall; Goldilocks and three bears
Oxford Hot Puzzle (Level 1)	*Avalanche(11); *The Thursday thief(12); *The magician(13); *Into the Pyramid(14); *The white stones(15); *New Year café (27); The girl in the mirror; Time for a robbery
Penguin Easystarts	Anita's big day; The troy stone; April in Moscow; Dino's day in London; *Who wants to be a star?(9)
Penguin Readers (Level 1)	*The wrong man(8); *Prince William(25); Leonardo DiCaprio; Jennifer Lopez; Michael Jordan; The missing coins
Penguin Young Readers (Level 1)	*The ghost house(5); *The little mermaid(6); The sorcerer's apprentice; *Goldilocks and the three bears(7)
Oxford Storyland Readers	*The younger brother(22); *The story of tea(23)

BNESC Series	Title
Ladybird Books	*The little hen(7); *Pinocchio(8); *101 Dalmatians(9); *The milkmaid(12); *Royal weeding(13); *Lost and found; Bouncy Tigger; Lost in the wood; Too much honey; The honey tree; Tiggers hate to lose
Oxford Reading Tree (Owls: Stage 6 & 7)	*In the garden(22); *Kipper and the giant(23); *Land of the dinosaurs(24); *Red planet(25); *Lost in the jungle(26); The broken roof; The treasure chest; The outing; Robin Hood; The lost key
Oxford Reading Tree (Robins: Stage 6-10)	*The dump(27); *The old vase(28); *The emergency(29); *The village show(30); *The holiday(31); *A proper bike; The secret plan; The photograph; William and the dog; Kate and the sheep
Oxford Reading Tree (Jackdaws)	*The spoilt holiday(17); *The little queen(18); *Karen's adventure(19)
Oxford Reading Tree (Wolf Hill)	*I hate computers(10); Toxic waste(11); The flying armchair; The hole in the ground
Oxford Literacy Web	*Tiger(20); *Elephant diary(21); Spiders are amazing; The salmon's journey; A to Z dinosaur alphabet; Keep your hamster happy; A day in the life of a storm chaser
Oxford Poems	*Pet poems(14); *Tasty poems(15); *Seaside poems(16)
Usborne Reading for Beginners	*The incredible present(1); *The clumsy crocodile(2); *The dinosaurs next door(3); *Uncle Pete's pirate adventure(4); *Dragon in the cupboard(5); *Chocolate island(6)
Walker Books	The toymaker; Rosie's babies; My great grandpa; Clever tortoise
David & Charles Children's books	Harry and the bucketful of dinosaurs
Hodder Children's books	Coral goes swimming
Ragged Bear	Woodland nutcracker; Nice work, little wolf!

* Books used in the pilot study

Appendix 5: Evaluation Sheet

Title: _____

After looking at the book, how would you rate the following features?

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Not so good	Poor
The picture on the front cover	5	4	3	2	1
The illustrations	5	4	3	2	1
The length of the book	5	4	3	2	1
The size of the book	5	4	3	2	1
The print size of the book	5	4	3	2	1
The quality of the print	5	4	3	2	1

	Very Interesting	Interesting	Average	Boring	Very boring
The title	5	4	3	2	1
The content	5	4	3	2	1

	Very Easy	Easy	Average	Difficult	Very difficult
The level of the language	5	4	3	2	1

Reflections on books evaluated:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Any other suggestions or comments:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Appendix6: Instructions for Book Evaluation

Evaluation procedure

1.1 **Aims:** this programme has two main aims: to find out whether the books selected are interesting to students or not. Note that finding out students' reflections about the books is the important task in this programme rather than compelling them to read the books.

1.2 **Pre-activity:** (5 minutes)

- Display books in an appropriate way, so that the students can access them easily.
- Make it clear that, during the time of reading, you allow them to discuss and then to comment freely.
- Give a book to each pair and each student a response sheet, and then ask them to write the information about the book.

1.3 **While-activity:** (10 minutes)

- Ask the students to start looking at the books that each pair has chosen, make it clear that this is a previewing activity. Encourage them to look at the content, picture, illustration, etc. to see whether the book is interesting to them.
- After 5 minutes, ask students to write down their reflections on the evaluation sheet.
- Walk around to ensure that all the students are doing the book evaluation, and write down the information about the students' evaluation on the report sheet.

1.4 **Post-activity:** (5 minutes)

- Ask the students to check they have answered the information on the evaluation sheet.
- Ask the students to pass their books to next pair, and then repeat the evaluation procedure.

Appendix 7: Teacher Report

Teacher report

Date:

Number of students:

1. Procedure:

2. Activities:

3. Students' participation/responses:

4. Discussions:

5. Other comments:

Appendix 8: The Result of Book Evaluation

Results of GR Evaluation

	Number of student	Overall rating	Title	Cover page	Illustrations	Length	Level of language	Quality of print	Size of font	Size of book
1	5	3.00	3.00	3.20	3.10	2.60	2.60	3.00	2.80	2.80
2	10	3.10	3.10	3.33	3.10	1.90	2.33	3.60	2.70	2.20
3	5	2.80	3.00	3.00	3.05	1.80	2.40	2.80	2.00	2.20
4	13	3.15	3.31	3.69	3.54	1.69	2.85	2.77	2.15	2.15
5	9	3.67	3.44	4.00	3.89	2.44	2.33	3.11	2.44	2.56
6	7	3.43	3.00	3.00	3.29	2.00	2.58	3.00	2.14	2.29
7	5	3.00	3.60	3.60	3.00	2.40	3.00	3.00	2.40	2.60
8	3	3.00	3.33	3.67	3.22	1.67	2.33	4.00	2.67	2.00
9	8	3.25	3.13	3.25	3.25	2.25	2.88	3.25	2.63	2.75
10	11	3.18	3.19	3.55	3.27	2.09	2.45	3.82	2.55	3.09
11	6	3.17	3.17	3.50	3.15	2.83	2.50	3.50	2.33	3.00
12	3	3.10	3.37	3.67	3.25	2.33	2.67	2.67	2.33	3.33
13	8	3.38	3.63	3.63	3.15	2.88	2.50	3.63	2.50	2.88
14	4	3.25	3.25	3.75	4.00	3.25	2.50	3.25	2.75	2.75
15	10	3.40	3.10	3.40	3.70	2.80	2.50	3.60	2.50	2.80
16	12	3.42	3.27	3.42	4.17	2.58	2.58	3.58	2.57	2.33
17	10	3.50	3.20	3.40	3.33	2.40	2.80	3.80	2.50	2.60
18	8	3.88	3.38	3.75	3.88	2.75	2.63	3.63	2.75	3.00
19	13	3.38	3.23	3.54	3.62	2.54	2.31	3.62	2.46	3.00
20	10	3.70	3.20	3.50	3.90	2.70	2.40	3.80	2.60	3.00
21	8	3.50	3.13	3.50	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.88	2.50	3.13
22	7	3.15	3.71	3.00	3.08	2.57	2.57	3.57	2.86	3.00
23	9	3.67	3.11	3.44	3.22	2.78	2.33	3.44	3.00	3.33
24	5	3.00	3.60	4.00	3.60	2.80	3.00	3.80	2.00	3.20
25	12	4.00	3.67	4.42	4.83	2.75	2.42	3.67	2.75	3.33
26	12	3.25	3.75	3.92	3.92	2.92	2.92	3.50	2.42	3.08

Note that the numbers above are represented the mean scores.

Rating:

Overall ranking	1-Poor 2-Not so good 3-Satisfactory 4-Good 5-Excellent
Quality of print	
Length	1-It's too short 2-It's a little bit short 3-It's about right 4-It's a little bit long 5-It's too long
Title	1-It's very boring 2-It's boring 3-It's about right 4-It's interesting 5-It's very interesting
Content	
Cover page	
Illustration	
Level of language	1-It's very difficult 2-It's difficult 3-It's about right 4-It's easy 5-It's very easy
Size of print	1-It's too small 2-It's a little small 3-It's about right 4-It's a little big 5-It's too big
Size of book	

Results of BNESC Evaluation

	Number of student	Overall rating	Title	Cover page	Illustrations	Length	Level of language	Quality of print	Size of font	Size of book
1	8	3.50	3.13	3.63	3.75	3.25	2.50	3.50	3.13	3.38
2	9	3.50	3.50	3.80	3.90	2.70	2.50	3.90	3.10	3.30
3	5	3.60	3.00	4.00	3.80	2.60	2.60	3.80	3.00	3.20
4	9	3.67	3.44	4.11	4.00	2.78	2.44	4.22	2.78	3.33
5	9	3.11	3.11	4.11	4.22	2.67	2.33	3.89	2.89	3.44
6	10	3.90	3.50	3.80	4.10	2.80	2.50	3.90	2.50	3.40
7	14	3.57	3.14	3.64	3.57	2.43	3.00	3.57	3.00	2.50
8	14	3.86	3.36	4.00	3.93	2.50	2.29	3.93	2.64	2.29
9	12	3.75	3.10	3.75	3.67	2.58	2.42	3.42	2.83	2.25
10	11	3.09	3.36	3.64	3.45	2.64	2.45	3.00	2.64	2.36
11	7	3.43	3.00	3.57	3.57	2.86	2.57	3.71	2.57	2.43
12	14	3.86	3.60	3.93	4.29	2.79	2.57	3.71	2.50	2.64
13	3	4.67	4.00	4.00	4.33	3.00	2.42	3.00	2.00	2.33
14	12	3.58	3.17	3.83	3.00	3.08	2.50	3.42	2.83	2.42
15	5	3.00	3.22	3.00	3.55	3.00	2.60	3.40	2.20	2.60
16	9	3.56	3.44	3.56	3.00	2.67	2.56	3.11	2.67	2.78
17	3	3.00	3.05	3.67	4.25	2.67	2.33	3.33	3.00	3.00
18	12	3.58	3.50	3.58	3.67	2.25	2.50	3.83	3.67	2.92
19	9	3.10	3.29	3.22	3.67	2.11	2.22	3.56	2.78	3.00
20	3	3.67	3.10	3.33	4.00	3.00	2.67	3.33	3.33	3.00
21	9	3.78	3.11	4.00	3.89	2.78	2.78	4.00	3.22	3.11
22	17	3.71	3.47	3.76	3.88	2.94	2.76	3.71	3.24	3.18
23	9	3.33	3.22	3.33	3.78	2.78	2.11	4.00	3.22	3.11
24	8	3.75	3.75	4.00	3.88	2.63	2.38	4.38	3.25	3.13
25	7	3.00	3.14	3.14	3.20	2.29	2.43	3.29	3.29	3.00
26	3	3.33	3.33	3.33	3.67	2.67	2.33	4.00	3.00	3.00
27	9	3.11	2.56	3.11	3.33	3.22	2.44	3.44	2.89	3.22
28	10	3.10	3.25	4.00	3.60	2.6	2.70	3.50	3.00	3.00
29	11	3.56	3.36	3.91	4.00	2.72	2.73	3.55	3.00	3.45

Note that the numbers above are represented the mean scores.

Rating:

Overall ranking	1-Poor 2-Not so good 3-Satisfactory 4-Good 5-Excellent
Quality of print	
Length	1-It's too short 2-It's a little bit short 3-It's about right 4-It's a little bit long 5-It's too long
Title	1-It's very boring 2-It's boring 3-It's about right 4-It's interesting 5-It's very interesting
Content	
Cover page	
Illustration	
Level of language	1-It's very difficult 2-It's difficult 3-It's about right 4-It's easy 5-It's very easy
Size of print	1-It's too small 2-It's a little small 3-It's about right 4-It's a little big 5-It's too big
Size of book	

Appendix 9: Reading Record

Book Reading Record

Title of Book:				Date:		
Type of book:						
Reasons why you choose this book:						
Each time you read, please write down the following information, e.g. Date 22/04/01 Page 5-10 Time 20 minutes						
Date	Page	Time		Date	Page	Time
Summary: (Please write a short summary or main idea of the book below)						
Reflections about the book:						

Response after reading

After reading the book, how would you rate the following features?

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Not so good	Poor
The picture on the front cover	5	4	3	2	1
The illustrations	5	4	3	2	1
The length of the book	5	4	3	2	1
The size of the book	5	4	3	2	1
The print size of the book	5	4	3	2	1
The quality of the print	5	4	3	2	1

	Very Interesting	Interesting	Average	Boring	Very boring
The title	5	4	3	2	1
The content	5	4	3	2	1

	Very Easy	Easy	Average	Difficult	Very difficult
The level of the language	5	4	3	2	1

What difficulties/problems did you have when you were reading the book?
1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.
4. _____.
5. _____.

Appendix 10: Language Proficiency Tests (Study One)

Key English Test (KET), The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES)

英文閱讀測驗

(Pre-test)

注意事項

- 請在右邊的答案紙上寫下你的姓名, 班級及座號.
- 這測驗有三個部份, 總共有20個問題.
- 請依照每一部份的說明作答; 回答問題時, 請將答案寫在右邊的答案紙上. 你必須以英文作答, 否則一律不予計分.
- 考試時間為 15 分鐘.
- 作答完畢或是考試時間終了時, 請將試題與答案紙分開交給老師.

答案紙

姓名: _____ 班級: _____ 座號: _____

第一部份:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
6. _____

第二部份:

7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____
12. _____ 13. _____

第三部份:

14. _____ 15. _____ 16. _____ 17. _____ 18. _____
19. _____ 20. _____

第一部份:

字彙選擇題: 請依照例題的方式, 在A-I中為題號1-6選出一個正確或最佳的答案. 請在答案紙上填寫(A, B, C...).

(例題):

You can see a film here. Answer J

1. If you are sick, you stay here.
2. You can catch train here.
3. You can put or withdraw money here.
4. You can send letters and buy stamps here.
5. People often stay in a room here on holidays.
6. You can see beautiful, old and interesting things here.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| A | fire station |
| B | museum |
| C | bus station |
| D | subway |
| E | hospital |
| F | hotel |
| G | airplane |
| H | bank |
| I | post office |
| J | cinema |

第二部份:

填空題: 請依照例題的方式, 在空格7-13中填寫一個正確或最佳的答案. 請將答案寫在答案紙上.

Most people know the names of the famous detective Sherlock Holmes (雪洛克荷馬) and his (例題) good friend Dr. Waston. 7 perhaps you don't know these facts about Sherlock Holmes. The first Sherlock Holmes story was written by Arthur Conan Doyle in 1886. Conan Doyle was 8 doctor and he 9 only write his books while he wasn't busy with 10 people.

In the stories, Holmes and Waston lived 11 221B Baker Street. Hundreds of people from all over the world still write to Holmes at that address every week asking for 12 help. The building is now a bank, and there is a secretary in the bank who reads and answers 13 Sherlock Holmes letters.

例題:

A his	B its	C their	Answer
7. A But	B And		C While
8. A the	B a		C one
9. A must	B may		C could
10. A happy	B sick		C good
11. A to	B by	C on	
12. A when	B after	C during	
13. A each	B every	C all	

第三部份：請依照例題的方式，在題號14-20填寫一個正確或最佳的答案。請將答案寫在答案紙上。

游泳明星(Swimming Star)

沙郎黛維斯(Sharron Davise)在13歲時，第一次參加奧林匹克運動會。從那之後，這位英國的游泳明星贏了許多獎牌。以下是一篇訪問她的報導。

Reporter: How old were you when you started swimming?

Sharron: I learnt to swim when I was six. When I was eleven I started swimming in the British junior term.

Reporter: Is swimming the most important thing in your life?

Sharron: Swimming is my life. I swim for three to five hours a day, six days a week. I'm often in the pool at 5:30 in the morning!

Reporter: What do you do when you're not swimming?

Sharron: I have two dogs and two cats to look after. I don't like parties much, but I love going to the cinema.

Reporter: Why do you think swimming is such a good sport?

Sharron: Swimming is better than other sports because it exercises all the different parts of your body. But best of all, swimming is the only sport which teaches you how to save someone's life..

Reporter: What's been the best moment in your career?

Sharron: Winning the silver medal at the Olympic has been the high point so far.

例題:

Sharron has swum since she was six. Answer A
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

14. Sharron has swum for her country since she was eleven.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

15. Sharron swims every day of the week.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

16. Sharron gets up late.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

17. Sharron's dogs go to the swimming pool with her.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

18. Sharron likes films better than parties.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

19. Sharron thinks a good swimmer can help other people.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

20. Sharron won a silver medal at the Olympics.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

英文閱讀測驗

答案紙

(Post-test)

班級：_____ 座號：_____

注意事項 (Note)

- 在右邊的答案紙上寫下你的班級及座號。
- 這測驗有三個部份，總共有20個問題。請回答所有的問題。
- 請依照每一部份的說明作答；回答問題時，請將答案寫在右邊的答案紙上。你必須以英文作答，否則一律不予計分。
- 考試時間為15分鐘。
- 作答完畢或是考試時間終了時，請將試題與答案紙分開交給老師。

第一部份：

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

第二部份：

7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____

11. _____ 12. _____ 13. _____

第三部份：

14. _____ 15. _____ 16. _____ 17. _____

18. _____ 19. _____ 20. _____

第一部份

字彙題: 請參照例題的方式, 依照1-

6題號的解釋在答案紙上填寫一個正確或最佳的字彙。

例題:

People use machines to make goods. Answer: Factory

1. You can see a lot of animals here.
2. You can buy food, cloth and drink here.
3. You can take airplane here.
4. You can see plays or shows here.
5. You can see trees and flowers here.
6. You can read or borrow books here.

A cram school
B theater
C park
D zoo
E library
F supermarket
G airport
H restaurant
I police station
J factory

第二部份

克漏字選擇題: 請依照例題的方式, 在題號7-13的空格中填入一個最佳的答案。請將答案寫在答案紙上。

Sheffield (雪菲爾) (Example) Britain's fifth largest city with a population of more than half million people. 7 is built on eight rivers and many hills. Sheffield is 8 very green city. It has more parks and woods than any other English city.

Sheffield is a working city 9 many years, its factories sent knives, forks and steel to countries all around the world. Since 1980, many of 10 factories are closed. 11 new shops and offices are being opened every day.

Sheffield has a lot to offer its visitors. Here you 12 see the world's oldest football club. You can watch ice hockey, rugby and, in April, the world Snooker Championship. Sheffield is a friendly city. 13 people who come here to work or study find that they do not want to leave!

例題:

A were B is C has Answer B

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------|--------|---------|
| 7. | A It | B He | C She |
| 8. | A the | B a | C one |
| 9. | A on | B in | C for |
| 10. | A special | B new | C old |
| 11. | A But | B And | C While |
| 12. | A can | B are | C have |
| 13. | A Each | B Many | C Every |

第三部份 閱讀測驗：請依照例題的方式，在題號14-20選出一個正確或最佳的答案。請在答案紙上填寫(A, B or C)。

巴黎的九月天(September in Paris)

布萊登巴瑞克(Brendan Barrick)是一位年輕的電影明星。他最有名的電影作品是巴黎的九月天。以下是一篇訪問他的報導

Reporter: You are only 11 years old. Do you get frightened when there are lots of photographers around you?

Brendan: No, because that always happens. At award shows and things like that, they crowd around me. Sometimes, I cannot even move.

Reporter: How did you become such a famous actor?

Brendan: I started in plays when I was six and then people wanted me for their films. I just kept getting films, advertisements. TV films and things like that.

Reporter: Is there a history of acting in your family?

Brendan: Yes, well my aunt's been in films and my dad was an actor.

Reporter: You're making another film now - is that right?

Brendan: Yes! I'm going to start filming it this December. I'm not sure if they've finished writing it yet.

Reporter: What would you like to do for the rest of your life?

Brendan: Just be an actor! It's a great life.

Example

Brendan is six years old now. Answer **B**

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

14. A lot of people want to photograph Brendan.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

15. Brendan became an actor when he was 11 years old.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

16. Brendan has done a lot of work for films, TVs...

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

17. Brendan wanted to be an actor when he was four years old.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

18. Some of Brendan's family are actors.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

19. Brendan is writing a new film now.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

20. Brendan is happy to be an actor.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

Appendix 11: Reading speed Tests

[英文閱讀速度測驗注意事項 (Pre-test note)]

1. 這測驗最主要的目的是要發現你英文閱讀的速度,因此測驗的結果並沒有所謂的好成績或是壞成績.成績當作個人英文學習指標,看看自己英文閱讀是否有進步,因此也就不會與其他同學作比較,或是作全班排名,也不會公佈出來.
2. 請等到老師說開始閱讀時,你才開始閱讀.閱讀時,請專心閱讀,不要分心看老師或是其他同學,也不需要注意你到底花了多少時間,或是想與其他同學比賽.你只要專心閱讀一直到你閱讀完整篇文章.
3. 當你閱讀完文章時,抬頭看黑板上老師所翻開的數字是多少.將數字寫在文章最後一行的空格上.例如當你閱讀完時,看到黑板上老師所翻開的數字是123456,請你在空格內填寫 (6).
4. 當老師叫你開始回答問題時,你才能回答背面的問題.請將答案寫在題目前的空格中.回答問題的目的是要確定你是否了解所讀的文章.

NEW YEAR AROUND THE WORLD

The beginning of a year is a time for hope and change. People celebrate a new year in different ways around the world. Some welcome the New Year with prayer. Others welcome the New Year with fire, water, flowers or dancing.

There are many New Year's Day celebrations in USA. In Colorado there is a big firework show. Many people watch the sky as it changes into colour at New Year. The match of the rose takes place in California. Many flowers are used to cover cars that pass through the streets. In New York City, people fill Times Square on New Year's Eve. They have a huge outdoor party to welcome the New Year. They count down the seconds to midnight.

In Scotland, New Year is called "Hogmanay". The first visitor to a house after midnight is called a "first-footer". He or she can bring good luck for the whole year. The best luck comes with a tall, dark man. If he brings coal with him the family will keep warm. If he brings bread they will not be hungry.

In Greece, families make a special cake with a ring or gold coin hidden in it. Whoever finds the ring or gold coin in their cake will have a lucky year. Children go from house to house with a model of a ship. The children beat small drums, and sing songs. When the children have finished their singing, people give them candies or money.

New Year Around the World. (2000). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

班級: __年__班 座號: __ 請寫下你閱讀完文章時的數字: (___).

請依照文章的內容, 回答下列的問題. 請在下列的答案紙上, 按照題號寫下你的答案 (請注意每個問題只有一個正確答案).

1. Which one of the following in the text is not used by people for welcoming the New Year?
a) flowers b) prayer c) fire d) food
2. The sky in Colorado changes its colour on New Year's Eve, because of
a) water b) dance c) firework d) drum
3. Many people go to Times Square at midnight on New Year's Eve for
a) counting down the time b) dancing c) keeping warm d) singing
4. What will the first tall, dark visitor bring to a family in Scotland on New Year's Day?
a) bread b) a party c) good luck d) money
5. If the first visitor brings bread on New Year Day, the family will not
a) dance b) be hungry c) sing d) prayer
6. If you find a ring in your cake in Greece on New Year's Day, you will have
a) Candies b) a party c) roses d) a lucky year
7. When children finish singing, what will people give them?
a) coal b) roses c) money d) water

答案紙:

1. () 2. () 3. () 4. () 5. () 6. () 7. ()

[英文閱讀速度測驗注意事項 (Post-test note)]

1. 這測驗最主要的目的是要發現你英文閱讀的速度, 因此測驗的結果並沒有所謂的好成績或是壞成績. 成績當作個人英文學習指標, 看看自己英文閱讀是否有進步, 因此也就不會與其他同學作比較, 或是作全班排名, 也不會公佈出來.
2. 請等到老師說開始閱讀時, 你才開始閱讀. 閱讀時, 請專心閱讀, 不要分心看老師或是其他同學, 也不需要注意你到底花了多少時間, 或是想與其他同學比賽. 你只要專心閱讀一直到你閱讀完整篇文章.
3. 當你閱讀完文章時, 抬頭看黑板上老師所翻開的數字是多少. 將數字寫在文章最後一行的空格上. 例如當你閱讀完時, 看到黑板上老師所翻開的數字是123456, 請你在空格內填寫 (6).
4. 當老師叫你開始回答問題時, 你才能回答背面的問題. 請將答案寫在題目前的空格中. 回答問題的目的是要確定你是否了解所讀的文章.

NEW YEAR AROUND THE WORLD

All over the world, people wish good luck for themselves and their families in the year to come. It is a time for stories and parties.

In Brazil, the New Years' Eve is the special day of Yermanja, the goddess of the sea. Yermanja controls storms, so people pray to her for a safe trip if they are travelling by sea.

Along the coast, people gather at the beach for parties.

They play music and sing to the goddess. Then people lay flowers on the water. If the flowers are washed out to sea, the next year will bring good luck.

New Year is celebrated by Chinese people living all over the world.

In China, a story says that a bad monster comes down from the mountains at the end of the year. The monster is scared of loud noises, bright lights, and the colour red, and Chinese people use all these things to scare it away.

So, gongs crash and drums beat, and fireworks are set off in the streets.

Good luck words are written on red paper and stuck on doors.

Children are given gifts of money in special red envelopes.

In many parts of Mexico, New Years' Eve is called "Wishing Night" and is celebrated with carnivals. Streets are decorated with flags and flowers.

There is music and dancing. At night there are firework displays.

People make tiny models to show their wishes for the coming year and lay them around a cross.

New Year Around the World. (2000). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

班級: __年__班 座號: __ 請寫下你閱讀完文章時的數字: (___).

請依照文章的內容, 回答下列的問題. 請在下列的答案紙上, 按照題號寫下你的答案 (請注意每個問題只有一個正確答案).

1. Which one of the following in the text is wished by people for the year to come?
a) parties b) a safe trip c) good luck d) gifts
2. Who do Brazilian people play music for and sing songs to?
a) people in the world b) their families c) themselves d) Yermanja
3. If the flowers are washed out to sea, the Brazilian will have
a) a party b) good luck c) a gift of money d) a safe trip
4. Chinese people use loud noises, bright lights and colour red on New Year's Day for
a) scaring a bad monster b) having a party c) wishing good luck d) having gifts
5. What do Chinese people put in red colour envelopes for giving children gifts?
a) good luck words b) money c) a story d) flowers
6. Which one of the following is not used by Mexican people on New Year's Eve?
a) flowers b) music c) firework d) water
7. What do Mexican people make to show their wishes for the year to come?
A) FLAGS B) A CROSS C) TINY MODELS D) FIREWORK

答案紙:

1. () 2. () 3. () 4. () 5. () 6. () 7. ()

Appendix 12: Attitude Questionnaire



Centre for English Language Teacher Education

Student Attitude Questionnaire on the ER Programme (After)

1. Class: _____ Year _____ Classroom ID: _____

2. Name: _____ Sex: Male Female

3. In general, do you **LIKE** learning English? (Tick \checkmark **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) I like it very much. | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) I like it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) I don't like it. | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) I don't like it at all. |

Please give reasons:

.....

4. In general, do you like reading in **English**? (Tick \checkmark **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) I like it very much. | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) I like it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) I don't like it. | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) I don't like it at all. |

Please give reasons:

.....

5. In general, do you like the **ER programme**? (Tick \checkmark **ONLY ONE** appropriate box)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) I like it very much. | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) I like it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) I don't like it. | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) I don't like it at all. |

Please give reasons:

.....

.....

6. You opinions about the **ER programme**: (Circle an appropriate number)

	I like it very much		I don't like it at all	
(1) Freedom of choosing books	4	3	2	1
(2) Reading different stories	4	3	2	1
(3) Cover pages and illustrations	4	3	2	1
(4) Sharing reading with classmates	4	3	2	1
(5) Group discussions	4	3	2	1
(6) Writing reading records	4	3	2	1
(7) No homework	4	3	2	1
(8) No pressure of testing and marking	4	3	2	1
(9) Teachers' participation	4	3	2	1
(10) Other:	4	3	2	1
(11) Other:	4	3	2	1

7. Suggestions or comments on the ER programme:

-
-
-
-
-
-

☺ Thank you very much. ☺



Samuel. P-H. Sheu,
CELTE
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Coventry CV4 7AL
England. UK.
E-mail: elrcs@warwick.ac.uk

6. You opinions about current English lessons: (Circle an appropriate number)

	I like it very much		I don't like it at all	
(1) The content of reading text in the textbook	4	3	2	1
(2) The topic of reading text in the textbook	4	3	2	1
(3) Teachers' reading aloud	4	3	2	1
(4) Chinese translation	4	3	2	1
(5) Chinese glossary in the textbook	4	3	2	1
(6) Exercises	4	3	2	1
(7) Homework	4	3	2	1
(8) Testing and marking	4	3	2	1
(9) Remembrance of vocabulary and grammar	4	3	2	1
(10) Other:	4	3	2	1
(11) Other:	4	3	2	1

7. Suggestions or comments on current English lessons:

-
-
-
-
-
-

☺ Thank you very much. ☺



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Appendix 13: Definition and Research Results of ER

Programmes

Definition of an extensive reading programme

An extensive reading programme is a reading project in which the school provides various books on different topics. Students can choose what they like to read at your own pace and in your own time for pleasure. This means that there are no homework, marks or tests. Some studies show that students improve their English language ability by taking part in an extensive reading programme, especially in reading speed and comprehension, and vocabulary learning.

Summary of Research Results on extensive reading

1. Reading ability

- 1.1 Reading comprehension (Elley 1991, Elley and Mangubhai 1981, Hafiz and Todur 1989, Lai 1993, Mason and Krashen 1997, Todur and Hafiz 1990)
- 1.2 Reading speed (Lai's 1993)

2. Affect

- 2.1 Positive attitude (Elley 1991)
- 2.2 High motivation (Cho and Krashen 1994)
- 2.3 Positive reactions (Rodrigo 1995)

3. Vocabulary

- 3.1 developed an adequate vocabulary (Krashen 1993)
- 3.2 gained in vocabulary recognition (Lai 1993)
- 3.3 acquired vocabulary knowledge (Coady 1997, Hafiz and Tudor 1990, Podrigo 1995)
- 3.4 Spelling (Day and Swan 1991, Krashen 1989, Polak and Krashen 1988)

4. Linguistic competence

- 4.1 Writing (Elley and Mangubhai 1981, Hafiz and Tudor 1989, Janopoulos 1986)
- 4.2 Listening and speaking (Cho and Krashen 1994, Elley and Mangubhai 1981)
- 4.3 Grammar (Coady 1997, Notion 1997).

Appendix 14: Procedure of the ER Programme

The procedures for the ER programme (45 minutes)

Pre-reading (5 minutes)

1. Bring the book box to the classes before the periods set for the reading programme and then display books on a table, so that the students can access them easily.
2. Ask students to come to the table and choose one book for reading.
3. Write down the information (name, date and reasons for choosing) of the book in the reading record.
4. Remind and encourage students to use the strategies they learn in the introductory session.

While-reading (30-35 minutes)

5. Ask students to read the books. Remind them that they can ask teacher or their classmates for the meaning of unknown words if they wish.
6. Make it clear that they are free to change the book if it is not interesting to you. But, before choosing another book, you should write down your reasons and response in the reading record.

Post reading (5-10 minute)

7. Ask those who cannot finish reading the book to keep it along with the reading record in a separate box and continue to read in the next reading time.
8. Ask those who finish reading the book to complete the rest of the reading record.

Teacher's task

1. Make sure that students understand what they have to do in the programme, and encourage them to write their opinions and reflections on the reading records.
2. Observe students' reading and write your findings on the teacher's report sheet.

Appendix 15: A Sample Summary

書名: 有失必有得

系列: 小熊維尼

故事大綱

小熊維尼與他的朋友比賽看誰能找到藏在森林中的彩蛋。

不幸地, 當他發現他的籃子破了個洞時,

他失去了所有他所尋獲的彩蛋。

但是, 他的好朋友們願與小熊維尼分享他們所尋獲的彩蛋,

告訴我們與好朋友分享比其他事情還重要!

這是小雄維尼叢書系列中的一本書, 並且我也已經在電視卡通影片中看過。

這本書非常有趣, 並且圖片也生動逼真。

因為我已經知道這中文故事, 這本書幫助我了解如何以英文表達。

Title: Lost and Found

Series: Winnie-The-Pooh

Summary

Pooh and his friends are searching for eggs hidden in the woods.

Unfortunately, when he finds a hole in his basket,

he loses all eggs found in the woods.

But, his good friends would like to share their eggs with Pooh,

and this tells us that sharing is more important than any others.

This book is one of the Winnie-The-Pooh series,

and I have seen it on TV cartoon programme.

This book is very interesting and the pictures are lifelike.

Because I knew the story in Chinese already, it helps me to know how to write in English.

The main points of a book to be included in summary writing:

- The main characters
- A short description of the story
- The views that the author intends to express
- The title, author and publisher
- The type of the book/story
- The reflection on the book

Appendix 16: Language Proficiency Tests (Study Two)

Key English Test (KET), The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES)

英文閱讀測驗

注意事項 [Note]

- 請在右邊的答案紙上寫下你的姓名, 班級及座號.
- 這測驗有三個部份, 總共有40個問題.
- 請依照每一部份的說明作答; 回答問題時, 請將答案寫在右邊的答案紙上. 你必須以英文作答, 否則一律不予計分.
- 考試時間為 40 分鐘.
- 作答完畢或是考試時間終了時, 請將試題與答案紙分開交給老師.

答案紙

姓名: _____ 班級: _____ 座號: _____

第一部份:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____
11. _____ 12. _____

第二部份:

13. _____ 14. _____ 15. _____ 16. _____ 17. _____
18. _____ 19. _____ 20. _____ 21. _____ 22. _____
23. _____ 24. _____ 25. _____ 26. _____

第三部份:

27. _____ 28. _____ 29. _____ 30. _____ 31. _____
32. _____ 33. _____ 34. _____ 35. _____ 36. _____
37. _____ 38. _____ 39. _____ 40. _____

第一部份:

字彙選擇題: 請依照例題的方式, 在A-I中為題號1-12選出一個正確或最佳的答案. 請在答案紙上填寫(A, B, C...).

例題:

People use machines to make goods. Answer: Factory

7. If you are sick, you stay here.
8. You can catch train here.
9. You can put or withdraw money here.
10. You can send letters and buy stamps here.
11. People often stay in a room here on holidays.
12. You can see beautiful, old and interesting things here.

A fire station
B museum
C bus station
D subway
E hospital
F hotel
G airplane
H bank
I post office
J cinema

7. You can see a lot of animals here.
8. You can buy food, cloth and drink here.
9. You can take airplane here.
10. You can see plays or shows here.
11. You can see trees and flowers here.
12. You can read or borrow books here.

A cram school
B theater
C park
D zoo
E library
F supermarket
G airport
H restaurant
I police station
J factory

第二部份:

填空题: 請依照例題的方式, 在空格13-26中選出一個正確或最佳的答案. 請將答案寫在答案紙上.

Sheffield (雪菲爾) is Britain's fifth largest city with a population of more than half million people. 20 is built on eight rivers and many hills. Sheffield is 21 very green city. It has more parks and woods than any other English city.

Sheffield is a working city 22 many years, its factories sent knives, forks and steel to countries all around the world. Since 1980, many of 23 factories are closed. 24 new shops and offices are being opened every day.

Sheffield has a lot to offer its visitors. Here you 25 see the world's oldest football club. You can watch ice hockey, rugby and, in April, the world Snooker Championship. Sheffield is a friendly city. 26 people who come here to work or study find that they do not want to leave!

Most people know the names of the famous detective Sherlock Holmes (雪洛克荷馬) and his (例題) good friend Dr. Waston. 13 perhaps you don't know these facts about Sherlock Holmes. The first Sherlock Holmes story was written by Arthur Conan Doyle in 1886. Conan Doyle was 14 doctor and he 15 only write his books while he wasn't busy with 16 people.

In the stories, Holmes and Waston lived 17 221B Baker Street. Hundreds of people from all over the world still write to Holmes at that address every week asking for 18 help. The building is now a bank, and there is a secretary in the bank who reads and answers 19 Sherlock Holmes letters.

例題:

A were	B is	C has	Answer	B
--------	------	-------	--------	---

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------|--------|---------|
| 20. | A It | B He | C She |
| 21. | A the | B a | C one |
| 22. | A on | B in | C for |
| 23. | A special | B new | C old |
| 24. | A But | B And | C While |
| 25. | A can | B are | C have |
| 26. | A Each | B Many | C Every |

例題:

A his	B its	C their	Answer	A
-------	-------	---------	--------	---

- | | | | |
|-----|---------|---------|----------|
| 13. | A But | B And | C While |
| 14. | A the | B a | C one |
| 15. | A must | B may | C could |
| 16. | A happy | B sick | C good |
| 17. | A to | B by | C on |
| 18. | A when | B after | C during |
| 19. | A each | B every | C all |

第三部份 閱讀測驗：請依照例題的方式，在題號27-40選出一個正確或最佳的答案。請在答案紙上填寫(A, B or C)。

巴黎的九月天(September in Paris)

布萊登巴瑞克(Brendan Barrick)是一位年輕的電影明星。他最有名的電影作品是巴黎的九月天。以下是一篇訪問他的報導

Reporter: You are only 11 years old. Do you get frightened when there are lots of photographers around you?

Brendan: No, because that always happens. At award shows and things like that, they crowd around me. Sometimes, I cannot even move.

Reporter: How did you become such a famous actor?

Brendan: I started in plays when I was six and then people wanted me for their films. I just kept getting films, advertisements. TV films and things like that.

Reporter: Is there a history of acting in your family?

Brendan: Yes, well my aunt's been in films and my dad was an actor.

Reporter: You're making another film now - is that right?

Brendan: Yes! I'm going to start filming it this December. I'm not sure if they've finished writing it yet.

Reporter: What would you like to do for the rest of your life?

Brendan: Just be an actor! It's a great life.

Example

Brendan is six years old now. Answer **B**

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

27. A lot of people want to photograph Brendan.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

28. Brendan became an actor when he was 11 years old.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

29. Brendan has done a lot of work for films, TVs...

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

30. Brendan wanted to be an actor when he was four years old.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

31. Some of Brendan's family are actors.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

32. Brendan is writing a new film now.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

33. Brendan is happy to be an actor.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

游泳明星(Swimming Star)

沙郎黛維斯(Sharron Davise)在13歲時,第一次參加奧林匹克運動會.從那之後,這位英國的游泳明星贏了許多獎牌.以下是一篇訪問她的報導.

Reporter: How old were you when you started swimming?

Sharron: I learnt to swim when I was six. When I was eleven I started swimming in the British junior term.

Reporter: Is swimming the most important thing in your life?

Sharron: Swimming is my life. I swim for three to five hours a day, six days a week. I'm often in the pool at 5:30 in the morning!

Reporter: What do you do when you're not swimming?

Sharron: I have two dogs and two cats to look after. I don't like parties much, but I love going to the cinema.

Reporter: Why do you think swimming is such a good sport?

Sharron: Swimming is better than other sports because it exercises all the different parts of your body. But best of all, swimming is the only sport which teaches you how to save someone's life.

Reporter: What's been the best moment in your career?

Sharron: Winning the silver medal at the Olympic has been the high point so far.

例題:

Sharron has swum since she was six. Answer A
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

34. Sharron has swum for her country since she was eleven.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

35. Sharron swims every day of the week.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

36. Sharron gets up late.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

37. Sharron's dogs go to the swimming pool with her.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

38. Sharron likes films better than parties.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

39. Sharron thinks a good swimmer can help other people.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

40. Sharron won a silver medal at the Olympics.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't Say

Appendix 17: Group Discussion Report

Group Discussion Report

Date:

Name of students:

What aspects of programme you LIKE:



--

What difficulties do you have when you read books?

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Suggestions/Comments on the programme:

-
-
-
-
-
-

Recommended book

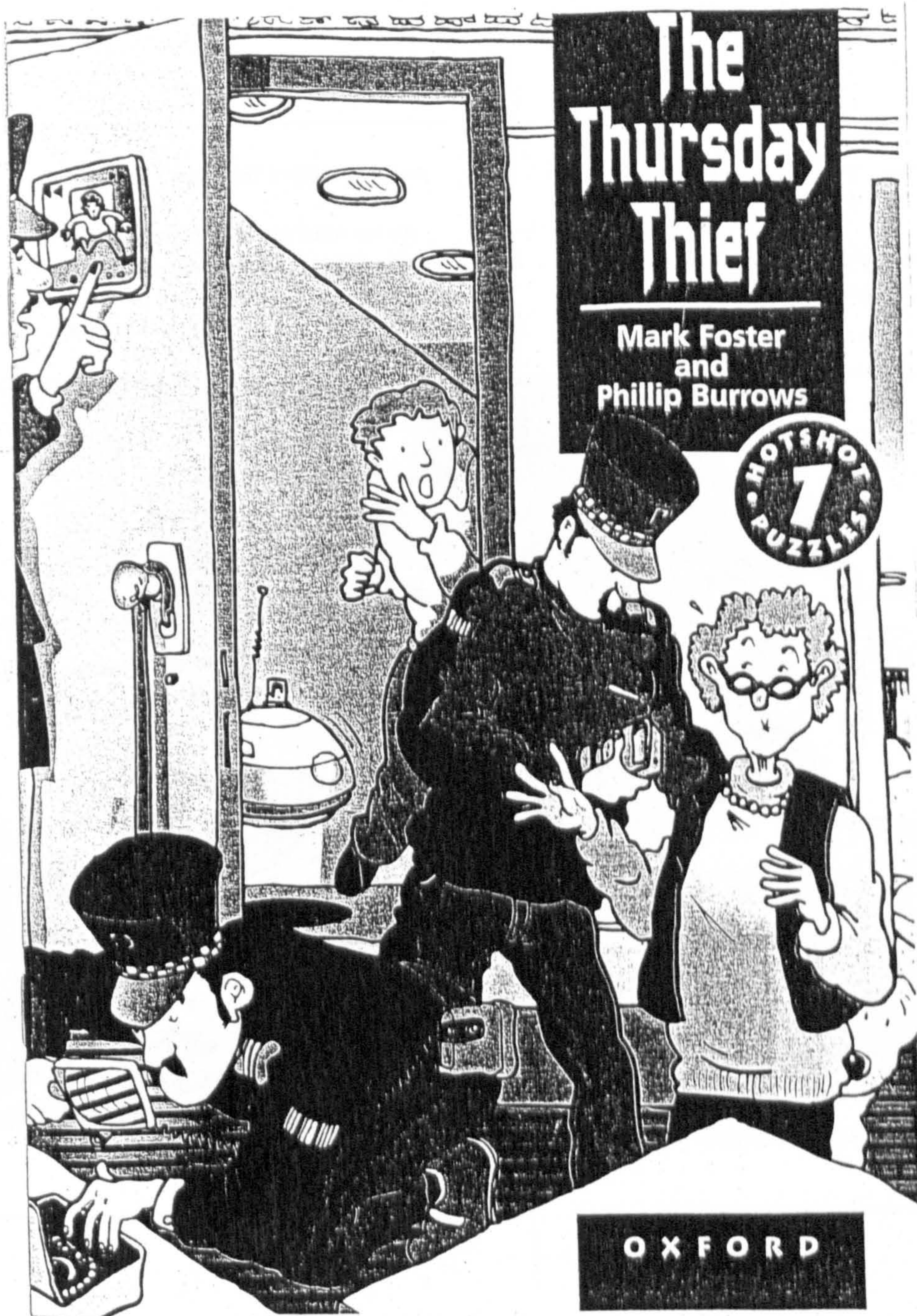
Title	Publisher
Reasons for the recommendation:	

Thanks



Appendix 18: Reading Strategy Activity Sheet

Look at the picture below first and then think of the questions on the bottom.



1. What type of story is this book?
2. What is this story about?
3. What words do you think will appear in the book?

Read the text below and then answer the questions on the bottom.

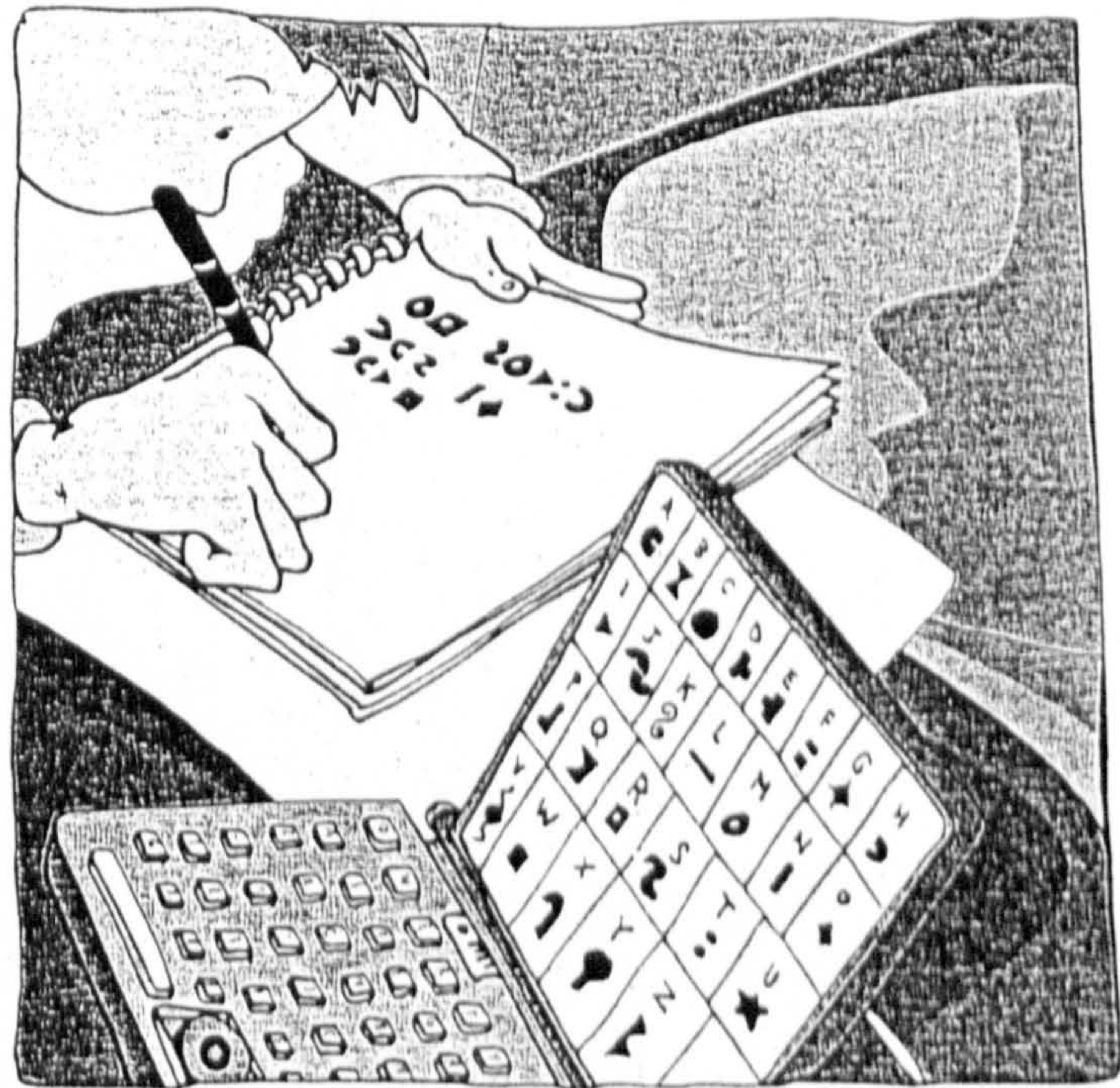


Charlie's home is in a tall building. From his window he can see far away. He likes looking out of his window. With his binoculars he can see a lot of other buildings and some hills. Charlie thinks that the hills are a thousand miles away, but he wants to go and walk in them one day.

4

A lot of other people live in the building. A man called Mr Smith lives upstairs. Charlie thinks that he is a forger and makes money – twenty pound notes – in his room. Next door to Charlie lives a woman called Miss Mitchell. Charlie thinks that she takes things from shops and doesn't pay. He writes all this down in a book.

Charlie's mum is a teacher and his dad works in a shop. But Charlie wants to be a detective.



● What is Charlie writing?

5

1. Where is Charlie's house?
2. Does Charlie think that Mr. Smith is working in a bank?
3. Where is Charlie's mum working?
4. What job does Charlie want to do in the future?

Appendix 19: A Sample Group-Discussion Report

小組討論報告

日期:

組別: 第 2 組



1. 對於這個廣泛閱讀英文課外讀物課程,



你喜歡的方面:

1. 選擇所喜歡的書, 更換不喜歡的書.
2. 顏色鮮艷的封面和插圖.
3. 因為我們只能在漫畫書上才有我們喜歡更換的圖片. 例如... 哈佛, Penguin. 很少在中文書上看到.

We can choose books we like and change those we don't like. Colourful cover pages and illustrations attract our attention, but in Chinese books, these features can only be found in cartoon and comic books. We also like the real pictures used in Oxford Factfiles and Penguin Readers, because they are real and are rarely used in Chinese books.

2. 挑選英文書籍的原因:

1. 先看封面有不有趣.
2. 看內容會不會困難.
3. 字少. 圖片多.

When we found the cover page of a book interesting, we also turned the pages to see whether it was difficult to read or not. Also if there were many words or the pages were densely covered by words, we put it down and tried to find one which was less dense.

3. 當你閱讀這課程中的英文課外讀物時, 你有那些困難?

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

4. 對於這個廣泛閱讀英文課外讀物課程，你有什麼意見和建議：

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

5. 小組的推薦書

書名: Robin Hood	出版社: Oxford
推薦的原因: 1. 有趣的封面 2. 故事很有趣	

Interesting cover page and story

Appendix 20: Samples of Teacher Report

GR Class

課堂記錄報告表

日期: 9.5.13 上課時間: 45 分鐘.

學生出席人數: 16 位.

1. 程序:

同樣的遊戲規則再宣佈一次.

In the last two weeks, the students automatically got together to read, but few students were still reading alone. So I encouraged them to join other pairs but they appeared to be reluctant.

2. 學生閱讀情形:

既然孤立會干擾, 只有集思廣益.
他們互相討論, 尋求書本上的線索, 解決問題.

3. 學生的參與度和反應:

This week, I found surprisingly that some students read in groups in which they formed in the group-discussions. They also helped each other by reading together or looking at the pictures or clues inside the books.

4. 學生彼此間的討論:

→ 全班自動小組討論.

5. 其他的建議和意見:

熱絡的討論中, 有時出聲提醒他們話題不可離
開某文句或這一回事.

There is a problem, that is, they liked to talk (young teenage), and sometimes they were talking something different from the stories. So I have to ask them to go back to the books and to reduce their volume because I am worried about other teachers' complaints (too noisy).

BNESC Class

課堂記錄報告表

日期: 91.02.01

上課時間: 25 分鐘.

學生出席人數: 20 位.

1. 程序:

2. 學生閱讀情形:

- 學生知道他們必須專心閱讀.
- 或許他們不想被叫到前面, 所以只好閱讀.

The students knew in this reading programme they had to read but nothing else. Also, probably they didn't want to be asked to read next to me (I think), so they read.

3. 學生的參與度和反應:

安靜閱讀.

However, they read quietly, and in one or two occasions, they used hoarse voice to ask their peers for help.

4. 學生彼此間的討論:

偶爾交談尋求幫助.

5. 其他的建議和意見:

我認為學生開始適應這套廣泛閱讀課程!

I felt they are starting to get used to the ER programme.