AN EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE

READING ABILITY TRANSFER

OF CHINESE SPEAKING LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

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THESIS SUMMARY

Reading is not only essential for people in their first language earning, but may also be essential in a foreign language. It follows that the task of the teacher of reading in S/FL becomes crucial. As teachers of reading we must know what skills a learner needs so as to be a competent reader, whether there is any relationship between reading in L and in S/FL, and what kind of training should be given to learner

This thesis tries to answer these questions first by analysing, the reading process in L1 and the similarity and difference between reading in L1 and S/FL, and then by investigating through an experiment the possibility of reading ability transfer from L1 to S/FL. The thesis ends with some implications and recommendations drawn from the theoretical analysis and the results of the experiment.

Reading is an active process in which the reader makes an active contribution by drawing upon and using concurrently various abilities and skills that he has acquired to understand the message and get the information from the text. Reading process is much the same for all languages with minor variations to accommodate the specific characteristics of the language used. However, the knowledge of the target language and the different cultural background knowledge make reading in a foreign language different to and even more complicated than reading in the native language.

The experiment of this thesis was carried out for the purpose of investigating whether reading skills can transfer from L1 to S/FL. The results show that while the assumption of reading universals and transfer of reading strategies across languages may be justified, language proficiency plays a significant role in the transfer. S/FL readers, such as the postgraduates in the experiment, can use reading strategies of fluent L1 readers when their S/FL competence reaches the level which can enable them to use the language at ease. The postgraduates showed a positive, though weak, tendency for the transfer of some of the reading skills tested, but for those readers whose control over the language was limited, this 'language competence ceiling' interfered with their transfer of reading ability. Language competence is not the only variable of transfer; improper training methods and the psychological strains experienced by the reader also hinder the transfer of reading ability.

In the light of theoretical analysis and the experimental results, a reading teacher must help students to improve their target language competence, and at the same time train students in the proper way to use skilled reading strategies. Only by putting emphasis on both the linguistic and psychological elements can teachers be most likely to help students to become skilled readers.

Key Phrases: Reading / reading ability transfer / variables of transfer / language competence ceiling / reading skills

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INTRODUCTION

The significance of reading has hardly ever been challenged in any discussion of the subject. Rather its importance for both first language learners and foreign language learners has been strongly emphasised by linguists and teachers.

1. Significance of Reading for First Language Learners

As everyone knows, reading was, is, and will always be very important in the life of the people. Even in this audio-visual age the printed word remains the pre-eminent source of information because of the great volume of books and periodicals produced, and the availability of the accumulated writings of past generations.

In first language learning, reading is regarded as "the core of the syllabus"(J.A. Bright et al 1970:52), and as "a golden key to open golden doors" (C.A. Lefevre 1964:15). There are three general reasons for this.

Firstly, reading is an important facet of achievement in all school subjects. A learner with reading problems is, without doubt, handicapped in other areas of studies (M.I. Friendman et al 1980). "Inability to read simply means that learning in all subject may be stunted and sometimes helplessly crippled at the very root" (C.A Lefevre 1964:15). On the other hand "reading proficiency is the royal road to knowledge; it is essential to success in all academic subjects" (R. Strang 1978)

Secondly, reading unifies the related language arts of writing, listening and speaking. What is written is read and what is read is discussed. Therefore reading integrates and effects the nature and quality of oral and written language. In language skills, listening and reading are receptive skills and speaking and writing are productive skills. The former is the foundation of the latter. One cannot produce anything without first taking in something. Moreover, listening is sometimes limited by factors such as the speaker and content. Reading, however, depends wholly on the reader himself. In the speaker/listener relationship it is the speaker who controls the speed and the content. You cannot speed up a tedious television or radio programme, and a boring lecturer is even worse since you do

not have the option of 'switching off'. But in a writer/reader relationship the reader can vary his speed of reading and decide what to read. Here the initiative remains with the reader. These four language skills cannot be isolated from each other, however, reading is the foundation for the other three, and the improvement of reading ability will facilitate the improvement of the other three. So among the language skills reading is the most important of all, and the foundation of the others.

Thirdly, reading is a very important means by which people obtain information about their environment, helping them to interact successfully with that environment, especially the environment outside the realm of their own world. As R.P. Hewlett (1962:14) pointed out in Reading and Response, "reading brings up, potentially, the whole world except for that tiny segment of it which we can experience directly." Our direct experiences are limited, but the range of experience available to us through reading is unlimited. Moreover, "reading is also a form of experience that modifies personality" (W.S.Gray 1937:25-26). As readers comprehend accurately, interpret broadly and apply what they learn wisely, they acquire new understanding, broaden their interests and deepen their appreciation of the subject matter. Thus, their personality is continually modified and enriched through reading. Last but not least, reading is personal enjoyment and may be one of life's inexhaustible pleasures and blessings .

To sum up, reading is the foundation for the learning of other language skills and subjects; reading is the most important access to knowledge; reading can alter one's outlook and enrich one's character; and reading can give great enjoyment.

2. Significance for Foreign Language Learners

Reading is not only essential for people in their first language learning, but also essential in foreign language learning. Justification for an emphasis on the development of reading is not hard to find.

First, as W.M. Rivers(1969:214) states, in countries where English is a foreign language, "where there is little reading, there will be little language learning". In

these countries, it is impossible to provide learners with direct experience of language used as a part of real life in the way the native learners get their first language, i.e. what the learners read, hear and learn is their own language. With the exception of classroom teaching in which the target language is used, the most important access to the target language is through the reading of literature, periodicals or scientific/technical journals written in that language. So those who want to learn a foreign language will have to read into a knowledge of it. Moreover, reading, once developed, can be easily maintained at a high level by the student without help from his teachers. Through reading, he can not only learn the language, but broaden his knowledge and deepen his understanding of the culture of the speakers of the language, their ways of thinking and their contributions to many fields of artistic and intellectual endeavour.

Second, reading is also the core of foreign language learning. No one is likely to remember a language for long if he is unable to read it easily or if normal writing intended for native readers is beyond his reach (F.C. Billows, 1962). It often happens in China that during the three or even six years of study of English, a student learns a limited sample of English and a reduced, selected vocabulary with carefully graded basic structural material. He does not however have any experience in facing normal, unrestricted language, and his mind has not been trained systematically in absorbing ideas quickly and accurately from the printed pages. Therefore he is likely to find books and even newspapers in English inaccessible. And being unable to read efficiently, after he finishes his study in school, he soon forgets everything about that language despite many years of training. Only when he is able to read easily in that language can he keep in touch with it through reading in the environment of the native language. In order to learn and remember a foreign language one has to be a competent reader in that language.

Since reading is so important both to native and foreign language learners, the task of the teacher of reading becomes crucial. To be a good reading teacher, able to shoulder this great responsibility, we must know what skills a learner needs so as to become a competent reader and whether there is any relationship between

reading in the native language and reading in the foreign language, or in other words, whether reading ability can transfer from one to the other. The teacher also needs to know what kind of training should be given to learners.

This theses tries to answer these questions firstly by analysing the reading process in the native language, similarities and differences of reading in the reading in the native language and the foreign language, and, then, by investigating through experiment the possibility of reading ability transfer from L1 to S/FL (in this case from Chinese to English). It is hoped that the analysis and the experiment will give us some insight into the teaching of English as a foreign language and this, therefore, will enable us to give better guidance and more effective help to our students in improving their reading ability.

The thesis will be divided into three parts, the first of which deals with the analysis of reading process in the native language, the characteristics of a good L1 reader and the difficulties experienced by L2 readers. The second part describes and analyses the reading ability transfer experiment. The third and final part consists of the implications and recommendations drawn from the theoretical analysis and the results of the experiment.

CHAPTER ONE
READING AND READING PROCESS
IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE

Proficient readers find reading a relatively easy activity. They are able to process written information smoothly and rapidly, with little or no conscious awareness of the mental activities that take place when they read. To them reading has become an automatic process and there is rarely any occasion for them to pause and consider what the process entails, in other words, what sequence of events happens in their brain when they read. This, of course, does not mean that reading is a very passive, simple process. On the contrary, reading, as F. Smith(1971:1) pointed out, is a specialized and complex skill involving a number of more general skills that have to be understood in any serious analysis of the subject. What, then, is reading?

1.1   What Is Reading

Many definitions have been given by linguists in answer to this question. D.C. Mitchell (1982:1) stated "reading can be defined loosely as the ability to make sense of written or printed symbols. The reader uses symbols to guide the recovering of information from his or her memory and subsequently uses this information to conduct a plausible interpretation of the writer's message".

W.S. Gray (1940:50) gave the following definition: "reading is a highly complex activity including various important aspects, such as recognizing symbols quickly and accurately and apprehending clearly and with discrimination the meanings implied by the author, reaching to and using the ideas secured through reading in harmony with the reader's purposes and integrating them into definite thought and action patterns".

Wardhaugh (1969:133) described reading as follows: "When a person reads a text, he is attempting to discover the meaning of what he is reading by using

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visual cues of spelling, his knowledge of probabilities of occurrence, his contextual-pragmatic knowledge and his syntactic and semantic competence to give a meaningful interpretation of the text".

K. Goodman (1970) saw reading as "a psycholinguistic guessing game" involving an interaction between thought and language, stating that "reading is a selective process. It involves partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected or refined as reading progresses".

F.Smith (1985:103), after analyzing the range, the score and some definitions of reading, emphasized the selective way in which people read all kinds of print and came to the definition: "reading is asking questions of printed text and reading with comprehension becomes a matter of getting your questions answered".

All the above definitions though varying in wording, define reading as an active process in which the reader makes an active contribution by drawing upon and using concurrently various abilities and skills that he has acquired to understand the message and get information he needs from the text.

How does a reader derive meaning from written language, and what actually happens in his brain when he reads? There are many theories attempting to describe this, and according to G.A. Cziko (1980), Mitchell (1982:127-136) and D.M. Wildman and M. Kling (1979), etc. most of these can be classified into three major groups, or three major models of reading process. These are, by name, the bottom-up, the top-down and the interactive models. Now let us look at them one by one.

1.2   Three Models of Reading

1.2.1   A Bottom-Up Model of Reading Process

This model views reading as a "one way flow of information starting with the visual (graphic) input and proceeding through a series of progressively higher-order processing stages until meaning is derived" (Cziko 1980). A typical example of this model is that of Gough (1972). Gough described the bottom-up model reading process in his essay 'One Second Reading' as follows:

"Reading begins with an eye fixation. The reader's eyes focus on a point slightly indented from the beginning of the line, and they remain in that fixation for some 251 msec. Thus they will sweep 1-4 degree of visual angle (say 10-12 letter spaces) to the right, in a saccadic movement consuming 10-23 msec, and a new fixation will begin. Barring regression, and ignoring return sweep (which takes 40-54 msec), this sequence will be repeated as long as reading continues. When the initial fixation is achieved, a visual pattern is reflected onto the retina. This sets in motion an intricate sequence of activity in the visual system culminating in the formation of an icon."

In this way the reader, Gough believed, plods through the sentence letter by letter serially, from left to right, thus understanding the words of the sentence serially one by one from left to right. During the whole process, higher processes such as semantic and syntactic analysis do not influence lower processes such as orthographic and phonemic analyses. Gough offered the following figure to illustrate the whole reading process.

Figure 1: Gough's Figure of the Bottom-Up Model of Reading
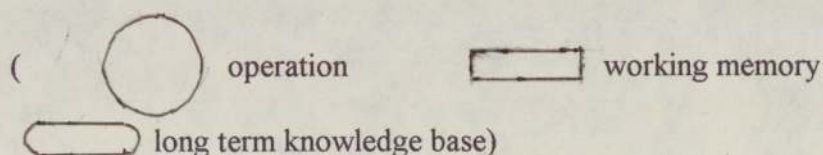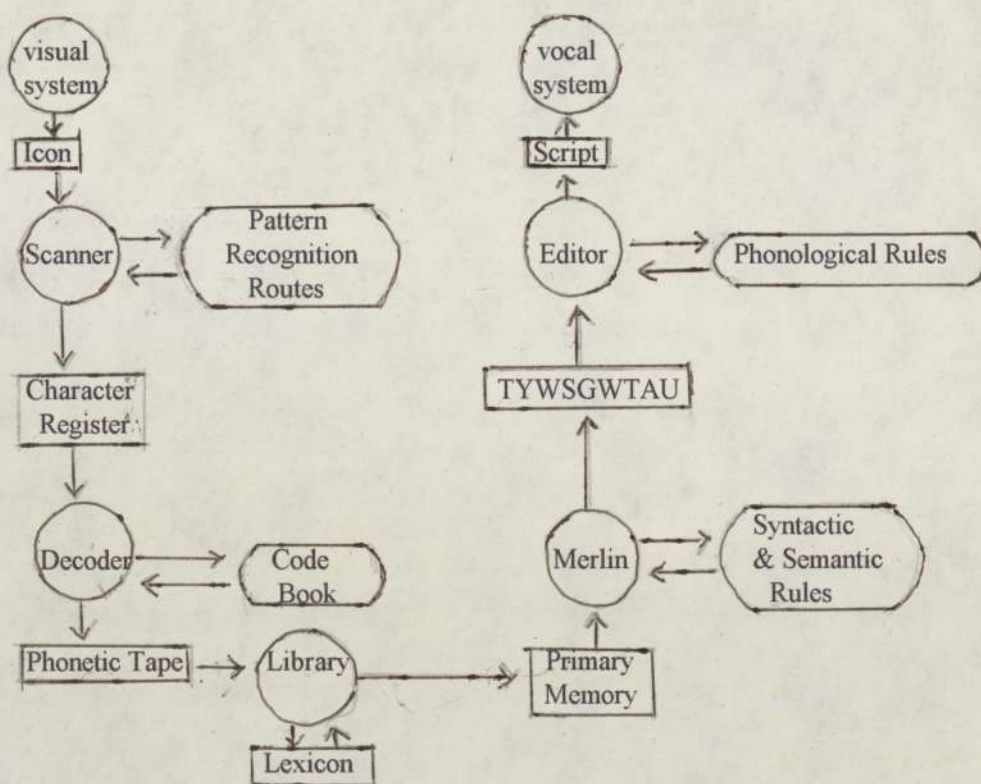
The above figure shows "the reading processing of information on the page from the beginning of an eye fixation to the emergence of a spoken word in literally split second intervals" (Gibson and Levin 1976:445). Briefly, the visual stimulus perceived by the reader is transformed first to an icon. Letter recognition follows, letters being identified one by one during this interval, serially from left to right. This is assumed to be done by a scanner which can resort to pattern recognition routes for recognition of the letters. The letters are then deposited in a 'Character Register' and immediately operated on by a Decoder with access to a code book of grapheme-to-phoneme corresponding rules. The end product of this process is now stored on a phonemic tape to await for the next process, lexical search. A librarian with access to a lexicon takes care of this. The lexical items are then deposited temporarily to primary memory one by one, already with word status including phonological, syntactic and semantic information. Primary memory is the working memory for acts with the comprehension device, "Merlin", a mysterious operator possessed of syntactic and semantic rules. By this time enough words have gotten to the comprehension device to send them along for storage in TPWSGWTAU (the place where sentences go when they are

understood). Phonological rules are applied after this by an editor, and the script emerges as an utterance.

To sum up, Gough's model shows that reading is a serial process, going from lower level processes to high level processes, that is to say, from letter recognition to word recognition and then to the understanding of the sentence meaning. It is true that this bottom-up model is one of the models of reading, and beginner readers tend to read like this, as do people who are reading very difficult materials. However, under normal conditions readers do not follow this model.

1.2.2 A Top-Down Model

Opposite to the bottom-up model there is the top-down model of reading which is derived from work on speech perception. The typical model is that of F. Smith (1971) and Goodman (1970). This model, as pointed out by G. A. Cziko (1980), emphasises the role of the higher cognitive processes that generate meaning hypotheses based primarily on contextual information. F. Smith (1971:187-210) explained that while the surface structure of English is organized linearly, meaning cannot be discussed in terms of order. Words are elements of the surface structure, of the physical representation and not of the meaning. The meaning of a sentence is something global: a 'state of mind', an instantaneous set of relationships established in cognitive organization, and not something strung over time. Meaning can also be extracted immediately from the visual configurations without the immediate identification of words. In other words the reader extracts meaning from a sequence of words before identifying any particular ones. In short, comprehension of meaning normally precedes word identification. Goodman (1970) believed in the same model, and in his famous READING: A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC GUESSING GAME stated that "readers utilise not one, but three kinds of information simultaneously. Certainly without graphic input there would be no reading, but the reader uses syntactic and semantic information as well. He predicts and anticipates on the basis of this information, sampling from the print just enough to confirm his guess of what is coming, to cue more

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semantic and syntactic information".

The processing sequence of Goodman's model (1970) starts with an eye movement and a fixation on new material. After this the selection process begins. The reader, guided by his reading strategies, language knowledge and constraints set up through prior choices, picks up graphic cues to form a perceptual image. Next he searches his memory for related syntactic, semantic and phonological cues and reforms the perceptual image. At this point he makes a guess or tentative choice consistent with graphic cues. If he is successful, the meaning goes to the short-term memory. If not, he tries again, or as a last resort, looks back at the text to gather more graphic cues. Once he has made the guess he tests it for semantic and grammatical acceptance. If it fits the context, the meaning is assimilated with the prior meaning and stored in the long term memory, and the reader now forms predictions about the upcoming content. If the choice does not fit, the reader regresses and repeats the formal operation until an acceptable choice is found and then the cycle continues. The following is Goodman's figure illustrating the top-down model of reading.

Figure 2:   A Flow-Chart of Goodman Model of Reading
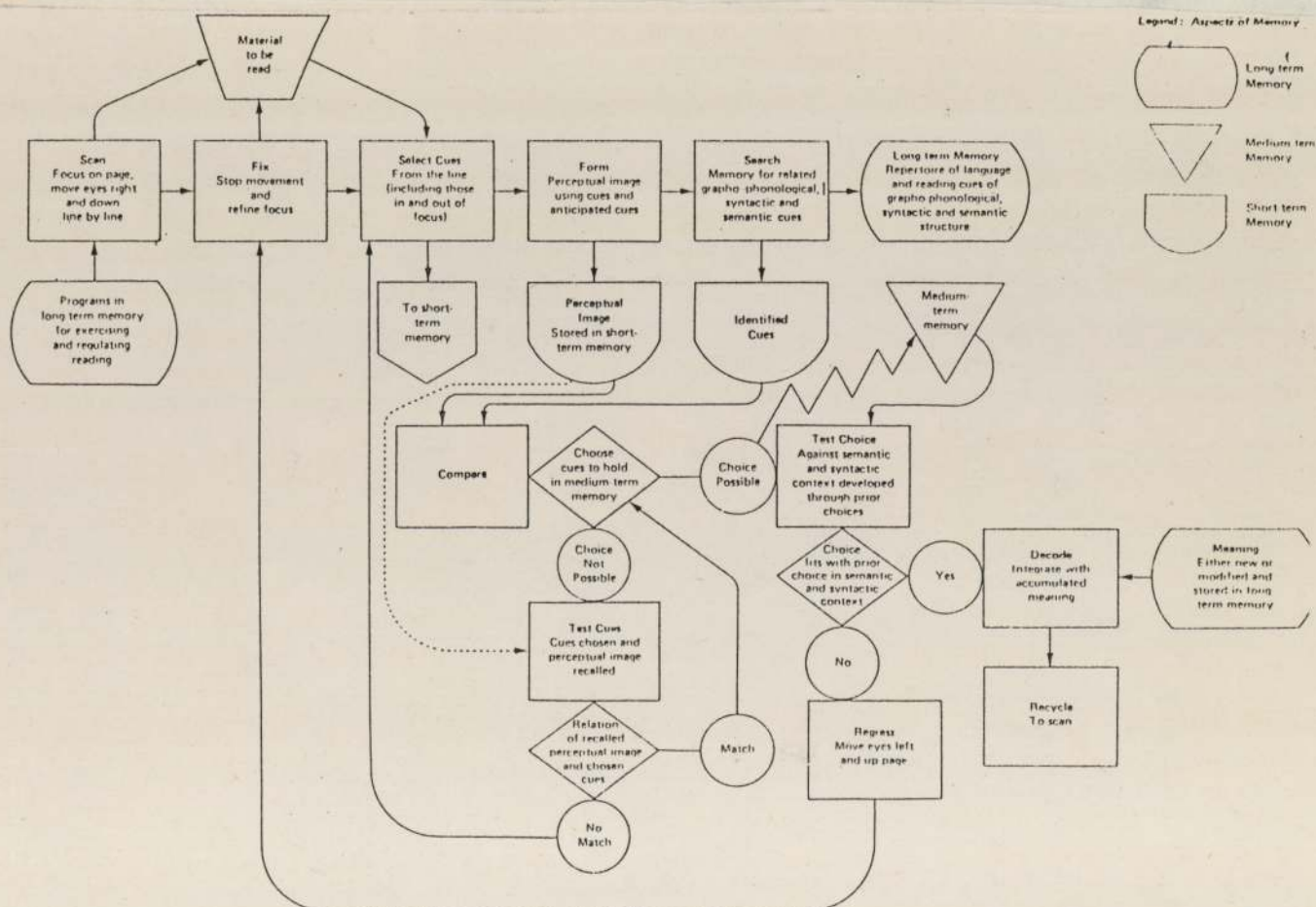
To conclude, reading in the topdown model is a hypothesis forming activity. "Based on the reader's knowledge of the world, on his grasp of the context up to a given point, on his use of grammatical relationship, and on minimal sensory cues pulled from the periphery, the reader determines a specific guess about the identity of the word about to be perceived" (Wildman and Kling1979:156). Reading thus moves stage by stage from the semantic top to the formal linguistic bottom until the semantic representation of the text is reconstructed, that is, the meaning of the print is understood.

A problematic aspect of this approach, as pointed out by Ian Ulijn (1980) in a survey of foreign language reading research, is that "it implies a lot of hypotheses to be made. It seems more economical to recognize words early in the reading process, with perhaps two or three senses, quickly limited to one by the context, than to leave open a dozen of hypothesis starting from all the semantic and syntactic possibilities of a text". Therefore the reader uses this model only under condition of highly predictable, very redundant semantic content, or without regard to reasonable time constraint, and it is less plausible when the semantic content is normal.

1.2.3 An Interactive Model

In addition to the bottom-up and top-down models of reading there is also the interactive model, which describes how the reader uses and integrates both graphic and contextual information in extracting meaning from a written language.

David E. Rumelhard (1975) in his essay TOWARD AN INTERACTIVE MODEL OF READING gave a very detailed and persuasive model of reading. It goes as follows:

"Reading is the process of understanding written language. It begins with a flutter of patterns on the retina, and ends (when successful) with a definite idea about

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the author's intended message which bridges and blurs these two traditional distinctions. Moreover, a skilled reader must be able to make use of sensory, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic information to accomplish his task. These various sources of information appear to interact in many complex ways during the process of reading."

In his model the graphic information enters the system and is registered in a visual information store. A feature extraction device then operates on this information and extracts critical features from it. These features become the input to a pattern synthesizer, which has besides this sensory information, available information about lexical items, syntactic possibilities, semantics of the language and information about the current contextual situation. This synthesizer uses all this information to produce an interpretation of the written language. Here Rumelhart is clearly rejecting the bottom-up model in which the reader plods through the sentence, letter by letter, word by word from left to right. Instead his model emphasizes the frequent interaction between the lower and higher processes in which graphic input is systematically sampled at potentially higher information levels. The following is a figure offered by Rumelhard (1975) to illustrate this process:

Figure 3: A Stage Representation of an Interactive
Model of Reading (Rumelhart 1975:588)
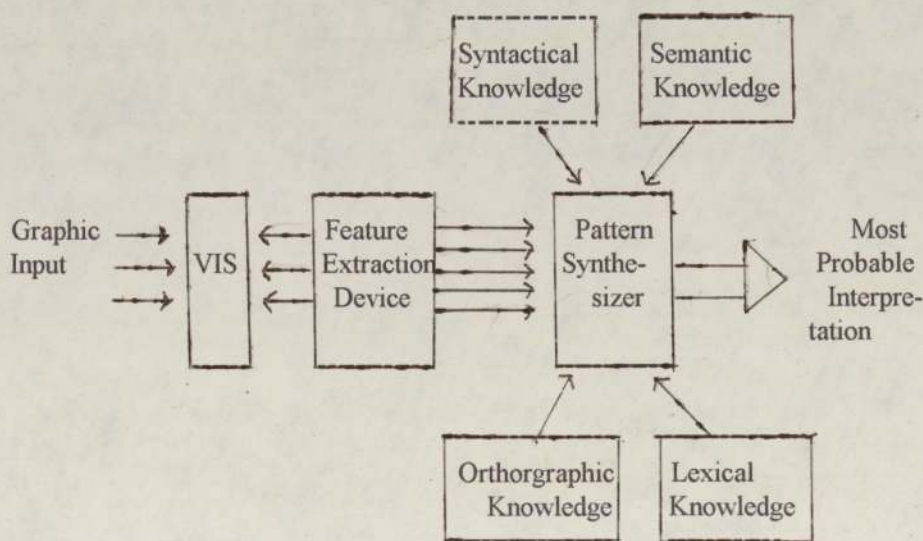
We have now looked at three reading models. No single model, as Gibson and Levin (1975:438) rightly pointed out, will alone be enough to serve to describe the process of reading, because there are as many reading processes as there are people who read, things to be read and goals to be served. As an activity, reading is as varied as perceiving, thinking or remembering --- in fact it utilizes all three of these activities. Nevertheless, all three models have provided us with a better idea of reading processes. The question we now need to ask is how a fluent reader reads, and what makes a fluent reader.

CHAPTER TWO
A SUCCESSFUL L1 READER

Some people believe that reading in one's native language is an easy job and that anyone (unless he is illiterate or blind, and we are excluding reading Braille) can read fluently. Contrary to this false belief, a lot of research such as that of Cromer (1970:471-483), gives strong evidence that there are reading difficulties for readers in the native language, and even for readers who have reached their tertiary level of education. He gave four models of reading difficulties:

1) The Defect model: some non-function or dysfunction

  e.g. sensory impairment
2) The deficit model: an absence of some function or ability

   e.g. vocabulary skills
3) Disruption Model: a function which is considered atypical but is present and interfering fluent reading process

   e.g. being anxious, or hyperemotional
4) The difference model: a mismatch between the individual's typical mode of responding and the pattern of responding assumed necessary for adequate reading to occur

The difference reader has adequate intellectual, language and vocabulary skills etc. However, although he has the skill to read aloud and say individual words correctly, he does not organize his reading input in a meaningful way, that is to say, he organizes his input in a word-by-word fashion rather than into meaningful units such as phrases.

Now we can see that not all people are fluent readers, even in their native language. Since our aim is to understand the reading behaviour of good readers, we will drop these models of reading difficulty and turn to look at the model of the fluent reader. To help people to become fluent readers it becomes absolutely necessary to understand the reading process of the fluent reader, or in other

words, the characteristics of their reading. Only by understanding the skilled reader can we hope to have a deeper insight into the teaching of reading, both in the native language and in the foreign language. We may summarise the characteristics of the skilled reader in the following three points: a fluent reader is a good comprehender, is highly flexible and is a successful strategist.

2.1 A Fluent Reader Is A Good Comprehender

In life reading is a very important component of our activities. People read for all kinds of reasons and purposes. To sum up these various purposes Frank Smith (1982:6) cited from Louise Rosenblatt (1978) that there are two broad purposes of reading, these are 'efferent' and 'aesthetic'. Efferent reading is when the purpose is to bring something away from the text, or to get information from the written page. Aesthetic reading is when the aim is to be involved in the reading, or to enjoy ourselves during reading when we are less interested in information than in the experience that it generates. No matter what purpose a reader has in mind when he begins to read, to fulfill his purpose he must understand what he is reading. Information, whether it is the general outline of an article or a book, or specific details, cannot be obtained unless the reader understands what he is reading. Without this one will only experience disappointment, frustration or lack of enjoyment if he cannot understand what he is reading. Indeed reading sometimes does not imply comprehension, as when some people say that they have been reading a book for two hours and have scarcely understood a word, or when one is "barking at print" (Wardhaugh 1969), or in other words, when one is "enunciating in the conventional way the sounds symbolized by the printed or written words in the script" (Rivers 1981:261). However, since the core of reading is unanimously regarded to be comprehension and extraction of meaning from the printed page, so the first and foremost criteria for a good reader is that he must be a good comprehender.

What then does good comprehension mean? The whole question of comprehension is highly complex. For convenience and simplicity's sake, let us

cite Fry (l968:26-27):

"Reading can usually conveniently be thought of as being on two levels at once. First the reader should get the objective facts. If the story says that 'there are two cows', the reader should get the idea that there are two cows. This is a fact and requires little interpretation or judgment. On the higher level the reader should also get the subjective information. This subjective information might include such things as the tone and mood of the story. Or the reader might be expected to generalize from the specific facts given, in order to get the main idea which is not specifically stated."

He then went on to say that to get the subjective information the reader might also be expected to analyze the facts given and get the underlying theme. Ferguson (1973), when talking about comprehension, also mentioned these points by distinguishing "literal comprehension - getting the direct meaning of the print, and interpretation - probing for greater depth than literal meaning to get meanings not directly stated in the   text by reading between the lines, making generalizations, reasoning cause and effect, anticipating endings, making comprehension, sensing motives and discovering relationships." He went further and claimed that to have good comprehension the reader should also think critically and creatively about what he is reading; that is, he should pass personal judgment on the quality, value, accuracy and truthfulness of information, and seek to express new ideas.

In summary, a good comprehender recognizes the literal and implied meaning of the author and uses his previous knowledge to evaluate the soundness of the author's ideas, reach valid conclusions and gain new insights and interests. A good reader reads for meaning and comprehends well.

2.2   A Good Reader Is A Highly Flexible And Adaptive Reader

A successful reader, as described by Gibson and Levin (1976:438), is very

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selective, planning his strategy ahead and adapting his manner and speed to suit his interest, the material and his purpose.

2.2.1 Flexible Manner Of Reading

To be flexible and selective in reading is no doubt essential because, as everyone knows, there are numerous different reading situations in life; ranging from public recital of poetry to the private scrutiny of price lists and bus timetables. Royce Adams (1974:8-13) in his READING SKILLS summed up the situation of reading in five categories. They are:

1) Reading for pleasure.

2) Reading for practical reasons.

3) Reading for general ideas.

4) Reading to locate specific information.

5) Reading to critically evaluate.

A skilled reader copes with different reading situations in different ways so as to accomplish his purposes successfully. Sometimes we need to read very carefully, making an intensive study of the written material so as to have a full and detailed understanding, a better appreciation and a correct evaluation, for example, in situations such as 2) and 5) when we read great literary works, legal documents or extremely important material. Sometimes we may read less carefully to get just enough information to establish an order of priority or to decide against reading, such as in situations 1) and 3) when we are reading novels or when we are searching through reference materials or books. Sometimes we read very fast, scanning through printed pages to look for specific information as in situation 4). In short, a skilled reader changes his manner of reading in accordance with the changing of reading situations.

2.2.2 Flexible Speed Of Reading

There is another aspect of reading which is closely linked with the manner of reading, that is, speed. In different reading situations a good reader will vary his

speed of reading. There are many kinds of reading speed, which depend on the difficulty of the material being read as well as the reader's own reading ability, background knowledge and his reading purpose. To make it simple let us state that there are three speeds (Fry 1978:48).

2.2.2.1   Study Reading Speed

Study reading speed is the slowest reading speed. It is used   when the reader is reading difficult material and when the reader wishes to have a high rate of comprehension as well as good retention. Examples are when one is reading directions which have to be followed exactly, when reading legal documents which have a strange phraseology and exacting vocabulary, or when learning a poem for recital. In these cases the reader will use this study speed so as to ensure thorough understanding.

2.2.2.2   Average Reading Speed

Reading at average speed is what people do most of the time. Easier text books, novels, newspapers etc. can be read at this speed. When people read at average speed, their comprehension of the reading material is about 70% - 80% (Fry 1978:51). It is difficult to say exactly what average reading speed should be. It varies considerably from person to person. "A good reader's average reading speed might vary from 250 w.p.m to 500 w.p.m."   (ibid.) There is notably a much greater variation in the average speed of good readers than that of the poor readers. Good readers clearly are more flexible than poor ones in their speed of reading.

2.2.3   Fast Reading Speed

Fast reading speed is used when a good reader skims or scans through what he is reading.

Skimming is the fastest reading speed which is used when a reader wishes to

cover materials in a hurry and when high comprehension is not required. It is not always necessary to read material very carefully and to understand every detail of it. When a fluent reader is just browsing for general information or when he merely wants to know the high points of what the is reading, he will skim through it, selecting, leaving out chunks of material, reading only the key paragraphs, sentences or words. His speed may reach as much as 800 w.p.m. or more.

Scanning is similar to skimming in that the skilled reader uses this reading technique when it is not necessary to read something in its entirety. However it is unlike skimming in that the reader who is scanning knows in advance what he is looking for. The reader uses scanning "to search for a specific piece of information for a given purpose" (Nuttall 1982:34) . Only skilled readers are capable of using skimming and scanning efficiently.

Now let us sum up what we have been discussing about speed of reading by using the table given by Fry (1978:52):

SPEED		POOR READER	GOOD READER
SLOW:	Study speed is used when material is difficult and/ or high comprehension is required.	90-125 w.p.m. 80-90% com.	200-300w.p.m 80-90% com.
AVERAGE:	Average speed is used for everyday reading of magazines, newspapers and easier text books.	150-180w.p.m. 70% com.	250-500w.p.m 70% com.
FAST:	Skimming is used when the highest rate is desired. Comprehension is intentionally lower	Cannot Skim	800+w.p.m. 50%

To conclude, in this modern world, we need to read for work, study and pleasure. Overall we need to read to have a normal life. Nobody can tell how much written material one comes across every day. To tackle this problem one must be a flexible reader, who knows "why he is reading, and how he wants to benefit. He will judge what particular information is wanted, what degree of comprehension

is needed, what uses will be made of the information and how long the information will be retained" (Ferguson 1973:29-34). In this way he can select the appropriate style of reading to suit his purpose and the material that is being read. Only by being adaptive and flexible can he be successful in all reading situations.

2.3 A Good Reader Is A Successful Strategist

Having talked about the two characterisations of a good reader, namely good comprehension and high flexibility, we now come to the most complicated problem of reading, that is, the strategies used by the good reader. What strategies does a good reader use while reading? Mitchell (1982: 136-147) described in his book THE PROCESS OF READING the process of fluent silent reading and summed up by saying that fluent reading comprises a number of different sub-processes, and that there are three major skills or techniques; namely the extraction of visual information from the page, word recognition and extraction and combination of propositions, in other words, meaning identification.

2.3.1 Extracting Visual Information From The Page

The eyes play an inextricable role in the process of normal silent reading in that they serve as sensory receptors through which printed information is transmitted to the brain. During reading, the eyes move in jerky, rapid jumps known as saccades. Between these rapid movements the eyes remain relatively stationary for about a quarter of a second; these pauses are known as fixations.

When the eye is open, it is exposed to stimulation by light. As the eye is exposed to much more information than the brain can actually use, the brain selects and processes only as much as it can handle. Therefore when the brain is busy processing the visual information gained from a fixation, the eyes are actually 'blind' to new information. There are two important findings from tachistoscopic

studies. (The tachistoscope is a device that can present information to the eye for very brief periods of time.) One is that 50 msec, that is one twentieth of a second, is a sufficient exposure for all the visual information that can be gained in a single fixation. It will make no difference if the source of the visual information is removed after 50 msec or left for 250 msec, nothing more will be seen. The second finding is that what could be perceived in a single brief presentation depends on what was presented and the viewer's prior knowledge. If random letters of the alphabet were presented, then only four or five letters might be reported. But if words were presented for the same amount of time, then two or three words might be reported, comprising a total of perhaps twelve letters. And if the words happened to be organized into a short sentence, then four or five words, a total of perhaps twenty letters, might be perceived from the same exposure duration (Smith 1971:91)

Perception involves understanding and organization. The quality of one's perception is affected by the nature of the situation that exists at the moment, by the degree to which it occupies one's attention, by the ideas already acquired concerning it, and by one's need and expectation (Strang 1978:72). Individuals differ in their perception. Usually skilled readers see words as a whole, recognising familiar syllables and words almost as quickly as individual letters, and take in phrases and short sentences as readily as single words. The poor reader however sees word fragments and unimportant details. Therefore the first important distinction between good and poor readers is the quality and quantity of items that can be identified in a single fixation. Here we want to add that fixation rate settles down by about grade 4. Although there is a slight tendency for skilled readers to change fixation faster than unskilled readers, the difference is only about one extra fixation of a second. That is why the quality and quantity of information extracted at a fixation becomes so important. The skilled reader can pick up more information on every fixation.

2.3.2   Word Identification

Word identification is one of the most visible aspects of reading. Without it reading would be impossible. This of course does not mean that while reading the skilled reader has to identify every word. On the contrary, a lot of studies have already proved convincingly that a skilled reader does not normally identify individual words in fluent reading. However, a few will contest this claim that the skilled reader is a competent word identifier. There are two ways to identify a word, namely direct identification and indirect identification, or immediate and mediate identification.

2.3.2.1   Direct Word Identification

By direct or immediate word identification we mean that words as a whole are identified directly from features or visual information presented on the page without the intervening identification of any of the letters that make up the word, and without translating the printed symbol into speech sound.

For many readers word identification is a spontaneous process. Most readers report that individual words appear to them as whole entities. Since a reader can report from a single tachistoscopic presentation either four or five random letters or a similar number of words, words must be identified as whole or as a unit which is just as much a unit as a letter. Moreover the mistakes made by proof readers and the fact that a skilled reader can identify a word quickly, even when not every letter of the word is legible, gives strong evidence that the reader identifies words as a whole without letter by letter identification. And as Mitchell (1982:165-66) pointed out, both poor and good readers can use direct word recognition in reading and there is no direct evidence that they differ in the way that they handle highly familiar words. However, since one must know the word in order to identify it directly as a whole, we can assume that the greater one's vocabulary is, the more effectively one can use this strategy of direct word identification; hence to be a fluent reader one must have a large vocabulary.

2.3.2.2   Indirect Word Identification

There is no direct evidence that poor and good readers differ in handling highly familiar words, but there is strong evidence that there are differences in word-attack skills used to identify unfamiliar words and "the most obvious weakness shown by readers as a group is that they have marked difficulty in identifying new or unfamiliar words" (Mitchel: 1982:174). These problems with indirect word identification are the major source of their difficulties in reading.

How does a skilled reader attack a new or unfamiliar word? What strategies does he adopt to identify it?

2.3.2.2.1   Word Identification Depends On The Semantic Environment

When words stand alone, we are sometimes able to give a definition to them, if we know them. For example, "island": a body of land surrounded by water. But in English there are countless homonyms and their meaning changes with the change of context. For example, the word "plant" many be related to a structure dealing with living things, or to one dealing with a labour union and assembly line (Pasner et al. 1972:161). In such circumstances we have to depend on the semantic environment to decide their appropriate meaning in that context. Look at the words "figure", "table" and "larger" in the following two sentences:

1) The statistician could be certain that the difference was significant since all the figures on the right hand side of the table were larger than any of those on the left.

2) The craftsman was certainly justified in charging more for the carvings on the right since all the figures on the right hand side of the table were larger than any of those on the left.

(Rumelhart 1975:586)

Here our understanding of those three words is quite different. In the first sentence "figure" means obviously a number, "table" a format for organizing numbers and "larger" meaning the mathematical symbol > . In the second sentence, judging by the context they are in, "figure" now refers to a small statue, "table" a physical object with a flat top for setting things on, and "larger" means of greater volume. The semantic context decides the meaning of individual words.

By using semantic cues we can also guess the meaning of unknown words and anticipate the coming ones. Good readers with this reading strategy can figure out the exact meaning of an unknown word, or predict the specific upcoming words (which is more demanding), or he can get to know the underlying idea of the unknown or upcoming words; or he can guess its semantic features, in other words the broad aspect of its meaning (Wildman and Kling 1979:139).

In summary, "the knowledge that context can be used to figure out words one does not know is an important meta-cognitive insight" (Baker and Brown 1984:21-44) and "using context clues as an aid to word meaning identification is an essential literal reading comprehension skill. The reader's background and experience will obviously contribute to their effectiveness in using context clues: (Morrison 1979:34-43). By using this strategy good readers greatly benefit their reading comprehension.

2.3.2.2.2   Word Identification Depends On The Syntactic Environment

Grammatical context facilitates word identification (Gibson and Levin 1976:377). Levin, Ford and Beckwith (1968) gave high school students the task of choosing the correct pronunciation for holographically spelled words, for example,

sow: /sou/   or /sau/

present: /'present/ or /pre'sent/

The pronunciation depends on the context of the homograph. The words were presented with a clue word, either indicating   the part of speech, for example "to sow", or indicating its meaning, for example, 'pig - sow'. The experiment showed that the homograph was pronounced more rapidly when the preceding word clue signalled its part of speech rather than the meaning. The students found it easier to say the phrase 'to present' than the word sequence 'gift - present'. Now let us look at the following sentences:

The plane will light on the runway.
The cake was light as a feather.
Turn the light on.
It's time to light the fire.
The girl had light brown hair.   (Gibson and Levin 1976:448)

In these sentences the grammatical functions of the word 'light' vary from verb to noun to adjective. Only those who have a good knowledge of syntax will have no difficulty in identifying its appropriate meaning and function in a sentence. All these prove that structure clues can be used to establish the type of a word and thus help the reader to identify the words more rapidly.

The rules of syntax increasingly constrain the grammatical class of successive words in a phrase or sentence. For example, here are two sentences which describe the adventure of an elf:

> He ran into the kitchen and in the darkness he could see the remains of supper. Brownie jumped onto the table and lit a _____.
> (Perfetti et al 1979)

Here the intra-sentence constraint syntactically selects a noun so that a reader could dismiss all the other alternatives such as verbs, adjectives etc. Furthermore, a skilled reader may use his knowledge of case-grammar to find out that it is obviously an objective case, and so would come to the decision that all nouns of state can also be eliminated, and here the word must be something lightable. The inter-sentence information adds the constraint that the word must refer to something that can improve visibility, rather than something that is merely lightable.

To conclude, a reader's knowledge of the rules of grammar could constitute adequate basis for predicting the syntax which follows a particular point in a passage. The prediction of the grammatical class of upcoming words could enhance word recognition and thus facilitate the whole reading process (Wildman and Kling 1979), and this syntactic knowledge of the reader can also lead to more efficient organization of ideas in the text.

2.3.2.2.3   Word Identification Depends On The Morphological Cues

As has just been explained, a contextual cue is perceived by examining the preceding and following words or sentences. By studying these surrounding

words and their relationships to unknown word, a reader may be able to gain additional insight into the meaning of that word. Cues to meaning can "be found within a word itself, in some cases, more specific clues than can be offered by context clues" (Beverly S. Morris 1979). Here Morrison referred, of course, to morphological clues offered by word formation.

In English there are morphological rules which are used to build up different words from one by affixation and combination. For example, by affixation, we can build up from 'form' such words as 'formal', 'formalize', ' formalization', 'formality', 'formless', 'informal', 'reform' etc. The suffix and prefix can add meaning to or change the meaning of the word and indicate its part of speech. By combination we can form many words on the base of 'air': 'airsick', 'air-condition', 'aircraft', 'airline', 'airmail', 'airplane', 'airtight' etc. If a reader has a good knowledge of these rules and can make good use of it while reading, he could be greatly helped in identifying the part of speech and the possible meaning of the word. This knowledge of word formation is indeed an additional tool in word identification.

Up to now we have discussed the strategies used by the good reader to identify individual words. Though good and poor readers are similar in handling very familiar words, they are quite different in attacking unfamiliar and new words in a text. Good readers seem more effective at using semantic, syntactic and morphological clues to choose the appropriate meaning of a polysemous word in the context, or to guess the meaning of an unknown word and to anticipate the upcoming words.

2.3.2.3   Overlooking Unknown Words

Besides guessing the meaning of an unknown word from all kinds of cues, good readers are often found to ignore the unknown words while poor readers often get into a panic when facing an unknown words (Nuttall 1982:75). Cooper and Petrosky (1976) claimed that "in textbook or technical reading, the best strategy

is to skip a new word the first time it appears, expecting it to be explained or defined contextually before long". In voluntary or pleasure reading the best strategy is always to guess and keep going. A person engrossed in a personal letter from a friend or in a novel does not stop reading at unfamiliar words, he keeps on reading, ignoring the unknown words. The ability to decide what he can safely ignore is another characteristic of a skilled reader (Nuttall 1982:75).

The ability to identify or overlook words is of great importance in reading. However, a good reader must also have effective word attack skills and must be good at identifying individual words. But a reader who has word identification skills is not necessarily a fluent reader. Cromer's difference reader is a good example. "They have word identification skills commensurate with those of good readers, however, they differ from good readers in that they do not adequately comprehend passage or sentence meanings" (Isakson and Miller 1976:787-792). Therefore a fluent reader should be one who is also able to derive the overall meaning of a text being read. The following section deals with the strategies the good reader uses to identify the meaning of sentences and paragraphs.

2.3.3   Meaning Identification

To some people, since written text is made up of words, comprehension cannot occur and meaning cannot be extracted from the text without prior word identification. We cannot say that they are wrong, but they do not realise that there are two alternative routes to meaning identification, just as words can be identified in two ways. Smith (1971:206) shows these two routes distinctly by offering the following figure:

Figure 4: Two Routes of Meaning Identification

--------- immediate meaning identification

_____ mediate meaning identification

Feature Discrimination	Word Identified (mediate or immediate)	Semantic Feature	Semantic Feature List	Meaning Identified
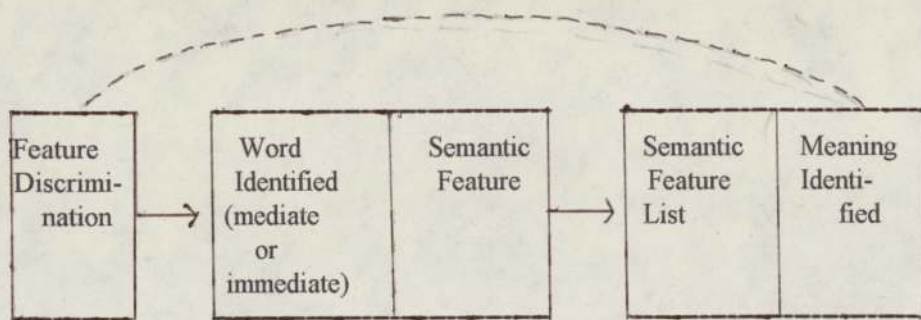
When a fluent reader reads for meaning, the comprehension of meaning precedes word identification rather than follows it in normal skilled reading. There is considerable evidence for this. For example, everyone has the experience that when required to recall a passage immediately after reading it, the meaning or the main idea of the passage can be recalled, but not the exact words. Furthermore, the analysis of miscues in oral reading (Sims 1979 and K.S. and Y.M. Goodman 1978) shows that many of the miscues the skilled reader makes are visual rather than semantic, that is to say he produces miscues that do not interfere with gaining meaning. For instance, for the sentence, "The stonecutter was once again contented.", there are several miscues for the word 'contented'.

1) The stonecutter was once again con'tent.
2) The stonecutter was once again conted.
3) The stonecutter was once again continent.
4) The stonecutter was once again satisfied.   (R. Sims 1979:104)

It is apparent that all the miscues are not created equal. The miscue, 'satisfied', which looks least like the original word, comes closest to retaining the original meaning: 'contented'. At the same time 'conted' and 'continent', which look visually somewhat like the original word, in fact interrupt the meaning and indicate that the reader failed in understanding the sentence. Skilled readers tend to make such miscues as 'satisfied'. Here we can see that what the mouth reports in oral reading is not what the eye has seen but what the brain has generated for the mouth to report. The oral output reflects the comprehending behaviour of the reader and gives evidence to the fact that the skilled reader identifies the meaning of the sentence before identifying every individual word. Besides oral miscues analysis, the eye-voice-span also provides evidence that the skilled reader processes the meaning so as to identify the words by keeping his voice four or five words behind his eye. All these show convincingly that the skilled reader identifies the meaning of a sentence directly from the print, without identifying

every and each individual word.

The immediate route of meaning identification is the quick and effective process of reading, whereas mediate meaning identification is a very slow process in which the reader gets to comprehension through the identification of individual words. The beginner reader lacks the experience of the fluent reader, and so often relies on the mediate route. As for the fluent reader, though he has to depend on the slow route sometimes, (such as when reading very difficult material), he normally uses the quick route to identifying meaning.

How does a skilled reader identify meaning directly from the print? This is too complicated a question to answer within the limited space of this thesis. Here we only want to say briefly that, as Cooper and Petrosky (1976:184-206) pointed out, good readers can do so by "reducing the alternative number of meanings a sentence or paragraph can have by using syntactic and semantic clues from the text along with prior knowledge of language and context".

Overall, reading, as discussed above, is an active and constructive process. The fluent reader approaches a text with expectancies based upon his knowledge of the subject. As he progresses into the material, he confirms or revises these expectancies. In the whole process his previously acquired information interacts with new information in the text, affecting the manner and degree of comprehension. How much one can learn from a text depends to a large degree on what one already knows and how well he can use it to aid his comprehension.

The picture of a skilled reader which emerges from the above discussion is of someone who reads for meaning and comprehends well, who reads flexibly and adaptively, suiting his manner and speed of reading to his purpose, and who, with the help of his knowledge of the language and the topic, makes best use of the redundancy, that is the orthographic, semantic and syntactic clues of the text and chooses the most appropriate strategy to comprehend the text economically and efficiently.

CHAPTER THREE
READING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

In the above chapter we discussed the reading process of native language readers and the characteristics of a fluent L1 reader. Briefly speaking, a fluent reader must have both language competence and reading skills so that he can read with flexibility and with adequate comprehension, suiting his speed and manner of reading to his purpose.

In this chapter we are going to discuss whether there is any similarity or difference between reading in the native language and reading in the second/foreign language. It is hoped that the comparison will give us deeper insight into the teaching of reading in the second/foreign language.

3.1 Similarity Between L1 And S/FL Reading

3.1.1 The Reading Universal Hypothesis

Some linguists, represented by K. Goodman, put forward the reading universal hypothesis, believing that the ability to read is acquired once only and need undergo only minor changes when applied to different languages. Goodman (1973:21-27) explained convincingly this reading universal hypothesis in his essay PSYCHOLINGUISTIC UNIVERSALS IN THE READING PROCESS. According to him "reading is a psycholinguistic process by which the reader (a language user) reconstructs as best as he can, a message which has been encoded by a writer as a graphic display". No matter which language the reader employs he must first have graphic input, whether the language is alphabetic or non-alphabetic, whether or not it is read from left to right or right to left, or from top to bottom. There cannot be any reading without graphic input.

Secondly, he needs to use minimal graphic clues to predict grammatical structures. It is certain that different languages have different grammatical systems. For

example word order is more important than inflections in languages such as English, Chinese etc. Yet, in a highly inflected language such as Russian, inflection becomes more essential in identifying meaning. Therefore some special strategies may result from particular characteristics of a language. However, readers will need to use their grammatical competence in much the same way.

Thirdly, the reader will have to make use of semantic cues of the print. "Semantic aspects of the reading process cannot vary to any extent from one language to another, since the key question is how much background the reader brings to the specific reading" (ibid.). To sum up, "the reading process will be much the same for all languages with minor varieties to accommodate the specific characteristics of the orthography used and the grammatical structure of the language"(ibid.).

3.1.2 Evidence For The Reading Universal Hypothesis

Evidence for the reading universal hypothesis can be seen in the experiments in cloze tests, miscue analysis and thinking-aloud reading carried out by Clarke (1978), P. Rigg (1977) and Hosenfield (1977) etc.

3.1.2.1 Evidence From Cloze Tests And Miscue Analysis

The experiments carried out by Mark A. Clarke (1978:121-150) showed some evidence of the reading universal hypothesis. Clarke made two experiments with Spanish-speaking subjects, one being a cloze test and the other oral miscue analysis, with the aim of describing the first language and second language reading behaviour of adult Spanish-speakers who are assumed to be proficient readers in their native language. His principle research questions were:

1) Can the psycholinguistic perspective of reading explain the reading performance of proficient adult Spanish-speaking readers reading in Spanish and English?

2) Do these individuals transfer their reading skills to the second language?

In the first experiment, the cloze test performance of good and poor L1 readers were examined. In the second study, the oral reading performances of a good and a poor reader were analyzed according to established miscue procedures. In the present part of this work, my main concern is about the reading universal hypothesis, therefore, we will now only look at the result concerning the first research question and we will come back to the second question later in this study.

In Clarke's first experiment --- Cloze Tests, the results show clearly that "the subjects were producing hypotheses about the text based on syntactic and semantic cues". Though there is a difference between good and poor readers in the use of syntactic and semantic cues when confronted with blanks for which they have no immediate answer, they did use these cues in their efforts of trying to understand the passages both in Spanish and in English.

In the second experiment, both readers produced miscues that demonstrated their attempts to utilize graphophonic, syntactic and semantic cues to extract the author's message. Andrade, the good reader, produced 52% syntactically acceptable and 80% semantically acceptable miscues, and Baca, the poor reader, 52% syntactically acceptable and 64% semantically acceptable miscues on the Spanish reading. On the English reading, the former produced 54% syntactically acceptable and 46% semantically acceptable miscues. The latter produced 46% syntactically and 38% semantically acceptable miscues. Just as Clarke concluded, "the reading behaviour of these two adult students resembled, in most respects, the reading behaviour of native English speaking readers and the reading behaviour of children for whom English is a second language. The good reader produced fewer miscues than did the poor reader; neither subject corrected any miscues; their miscues were generally of high graphic and phonemic proximity to the text; they produced no allologs; their miscues produced little syntactic or semantic change and the most frequent miscue was the word level miscue in which one word was substituted for another".

3.1.2.2 Evidence From Thinking-Aloud Reading

Another study which also gives a clear picture of the reading process in S/FL reading is that of Carol Hosenfield (1977:112-123) who made an investigation into the reading strategies of second language readers by asking the readers to think aloud while reading. Just as there are successful and unsuccessful first language readers, so there are successful and unsuccessful second/foreign language readers. The unsuccessful reader in this study showed great difficulty in understanding the passage. He read in short phrases, depended on the dictionary for unknown words and lost the meaning of sentences as soon as he had decoded them. However, the performance of the successful second language reader displayed great similarity between the reading process of the first and second language. When he read he kept the meaning of the whole passage in mind; he read in broad phrases; when faced with an unknown word he used the context of the preceding passage or the remaining words in the sentence as meaning cues, or else decided it was not important in an adequate comprehension and skipped it. Here the reading process of the successful second/foreign language reader resembles to a great extent that of the fluent first language reader, which was described earlier in Chapter Two.

The results of the experiments carried out by Clarke and Hosenfield seem to give the answer 'yes' to Clarke's first research question and therefore justify the reading universal hypothesis. The subjects studied here appeared to be utilizing the same basic behaviour both in reading in the first and in the second language. For them reading is not an exact process which depends on accuracy at all levels of language, but rather it seems to be a process of hypothesizing, testing, confirming and rejecting. There is minor variation in reading in different languages, for instance as shown in the results of Clarke's experiment. In Spanish the readers produced miscues on function words more often than on any other part of speech, while in English they tended to miscue on noun more than on other grammatical categories. Yet, the process in both English and Spanish reading is much the same. In Short, just as P. Rigg (1977:106) said, "the reading

process was the same for all subjects regardless of race, age or reading proficiency. That is, all the subjects clearly used three cueing systems and clearly followed the same basic process of sampling from those systems, predicting and confirming. There was wide discrepancy among individuals as to how effectively this process was carried out, but the process itself did not differ from individual to individual".

3.2   Differences Between L1 And S/FL Reading

Having discussed the similarity between first and second language reading, we are now coming to the question of whether there is any difference between the two. The answer is, of course, a big yes. Just as Alderson (1984:1-24) rightly points out, "it is a common experience, at least of EFL teachers, that most students fail to learn to read adequately in the foreign language. Very frequently, students reading in a foreign language seem to read with less understanding than one might expect them to have, and they read considerably slower than they reportedly read in their first language". Results of research which compared reading in two languages supported what Alderson said above. For example, John Macnamara (1968:41-53) first found that "fifth and sixth grade children solved their problems equally adequately in their two languages --- English and Irish, but took a longer time to do so in their weaker language, that is Irish". Then in an experiment with English/French bilingual, Macnamara (1970:107-116) found differences between reading in the native and reading in the second language in the rate at which individual words and sentence structures are interpreted.

Students "determined the meanings of individual words more rapidly in their native than in their second language" and "the interpretation of syntax is performed more rapidly in the native tongue". Overall, very frequently, reading in the second language is more difficult and less efficient than reading in one's own language. Here we have to ask what has caused this difference? In other words, what are the problems that S/FL readers have in their reading?

From the analysis of the L1 reading process we have got to know that to be able to read in a language the reader must know the language, have adequate background knowledge, and that he needs to be able to use appropriate reading skills to suit different reading situations. No one can be a fluent reader if he cannot satisfy these requirements. It seems therefore that here might lie the problems that cause the difference between L1 and L2 reading. In the following section I am going to discuss the differences or problems in some detail in these three respects, namely, language competence, background knowledge and reading strategies.

3.2.1 Difference In Language Competence

Compared with the research of L1 reading, it is surprising that there is not much research of L2 reading. Nevertheless, most of the research carried out emphasizes the importance of language competence in second language reading.

Ian Uliji (1980), after analysing the relevance of L1 psycholinguistic models for L2, claimed that "there is one striking difference from L1 in that L2 reading is hindered by imperfect knowledge of L2 and interference from L1". Tom Hudson (1982:1-21), when analysing the components of breakdown in L2 reading, mentioned language competence as the first component, stating that "the first component is composed of basal elements such as letter and word recognition, phoneme-grapheme correspondence, and recognition of the lexical, syntactic, semantic and discourse linguistic relationships which are presented through the text". Yorio (1971:107-119) used Goodman's view of reading as a selective process to analyze foreign language reading and came to the conclusion that "reading, then, involves one of the following factors: (1) knowledge of the language [code]; (2) ability to predict or guess in order to make correct choices; (3) ability to remember the previous cues and (4) ability to make the necessary associations between the different cues that have been selected".

He then went on to expound the problems in foreign language reading. As he

explained, "when reading in a foreign language, these factors are being somewhat modified and new elements appear: (1) the reader's knowledge of the foreign language is not like that of the native speaker; (2) the guessing or predicting ability necessary to pick up the correct cues is hindered by imperfect knowledge of the language; (3) the wrong choice of cues or the uncertainty of the choice makes association more difficult; (4) due to unfamiliarity with the material and lack of training, the memory span in a foreign language in the early stages of its acquisition is usually shorter than the native language; re-correction of previous cues is more difficult in a foreign language than the native tongue and (5) at all levels and at all times, there is interference of the native language". Here it is obvious that though Yorio mentioned five elements which make S/FL reading different from L1 reading, the fundamental element is language competence, from which the other four elements result. Inadequate language knowledge causes the other problems.

To sum up what we are discussing here, reading, as Fries (1963:186) claimed, is a "type of linguistic performance. It is a type of linguistic response that depends first of all upon the language control achieved by each particular reader. Without the knowledge of the language one cannot learn to read. One must begin with and build upon the habits of that precise language control". No doubt, before one reaches a certain level of his S/FL competence he will have great difficulty in reading in that language.

When talking about language competence, one usually has four elements of knowledge in mind, that is phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical knowledge (W. Klein 1986:47-68). And in reading, especially when one's concern is mainly in fluent silent reading, one may neglect the phonological aspect of the language and emphasize the other three elements, or in more general terms, the vocabulary and grammar, with different parts of morphology combined with vocabulary and grammar respectively. Therefore, the language competence is regarded as an adequate knowledge of vocabulary and syntax. However, often teachers find that even when students know the words and sentence structure of

the target language they are still unable to understand what they are reading, so besides their language competence (which I will return to later in more detail) there must be other problems which hinder the reading comprehension of the students. These other problems may be the background knowledge and reading strategies the students employ.

3.2.2   Difference In Cultural Background Knowledge

In analysing the characteristics of the fluent reader in the native language, it was pointed out that in reading the brain supplies more information than it receives from the eye about the text. The proficient reader must draw on his experiential conceptual background in order to supply a semantic component to the message, and his ability to grasp the logical organization of a text is firmly rooted in his prior knowledge of the topic and of the world.

Prior knowledge, especially cultural background knowledge, becomes more important in S/FL reading. The student cannot go far into the target language without facing differences in cultural meanings, because the meanings expressed in a language are largely culturally determined. One cannot understand a language fully without understanding at least some of the distinct cultural meanings expressed through it. Many a reading teacher has had the maddening experience of students who appear to understand every sentence and yet cannot answer the simplest question about a passage as a whole - Does the author like it? Is he for or against it? etc. Broad comprehension problems like this, as Eskey (1973:169-183) believed, are "usually caused either by the straight-forward cultural conflict of some kind (the writer's message is either inconceivable, or totally unacceptable to the reader), or by the reader's missing the writer's rhetorical orientation". Since rhetoric varies from culture to culture, the foreign reader of English, no matter how advanced, may miss or misinterpret the rhetorical signals. These rhetorical signals for example establish the writer's purpose, his attitude towards his subject and the logical strategy by which he structures his text. We have to admit that background knowledge of the culture of the target language

makes S/FL reading more complicated and difficult than L1 reading, and the lack of knowledge of the culture of the target language may even cause the comprehension of a text to collapse completely.

Margaret S. Stefensen and Chitra Joag-Dev (1984:48-61) carried out an experiment on the effect of difference in culture on reading comprehension. This experiment, according to Alderson et al (1984:62), appears to be the first to produce firm empirical evidence of the idea that cultural knowledge plays a part in second language reading comprehension. In this experiment the subjects were 20 Americans and 20 Indians, and the material was two texts in the form of two letters written by two people, one describing a traditional American wedding and the other a typical Indian wedding. Subjects read a warm-up passage, then one of the experimental texts. After a filter task which was expected to inhibit short-term memory, they were asked to recall the letter about the wedding. Finally they were asked a number of questions on the text. The same sequence was repeated with the second wedding text.

The results of the experiment proved the predictions of the experimenters. Subjects recalled more of the native text than the foreign text: Americans' recall of the gist of the native passage was 52.4 versus 37.9 of the gist recall of the Indian passage. For the Indians the mean performance was 37.6 versus 27.3. Subjects produced more culturally appropriate expansion of the native text than the foreign text: for the Americans the mean performance score was 5.7 versus 0.1, and for Indians 5.4 versus 0.3. Also subjects produced more distortion of the foreign text than the native one: here for the Americans 7.6 versus 0.1 and for the Indians 5.5 versus 0.3. Another interesting factor of the experiment is that subjects were able to read the passage based on their own culture more rapidly than the passage based on the foreign culture. For the Indians the reading time was 276 secs. versus 304 secs., and for the Americans the reading time was 168 secs. versus 213 secs. Here the reading speed shows not only clearly that cultural knowledge facilitates reading comprehension, but also that reading in a second language is more difficult than reading in the first language, since the Indians read

both passages more slowly because both passages were in English, their second language.

The importance of background knowledge can also be explained by the schemata theory. Schemata, as defined by H.G. Widdowson (1983:54), are "cognitive constructs or configurations of knowledge we place over events so as to bring them into alignment with familiar pattern of experience and belief. They therefore serve as devices for categorizing and arranging information so that it can be interpreted and arranged. Schemata, as Anderson et al (1977) explained, "represent the generic concepts underlying objects, events and actions. Schemata are abstract in the sense that they contain a 'variable', 'slot' or 'place holder' for each constituent element in the knowledge structure."

According to the schemata theory, when one is comprehending a message he is filling the slots in the appropriate schemata with what he has got from the message. In other words, he is constructing correspondence between relevant schemata and the givens in the message, and when he has constructed this correspondence, he has the sense that the message has been comprehended. Dominant high-level schemata are often imposed on the text, causing people to understand a passage in a certain way. It follows that the schemata by which the reader assimilates the text are incongruent with the schemata of the author embodied in the text. Intrusion from the reader's knowledge of the world will cause distortion of the message of the text. "Schemata knowledge is not only engaged to process incoming information by relating it retrospectively to established patterns, it also works prospectively to project anticipations about what is to come" (Widdowson 1983:61).

Therefore when the content and its manner of organization is familiar to the reader he can read very fast without any problem in comprehension, for in this situation "the act of reading does not involve so much the accumulation of new knowledge as the confirmation of predictions that are based on what is already known" (ibid). But when the content and its manner of organization is unfamiliar

to the reader, his anticipation based on schematic projections about what is to come may be denied and this will disturb normality of reading and cause the reader to keep changing his frame of reference so that he cannot settle into secure predictions. The result is that the reader slows his speed, making a lot of regressions and reappraisals and that he may misinterpret or even fail to understand the message at all. Here the schemata explains why there is such a difference between the American and Indian subjects in reading these two passages about different national weddings.

Brought up and educated in their own culture, the foreign readers have their own patterns of behaviour, basic underlying values and attitudes, connotations of words in different contexts and different world knowledge. When they observe the culture of the target language, because of schematic knowledge, they unwittingly tend to interpret what they observe as having the same purposes and significance as in their native patterns of behaviour. When the two cultures differ in manner or the significance of actions, the 'outsiders' misunderstand. Furthermore, since their patterns of action and their association with particular significance are mostly matters of habit that operate below the thresholds of awareness, they are apt to persist in their misunderstanding of the target culture (R. Lado 1964:28). Therefore reading in a S/FL is different from and more difficult than reading in the native language.

3.3 Reading Strategies

The third point to discuss here is whether there is any difference between L1 and S/FL reading in the reader's use of reading strategies, or in other words whether reading skills and habits are transferable from one language to another, and whether a better L1 reader is a better S/FL reader in their use of reading strategies.

There are actually three different viewpoints to this question. Some linguists believe in the transferability of reading skills, thus claiming that "success in

learning the reading of a foreign language can be best achieved through the teaching of reading skills in the mother tongue" (M.D. Al-Rufai 1975:236-241). Others, such as Yorio (1971), believe that success in reading is directly related to the learner's degree of proficiency in that language, and thus the shortest route to reading competence in the foreign language is intensive work on that language core itself, and they seem to have no belief in the transferability of reading skills. Thirdly some linguists, such as Clarke (1980) and Alderson (1984), believe that reading skill transfer does take place, but the learner's level of proficiency in the target language sets limits on the degree of skill transferability, posing the existence of a language competence ceiling which causes the reader to adopt an array of strategies typical of the poor reader.

The present experiment, the result of which I am going to analyze in the following chapters, is an attempt to test whether reading ability can be transferred from reading in Chinese to reading in English as a foreign language. Quite a few experiments have already been conducted by some linguists to compare the reading in the native language and the reading in the foreign/second language. These comparisons however were made between languages which are somewhat similar, such as English and Spanish, English and French, English and Dutch etc., but few have been conducted to compare reading between such drastically different languages as Chinese and English. This contrastive comparison experiment is a preliminary attempt of the writer to gain some insight into the possibility of reading ability transfer of Chinese-speaking learners of English. One experiment is impossible to compare the comprehensive reading ability in these two languages, and therefore, the emphasis of this experiment is on the reading ability transferability of three sub-skills of reading.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHOD OF THE EXPERIMENT OF READING ABILITY
TRANSFER OF CHINESE-SPEAKING LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

4.1   Purpose Of The Experiment

In teaching English as a foreign language in China, whether it is in middle schools or in the universities or colleges, reading   is regarded as the most important skill in mastering the language, and is given primary attention in teaching. However, the view of teachers on how to teach their students this ability differs from one to another. Some believe that English language competence, or the knowledge of the target language is everything. To them a good knowledge of the language enables a student to be an efficient reader. This point implies that the skill of reading can transfer from the mother tongue to the foreign language automatically. Others believe that though knowledge of the target language is important, the training of skills in the foreign language is of equal importance. To them a student with a fairly good knowledge of the language but without good reading skills and good reading habits cannot be an efficient reader in the target language. This view gives some indication to the impossibility of the transfer of reading skills from one language to another.

The following experiment is designed with the hope of getting to know something about the reading ability transfer from Chinese to English as a foreign language. Here the experiment concentrates on the possibility of transfer of some of the reading skills, namely the skills of detailed fast reading, skimming and scanning, and making full use of cues available in understanding what one is reading.

The possible results which we might expect to come out from this experiment are:

1) We might find no correlation at all between reading in Chinese and reading in English. In other words, those who did well in reading in Chinese didn't

necessarily do well in English. If this were the case we might assume that Chinese and English were two entirely different fields of knowledge and ability. Though the reading process might be somewhat alike, as suggested by the reading hypothesis, the reading ability might remain unlikely to transfer from Chinese to English.

2) We might find a strong correlation between the reading ability in the two languages. The result would lead us to believe that there was a possible transfer of skills and therefore the native language should be considered in improving students' reading ability in English.

3) We may find that there was a positive transfer of reading ability but this transfer was conditioned by some factors.

4) We might find that there was a strong correlation between reading ability in English and the English language proficiency of the students. This sort of result would lead us to assume that language proficiency played a critical role in improving reading ability and the teachers' main task, then, should be to increase the students' knowledge of the target language.

4.2. The Sample

This experiment involved testing three groups of subjects. Namely, postgraduates in English, second-year English majors and first-year non-English majors.

4.2.1 The Postgraduate Group

There are fifteen subjects in this group. They are all postgraduates in the department of foreign languages and literature in Southwest-China Teachers' University. All of them have had four years' formal University training in English as a foreign language, and have succeeded in passing the entrance exam for postgraduate studies and are now pursuing their postgraduate course. Judged by

their education, they, as a whole group, are regarded to have the highest level of English amongst all the subjects in this experiment. Although they may be somewhat different individually in their language competence since they are now in different years of postgraduate studies.

4.2.2   Second-Year English Major Group

In this group there are sixteen subjects who are now studying in the same class in the department mentioned above. They all have one and a half years' formal university training in English. Judged by their experience of English learning, they, as a group, are regarded to be weaker in the target language competence than the postgraduate group.

4.2.3   First-Year Non-English Major Group

This group has twenty two subjects, who are all majors in the science of politics, studying in the same university as the subjects of the other two groups. As they are not English majors they had only four hours of English training each week since they entered the university six months ago. As a result, their English language competence, as a whole group, is regarded as the weakest among these three experimental groups.

4.3   Tests

During the whole experiment three kinds of tests were conducted with all the subjects in both Chinese and English, so as to contrast their reading abilities in the two languages. The detailed fast reading test aims to test the reading speed and comprehension rate of the subjects. The cloze test with deletions at random aims to check how well the subjects can make use of cues available from the context in their efforts to understand what they are reading. Two fast reading test is given to see whether they can use the skills of skimming and scanning to locate specific information. This is in essence to test whether they are able to change their

reading speed and manner to satisfy the requirements of different reading situations.

4.4   Instrumentation

For this contrasting reading experiment, three Chinese reading passages and six English reading passages were chosen to test how well the subjects with different levels of English language competence used reading skills to understand what they were reading in different reading situations.

4.4.1   Three Chinese Passages

Passage 1: A newspaper report
Passage 2: An academic article on Chinese rhetoric
Passage 3: A newspaper comment

Passage 1 was taken from THE PEOPLE'S DAILY of the 15th June, 1979. With its approximate 1327 characters, it reports how a toy factory improved the quality of its product, toy pandas, and succeeded in making it sell well on foreign markets. After the passage there are 10 multiple choice comprehension questions to check the readers understanding of the main points of the report.

Passage 2 is a rather long article of about 3476 characters written by a Chinese expert on the importance and the ways to learn Chinese rhetoric so as to improve writing and reading ability. It is taken from a reference book for students of the Chinese language and for those who want to improve their basic skills in writing. Though it is an academic article it is very easy to read and understand. The subjects are required to find two answers from this article as quickly as they can. One question is: Which factors are essential to one's writing ability? The answer to which is found right at the beginning of the article, the second question is: What is the key to learning Chinese rhetoric? the answer to which is the first point in the third part of the article.

Passage 3 is a cloze passage with every sixth word deleted. The original passage is a short newspaper comment taken from THE CHENGDU EVENING PAPER of October the 31st, 1987. It comments briefly on the correct attitude toward old people in China. The passage has 347 characters, or 198 words. 58 characters, or 33 words, are deleted from it, that is to say that for some blanks two or even three characters are required. This is indeed very different from the English cloze passage, in which the requirement is always one word one blank. To explain this difference we have to say a few words about the Chinese language, more exactly, on the three terms concerning the Chinese vocabulary, namely, 'character', 'morpheme' and 'word'.

Chinese language is a language which consists mainly of two syllable words. A Chinese character usually represents only one syllable. A Chinese word may have only one syllable, that is only one character, or it may be made up of two or even more syllables or characters. When a word contains two or more than two characters, the characters are then called morphemes. Therefore in the Chinese language a character may be a morpheme or may be a word. To put it another way, a Chinese word may have only one character containing one syllable or it may consist of two or more morphemes. Now let us look at this Chinese sentence: 老人事业是一项社会性事业。In this sentence we have twelve characters or six words. The word '事业' consists of two characters or two morphemes and the word '是' has only one character. To explain it more clearly let us look at another example. In the Chinese sentence: '我想喝水。' (I want to drink water), '水' is a word which means 'water' in English, and in the sentence: '地很平' (The ground is very flat.) '平' is also a word meaning 'flat' in English. They both have only one syllable and so can be called 'word' or 'character' in Chinese. However, in the sentence: '这篇文章达到先进学术水平' (The article has reached the advanced academic level.), '水' and '平' are no longer separate words, they are now two morphemes in this sentence. Together they form a word '水平', which means 'level' or 'standard' in English. The greater part of Chinese vocabulary is made up of words containing two syllables or two morphemes. This is one of the main

characteristics of the Chinese language. That explains why in the cloze passage for most of the blanks there are two or even more spaces, indicating that the blank requires a two-syllable word or a word with even more syllables.

4.4.2   Six English Passages

Passage 1: Ants

Passage 2: Making Leather

Passage 3: A List of Abbreviations Of Languages

Passage 4: How To Mark A Book

Passage 5: The Tricks

Passage 6: Skills

Among these six passages the first two are used for the detailed fast reading test, Passages three and four for the test of skimming and scanning and the last two are for the cloze test. Because of the wide range of the English level of the subjects, for the detailed fast reading and the cloze test, two different passages were chosen for each test according to the level of difficulty in the language, the first one being much easier than the second one, so as to suit the different levels of the subjects. Passages three and four were chosen not for their different levels of language but because they are different kinds of material that can both be used to test the skills of skimming and scanning. Passage 3 is a list of abbreviations of languages and passage 4 is a fairly long article about marking a book. From both of these the subjects are required to find answers to the questions raised at the beginning of each of the passages.

4.4.2.1   Text Difficulty level of Passages 1 and 2

Passage 1, as mentioned above, is easier than Passage 2. This can be proved from the following two aspects.

First, when comparing their vocabularies with that required of middle school

Chinese learners of English by the Middle School English Syllabus, we see that only about 2% words of Passage 1 are beyond the required vocabulary while 13% words of Passage 2 are beyond the required vocabulary. In other words, Passage 2 has a higher level of difficulty with regard to vocabulary.

Second, though the percentages of complex and compound sentences are, by chance, the same, the average sentence length of Passage 2 is much longer than that of Passage 1, the difference being almost 10 words.

With more words beyond the vocabulary required by the English Syllabus and with sentences much longer, Passage 2 is no doubt of a higher level of difficulty.

4.4.2.2   Text Difficulty Level Of Passages 5 and 6

Passages 5 and 6 are cloze texts. When we analyze the complete texts, we find that their vocabularies are both within the required vocabulary by Middle School Syllabus and their average sentence lengths are almost the same, 7.5 words and 7.1 words respectively. However judged from the sentence complexity and especially the deletion rate, Passage 6 is more difficult than Passage 5. Passage 6 has 12% more compound and complex sentences and its deletion frequency is 2 words less than that of Passage 5.

4.5   Procedure

The whole experiment was organized and administered in the following way:

1) The subjects were divided into three groups according to their years of English training as mentioned above and they took the tests separately at a different time. Since there were nine reading passages for the subject to read it might have been better to divide the experiment into two parts so that the subjects could do one part at a time, this would stop the entire test being too long and too tiring. However, because of the difficulty in arranging the test time, for the subjects

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were all at that time busy preparing for their final examination of the term, all the three tests with nine passages had to be given at one time.

2) The order of the tests for all the three groups was the same as the following:
    a) Detailed fast reading test in Chinese (CDFT)
    b) Test of skimming and scanning in Chinese (CTSS)
    c) Cloze test in Chinese (CCT)
    d) Detailed fast reading test in English (EDFT):
       First Passage 1 and then Passage 2
    e) Test of skimming and scanning in English (ETSS):
       First passage 3 and then Passage 4
    f) Cloze test in English (ECT):
       First Passage 5 and then Passage 6

3) Before having the tests the purpose for this experiment and the requirements for each type of test were explained in Chinese to the non-English majors and in English to the English majors and the postgraduates.

4) The subjects were required to do all of the tests at their own reading speed and to write down their starting and finishing times for each test themselves. The test papers were handed out to them one by one, separately and respectively according to their different speed of finishing each paper. For example, when one subject finished reading the Chinese detailed fast reading passage he raised his hand and the teacher then went to his seat, collected the reading passage and gave him the question sheet. I was helped by another teacher of English in the administration of the experiment for the second year English major group and the first year non-English major group.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Results Of The Experiment

5.1.1 Result Of The Chinese Part For All Three Groups Tables 1-3 give the mean scores and the mean time of the three different groups of students, EP(English postgraduates), EM (second-year English majors) and NEM (non-English majors) on the three kinds of Chinese tests.

The mean time is given in minutes and decimal parts of minutes (i.e. rather than seconds). For instance, 3.27 means 3.27 minutes or 3 minutes and 16 seconds.

The mean score is calculated by using the 100-point system. For the test of skimming and scanning the number given in the row labelled "%" is the percentage of the subjects who got the full mark for the test.

Detailed Fast Reading Test

Group	EP	EM	NEM
Mean time	3.27	2.51	3.22
Mean score	70.67	61.25	57.72

Table 1

Test of Skimming and Scanning

Group	EP	EM	NEM
Mean time	36.54	6.01	4.99
Mean score	73%	75%	95%

Table 2
(Note here the number in the row headed % indicated the
percentage of the subjects in each group who got the

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full mark for the Chinese skimming and scanning test.)

Cloze Test

Group	EP	EM	NEM
Mean time	9.76	5.58	7.38
Mean score	54.94	55.69	55.67

Table 3

5.1.2 Results Of The English Part For All Three Groups

The following three tables give the mean score and the mean time of each group in the three types of English test. The mean time is also noted in minutes and the mean score for the Detailed Fast Reading and Cloze Tests are given in point. For the tests of skimming and scanning what is given is not the mean score but the percentage of subjects who got the full mark for the first English test of skimming and scanning and the percentage of subject who got four or five points (full marks) for the second English skimming and scanning test.

P2, P2 etc. refer to the tests using the first passage, the second passage etc. of the test material.

English Detailed Fast Reading

Groups		EP	EM	NEM
P1	Mean time	5.35	7.13	8.97
	Mean score	77.33	63.75	59.54
P2	Mean time	5.54	5.78	8.6
	Mean score	68.67	45	33.18

Table 4

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Test of Skimming and Scanning

Groups		EP	EM	NEM
P3	Mean time	3.45	3.31	6.12
	Mean %	92%	69%	50%
P4	Mean time	6.47	8.03	10.38
	Mean %	93%	81%	59%

Table 5

Cloze Test

Groups		EP	EM	NEM
P5	Mean time	4.85	5.62	8.97
	Mean score	59.13	51	36.36
P6	Mean time	8.07	9.11	13.47
	Mean score	61.07	47.5	32.45

Table 6

What the above tables show is a general picture of the reading ability of our three groups of subjects in both their native language - Chinese, and their foreign language - English, in using the skills of detailed fast reading, skimming and scanning and the skill of making use of all kinds of cues available in comprehension. The results of the Chinese tests show that though they are at different stages of education, their Chinese reading ability seems to have nothing to do with this. For example, postgraduates are not necessarily better than the undergraduates, and the first-year undergraduates are not necessarily weaker than the postgraduates and second-year undergraduates. However, the average ability of the groups in reading English differs from one and other in a fixed pattern which is closely related to their years of training in the English language. As

was expected, the postgraduates were definitely better than the other two groups, and the non-English majors appeared to be the weakest in all three skills. I shall return to this point in more detail later in the thesis.

5.2   Analysis Of The Result

The main purpose of this experiment is to find whether there is any correlation between reading in the native language and reading in the foreign language. Therefore, we are now going to analyze the results so as to get the correlational coefficients which indicate the correlation.

How can we compare the two reading abilities of our subjects? As we all know, there are two important factors in reading, namely reading speed and comprehension. Speed is an important factor in reading, as it is more efficient to achieve one's purpose in a shorter time. By definition, a faster reader reads more than a slower reader. However, speed is by no means the only factor in reading. As N.B. Smith (1958:39) pointed out in READING FASTER, "ability to cover words rapidly is quite valueless unless the reader gathers meaning as his eyes travel over the print." He emphasized speed and comprehension as well. In the light of this, reading efficiency, or reading ability, may be defined as a function of reading comprehension and speed of reading. In this experiment, to do a correlational analysis, we must first of all get to know the reading ability of each subject. In fact, all our tests involve these two factors, and from each test we can get two figures for each person, that is, the score he has got in a test and the time he has spent in finishing that reading task. If we can obtain the figure which shows how many points each subject obtains per minute, I believe this figure, which involves both speed and comprehension rate, can tell us a subject's reading achievement in a particular reading situation and thus can indicate his reading ability.

To obtain this figure we followed the steps below in calculation:

1) The scores of each subject in all tests were changed to the 100-point system. For example, if one subject got 7 questions right for DFT he got seventy points. If he filled in 12 out of the 19 blanks with exact response he got 63 points. If he got the right answer for TTS he got 100 points. In the cloze test, the exact-response method of scoring was used instead of the acceptable-response method. This is because the exact-response method of scoring is less difficult and less time consuming to carry out and, more importantly, because according to experiments such as those of Swain et al (1976), there is a high correlation between these two methods, and so an exact-response method is indeed as satisfactory as the acceptable-response method.

2) The score each person got for each test was divided by the time he used in the test. The result is the score each student obtained per minute for that test, which, as was explained above, can indicate one's reading achievement or hopefully one's reading ability in that particular reading task. (See Appendix 1 for the raw data of each subject.)

Since we have obtained the figures that can indicate one's reading achievement in each test, we can now carry on the correlational analysis by using these figures. The analysis was carried out from different angles so as to have a comprehensive analysis.

5.2.1   Correlational Analysis For All The Subjects As One Group

Ignoring the difference of years spent learning the English language (which is the only criteria used here to divide the subjects into different groups) we will now view the subjects as a single group, and calculate the correlational coefficients for each test on the calculator by using the figures we have got for each person in each type of test. We know that there is only one Chinese test, but two English tests in each type of test. For DFT and CT we first added the points per minute of the two English tests together for each subject and then compared the total with the corresponding Chinese result. The correlational coefficients are as follows:

$$\text{DET: } r = -0.03 \qquad \text{CT: } r = 0.05$$

For TSS we used the same method of calculation with the only difference being that the results of two English test were not added up. This is because, unlike the other two tests, the material for the two English TSS were not chosen for their level of difficulty in the language but because they are two different kinds of material suitable to test the skills of scanning and skimming. Therefore the results of these two ETSSs were compared with that of the Chinese TSS separately and the results of the calculation are:

Chinese TSS : English TSS 1: $r = -0.04$

Chinese TSS : English TSS 2: $r = 0.09$

One thing must be explained here. There are 15 subjects in the postgraduate group, but for the comparison of the Chinese TSS and the English TSS 1 only the data of 13 of them was used. This is because the times of the remaining two subjects, that is 0.9 m. and 0.68 m. respectively, are too short to be reliable. It seems unbelievable that these two subjects could finish all five questions within so short a time. I tried the tests myself, imagining myself to be a subject, and it took me a little more than a minute. It seems that they must have made a mistake in noting the exact time. Therefore I had to exclude these two results from the sample for this test and used the data of the other 13 subjects. For the same reason one subject in the second-year English major group was also excluded.

The coefficients obtained show that there is absolutely no correlation in all types of test between the Chinese reading ability and the English reading ability when all the subjects were regarded as one single group.

5.2.2 Correlational Analysis For Each Group

Since all the subjects were divided into three groups according to their different years of English training, let us now see whether there is any relation between the two reading abilities within each group. We used the same way as we did before and the results are as follows:

English Postgraduate Group

$$DET: \quad r = -0.21$$
$$CT: \quad r = 0.59 > r\ 0.05\ (13) = 0.51$$
$$TSS\ 1: \quad r = 0.58 > r\ 0.05\ (11) = 0.55$$
$$TSS\ 2: \quad r = 0.58 > r.0.05\ (13) = 0.51$$

Second-Year English Major Group

$$DET: \quad r = 0.03$$
$$CT: \quad r = 0.33$$
$$TSS\ 1: \quad r = -0.02$$
$$TSS\ 2: \quad r = 0.30$$

First-Year Non-English Major Group

$$DET: \quad r = -0.32$$
$$CT: \quad r = 0.37$$
$$TSS\ 1: \quad r = 0.30$$
$$TSS\ 2: \quad r = -0.10$$

5.2.3   Comparison Of Comprehensive Reading Abilities In Chinese
         And English Of Subjects In Each Group

The above two ways compared only each subject's separate reading achievement for each test. Now let us see what happens when we compare the two reading abilities in their entirety, instead   of in the separate reading skills. This analysis was for the purpose of dividing the subjects into good L1 readers and poor L1 readers and then finding out whether the good L1 readers hold a superiority over the poor L1 readers in their reading in English.

The analysis was carried out in the following way:

1) Added up the 6 figures (score per minute) of each subject for the 6 English tests and the 3 figures (score per minute) for the Chinese tests respectively. The pair of figures resulted from this calculation is believed to indicate the subject's comprehensive reading achievement in this experiment.

2) Calculated the mean score per minute of the Chinese tests and the result is

53.49. Those who got points above the mean score per minute are thus regarded as good L1 readers.

3) In each group the mean scores for the English tests for good L1 readers as a whole and poor L1 readers as a whole were calculated separately and the results we have found are:

English Postgraduate Group

Good L1 readers:	118.66
Poor L1 readers:	99.54
difference:	19.12

Second-Year English Major Group

Good L1 readers:	74.13
Poor L1 readers:	71.32
difference:	2.81

First-Year Non-English Major Group

Good L1 readers:	42.56
Poor L1 readers:	39.42
difference:	3.14

5.3   A Brief Summary Of The Above Results Of Analysis

5.3.1   All The Subjects As A Single Group

In order to see whether there is any correlation between their ability in reading Chinese and in reading English, when time of their English training was on purpose not taken into consideration, we put these three groups together as one single group and calculated the coefficients for each type of test by using each subject's score per minute for each kind of test. It was discovered that all the coefficients are very low and not significant at all.

5.3.2   Correlation Within Different Groups

5.3.2.1   Comparison Of Achievement In Each Test Within The Group

Although there is no correlation at all when we considered all the subjects with different years in English training as a whole group, is reading in English related to reading in Chinese within the different groups? The answer is both 'yes' and 'no'. The result of analysis shows that for the English majors and the non-English majors there is no relation between their abilities in reading these two languages. Put it in another way, the coefficients failed to indicate any signs of reading skill transfer for the subjects in these two groups. The highest coefficient among those 8 coefficients is 0.37 in CT of the non English major group, yet it is below the level of r0.05 = 0.42 and thus, is not significant.

What is interesting here is the result of the correlational analysis of the postgraduate group. For this group there is no correlation between their ability in fast detailed reading, the coefficient being only -0.21. For further comparison, the coefficient between Chinese DFT and English DFT 1 and that between Chinese DFT and English DFT 2 were calculated. Still no correlation was discovered, the coefficients being -0.20 and 0.10 respectively. This implies that whether they read the passage on their easy side or the more difficult one there is no sign of reading skill transfer in detailed fast reading.

However, when it comes to the skill of skimming and scanning and making use of cues available in comprehension, there appeared something that is very interesting and encouraging. The results show that there is a positive correlation in reading in the native and the foreign language for these English postgraduates. The coefficients for the two TSSs are, interesting enough, both 0.58, which is not high, nevertheless it is significant on the level of r0.05(13)=0.51 and r0.05(11)=0.55. And the coefficient for CT is 0.59. We further compared the result of the Chinese cloze test and the results of the two English cloze tests separately and found that the coefficient for CCT and ECT 1 is 0.52 and that for CCT and ECT 2 is 0.56. That is to say, the result of the easy English cloze test correlated at a lower level with the result of the Chinese cloze test than the result of the more difficult cloze test, and the coefficient even dropped a little and became almost as equal as the significant level of r0.05(13)=0.51. This phenomenon is really hard to explain.

Further investigation is needed before any possible explanation can be given. Anyway, here the correlation between the Chinese CT and the English CTS is positive.

What the coefficients of the three kinds of reading activities suggests is that reading ability transfer seems to work better with some reading subskills, that is to say, when subjects were using the skill of skimming and scanning to locate specific information and when they were using cues available from the text to understand what they were reading, reading ability transfer did occur. They could use good L1 reading strategy to help with the reading task in the foreign language. However, when they were doing detailed fast reading, that is, when they were forced to read fast, understand the whole passage and at the same time remember what was being read, reading ability transfer did not happen. It might be that there may simply be no correlation to be found as regards to the skill of detailed fast reading or there may be some factors that inhibit the transfer of reading ability. We shall go into this later in the analysis of possible transfer variables.

5.3.2.2 Comparison Of The Comprehensive Reading Abilities Within The Groups

When we compared within the groups the two comprehensive reading abilities, something interesting was also found. The good L1 readers in each group maintained a superiority in English reading over the poor L1 readers. However, the differences between the poor and good L1 readers in the second-year English major group and first-year non-English major group, which are 2.81 and 3.14 respectively, are really too small to be of any significance and the small difference may be explained as chance variation. Nevertheless, the difference between good and poor L1 readers in the postgraduate group, which is 19.12, could positively mean that the good L1 readers maintained their superiority in the foreign language reading and as a group the good L1 readers may be said to be better foreign language readers than the poor L1 readers.

5.4   Further Analysis Of The English Cloze Tests

The Chinese and English cloze tests were analyzed before with the purpose of finding out the correlativity between the ability of subjects in using cues available from the context in Chinese and English. The result shows a positive tendency of correlation. Now the English cloze tests can be analysed in another way so as to find out the difference, if any, between those three groups of subjects in their ability to use semantic and syntactic cues.

The ability to use semantic and syntactic cues is an important factor which can indicate objectively the language competence of the subjects. Usually in the development of language competence, as Yorio (1971:109-119) believed, adult readers very seldom or never have any difficulty with the grammatical structure of their own language. Most native speakers learn rather quickly all the possible syntactical structures in the natural development of their acquisition as part of the language system. However, lexical items are not acquired as part of the system of the language in the same way that grammatical structures are. "The acquisition of vocabulary depends very much on education and to a certain extent on the degree of sophistication and the personal experience of the speaker. It is the same with second/foreign language learners. Comparatively speaking, the learning of vocabulary is more difficult than syntax, and it follows that the use of semantic cues is more difficult than the use of syntactic cues in reading" (Yorio loc cit). Now let us take a look at how our subjects used syntactic and semantic cues in the English cloze test.

For the cloze tests the answers were first scored for exact-word replacement, that is the response was considered correct if it was the correctly spelt word originally deleted from the text. The scores obtained in this way have already been used in the correlational analysis described in detail above. Now to know how they used semantic and syntactic cues, all the non-exact responses were evaluated again using Clarke's analysis tool, simplified by putting the responses which are acceptable with the following or preceding portion of the sentence together into one grade so as to make grading easier. The analysis tool is as follows:

Syntactic Acceptability

3   totally acceptable
2   acceptable in the sentence; the response satisfies sentence-level syntactic constraints, but violates discourse constraints.
1   acceptable only with the following portion or the preceding portion of the sentence; the sentence is syntactically acceptable from the response up to and including the response.
0   totally unacceptable

Semantic Acceptability

5   totally acceptable
4   totally semantically acceptable if the minor syntactic constraints are ignored; the sentence and/or the response requires minor syntactic changes.
3   acceptable in the sentence; the response violates passage-level meaning constraints.
2   acceptable in the sentence if syntactic constraints are ignored; the sentence and/or the response requires minor syntactic changes to become acceptable at the sentence level.
1   acceptable only with the following or the preceding portion of the sentence from the response on or up to and including the response, the sentence is acceptable.
0   totally unacceptable   (M. Clarke 1978:125)

The following tables indicate the total results of the two English cloze tests for all three groups.

ENGLISH CLOZE TEST 1

(exact res. = exact word responses
tot accept = totally acceptable
tot unaccep = totally unacceptable
res. for analysis = remaining responses for analysis)

English Postgraduate Group

	exact res.	tot accep	tot unaccep	blank	res.for analysis
No	169	57	6	1	52
%	59%	20%	2%	0.4%	18%

Table 7

Second-Year English Major Groups

	exact res.	tot accep	tot unaccep	blank	res.for analysis
No	155	61	15	1	72
%	51%	20%	5%	0.3%	24%

Table 8

First-Year Non-English Major Group

	exact res.	tot accep	tot unaccep	blank	res.for analysis
No	152	68	46	12	140
%	36%	16%	11%	3%	33%

Table 9

ENGLISH CLOZE TEST 2

Postgraduate Group

	exact res.	tot accep	tot unaccep	blank	res.for analysis
No	301	65	14	5	110
%	61%	13%	3%	1%	22%

Table 10

Second-Year English Major Group

	exact res.	tot accep	tot unaccep	blank	res.for analysis
No	254	54	37	11	172
%	48%	10%	7%	2 %	33%

Table 11

	exact res.	tot accep	tot unaccep	blank	res.for analysis
No	240	79	104	49	254
%	33%	11%	14%	7%	35%

Table 12

The above 6 tables show the general situation of all the three groups in the two English cloze tests. Judging by the percentages of the totally unacceptable responses and blanks which are 2.4%, 5.3%, 14% of the first cloze test and 4%, 9% and 21% of the second cloze test for EP, EM and NEM respectively, the postgraduates do maintain a superiority over the other two groups. To get to know more clearly how well these groups used semantic and syntactic cues and what the difference was among them in their ability to use semantic and syntactic cues, the remaining responses, namely, those below the code category syntax 3 and semantics 5, were further analyzed and compared. The results are shown by the following two tables.

CLOZE TEST 1

	res.for analysis	Sem. Accep				Syn.Accep		
		S4	S3-2	S1	S0	G3	G2-1	G0
EP	52/18%	15%	50%	29%	6%	69%	27%	4%
EM	72/24%	10%	53%	34%	3%	82%	14%	4%
NEM	140/33%	9%	34%	44%	14%	69%	24%	6%

Table 13

CLOZE TEST 2

	res.for analysis	Sem. Accep				Syn.Accep		
		S4	S3-2	S1	S0	G3	G2-1	G0
EP	110/22%	5.5%	70%	22%	3%	87%	5.5%	7%
EM	172/33%	3.5%	53.5%	26%	16%	85%	9%	5%
NEM	254/35%	5%	53%	28%	14%	72%	22%	6%

Table 14

It is obvious that the English postgraduates made better use of the semantic cues than the other two groups. For the first cloze test their responses which are totally semantically acceptable at the passage level with syntactic constraints ignored, and those which are totally acceptable at the sentence level are 65%, 63% and 43% respectively for the three groups. For this easy passage the difference between EP and EM is 2%, which is not very great. However the difference between them and NEM is much greater, with 22% difference for EP and EM and 20% for EM and NEM. As to their ability to use syntactic cues, here for passage 1 the English majors are the best on the sentence-level acceptance and the postgraduates made more serious mistakes than the English majors and a little more than the non-English majors. This may indicate that when working on the easy passage they concentrated mainly on the meaning of the passage and paid much less attention to the syntax. For the second cloze test, that is, the difficult passage, the difference in using semantic cues between postgraduates and English majors increased considerably to 18.5%, with postgraduates having 75.5% responses which are acceptable at the passage-level and the sentence-level and EM 57%. And the difference between EM and NEM almost disappeared, with 57% for EM and 58% for NEM. At the same time they also made more syntactic mistakes than the postgraduates. Nevertheless, for cloze passage 2,

non-English majors show an inferiority now to the English majors in using the syntactic cues, although they were almost equal in using semantic cues.

To sum up, we have found that for the easy passage postgraduates and English majors are not much different in their ability of using semantic cues, however, they are much better than the non English majors. We also found that for the difficult passage, postgraduates show a superiority in their ability to use semantic cues over the other groups, making those two groups now almost equal. The conclusion we might have now is that since the postgraduates are better in using semantic cues in comprehension, they do have a higher English language competence than the English and non-English majors. Since reading is a type of linguistic performance, it is first of all dependent on the language control achieved by the reader and therefore it is no wonder that language competence affects one's reading ability and the transfer of reading ability.

5.5 Conclusion

Based on the above discussion of the results of this experiment the following tentative conclusion can be reached.

1) The strongest relationship indicated by the experiment was between English language proficiency and reading ability in English. The English postgraduate group maintained its superiority over the other groups in all the English tests in both speed and comprehension, whereas the non-English majors remained the poorest of the three groups.

2) The experiment also shows that for the second-year English majors and non-English majors, their reading ability in English did not relate to their reading ability in Chinese. But, in the postgraduate group, those who were better in the native language reading were also better in the foreign language reading, and the postgraduates did show a very weak but positive tendency of reading ability transfer from mother tongue to foreign language. However, interestingly enough,

this ability transfer seemed to work better when the subjects were using the subskill of skimming and scanning to locate specific information, and the subskill of making use of cues from the context to understand the message. But for the detailed fast reading skill there is no sign whatsoever of reading ability transfer.

In conclusion, there seems to exist a language competence ceiling which affects the transfer of reading ability from Chinese to English. Only when learners of English have reached a fairly high level of English language competence, as have the postgraduates in this experiment, could it be likely that the transfer of some reading skills might happen. In other words, as suggested by the reading universal hypothesis, since the reading process in reading all languages is almost the same, then reading ability, theoretically speaking, can transfer from one language to another. This transfer however is limited by variables, such as the language competence as suggested by the result of this experiment. In the following chapter I am going to look at this experiment again, along with other research, so as to know more about possible variables which affect the transfer of reading ability.

CHAPTER SIX

VARIABLES OF READING ABILITY TRANSFER

6.1 Transferability Limited By Language Competence

6.1.1 Evidence From This Experiment

As has already been pointed out, the subject used here were chosen according to their various years spent training in the English language. Generally speaking, the longer one has been trained, the more competent he will be at that language. The result of the tests has given a clear picture of the subjects' language competence, which shows undoubtedly that the postgraduates are much better than the undergraduates. In addition to this, the result of analysis into how well these groups of subjects used semantic cues further proved convincingly that the postgraduates were much better than the other two groups in the use of semantic cues to understand what is being read, which is another objective indication of the level of language competence. What is more, the correlational analysis shows that only in the postgraduate group is English reading ability somewhat related to Chinese reading ability. All this from the present experiment could suggest that there may exist a language competence ceiling which hinders reading ability transfer.

6.1.2 Evidence From Other Experiments

Clarke (1980:203-239), Cziko (1980:110-114), Hauptman (1981:37-57) and others have also investigated through their experiments the effect of language competence on the transfer of reading skills from the native language to the second/foreign language, and all of them gave evidence for the 'language competence ceiling' hypothesis.

Based on the reading universal hypothesis, Clarke believed that an affirmative answer was to be accepted if good L1 readers maintained an equal advantage

over poor L1 readers in both Spanish and English. It was assumed that, given equivalent proficiency in the second language, the superior reading skills of the good readers would provide them with an equal advantage over the poor readers in both languages. The result showed that "the rank order of the good and poor reader groups is maintained in the second language. There is positive correlation between the Spanish and English cloze test performance and the acceptable means for the two groups on the English cloze test show a ten percent point difference."

This indicates that good readers as a group are better L2 readers than the poor readers, thus giving some evidence to support the theory of reading ability transfer. But when he came to analyze the results in more detail, Clarke found that in the native language the good readers seemed to rely on semantic rather than syntactic cues, while the poor readers did just the opposite. 41% of the unacceptable responses of the good readers were judged semantically acceptable with minor syntactic adjustments, while the equivalent for the poor readers was 25%. The percentage of unacceptable responses which were totally syntactically acceptable was 50% for the poor readers and 35% for good readers. In English, however, the picture changed. The use of syntactic cues by both good and poor readers was equal - 36%. The percentage of only semantically acceptable responses of the good readers fell to 22%, which was only 4% more than that of poor readers. The distinction between good and poor readers was generally reduced.

Clarke's second experiment - oral reading miscues - gave the same picture, that is, "the good readers' superiority over the poor readers decreases substantially when their English reading performances are compared to their Spanish reading performance." Based on this research, Clarke suggested that there exists a 'language competence ceiling' which hampers the good L1 reader in his attempts to use effective reading behaviour in the target language. Apparently, limited control over the language "short circuits" the good reader's system, causing him to resort to poor reader strategies when confronted with a difficult or confusing task in the second language(ibid. 138).

What Cziko (1978:101-114) found in his experiment also gave evidence for this 'language competence ceiling' hypothesis. Cziko tested two groups of English speakers with different levels of French and a group of French native speakers. The subjects were required to read two French texts aloud and then answer questions. The errors they made were analyzed. It was found that the group with an intermediate level of French made a significantly lower proportion of deletion and insertion errors and significantly shorter insertions, but significantly higher proportion of substitutions visually similar to the text words. The intermediate group was also found to have made a significantly higher proportion of errors not conforming to preceding syntactic and semantic constraints, but a significantly lower proportion of errors which did conform to the preceding sentence and discourse constraints. These findings, as Cziko pointed out, indicate firstly that "group INT relied heavily on the graphic information of the text since only 5% of all errors for this group were errors of deletion or insertion and 82% of all substitutions were graphically similar to the text word". Secondly, he observed that "group INT is less sensitive to or relies less on contextual constraints as a source of information in reading since only 51% of this group's meaningful errors conformed to the syntactic and semantic constraints of the preceding vowels of the sentence, whereas the figure was 67% for group ADV and 70% for group NS". From this study we can see clearly that the language competence interferes with the reading strategies that readers use in reading. L2 readers with lower competence in the target language tend to follow the bottom-up model of reading, being primarily reliant on graphic information and apparently much weaker in using contextual, especially semantic, information.

To conclude, while the assumption of reading universals and transfer of reading strategies across languages may be justified, the experiments discussed above and some other research suggest that language proficiency plays a significant role in the transfer. S/FL readers can use reading strategies of fluent L1 readers when their language proficiency is near that of native speakers, or reaches a certain level which can enable them to use the language with ease. But for those S/FL readers whose control over the language is limited, this 'language competence

ceiling' interferes with their transfer of reading ability, 'short circuiting' their system and thus causing them to resort to poor reader strategies when confronted with a difficult task in the target language reading.

6.2   Transferability Limited By Psychological Strain

6.2.1   Feeling Of Anxiety.

Language competence is a major variable that affects ability transfer in reading, as has already been shown by the result of this experiment. This, however, is not the only variable. There seem to be other variables which limit the transfer.

While analysing the conditions under which transfer is interfered, Ellis (1965:65) mentioned motivational variables. He said, "One motivational variable, anxiety, has been extensively studied in recent years and some fairly reliable generalizations about its effect on learning are evident. One generalization which has significant implications for classroom teaching is that anxiety appears to facilitate performance in relatively   simple types of learning, such as conditioning, but interferes with performance in more complex learning tasks. Certainly it is reasonable to assume that anxiety will interfere with most classroom learning which generally consists of a fairly complex nature." Reading is a complex, active process which involves not only memorising, but also analysing and synthesising, and it is the feeling of anxiety of readers that often causes the use of poor reading strategies.

Unlike native speakers, foreign language learners, as H.W. Seliger (1972) pointed out, often suffer from feelings of insecurity. For foreign language learners the main place where learning takes place is in the classroom, where (unfortunately) for most of the time language is not presented to them in context, and may be meaningless in the sense that it is not used for 'real communication'. In addition, the class time is limited. Because of this limited exposure to the target language and the meagre opportunity to use the language in a meaningful situation, when the

learner comes to the real use of the language he may always feel uncertain about the meaning of what he is reading. This psychological state is probably traumatic. It causes such feelings of insecurity about the foreign language that the learner is unable to use, or may never even think of using, efficient reading strategies which he uses with ease in his native language. Examples are ignoring unimportant unknown words, guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words, skimming and scanning and so on. Because of his anxiety to overcome the feeling of uncertainly, when he reads he focuses on every word, fearing that one word missing will result in misunderstanding. For this kind of reader there are no uninformative features, all features are presumed to be informative (Sirirat Nilagupta 1977).

The desire to know every word usually leads him to view reading in the foreign language as a process of decoding word by word. In his attempt to overcome this insecurity, besides his over dependence on the dictionary or glossary, he also resorts to poor strategies such as grammatical analysis, frequent translation, vocalization and sub-vocalization etc. With this level of psychological strain it is most unlikely that effective transfer can take place.

In this experiment it appears that the lower the subjects are in their English language proficiency, the less confident and subsequently the more anxious they become. We can see this from their difference in their willingness to take chances in reading and also from the difference in their reading speed.

Let us look at the result of the two English cloze tests concerning the number of gaps unfilled:

Groups	Gaps Unfilled	Total Number Of Gaps	%
Postgraduates	6	780	0.8%
English Majors	12	832	1.4%
non-English Majors	61	1144	5.3%

Table 15

The above table shows clearly that non-English majors left many more gaps unfilled than the other groups, whilst postgraduates left the fewest gaps unfilled of the three groups. This may suggest that the subjects with lower target language competence felt more reluctant to take chances because of their feeling of anxiety and fear of making mistakes. On the contrary, subjects with higher language competence were confident with the use of the language and thus more willing to take chances with guessing the meaning of omitted words.

As to the reading speed, let us take the first detailed fast reading passage for example. This passage has 52 sentences with altogether 720 words. The average sentence length is 13.8 words and there are only 4 sentences with numbers of words ranging from 25 to 32, which is only 8% of the total number of sentences. The sentences are not only short but also simple. Among these 52 sentences only 3 (6%) are complex compound sentences, 9 (17%) compound sentences and 16 (31%) complex sentences. The rest, that is 24 (46%), are simple sentences. The words unknown to the non English majors, judged by the teacher, are only 14 out of 721, that is just 2%. In short , this passage is on the easy side for the non-English majors, let alone for the postgraduates and second-year English majors. A passage such as this one with interesting content, easy structure and only a few new words should be proper for a fast reading test. But, the reading speeds are only 135 wpm for postgraduates, 100 wpm for second-year English majors and 80 wpm for non-English majors. One of the possible reasons for such a slow speed and low comprehension rate   (except for the postgraduate group the other two groups had an average comprehension rate of only 64% and 60% respectively) may be feelings of insecurity. In their attempt to overcome the feeling of insecurity with the English language it is likely that they resorted to 'poor reader' strategies of reading slowly in a word by word way, and they did so especially in the context of doing a test, a situation which usually increases levels of anxiety in students.

6.2.2   The Requirement Of Memorization

As Kao Je-Jing (1987:68-70) and Yorio (1971:101-119) pointed out, one of the factors that reading involves is the ability to memorize what you are reading. But this does not mean that reading always requires readers' efforts to memorize what is being read. Some reading situations, for example learning to read, require memorization, while others such as reading for pleasure do not. The kind of exercise that requires subjects to memorize the content and answer questions without their referring back to the material is, in a general sense, more difficult and can make the subjects feel even more anxious.

Frank Smith (1985:47), when talking about the bottleneck problem in reading, pointed out that "a piece of reading material may be capable of making eminent sense to prospective readers, yet still prove impossible for them to read. One reason, as in the case of tunnel vision, may be anxiety. Readers who are afraid of making a mistake, as they read, of not comprehending every detail, will overload short-term memory and confuse themselves into complete bewilderment. And readers who try to cram too much into long-term memory will not only find that they have nothing to remember for their efforts, but also succeed in transmuting sense into nonsense in the process."

It is even so in the case of S/FL reading. "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 then is more difficult in a foreign language than in the mother tongue" (Yorio 1971:107-119). This has already been proven by some experiments, such as that of Loe which was mentioned by Robert Lado in 1965. From the results of Loe's experiments, Lado concluded that "the difference between the native and the foreign memory span is greater when the material in the foreign language contains the memorization and grammatical contrast between the two languages". For Chinese and English, two drastically different languages, the difference of memory span found by Loe is 6.5 words. It follows that the stress on memorization of the detailed fast reading passages causes greater anxiety than the other four passages in the TSS and CT which did not require memorization. Also, anxiety, as discussed above, can hinder transfer of

reading skills. Therefore anxiety caused by the stress of memorization might be the cause of the lack of correlation between Chinese and English for the postgraduate group in performing the detailed fast reading task.

6.3   Transferability Limited By Improper Training

Besides the two factors mentioned above, there might be another which also plays a significant role in the transfer of reading ability, that is, the way students are taught.

There has already been evidence for this. Larry Selinker (1972) provided a good example of the interference the method of training has on the learning, which he called 'transfer of training'. Transfer of training, as he described it, "underlies the source of a difficulty which Serbo-Croatian speakers at all levels of English proficiency regularly have". He gave the example of the use of 'he' and 'she'. Although, with regard to animateness, the distinction between 'she' and 'he' is the same in Serbo-Croatian   as it is in English, textbooks and teachers almost always present drills with 'he' exclusively in all situations. Serbo-Croatian speakers at all levels of English proficiency produce in their English language 'he' on almost every occasion wherever 'he' or 'she' would be called for according to any norm of English. The extent of this fossilization can be seen with respect to speakers of the target language over the age of 18, who, even though they can be consciously aware of the distinction and of their recurrent error, in fact regularly produce 'he' for both 'he' and 'she'. The way one is trained is indeed crucial in one's learning. This is especially true with foreign language learning, since textbooks and teachers are the only source from which the learner gets to know the language.

The way training happens can produce positive transfer and negative transfer as well. That is why Ellis (1965:71-72) said that "a frequently asked question is how can we organize the school curricula so as to best ensure positive transfer". Some of the ways used in teaching reading in a foreign language, contrary to the wishes of teachers, encourage poor reader strategies and thus prevent the transfer of

good reader strategies of the native language. The following are some examples of the negative effect of training on the development of S/FL reading ability.

H.W.Seliger (1972), when analysing the possible causes for students' low efficiency in reading, pointed out that one of the possible causes of slow reading is "the common practice in ESL classes of having the students read aloud". Reading aloud has more to do with pronunciation and the relation between sound and spelling. But as we know, the focus of reading is on the perception of semantic units beyond the individual word and even beyond individual sub-structures of the sentence, and reading is fundamentally to do with comprehension. "To encourage reading aloud is therefore to foster a false conception of reading and to practice irrelevant skills" (D.C.Taylor 1985). Too much emphasis on reading aloud would seem to reinforce word-by-word reading, vocalisation and sub-vocalisation, all being harmful reading habits interfering with the development of reading speed and comprehension.

Carol Hosenfield (1984) gave another very convincing example of negative transfer caused by improper training. In her case study she had Ricky, a 14 year old American boy, learning Spanish as a second language in school. Hosenfield used the thinking aloud approach to discover Ricky's reading strategies in Spanish. She found that in order to obtain meaning from printed text, Ricky engaged in a careful word-by-word decoding of sentences, giving English equivalents of the Spanish words and turning to the glossary whenever he met with an unknown word. Reading for him thus consisted chiefly of shuttling back and forth between the glossary and the text. But one interesting thing is that Ricky guessed from the context skilfully and successfully the meaning of an unknown word he failed to find in the glossary. It seems that he was able to use the strategy of guessing contextually the meaning of words he did not know, yet frequently he did not do so and his first response to the words was to look them up in the   glossary. When asked what he had been told about reading Ricky replied that the only thing he could remember was what his teacher had told him: "Take your time. Pronounce the words correctly. If you don't know a word, look it up and

remember it." So the foreign language behaviour of Ricky is very much induced by the instruction he received (C.Anderson and A.H.Urhguhart 1984).

Another explanation offered by Hosenfield is that either he began his language course too early, or at least that he began by reading texts that were too difficult for him. On account of there being too many unknown words he had to depend on the glossary to solve problems, and as a result gradually formed the habit of turning automatically to the glossary, even when it was no longer necessary to do so. Here it appears that from the method of training and inappropriate teaching material resulted the harmful reading habit of over-dependence on the dictionary.

Coady (1979) in his A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC MODEL OF THE ESL READER pointed out that the way of training is sometimes responsible for the fact that "an alarming number of students have a great deal of proficiency in English and yet read very slowly and with poor comprehension". He analysed the effect on efficient reading of the relationship between the material and the exercises following it. "A reading class will use a reader which has short stories followed by comprehension questions, vocabulary exercises, and occasionally language-orientated exercises such as identification of affixes. The implicit goal of such a lesson is total and perfect comprehension of the reading passage as well as highly accurate detail work on the exercises". In such a lesson the students spend much more time in doing the exercise, correcting them and discussing the passage than they would use in actual reading. The result of such training causes students to believe that one should read educational material very carefully and understand it as perfectly as possible, whilst being prepared to answer all kinds of detailed questions on it. To obtain this 'perfect' comprehension of reading, students naturally adopt the strategies of reading slowly, carefully and in a word-by-word way. The worst thing is that this kind of activity constitutes the main part of reading lessons. No wonder that slow, word-by word type of reading becomes the students' usual reading behaviour whatever reading situation they are in.

J.H.Hill was surely right when he said in his article EFFECTIVE READING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (1981), "When it comes to the foreign language, the reader's difficulties are compounded by his linguistic shortcomings. However, given a good knowledge of basic structures - effective reading is not for beginners - these are likely to be mainly problems of vocabulary and therefore not insoluble. More difficult to overcome is the attitude to language inculcated into the majority of language students by their training."

As a foreign language learner and then a foreign language teacher myself, I cannot agree with him more. In my experience the general practice of EFL reading classes was, and still is (although some change is happening) a matter of putting the emphasis exclusively on the language. Often what is known as "intensive reading" is actually not reading at all, but rather a composite type of learning which combines text learning with language study and some oral practice. The lesson consists of a series of language points teaching, and reading texts are actually sources of language exercises rather than reading exercises. Students are always required to understand each and every word. Sometimes there are indeed some comprehension questions on the text, yet they are usually questions on the details of the text and seldom on the global understanding of the whole text. What is more, no effort is made to teach the reading strategies of the fluent reader, or in other words, no attempt is made to help students to transfer their L1 reading strategies into the foreign language reading. Trained in this way, how can the students be expected to be able to read efficiently in the foreign language.

Good training helps students to become skilled readers, while improper ways of training, inappropriate teaching materials and reading exercises etc. will certainly hinder students in their development of reading ability and lessen the possibility of the transfer of good L1 reading strategies into foreign language reading.

Up to now in this part of the study we have discussed transferability of reading ability and the variables which interfere with this transfer. From the results of the present experiment and other research in foreign language reading the following

conclusion may be drawn: based on the hypothesis of reading universals, one's ability to read is acquired once only and need only undergo minor changes when applied to different languages. Therefore the reading strategies one is capable of using in native language reading can be transferred to foreign language reading. However, according to the theory of learning transfer, there are conditions under which transfer is hindered. In foreign language reading, language factors and non-language factors become variables of transfer; they are limited language competence, lack of knowledge about the culture of the language they are learning, the way in which they are trained and the psychological strain they are suffering when reading in a foreign language. Altogether these factors make reading in a foreign language quite different from reading in the mother tongue and cause the transfer of reading strategies of the fluent L1 reader to be difficult or even impossible.

6.4   Some Problems In The Experiment

Before ending this chapter I want to briefly discuss the problems which were encountered in the experiment. Apart from the common problems of experiments involving people as subjects, for example, emotional factors and the attitude of the subjects towards the experiment which may affect the result, the main problem in the present experiment was the noting down of the exact time and score. This experiment tested both the speed and comprehension of the subject in different reading situations and thus the recording of the exact time and score became crucial to the result. The recording of the score appeared to be easy as there were answer sheets for the subject to check the correct answers (DFT), or to write down their own answers (TSS and CT). There should not be any mistake in recording the scores from these written answers, provided that the experimenter was careful with the figures. However, recording the correct time used by the subject for each test appeared to be problematic. Since the subjects should finish each test at their own fast speed, the experimenter could not set the time limitation or have the subjects start and stop at the same time. Therefore the subjects were required to note down their own starting and finishing time. On

the answer sheets there was "Beginning Time: ____m ____s" at the beginning of the passage and "Finishing Time: ____m ____s" at the end of the passage. It seemed a simple task for the students to look at their watch and write down the time. Actually though it was not this simple at all.

Firstly, after getting their papers, some of the subjects seemed to forget about noting the time as they were so anxious, so eager to finish the test, and so concentrated on the material that they gave no thought to other requirements, forgetting to write their name or note either the starting or finishing time. There was no way for the experimenter to remind them of these requirements without disturbing them, and once it was found that these details had been omitted it was too late to remedy the fact, and this could not be made up.

Secondly, careless subjects tended to note down the wrong time. Subjects recorded the time using their own watches. Some had watches with digital indicators, and some had three-hand watches (i.e. analogue watches with a second hand). Of course the former is preferable to the latter for exact time recording. Those using three-hand watches were more likely to make an error, and could make a mistake of 1 or 2 minutes, or even as much as 5 minutes difference. One student in fact noted a finishing time that was earlier than the starting time. Equally, in a few cases the time spent on the test was incredibly short - too short to be trusted.

Papers with these problems could not be used in the analysis of the results and had to be excluded, thus reducing the sample size to one smaller than it was designed to be. As an example if we consider the second-year English majors , only 16 of the original sample of 21 acted exactly according to requirements; 12 of the 34 non-English majors were excluded due to errors in time noting and failure to write their names; 2 papers of the postgraduates and 1 of the English majors in TSS were rendered useless by the obvious mistakes in the time taken to do the test. The decrease in subject numbers could affect results.

It needs a special effort on the part of the experimenter to avoid any artificial factor which can affect the experiment's results and so guarantee the success of the experiment. In experiments such as the present one which involves a large number of subjects, it becomes more important for the experimenter to try to carefully consider and eliminate factors which affect the normal performance of subjects. The problems in this experiment might have been prevented to a certain degree if we had had a big clock with a digital display, if we had had the time and opportunity to let our subjects get used to this type of test which requires accurate noting of time, and if we had had more teachers available to administrate the tests. Then the results might be more reliable. In short, the results of experiments which involve a great number of subjects and which are unavoidably affected by certain artificial factors must be used with caution and can never be regarded as perfect.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   Importance Of The Reading Teacher

Compared with the native speakers, foreign language students have a much more complicated and difficult task in achieving competence in reading, and what takes place in the classroom is critical for them since it can determine whether they become skilled readers or not. In a sense teachers become the most important people in the students' lives. This can be seen clearly from the situation of teaching reading in China.

In China, in spite of the fact that reading is given official priority among the language skills, the teaching of reading is by and large unsatisfactory (Tang Li-Xian 1981: 139-140). Observation of reading classes in some middle schools and universities will bring home to anyone the sad fact that reading at all levels is exclusively intensive reading, the task of which is to teach a text of an average length of a few hundred words in the course of some 6 - 8 class hours. In these intensive reading classes the teacher concentrates his efforts on language teaching and reading aloud. He explains in great detail, sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph, the vocabulary, the idiomatic expressions and grammatical structures, and most of this explanation is done in Chinese. Furthermore, the whole or part of the text will be translated either by the teacher or the students into Chinese to ensure that its meaning is understood correctly. In short, what is considered most essential in the teaching is to give the students as much knowledge about the language as they can. It follows that seldom are any efforts made to help students to learn the reading strategies of the fluent reader. Here I am not saying that passing on of knowledge about language is not important. As recognized earlier, knowledge about the language, or language competence, is a crucial variable influencing reading ability transfer. Until they have reached the language competence ceiling, students are severely limited in developing their reading ability. Therefore one of the important tasks of teachers

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is, without doubt, to enable their students to have a high target language competence. However, language competence is not the only variable. Alongside it there is another important one: that is the transfer of training. The common way of teaching in China does give students a fairly profound knowledge of the English language, but unfortunately at the same time it cultivates bad reading habits and encourages poor reading strategies. Students trained in this way, despite having a fairly good knowledge of the language, are poor readers, and once they graduate from school they cannot go on learning English through reading. Their English language knowledge soon degenerates and finally becomes entirely forgotten. Knowledge of the target language and good reading skills are both of great importance to the mastering of a target language and in ensuring that learners become fluent readers. Neither factor can be ignored.

How the teacher teaches in the reading class is critical to the development of the reading ability of his students. He can facilitate it or he can, often without realizing it, interfere with its development. The following are some tentative recommendations for teachers, Chinese teachers in particular, for reading in a foreign language.

7.2   Emphasis Of Teaching Must Be Put On Both The 'Linguistic' And The
       'Psycholinguistic'

The discussion above underscores both language competence and reading skills in the development of reading ability. A high level of language competence makes fluent L1 reading skill transfer possible, and good reading skills help readers to read more and hence learn more, consequently raising their level of language competence. Therefore reading teachers must pay attention to these two sides of language teaching. Overlooking either one will prove traumatic to the improvement of reading ability. Just as Clarke (1980) concluded at the end of the discussion of his two experiments:

"... the dilemma for the reading teacher is one of attempting to provide students

with a 'global' view of the task... by emphasizing the inexact nature of reading, the need for guessing, taking chances etc... while at the same time helping them to acquire the fundamental language skills to facilitate the process. Attempting to teach students to use the phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and discourse cues of the language before they have learned what they are, how and when they occur, and their contextual variation, seems unrealistic. Yet, the familiar example of the students who know all the words and grammatical structures of a sentence or paragraph and yet cannot comprehend what s/he has read, is the result of learning the elements of the language without understanding the process which one utilizes to communicate with those elements. In other words, ESL reading teachers must emphasize both the psycho and the linguistic."

The current situation in some middle schools and universities in China shows that most of the reading teachers give all their attention to language teaching. Here we hope to call on the teachers to also give their attention to the psycholinguistic aspect of reading, training their students to use fluent reader strategies and providing them with a lot of practice in using these strategies, as well as helping them to recognize the similarity between reading in the native and in the foreign language. We can assume that students at intermediate and advanced levels possess a basic competence in the target language, and so what they need more is the teacher helping them to make use of their established knowledge in order to get the message from the print. In other words, the teacher should help the students to master good reading skills and cultivate good reading habits. Overall the role of the teacher (beside language teaching) is to teach students reading strategies appropriate to the task; to encourage them to take risks; to guess; to ignore the impulse to always be absolutely correct, and to give them practice and encouragement in using the minimum number of cues to obtain the maximum amount of information (Clarke and Siberstein 1977: 7).

7.3 Recommendations

Reading is an activity which comprises a variety of strategies. Among this array

of skills which ones should take priority? The answer to this largely depends on the students' levels and the ways in which they read. With Chinese students in mind I would like to suggest that the following strategies be of priority in the teaching of intermediate and advanced learners.

7.3.1 Help Students To Master Word-Attacking Strategies

Vocabulary seems to be one of the main difficulties in foreign language reading. Students' answers to the questionnaire of Yorio (1971:109) show that they believe that vocabulary constitutes their main problem, the highest average scale of difficulty being for vocabulary. Their limited vocabulary certainly causes their difficulties in reading. However, there might be another cause for this, that is, their lack of word-attacking strategies which is another effect of the transfer of training. Normally, in the reading class the reading teacher tries to prepare the students in advance for specific vocabulary needs, ensuring that all words are familiar before the student confronts a particular passage. This, as S.Been (1979:91-101) rightly pointed out, in fact "fosters non-productive attitudes". It makes students feel that it is essential to have an explicit understanding of each and every word to comprehend meaning and, furthermore, this makes it impossible for them to develop the skill of intelligent guessing. A good reading teacher should help students to exploit the redundancies in language and to utilize whatever resources they have to make up for information they are lacking, and, more importantly, to help them to get rid of the feeling of panic they experience in facing unknown words.

We have already talked about how the fluent L1 reader identifies unknown words in detail in the discussion of Indirect Word Identification. Here I only want to add that to train student in word attacking strategies used by fluent readers the teacher should first of all convince them that they are indeed capable of inferring the meaning of unknown words. He can do so in many ways, such as by emphasizing the importance of redundancy in language through demonstration of the types of

contexts which can provide the meaning of an unfamiliar word, such as:

1) Synonym in apposition:

Our uncle was a nomad, an incurable wanderer who could never stay
in one place.

2) Antonym:

While the aunt loved Marly deeply, she absolutely despised his twin brother
Smarty.

3) Cause and effect

By surrounding the protesters with armed policemen, and by arresting the
leaders of the movement, the rebellion was effectively quashed.

4) Association between an object and its purpose or use:

The scientist removed the treatise from the shelf and began to read.

5) Description

Tom received a new roadster for his birthday. It is a sports model, red with
white interior and bucket seats, capable of reaching speeds of more than 150
mph.

6) Example:

Mary can be quite gauche: yesterday she blew her nose on the new linen
tablecloth.

(Clarke and Siberstein 1977: 145)

Once students have been convinced, the teacher can give them specific training by means of activities involving guessing. Nuttall (1982:71-73) suggested some variations for training. For example, the teacher could supply one or several short texts, each containing the same non-sense word replacing the same foreign language word in the original version, and ask the students to guess the meaning of the nonsense words. To make the exercises easier, the teacher may offer several FL 'translations' for students to decide which one could fit all the contents exactly and thus they can substitute the nonsense word. Alternatively, the teacher may use genuine but unfamiliar words instead of the nonsense words in a similar exercise. Cloze passages, as Hatch (1974) suggested, can also be used to force

students to make predictions about what might be 'seen' in the blanks.

What the teacher must be very careful with in organizing these activities is that he must choose the right passage for his students by considering new word density and the amount of clues students can make use of. It is unproductive and unfair for the teacher to give exercises where there are too many new words and so few clues that guessing becomes impossible. Activities with these inappropriate passages can prove self-defeating; instead of helping the students to develop word-attacking strategies they can prove harmful to students, frustrating their efforts, driving them back to the old habit of relying solely on dictionaries and even causing them to give up reading. Besides training students' ability of inference it may be worthwhile for the teacher to help students to be able to ignore unknown words which are not essential to the overall understanding of the main idea of a sentence or paragraph. To decide what can be safely ignored becomes important in fast reading. With the ability to ignore unimportant words and inferring meaning of unknown words, students would find vocabulary a less formidable obstacle in reading and would enjoy reading more.

7.3.2 Help Students To Read By Phrase

The fluent reader fills short term memory with the largest units the meaning of phrase or sentences rather than words or letters. Thus they can maintain enough speed to overcome the limitation of the visual processing and memory system (Cooper and Pertrosky 1976). But, unfortunately, the typical strategy of many foreign language readers is to read one word at a time. That is why they have great difficulty in increasing speed and getting meaning from and memorizing what is being read. In his study of the indifference model, W. Cromer (1970) suggested a way to help these indifference readers. One implication of his study is that "readers who have not adequately learned to deal with written material in terms of meaningful units can be encouraged to do so by the use of the rather artificial technique of grouping the material for them". This 'artificial technique of grouping' can also be used to help foreign language readers in overcoming the

word-by-word type of reading.

There are many different procedures in using the technique suggested by Cromer. For example, A.J. Harris (1958:425-428) recommended eight procedures. We can sum these up more briefly in the following three points. Firstly, teachers can help students to improve their ability to group words properly by asking them to read after the teacher passages or phrases orally, or by asking them to mark off phrases in a passage. Secondly, the teacher can provide practice in recognition of phrases as units during brief exposure by using the overhead projector or a simple home-made tachistoscope. Thirdly, practice can be given in reading printed materials in which phrases have been marked off by the teacher.

It is important for teachers to help their students to read phrase by phrase and then sentence by sentence. And this should also be combined with the training of reading speed.

7.3.3 Help Students To Increase Reading Speed

Reading speed, as previously discussed, is a considerable problem in foreign language learning. Students who read too slowly will easily get discouraged. They will also tend to stumble on unfamiliar words and fail to grasp the general meaning of the passage and flexibility is out of the question for them.

One of the most common ways of increasing speed is to give students timed reading exercises: giving them passages to read and asking them to time themselves, or limiting their time for each reading passage. Here two points should be borne in mind. One is that material for timed reading should be appropriate to the language level of the students. The teacher must avoid using materials in which the vocabulary and grammatical complexity are beyond the students' knowledge. Material should therefore be on the easy side when the purpose of the exercise is to train reading speed. The other point is that "reading speed should not be developed at the expense of comprehension" (F. Grellet

1982:16). Reading comprehension should reach 70%. Students should be encouraged to keep a record of their progress in speed and be motivated to beat their own record.

In addition to timed reading there are other ways to help students out of the problem of speed. For instance training them to do skimming and scanning, which are both specific reading strategies necessary for quick and efficient reading.

When skimming, the reader goes through the material quickly in order to get the gist of it, to know how it is organized or to get an idea of the intention of the writer. When trained to do skimming, students, as suggested by Nuttall (1982:40), can be asked to locate facts which are expressed in sentences rather than in single words. They can be asked to say briefly what a text is about, or given specific questions that can be answered by glancing quickly through the text. For example:

a) What is dealt with in this article?

b) Which of these titles fits the text best?
   (Several titles are provided.)

c) Which of these topics are dealt with in the text?
   (A topics list is given.)

d) Which of these pictures/diagrams etc. illustrates the text?
   (Several illustrations are supplied.)

e) Which text belongs to this picture/diagram?
   (One picture and several short texts are supplied.)

f) Which of these texts deals with this?
   (Several texts are supplied: one or more deal with the
   given topic.)

   (Nuttall: 1982:40)

The teacher can give students some help with skimming by telling them to take advantage of chapter titles, subheadings, other arrangements and topographical devices (R.C. Yorkey 1970:117), to read the first sentence in a paragraph, or by telling them to read the first few paragraphs and only the key sentence and key

words later on (E. Fry 1978:53) etc. However, the most important way to improve the skimming skill is to give students lots of exercises and force them to read more rapidly. At first the teacher must provide skimming questions and coach the students through passages. Of course after skimming comprehension should also be checked.

When scanning we only try to locate specific information such as a date, a name or a specific fact. The basic difference between scanning and skimming is that in scanning the reader knows what he is looking for. The scanning exercises, comparatively speaking, are easy to devise, but it is important to use sections which can be realistically scanned, that is, sections which contain specific information and which are commonly scanned in real life (Clarke and Siberstein 1977). Examples might be dictionaries, telephone books, book indexes, advertisements etc. These selections provide authentic situations which can help students to scan naturally. Training in timed reading, scanning and skimming done in the right way with the right material will certainly help students to improve their reading speed and enable them to be flexible in different reading situations.

There are of course many other strategies which are important in reading comprehension. It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss all of them. What has just been recommended above is those that I have found my students to be in need of in their present study.

Now as we are getting to the end of this paper, let us make a brief summery of the main ideas discussed so as to conclude the paper.

Reading process is much the same in all languages with minor variations to accommodate the specific characteristics of the language used. Theoretically speaking, reading ability can transfer from the native language reading to the second/foreign language reading. However, limited knowledge of the S/F language and the different cultural background knowledge make reading ability transfer difficult. Besides this "language competence ceiling, improper training

methods and psychological strains experienced by the reader also hinder the transfer of reading ability. Therefore learning to read in a S/F language is extremely demanding for students. To become good readers they need language competence, cultural background knowledge and skilled reader strategies. Only by systematically integrating language-focused instruction with reading-skill development can teachers be most like to help students to transfer their fluent L1 reading strategies into the target language reading and become efficient readers in that language.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:   Raw Data of the Experiment

Time and Scores for Detailed Reading
in English and Chinese

Postgraduates

No	Chinese		English P1		English P2	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
1	2'8"	6/10	5'4'	5/10	6'3"	7/10
2	4'46"	8	6'56"	8	11	9
3	1'41"	7	6'	6	3'59"	4
4	6'40"	8	7'55"	8	7'51"	9
5	2'49"	7	6'	10	5'56"	7
6	3'30"	7	5'45"	7	7'20"	7
7	4'50"	7	1'25"	9	3'5"	4
8	4'2"	8	8'35"	10	6'20"	9
9	2'5"	8	7'	7	6'	8
10	3'2"	9	7'35"	9	7'50"	6
11	3'38"	6	2'37"	7	2'53"	8
12	2'45"	6	4'45"	8	5'9"	4
13	2'	2	3'28"	7	2'25"	8
14	1'45"	9	4'10"	10	3'50"	8
15	3'20"	8	5'	5	3'48"	5

Second-Year English Majors

No	Chinese		English P1		English P2	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
16	2'18"	6/10	5'8"	8/10	5'55"	5/10
17	2'50"	4	18'10"	7	6'55"	4
18	2'19"	6	6'	4	5'31"	0
19	1'25"	8	6'26"	5	4'15"	4
20	3'5"	8	4'50"	5	3'20"	3
21	2'	5	4'25"	8	3'50"	10
22	4'11"	6	8'47"	7	8'39"	4
23	3'15"	7	6'35"	6	5'5"	4
24	2'	2	5'16"	8	6'58"	5
25	3'15"	9	7'50"	6	5'40"	4
26	2'15"	5	5'25"	9	4'5"	5
27	3'45"	6	4'15"	4	4'15"	5
28	1'15"	8	10'15"	7	5'	5
29	2'30'	6	8'10"	7	6'	5
30	1'25"	8	6'15"	6	4'40"	5
31	2'20"	4	6'20"	5	7'25"	4

First-Year Non-English Majors

No	Chinese		English P1		English P2	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
32	2'	5/10	3'40"	4/10	5'20"	2/10
33	3'	5	10'10"	7	8'40"	4
34	4'5"	6	6'50"	5	4'	1
35	1'47"	7	7'	5	7'23"	3
36	4'	5	6'	8	8'52"	4
37	3'15"	5	9'30"	5	19'55"	5
38	2'26"	7	7'22"	8	10'36"	7
39	3'	9	12'10"	4	10'55"	4
40	2'	3	3'	4	5'10"	2
41	3'25"	6	13'5"	6	7'30"	1
42	5'	6	10'40"	7	3'25"	2
43	3'23"	4	8'29"	7	5'34"	2
44	3'25"	4	16'20"	7	9'20"	4
45	3'	5	6'26"	2	5'40"	5
46	1'50"	7	16'20"	7	13'50"	4
47	3'	6	7'	7	6'	2
48	4'	6	5'	7	15'	5
49	3'30"	6	8'	7	9'	4
50	8'	5	9'18"	6	8'20"	3

51	3'15"	8	6'20"	5	7' .	4
52	3'20"	6	10'	8	6'55"	3
53	2'5"	6	14'45'	7	10'50"	2

Time and Scores for Skimming and Scanning
in English And Chinese

Postgraduates

No	Chinese		English P3		English P4	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
1	12'1"	5/5	*54"	4/5	10'54"	0/3
2	10'23"	3	5'32"	5	5'45"	3
3	9'10"	5	*40"	4	10'44"	3
4	5'20"	3	4'20"	4	7'	3
5	7'47"	5	4'50"	3	8'25"	3
6	10'28"	5	3'54"	4	8'20"	3
7	8'8"	5	4'35"	4	4'27"	3
8	6'45"	5	3'35"	4	4'50"	3
9	3'	5	3'30"	5	5'	3
10	6'	3	4'	5	5'45"	3
11	2'40"	3	1'21"	4	8'9"	3
12	4'40"	5	3'13"	4	5'56"	3
13	2'54"	5	2'	4	4'3"	3
14	5'20"	5	2'5"	5	4'20"	3
15	3'31"	5	2'2"	4	3'30"	3

Second-Year English Majors

No	Chinese		English P3		English P4	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
16	6'24"	3/5	6'48"	4/5	9'3"	3/3
17	7'30"	5	4'10"	5	13'55"	3
18	4'44"	5	3'8"	4	7'31"	3
19	4'54"	5	2'37"	4	8'56"	3
20	10'20"	5	*1'	4	5'10"	2
21	2'5"	5	2'30"	4	8'	3
22	4'51"	5	3'35"	4	9'10"	3
23	5'40"	5	2'20"	5	5'	3
24	12'	3	3'19"	4	7'46"	3
25	8'50"	5	4'45"	2	4'40"	3
26	8'20"	0	1'50"	3	7'25"	0
27	10'30"	5	2'	3	6'40"	2
28	2'	3	5'	2	3'55	3
29	6'10'	5	1'40"	4	12'45"	3
30	6'8"	5	3'45"	3	8'10"	3
31	7'40"	5	5'30"	4	10'20"	3

First-Year Non-English Majors

No	Chinese 19		English P3		English P4	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
32	4'55"	5/5	5'35"	4/5	3'5"	0/3
33	5'	5	3'50"	5	11'40"	3
34	3'50"	5	5'55"	3	12'35"	0
35	2'25"	5	9'40"	2	7'21"	2
36	4'	5	4'48"	3	10'1"	3
37	8'40"	5	4'35"	4	19'50"	2
38	6'25"	5	5'6"	4	11'28"	3
39	4'	5	6'55"	3	8'	3
40	2'10"	5	6'15"	3	9'10"	3
41	4'45"	5	5'55"	2	5'15"	3
42	3'15"	5	6'20"	2	12'15"	2
43	2'27"	3	9'35"	5	16'37"	3
44	6'20"	5	11'	4	14'30"	2
45	2'30"	5	8'18"	4	9'40"	2
46	6'	5	10'15"	4	21'15"	3
47	9'25"	5	4'	2	11'	3
48	4'	5	3'	4	6'	1
49	5'	5	6'	3	8'	3
50	7'	5	6'29"	2	13'32"	3

No						
51	7'	5	3'	5	4'	3
52	6'5"	5	4'10"	3	5'30"	3
53	4'30"	5	4'	4	7'40"	2

Time and Score for Cloze Test
in English and Chinese

Postgraduates

No	Chinese		English P5		English P6	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
1	13'52"	14/33	5'21"	12/19	9'6"	17/33
2	9'11"	21	3'32"	14	6'32"	20
3	10'56"	19	5'25"	12	10'50"	19
4	7'20"	18	5'5"	8	9'40"	23
5	11'40"	18	3'43"	8	6'30"	20
6	8'14"	17	4'55"	12	9'33"	18
7	14'31"	17	7'40"	12	7'50"	16
8	8'55"	23	5'10"	12	8'35"	21
9	10'	15	9'	12	11'30"	21
10	9'	16	4'5"	13	6'45"	17
11	5'40"	16	3'50"	9	9'	25
12	8'29"	19	2'47"	12	6'22"	19
13	7'13"	19	3'19"	15	7'42"	20
14	4'45"	18	2'55"	9	6'20"	27

15	4'42"	20	2'56	9	4'52"	18

Second-Year English Majors

No	Chinese		English P5		English P6	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
16	3'25"	15/33	3'10"	5/19	4'44"	17/33
17	2'40"	18	9'10"	14	11'25"	14
18	5'26"	17	4'34"	10	8'44"	12
19	5'8"	22	5'18"	10	10'35"	19
20	7'40"	18	4'30"	9	7'45"	15
21	3'20"	22	2'30"	10	6'5"	21
22	4'16"	14	7'39"	9	9'42"	16
23	4'50"	15	2'15"	5	10'40'	18
24	5'38"	19	6'18"	10	7'45"	15
25	9'50"	17	6'5"	6	6'	17
26	5'50"	19	5'20"	14	9'40"	19
27	5'45"	21	6'5"	9	13'	17
28	4'	19	3'	9	9'55"	12
29	8'35'	20	10'20"	12	13'	16
30	4'50"	23	5'10"	12	6'20"	12
31	7'40"	16	3'30"	11	10'30"	14

First-Year Non-English Majors

No	Chinese		English P5		English P6	
	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score
32	11'	13/33	13'15"	7/19	14'44"	6/33
33	11'33'	19	9'15"	10	15'35"	16
34	5'55"	18	6'	8	6'28"	14
35	5'50"	19	8'15"	7	13'30"	9
36	7'21"	20	9'	9	15'1"	13
37	9'10"	19	9'15"	7	13'30"	7
38	7'15"	20	10'19"	9	15'30"	10
39	6'40"	17	11'10"	8	15'5"	11
40	12'20"	16	11'23"	7	13'58"	10
41	6'45"	14	8'10"	3	15'10"	14
42	7'5"	17	7'	8	14'15"	12
43	5'32"	15	7'57"	10	10'45"	11
44	12'10"	14	11'	3	4'	4
45	5'	22	5'20"	5	13'50"	7
46	7'55"	17	12'55"	8	16'22"	13
47	9'	18	4'	5	7'	10
48	4'	21	8'	6	14'	13
49	7'	23	9'	7	15'	11
50	7'1"	19	8'41"	5	2'13"	8

51	3'	21	3'	5	12'	14
52	5'25"	17	15'5"	10	10'30"	12
53	5'30"	24	9'20"	5	19'	13

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开始时间：   分   秒

"小熊猫"为什么能畅销几大洲？

在我国的出口商品中间，有一种畅销的儿童玩具——"扬州熊猫"。去年一年，有几百万只"熊猫"，飞越关山，远涉重洋，成了欧、美、澳、亚几大洲儿童的怀中宝、座上客。

今年三月，国务院一位负责同志，拿"扬州熊猫"做例子，鼓励全国各地生产出口商品的单位，努力使自己的产品在国际上有竞争能力，为国家创造更多的外汇。

这话传到扬州的时候，我们正在"熊猫"之家——扬州玩具厂采访。厂里的同志把我们带进出口展品陈列室，一进室内，别有洞天！大小"熊猫"，千姿百态：有的站，有的坐，有的蹲，有的卧，能左顾右盼，会抱球击鼓，象在清溪边戏耍，如在竹林中穿行，神气活现，异趣横生。看见这么多活泼可爱的小玩艺儿，不由得连声叫好！

扬州玩具厂是一个很不起眼的小厂，只有五百多名职工，连同厂外加工的不过一千八百人，一年能制造五百多万件玩具，百分之九十八以上的产品供应国际市场。就是这样一个以手工操作为主、设备简陋的小厂子，去年一年为国家创外汇九十几万元，获得利润四十几万元。

为什么这里出的"熊猫"能畅销几大洲？说来话长。这种毛绒玩具早在六十年代就已问世，但是，由于共说不扬，名声不好，一度跌到淘汰的边缘。一九七二年，国际上掀起一阵"熊猫热"：熊猫牌水杯、熊猫牌金笔二连三地出来了，这唤起了扬州玩具厂职工"捷际出新"的兴致，决心把扬州"熊猫"推进国际市场！他们对"老熊猫"采取四项革新措施，用上了新工艺、新材料、新造型，这样一来，本来是呆头呆脑的"熊猫"附于也会活动了，这头一身白亮晶晶小胸眼的金牌、黄神气！经过这一番精心装扮之后，新一代的"熊猫"就揭退外贸市场了。各国客商一眼看中，纷纷争购。过去的"老熊猫"是一打一卖，现在的新"熊猫"改为一只一卖，过去每只身价值零点七美元，现在增加到五点八八美元，一登"龙门"还倍增！在一九七二年春季广州交易会上，两万只"扬州熊猫"供不应求。

商品对路适销了，可不能麻痹。国际市场跟息多变。儿童们的兴趣也常常转移。扬州玩具厂职工时时注意国际市场行情的变化，他们努力探索：外国的"米老鼠"为什么经久不衰？我国的"小熊猫"就不可以怎起直追，畅销全球？他们把全部工作的基点放在经常的周密细致的调查研究上：翻阅各种样本资料，积极摩儿童心理。倾听用户呼声，利用一切可以利用的机会，积极主动地同国外商接触，听取意见，马上就干，不见效果不罢休。一有合理化建议，一有位客商要看商议，有位客商望着一只"熊猫"，象射出凶光，眼球发红，孩子们马上提意见，厂里陪同人员马上把意见反映到加工车间，车间立即给一只"熊猫"换上一对淡色的眼球。

在这里，不妨举"熊猫眼"的改革做例子：有一次，一批外商到扬州玩具厂陈列室参观和座谈，有位客商望着一只"熊猫"，自言自语地说："眼球发红，象射出凶光，孩子们会害怕呀！"说话的无心，听话的有意，厂里陪同人员马上把意见反映到加工车间，车间立即给一只"熊猫"换上一对淡色的眼球，送到客人手中，再次征示意见。客商们睑着那双柔和的熊猫眼，啧啧赞叹："很好，很好。你们改得真快。"当场没示订货。

件事，应当引起所有长期关门造"车"的同志注意。扬州玩具厂的这种工作热忱和办亊发率，不足该很好学习，迎头赶上去吗？

"扬州熊猫"，一九七二年跻身至国际市场以来，同各国小朋友结下了不解之缘，在世界玩具行列中占往一席地位。为什么？有一个重要的原因，就是扬州玩具厂的职工眼抓"三性"（时间已、适应性、竞争性），抓"四新"（新品种、新花凑、新材料、新工艺），用他们自己的话说：不抓这"三性"、"四新"，就没有我们厂的生存和发展。这话是很有道理的！目前，他们正在找公陪，挖潜力，很改"体姿"。外国一只五六十公分的大玩具不到四两重，我们一只五六十公分的"笨熊猫"，体重半斤重，孩子可以当拳头打人，阁辆。扬州玩具厂制成一种十公分"小熊猫"，真个是：十里春风扬州路，"熊猫"一品种就出口了一百多万只。真个是：十里春风扬州路，"熊猫"一代胜一代！

试据所读短文选出各题的最佳答案。

1. "小熊猫"___
A. 是一种销售国内的儿童玩具。
B. 是一种畅销中外的毛绒玩具。
C. 是玩、熊、兔、亚儿童能坐上去。
D. 是扬州的特产。

2. "扬州熊猫"问世于___
A. 五十年代。　　B. 六十年代。
C. 七十年代。　　D. 以十年代。

3. 生产"扬州熊猫"的扬州玩具厂是___
A. 一个几千职工、设备良好的大厂。
B. 一个一千多职工、设备简陋的小厂。
C. 以手工劳作为主，仅几百名职工的小厂。
D. 以机器操作为主，仅几百名职工的小厂。

4. 扬州玩具厂所生产的玩具___
A. 一半以上供应国内市场。
B. 一半以上供应国际市场。
C. 基本上全部投入国内市场。
D. 基本上全部投入国际市场。

5. "扬州熊猫"___
A. 自问世以来，一直畅销国内外市场，经久不衰。
B. 问世后曾一度几乎被淘汰。
C. 以十年代再次打入国际市场。
D. B和C。

6. ___使"扬州熊猫"进入进入国际市场
A. 国际市场掀起的"熊猫热"。
B. 新工艺、新材料、新装潢。
C. 出售方式和价格的改变。
D. 适合的歌毛和经眼色金牌。

2

7. ___是"扬州熊猫"在市场上立住足的原因之一。
A. 质地舒适耐磨和各种多变色运作。
B. 便宜、质感、经久久。
C. 能听取外面意见。
D. 临春的千头采后更成。

8. 熊猫眼睛采用后更成___色。
A. 虹色。　　B. 紫色。
C. 蓝色。　　D. 浅色。

9. 扬州玩具厂玩在努力改进造型等的___
A. 质量。　　B. 姿态。
C. 色彩。　　D. A、B和C。

10. 根据扬州玩具厂得以生存发展长"三性"是___
A. 卓应性、竞争性和特殊性。
B. 姿态性、安全性和经济性。
C. 时同性、时同性和实用性。
D. 适应性、时间性和竞争性。

3

语法修辞与阅读写作①

张志公

今天，打算谈三个问题：一、语法修辞与阅读写作的关系；二、语法修辞的用处；三、怎样学习和运用后法修辞。

先谈第一个问题：语法修辞与写作的关系。

参加业余学习的同志都迫切要求迅速地、有效地提高写作能力，这是一种正当的要求。但是，绝不能把写作能力看做仅仅是方法问题。写作能力的高低决定于三方面的因素：第一，思想水平；如认识见闻和多方面的实际经验。第二，思维能力；第三，语言文字的训练。语言文字的训练是决定写作能力的一个方面，不是唯一的方面。学习语法修辞，目的就在于加强语言文字的训练。

语言文字的训练又包括两个方面，一是运用语言文字的实际活动，包括口头语言（听和说）和书面语言（读和写）的活动，二是有关语言文字知识的训练。这两个方面密切相关，又有所区别。语文的实际活动和话言文字知识是根本的，在读与写之间，读是根本的，这叫多读。写的训练才有效，写的训练是多写，多读是写的基础，在多读多写的基础上，

① 选自《语文学习讲座丛书（二）》。

第二部分 快速阅读 Fast Reading

开始时间：（ ）分（ ）秒

请尽快地从本文章中找出下面问题的答案：

1. 写作能力的高低决定于那几个因素？

2. 学习语法修辞时，应抓住的关键问题是什么？

结束时间：（ ）分（ ）秒

再学点语言文字知识，这知识才有用。有些人只顾学知识，而不在读和写的实际活动方面下功夫，其结果是读写能力不能提高，或者提高不快。这时段，常常是回过头来否定语文知识。"学了好些知识，写作能力也不见提高"，可见知识是没有用的。其实，不是知识没有用，而是学的不得法，没有读写的实际活动作基础，知识没了空洞的东西，整的人或编书的人如果把语文知识作用扩大化，认为有了知识建有了一切，不重视读写实际活动，其结果也必然要使自己所应吸取到的语文知识遭到事实的否定。主观上觉得重视它，客观上反倒起到削弱了它。在实践中，我却叫这样的看法；只有让语言文字知识的合读写的学习需要，语文知识才能学好。

没有学过语文知识的人，照样可以读书、写作。世界上有许多没有学过兵法而能成为很好的战斗员指挥员的人，但是，也有许多没有学过兵书不上战场而能打胜仗的文章的人，而没有有只念语法修辞不练写作而能写出很好的文章的人，这样说，是否语文知识就不必要学了呢？不是。语文知识是必要的。由于传统的影响，社会上也有一股否定语文知识，认为语文知识毫无用处的风气，这是错误的。如果说，我们古代那些没有学过建筑学，凭着丰富的实践经验的工匠修建了那么些雄伟优美的各种建筑，直使现代建筑学家惊讶赞叹不止，这是值得我们敬佩的，是以引为骄傲的。那么，在二十世纪的今天，以那些古代都实力为论据来否定现代建筑学，材料力学等等科学知识，就成为一种落后思想的表现了。问题只在于，怎么学哪些知识，怎么教，怎么学，特别是怎么用，怎么把知识和实践正确地结合合起来。语文知识

和语文实践的关系也是这样。这里是针对那种出于急欲求成的心理，过分依赖知识，忽视实践的现象来说的，所以首先强调指出实践的重要性。

读和写之间，什么是先读？从语文角度说，一是吸收，一是观摩。学习别人的语言，供聚斗丰富的语言资料，这依是吸收，学习别人的写作经验，这就是观摩。有了语言材料，有了别人的经验，再根据自己的实际需要去写，才能写得好。光有不行，不常听别人唱也不行，又譬如学打兵乓球，不动手打打固然不行，光自己对着墙打，不看人家打，技术也不能提高。明确了这些，我们自己提高我们对语言文字的做感。

语言文字有些规律性的东西的。知道了语言文字的规律，有了对语言文字分析、分析的能力，并且逐渐养成了习惯，再去看文章、文章就不再是囫囵的一块。学习语法修辞，有助于，读书时，读得比较深入。比较细致，理解得比较深透，比较正确，运用语言比较熟练。

第二，写作时，运用语法知识，有助于解决一部分语音文字的正误优劣的问题，只能解决一部分问题，而不能解决片全部问题。这是因为，语言文字在不断发展，不断变化，语言文字有不少变通的用法。任何语言的语法修辞知识都不能解决全部正误优劣的问题，而汉语尤其是这样。汉语中，纯粹的形态变化很少，语法、语气、修辞、逻辑的关系更加密切，如果一句话在事理上是对的，在语法上一般也是对的。反之，一句不通的话，在

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往还你说法、修辞、逻辑各方面都有毛病。例如，"我的个子"比你大。"大家都承认这句话，都知道这是"我的个子比你的个子大"的省略，并不是指"个子"跟"不子"相比。但是，如果说这个例，把"我的女儿比你的女儿大"说成"我的女儿比你大"，那就不通了。这是逻辑的规矩。正因为"个子"不能同"个子"相比，所以"个子"可以省略，而"女儿"可以同"你"相比，所以不可省略。单凭语法书上讲点儿你听的道理是未必能解决这种问题。但是，学点语法修辞，使我们对语言文字有个正误优劣的观念。解决一部分损基本的正误的问题，那是很有用的。这有助于养成严肃认真、细致推敲的习惯。当然，不学语法修辞，也可以从实际经验中培养辨别正误优劣的能力，而学了语法修辞，则可以更自觉、更有效地树立这种观念。如果我们读的时候能辨别正误优劣，那么，写的时候，也就会更熟练一些，更准确一些。

最后，简单地谈谈第三个问题：怎样学习和运用语法修辞。

第一，学习语法修辞要抓住关键；汉语语法修辞的关键问题有两个。一是选词，二是组织。

"严格，严厉，严肃，严峻"，"美丽，华丽，壮丽"，而各有适用的场合，有时候意思上都有关联。使用时而各有适用的场合，要确切地了解它们的意思，谬以千里"。写的时候要细心选择，选得不对，就是透词错词的。"即使试验失败了，试验成败失败了。"而使试验失败了，试验成败失败。"后两句只用"虽然"，老明试验略早是失败了，还是有收获的。"两句用"虽然"，老明试验略早是失败了，错乱是不行的，关系很大。在组织方面，不仅反映……

帖边不好。""天气变得很快，刚听了两天，就阴了，又阴了。""天气变得很快，刚阴了两天，就晴了，阴了，又附了。"这两句话给人的感觉差么不一样！为了学好选词和组织，当然要学一些有关的知识，但是往往力不要过于分散。如果五花八门的知识学了一大堆，而关键问题没抓住，那于提高读书写作的能力是不利的。

要抓住基本的东西，不要忙着去抓一些特殊的东西。例如，"是"字。最基本的用法是组成"甲是乙"这种句子，甲或者等于乙，或者问子乙的范围。要抓住这一条。平时我们写东西常常在这涉基本的规矩上出毛病，象"我们的家庭是中农出身"这种句子在习作里是常见的。至于什么"好是好，就是太贵了些""茉莉花比桃花香"，这种"是"，知道就行，不必忙着去抓。

抓关键住的东西，撇基本的东西，这是做学习有效取的很重要的一条。

第二，学了语法修辞，首先试着在阅读中运用，一是运用所学的知识去注意体会文章里选词的情形。一是用来试着分析某些句子的组织。仍旧要注意分析，不要眉毛胡子一把抓，逐词就推敲，遇句就分析，那样很不必要，没好处。需要多思考一下的是重要的词，理解起来有些困难的词，需要分析一下的是结构鱼不特殊，但是长而复杂。一下子两不着有这样的句子。不要抓住住在有这样有的句子或者部分的关系。文章里住在有这样的句子不太长。不要领住也很好懂，意思也很好懂，可是里边用了个成语或者别的句子成分不易分析，按语法上所学的句子结构和句子成分去分析，分析原是为了理解，意思既然好懂，何必做不必勉强去分析。分析原是为了理解，意思既然好懂，何必为分析而分析呢？

有助于熟练掌握所学的语法修辞知识，还有助于养成运用语言的能力。

学语法修辞，大致要经过这样几个过程。从不懂点语法修辞，变成懂点语法修辞；从不善于运用语法修辞知识，甚至于因为知道了一点语法运用知识反而觉得很拘束、不自在，正象业余学唱歌的人刚懂了"反眼"的时候感觉很很拘束，不大敢张口一样，变成活络地运用语法修辞知识，从时常运用语法修辞而写出来就很妥帖，变成又丢掉了它，好象不作语法修辞时反倒没有毛病，正象唱歌熟练的人唱到后来不打板而快不"走板"一样。

第三，学语法修辞要多从运用上着眼，不要只管些抽象语语，运用上的特点。我觉得，更重要的是认识这种句子在概念。比如，"路边上停着一辆卡车。""这种句子怎样分析，一直有争论，有人说"路边上"是主语，有人说"卡车"是主语，有人说这是无主句。我觉得，（1）开头总是个表示地点的词，（2）动词往往是表示移动或者放置之类的意思，加上"着"或者"了"，有时候也用"是"，（3）全句表示某处存在着什么或者出现了什么，动词就是表示存在或出现的方式的，（4）描述泥物、景象的时候，常常用到这种句子。认识了这几点，我觉得比争论哪是主语更有用处些。试读朱自清先生的《荷塘月色》，你会发现那篇散文里使用了好些这类句子，而这些句子的运用很有助于景物的描写，使人有身临其境的感觉。当然，哪是主语之类的理论问题也是重要的，对这种问题有兴趣，有基础的，也可以跟专门研究语法的人一道去争论。不过，总不要忘了"学以致用"这一条。如果研究语法修辞只是为理论而理论，不解决实际运用问题，那就不对了。

第四，可以多作点造词、组句和修改文章的练习。比方，写了一封信，或者工作中写了个报告，不妨留个底稿，一方面用所学的语法修辞知识去检验检验，看看语文上有没有毛病，仔细修改修改，同时也可以抽出几句来，作为练习材料。一练造词，看看原句里的词所用的词可否换用别的词，能换哪几个，换用之后结果怎样，是不是能组到比原来所用的更贴当的词。二练组句，看看原句还有没有别的组织法，比如把一个长句变成几个短句，或者把几个短句并成一个长句，或者颠倒词次序，换个说法，等等，这样看看怎样，结果怎样，是不是有比原来的说法更严密或更贴当或更浅浅的说法。这种练习作得多了，

第三部分

请根据现有内容，准确填出短文中所有省略的汉语单词。每空一字。

短文

发扬尊老美德　树立敬老新风

市政府决定在今年重阳节期间开展全社会的敬老周活动，这必将使我市尊老、敬老新风更加发扬光大。

对待老人的态度是＿＿一个社会道德水平的＿＿。老人是我国物质文明＿精神文明的创造者，继承者和＿＿＿。他们为社会劳动了＿＿年，今天社会拥有的＿＿美好的东西，都有＿＿的奉献。因此，全社会＿社会的每一个成员＿应该尊重他们，关心他们。＿＿＿在改造自然和社会＿长期斗争中，积累了＿＿的知识和实践经验，＿是社会的宝贵财富＿智力资源。我们要善于＿＿向老人们学习，把他们＿知识和经验发扬光大。

＿＿事业是一项社会性事业，＿＿是在我国老年人数＿，物质基础和社会福利＿＿较差的情况下，更＿＿动员和依靠社会各＿＿的力量，才能把这项＿＿办好。在当前，特别＿加强宣传教育，树立人人＿＿热爱老年事业，热心为老年人＿＿的社会主义新风尚，使＿＿＿感觉到，社会没有忘记＿＿，人们更不会嫌弃他们，＿他们心情舒畅，健康长寿。＿＿老人们健康长寿了，对我们＿＿，社会，家庭乃至个人，都＿一件大大有益的＿＿啊！

Fast Detailed Reading Tests
Passage One: Ants

There are more ants than any other kind of land animal in the world. A million ants can live in a few trees, and there may be a quarter of a million in one colony. The total weight of all the ants in the world is far greater than that of all the human beings. (Who works out such facts? How? Why?)

Human beings are extremely interested in the study of ants. The more we study them, the more they seem to be like ourselves. Our dictionary tells us that the ant is a social insect. That means that ants live in societies in which they depend on one another. The societies are not all exactly the same. There are differences because there are ants of very many kinds - more than 15,000 kinds, in fact. But in general each kind has ants of three main types: queens, males, workers.

The queen has wings for a time, and one day she flies away with a winged male. The male dies soon afterwards, but the queen, without her wings, finds a good place for her new nest and begins to lay eggs there. Worker ants will feed her and protect the eggs and they will build as big and as safe a home as they can.

In the ant society each worker has a special job. Some workers take care of the young, some carry out building work, and some are soldier ants and do the fighting. Most of the workers spend a part of their time making sure that there is enough food in the house.

The ants have a good many enemies. They include birds, bears, and 'ant-eaters' of various kinds. In some cases other ants are their worst enemies, just as man's worst enemy is man. In some parts of the world red ants march in large armies to attack the homes of black ants. They send lines of scouts out to find the black ant colonies. When the scouts rush back with a report, the red ants form columns and march to the attack. Meanwhile, the black ants are blocking the entrances to their tunnels with all the stones and mud that their engineers and workers can find.

The red ants attack. Some of them succeed in getting inside the tunnels. They try to carry the black ant babies away. The black ants do all they can to prevent that. They send their biggest soldiers into action. These have very large heads with powerful jaws. The black soldiers make a circling movement to cut off the red robber ants. Very many of the robber ants' soldiers and workers are killed, but some escape with babies belonging to the black ants. They take the babies home and bring them up in their own colony because they have no workers of their own. When these ants grow up, they become the only workers in the red ants' colony.

Some ants make life very uncomfortable for anyone who goes near their colony. But other ants find us very useful. They like the food we eat, and so they come into our houses and gardens to get it. They visit us in thousands when we have a picnic. The ants on a ship may have got there by accident, but they seem to be quite at home as the ship sails round the world. Sometimes they have left the ships and started colonies in foreign countries.

Ants accept town life and will make a home as near to our kitchen as possible - in a hole in the wall, under the ground just outsides, or under the kitchen itself.

One question remains. Studies of ant life tell us that these creatures live in colonies, keep farms, go to war, carry off slaves, and have a society rather like our own. But do they think? Are they intelligent? Should the proverb really advise the lazy man - the sluggard - to watch the ant in order to learn to be wise?

Go to the ants, you sluggard,
watch her ways and get wisdom.
She has no overseer,
no governor or ruler;
but in summer she prepares her tore of food
and lays in her supplies at harvest.

But probably the worker ants who get the food do not know what they are doing. They are controlled entirely by instinct.

Now select the answer which is most accurate according to the information given in the passage:

1. Ants
   a. are more numerous than any other kinds of land animals in the world.
   b. sometimes live in colonies of a quarter of a million.
   c. have more than 15,000 different kinds.
   d. all above

2. People are extremely interested in the study of ants
   a. because there are so many ants in the world.
   b. because there are so many different types of ants.
   c. because ants seem to be like human beings.
   d. because human beings are like ants.

3. Though there are many different kinds of ants, there are mainly _____ different types of ants in one colony.
   a. 3
   b. 3000
   c. 15,000
   d. uncountable

4. After the queen lays eggs
   a. worker ants move her and the eggs to a good place.
   b. worker ants feed her and protect the eggs.
   c. she dies.
   d. she flies away to find a good place for her nest.

5. In ant society, worker ants
   a. obtain food, build nests, and fight.
   b. spend all their time making sure that there is enough good for the whole society.
   c. fight each other.
   d. lay eggs and feed babies.

6. Ants
   a. have many enemies.
   b. have only a few enemies.
   c. have no enemies except other ants.
   d. are always fighting with each other.

7. The red ants attack the black ants in order to
   a. take away food from their nest.
   b. eat the black ants.
   c. steel baby black ants from them.
   d. occupy their nest.

8. The red ants are different from black ants in that
   a. they are good at war with other ants.
   b. they don't have worker ants of their own.
   c. they have soldiers with very large heads and powerful jaws.
   d. they do not bring their babies up.

9. _____ ants find people useful.
   a. All   b. Most
   c. Some   d. No

10. The writer thinks that ants
    a. are too busy to think much.
    b. think a lot like human beings.
    c. work without thinking.
    d. are very intelligent.

Passage Two: Making Leather

Hides and skins are the raw material of the leather manufacturer or tanner. When man first used animal skins is not known. Skins, even when preserved by tanning, do not last as long as stone, pottery, metals and bone, and our knowledge about the early use of skins is vague. However, the numerous flint scrapers and bone or ivory sewing needles in our museums show that tens of thousands of years ago, in the early Stone Age, skins were prepared and used long before textiles. Nowadays, hides and skins are essential raw materials and important articles of commerce.

Any animal skin can be made into leather, but the skins chiefly used come from cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and horses. To a lesser extent the skins from dogs, deer, reptiles, marine animals, fish and birds are also used. Snakes, lizards, seals, whales, and sharks all contribute to leather manufacture.

'Hide' is the trade word for the skins of the larger animals such as fullgrown cattle and horses; and 'skin' for the smaller animals, and immature large animals such as ponies and calves. Some skins are made into leather after the hair or wool has been removed; but the skins of the fur-bearing animals and sometimes of sheep, lambs and ponies are processed, or 'dressed', with the hair or wool still in place.

Most cattle hides come from South America, the U.S.A. and from Australia with smaller quantities from East and West Africa, Central America and the Sudan. Sheepskins come from Australia and New Zealand, and the best goat skins come from India, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Arabia and Nigeria.

There is usually a long interval between the flaying, or stripping, of the skin from the animal and putting it into the tannery for processing. If the flyed skins were left wet, they would go bad, just like meat; they must therefore be preserved in some way. The commonest method is salting. This involves sprinkling the skins with salt on their inner side; or immersing the skins completely in strong salt solution for some hours, after which they are drained and sprinkled with solid salt.

Another method of drying is to stretch the skins out on the ground, or on frames and to dry them in the sun, or even better in the shade. Beetles and other insects eat skins and must be kept away by the use of some chemical such as D.D.T. The dried skins are called 'crust' leather and are sent in this form to the tanneries for the very complicated process of tanning. After tanning, only the 'corium' or middle layer of the skin is left to provide leather as we know it. It is to the closely knit fibre structure of the corium that leather owes its virtues of flexibility, strength and elasticity, its resistance to rubbing and its unique power of allowing water vapour and air to pass through it while resisting penetration by liquid water itself.

Now select the answer which is most accurate accordin to the infor-
mation given in the passage:

1. Skins do not last as long as pottery
   a. unless they are preserved by tanning.
   b. however well preserved by tanning.
   c. except after certain processes.
   d. unless made into leather.

2. Our knowledge about the early use of skins is vague
   a. because there is no evidence.
   b. even though there is some evidence in the form of tools.
   c. although numerous Stone Age skins have survived.
   d. in spite of some written evidence.

3. Textiles started to be made
   a. long before skins.
   b. at about the same time as skins.
   c. long after skins started to be used,
   d. long before stone tools.

4. Leather can be made from the skins of
   a. any animals except fish and birds.
   b. any kind of animal.
   c. cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and horses only.
   d. the larger animals only.

5. The skins of sheep, lambs and ponies are dressed
   a. with the hair or wool still in place.
   b. in one of wo different ways.
   c. after the hair or wool has been removed.
   d. with the hair or wool added later.

6. The difference between a hide and a skin
   a. has never been defined.
   b. depends on the type of tanning process.
   c. is largely a question of size.
   d. varies from country to country.

7. Cattle hides come mainly from
   a. Africa.   b. the Americas and Australia.
   c. the Sudan.   d. Australia and New Zealand.

8. Skins are usually preserved with salt after stripping
   a. because they cannot be tanned immediately.
   b. to preserve their moisture.
   c. to make them easier to be processed.
   d. to keep insects away.

9. Unless specially treated, sun dried skins may be attacked by
   a. beetles.   b. white arsenic.
   c. D.D.T.   d. various chemicals.

10. When the 'crust' leather has been processed by tanning
    a. the 'corium' is discarded.
    b. the 'corium' forms the middle layer.
    c. nothing but the 'corium' remains.
    d. it becomes airtight and waterproof.

Fast Reading

Passage   One

Directions: On this page is part of the index from a book by Mario
Pei entitled The Story of Language. Try to find out the answers
to the following questions as quickly as you can.

Atarting Time: _____ Minutes _____ Seconds

1. What does the abbreviation Hind stand for?

   _____

2. What is the abbreviation of Sanskrit?

   _____

3. Which language had a longer historical period, Middle English
   or Middle French?

   _____

4. Is G the abbreviation of German, Germanic, Gothic, or Greek?

   _____

5. How many different abbreviations refer to some historical
   period of Latin?

   _____

Finishing Time: _____ Minutes _____ Seconds

AF	Anglo-French	LL	Late Latin
Amer. Ind.	American Indian	ME	Middle English (1100-1500)
Ar.	Arabic	MF	Middle French (1400-1600)
Aram.	Aramaic	Mex.	Mexican
D	Dutch	MGK.	Medieval Greek (700-1500)
Dan.	Danish	ML.	Medieval Latin (700-1500)
Egypt.	Egyptian	NL.	Neo-Latin or New Latin
F	French	Norw.	Norwegian
Fris.	Frisian	OE	Old English (before 1100)
G	German	OF	Old French (before 1400)
Gk.	Greek	OS	Old Saxon
Gmc.	Germanic	Pers.	Persian
Goth.	Gothic	Pg.	Portuguese
Heb.	Hebrew	Pol.	Polish
HG	High Herman	Pr.	Provencal
Hind.	Hindustani	Rom.	Romance, Romanic
Hung.	Hungarian	Russ.	Russian
Icel.	Icelandic	Scand.	Scandinavian
IE	Indo-European	Scot.	Scottish
It.	Italian	Skt.	Sanskrit
Jap.	Japanese	Sp.	Spanish
L	Latin	Sw.	Swedish
LG	Low German	Turk.	Turkish
LGK.	Late Greek	VL	Vulgar Latin
LHeb.	Late Hebrew	VGmc.	West Germanic

Directions: Skim through the passage and try to find the answer to
   the question as quickly as you can.

Starting Time: ___ Minutes ___ Seconds

Why, according to the writer, is marking up a book very important
to reading?

_____

_____

Finishing Time: ___ Minutes ___ Seconds

How to Mark a Book
Mortimer J. Adler

You know you have to read "between the lines" to get the most out of
anything. I want to persuade you to do something equally important
in the course of your reading. I want to persuade you to "write
between the lines". Unless you do you are not likely to do the most
efficient kind of reading.

Marking a Book Is an Act of Love

I contend, quite bluntly, that marking up a book is not an act of
mutilation but of love. You shouldn't mark up a book which isn't
yours. Librarians (or your friends) who lend you books expect you to
keep them clean, and you should. If you decided that I am right about
the usefulness of marking books, you will have to buy them.

Two Ways of Owning a Book

There are two ways in which you can own a book. The first is the
property right you establish by paying for it, just as you pay for
clothes or furniture. But this act of purchase is only the prelude to
possession. Full ownership comes only when you have made it a part of
yourself, and the best way to make yourself a part of it is by writ-
ing in it. An illustration may make the point clear. You buy a beef-
steak and transfer it from the butcher's icebox to your own. But you
do not own the beefsteak in the most important sense until you con-
sume it and get it into your bloodstream to do you any good.

Confusion about what it means to own a book leads people to a
false reverence for paper, binding, and type - a respect for the
physical thing - the craft of the printer rather than for a man to
acquire the idea, to possess the beauty, which a great book contains,
without staking out his claim by pasting his bookplate inside the
cover. Having a fine library doesn't prove that its owner has a mind
enriched by books; it proves nothing more than that he, his father,
or his wife, was rich enough to buy them.

Three Kinds of Book Owners

There are three kinds of book owners. The first has all the standard
sets and best-sellers - unread, untouched. (This deluded individual
owns wood pulp and ink, not books.) The second has a great many books
- a few of them read though, most of them dipped into, but all of
them as clean and shiny as the day they were bought. (This person
would probably like to make books his own, but is restrained by a
false respect for their physical appearance.) The third has a few

books or many - every one of them dog-eared and dilapidated, shaken and loosened by continual use, marked and scribbled in from front front to back. (This man owns books.)

Reasons for Marking a Book

Why is marking up a book indispensable to reading? First, it keeps you awake. In the second place, reading, if it is active, is thinking, and thinking tends to express itself in words spoken or written. The marked book is usually the thought-through book. Finally, writing helps you remember the thoughts you had, or the thoughts the authou expressed. Let me develop these three points.

If reading is to accomplish anything more than passing time, it must be active. You can't let your eyes glide across the lines of a book and come up with an understanding of what you have read. Now an ordinary piece of fiction, Gone With The Wind, for example, doesn't require the most active kind of reading. The books you read for plea-sure can be read in a state of relaxation, and nothing is lost. But a great book, rich in ideas and beauty, a book that raises and tries to answer fundamental questions, demands the most active reading of which you are capable. You don't absorb the ideas of Aristotle the way you absorb the crooning of Frank Sinatra. You have to reach for them. That you cannot do while you are asleep. If, when you've finishe reading a book, the pages are filled with your notes, you know that you read actively.

Even if you wrote on a scratch pad, and threw the paper away when you had finished writing, your grasp of the book would be surer. But you don't have to throw the paper away. The margins (top and bottom, as well as side), the end-papers, the very space between the lines, are all available. They aren't sacred. And, best of all, your marks and notes become an integral part of the book and stay there forever. You can pick up the book the following week or year, and there are all your points of agreement, disagreement, doubt, and inquiry. It's like resuming an interrupted conversation with the advantage of being able to pick up where you left off.

And that is exactly what reading a book should be: a conversation between you and the author. Presumably he knows more about the sub-ject than you do; naturally, you'll have the proper humility as you approach him. But don't let anybody tell you that a reader is sup-posed to be solely on the receiving end. Understanding is a two-way operation; learning doesn't consist in being an empty receptacle. The learner has to question himself and question the teacher. He eveh has to argue with the teacher, once he understands what the teacher is saying. And marking a book is literally an expression of your dif-ferences, or agreements of opinion, with the author.

Ways of Marking a Book

There are all kinds of devices for marking a book intelligently and fruitfully. Here's the way I do it:

  1. Underlining: of major points, of important or forceful state-ments.

  2. Vertical lines in the margin: to emphasize a statement already underlined.

  3. Star, or asterisk, in the margin: to be used aparingly, to em-phasize the ten or twenty most important statements in the book.

  4. Numbers in the margin: to indicate where else in the book the

author made points relevant to the point marked; to tie up the ideas in a book which, though they may be separated by many pages, belong together.

5. Circling of key words or phrases.

6. Writing in the margin, or at the top or bottom of the page, for the sake of: recording questions (and perhaps answers) which a passage raised in your mind; reducing a complicated disussion to a simple statement; recording the sequence of major points right through the book.

You may say that this business of marking books is going to slow up your reading. It probably will. That's one of the reasons for doing it. Most of us have been taken in by the notion that speed of reading is a measure of our intelligence. There is no such thing as the right speed ofr intelligent reading. Some things should be read quickly and effortlessly, and some should be read slowly and even laboriously. The sign of intelligence in reading is the ability to read different things differently according to their worth. In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather how many can get through you - how many you can make your own. A few friends are better than a thousand acquaintances. If this be your aim, as it should be, you will not be impatient if it takes more time and effort to read a great book than it does a newspaper.

English Close Test 1 (Passage 5)

The Trick

When I was small I had a stupid accident. It was at a party. My uncle was playing tricks. He pretended to make a coin disappear. _____ thought I could do the same. I _____ a coin into my mouth, meaning to _____ it behind my teeth. Something went wrong _____ I swallowed it. The coin went down. _____ was too far down to get it _____ again. We telephoned the hospital. They _____ us to come at once.

A very nice _____ wrote down the details. I was put _____ a wheelchair and sent to the X-ray _____. There special photographs were taken.

At first _____ had hurt in my throat. Then it _____ lower down. The photograph showed it had _____ my stomach. The hospital decided to keep _____ in that night. The next day they _____ me go home. It did not hurt _____ more. They said it shouldn't cause any _____ trouble.

I never put anything silly _____ my mouth again.

Test 2 (Passage 6)

Skills

No one is born with a skill. Skills are learnt. So why are some people better at some things than others? For instance, why are some _____ better with their hands? They _____ be made that way. But _____ people are good at what _____ enjoy doing. The more you _____ doing it, the more you _____ it. The more you do _____, the better you get. Have you heard the old saying "Practice _____ perfect"?

Sometimes people talk themselves _____ of trying new skills. They _____ be afraid to try something _____. Or they might think of _____ last time they tried. Just _____ they did not like it _____, they think they won't now. _____ often don't give something a _____ chance.

They might say "This _____ too hard. I'm not good _____ my hands. I'll never succeed." _____ they might give up. But _____ is not because they could _____ do it. It is because _____ weren't keen enough to carry _____ trying. We often neglect what _____ aren't very good at.

There are very _____ skills. Certain jobs require certain _____. We may not have the _____ now. We need not despair! _____ can learn them. We can _____ trained. It is never too _____ to improve our skills in _____ some areas. This mainly depends on _____ much determination we have!