Readings on L2 reading: Publications in other venues 2014–2015

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This feature offers an archive of articles published in other venues during the past year and serves as a valuable tool to readers of *Reading in a Foreign Language* (*RFL*). It treats any topic within the scope of *RFL* and second language reading. The articles are listed in alphabetical order, each with a complete reference as well as a brief summary. The editors of this feature attempt to include all related articles that appear in other venues. However, undoubtedly, this list is not exhaustive.

Abidin, M., Pourmohammadi, M., Varasingam, N., & Lean, O. (2014). The online reading habits of Malaysian students. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 164–172.

Given Malaysian students' prolific use of on-line technologies in the global information-age, in this quantitative study the authors sought to find out if these dynamics have influenced Malaysian high school students' reading habits, and if students were more prone to use English when engaging in online activities. In addition, the authors wanted to determine if there were any differences in online reading habits between genders and to investigate the relationship between

socio-economic status and online students' reading habits. The study focused on 240 'Form Four' secondary urban students between 16 and 17 years of age. Researchers employed adapted versions of questionnaires originally developed for studying computer technology and college students' reading habits (Livingstone & Bober, 2004; Shen, 2006). A reliability test calculated Cronbach's alpha with a value of 0.832. The authors employed descriptive statistics to describe demographic variables in terms of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, as well as inferential statistics (sample *t* test and Pearson Correlation) to investigate questions pertaining to differences and relationships between the variables. In alignment with previous research in the field (Livingstone et al*.,* 2005; Shen, 2006), main findings revealed Malaysian secondary students were active Internet users and preferred the use of English when involved in online activities. In addition, aligned with previous research (Shen, 2006), findings also revealed that although all respondents had similar online reading habits regardless of gender and socio-economic status, they were more inclined toward social networking activities rather than reading as an academic activity. The authors conclude that although findings show that students went online for educational purposes, it is clear that the purpose was not for reading in particular. Given the usefulness of the Internet for facilitating students' development of reading skills, the authors suggest that secondary teachers should incorporate activities for encouraging their students to go online to read.

Au-Yeung, K., Hipfner-Boucher, K., Chen, X., Pasquarella, A., D'Angelo, N., & Deacon, S. (2014). Development of English and French language and literacy skills in EL1 and EL French immersion students in the early grades. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *50*, 233–254.

The article includes two different longitudinal studies that examine the development of English and French language and literacy skills with both native English speakers (EL1) and English learners (EL) enrolled in a French immersion school. The first study, with 228 students in grade 1, revealed similar results for EL1 and EL groups on tasks that measure English phonological awareness and word reading. Similar findings were also reported for all the French language tasks. The only difference found between groups was with English receptive vocabulary, where the EL1s outperformed the ELs. The second study consisted of a subset of the students from the first study, in order to examine the phonological awareness and word reading factors in grades 2 and 3. Once again, both groups yielded similar results for tasks that tested English phonological awareness, word reading, and reading comprehension. The EL1s scored better than the ELs only on expressive and receptive vocabulary. Findings on all of the French language tasks were similar across both groups. This study provides empirical evidence to substantiate the notion that early French immersion is a positive option for both EL1s and minority-language students. The study is one of the first to examine educational outcomes of these types of students in both English and French, and it provides a strong foundation for future studies of this kind with other language programs.

Behroozizad, S., Nambiar, R., & Amir, Z. (2014). Sociocultural theory as an approach to aid EFL learners. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 217–226.

Against the backdrop of the continued use of traditional pedagogical strategies for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Iran (e.g., dialogue memorization, fill-in-the-blanks exercises, and retelling the complete listening text), in this theoretical/pedagogical article, the

authors make a case for the need to reconfigure the EFL classroom in order to provide students ample opportunities to develop functional or communicative language competencies. The authors advocate for Iranian EFL classrooms where students are not passive recipients of knowledge, but interactive agents in the process of learning and knowledge construction. By turning to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning, the authors suggest ways in which EFL teachers could facilitate the process: by engaging ELF students beyond their *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZDP), *scaffolding* instruction (e.g., giving helpful suggestions in the process of doing tasks, asking leading questions, drawing tables and charts, and giving feedback concerning the students' group work), thus becoming *mediators* of learning. Implicit in their argument is the assumption that by organizing EFL classrooms based on Vygotskian sociocultural theory teachers will enrich the social setting of learning and create more effective, communicative EFL learning environments where students will be able to self-regulate and self-assess their learning processes.

Bilikozen, N., & Akyel, A. (2014). EFL reading comprehension, individual differences and text difficulty. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 263–296.

In this article, the authors explore how topic interest, prior knowledge, gender, reading motivation, metacognitive awareness, linguistic proficiency (individual difference variables [IDVs]) and text difficulty impact L2 reading comprehension. The study examined data from 66 Turkish intermediate and advanced English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Recall protocols were utilized to assess student reading comprehension. The authors first conducted a hierarchical multiple regression analysis to determine what percentage each IDV contributed to overall reading comprehension. They found that linguistic proficiency, motivation to read, and prior knowledge significantly accounted for variance in reading comprehension for both advanced and intermediate learners. Next, the authors ran multiple regression analyses to explore whether or not the contribution of the IDVs changed based on text difficulty (intermediate text or advanced text). They found that IDVs were a significant predictor of variability only for advanced EFL students when they read the intermediate level text. The impact of IDVs was not significant for intermediate students reading the intermediate text nor for advanced learners reading the advanced text. Therefore, the authors conclude that although results regarding the impact of IDVs upon comprehension are important, text difficulty plays an important role that cannot be ignored.

Brantmeier, C., & Xiucheng, Y. (2014). Empirical research on native Chinese speakers reading in English: Data driven issues and challenges. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 145–163.

This literature review examines articles focused on Chinese reading research retrieved from the Chinese Social Science Citation Index (CSSCI), ERIC, and MLA databases. The authors synthesize main topics, research questions, and results of articles published from 2005 to 2009. It is noted that the majority of articles focus on adult learners of English, and that most articles are concerned with English vocabulary acquisition and reading strategies. As a result, the authors argue that more research on text topics, more thorough descriptions of reading passages should be provided, and more work with metacognition should be done in China.

Charubusp, S., & Chinwonno, C. (2014). Developing academic and content area literacy: The Thai EFL context. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 119–134.

In this mixed-methods study authors investigated the effects of Academic Literacy-Based Intervention (ALI)—language, cognitive, sociocultural, and affective/psychological dimensions— on the reading performance of 30 Thai undergraduate students, classified into high English (*n*=15) and low English (*n*=15) reading performance groups as per the Academic Reading Module (IELTS) pre-test administered. In particular, the authors sought to understand to what extent ALI (a) could increase reading proficiency in general and (b) affect the reading proficiency of students with varying levels of initial reading proficiency. After 10 weeks of ALI intervention, students were administered the Academic Reading Module (IELTS) as a post-test. The authors analyzed quantitative data gathered from pre and post-tests, as well as qualitative data from classroom observation records and semi-structured group interviews. In comparing high and low reading proficiency level students, results generated by the English Reading Proficiency Test showed that low proficiency students made a statistically significant improvement in English reading proficiency. A paired sample *t* test evaluated the impact of ALI on students who had high and low English reading proficiency and indicated there was no statistically significant improvement among the students who had initially high proficiency. However, analysis showed there was statistically significant improvement among students who had low initial proficiency (eta-squared statistic indicated a medium effect size). Since findings indicate ALI promotes English reading proficiency and reading self-efficacy at all student levels, especially among those with low initial reading proficiency, the authors concluded that EFL classrooms should foster content literacy that focuses on multifaceted components (e.g., language, cognitive, strategic, and socio-cultural).

Chiu, H. (2015). Supporting extensive reading in a university where English is used as a second language and a medium of instruction. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 234–251.

This study was an action-research pilot study implemented in a university where English was the medium of instruction. The study sought to understand whether adding reading to the existing discussion group curriculum could improve student access to extensive reading materials. The study also aimed to determine what types of readings are suitable for these students. In addition, the researcher wanted to learn whether these readings could encourage other skill development that the university supports such as critical thinking skills. At the university there is an option to meet with a teacher in a small group setting to improve oral proficiency through speaking in a conversational or presentational way in a discussion group. Three groups with three students each participated in a more specific task for these sessions. Participants were given short fiction and non-fiction excerpts to read and focus on for the discussion period. Data was collected about the students through field notes taken during their discussions. These notes were focused on students' participation and responses to the texts. In addition, teachers were asked to look at the format of these discussions to determine their opinions on maintaining a curriculum like this one. Materials and texts were chosen specifically to cater to the interests university students. Results demonstrated that while the sessions provided the opportunity to read texts more extensively, and the students enjoyed a number of the stories, the texts selected were often very difficult for the students to read. However, enjoyment did not depend upon the difficulty of the texts. If the students found the text to be interesting, it was worth the additional effort. These results also

demonstrated that it is possible to use these discussions to build critical thinking and other such skills that the university promotes. The teachers' feedback on the sessions indicated that they were not certain that such sessions could really encourage better reading habits. Teaching appropriate texts was evaluated to be difficult for a variety of reasons relating to interest and difficulty; however, all teachers believed that nonlinguistic skills that the university supports could be taught throughout the discussion. This study demonstrated that it is possible to show students the interactive nature of reading and that texts appropriate for students are those that they find interesting and relatable to their lives.

Chlapana, E., & Tafa, E. (2014). Effective practices to enhance immigrant kindergarteners' second language vocabulary learning through storybook reading. *Reading and Writing*, *27*, 1619–1640.

With data obtained from 87 immigrant kindergartners in Greece, this study examined the impact of direct instruction, interactive instruction and classroom storybook reading on Greek vocabulary learning. Students were from 11 different countries, and attended seven different schools. Classrooms were randomly assigned into three groups. One experimental group of classrooms used direct instruction of vocabulary. Another experimental group of students learned vocabulary through interactive instruction where students discussed words and answered story questions. The control group received regular storybook readings with no additional instruction. There were no significant differences between groups on pre-tests. Univariate ANOVA results indicate that significant differences existed between groups on the post-test. Bonferroni post hoc analyses revealed that the group receiving interactive instruction outperformed the other two groups. Given these results, the researchers conducted ANCOVAs to further examine interactions. Results indicated that girls outperformed boys on instructed words in both intervention groups and that prior target word knowledge and Greek receptive vocabulary significantly contributed to vocabulary learning. The authors argue that teachers working with immigrant populations should encourage interactive learning in classrooms, and that vocabulary should be an essential component of instruction.

Chow, B. (2014). The differential roles of paired associate learning in Chinese and English word reading abilities in bilingual children. *Reading and Writing*, *27*, 1657–1672.

This study examined the role that visual-pronunciation and visual-semantic paired associate learning (PAL) played in word reading ability for Chinese-English bilingual second grade children in Hong Kong. Chinese and English word reading tests, a phonological memory task, a phonological awareness task, nonverbal reasoning tests, and PAL tasks were administered to 121 children. Hierarchical regression analysis revealed that PAL skills significantly predicted word reading, and that it predicted word reading in different ways for English and Chinese reading. Chinese, but not English word reading, was significantly predicted by visual-semantic PAL and English, but not Chinese word reading, was significantly predicted by visual-pronunciation PAL. Hierarchical regression analysis also showed that word reading abilities were significantly predicted by phonological skill. The author highlights the different PAL mappings for Chinese and English word reading, and argues that PAL modality (visual-semantic or visual-pronunciation) should be considered when instructing young bilingual readers.

Daskalovaska, N. (2014). Incidental vocabulary acquisition from reading an authentic text. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 201–216.

This study looked at how much vocabulary learners truly gain from an authentic text while comparing readers with diverse sizes of vocabularies. In addition, the researcher sought to understand whether the words that appear more frequently were more likely to be learned. These questions were sought after using a test which was formulated in the same way as the Vocabulary Levels Test (Nation, 1990). Participants took Nation's Vocabulary Levels Test at the beginning of the study to categorize their vocabulary size. They were then asked to read while a recording read aloud the first eight chapters of *Pride & Prejudice* by Jane Austen. This text was verified to be comprehensible to those participating in the study at 96%. Using the target words chosen from the text, students were given a pretest to determine their familiarity with the words. One week later, students read the passage while it was read aloud to them to control for reading rate variations. One day after reading and listening to the passage, participants took the test to see how much vocabulary they were able to gain through reading an authentic text. According to the results, participants gained a statistically significant amount of new vocabulary terms, but their previous vocabulary size had no effect on the rate of learning unknown words. In addition, frequency was not a large factor impacting vocabulary growth as other factors may have impacted word learning. Certain parts of speech, for example, nouns, appear to be easier to learn. Further study and more advanced analysis were recommended in order to gain a fuller understanding of the relationship between word frequency and acquisition rate. Overall, as the study focused on word meanings, it is possible that there were a variety of misunderstandings leading to incorrect answers and assumptions about words. Therefore they were perhaps learned through their frequency, but not learned correctly. While this study had a small sample (18 participants), it is clear that it demonstrates that words can be learned in authentic reading contexts that are at the appropriate level for students. The author concludes that this study is evidence for the need for extensive reading programs to improve vocabulary acquisition, suggesting also that teachers should teach in a way that will focus learners on vocabulary learning and strategies.

Demiroz, H., & Yesilyurt, S. (2015). Pre-Service EFL teachers' motivational profiles for recreational reading in English. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 15–24.

Using a self-determination theory framework, the authors of this study examined motivational profiles of pre-service Turkish EFL teachers regarding recreational reading. Specifically, the researchers wanted to explore the relationship between profiles and gender, frequency of reading and amount of reading performed by 224 pre-service English language teaching (ELT) students. Students completed the Motivation for Recreational Reading Questionnaire (MRRQ), which examined motivation, external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, intrinsic motivation for knowledge, intrinsic motivation for accomplishment, and intrinsic motivation for stimulation. Students also filled out a background information form during the same session. According to the descriptive statistics, most students participate in recreational reading because of strong intrinsic motivation for knowledge. Correlation analysis revealed that reading frequency and number of pages read is positively and significantly correlated with intrinsic motivation for knowledge and intrinsic motivation for stimulation, but not for intrinsic motivation for accomplishment. Regardless of these results, the authors note that the frequency

and amount of recreational reading was still somewhat low. Therefore, they argue that recreational reading among pre-service EFL teachers should be encouraged.

Dhanapala, K., & Yamada, J. (2015). Reading processing skills among EFL learners in different proficiency levels. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 25–40.

The authors of this study sought to understand how the various components of reading such as vocabulary knowledge, drawing inferences, knowledge of text structure, finding specific information, and the ability to identify the main idea and details, related to the scores received on a reading comprehension test and the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). They investigated how those same components discriminate between levels of proficiency, and how they contribute to the total score of the TOEIC. They examined this information with 146 Japanese EFL learners who had at least six years of experience with English. All participants took a reading comprehension test, which was made up of four passages with forty total multiple choice questions to be completed in one hour. They also took the TOEIC, which consists of two sections of listening and reading with 100 questions for each section. Two hours are given to complete this measure. Only the reading scores were used for the TOEIC. Based on statistical analysis, knowledge of text structure, finding specific information, the ability to identify the main idea and details, drawing inferences and predictions, and vocabulary knowledge were all found to be statistically significantly related to the scores on the reading comprehension test with identifying specific knowledge being the strongest significant relationship. A significant difference also existed between the scores on the reading comprehension test and TOEIC. In addition, there were clear differences based on the proficiency of the students with more advanced students better able to process and understand the text. Yet, there were different levels of impact for different levels of proficiency with vocabulary being much more able to predict performance with beginners while grammar and discourse structure skills were better predictors for those in high proficiency stages of acquisition. Main idea identification tasks were also substantially easier for the lower-proficiency students. Across all levels, inferencing was the worst skill for these learners. In addition, findings show that the TOEIC had consistently lower scores than that of the reading comprehension test. Here they have attributed this to the fact that TOEIC has test questions focused specifically on lexical items rather than being entirely focused on comprehension in the way that the reading comprehension test is. Altogether this study demonstrates the clear link between the component skills of reading and overall reading comprehension performance. The authors suggest that reading instructors bring in classroom activities that target skills and sub-skills of reading to improve overall reading comprehension.

Fujita, K., & Yamashita, J. (2014). The relations and comparisons between reading comprehension and reading rate of Japanese high school EFL learners. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 34–49.

The authors of this study sought to understand the relationship between reading comprehension and reading rate in Japanese EFL learners. They divided the learners into two groups and compared the relation between reading rate and reading comprehension found in the groups. Reading comprehension was measured by having the 125 participants read a passage and respond to multiple choice questions or completing a free recall of the passage. On six passages not previously seen by participants, each student answered five multiple choice questions. For

reading rate tests, Carver's (1990, 2000) definition of reading rate was used. It defines reading rate as the highest speed at which one can read with more than 64% accuracy. It was modified to 50% percent here as students are in high school and culturally have difficulty reading quickly as accuracy is emphasized in the classroom. For the data collection, participants read two unfamiliar passages and then responded to five questions to understand the accuracy of the reading. Performance groups were discovered through cluster analysis, ANOVA, and multiple comparisons. The cluster analysis established the groups as follows: low to middle comprehension, low rate (LMCLR); high comprehension, low to middle rate (HCLMR); low comprehension, middle rate (LCMR); and high comprehension, high rate (HCHR). These were compared so that reading comprehension and reading rate could be investigated further; the scores of all groups were statistically significantly different. The results demonstrate a significant but weak correlation between reading rate and reading comprehension. In comparing this with first language acquisition, it is evident that some differences may lie simply in the types of texts used in research when looking at L2 high school students and what they are expected to read in comparison to their L1 elementary counterparts. In the case of high school Japanese EFL learners, it appears that reading rate and reading comprehension are different skills that must be utilized differently depending upon passage type. The comparison between the groups shows that certain readers performed in specific ways on the test. In looking at this the author claims that certain stages of reading abilities may be present. Specifically with the LCMR group it is evident that their reading rate has improved while their comprehension has remained low. They are in what has been defined as the conditional into the competitive stage where comprehension and reading rate compete for the resources. There are many other steps like this in language acquisition according to the author. In conclusion, the data here state that reading comprehension and reading rate are different variables. As a result, reading courses should focus on both skills separately. To better understand the development of the stages found in the group analysis and previously discussed in the work of Verpoor and van Dijk (2011) a longitudinal study has been recommended by the author.

Gablasova, D. (2014). Learning and retaining specialized vocabulary from textbook reading: Comparison of learning outcomes through L1 and L2. *The Modern Language Journal*, *98*, 976–991.

The author of this study seek a greater understanding of the breadth and depth of lexical knowledge that can be acquired through reading a technical text both immediately after reading and following a week delay. This study was completed with 64 Slovak high school students. They were divided into two groups with one group receiving the text in the L1, Slovak, and the other receiving it in the L2, English. All students were advanced learners of English and groups were balanced for gender and proficiency. The participants were asked to read the passages while a recording played the same material in order to familiarize the participants with target word pronunciation. Participants were told to focus on the meaning of the text. The target words were carefully selected looking at factors such as whether the word itself was concrete or abstract. Prior knowledge was tested through self-reporting familiarity with the topic. The computer-administered posttest of 36 questions (12 of which collected data on word meanings) was given both immediately after and one week after the reading session. To obtain results for the breadth of knowledge, if the response included minimal evidence of learning it was coded correct. Following this for depth of knowledge, meaning components which were considered

obligatory for defining the word and distinguishing it from other words were counted toward deeper understanding of the word. The percentage of these components in a response was calculated for analysis. Using an independent samples *t* test, these groups were compared. Results show that there is a different rate of retention by L2 instructed participants when comparing them to L1 instructed participants. L2 instructed participants recalled fewer target words and an analysis of incorrect answers showed that incorrect connections had been formed as well. In addition, if an L2 instructed participant was able to recall a particular target word, then they could not recall as many meaning components as someone who was L1 instructed. The explanations for these findings indicate that there are many points where acquisition of the word may have been lost including when forming the link, when attempting to maintain the link over time, when processing the word, as well as when the word was complex. There were many contextual factors which could contribute to learning a new word as well and more of these factors seemed to be at play when students are encountering the passage in a second language. In addition, more words were lost following a delay when students were instructed in the L2. The author shows this as evidence that instruction needs to be more targeted for students who are working in an L2 medium. The findings show that students who are working in their second language, even when advanced, are at a disadvantage compared to those learning in an L1 when it comes to subject learning. More needs to be done to understand the intersection that lies between acquiring language and learning information.

Ghabanchi, Z., & Payame, R. (2014). The correlation of IQ and emotional intelligence with reading comprehension. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 135–144.

In this study, the author pursued an understanding of the relationship between intelligence quotient (IQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), and reading comprehension, looking to understand which form of intelligence had a more significant bearing on EFL university students' reading comprehension proficiency. In addition, the author wished to understand whether those with higher IQs or EQs had higher reading proficiency scores. Participants were selected because they had passed the basic courses in reading comprehension. There were 55 students studying English Literature and Translation. EQ, IQ, and reading comprehension proficiency were each measured using a written survey. For EQ the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) was used while IQ was measured using Raven's Advanced Progressive Matrices. A reading section of a TOEFL exam was used to measure reading proficiency. Each test was taken in a separate session. The results were analyzed through a correlational analysis using Pearson product-moment coefficient. Results demonstrated that IQ had a strong correlation with reading comprehension (r=.36). The total EQ and its subsections were found to be poor predictors of reading comprehension. Overall, learners with higher IQs outperformed those with higher EQs, showing a stronger relationship between IQ and reading comprehension then between EQ and reading comprehension. The implications of the study lead to the conclusion that attention must be paid to the intelligence and emotional intelligence of students in the classroom. Further research is recommended to relate emotional intelligence with language learning.

Güvendir, E. (2014). Using think-aloud protocols to identify factors that cause foreign language reading anxiety. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 109–118.

This study used a think aloud protocol in order to better understand what causes foreign language reading anxiety. Thirty first year students in English Language Teaching participated in the study. They were asked to read "The Cat Sat on the Test," an 873 word passage about the American school testing system. Before reading students were all taught about verbalizing their mental processes. They then did so while reading the passage. Their responses were transcribed and coded by two raters. Content analysis was used in order to understand the data collected. In pinpointing the features, researchers found twelve categories of different factors contributing to anxiety. Some of these categories had greater amounts of students expressing anxiety. The largest contributors were (a) the metaphoric title (90%), (b) unknown vocabulary (76%), (c) exam that may result (73%), (d) reading aloud (70%), (e) text length (63%), (f) time (56%), and (g) teachers questions (56%). Other less pronounced sources of anxiety were text type, coherence among paragraphs, linguistic structures, and topic familiarity. This author thereafter recommends that teachers focus on anxiety sources declared by students in order to build activities that shape a positive reading experience for all in the classroom. This can include strategies instruction which may help students decode figurative language and understand cultural implications.

Hamada, M. (2014). The role of morphological and contextual information in L2 lexical inference. *The Modern Language Journal*, *98*, 992–1005.

This study investigates how using morphological and textual information in lexical inference differs depending upon the proficiency of the L2 learner and the reliability of morphological information. The one-hundred and seven participants were part of a reading and vocabulary course as part of an intensive English program at a Midwestern university. The learners were distributed across the levels of proficiency including beginning, intermediate, high-intermediate, and advanced. The experimental task was a multiple-choice lexical inference task which had been taken and altered from previous studies. Participants were asked to select the definition of an unfamiliar, often non-real lexical item presented in a sentence. There were five answer options for each of the questions, and the answers were designed to demonstrate participants' use of contextual or morphological clues to understand the word. The options also included "I do not know" as well. The test was administered during class time, but the task was completed with someone who was not the teacher and students were told that this would have no impact on their grade in the course. There was no time limit for completing the task. Results indicated that the choice of which information to depend upon can be influenced by the reliability of the morphological indicators. When the morphological information was incorrect, high-intermediate and advanced learners utilized the contextual information and were able to obtain the correct answer; however, beginners and intermediates did not use the same skills, and, as a result, chose the incorrect answer, indicating that the factors learners rely upon do change as learners pass through stages of acquisition. Conclusions drawn here suggest that learners choose to infer meaning first based upon morphology and then test that definition with contextual clues. This requires an evaluation ability which may not be present in beginners, but emerges as learners enter the high-intermediate and advanced stages of acquisition. Therefore, there are differences based on proficiency when looking at choosing morphological or contextual clues with the morphological clues that may be unreliable and do not match the context. Implications from this work may include the perils of using lexical inference as a method of vocabulary instruction at beginning levels. Future studies may also wish to look more closely at participants L1 backgrounds and this impact as this study did not look at those factors.

Haupt, J. (2015). The use of a computer-based reading rate development program on pre-university intermediate level ESL learners' reading speeds. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 1–14.

Haupt tested the effect of a computer-based reading rate development program on the reading speeds of five ESL students. The author focused on training the adult, intermediate-level students in reading fluency by using a combination of paper-based and computer-based texts. The computer-based readings were presented using iMovie videos with timed, scrolling texts. The pace of the scrolling increased by five words per minute, per text, as the subjects progressed through the 18 texts used for the training. The results show that the students increased their reading speed of computer-based texts by an average of 43.2 words per minute, or 42.8%, while maintaining a 75% or above comprehension rate. The increase for paper-based texts was 38.4 words per minute, a difference of only 4.8 wpm. The students indicated in post-study interviews and questionnaires that the program improved not only their reading fluency, but also other aspects of reading, including focus on general meaning instead of each word, acquisition of vocabulary, overall comprehension, and motivation. Though the study has major limitations, such as a small sample size and no control group, Haupt's results suggest that a computer-based reading development program can have clear benefits for the English reading skills of ESL students.

Huang, O., & Chen, X. (2015). Examining the overall quality of English/Chinese bilingual children's picture books: Issues and possibilities. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 133–142.

This study utilized mixed methods to evaluate English/Chinese bilingual children's picture book quality. Books included were written in simplified English/Chinese, English/Chinese with pinyin and English/traditional Chinese. The books were scored by both researchers on: genre, topic, cover and body, author/illustrator/translator credibility, illustrations, and book theme. Author/illustrator/translator credibility was based on background information provided and publication history. Books covered a range of topics and genres. The authors felt that most books did not provide sufficient information to evaluate author/illustrator/translator credibility. They also felt that some books used stereotypical and culturally inappropriate illustrations. However, the authors argue that educators should continue to look for high quality books to use with bilingual students. They conclude by providing a framework through which educators can evaluate potential literature.

Joh, J., & Schallert, D. (2014). How conception of task influences approaches to reading: A study of Korean college students recalling an English text. *TESOL Quarterly*, *48*, 715–737.

The researchers of this study utilized experimental design to explore differences in student strategy use and post-reading task performance based on readers' conceptions of the task they would face. Participants included 30 Korean high-intermediate students learning English. Students were randomly assigned to either the control or experimental group, and randomly assigned one of three readings. Students in the experimental group were given the directive that they would do a recall task upon completion of the reading. Participants in the control group were informed that they would have to complete a post-reading task, but did not know that it would be a recall task. All students completed topic interest and text difficulty information sheets,

as well as a follow-up interview after reading. Recall protocols were scored using idea units. Interviews were coded to include categorization of strategies used by participants. Although ANOVA did not find a difference in performance on recall scores, students recalled different portions of their text based on their condition group. Further, chi-square results indicated that significant differences in strategy use occurred based on condition group, with those in the experimental group attempting to memorize information as a main strategy. The authors conclude that strategy use may have been impacted by sociocultural background and argue that more ethnographic work into this phenomenon would be beneficial, particularly for second language teaching.

Karimi, M., & Alibakhshi, G. (2014). EFL learner's text processing strategies across comprehension vs integration reading task conditions. *System*, *46*, 96–104.

With 22 L1 Persian students studying EFL, the researchers examined strategies readers use as they process two reading tasks: single-text comprehension and multiple-texts integration. The authors were careful to account for potential differences in both reading proficiency and prior knowledge, and findings revealed no significant differences for both factors. For the experiment, the single-text comprehension group was asked to read a text and answer the questions following it, which included both multiple choice and open-ended tasks. The multiple-text-integration group received three texts together and were asked to develop an essay on the topic. Findings revealed that readers' text processing strategies vary as a function of differences in reading task conditions. The authors offer a careful discussion about how this study contributes to the dearth in the database, and they also detail how the research may offer instructional implications for the use of multiple texts for content integration.

Karimi, M. (2015). EFL learners' multiple documents literacy: Effects of a strategy-directed intervention program. *The Modern Language Journal*, *99*, 40–56.

This investigation sought a better understanding of reading strategies instruction on EFL students' self-reported use of reading strategies while reading multiple documents. It also investigated whether strategy instruction on a single document would be as effective as multiple document strategy instruction in promoting multiple document comprehension. Participants were 76 Farsi-L1 EFL learners attending a private language facility. Thirty texts were meant to be used during the course. There were four distinct groups using the texts. The first was multiple texts without strategy instruction while the second also used multiple texts and added strategy instruction. The other two groups used single texts for instruction with one group having strategies instruction while the other did not. Strategies taught fell into the categories of: comprehension monitoring, elaborative and coherence inferencing, prediction, planning, concept mapping, and summarizing. Participants in the instruction groups were taught through modeling and guided practice. Two tests were given to participants. One provided researchers with the ability to know that all groups were equal at the start of the program. The other gave the results of the varied types of instruction. All participants were tested on multiple texts through two intertextual inference tasks where twenty sentences were written synthesizing information across texts, and the participants chose which inferences were correct. Participants were allowed to return to the texts in order to answer the questions. Participants then completed their self-reported strategy use inventory which was tailored exactly to the strategies taught in the program and based off the

Metacognitive Reading Strategies Questionnaire (MRSQ). In the posttests eight participants were chosen from each group to complete the reading in a think-aloud protocol. Results showed that there were significant differences among the four groups on multiple text comprehension. Differences were found between multiple and single texts with strategies instruction as well as between multiple text with and without strategies instruction. The single texts groups were not statistically significantly different. Multiple text and strategy instruction used the most strategies while those with single text and strategy instruction used the second most strategies. The qualitative analysis of the think-aloud samples demonstrated that those trained on multiple texts were intentional in using the strategies to analyze multiple texts while those who were strategy trained on single texts demonstrated the use of the strategies only within any one of the given texts. Strategy instruction here aligns well with all that has been studied previously as it improves student reading comprehension abilities. All of the skills studied here (comprehension monitoring, elaborative and coherence inferencing, prediction, planning, concept mapping, and summarizing) are thought to have a strong impact not only on single text reading but upon multiple text reading and integration. This study demonstrates a need for training on multiple texts as it is clear that those trained on single texts in this circumstance did not apply their skills to the multiple texts in the most effective way. This study concludes that multiple texts and strategies need to be integrated together in EFL coursework if this is a skill that EFL students need.

Khaki, N. (2014). Improving reading comprehension in a foreign language: Strategic reader. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 186–200.

Drawing on research in L2 reading highlighting the importance of implementing strategies to help students become 'strategic readers,' and against the backdrop of typical reading classroom scenarios in Iran —where EFL teachers first read a passage and then, more often than not, translate passage to L1 before asking students to answer questions related to the passage— this quasi experimental study sought to investigate the effectiveness of two cognitive reading strategies (e.g., summary telling and student-generated questions) on intermediate EFL students' reading comprehension, as well as differences between the effect of these strategies on student performance. Pre-test and post-test consisted of reading six short passages and answering 30 multiple choice questions. Data from 54 intermediate-level EFL Iranian female students (ages 14-39) randomly assigned into three intact groups. Experimental group 1 (n=19) was assigned to study the passages given to them, write a summary, and learn to be able to present it orally. Group 2 (n=19) had to generate and write questions about the passages while also studying these so that they could answer questions posed by the teacher. The control group (n=15) was assigned to study the passages so that they could answer the teacher's questions about the passages. Results of a one-way ANOVA indicated that there was significant difference between group 1 and the control group, whereas no significant difference was observed between group 1 and group 2, and also between group 2 and the control group. The author concludes by recommending that EFL teachers ask their students to prepare a reading passage summary to help them improve their reading comprehension.

Kirchhoff, C. (2015). Extensive reading in the EFL classroom: Benefits of a face-to-face collaboration activity. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 54–65.

The author of this study integrated small group book discussion as a "collaborative task" into an extensive reading course in order to evaluate motivation differences during extensive reading. Using a qualitative methodology with 41 Japanese EFL students, the researcher had the students fill out an anonymous questionnaire at the conclusion of three weeks. The questionnaire consisted of five multiple-choice questions, with the last question allowing extra space for written clarification. The space allowed students to clarify what component of the book talk they (dis)liked. Seven main concepts emerged: interest in book increased, learned about books, easier to select new books, communication ability, speaking practice, talking to classmates, and enjoyable. Overall, 38 of the students viewed book talks as being a positive component of extensive reading. The author concludes that a collaborative task such as a book talk might enhance student motivation during extensive reading, and therefore is a good component to integrate into an extensive reading environment.

Lee, H. (2015). Using picture books in EFL college reading classrooms. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 66–77.

With 39 EFL learners at a university in Taiwan, the authors of this study investigated the utilization of authentic picture books in the English courses for those not majoring in English. They sought to understand students' responses to reading children's literature in the classroom and the perceived effectiveness of reading children's texts as part of English capabilities growth. The participants were not avid readers and were not confident in their abilities to read in English at the start of the course. They were placed into this intermediate course for eighteen weeks wherein they watched two movies and read eight picture books, dealing primarily with self-exploration or social issues. Following each book there was an involved discussion incorporating outside materials and utilizing a variety of vocabulary and literacy skills. In the final class session students created a play depicting one of the stories. At the end of the course, students completed an open-ended questionnaire which asked them about their feelings and perceptions as it related to the course and the materials used within the course. Results of this survey indicated a generally positive reaction to the course and its use of children's literature. Students generally found this type of literature to be a useful learning tool in English. Students also responded positively to how the books were integrated into the classroom with peer collaboration. Many of the students found that the themes in the text were universal and therefore could be used in adult classrooms, but others criticized the program as it did not adequately prepare students for standardized testing in English. In conclusion, despite apprehension EFL instructors may have toward these types of texts, it is clear that using specific children's texts in the context of EFL literacy can be a valid practice to build students' enjoyment and accessibility to meaning in an interesting text.

Liu, S., & Wang, J. (2015). Reading cooperatively or independently? Study on ELL student reading development. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 102–120.

Liu and Wang used data from two large data sets, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), to examine the effectiveness of small group and pair reading activities versus that of independent reading activities on the reading proficiency of 4th grade level English Language Learner students. The researchers found that collective reading activities are no longer beneficial for ELL students at

the intermediate level and, instead, could impede the development of the students' reading skills. More effective are independent reading activities, such as silent reading and allowing the students to read books of their own choice. The authors state that this study indicates a need for the creation of special curricula at the lower, intermediate, and higher levels of ELL instruction. Furthermore, ELL teachers of intermediate and higher grades should assign their students more independent reading activities, both at school and at home.

Liu, Y., & Todd, A. (2014). Dual-modality input in repeated reading for foreign language learners with different learning styles. *The Foreign Language Annals*, *47*, 684–706.

Utilizing a repeated-measures design, the authors of this study investigated the role dual and single modal instruction played in vocabulary development and reading comprehension, and examined whether or not student learning style interacted with the efficacy of modality use. Forty intermediate-level Japanese learners were invited to participate in the study out of a pool of 80 native Mandarin-speaking students. Students were first given a vocabulary pre-test and then randomly broken into one of four practice reading conditions: silent reading (visual-only modality), read-aloud reading (shadowing), repeat the reading (time-lapse imitation), and silently reading along with a recording (sub vocalization). Passages were read seven times. Participants were given a short break before completing a 21 multiple-choice question reading comprehension test. In order to determine student learning style, a caption reliance test (CRT) was administered. Students returned the next day to complete the vocabulary post-test. *T*-test analysis revealed that students in all learning conditions had acquired significantly more vocabulary. Further, students in the shadowing group significantly outperformed the visual-only condition. Reading comprehension scores also revealed significant differences. For example, students in the sub vocalization and time-lapse conditions performed significantly better than students in the visual-only group. Last, scores on vocabulary development, and reading comprehension were significantly different based on learning style. The authors note that sub vocalization seemed to be most helpful in reading comprehension, as it required the least amount of attention to input. However, shadowing is more helpful for boosting vocabulary development. Therefore, the authors argue that second language reading instruction should be dependent upon subsequent goals (reading comprehension or vocabulary development). Additionally, practices are best implemented when teachers have an awareness of student learning style, and consequently should attempt to gather more information about them.

Mayora, C., Nieves, I., & Ojeda, V. (2014). An in-house prototype for the implementation of computer-based extensive reading in a limited-resource school. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 78–95.

In the context of EFL teaching and learning in Venezuela, where the average high-school graduate is capable of fluently reading texts in English after five years of formal EFL instruction, and the public sector often experiences limited access to material, economic, and Internet resources, the authors report on a study investigating the viability of implementing an in-house software prototype they developed to allow students from a limited resources high school to conduct extensive reading in a computer without Internet connection —an alternative to well-established and innovative Computer-based models of Extensive Reading (CBER). In particular, the authors describe the design process, placing special emphasis on the pedagogical and cognitive aspect of software design, in the hope their model might be of some use to teachers in

similar social/economic contexts, or to those wishing to implement a different model of CBER. Authors designed the in-house prototype based on the systemic quality approach to educational software design (Díaz-Anton et al., 2002, 2003), which includes four stages of development (beginning, elaboration, construction, transition). As part of the 'beginning' stage, a context/situation analysis revealed neither the paper-based model of ER nor the Internet supported model would be feasible for their context and, therefore, designing in-house software suited their context and students' needs. As part of the needs analysis, authors assessed Senior students' vocabulary knowledge, reading speed in English, and reading comprehension. Quantitative analysis of data suggests target students had limited knowledge of some of the most frequent words in English, were slow readers, and had difficulties understanding a short text in English. With these specifications, the authors embarked on a review of ER models as per the literature and designed the prototype off-line reading software product. Based on their experience, authors conclude that in-house teacher-produced software may be a more adequate alternative for implementing extensive reading since the developers have more control on certain options and are not restricted by issues of Internet access.

Melhi, A. (2014). Effects on and predictability of computer-mediated glosses in reading comprehension of EFL college students. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 65–77.

This study attempts to define the effectiveness of the computer-mediated dictionary also known as e-gloss to improve reading comprehension while also seeking more information on whether or how much a computer-mediated dictionary can predict the reading comprehension abilities of EFL university students. In a quasi-experimental design with thirty-eight EFL students in a Saudi university, an experimental group was given reading instruction in a computer lab and taught to use the computer-mediated dictionary while the control group was taught in the "traditional way" with the vocabulary words being taught by a teacher prior to reading and lecture. The experimental group had only the online links and the control group had only the glossing found in the textbook. Students were taught through this medium for 16 weeks, and then, one week after the end of the regular meetings, they took a reading comprehension test. Participants read the passage and then responded to 30 multiple choice items which were made to check comprehension. It was demonstrated that integrating the e-glosses into computer-based instruction created a statistically significant improvement in the experimental participants' reading comprehension abilities. E-glosses were found to account for 41.8% of the variance in the students' reading comprehension performance in this study. A positive linear relationship was found between e-glossing and reading comprehension scores. The glossing is thought to reduce cognitive load, thus allowing more of their capacities to be focused on text reading and reading comprehension. The meaning-focused reader is able to continue reading without pause. The author concludes that hypertext glosses can improve reading comprehension and vocabulary learning as well as overall reading abilities.

Mermelstein, A. (2014). Improving EFL learners' reading levels through extensive reading. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 227–242.

Against the context of traditional modes of EFL teaching and learning in Taiwan, this quantitative study examined the effects of Extended Reading (ER) strategies on the reading levels of fourth-year Taiwanese university students. In particular, author set out to investigate if

the addition of a 12-week long ER program significantly improved results on students' reading levels as measure by reading level tests than a similar program that did not include ER. Two fourth-year university classes of EFL mixed-ability learners participated in the study (n= 87). Control and treatment groups received the same curriculum and reading materials (Oxford Bookworms & the Penguin Classics) with the exception of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) for treatment group. Treatment group students were also expected to read a minimum of three pages from their graded reader books daily. Instructors/researchers strictly adhered to Day & Bamford's (2002) top 10 principles for conducting a successful extensive reading program. A comparison of results from a pre-treatment graded reader reading level test and a post-treatment reading test was used for data analysis. In addition, informal data collection methods (e.g., classroom observations and participants' graded reader record sheets) were also employed. Measures of the means and standard deviations of the results of the pre and post reading level tests, and categorical analysis on reading level data using Chi Square suggest significant differences between starting reading level and ending reading level variables. As such, the authors ascertain that a 12-week ER program produced significantly improved results on the participants' reading levels and that treatment group produced significantly better results in English proficiency, as measured by reading level tests, than the control group of students. The authors conclude by indicating that an addition of an ER program may be superior to a CLT approach without ER.

Mikulec, E. (2015). Reading in two languages: A comparative miscue analysis. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 143–157.

This study investigates how miscues, the differences between what the text says and what the reader understands, are present with two advanced speakers of a second language in both their first and second languages, English and Spanish respectively. The author uses miscue analysis to better understand first and second language reading in its entirety as well as investigating what types of miscues will be present, how learners will respond to correction, and how this will affect overall text comprehension. Two participants with the L1 of English and L2 of Spanish were asked to read one folk tale in each language aloud and then recount the folk tale. These recordings of the folk tales were then analyzed quantitatively to discover any miscues present. Both participants had approximately equal numbers of miscues in both Spanish and English; however, further analysis demonstrated that the types of miscues varied by language and participant. The variety of miscues demonstrate different relationships to the language spoken. In the case of transpositions, they were much more prevalent in English, but what this indicates is an ability to manipulate English that is not present with Spanish. Miscues that were more prevalent in Spanish include repetitions, which both participants had a great deal of in Spanish while having none in English. There were other miscue types that had less stark of a contrast as well. While few of the miscues changed the overall meaning of the tales, it was possible to alter the meaning with little transpositions or insertions. It was evident through the miscues that the comprehension of the Spanish tale was lower due to the types of miscues present which demonstrated a lack of interaction with the text, meaning that language proficiency can remain a barrier to complete comprehension of a text even at advanced proficiency levels.

Ong, J. (2014). A tension between theory and practice: Shared reading program. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 20–33.

This study sought to offer a descriptive and evaluative account of a shared reading program conducted in four primary schools in Singapore. In particular, the author first investigated the perceptions of quantity, variety, and readability 20 teachers had regarding big storybooks, and their knowledge of the program's objectives. Second, the author examined teachers' perceptions of the importance of three variables—phonological awareness, word decoding, and text comprehension—in helping young readers develop their reading abilities, and how much emphasis these teachers actually gave to each of these variables in the shared reading program. Through semi-structured interviews with four teachers the author developed a survey that was administered to the twenty primary school teachers. Results indicate that (a) 58% of the surveyed teachers indicated that the quantity of big storybooks read to a class in a 12-week semester was sufficient and 54% of the teachers perceived that there was enough variety of big books; (2) although they were able to list a wide range of objectives of the shared reading program when interviewed, 33% of the teachers indicated that they either did not know the objectives or were not certain about the objectives of the shared reading program; (c) three sampled paired *t* tests show that despite the high importance placed upon phonological awareness, word decoding, and text comprehension by the classroom teachers in helping young learners develop their reading abilities, these variables did not receive equal importance in the shared reading program; and (d) text comprehension received the lowest value among the teachers surveyed in this study. This tension between theory and practice of teaching reading was attributed to a lack of synchronization of information between publishers of storybooks and classroom teachers. Author concludes by emphasizing that the ability to recognize and read words, without comprehension of stories, simply takes away young children's joy in reading and may demotivate them to read.

Papadima-Sophocleous, S. (2015). Integrating computer assisted language learning into out-of-class extended learning: The impact of iPod touch-supported repeated reading on the oral reading fluency of English for Specific Academic Purposes students. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 188–205.

In this study, the author investigated the effects of computer assisted Repeated Reading (RR) techniques on the Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) of first-year university students studying English for Specific Academic Purposes in Cyprus. The 16 participants used an iPod Touch and iPod software to read and record themselves reading orally a collection of texts. The recordings were used to measure the students' reading automaticity and prosody, and results show that both improved with the help of the iPod-supported RR activities. The participants reported that the exercises also helped boost their confidence in speaking English. The author proposes that the use of the iPod touch is not only beneficial to the students and the development of their ORF, but also to teachers looking for ways to expose their students further to the language outside of the classroom.

Park, J., Yang, J., & Yi, C. (2014). University level second language readers' online reading and comprehension strategies. *Language Learning & Technology*, *18*, 148–172.

This investigation searched for factors that inform L2 English readers' decision-making and meaning construction regarding reading comprehension while they read online. Participants in this study were seven graduate students from China, South Korea, and Taiwan at a Midwestern university in the US. Previous research on this topic had been focused on elementary students,

but the instrument from that study was modified to better understand advanced and older EFL learners. Before reading began, participants were asked to rate their familiarity on the topics studied, including cloud storage and global warming. They were then given the texts. The participants were given the free ability to utilize any source on the internet to help them understand the texts they were given. They were asked to think aloud, verbalizing their thoughts in their L1 or L2. Following reading, they were asked to answer 18 comprehension and vocabulary questions. During the questions they continued to verbalize and the researchers used this time to see how the questions impacted their meaning construction. There was no time limit for any of these steps and all participants were able to succeed highly on the comprehension and vocabulary measures as the average score was 94.4 out of 100. Participants then participated in a post-reading interview. After this data was transcribed, the participants returned one more time to verify that what they said was well represented. This data was analyzed through the framework of readers' online cognitive strategies with some alterations for the L2 context. The themes were (a) the utilization of prior knowledge sources; (b) the development of self-regulated reading strategies; (c) the demonstration of cognitive flexibility. The results show that participants used prior knowledge during the reading process. Background knowledge has a significant positive relationship with reading comprehension, and this was demonstrated here again. Knowledge learned in L1 also proved valuable when learners attempted to use the information in the L2. In addition, the ability of these students to utilize the needed websites for them based on vocabulary and content needs was invaluable in understanding the texts. They were able to use search results well too as their prior knowledge intersected with the topic and information presented. Results demonstrated the bilingual nature of the information searched as well. Depending upon what the individuals did not understand they chose to search in either English or their L1. Knowledge of structures and decoding were also valuable in understanding the text in an efficient manner. Planning and predicting based on knowledge of the internet were key strategies used to find the relevant information on the internet. Then participants used their monitoring and evaluating strategies to understand and evaluate the information they had obtained, skimming through familiar print structures. All of the strategies occurred in a repeating yet nonlinear pattern until the participant was satisfied in saying they understood. The researcher concludes that there was a demonstration of cognitive flexibility as participants gathered, synthesized, and utilized both languages to understand the text. The author does admit that it is not determined here to what extent more elaborate strategies may be attributable to age differences rather than language background. In this study, it was concluded that online reading depends on five types of prior knowledge such as: topic, internet services, web structure, printed text structure, and computer skills.

Pornour, M. (2014). Teacher's effect in L2 reading topic familiarization: Students' test performance and perceptions. *The Reading Matrix, 14*, 173–185.

Given the advent of learner centered instruction, CALL, internet based English lessons, and self-study English language textbooks, and the ensuing failure to appreciate L2 teachers interventions in L2 classes in general and L2 reading in particular, this study sought (a) to compare the effects of written topic familiarization with teacher directed topic familiarization in students' performance of comprehension tests, and (b) to probe students' perceptions of the teacher's effect in topic familiarization. In order to test the hypothesis a teacher directed topic familiarization enhances students' performance on L2 reading comprehension tasks more than

written introductions do, the author formulated two questions: (a) to what extent does teacher-directed topic familiarization help students' recall of reading passages; and (b) to what extent does teacher-directed topic familiarization enhance students' performance on multiple choice reading comprehension tests? For the mixed-methods phase of the study, author formulated a third question aimed at understanding students' perceptions of the teacher's effect in topic familiarization as compared with the efficacy of written explanations. Seventy-three undergraduate L2 students at a university in southern Iran participated in the study. Four reading passages understandable by an average American student in 9th and 10th grades were selected, and 'free recall' and multiple choice tests to measure reading comprehension. In order to probe participants' perceptions of their reading class, a five point Likert scale questionnaire was developed and also administered. Application of independent-samples t tests found no significant difference between teacher-directed topic familiarization and written introductory background knowledge activation/construction pre-reading activities in enhancing students' performance on second language reading comprehension tests. Results of the independent-samples t test (Likert scale questionnaire) also indicate there was no significant difference between the No Teacher and Teacher groups in terms of their perceptions of teacher-directed topic familiarization versus written background knowledge activation/construction information. Findings confirmed that learners could be independent readers when it comes to topic familiarity.

Prior, A., Goldina, A., Shany, M., Geva, E., & Katzir, T. (2014). Lexical inference in L2: Predictive roles of vocabulary knowledge and reading skill beyond reading comprehension. *Reading and Writing*, *27*, 1467–1484.

This study measured the success of adolescent native speakers of Russian at inferring the meaning of novel words embedded in a text in Hebrew, their L2. It looks at the predictive nature of language proficiency and reading capabilities in order to explain individual differences in lexical inferencing in an L2. With 53 twelfth graders originally from the former Soviet Union in their third year of living in Israel, a variety of measures were taken to understand the reading proficiency and lexical inferencing capabilities of these students. Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices test measured cognitive ability while Peabody Picture Vocabulary test measured vocabulary knowledge. Word reading ability was measured through an isolated word reading task from a nationally standardized battery of tests, and reading comprehension was measured using the eighth grade level text taken from a national standard test. All students took the Raven's Matrices together and then were individually tested on all of the other measures. Results demonstrated that all participants were at a low-intermediate level of Hebrew with a clear dominance in Russian. The Hebrew lexical inference scores were highly correlated with Hebrew vocabulary, Hebrew word reading accuracy, and reading comprehension. Russian vocabulary also highly related with Hebrew reading comprehension and inferencing skill, but this was less strong than that of Hebrew vocabulary. Reading fluency, however, did not correlate with any other measures. Hebrew and Russian vocabulary scores were also moderately correlated, demonstrating an underlying skill. The relative contributions of vocabulary and decoding were sought after. The results demonstrated that decoding accuracy explains a great deal of the variance, as does vocabulary knowledge, totaling together about 40% of the variance in lexical inferencing performance. In addition, reading comprehension was shown to explain 29.3% of the variance. These are simply two of the models run, but overall, the results demonstrated that those that were able to decode the text while having larger beginning vocabularies were better able to

infer the correct meaning of novel words. While reading comprehension and lexical inferencing are different abilities, they interact. These findings demonstrate that L2 readers go through similar processes as L1 readers. It is valuable to build decoding skills so that resources may be released to deal with unknown lexical items. The impact of vocabulary on reading and inferencing can be seen in a variety of ways including the notion that there is a need for a certain amount of vocabulary to succeed as well as the idea that vocabulary knowledge is driven by individual characteristics in this environment. The last explanation provided explains that linguistic knowledge may have come with greater vocabulary knowledge over time. In the end, the author concludes that extensive reading would be a positive step to improve reading in those that have the decoding resources to make it possible.

Razi, S. (2014). Metacognitive reading strategy training of advanced level EFL learners in Turkey. *The Reading Matrix*, *14*, 337–360.

This article looks at differences in metacognitive strategy use and the impact of metacognitive strategy training upon reading scores for 46 Turkish advanced EFL students. The researcher implemented a quasi-experimental design by non-randomly assigning three prep classes into either the control or experiment group to create equivalent participant numbers in groups. Both groups used the course materials. Participants in the experimental group also followed a previously piloted and adapted course called METARESTRAP which trained them in activating background knowledge, comprehension monitoring, annotation strategies, visualization strategies, and context-based evaluative strategies. All students were first presented with a reading comprehension pre-test, consisting of multiple choice, and paragraph matching questions. They also completed the MRSQ, a metacognitive strategy inventory. Students then participated in their respective prep courses. Following the completion of the course, the same reading comprehension test was given, as was the MRSQ. Results from *t*-test analysis revealed significant differences and a large effect size for post-test performance in the experimental vs. control group. The researcher then conducted a paired-samples *t* test and found significant differences in pre-test and post-test reading comprehension scores for both groups, however the difference for the experimental group was much larger. Although significant differences did not exist for overall metacognitive strategy use, a paired-samples *t* test did reveal a significant difference in strategy use from pre to post-test for the experimental group. The researcher concludes that METARESTRAP instruction is highly beneficial for aiding Turkish EFL students in metacognitive strategy use and should be researched further.

Shih, Y. (2015). The impact of extensive reading on college business majors in Taiwan. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 220–233.

Shih investigated the effects of extensive reading on the reading proficiency of EFL students while they were being taught reading strategies. The participants were 99 students from two intact classes of first year business majors at a junior college in Taiwan. One class made up the control group and was taught reading strategies but was not given extensive reading assignments. The intervention group was taught reading strategies and participated in an extensive reading program for one academic year. Shih found that, while both groups improved their reading proficiency, there was no significant difference in gain in reading proficiency by the intervention group versus that of the control group. There was, however, significant difference in the

perception of the two groups regarding their use of reading strategies; the intervention group reported a greater use of reading strategies. According to the researcher, the results indicate that EFL teachers who are determined to teach their students reading strategies could benefit by doing so in conjunction with an extensive reading program.

Suwantharathip, O. (2015). Implementing reading strategies based on collaborative learning approach in an English Class. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 9–101.

This study investigated how reading strategies based on collaborative learning approaches could help improve students' reading comprehension and how students respond to the use of strategies based on collaborative learning approaches. With 80 EFL students enrolled in two class sections of Fundamental English II, one class was chosen to be the control group while another was chosen to be the experimental group in a quasi-experimental design. Both classes were measured to be equally skilled in reading comprehension prior to the study. Thirteen weeks of instruction followed with one course receiving training in useful reading strategies through a collaborative reading approach while the other received traditional instruction. Three instruments were used to measure the effectiveness of the strategies instruction, including a 50-item multiple choice test measuring comprehension of expository texts, a cognitive and metacognitive questionnaire based on a previously research reading strategies checklist, and an open-ended questionnaire to provide responses of perceptions about the collaborative learning approach. Results demonstrate that although there was no statistical difference between the performance of the two groups at the beginning of the course, following the course the scores were found to be different in a statistically significant manner. According to the author this response may be attributable to a lower affective filter in the collaborative classroom. In addition, it was found that students improved their strategy use after intervention. Also, student responses indicated that they enjoyed the method as well as it allowed for them to work faster and more effectively. Working in groups had its benefits according to the students, especially as class members that understood could explain to those that did not. Overall, the readers in the experimental group were able to become effective readers.

Tabata-Sandom, M. (2015). L2 reading perceptions of learners of Japanese: The influence of the reading instruction. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 274–289.

Looking at the survey responses of 132 Japanese as a Foreign Language learners, this study analyzed various beliefs students held about themselves as Japanese readers. Students came from beginner, elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels of Japanese. One-way ANOVA was used to examine differences between the 14 Likert-scale question items. Overall, the researcher found that increased developmental stage did not impact student belief that they would become a native-level reader, that students found reading in Japanese difficult, that students were not confident readers, and that many students desired to master reading in Japanese. Students also noted that most students chose to read in order to improve linguistic ability, rather than for enjoyment. Pearson Chi-Square analysis was used to examine differences between responses on two open-ended questions. Results showed that "sense of achievement" was the largest factor that made reading in Japanese fun, and that nothing differed significantly in making reading in Japanese not fun. The researcher concludes that utilizing an extensive reading approach in

Japanese may be too difficult for some learners, and that teachers should employ a more balanced approach.

Tavakoli, H. (2014). The effectiveness of metacognitive strategy awareness in reading comprehension: The case of Iranian university EFL students. *The Reading Matrix, 14*, 314–336.

In this study, the author explored the relationships between metacognitive strategy awareness, reading comprehension, gender and English proficiency level for 100 Iranian EFL students. Students were randomly selected from a pool of 400 undergraduates at a university located in Tehran. The researcher first gave the students a background questionnaire before assessing the students' proficiency level through the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) and assigned students into high, mid, and low groups. Then, students took a reading comprehension exam consisting of five passages and 50 multiple choice questions. Last, students were asked to take the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS), a metacognitive awareness inventory based off the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI). Results from Pearson coefficient correlation analysis showed that there was a strong correlation between awareness of metacognitive strategies and subsequent achievement on the reading comprehension measure, with support strategies having the highest correlation. Additionally students with higher English proficiency tended to use more strategies overall, however, no statistical analysis was done on this finding. MANOVA results did not reveal any significant difference in strategy use by gender. The author argues that strategy use is an important factor in EFL student reading achievement, and that instructors need to teach students when and how to appropriately apply reading strategies.

Tonne, I., & Pihl, J. (2015). Morphological correspondences in the reading-writing relation among L2 Learners. *The Reading Matrix, 15*, 206–219.

Tonne and Pihl investigated the connections between L2 reading and writing in regards to morphological and lexical awareness in the second language. The pair analyzed the reading and writing data of 28 3rd-6th grade students with Norwegian as L2. They found a pattern indicating a reading-writing correlation regarding derivational morphological features in the students' reading and the same type of features in their writing. However, they did not find the same kind of reading-writing correlation involving compositional and inflectional morphological features. Furthermore, although the students understood some of the complex expressions, including idioms and metaphorical expressions, in the reading selections, these forms were practically absent in their writing. The authors also found that, in accordance with previous research focusing on other languages, morphological and lexical competence in the L2 facilitates the student's reading in that language. Based on their findings, Toone and Pihl advocate a literature-based literacy education with very good literature and structured work with both fiction and non-fiction texts.

Uhrig, K. (2015). Learning styles and strategies for language use in the context of academic reading tasks. *System, 50*, 21–31.

The researcher provided a rich description of learning styles and strategies utilized in academic reading tasks through a case study of two learners. Data collection utilized three different sources:

stimulated recall, texts, interviews and episodes. Final data analysis includes four different episodes. Through careful analysis of the study logs and text excerpts, strategy choices were identified and then later validated through interviews. Findings are discussed through a comparison of the two participants' choices to prior studies with other business and law students, and also by offering explanations of those choices with established links between strategies and styles. Overall, findings support prior theory that states that strategies are the result of learning style and task engagement. The author ends with a discussion about future research that could involve a larger participant population.

Walker, C. (2015). A study of self-concept in reading in a second or foreign language in an academic context. *System, 49*, 73–85.

With a mixed methods research design and 104 participants from 16 different countries, the author examined both the nature of and changes in self-concepts of L2 reading. The researcher clearly establishes the dearth in the prior literature by detailing prior studies across disciplines. She establishes a strong foundation, both theoretical and empirical, for this study. Data collection instruments included both a questionnaire and interview. Through descriptive statistics and coded transcriptions, findings revealed that weak knowledge is not the only reason students may fail with reading, but that self-perception of competence also plays a role. Findings also identify a framework for examining L2 reading self-concepts across development and possible stages of acquisition. The author concludes with ways that educators can support individual readers more effectively. One of many contributions that the present study makes is that it details, through descriptions, different dimensions of self-concept that are often overlooked in a purely qualitative design.

Wichadee, S. (2014). Developing reading and summary writing abilities of EFL undergraduate students through transactional strategies. *Research in Education*, *92*, 59–71.

This study looked at the way that transactional strategies in pedagogy may impact students' reading and summary writing abilities. In addition, it looked at whether students themselves felt that they benefitted from having these strategies present in the classroom, through a quasi-experimental design, one class was given the instruction in the traditional way, as the control group, and another was given transactional instruction based on concepts from Casteel et al. (2000) and Julapho (2008). This model includes the phases of explanation and modeling, practice and coaching, and transfer of responsibility. All lesson plans were strictly formatted in previous traditional ways or transactional ways. Students were tested through multiple instruments prior to and following the course. They were given a reading comprehension test developed by the researcher and piloted with 40 students. It included 30 multiple choice items with four choice options. The test included a variety of levels of comprehension including literal, interpretive, applied, and creative. Each of these required a different component of understanding of the passages. Participants were given sixty minutes to complete the reading tasks. The pretest and posttest were the same with only the order of the answers changed. Along with the reading comprehension tasks participants were asked to complete summary writing tasks. There were four 500 word passages used, two for the pretest and two for the posttest. The participants were evaluated based on five areas: the main idea, supporting details, freedom from repetition, formulation of new sentences, and linguistic correctness. Following the course students were also

given an opinion questionnaire, which allowed them to rate the techniques used in the course on a Likert scale. The two classes were compared using a paired samples t test. The pretests were analyzed and confirmed that at the onset of the course the groups were not significantly different. In looking at the posttests, a significant difference was found between the final performances of the two groups. Although students did improve in both contexts, students in the experimental group made a significant improvement. In addition, those in the transactional group had a high opinion of the method used in the course for all items on the opinion questionnaire. Despite the limitations of the research such as acting as the teacher for all participants and limited samples, this study shows that this methodology has clear actual and affective impact on students' reading and writing abilities.

Yilmaz, A. (2015). Short stories via computers in EFL classrooms: An empirical study for reading and writing skills. *The Reading Matrix*, *15*, 41–53.

This study sought to better understand the use of short stories on computers in the teaching and learning of English as well as student perceptions of this technique. With 35 English Language Teaching students at a state university in Turkey, students carried out a number of tasks and activities with short stories on computers. A smaller sample was then interviewed to learn the students' perceptions related to the process. These interviews were transcribed and studied through content analysis. The themes most often seen included that the new medium of instruction drew attention, raised curiosity, enabled cooperation and feedback communication, improved reading and writing skills, and finally increased L2 motivation. Students were very positive in their opinions about the novelty of the environment and the type of feedback they were able to receive on their work through this online platform. The students found the texts more relatable through the images and topics found in the short stories. In addition, despite initial nerves in relation to the use of these programs, in the end, the students embraced the learning environment. The author concludes that reading short stories on the computer platform can have positive effects on reading and writing skills, vocabulary knowledge, creativity, and motivation. It also provides an opportunity to build electronic literacy skills.

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