Readings on L2 reading: Publications in other venues
2009–2010

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This feature offers an archive of articles and books 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.

Al-Homoud, F., & Schmitt, N. (2009). Extensive reading in a challenging environment: A comparison of extensive and intensive reading approaches in Saudi Arabia. *Language Teaching Research*. *13*(4), 383–401.

With 70 EFL male colleague students at a university in Saudi Arabia, the present study compares the benefits of the extensive reading approach with the traditional intensive reading approach in terms of the learners' overall ability to comprehend texts, reading speed, vocabulary gains and their attitudes towards these two reading approaches. Both tests and questionnaires are used as measurement tools. Statistics show that the relatively stress-free extensive approach is as good as or better than the more formal traditional reading approach, taking account the variables studied.

Alptekin, C., & Ercetin, G. (2009). Assessing the relationship of working memory to L2 reading: Does the nature of comprehension process and reading span task make a difference? *System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics*. *37*(4), 627–639.

The authors offer a compelling review of literature to demonstrate the disparities in conceptualization, operationalization, measurement, and assessment of prior studies that treat this topic. Participants in the study are Turkish undergraduate students. Instruments for the study include two different versions of a reading span test in English, one includes recall and the other recognition-based items. Reading comprehension is measured with multiple choice. Findings reveal that working-memory capacity may be a predictor in L2 reading when the reading span tests assess storage through recall-based tasks and when measurement accounts for both storage and processing.

Arnold, N. (2009). Online extensive reading for advanced foreign language learners: An evaluation study. *Foreign Language Annals*. *42*(2), 340–366.

With advanced learners of German, the author utilizes qualitative research methods to evaluate an online extensive reading program. Details of the program are offered and closely scrutinized in order to offer suggestions for similar programs. The study demonstrates specific affective and linguistic benefits, such as increased motivation to read and improvements in reading abilities. Additionally, the investigation reveals that with the extensive reading program learners read for pleasure, a main goal of most extensive reading programs. The authors offer a compelling discussion about how the internet may be a key factor involved in reading for pleasure and how, with the elimination of instructors pre-selecting reading materials, learners may be more motivated to read in German at the advanced stages of acquisition.

Bensoussan, M. (2009). Reading references and expectations of multilingual Israeli university students. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*. *30*(6), 465–480.

This article examines the reading preferences and textual expectations of 226 multilingual Israeli university students, comparing reading in L1 with L2 and L3. Findings indicate that reading preferences are multilingual, primarily in Hebrew, Arabic, English and Russian, and they are related to the readers' interests as well as to text genre and availability. Also, most students prefer to read for social purposes, followed by academic purposes, and finally personal purposes. Finally, Benoussan reports that in most cases L1, usually Hebrew or Arabic, followed by Russian, is used for personal reading (literature, poetry and sacred texts) while English is used more in reading for social and academic purposes (Internet, newspapers, academic articles and textbooks).

Davis, C. J., Perea, M., & Acha, J. (2009). Re(de)fining the orthographic neighborhood: The role of addition and deletion neighbors in lexical decision and reading. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*. *35*(5), 1550–1570.

Four experiments are conducted in this study to investigate the influence of addition and deletion neighbors on visual word identification. Participants are undergraduates from two universities in Britain and Spain. In three lexical decision tasks and one normal silent reading task, the authors show that the presence of higher-frequency addition/deletion neighbors (AN/DNs) will produce reliable interference effects on visual word recognition, and such effects are always evident for AN/DNs which involve outer overlap. The authors suggest that the study has both theoretical and methodological implications for the study of input coding schemes and the mechanisms underlying word cognition.

Ganem-Gutierrez, G. A. (2009). Repetition, use of L1 and reading aloud as mediational mechanism during collaborative activity at the computer. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*. *22*(4), 323–348.

In an L2 Spanish CALL classroom of 18 undergraduate students, the author investigates the degree and roles of three semiotic tools—repetition, L1, and reading aloud—as mediational mechanisms during collaborative activity in two modes of implementation: computer and paper-based. Results of the study indicate no medium-related difference in the overall amount of

semiotic mechanisms, yet there are significant differences with reference to the three specific mechanisms. The author, while pointing out the limitation of the scale of the present study, suggests that the findings will give some insights to both the role of computer and that of specific tasks to foster collaboration in the L2 classroom.

Gorsuch, G., & Taguchi, E. (2010). Developing reading fluency and comprehension using repeated reading: Evidence from Longitudinal Student Reports. *Language Teaching Research*. *14*(1), 27–59.

Based on qualitative data from student reports, the present research addresses the effects of Repeated Reading (RR) on, specifically, L2 learners' reading fluency, comprehension development and their overall language development. The participants are 30 intermediate EFL learners at a college in provincial Vietnam, at the average age of 22. Reports from the participants reveal that RR exerts a positive role in the use of reading strategies, motivation to read, changes in reading speed and comprehension, and overall language skill development.

Hamada, M. (2009). Development of L2 word-meaning inference while reading. *System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics*. *37*(3), 447–460.

How learners develop the ability to generate inferences is a topic that has not been widely investigated in the past. The author offers a compelling argument as to why longitudinal inquiries will offer significant insights into this phenomena, and the study substantiates this claim. With 5 Japanese students studying ESL, the author collects data during a 4 week period. The learners read academic texts and completed think-aloud protocols. Findings reveal that all learners transitioned from utilizing global to local reading strategies, and that the learner with the lowest comprehension score demonstrated a consistent increase in number and variety of strategies used. This was not true for the more successful comprehenders. The author offers a thorough discussion of instructional training and its effects on reading.

Jalilifar, A. (2010). The effect of cooperative learning techniques on college students' reading comprehension. *System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics*. *38*(1), 96–108.

With 90 female students at a college in Iran, this study investigates the effects of two techniques of Cooperative Learning on EFL reading comprehension in comparison with the technique of Conventional Instruction (CI). Results show that, compared with the techniques of Group Investigation (GI) and CI, the technique of Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD) is more effective in improving L2 reading achievement of the pre-intermediate level college students. The author suggests the reason may be team rewards, which exert a marked influence on the learners' performance in L2 reading.

Kato, S. (2009). Suppressing inner speech in ESL reading: Implications for developmental changes in second language word recognition processes. *The Modern Language Journal*. *93*(4), 471–488.

Kato investigate the effect of the suppression of inner speech on second language visual sentence comprehension and its relation to L2 reading proficiency and lower level processing efficiency. The study emphasizes the independent involvement of phonological and orthographic processing skills and is based on data collected from 64 college-level Japanese ESL learners who were executing reading tasks. The results show significantly poorer reading rates and verification accuracy under suppression conditions, which supports the hypothesis that articulatory suppression negatively affects L2 reading performance. The results also indicate that L2 orthographic processing efficiency is a significant predictor of overall L2 reading ability. In fact, there is now empirical support for the hypothesis that the higher the level of ESL reading proficiency, the greater the contribution of the L2 orthographic processing skills in reading comprehension.

Khorsand, N. (2009). Cognitive levels of questions used by Iranian EFL teachers in advanced reading comprehension tests. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED507869)

In this study, Khorsand examine the cognitive levels of 215 questions used by Iranian EFL teachers in advanced reading comprehension tests, then categorize them according to Bloom's taxonomy. The author contends that 92.43% of the questions fell within the two lowest levels of the taxonomy, knowledge and comprehension. Since such classes aim to teach critical reading and thinking, Khorsand proposes a shift in the focus of the questions that the teachers prepare towards the three higher levels: analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The author also discusses possible explanations for the teachers' preference for low level questions and ways to improve the situation.

Lee, Y.-W., & Sawaki, Y. (2009). Application of three cognitive diagnosis models to ESL reading and listening assessments. *Language Assessment Quarterly*. 6(3), 239–263.

Language tests for high-stake decision making generally report one score, and they fail to diagnose individual strengths and weaknesses. The authors discuss this issue, and through the use of three cognitive diagnosis models, they present a solution for second language listening and reading comprehension assessments. The authors detail the three psychometric models—the general diagnostic model, the fusion model, and latent class analysis. Data were taken from two field tests forms of the TOEFL. Findings indicate similar results across the three models in terms of examinee classification, but marginal differences are also identified and discussed.

Loh, E. K. Y., & Tse, S. K. (2009). The relationship between motivation to read Chinese and English and its impact on the Chinese and English reading performance of Chinese students. *Chinese Education and Society*. 42(3), 66–90.

With 1,232 fourth-grade Hong Kong Chinese students, the present study examines the relationship among reading attitudes, self-concepts as readers, and reading performance. On the reading tests, girls scored higher than boys. No relationships were found between attitudes, self-concepts, and performance. These surprising results are discussed in detail with regard to the system in Hong Kong. The authors offer relevant instructional suggestions, including the reinforcement of progress and encouragement for students to seek help. The findings in the study contradict prior research, and consequently the authors urge instructors to

stop warning students about the consequences of failure. The study demonstrates that it is more advantageous to develop self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-motivation in learners.

Lyster, R., Collins, L., & Ballinger, S. (2009). Linking languages through a bilingual read-aloud project. *Language Awareness*. *18*(3-4), 366–383.

The study addresses three questions in a bilingual read-aloud project, namely, raising teachers' awareness of the students' bilingual resources, encouraging students' cross-linguistic collaboration, and promoting teachers' cross-curricular and cross-linguistic collaboration. Participants are three classes of 68 six to eight-year old children in three schools within the same school board, three English teachers and three French teachers. Findings indicate that the bilingual read-aloud project generates high levels of motivation among the students. It also creates opportunities for teachers to collaborate, which is greatly appreciated by the teachers. It is successful in initiating the students' cross-linguistic collaboration as well.

Macaro, E., & Mutton, T. (2009). Developing reading achievement in primary learners of French: Inferencing Strategies versus Exposure to "Graded Readers". *Language Learning Journal*. *37*(2), 165–182.

In a study of three groups of year 6 primary school students in England, Macaro and Mutton explore the value of teaching L2 reading strategies, specifically inferencing strategies, as compared to simply exposing the students to more text, graded French readers, without any strategy instruction. The results show that both groups made significant progress in reading comprehension in comparison to their control group, which received neither of these two benefits. However, the group that was taught inferencing strategies, performed at a higher level in inferring the meaning of unknown words and in the learning of function words. The authors conclude that training learners in how to read is as important, if not more so, than making them read more.

Maun, I. (2009). Scaffolds for reading in French: Lessons from history, guidance for the future? *Language Awareness*. *18*(2), 198–214.

Maun reviews historical methodological precedents for creating understanding of French texts, along with past and current artificial symbolic systems, in order to propose methods to help increase students' understanding and lead to greater lexical acquisition. He discusses the importance of L2 vocabulary in understanding L2 texts, and reevaluates translation methods such as the use of parallel texts, grammar translation, glossing and glossaries. He also writes about attempts to create a 'universal character' including Otto Neurath's ISOTYPE and Charles Bliss' Blissymbolics. Maun concludes that a mixture of old and new methods may be the solution.

Neville, D. O., Shelton, B. E., & McInnis, B. (2009). Cybertext redux: Using digital game-based learning to teach L2 vocabulary, reading, and culture. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*. *22*(5), 409–424.

With beginning level students of German at the university, the present study investigates the effects of digital game-based learning on knowledge retention and transfer. The authors also

examine student attitudes toward the game. The main focus of the article is on specific guidelines to follow when incorporating these types of games in the language curriculum. The authors provide a convincing and data driven argument about how digital games can make language learning both exciting and challenging. The observed qualitative trends detail specific instructional implications that demonstrate how digital games supplement existing course plans, while the authors simultaneously caution readers not to discard traditional print-based instructional approaches. Future directions for this type of research are offered.

Oboler, E. S. & Gupta, A. (2010). Emerging theoretical models of reading through authentic assessments among preservice teachers: Two case studies. *The Reading Matrix*. 10(1), 79–95.

The case studies explore the perceptions of teachers who are enrolled in a teacher preparation course that emphasizes diagnostic reading. The authors investigate whether the use of reading assessment tools enhances the understandings of the processes involved in reading. Reading inventories are used for both diagnostic and instructional purposes. Findings indicate that the teachers develop insights into the reading process that may be beneficial for pedagogical objectives, especially factors such as metacognition, prior knowledge, cultural variables, and content area reading. Results are highlighted to lend support for inquiry-based reading instruction.

O'Donnell, M. E. (2009). Finding middle ground in second language reading: Pedagogic modifications that increase comprehensibility and vocabulary acquisition while preserving authentic text features. *The Modern Language Journal*. 93(4), 512–533.

With 197 undergraduates in a fourth-semester L2 Spanish course, this quantitative study investigates the use of elaborated texts as an alternative for literary texts, focusing on text comprehension and word recognition. The influence of marginal glossing is also examined. Results show that, by using elaborated texts, these Spanish L2 readers have a better retrieval of text contents and can identify more vocabulary within the texts. Limitations as well as pedagogical implications of the study are discussed, and some disadvantages of using elaborated texts are also mentioned at the end of the article.

Sawaki, Y., Kim, H.-J., & Gentile, C. (2009). Q-Matrix construction: Defining the link between constructs and test items in large-scale reading and listening comprehension assessments. *Language Assessment Quarterly*. 6(3), 190–209.

The authors work with a team of testing content experts and testing measurement experts to create a set of Q-matrices that identify meaningful skill coding categories that reflect core language skills and processes assessed in the Reading and Listening sections of the Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT). The study is part of a larger one intending to explore the possibility of developing a detailed score report for low-stakes use by taking a cognitive diagnosis approach. The authors present a set of Q-matrices that represent meaningful score reporting categories of a suitable size yet still maintain an acceptable level of examinee classification consistency.

Scott, K. W., Bell, S. M., & McCallum, R. S. (2009). Relation of native-language reading and spelling abilities to attitudes toward learning a second language. *Preventing School Failure*. *54*(1), 30–40.

The article examines the relationship between (a) attitudes toward and perceptions about learning a foreign language and (b) reading and spelling skills for native speakers of English. The participants are 278 college students from a large university in the United States. Findings indicate that those with lower scores in the tests of the above-mentioned skills show stronger negative attitudes and perceptions toward foreign language learning. The study finds no significant difference in terms of attitudes and perceptions as to what foreign language they study.

Tong, X., & McBride-Chang, C. (2010). Chinese-English biscriptal reading: Cognitive component skills across orthographies. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. *23*(3-4), 293–310.

With 326 Hong Kong Chinese elementary school learners, the study explores the relationships among Chinese visual-orthographic skills, phonological awareness, and morphological awareness to both Chinese and English word reading. The authors offer a detailed description of the differences between Chinese and English reading, and they ground their assertions in prior research across the topics. Findings support the claim that Chinese children tend to adopt a visual-orthographic-based strategy while learning to read English as a second language. The authors discuss results in light of previous research, and they include evidence for instructional implications that emphasize the training of phonological processing skills as phonetic processing in one language may contribute to the other language.

Tseng, M. (2010). Factors that influence online reading: An investigation into EFL students' perception. *The ReadingMatrix*. 10(1), 96–105.

Differences between reading traditional texts and hypertexts are highlighted and detailed, as the authors emphasize the advantages of the latter. The author investigates the difficulties faced by Taiwanese EFL students as they learned to read online texts, and reading comprehension is also examined. Overall, learners do not like reading online texts because they could not underline, highlight, and take notes on the texts. They also disliked font sizes and background color. They study supports the use of traditional texts over online reading.

Udorn, W. (2010). Graded reading vocabulary-size tests for placement in extensive Reading. *The Reading Matrix*. 10(10), 15–44.

Selecting the correct level of graded readers is a difficult process in an extensive reading program, as detailed by the author. The author develops and tests two different tasks for placement in extensive reading—a vocabulary size test and a cloze test. Outlines of both measurement tasks are provided, along with analysis that lends support for the tests. Findings indicate that both tests can be utilized to place readers with the accurate level of graded readers. The author offers further implications for extensive reading programs.

van der Leij, A., Bekebrede, J., & Kotterink, M. (2010). Acquiring reading and vocabulary in Dutch and English: The effect of concurrent instruction. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. *23*(3-4), 415–434.

The authors examine the effect of concurrent bilingual instruction in L1 Dutch and L2 English on reading vocabulary in both languages. They studied two groups of elementary school students, one with instruction only in Dutch and the other with bilingual instruction in Dutch and English, and tested them twice within one year in Grades 2 and 3. The results support the expectations that bilingual instruction has a positive influence on L2 English reading and vocabulary, and that word reading fluency would be easier to acquire in Dutch due to its simpler orthography in comparison to that of English. They also partially support the expectation of benefits to L1 reading comprehension and orthographic knowledge.

Velan, H., & Frost, R. (2009). Letter-transposition effects are not universal: The impact of transposing letters in Hebrew. *Journal of Memory and Language*. *61*(3), 285–302.

The authors investigate the effects of letter-transposition on reading in Hebrew in three masked-priming experiments and discover results that stand in sharp contrast to those of studies conducted in Indo-European languages. The authors predict that since in Hebrew the two basic derivational morphemes, the root and the word-pattern, are not attached to each other linearly, but rather are intertwined, the identification of a specific root is critical for lexical access, and the transposition of root letters would not allow word recognition. The results support their hypothesis and suggest that in Hebrew, because the morphological structure is so divergent from other languages with alphabetic orthographies, the lexical space is organized according to root families rather than simple orthographic structure.

Ward, J. (2009). EAP reading and lexis for Thai engineering undergraduates. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*. *8*(4), 294–301.

The author used a yes-no checklist test on approximately 250 students in their first year at a university of technology in Thailand in order to establish how close such students are to the lexical threshold necessary for effective reading of English-language textbooks, a coverage level of approximately 95%. Based on the results he estimates that the average student vocabulary knowledge covers only half the General Service Word List, and less than half of a foundation engineering word list. As such, the goal of the EAP programs to enable students to read academic textbooks is untenable. Ward makes three recommendations to improve the situation: Thai universities should establish a more comprehensive and systematic textbook translation; EAP programs should focus on the lexical demands of specific engineering disciplines; and the faculties should run English for Occupational Purposes courses for senior students.

Ward, J., & Chuenjundaeng, J. (2009). Suffix knowledge: Acquisition and applications. *System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics*. *37*(3), 461–469.

With two groups of 257 EAP undergraduate students at a university in Thailand, this research examines L2 learners' morphological knowledge of complex words. It specifically addresses two issues: the acquisition of suffixes and the use of word families as a counting tool. Findings

indicate that, in terms of suffix acquisition, 1) some suffixes are acquired earlier than others; 2) affixes are learned in the process of affixation rather than decomposition; and 3) the amount of exposure may contribute to learners' knowledge of word-building. The research also suggests that word families are not a reliable counting tool.

Winskel, H., Radach, R., & Luksaneeyanawin, S. (2009). Eye movements when reading spaced and unspaced Thai and English: A comparison of Thai-English bilinguals and English monolinguals. *Journal of Memory and Language*. *61*(3), 339–351.

The authors in this study utilize Thai-bilinguals and English monolinguals to examine eye movements when reading in Thai and English. More specifically, they explored the spacing effects of words. Participants read complete sentences that contain both high and low frequent target words with and without interword spaces. Findings reveal that removal of spaces disrupt reading in English in both bilinguals and monolinguals. Findings lend support for a faciliatory function of interword spaces. The authors include a detailed description of the differences between reading in Thai and in English, and they continue to discuss these variations in light of present findings and prior research. Finally, the authors offer details about the process of reading unspaced texts in both Thai and English.

Yang, J., McCandliss, B. D., Shu, H., & Zevin, J. D. (2009). Simulating language-specific and language-general effects in a statistical learning model of Chinese reading. *Journal of Memory and Language*. *61*(2), 238–257.

The authors rethink the assertions from prior research regarding Chinese character reading by developing a connectionist model that learns the print-to-sound mappings of Chinese characters with the same functional architecture and learning rules that have been previously applied to English. The authors substantiate the model through behavioral naming experiments that use the same test items as the model. Overall, findings suggest that adult reading performance may be explained by using the same learning factors to the particular input statistics of writing systems that are shaped by both culture and the exigencies of communicating spoken language through reading. The authors offer compelling support for further research that may examine the unique aspects of semantic encoding in Chinese.

BOOKS published in 2009 and 2010 that treat second and foreign language reading:

Brantmeier, C. (2009). Crossing languages and research methods: Analysis of adult foreign language reading. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Grabe, W. (2009). Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Han, ZhaoHong & Anderson, N. J. (Eds.) (2009). Second language reading research and instruction: Crossing the boundaries. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Khalifa, H. & Weir, C. J. (2009). *Examining reading: Research and practice in assessing second language reading.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

About the Editors

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