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Mediational English-as-a-foreign-language teaching that supports independent reading

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MEDIATIONAL ENGLISH-AS-A-FOREIGN-LANGUAGE TEACHING

THAT SUPPORTS INDEPENDENT READING

———————————

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

———————————

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Education:

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

———————————

by

Lei Li

December 2005

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Approved by:

Dr. Lynne Díaz-Rico, First Reader   November 8, 2005
                                                       Date

Dr. Bonnie Piller, Second Reader

ABSTRACT

Teaching reading is an essential part of language
teaching. However, there is still room for improvement in
methods of teaching reading in the People's Republic of
China. This project focuses on introducing some important
reading strategies. The goal of this project is to improve
English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) learners' ability to
read independently.

This project proposes instruction that integrates an
interactive approach to reading, experiential activities
that motivate free reading, cross-age peers in English
reading, teachers' scaffolding, and the directed
reading-teaching approach. Based on the key concepts of
reading above, it builds the model of Controlled and
Supported Mediational Methods and Activities with the Goal
of Free Reading. Moreover, a sample unit is featured to
demonstrate the use of these key concepts for EFL
teaching.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the course of this thesis I have accumulated a debt of gratitude to many people.

Special thanks to my advisor, Dr. Lynne Díaz-Rico, who has been encouraging, supporting, and guiding me through every problem with patience, wisdom, and knowledge. This work would be impossible without her help. It is my great honor to have a chance to be her student.

I would like to thank my second reader, Dr. Bonnie Piller. She gave me much advice and provided me full assistance. I appreciate it a lot.

Thanks also to all my friends and classmates, especially Kuan-Ting Liu, Lily Wang, Michelle Hung, and Melissa Schnack. Because of their support and friendship, I have had confidence I can meet any challenge.

DEDICATION

I would dedicate this project to my parents, Weiping Li, Min Meng, for their bringing me into this world, for their 24 years of educating me, and for their cheering in my every progress.

谨以此文献给我的父母，感谢他们24年来的养育之恩，感谢他们看到我的每一点进步，并为之欣慰．

Also I would dedicate this to my husband, Zheng Fang, for his endless love and tolerance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Project

The Role of English in Contemporary China

English is becoming more and more important in the
People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) as trading relations
with the Western world continue to expand, and exchanges
in technology, such as in the fields of medicine and
computer science, continue to increase. Because English is
now the most widely recognized global language in the
world, it is used in the P.R.C. to communicate with
foreigners both in international trading and in cultural
interchanges.

After the major economic reforms in the P.R.C. in
1978, economic windows have been gradually opening. This
means English is used more and more in Chinese daily life.
Most international businesses are using English, most
advanced scientific and technological writing is in
English, and many kinds of cultural activities are
introduced in English. Thus, mastering English helps one
to acquire more knowledge. People with better English
skills have the advantage in finding a better job. For

these reasons, learning English has become more and more
popular in the P.R.C.

Conditions of English Teaching in the People's Republic of China

English is a compulsory course in the P.R.C., from
elementary school through higher education. English is
very important because it is one of the four compulsory
courses on the College Entrance Examination, which is held
only once a year in the P.R.C. In other words, if one
learns English well, he or she has a better chance to
enter a more prestigious school. On the average, students
spend more than 20 percent of their time learning English
in school every day.

Besides normal English learning in school, there are
many after-school programs. In order to improve their
English abilities, many students are forced to go to these
supplementary English schools after regular school hours.
Chinese parents all hope their children to be the best; in
fact, it is popular now to invite English teachers or
tutors to help their children learn English at home by
means of one-on-one instruction.

The Problem in Teaching and Learning English in the People's Republic of China

Examinations decide the methods used in English
teaching in the P.R.C. Before 1999, in order to have good

results in English on the College Entrance Examination, students seldom wasted their time preparing for English listening and speaking, because the exam did not include these skills. Therefore, students only put emphasis on improving their reading and writing skills. English teachers tended to use the grammar-translation method to teach English. During the process of learning English, Chinese students memorized lots of grammar points, vocabulary, idioms, and articles; however, most of them still lacked the ability to listen and speak in English. However, the true purpose of learning a language is to be able to communicate.

In the end, in the year 1999, the College Entrance Examination began to include listening and speaking tests. From the year 2001, Chinese government started to expand English instruction for elementary schools. The English programs were designed to be more lively and interesting, to attract elementary students. The public elementary school students began to learn English from third grade, but in many private elementary schools, students began to learn English when the first year they entered school.

Another critical problem in teaching and learning English is in reading. Although the government and teachers pay much attention to reading, they omit or lose

3

the key part of reading. Teachers' reading instruction is
exam-oriented. Especially in high school, teachers believe
that students must practice hundreds of thousands of
readings to improve their reading ability, so they can
score well on the final exam. So teachers tell students
lots of strategies about how to read fast, and choose
multiple-choice answers correctly; students then do not
pay attention to authentic reading strategies, only those
that help to read fast and answer multiple-choice
questions correctly.

This leads to various results. First, students may
not understand the content of the reading material well;
their only aim is to answer the multiple-choice questions
correctly. They cannot reach the real aim of reading--to
get more information. Sometimes, students can get a high
score on a test, but may not know what the article is
about. Second, they may form many bad habits in reading,
such as pointing to words with fingers, translating word
by word, and reading silently.

In writing, the big problem is word-to-word
translation, especially for the early-beginning to
intermediate English learners in China. They usually think
of writing in Chinese in their mind, and then translate
the Chinese into English. Moreover, they try to translate

4

one word in English to one word in Chinese or the reverse. It may result in many mistakes in grammar, tense, and so forth.

Target Teaching Level: Kindergarten to Third Grades

I plan to teach English to students of K-3 level in the P.R.C.; this is the time that students begin to learn English. I have already had teaching experience in Cooley Ranch Elementary School, in Colton, California. As an observer and teacher of second grade and fifth grade students for six months, I like students in the second grade much better, although children in fifth grade are also lovely. The students in second grade like to ask questions, and like to learn interesting things that they do not already know. Although these students are native-English speakers, I think the same teaching method used for them can also be used in English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) teaching. Drawing upon my experience, I feel that the earliest years of education cannot be ignored. Starting at an early age builds learning interest and critical thinking ability; the ages from six to nine are the golden time to learn language. Research shows it may be one of the best times for a learner to learn a language well.

I am quite confident and enthusiastic about teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). As a prospective teacher of EFL in the P.R.C., I would like to meet the challenge, and play an inspiring role to educate and encourage the students at the ages of six to nine to become interested in English, and lead them to achieve the success of learning an international language in an enjoyable way.

Purpose of the Project

English reading ability is highly regarded in the P.R.C., especially free reading. People need to get information from reading; 40 percent of the English on the College Entrance Examination is free reading and comprehension. However, teaching reading in the P.R.C. has some problems, and there is still space for improvement for the methods of teaching reading. As for younger students in K-3 grades, how to motivate their reading interest and form the productive reading habits are the main topics of teaching.

The goal of my project is to introduce some reading strategies in order to improve students' individual reading ability, and help them to become interested in reading with or without teachers' guidance.

6

My project samples of many useful reading methods, as
students can enhance their reading comprehension by using
reading strategies based on the interactive approach,
their own experience, cross-age peer reading, scaffolding,
directed reading-teaching approach and so on.

Content of the Project

This project is divided into five chapters. Chapter
One provides background information about English
education in China, and the context, purpose, and
significance of the project. Chapter Two consists of a
review of relevant literature. Chapter Three discusses the
importance of the literature review in the teaching of
English reading to elementary school students and proposes
a theoretical framework. Chapter Four describes a teaching
unit of five lessons based on concepts presented in the
proposed framework in the previous chapter. Finally
Chapter Five previews how the lessons presented in the
Appendix should be assessed. References conclude the
project.

Significance of the Project

This study synthesizes theoretical concepts and
proposes relevant curricula that can improve students'
English reading ability. It especially emphasizes how to

integrate these reading strategies in an EFL environment, so EFL learners can absorb real reading methods and enhance their reading abilities for practical use.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Interactive Approach to Reading

In recent years, the interactive approach to reading, in which students pay attention not only to surface structure of reading materials, such as words, but also to deep structure, such as meaning, has become an important teaching strategy in students' reading education, especially for English-as-a-second/foreign-language (ESL/EFL) learners.

Early work in second-language reading assumed that readers used either the bottom-up or the top-down approach to reading. However, recent theorists have identified efficient and effective reading strategies that require both bottom-up and top-down strategies to operate interactively--an interactive approach to reading.

Various aspects of an interactive approach are covered in this paper, which first introduces the theory of the interactive approach to reading and current research; then focuses on theoretical bases of bottom-up and top-down reading theories; and lastly, describes pedagogical implications of the interactive approach to reading that improves students' reading comprehension.

The Definition of the Interactive Approach to Reading

In recent research, reading theorists have recognized the importance of both the text and the reader in the reading process (AbiSamra, 2003), resulting in a combination of the two--the interactive approach.

The interactive approach to reading combines two ways of reading, the bottom-up and the top-down approach. The interactive model emphasizes the connection of top-down and bottom-up skills. These two terms are analyzed as follows.

Bottom-Up and Top-Down Approaches to Reading

The Bottom-Up Approach to Reading. According to Carrell (1988), "bottom" is considered to be letters and words. "Bottom-up" means students learn to read from letters and words, building towards deeper meaning of a given reading selection.

"Bottom-up" theorists believed that readers must recognize each word in order to comprehend a given reading selection; readers should give primary emphasis to words and sounds in identifying unrecognized words; reading acquisition requires a mastery of a series of word-recognition skills; letters, the letter/sound relationship and words should receive primary emphasis in

10

instruction; and accuracy in recognizing words is significant (Dechant, 1991). Under these circumstances, the "bottom-up" approach asks readers to learn to identify letters first; recognize how to spell words; then proceed to sentences, paragraphs, and finally to the text itself.

Rayner and Pollatsek's (1989) bottom-up model emphasized very specifically this process. Processing begins with eye fixation, which involves the forms of letters and words, such as the length of the word. Lexical access of the fixated word occurs next.

A simplified version of the bottom-up model is presented in Figure 1.

Typically, the bottom-up approach describes the reading instruction that takes place in EFL teaching in non-English speaking countries. People in these countries believe vocabulary is the most important thing in learning English. Teachers always identify the pronunciation and spelling of the words first, followed by the process of reading for comprehension.

The Limitations of the Bottom-up Approach to Reading. The bottom-up approach is recognized as a passive approach, because it pays more attention to the importance of text processing, but gives little emphasis to the
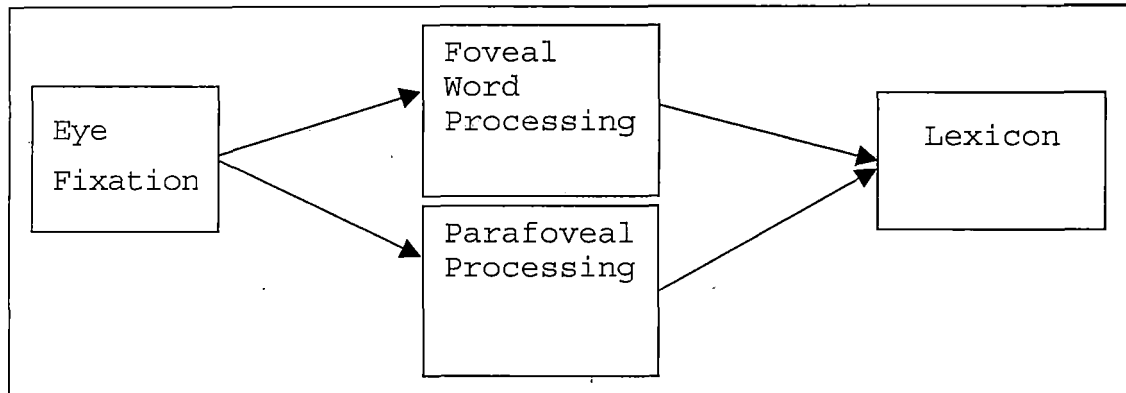
Source: Adapted from Dechant, E. (1991). <u>Understanding and teaching reading: An interactive model</u>. Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.

Figure 1. The Bottom-Up Model

influences of the reader's higher-order processing strategies, such as the reader's world knowledge, contextual information, and so on (Dechant, 1991). It ignores helping emerging readers to recognize what they, as readers, bring to the information on the page (AbiSamra, 2003). According to Eskey (1973), the bottom-up model is inadequate as a decoding model of the reading process because it underestimates the contribution of the reader. Moreover, "It failed to recognize that students utilize their expectations about the text based on their knowledge and how it works" (Carrell, 1988, p. 3).

Besides, the bottom-up approach is often termed the problem of "linearity." This results in "cognition effectively isolated from perception" (Lovett, 1981,

p. 3), because of the lack of interaction between higher-level and the lower-level processes (McCormick, 1988).

In conclusion, the bottom-up approach to reading has some limitations, including passive teaching, linearity, and lack of integration. It is not a good approach for EFL/ESL students.

The Top-Down Approach to Reading. In this teaching method, "top" is considered to be phrases, clauses, and intersentential linkages. This suggests that the processing of comprehension begins in the mind of the reader, with meaning-driven processes or with hypotheses about the meaning of some unit of print. It is readers who make hypotheses about the meaning of the text first, then identify letters and words to confirm them. Readers comprehend the selection even though they do not recognize each word. They can use meaning and grammatical cues to identify unrecognized words. Additionally, reading requires the use of meaning but not mastery of words. Furthermore, reading for meaning is the primary objective of reading, rather than mastery of letter, letter/sound relationships, and words. The most important aspect about reading is the amount of information gained through reading (Decant, 1991).

In the top-down approach, the reader is said to use the deep structure of the language, such as the knowledge, experience, and concepts that readers bring to the text to interpret the surface structure, such as the words, the phonics of the reading material. The top-down approach means that the reading is not simply a bottom-up process, reading is more a matter of bringing meaning to than gaining meaning from the printed page. A simplified version of the top-down model is presented in Figure 2.
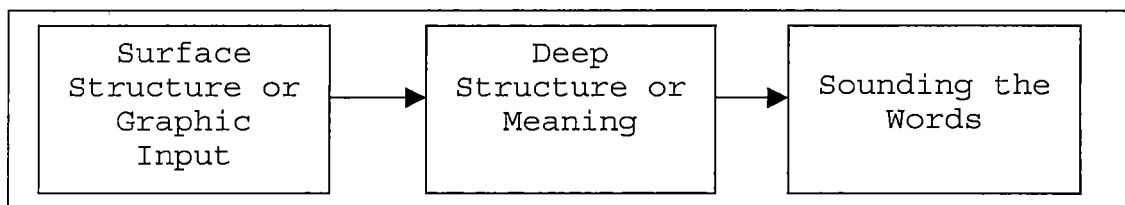
Surface Structure or Graphic Input	→	Deep Structure or Meaning	→	Sounding the Words

Source: Adapted from Dechant, E. (1991). Understanding and teaching reading: An interactive model. Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.

Figure 2. The Top-Down Model

The Limitations of the Top-Down Approach. According to research, visual processing of text in the top-down approach is very fast, and "the extent to which readers engaged in hypothesis testing or guessing behavior seemed to play a minimal role in the process of reading" (Dechant, 1991, p. 3). The top-down approach to reading

seems too abstract and fast for EFL learners, especially beginners.

Besides, Stanovich (1980) stated that graphic information might be even more efficient than processing text using predicting meaning using preexisting conceptions and knowledge. Under this circumstance, there were methods that good readers use other than just depending on hypothesis testing without any data input while reading.

The third criticism of the top-down models was that they could not generate testable hypotheses. "The claims were pronounced dogmatically instead of promoting research" (Lovett, 1981, p. 3).

In conclusion, top-down approaches to reading have some limitations that teachers should address when teaching a top-down approach to reading.

The Theory of the Interactive Approach to Reading

The Interactive Approach Model. The bottom-up and the top-down approaches to reading that have been explained above all have their benefits, but limitations as well. Much research has been done on these two approaches in order to find a more expectative approach to reading. An interactive approach to reading has emerged that combines and modifies the two aforementioned approaches. In an

interactive approach, reading is processed neither only from surface words nor only from deep meanings. Figure 3 identifies the basic differences between the bottom-up, the top-down, and the interactive models.
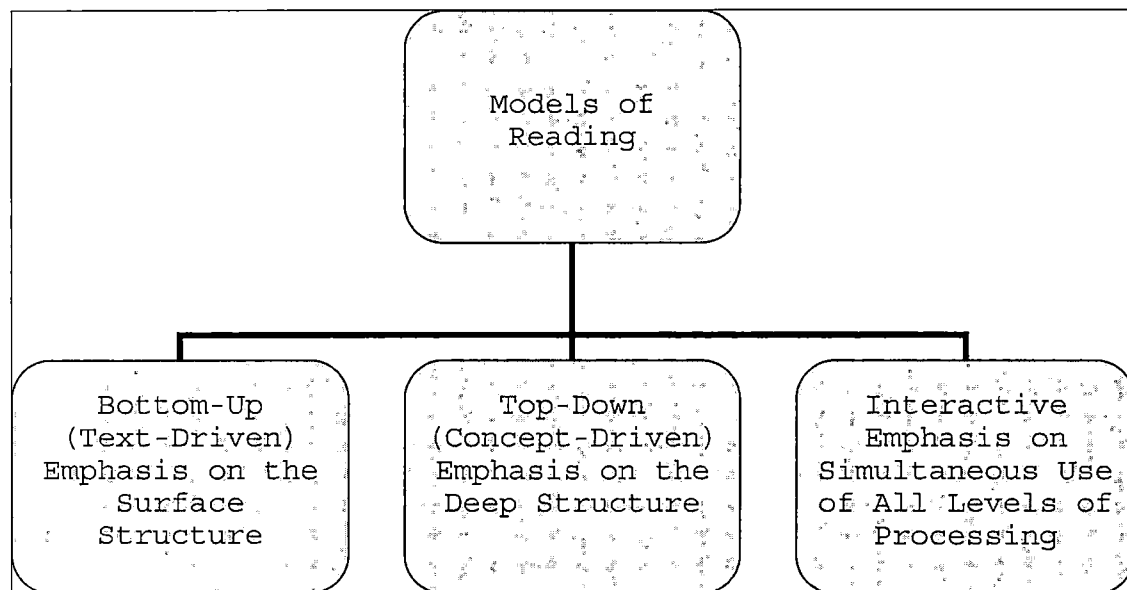
Source: Adapted from Dechant, E. (1991). <u>Understanding and teaching reading: An interactive model</u>. Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.

Figure 3. Models of Reading

An interactive reading model attempts to combine the strong points of the bottom-up and top-down models, and avoid the criticisms leveled against each (McCormick, 1988). Dechant (1991) emphasized that in an interactive model, readers could use information selectively from all source of meaning including grapheme, phoneme, morpheme,

syntax, and semantics. Goodman (1981) stated that an interactive model is one that uses print as input and takes meaning as output. According to AbiSamra (2003), the level of reader comprehension of the text was determined by how well the reader variables (interest level in the text, purpose for reading the text, knowledge of the topic, and foreign language abilities) interacted with the text variables (text type, structure, syntax, and vocabulary). In another words, the interactive approach is a bi-directional process that concerns both the reader and the text. The interactive approach balances phonics and whole language approaches together, in which phonics (bottom-up model) is a teacher-centered approach to reading, and whole language (top-down model) is a student-centered instruction (AbiSamra, 2003).

There is no single interactive model. Rather, interactive models encompass any model that minimally tries to account for more than serial processing (Grabe, 1988). Five typical interactive models will be explored as follows.

The Interactive-Activation Model. The first model is McClelland and Rumelhart's (1981) interactive-activation model. It is based primarily on word recognition research, and studies of mental activation and information

17

retrieval. In other words, the process of activation is essentially one in which individual features, letters, clusters, context, etc., all activate groups of lexical candidates for meaning, or comprehension selection. Generally speaking, the process of activation pays more attention to comprehension than to active prediction of words.

The Interactive-Compensatory Model. The second model is Stanovich's (1980) interactive-compensatory model. This model is based on word recognition processes. It explains many complex results of research on good and poor readers in a comprehensive way. Stanovich stated readers who were weak in one strategy would rely on other processes to compensate for the weaker process because reading involved an array of processes. Stanovich incorporated the concept of spreading activation, by means of which related lexical forms become automatically.

The Bilateral Cooperative Model. The third model is Taylor and Taylor's (1983) bilateral cooperative model. This model builds up parallel-processing strategies with combination of the features of the above models. The parallel-processing strategies operate both rapid and slow mechanisms for processing according to the needs of the reader and the difficulties of the text.

The Automatic-Processing Model. The fourth model is
LaBerge and Samuel's (1974) automatic-processing model. It
allows the reader to move back and forth between higher
and lower levels of processing as needed. It provides free
cognitive space for thinking about the meaning of what was
being read. They claim that fluent readers automatically
recognize most words.

The Verbal Efficiency Model. Perfetti's (1985) verbal
efficiency model is the last model. This model involves a
more narrow definition of reading than many other models.
For Perfetti, reading comprehension should not be equated
with thinking and its general problem-solving strategies,
but more narrowly with processes specific to reading.

Ultimately, each of the five models took a different
perspective. However, they all represented improvements on
bottom-up and top-down models. Improvements were widely
recognized in the reading and psychology literature.

Advantages of the Interactive Approach to Reading.
Above all, the interactive approach to reading absorbed
all the benefits of the bottom-up and top-down approaches.
As Perfetti (1985) suggested, the best model handled the
problems of word recognition and assessing a word in
permanent memory. The best model would assume that all
processes--including lower-level and higher-level

processes or bottom-up and top-down processes-interact.

McClelland and Rumelhart's interactive model best met this

requirement. Figure 4 expresses clearly this point.
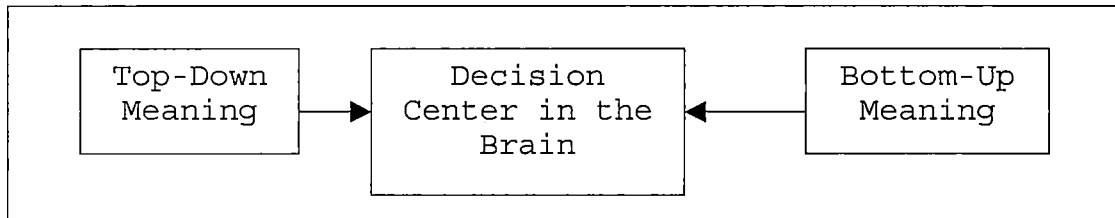
Source: Adapted from Dechant, E. (1991). Understanding and
teaching reading: An interactive model. Hillsdale, NJ: L.
Erlbaum Associates.

Figure 4. The Interactive Approach to Reading

Secondly, the interactive approach to reading

includes many reading strategies, and it is convenient for

students to use. In Rumelhart's (1981) interactive model of

reading process, orthographic, lexical, syntactic, and

semantic knowledge are the four principal components

coming together simultaneously to facilitate readers'

information processing.

Thirdly, because the interactive approach to reading

connects bottom-up and top-down approaches, if students

adopt this reading strategy, they can choose which one is

the most useful approach in different reading materials.

As Dechant (1991) summarized, "the interactive approach

applies in reading begins with top-down emphasis, moves to bottom-up when needed, and returns to top-down emphasis" (p. 29).

In addition, the interactive approach to reading is especially suitable for EFL or ESL learners. Chall (1983) has proposed a five-stage theory of reading acquisition for ESL students, based on implication of the interactive approach to reading. The stages she discussed was (1) prereading, initial reading, (2) confirmation and fluency, (3) reading for new information, (4) multiple viewpoints, and (5) construction and reconstruction (Carrel, 1988). Such a multistage approach to reading context holds promise for reading skills development in ESL or EFL students.

Teaching Application of the Interactive Approach
    to Reading

Reading Pedagogy. In teaching, because of the use of the interactive approach, students' reading has improved much more. There are some pedagogies that teachers adopt in teaching interactive approach.

First, EFL/ESL reading teachers should connect the value of phonics to the comprehension of the whole article. They should emphasize not only the student's understanding of phonology and meanings of the words, but

also the comprehension of the whole article. "Teacher should focus on reading as a comprehension process and teach both word-identification skills and comprehension strategies" (Tompkins, 2004, p. 5).

Second, according to Pearson and Raphael (1999), there are five roles for teacher in teaching the interactive approach to reading. They are as follows: (1) explicit instructing, (2) modeling, (3) scaffolding, (4) facilitating, and (5) participating. It is important that teachers provide flexible and variable instruction according to a student's individual needs. There is a variety of interactive strategies such as collaborative reading and teacher's guided reading that provide effective tools to assist teachers to promote students' reading.

The implications of this model for ESL teaching are numerous. According to Eskey and Grabe (1988), reading of any kind of text must be treated as real reading; in other words, reading for real meaning. It is important for teachers to introduce books, stories, and text that are worth reading. As Eskey and Grabe (p. 228) stated, "What the students read must be relevant to their real needs and interests, and they must be ready, willing, and able to read it."

Difficulties in Teaching. Although the interactive
approach to reading has lots of advantages in both theory
and teaching, difficulties are still apparent.

First, it is difficult for students to use both
decoding skills which are parts of the bottom-up model and
interpretive skills which are part of the top-down model;
they should be emphasized and developed together. However,
in practical teaching, these are hard to teach, especially
for those EFL or ESL learners. Devine (1988) provided an
example of this. In a study of twenty low-intermediate ESL
readers from a variety language backgrounds, because of
different language bases, they had different kinds of
focus on reading. After the experiment of reading, they
showed the result of three different models:
"sound-centered," "word-centered," and "meaning-centered"
respectively. The result, not surprisingly, was that
readers who equated good reading with sound identification
or good pronunciation usually failed to understand or
recall what they had read. From this experiment, there are
many difficulties if EFL teachers are to use the
interactive approach. Students may show proficiency in
some aspects of reading, but rarely in both aspects of
bottom-up and top-down models. However, it is usually the
reason that leads to their failure. As teachers, no matter

how hard it is to practice the interactive approach, they must give it a try, and keep on trying.

Second, because of the different cultural backgrounds and lack of language knowledge, EFL or ESL readers always have problems in interpreting meanings of words. The implication from the five models of interactive reading is that a massive receptive vocabulary is needed that is rapidly, accurately, and automatically assessed--a fact that may be the greatest single impediment to fluent reading by ESL students. This concern may be particularly true for students in advanced-level ESL courses (Grabe, 1986). This is true especially for academic purposes, because many EFL/ESL students are weak in academic language skills.

Third, the individual variation cannot be compensated for, especially with readers from different cultural backgrounds. As Goodman (1979) observed, "Even effective readers are severely limited in comprehension of texts by what they already know before they read. The author may influence the comprehensibility of a text particularly for specific targeted audiences" (p. 658).

Therefore, a goal for EFL/ESL reading teachers is to minimize reading difficulties and to maximize

comprehension by providing culturally relevant information.

Summary

From what has been discussed in this paper, the general idea of interactive approach to reading is connected with both surface structure of reading materials, such as words, and deep structure, such as meaning. It is built on the theoretical bases of bottom-up and top-down reading theories. Teachers who advocate an interactive approach motivate students to read more efficiently. However, there are some limitations of the interactive approach, especially for ESL/EFL learners, such as language barriers, cultural differences, and individual variations. The interactive approach needs further research and improvement from this aspect.

Teachers who apply this approach in their classroom must pay attention to some critical aspects; for example, how to connect phonic knowledge of the words with comprehension of the whole article, and what is the best way to help students conquer these difficulties.

Students benefit most from interactive approaches to reading. Through the interactive approach, learners can increase their interest in reading, understand reading materials more deeply, and obtain more information. This

is indeed a valuable chance for learning and reading
improvement.

Experiential Activities that Motivate Free Reading

In recent years, free reading--students' reading
independently--has become a very important part of reading
education. However, many problems arise in motivating
students to read on their own time. In order to resolve
these problems, researchers and teachers have addressed
this issue by proposing the increased use of experiential
activities. Key aspects of experiential reading are
covered in this paper, which first introduces the theory
of experiential learning and the current research on it,
then focuses on the need for experiential activities, and
lastly describes how to teach experiential activities in
free reading.

Definitions of Free Reading and Experiential
  Activities

The immediate need for motivating students to read in
and out of the classroom environment--free reading--
emphasizes the implementation of experiential activities
in language teaching. Definitions of both terms are
presented next.

Free Reading. Recently, the phrase 'free reading' has
signified a few peaceful and quiet minutes during which

students are left alone to read (Swartz, 2001).

Contemporary English-as-a-second/foreign-language

(ESL/EFL) programs utilize free reading extensively.

Experiential Activities. Recent research has shown that in order to improve students' learning, teachers should emphasize academic course-based activities as well as experiential activities that focus on meeting identified community needs (Bohlman, Martin, & Porter, 2003). Thus, learning balances theory and practice (experiential learning).

Effective experiential activities have three phases. The first phase is in-class preparation, which includes discussion, vocabulary development, or practice of questions to be asked during the activity. The second phase is the activity itself. The third phase comprises in-class follow-up activities, which might include discussion or writing projects based on information learned during the activity (Bohlman et al., 2003).

In sum, free reading helps English learners take charge of their own learning and improve their reading skills to some extent. However, teachers find it challenging to motivate students to read on their own. Experiential activities are employed as teaching tools to overcome this challenge. Next is presented an historical

overview of experiential learning from which experiential
activities are derived.

Historical Background of Experiential Learning

During the first half of the 20th century, one could

not observe how the human brain worked. People limited

their measurements and theories merely to what was going

in--the stimulus, and what was coming out--the response.

People thought that children could learn without external

stimuli, because the brain itself could learn (Kelly,

1997). Then in the 1960s and 1970s there was a dramatic

shift that occurred in psychology from the work of Piaget,

which involved child development and schema theory

(Travers, 1977). However, this research did not lead

directly to the theory of experiential learning itself,

although it spawned new theories: (a) revised

interpretations of learning, known as cognitive theories;

and (b) revitalized progressivism, known as humanist

theories. Humanists, such as Maslow, concentrated on the

affective domain and how learners manage their own life

processes (Kelly, 1997). The affective domain was

intimately tied to experience, but there was no adequate

theory with regards to its function in learning. Even as

late as the 1980s, experience was seen as merely a source

of stimuli. Saljo observed that students would recognize

that learning as an internal, experience-based process with the growing of their experience (Kelly, 1997).

Near the close of 20th century, a theory of experiential learning was gradually formulated. In the early 1980s, Mezirow, Freire and others stressed that all learning came from the way learners processed experience, especially how they reflected on life experience. They claimed that the process of learning was a cycle that began with experience, continued with reflection and later led to action, and itself became a concrete experience for reflection (Kelly, 1997). For example, a teacher may have experienced an angry student who failed a test. Reflection on this experience meant the way that this teacher tried to explain the occurrence, compared it to previous experiences to determine what was the same and what was unique, analyzed it according to personal or institutional standards, and formulated a course of action connected to the experiences of others, such as talking to other teachers who have also faced angry students (Kelly, 1997). This might then lead to further reflection.

Kolb divided experience into two separate learning activities: (a) perceiving and (b) processing (Algonquin, 1996). He also added another stage, abstract conceptualization (Kelly, 1997). Kelly (1997) concluded

experience was the center and root of learning, because people made generalizations, conclusions, and hypotheses about the experience.

Figure 5 shows the experiential learning cycle, which begins from the center of learning (experience), continues with critical reflection, then further goes to abstract and active experiment. Lastly it comes back to further reflection.

In sum, after a half century, many educators and researchers agree that learning is a process of experience. The necessity of using experiential activities in teaching will be explored as follows.

The Need of Experiential Activities in Free
Reading

The Shortcomings of Free Reading. Although free reading is used a lot in current language teaching, it has some disadvantages. Firstly, some students may not feel interested in reading, especially when they read silently. Two types of reading comprise what children want and like to read: (a) "preference" reading, and (b) "interest" reading. According to Summers and Lukasevich (1983), preference "relates more to reading which might to be done, while interests are inferred from what has actually been read" (p. 348). Students' interest levels play an

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   ┌─────────────┐              ┌─────────────┐
   │ Experience  │─────────────▶│  Critical   │
   │             │              │  Reflection │
   └─────────────┘              └─────────────┘
                                       │
                                       ▼
   ┌─────────────┐              ┌─────────────┐
   │   Active    │◀─────────────│  Abstract   │
   │ Experiment  │              │             │
   └─────────────┘              └─────────────┘
          │
          └──────────────▶ ┌──────────────────┐
                           │ Further Critical │
                           │   Reflection     │
                           └──────────────────┘
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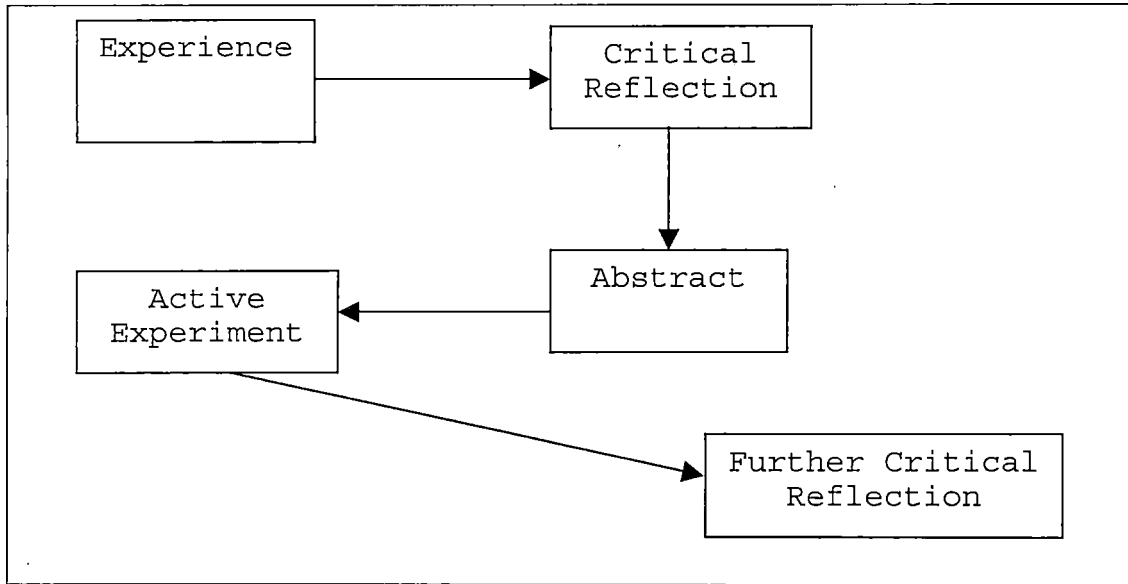
Source: Adapted from Kelly, C. (1997). David Kolb, the theory of experiential learning and ESL. The Internet TESL Journal, 3(9), Retrieved April, 8, 2005 from http://iteslj.org/Articles/Kelly-Experiential/

Figure 5. Experiential Learning Cycle

important role in reading. This provides information about what children are choosing to read out of all that is accessible to them. Thus, this is an important area that teachers need to focus on.

Because of language barriers, English-as-second/ foreign-language (ESL/EFL) learners may not fully understand reading materials, especially when they are written in a different cultural context. Under this circumstance, students may feel weary and give up on reading.

Furthermore, free reading is only reading (the theoretical part of learning); students may lack the practical part of learning, the experience. Hence, a practical learning method should augment free reading.

Because of the limitations of free reading, educators have to think of stronger teaching method, to help students become independent learners. Experiential activities have been shown to resolve this problem successfully.

Advantages of Experiential Activities in Free Reading. By using experiential activities, students' reading has shown much improvement. First, in traditional classrooms, teachers begin by presenting knowledge (including analysis and synthesis) to students. They hope students will later find ways to apply the knowledge in action. Despite the efforts of many would-be reformers, recent reports by researchers such as Goodlad (1984) suggested that most teaching, particularly at the high-school level, still involved the teacher as the purveyor of knowledge and the student as the passive recipient. So nowadays teachers should use more experiential activities to assist students' reading. "They can be helpful in providing interesting and purposeful

reinforcement to a wide variety of basic reading skills"
(Burns & Roe, 1979, p. xvi).

Besides, the essence of an experiential approach is
that information gained only by hearing can be easily
forgotten; in seeing, we may remember; but in experiencing
or doing, we are most likely not only to remember, but to
understand (Anderson-Hanley, 1999). In other words, if
using experiential activities in reading, students can
understand the reading more deeply.

Some teachers also introduce knowledge through
experiential activities. Accordingly, teachers can use
reading activities and games to their advantage. Such
activities can be used not only to bring interest and
excitement into the learning program, but can also help a
child attain a wider range of competencies. These
activities can be used successfully with children who have
a reading deficiency; promote desirable social interaction
among children by encouraging cooperation and discussion;
provide an opportunity to integrate reading with other
subjects; and often the teacher diagnostic information
that can be used to help individual children correct
misconceptions or fill gaps in their learning (Sugar,
1998).

<u>Difficulties of Experiential Activities in Free</u>

<u>Reading</u>. Despite many advantages in the use of

experiential activities, difficulties still exist. One

problem encountered by many teachers who use experiential

group activities is how to evaluate the students'

performance (Bowman & Ware, 1984). The instructor may find

it difficult to sample a sufficient amount of each

student's behavior to justify assigning a grade, because

some activities are designed and performed within groups.

These experiential activities are meant to motivate

students' reading interest; but it is important for the

teacher to give each group member appropriate assessment.

The second problem is the limitation experienced by

EFL/ESL learners who may be of various cultural

backgrounds and lack English proficiency; these students

may have problems when participating in experiential

activities. Thirdly, research shows that some current

intercultural activities are highly derivative (Seelye,

1996). Therefore teachers need to create more innovative

activities.

From what has been discussed above, experiential

activities which could be implemented indeed have some

drawback that need to require further research. However,

how to use experiential activities in teaching is becoming

a salient topic to researchers and teachers. The roles of students, teachers, and the school in experiential learning are explored as follows.

Roles of Students, Teachers and the School in Experiential Free Reading

The effective results of experiential education mainly change two aspects: (a) the roles of students and teachers and (b) structures of the school. Teachers employ experiential education in cultural journalism, service learning, environmental education, and even on more traditional school subjects.

Students' Roles. The key idea is that students take on active roles as they participate in a real activity with real consequences. During experiential learning, students should reflect on their own experiences, thus developing new skills, attitudes, and ways of thinking (Kraft & Sakofs, 1988).

Teachers' Roles. Besides a change in students' roles, experiential education also requires a change in the role of teachers. When students are active learners, their endeavors often take them outside the classroom walls. Teachers need to synthesize knowledge, but generally they cannot plan a predictable curriculum unit. Teachers are experimenting together with their students, reflecting

upon the learning activities they have designed, and responding to their students' reactions to the activities. In this way, teachers are more than just applying school policy and curriculum decisions. They are now playing an active role in the school (Rolzinski, 1990). As Day (1994) stated, the role of the teacher in a experiential environment is that of facilitator. The teacher carefully monitors the leaning environment while giving the children space to play alone.

Schools' Roles. As students and teachers take on new roles, the traditional structures of the school also may be challenged. For example, at the Middle School in Colorado Springs, Colorado, service activities, a kind of experiential learning, are an integral part of the academic program. Accordingly, teachers and administrators need to look at traditional practices in new ways. They may teach research methods of involving students in investigations of the community, rather than restricting research activities to the library (Rolzinski, 1990).

Therefore, experiential learning differs from traditional education. Teachers first immerse students in action and then ask them to reflect on their experiences. The following part will explain three types of

experiential activities and their pedagogical
implications.

Types of Experiential Activities in Free Reading

There are many kinds of experiential learning
activities. Teachers should design appropriate activities
with a variety of purposes for different learners.
Students need independent reading every day, and there are
extensive experiential activities to motivate students'
reading comprehension.

Games that Motivate Free Reading. Games/plays,
according to Piaget (1950), are ideal vehicles for
developmental/experiential learning. They are interesting,
and can retain students' attention. "In an informal survey
that I did 20 years ago, only one trainer in 50 had used
training games. Today, it is more likely that only one
trainer in 50 has not used training games" (Sugar, 1998,
p. xiii). Games that provide interest and involvement
could focus on reviewing and reinforcing what the
participants have learned through other approaches, and
enable the students to combine the control and efficiency
of conventional training (Sugar, 1998). Through playing
some experiential reading games, young children can solve
problems and acquire enriched meaning for language and
ideas, then further improve their reading comprehension.

Additionally, their emotional needs could be expressed. In the process, they can try new roles and activities with confidence and success (Day, 1994).

Games can be used as learning tools (Kim & Lyons, 2003), which is especially true for improving students' free reading. Games like Clue Bingo, Category Rummy, Word Wise, Measure Match and Definition Dominos could help children learn vocabulary (Sullivan, Davey, & Dickerson, 1978). Rhyming games can help them hear letter sounds more accurately. From Animal Bingo, Match Rummy, and Holiday Concentration, students could acquire concepts and facts in their reading. Many other games offer students firsthand experiences, further enabling them to achieve reading objectives.

Bingo is a typical experiential game which could be played in class before free reading time. The teacher first chooses some difficult words from the reading article, and makes word cards. Each player is given a bingo card divided into spaces making vertical, horizontal, and diagonal rows. A pack of word cards for the caller and discs for the players are needed. Then the caller presents the word, orally or visually by holding up the card from his/her pack, and the players cover the corresponding word on their bingo cards. The first player

to complete a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal row calls "Bingo" and is declared the winner (Sullivan, Davey, & Dickerson, 1978). Using the Bingo game, students could become familiar with the words which will appear in their free reading later, thereby improving their reading comprehension.

Another activity students could play according to their own experience is as follows. Before reading the article, teachers could ask students some questions, such as "What could you do in this case?" or "Why do you think so?" Then students read the article independently. After reading, students can discuss the same questions and the questions about the article itself in class (Burns & Roe, 1979). Through this activity, students can put themselves into the activity and improve their free reading.

Research also supports the use of games as a useful training tool in education. Bredemeir and Greenblat (1981) noted that participants typically experience motivation, interest, enjoyment, involvement, and satisfaction during the use of games. These authors concluded that games are at least as effective as other methods in facilitating students' learning of subject matter, and are more effective aids in helping students to retain what has been learned. They also noted that games could be more

effective than traditional methods of instruction in facilitating students' positive attitudes. Kim and Lyons (2003) also stated that the use of games could increase students' interest in free reading, and change their attitudes towards reading from passive to active.

Effective games should be first, user-friendly, easily explained, and quickly understood; second, easy and fun to play; third, challenging; and last, portable, so the game can be taken to any training site (Sugar, 1998). Most importantly, games need to be purposefully linked to the learning objective.

Other Types of Experiential Activities. Another type of experiential is taking a field trip linked to target reading material. For example, if students need to read material about Universal Studios, a good way for improving free reading is to take them on a field trip there (Bohlman et al., 2003). It is useful for broadening students' experiential background, to develop the concept and vocabulary needed to interpret the printed word. When a child sees the word "horse," he/she could associate it with the mental image of a horse. This abstraction is impossible unless a child has formed some mental images of the concepts being presented. Three major procedures are used to develop experiential background. First is the

sensory experience, which includes five senses—sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. Second is listening to stories read by the teacher, and the last one is by using learning centers, such as sharing, explaining, comparing and so on (Burns & Roe, 1979).

Having guest speakers visit the classroom is also a type of experiential activity. Sometimes, others' experiences are a good resource for students to improve reading comprehension. Students can also engage in discussion with a partner or in groups about their own experience relating to the reading, and so on (Swartz, 2001). Discussion with others can help students exchange their experiences and learn from each other.

In sum, these are only some of the most useful types of experiential activities. When teachers use them in teaching, there are some problems also. To address these aspects, further research about practical pedagogies is needed.

Pedagogical Implications. First, each reading genre contains kinds of experiential activities. Teachers should select or design appropriate activities which are relevant to students' everyday lives and needs. When planning an experiential activity, there are two factors to consider: language level and risk (Bohlman et al., 2003). Especially

for ESL/EFL learners, language level is crucial. Teachers should know what level of ESL/EFL ability is necessary to successfully complete the activity. Risk means how much students will need to explore in a new situation. Activities can be categorized as low risk, high risk, or somewhere in between.

Experiential activities can be organized in a variety of ways: whole-class participation, pair or small groups working together, and working individually. Teachers should select the organization that best suits the needs of their classes. For example, if there are students with mixed language ability, "teachers may choose to have students work in mixed-ability pairs or small groups. However, if students have varied interests, they may be allowed to work individually" (Bohlman et al., 2003, p. xxii).

Teachers should apply strategies to assess students' performance in experiential activities. Recent research showed that peer evaluation could be an effective method for accurately evaluating a large number of small group assignments (Phillips & Semb, 1977). The results of the study provide evidence to support the use of one type of peer evaluation in small group activities, particularly when the instructor is unable to make sufficient

observations for assigning grades. However, teachers need to provide students with only a few evaluative categories and explicit instruction for applying these categories.

<u>Summary</u>

The general idea of practical learning through experiential activities is to motivate students to read independently. Though there are some limitations to free reading--especially for ESL/EFL learners--such as language barriers, experiential activities could assist students to overcome those difficulties in free reading and improve their reading comprehension through different types of motivational activities, like games, field trip, and so on. There are some aspects of experiential activities that still need further research, like how to evaluate the students' performance.

Teachers need to apply this approach in their classroom, and pay attention to some pedagogical aspects, such as how to select or design appropriate activities for different learners, and what is the best way to assess them.

Students benefit most from experiential activities. Through the process of experiential activities, learners can increase their interest in reading, get more information, and exchange experience with others. This is

indeed a valuable opportunity for learning, sharing, and improving.

Cross-Age Peer Reading

In recent years, cross-age peer reading--students in different grades paired to read together--has become an essential strategy in teaching English learners to read. This review covers cross-age peer reading, first introducing the definition of cross-age peer reading; then, analyzing recent research delineating the advantages of cross-age peer reading; and finally, focusing on the teaching applications of cross-age peer reading that motivate students' reading comprehension.

<u>Definitions of Cross-Age Peer Reading</u>

Peer tutoring is the foundation of cross-age peer reading. Definitions of both terms are presented next.

<u>Peer Tutoring</u>. Multiple definitions of peer tutoring exist. The most succinct definition comes from Damon and Phelps: "Peer tutoring is an approach in which one child instructs another child in material on which the first is an expert and the second is a novice" (1989, p. 11). However, not all peer tutors are "experts"; they can be just same-age classmates (Greenwood, Carta, & Hall, 1988),

or same-aged low achievers (Pigott, Fantuzzo, & Clement, 1986).

Peer tutoring could be used in many fields. Research has shown that it was beneficial for such domains as mathematics, special education, and language arts. Peer tutoring also includes peer reading, which is one of the most well-represented fields.

Cross-Age Peer Reading. "Buddy reading" is another parallel name for "cross-age peer reading." It refers to peers of younger children who are old enough to be good models but still young enough to talk the same language; they provide individualized teaching and personal encouragement for each other (Henriques, 1997). Research that has been published primarily during the last ten years has established a connection between peer- or cross-age tutoring and student outcomes, mainly focusing on students in grades K-12. Discussions about this research follow.

Experiments on Cross-Age Peer Reading

How to help young children improve their reading is always a topic for researchers and educators. Accordingly, this has been well researched, as is shown below.

In 1995, Samway, Whang, and Pippitt established and maintained a cross-age reading program in a multiethnic,

multilingual inner-city school in Oakland, California. This program was an effective cross-age tutoring program which involved first-/second-grade students and fifth-/sixth-grade students together, most of whom were nonnative speakers of English. As a result of this experiment, there was compelling growth among the fifth-/sixth-grade students both as teachers and learners. The younger students likewise gained confidence in both oral language and reading skills (Samway, Whang, & Pippitt, 1995).

Researchers also did a meta-analysis of peer-tutoring research (Kalkowski, 2005). Using strict methodological criteria, these researchers selected many well-designed studies describing program effects on test scores, chiefly in the field of reading. The results showed a moderately beneficial improvement in tutees' effort and achievements, and their attitudes toward subject matter. Tutees had better results in structured programs of shorter duration. Their achievements improved more when lower-level skills were taught and tested on locally developed examinations. For the tutors, the researchers found that the tutors' academic outcome, self-concept, and attitudes all shown significant improvement.

Labbo and Teale (1990) also concluded, by means of a case study, that cross-age peer reading could help poor readers in the upper-elementary grades to improve their readings. There were 20 fifth graders involved in this study from a middle-class, suburban elementary school in San Antonio, Texas. Based on reading scores from the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills* (Hieronymous, Hoover, & Lindquist, 1986), they were all identified as below-average readers. These students were randomly assigned to one of three groups: (a) cross-age reading group (n = 7), (b) art partner group (n = 7), and (c) basal group (n = 6). Their cross-age partners were kindergarten students. The purpose of this comparison was to determine if possible effects of the cross-age reading program were due to the book reading activities or were merely a byproduct or social interaction with the younger children. The cross-age reading program consisted of four continuous phases: (a) preparation, (b) prereading collaboration, (c) reading to the kindergartners, and (d) postreading collaboration. In this case study, all of the students were pretested for reading achievement, self concept, and reading attitudes; then given a reading interview to elicit their evaluation of what good readers did as well as the strategies they used themselves as they read. This program lasted 8 weeks.

47

During this time, the reader and art partners made visits four times a week, with each of the 32 sessions lasting for 15 to 20 minutes. In the quantitative results, the readers group gained 9 points; art partners group gained 3 points; and basal group lost 1 point, suggesting that the cross-age reading program helped the poor fifth-grade readers in certain ways.

The previous section of this paper focused on experiments regarding the importance of cross-age peer reading. The following section will concentrate on the advantages.

Advantages of Cross-Age Peer Reading

According to recent research, reading problems were characteristic of various levels of readers. Through analyzing these problems first, researchers could help teachers find the right teaching strategies for various types of reading challenges.

In Carver and Hoffman's (1981) research, a primary problem with many poor readers in the upper elementary grades is that they are weak in fluency. Their reading rate is slow, and their word recognition is poor. When they read aloud, they do not produce a good oral reading of the text.

Leland and Fitzpatrick (1994) studied a cross-age reading program in a sixth-grade class that consisted of 24 students all reading at or below grade level. Before the cross-age peer reading program, when the sixth-grade students were asked whether or not they read at home, the most common response was "not very often." The students were also asked how many books they read monthly, and the response was "less than one." Under these circumstances, they seemed to lack self-confidence and really did not see themselves as competent readers. After participating in the cross-age reading program, when asked how they felt about reading and writing with young children regularly, they responded with enthusiasm. Under this realization, the partnership between readers of different ages and teacher is worth exploring, and its advantages will be listed below.

Research has noted significant beneficial effects on the language arts achievements of both tutors and tutees, especially for tutees. Language arts are examined from many aspects, such as story grammar, comprehension, acquisition of vocabulary, and general reading skills. Most of this research involved elementary students, and positive results were found for both short- and long-term tutoring (Kalkowski, 2005).

Taking into consideration, the reading problems of upper-level elementary students, Hoffman (1987) argued that oral reading was as effective as using any other instructional technique; but he emphasized that above all, the reading itself should be a constructive part of a complete lesson. Oral reading helped teachers model reading in the classroom. Students were also able to have discussions of the text, and provided with opportunities for practice. In other words, performance is a must for improving oral reading. When one gives a performance, one always practices beforehand. Likewise, cross-age peer reading provides students an opportunity to engage in the repeated reading of a particular article, reading together with their buddies. This technique builds fluency and comprehension.

Opportunities for skill practice and social interaction in cross-age peer reading are especially significant for at-risk students and students with disabilities (Miller & Kohler, 1993). In Davenport, Arnold, and Lassman's (2002) research, students who were selected to participate as tutors all met the criteria of disabilities with four students also identified as English-as-a-second-language (ESL) learners. After the program, these special education students were successful

in tutoring their younger peers. The surveys supported the fact that all students in cross-age tutoring program improved their attitudes toward reading.

Teaching Application

In the previous two sections of this paper, research results of cross-age peer reading were explored. This section will focus on why teachers should integrate it into their curriculum and apply it in teaching.

In Leland and Fitzpatrick's (1994) study in a college laboratory school, they, as professors who also taught in this elementary school, tested new ideas in using cross-age reading program. By means of this study, they found out that cross-age interaction could build reading enthusiasm. Effective results of using cross-age peer reading in teaching are explored as follows.

Students' Roles in Cross-Age Peer Reading. Dozens of studies have shown positive and substantial effects of peer and cross-age reading (Berliner & Casanova, 1998). In successful programs, Students who were paired to read took on diverse roles during the interaction.

Role set is a process of negotiation between cross-age reading partner as two children come together to share a book (MacGillivray & Hawes, 1994). According to this study, there were four types of role sets in

cross-age peer reading: (a) students as coworkers, (b) as fellow artists, (c) as bosses/employees, and (d) as tutors/tutees.

Children demonstrated these four role sets with the researchers. Five of the children contemplated that they had read as coworkers because they decided together on a book. For example, Carol said, "I read a page and Arlene reads a page" (MacGillivray & Hawes, 1994, p. 214). Another typical style of coworker role was that Ray followed Nettie's reading word by word, but when Nettie did not know a word, she asked Ray for help. This was not a tutor/tutee interaction, because Nettie talked with Ray as equal in this process (MacGillivray & Hawes, 1994).

The second type of relationship was that of fellow artists. "This interaction occurs when the students seemed to perform for each other" (MacGillivray & Hawes, 1994, p. 214), for example, one day after Arlene read to Vicki, Vicki said that she could read the story book with her eyes closed, and did recite the words, then they both took turns showing off their talents. Yet, during this process, the power shifted back and forth; at times, one partner exerted dominance over the other, but this tended to be temporary.

In the third type of interaction, boss/employee, one student characterized the boss, and primarily observed. He/she alone made the decision of which book they read, and oversaw the reading with the employee, who actually did all of the reading. For example, Ashley (a student's name) created a situation where she was telling Youstia (another student's name) how and what to read. Ashely's job was to maintain the game. She seemed intent on being in control of the whole situation and not reading at all (MacGilvray & Hawes, 1994).

However, according to extensive research, tutor/tutee is a most popular model during cross-age peer reading. Typically in these interactions, students used "echo techniques" in which the tutor said a short phrase and paused for the student to respond (MacGillivray & Hawes, 1994). Areas showing significant benefits for tutors include academic achievement in various subject areas, particularly in reading, locus of control (Lazerson, Foster, Brown, & Hummel, 1988), self-esteem in reading, attitudes toward school, social skills and cooperative skills. From the Samway et al. (1995) study, "both the older and younger students have benefited enormously from buddy reading" (p. 89).

to them and were able to practice responding to books. They could also practice many of the reading skills and strategies that they have learned in class, such as using their fingers to track a line of print from left to right. Secondly, they also learned book-handling skills. During the process of buddy reading, "the children have talked about and practiced how to share a book-where to place the book, who points to the words, who reads, and how to take turns reading" (Samway et al., 1995, p. 107). These seemingly small details became important to the success of a reading session and led to a better understanding overall of sharing and turn-taking during cross-age peer reading. Tutees also selected books more skillfully, became more confident writers and skilled conversationlists, and developed improve interactive skills.

Teachers' Roles in Cross-Age Peer Reading. Although peer reading took place between pairs of cross-age students, teachers have important responsibilities during this process as well. Teachers' roles were analyzed throughout the whole cross-age peer reading program that included four continuous steps: (a) preparation (b) prereading collaboration (c) cross-age reading process and (d) postreading collaboration (Labbo & Teale, 1990).

In the preparation step, "teachers could help individual students prepare for the storybook sharing sessions in three specific ways" (Labbo & Teale, 1990, p. 365). The teacher first helped each student select appropriate books from the school or classroom library; next, teachers encouraged them to become more fluent readers, and last, they helped the students decide how each book would be introduced and where they might stop to discuss the book with the kindergarten students.

Then, in the prereading collaboration, teachers used minilessons with students. Old and young students were divided into two small groups separately. Students could set personal goals and share their books; the teacher offered support for students who felt uncertain about the book interaction and addressed any last-minute concerns of the students (Labbo & Teale, 1990). Teachers could encourage students to read and write on their own, take dictation for them, and so on (Samway et al., 1995).

During the cross-age reading process, teachers also had their own roles as observers (Labbo & Teale, 1990). "We believe that teachers need to carefully observe buddy reading pairs and keep anecdotal records" (Samway et al., 1995, p. 83). For example, "when the students are working in their pairs, Mary and Gail as teachers spend their time

monitoring the two classes and make certain that the pairs are on task, they encourage students to sit wherever they are comfortable" (Samway et al., 1995, p. 87). Teachers listened carefully to the content of the discussions and evaluated the students with the following questions: What is being discussed and how are the two children interacting? What are the dynamics? Are the pairs working? The observation notes were helpful in debriefing sessions because they provided authentic feedback to the children.

The last role is postreading collaboration, which is done after each cross-age reading session. As Labbo & Teale (1990, p. 366) addressed, "This postreading collaboration was designed to provide an opportunity for the students to reflect on the quality of the storybook reading interactions." The teacher's purpose in the postreading discussions was to help students develop strategies they would use to improve subsequent readings. In Samway et al.'s (1995) study, teachers helped students write reflective essays, assessed their taking charge of the reading content, and monitored the reading skills that they were using at the moment.

Pedagogical Implications. According to Samway et al. (1995), the buddy-reading program engenders great enthusiasm in teachers as they now have a deeper

understanding both of children's learning processes and also of their role as teachers in enhancing students' learning. Useful pedagogical implications and suggestions are explored for teachers as follows.

Firstly, teachers should use observations of students to inform instructional decisions. In Samway et al.'s (1995) experiment, at the beginning, teachers started to organize their note-taking system; by mid-semester, they had tried various systems, such as stick-on address labels, notebooks, three-by-five index cards, and photo records. They also realized that it was hard to observe all of their students in the whole half-hour buddy reading session carefully with only one teacher available. Therefore, they found a more effective way, which was using two teachers to merely focus on two to three pairs of students at a time. The result of this method was that teachers could both move around the room to observe several students in detail, and further share their observations and discuss concerns with one another.

Next, teachers used students' feedback to enhance their teaching. Mary and Gail tried to read through the children's journal entries to note concerns and insights that students raised (Samway et al., 1995). "When Mary read Barbara's journal, she was amazed and said, 'I had no

idea that Manop could read so well independently, I never saw him exhibit this type of literate behavior before'" (p. 123). From this, the teacher knew that Manop had little confidence in reading independently, but after having been re-evaluated by Barbara, the teacher learned that Manop seemed to read more fluently and want to take risks with the other children. Therefore, the teacher decided to pair him up with aother peer buddy (Samway et al., 1995). From this case study, it is recommended that teachers pay more attention to the importance of students' feedback, which could give teachers more information to improve their teaching.

Teachers should provide differentiated instruction based on the unique needs of individual students (Mathes, Grek, Howard, Babyak, & Allen, 1999). "In order to accommodate a wide range of individual differences, children must be able to choose among activities the teacher has prepared or ones they themselves initiate" (p. 3). Under this circumstance, a good reading strategy for providing different instruction is to design various activities.

In cross-age peer reading, older and younger students enjoy working together and find it rewarding. Teachers should know that readers need more instruction in skills

and strategies; they need to connect the skills and strategies to real-life context so they become relevant and real to the students (Leland & Fitzpatrick, 1994). More importantly, teachers should help students build positive attitudes toward reading, and make literacy activities more enjoyable.

Strategies for working with ESL/EFL students are particularly important. According to Samway et al. (1995), 12 strategies worked especially well for the older students when they are working with younger buddies who are not yet fluent in English. The following two strategies appeared especially useful for ESL/EFL beginners: (a) paraphrase and talk about the pictures; (b) prior to reading the book, talk about it in the native language of younger learner. If the book is available in their native language, read that version first, so that students could have a better understanding of the story.

Limitations in Teaching. Although cross-age peer reading has wide-ranging research-proven advantages, there are several limitations as follows.

First of all, there is a possible disadvantage for tutors. Long-time peer reading together--especially teaching younger tutees--may cause impatience for those older children who are the tutors. If tutors lack

expertise, their impatience may negatively influence the effects of cross-age peer reading (Kalkowski, 2005).

The second limitation pertains to the younger students (tutees). Most students have difficulty from time to time paying attention, especially the younger buddies (Samway et al., 1995), which influences the efficacy of cross-age peer reading.

Others have speculated that peer reading may not be widely used partly because of "the demands placed on teacher time" (Giesecke, Cartledge, & Gardner, 1993, p. 4). Teachers tend to be concerned about the time and effort needed to train tutors (Kalkowski, 2005).

Summary

From what was discussed in this paper, the general idea of cross-age peer reading is pairing students of different ages to read together. Practical learning through cross-age peer reading motivates students to read more efficiently, which has been proved by extensive experimental and case-study research. It has limitations as well, calling for future research and improvement in cross-age peer reading.

Teachers who apply this approach in their classroom must pay attention to some cultural aspects. For example, teachers need to use observations in instruction, consider

students' feedback to solve problems, and try to change their roles in teaching.

Students benefit most from cross-age peer reading. Through the process of cross-age peer reading, two paired students take distinct roles and increase their reading in different aspects. Older students can become more skilled and versatile readers as tutors; younger students, as tutees, can learn more reading strategies from their older buddies. This indeed a valuable chance for learning, sharing, and improving.

Scaffolding Emergent Literacy

In recent years, scaffolding--the provisions of temporary learning support for students--has become an essential teaching strategy in teaching English literacy, especially emergent literacy for children, adolescents, and adults who are in the beginning stage of learning to read (Díaz-Rico, 2004). This review of scaffolding first introduces the definitions of scaffolding and emergent literacy; then analyzes the theories of emergent literacy and scaffolding from various research-based views, showing how scaffolding works for emergent literacy (including the strategies of scaffolding, the student's role, and the teacher's role in this process); and last summarizes its

application in the English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classroom.

The Definition of Scaffolding for Emergent Literacy

Scaffolding can help people at different levels of different learning process. This paper focuses on how scaffolding motivates emergent literacy. Definitions of both terms will be presented next.

Scaffolding. Like the original meaning of supports that construction workers use on buildings, scaffolding in education essentially means doing some of the work for the student who is not quite ready to accomplish a task independently (Dodge, 2005). It is a child-centered teaching strategy, a process of helping students transition from following others to learning independently.

Emergent Literacy. In the general sense, emergent literacy refers to children's entire process as they acquire literacy (Teale & Sulzby, 1989). According to Clay (1966), the term emergent literacy acknowledges children's natural growth and awareness of reading and writing. There is no definite starting point, nor a definite ending point in the continuum of emergent literacy (Soderman, Gregory, & McCarty, 2005).

According to research, it is especially important to give support or instruction for emergent literacy because this is the lowest level of the literacy-learning process. Vygotsky (1986) supported the role of adults in children's learning via the use of scaffolding. Scaffolding emergent literacy is defined as the kind of support provided by an adult or expert to a child so that he or she can achieve a task that he or she would not normally achieve alone. In order to understand more about how to scaffold emergent literacy, the theories of scaffolding and emergent literacy should be explored first.

The Theory of Emergent Literacy

Emergent literacy can be defined as "the reading and writing behaviors that precede and develop into conventional literacy" (Teale & Sulzby, 1986, p. 84). The historical development emergent literacy will be explained as follows.

Historical Development of the Theory. Starting in the 1970s, the concept of emergent literacy has been gradually replacing the notion of reading readiness, which is predicated on the idea that there is a single point in time when a child is ready to begin to learn to read and write. But the theory of emergent literacy, in contrast, proposes that the development of literacy takes place

64

within the child as a gradual process over time. According to this theory, children emerge, prepared to read, at their own natural learning pace (Hall, 1987). Educators, teachers, and parents are aware that the concept of reading readiness no longer effectively represents what is happening in the literacy development of young children (Teale, 1986).

During the last twenty years, researchers have begun to challenge and develop traditional assumptions that define children's literacy based on what adults can do. The theory of emergent literacy encompasses the following elements: (1) learning to read and write began very early in life; (2) reading and writing develop concurrently and interrelatedly in young children; (3) literacy develops from real-life situations in which reading and writing are used to get things done; (4) children learn literacy through active engagement; (5) being read to plays a special role; and (6) learning to read and write is a development process (Clay, 1975).

According to Hall's (1987) research, literacy includes speaking, listening, reading, writing, and viewing. There are four primary components of emergent literacy: (1) reading aloud, (2) the concept of the

symbol, (3) emerging writing, and (4) the literacy environment (Stratton, 2005).

The Emergent Literacy Perspective. Educators now realize that in emergent literacy, most "nonreaders" actually have had some culture experience and may have engaged in different informal kinds of reading. Therefore, it is the teacher's job to build on these nascent skills so that these students can move into reading (Applebee & Langer, 1984). Besides, the purpose of emergent-literacy perspective is to use adult-child interaction to improve the child's literacy, rather than to help the child get the "right" answer.

Another point that should be mentioned is that emergent literacy is also a challenge for adolescents and adults (Díaz-Rico, 2004). The reason is that "many people who have never learned to read have internalized a sense of shame, stemming from a background that precluded schooling or from a deep sense of failure at having attended school" (p. 149).

The most effective child-centered, adult-child interaction teaching strategy is "scaffolding." Vygotsky (1978) suggested that when working within the zone of proximal development (ZPD), children require scaffolding from adults in order that the learning experience could

meet and challenge a child's level of development. The theory of scaffolding and how it works within the ZPD will be discussed as follows.

The Theory of Scaffolding

There are relationships between Zone of Actual Development (ZAD), Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and scaffolding. They cannot be divided separately. In order to understand scaffolding more deeply, theories of ZAD and ZPD should be explored.

Zone of Actual Development. Vygotsky's most influential ideas are those related to zones of development. The ZAD is one of the constructs of zones of development. When a teacher assigns a task and the students are able to do it alone and unassisted, the task is within the ZAD (Wilhelm, Baker, & Dube, 2001). However, Vygotsky thought according to the ZAD, the children could already do what teachers asked them to do, and then teachers had taught them nothing (Wilhelm, et al., 2001). Under this circumstance, the ZAD should be improved, and a better strategy should be based on the ZPD.

Zone of Proximal Development. The place where instruction and learning can take place is the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky defined the ZPD as "the distance between the actual development level as

determined by independent problem solving and the level of

potential development as determined by through problem

solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more

capable peers" (1978, p. 86). Vygotsky viewed teaching as

leading development instead of responding to it, if

teaching is in the ZPD.

Scaffolding and the Zone of Proximal Development. In

the work of Vygotsky's followers, such as Elkonin (1969),

it was found that for young children, the progress within

their ZPD can be further improved when they were exposed

not only to social interactions, but also to special

instructional techniques, "scaffolding."

Under teachers' scaffolding, students develop new

cognitive abilities. Depending on various factors, a

teacher will lend different levels of assistance toward

task completion. The goal is to allow the students to do

as much as they can on their own, and then to provide

assistance when it is needed so that the task can be

successfully completed. Vygotsky emphasized that students

need to engage in challenging tasks that they can

successfully complete with appropriate help. He also

pointed out that teaching in such a way develops the

teacher just as attentive parenting matures the parent.

Learning always proceeds from the known to the new

(Wilhelm et al., 2001). Good teaching builds on this connection. The teacher should provide this scaffold to support the construction.

According to McKenzie's (1999) research, there are at least eight characteristics of scaffolding. Scaffolding provides clear directions, clarifies purpose, keeps purpose and motivation in the forefront, keeps students on task, and offers assessment to clarify expectations. Scaffolding points students to worthy sources; reduces uncertainty, surprise, and disappointment; delivers efficiency; and creates momentum.

The Relationship between the Zone of Actual Development, the Zone of Proximal Development, and Scaffolding. Like a bridge, scaffolding plays a very important role between the ZAD and ZPD. As Vygotsky (1986) stated, the child can do alone tomorrow what he/she did in cooperation today. He also noted that instruction plays an extremely important role in development because it proceeds ahead of development, then functions to help students in the ZPD. According to Wilhelm et al. (2001), the term "scaffolding" specified the types of assistance that makes it possible for learners to reach the highest level of their ZPD, facilitating the learner's transition from assisted to independent performance. The support of

69

teachers and peers, as well as a child's new capacities,
exist in the ZPD. But when learning is achieved, the
strategy reaches the student's zone of actual development
(ZAD); in other words, the student is no longer in need of
help. The ultimate goal of scaffolding is to bring the
previous unmastered processes of completing a task into
the students' ZAD so that they can do without help
(Wilhelm et al., 2001).

How Scaffolding Works for Emergent Literacy

Researchers have investigated how scaffolding works
for students at the emergent literacy level. The following
section of this paper will analyze scaffolding from five
aspects: strategies, the student's role, the teacher's
role, student-teacher interaction in scaffolding emergent
literacy, and the role of scaffolding in the ESL
classroom.

Strategies of Scaffolding in Emergent Literacy.
Modeling an activity or play is a very useful way of
scaffolding, because activity and play are necessities for
young children who are at the emergent literacy level.
According to Berk and Winsler (1995), teachers should pay
attention to the significance of children's make-believe
imaginative play in the process of socialization and
development. Imaginative play, as Vygotsky theorized, was

the leading educational activity in the preschool years.

Scaffolding provides further enhancements to the learning

opportunity, involving physical demonstration, showing the

child what needs to occur, and clarifying the activity for

the child. A verbal framework together with a physical

demonstration provide the child with positive motivation

to continue to explore literacy-related activities. For

some children, teachers may have to lead them through the

activities. Teachers may need to help guide the pointer so

words are not skipped, verbally prompting the child with

words (Genisio & Drecktrash, 1999). Context and situation

are also essential and integral to learning. Therefore

students need to be engaged in real, everyday activities

that have purpose and meaning.

Small-group scaffolding is another strategy that

teachers should pay attention to. According to Genisio and

Drecktrash (1999), small reading centers are exciting

learning environments for the child. Small groups of

friends gathered to share in an activity become efficient

learners through modeling and scaffolding.

Clay and Cazden (1992) pointed out two scaffolding

strategies in teaching reading: (1) working with new

knowledge, (2) accepting partially correct responses. In

the first strategy, when a child has no idea about the

main idea or words needed for a particular text, the teacher can find it and explain it by contrasting something the teacher knows the child understood from another reading. In the second strategy, the teacher uses what is correct in the student's response, so as to improve possibilities for students' active consideration.

Another scaffolding strategy has teachers model the appropriate thinking of working skills in the classroom. Such modeling helps children learn to operate in the school culture. Harmin (1994) noted the applicability of Rosenshine's guided practice technique for developing student understanding and provided an actual example in language arts instruction in the classroom.

Verbal scaffolding is a strong scaffolding strategy. According to Genisio and Drecktrash (1999), reading centers in the classroom provide strong verbal scaffolding.

As Brown, Collins, and DuGuid (1989) addressed, scaffolding must begin from what was near to the student's experience and build to what was further from their experience. Likewise, at the beginning of a new task, reading processes are internal, hidden, and abstract. Many strategies such as protocols, drama, visualization strategies, and symbolic story representation assist for

72

teachers to make hidden processes external and visible to students, so that students can use new strategies of reading.

The best way to motivate emergent literacy is to let students read or write about what they have some knowledge of and interest in. Gibbons (2002) stated that it is important to listen to the students' messages as well as to the grammatical form of their statements, because this is also an opportunity for scaffolding.

Students' Roles. According to David, Raban, Ure, Gouch, Jago, Barriere, & Lambirth (2000), scaffolding is a child-centered tutoring approach. In the learning process, the child is the active constructor, the leader who initiates activities. The focus of emergent literacy is on children's learning rather than on teaching. The role of the teacher, who is defined as a parent or a trained instructor, is to facilitate and extend child-initiated learning (Vygotsky, 1978).

According to various researchers, a child's attitude is very important in his or her learning success. For example, if a child is a successful early reader and writer, that child willingly engaged in reading and writing with a spirit of "I can do this." On the other hand, if another child experiences months, or even years

of frustration and failure, it is unlikely he or she can become a successful reader and writer. Often, students like this just give up (Routman, 2003).

Vygotskian theorists emphasized that children need to engage in tasks with which they can be successful with the assistance provided. They also stressed that children need to have strengths identified and built upon by means of individual attention from the teacher.

Teachers Roles. In scaffolding emergent literacy, the adult takes a supporting role by fostering the child's effort to learn, by providing appropriate materials, and by being around to assist as necessary.

The new emergent literacy perspective assumes that a child already knows a great deal about language and literacy when he/she begins learning at school. Even at the age of two or three, a child can understand what written language is and how reading and writing work. Instruction can then build on what the child already knows, and support the child's growth in reading or writing. The role of the teacher in emergent literacy in this case becomes one of supporting self-generated, self-motivated, and self-regulated learning (Emergent Literacy Project, 2005).

Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) asserted that the tutor's or teacher's role is helping children move from joint to independent problem solving. Scaffolding refers to the gradual withdrawal of adult control and support in the process of children's increasing mastery of a given literacy task. It is important that the teacher gradually releases responsibility to the student until the task can be completed independently.

The work of Wood et al. (1976) has shown that successful scaffolders focus children's attention on the task and keep them motivated throughout the session. Teachers divided the task into simpler and more accessible components, directing the child's attention to the essential and other relevant features. The scaffolding tutor demonstrates and models correct performance to students. Helping the task at a proper level of difficulty, avoiding unnecessary frustration, and encouraging children's independent functioning. As Reeve (1987) has shown, teachers' detailed tutoring was determined by children's increasing level of mastery on a given task and their need for external assistance.

Student-Teacher Interaction. As Vygotskian theory addressed, within the ZPD the child is not a mere passive recipient of the adult's teachings, nor is the adult

simply a model of expert, successful behavior. Instead, the adult-child interaction engages in joint problem-solving activity, where knowledge of responsibility for the task is shared. Rather than simply modeling, the adult teacher must first create a level of "intersubjectivity" (Wertsch, 1984, p. 13).

According to Wilhelm et al. (2001), in the student-teacher interaction process, the teacher first models how to use a new strategy and students watch. As this is done, the teacher talks through what the strategy is, when the strategy should be used, and how to go about using it. The next step is for the teacher to engage in the task with the students helping out. The third step is for students to take over the task, with the teacher helping and intervening as needed. Finally, the student independently uses the strategy and the teacher watches.

Table 1 features a model of scaffolding, showing this student-teacher interaction.

Therefore, initially, a maximum amount of teachers' assistance is needed to elevate the student's performance to its highest potential level (ZPD). Gradually, the level of assistance decreases, when the learner becomes capable of more independence. At this point, the teacher "hands over" the responsibility as the performer to the learner,

Table 1. Modes of Scaffolding

Teacher-Regulated	Supportive Joint Practice	Student-Regulated
Reading to student	Read around Reciprocal reading	Student protocols
Read aloud-- Teacher protocols	Teacher modeling-- Explicit instruction Teacher symbolic story representation--Shared reading with teacher Literature circles--Structured guided reading	Small group inquiry groups--Guided reading Independent reading--Student chooses reading material
Teacher chooses material for teaching purposes	Reading material negotiated and matched to student needs	Reading material negotiated and matched to student needs
I DO, YOU WATCH	I DO, YOU HELP; YOU DO, I HELP	YOU DO, I WATCH

Source: Based on Wilhelm, Baker, & Dube, 2001

removing the scaffolds. Now the learner can function independently at the same high level at which he/she was previously able to function only with assistance or scaffolds (Wilhelm et al, 2001).

The independent level implies that students can read alone (ZAD). At the instructional level, those students can read with help, through which they will learn new content and reach their zone of proximal development

(ZPD). During this process, instructional assistance plays a vital role as well as many other factors, such as motivation, background knowledge, students' experience, the vocabulary, the inference load, students' familiarity with the genre, and so forth. This style of teaching can lead to development when students are able to be successful with support (Wilhelm et al., 2001).

Scaffolding in the ESL classroom. Referring to Clegg (1996), "second language learners can no longer be thought of as a group apart from mainstream--they are the mainstream" (p. 13). Language scaffolding is logical in the ESL classroom. Similar to a first-language learner, providing support for a second-language learner is critical.

Gibbons (2002), who has researched methods of teaching ESL using scaffolding, firmly believed scaffolding was necessary for the teacher to implement language learning. She advocated the use of instructional support when concepts and skills were new, and then the gradual removal of support as students gain proficiency, in the same way as scaffolding for first-language-learners in Table 1.

Real teaching challenges are many, such as helping children assimilate successfully and quickly,

78

communicating with the children's parents, assessing how much English learners really understand about what it being taught, making classroom activities meaningful for ESL learners, and so forth. In meeting these teaching challenges, effective teachers initially learn as much as possible about the ESL child's linguistic, cultural, and educational background. For example, they may try to know what is the child's full name and how it is written in his or her home language. They may attempt to learn at least a few words in the child's language, label areas of the classroom in the child's language, or incorporate names of the child's family members into the stories they tell (Smyth, 2003).

To encourage the class's respect for various languages, samples of written script in other languages can be displayed in the classroom. Additionally, copies of familiar books that have been written in other languages can be placed in the reading corner (Soderman et al., 2005).

According to Laturnau (2003), instructional scaffolding techniques in the ESL classroom include using a child's native language to clarify vocabulary, directions, or key concepts to students. Teachers could tape the child's prior knowledge, use visuals and

manipulatives, teach key vocabulary, and adjust their speech. For example, they should face the child and pause more frequently, while paraphrasing and using shorter sentences. Instructors should increase waiting time for children to answer and focus on the child's meaning rather than on grammar.

Another strategy is the use of buddy reading. English-speaking buddies can be paired with ESL students to help them in class, in the lunchroom, and on the playground.

Teachers need to avoid the trap of having low expectations for these children. Like all children, ESL learners always know a great deal more than they are able to share in the classroom.

Summary

The general idea of scaffolding emergent literacy is to assist students at the beginning literacy level in order to help them reach a higher level of competency. Theories of scaffolding emergent literacy are connected closely with children's ZAD and ZPD.

Teachers need to pay attention to making scaffolding successful in classrooms that include ESL students. There are many strategies available, such as modeling activities

or plays, small group scaffolding, and so on. It is vital for teachers to understand these approaches thoroughly.

Through the process of scaffolding, students at the emergent literacy level realize what their deficiencies are, and as they receive support from teachers, adults, and buddies, they embrace their role in this process, and improve their emergent literacy according to their zons of proximal development.

Directed Reading-Teaching Approach

In recent years, a directed reading-teaching approach, Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA), has been developed by Stauffer (1969). It is a system of creating hypotheses first, then reading a selection of text, and then reviewing the hypotheses to encourage students' critical thinking. It has become an essential teaching strategy in teaching English literacy. This review covers DR-TA by first introducing definitions of the teacher-directed approach, directed reading-teaching approach, and DR-TA; then, analyzing the theory of DR-TA by a review of research including the procedure of DR-TA and advantages and limitations of this theory. The last part addresses teaching DR-TA, which includes both group and individualized instruction.

Definitions

DR-TA is a kind of directed reading-teaching approach, which is a teacher-directed pedagogy. Definitions of teacher-directed approach, directed reading-teaching approach, and DR-TA are presented as follows.

Teacher-Directed Approach. In a teacher-directed classroom, it is the teacher who plans, shapes, and guides the whole learning process. The teacher first analyzes course standards and then helps students acquire the knowledge and skills to meet those standards by using a sequence of instructional strategies (Tanner, Bottoms, Feagin, & Bearman, 2003). Rosenshine and Stevens (1984) defined teacher-directed instruction as a succession in which the teacher demonstrates, guides practice, and gives feedback to students.

Directed Reading-Teaching Approach. The directed teaching of reading teaches students how to read according to a series of controlled, behaviorally based lessons, such as in Reading Mastery, and Open Court (Díaz-Rico, 2004). According to Haynes and Jenkins (1986), teacher-directed reading instruction consists of two components: (a) cognitive explanations, which includes explanations and demonstrations of reading strategies and

skills and feedback on reading performance; and

(b) cognitive monitoring, which comprises asking questions

and directing students to read.

Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA). According

to Stauffer (1970), DR-TA is a teacher-guided activity

that improves reading comprehension through helping

students understand how to make predictions as they read.

It leads students to predict until they are able to do it

on their own. The theory of DR-TA will be discussed as

follows.

The Theory of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity

According to Stauffer (1969), reading is a thinking

process. He used an example of a six-year-old boy in a

group-type directed reading thinking activity to explain

this process. At the beginning, the student exclaimed,

"They are going to paint the house!" The picture on the

first page of the story showed two bears dressed like

people, walking toward a house that was rather obviously

in need of paint. Based on this, the student made his

prediction. When the teacher asked him to read the line

that proved his point, he started to skim the page

eagerly. He reached the bottom of the page, seemed

considerably puzzled, and then started reading the page

again--this time more slowly and carefully. At last, he

realized it did not really say that the bears would paint the house, and read the line "the bears will work on the house."

Therefore, student reading is in a direct thinking process. Researchers agreed that reading should be taught as a thinking process. Stauffer (1969) identified two steps. The first step was to believe that reading was a thinking process, and a second step was to believe that people could be trained to read critically and reflectively.

<u>Procedure of Directed Reading-Teaching Approach</u>. Stauffer (1969) theorized the DR-TA procedure including four parts: predicting, rationalizing, reading, and proving. This cycle began from allowing students to ask questions or make predictions using their own words in a non-threatening environment. As the reading continued, questions were answered and predictions were confirmed, revised, or rejected. This cycle continued throughout the whole lesson. To use DR-TA, teachers gave students a text selection and asked them to read the title and a few sample lines of text; they then examined the picture to develop hypotheses about the text. Students generated hypotheses as they read from the text, drawing from their

own experiential background. The figure 6 could delegate this procedure of DR-TA.
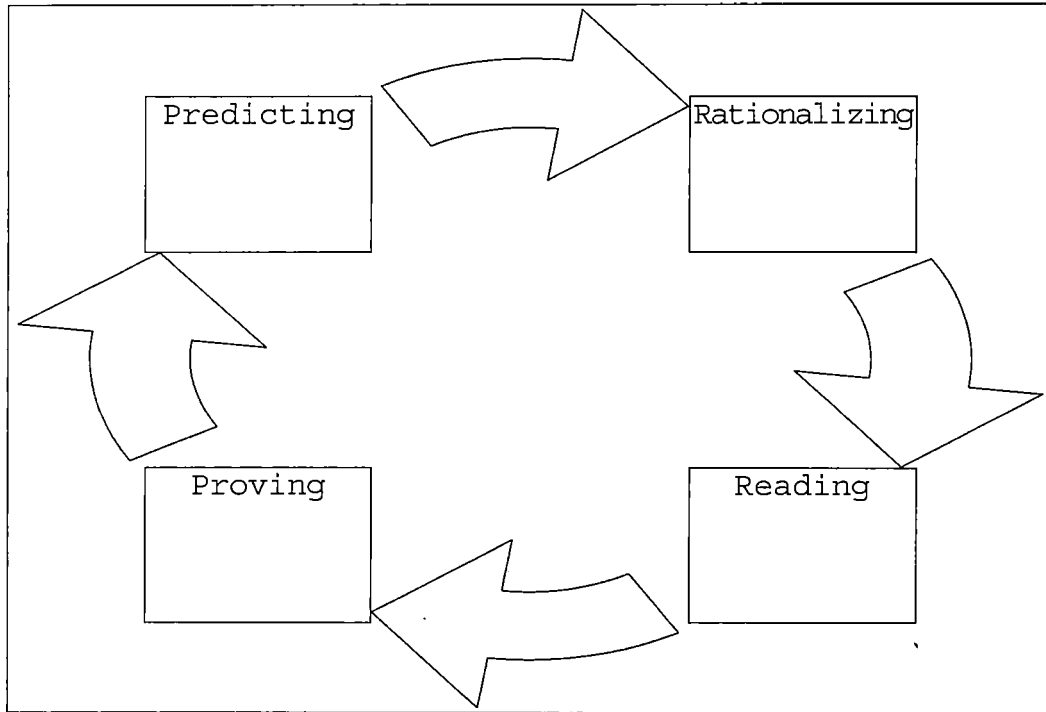
Source: Adapted from Stauffer, R. G. (1975) <u>Directing the reading-thinking process</u>. New York: HarperCollins.

Figure 6. The Directed Reading-Teaching Approach Cycle

Besides the above four-step cycle describing the procedure of DR-TA, other researchers have summarized the steps of DR-TA in other ways. According to Haggard (1988), DR-TA encompasses five steps: (1) identifying purposes for reading, (2) adjusting of rate to purposes and material, (3) observing the reading, (4) developing comprehension,

and (5) fundamental skill development. Reutzel and Cooter (1992) described it as a three-step comprehension cycle, which included (1) sampling the text, (2) making predictions, and (3) sampling the text again to confirm or connect previous predictions.

As Lyn (1993) observed, several substrategies could be used within each step of DR-TA. The first step, prediction, includes the process whereby teachers could model the writing process, use language to experience reading, and use text for re-reading. Other strategies such as co-operative cloze, joint construction of text, and individual writing can be used in the last step.

Variations of Directed Reading-Teaching Approach. This strategy has been used and developed for more than twenty years by many different teachers and researchers, and there were many variations as time passed. According to Richek (1987), there were five variations of DR-TA.

First, in Stauffer's original DR-TA, the teacher led students to think by asking students to identify the information from the story that they used to make predictions. The teacher might ask "why do you think so?" This valuable step brought the thinking process used during reading to the conscious level.

However, when some students were asked, "Why do you think so?" they might stop participating or respond, "I don't know." The second form of the DR-TA was useful in these cases. The teacher asked for predictions without asking for justification. Omitting the justification step speeded up the prediction process and made fewer demands on the student. After doing two or three stories in this fashion, students may develop the confidence necessary for responding to teachers' request for justification.

The third form of the DR-TA was particularly valuable for students who spoke English as a second language (ESL). That is the Directed Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) in which students listen to text instead of reading it. Researchers have found that experience in listening can increase students' facility with language and transfer to reading (Sticht & James, 1984).

A fourth version of the DR-TA is the silent DR-TA (Josel, 1986), which means teachers do not interrupt students' reading. The teacher first marks some stopping points in a selection; then students read it, stop at each point, and make their individual predictions in writing. After reading, each student reviews this record to see if any clues were missed.

Later, Richek (1987) developed a fifth variation called DR-TA Source. In DR-TA Source, the student used two sources: the original text and his/her own background knowledge. After making a prediction, the teacher asked students to stop and identify which part of the prediction was engendered by the text and which was from his/her background knowledge. DR-TA Source is recommended for students who are not active readers. It may be used during the prediction process or after students have read an entire selection using other forms of DR-TA.

DR-TA and its variations can help students become more effective readers. By consciously predicting and confirming as they read, students learn a strategy for reading independently and enthusiastically.

Advantages. DR-TA is readily adaptable to various materials and settings. It is easily used with basal stories and can be adjusted for teaching novels or other longer works. It is also applicable with subject-area text, either as described here or in an adapted form (Haggard, 1985). Haggard (1988) identified advantages of DR-TA, both to students and to teachers.

First, DR-TA increases comprehension through its emphasis on student-generated predictions, speculations, and conclusions which are based on prior knowledge and

experience. DR-TA emphasizes related experience and encourages using prior knowledge during the reading. Thus it has the effect of making the text less difficult and helps students understand new knowledge according to what they already know.

A second advantage of DR-TA is that it establishes and promotes the instructional environment. The DR-TA process comprises students and teacher's background knowledge, goals with objectives, and interpersonal communication. It provides a general sharing of background information and experience as students and teachers move toward the common goal of understanding.

And finally, DR-TA promotes critical thinking. Dewey's (1938) seminal ideas on problem solving, Bruner's (1960) subsequent work with discovery learning, and Suchman's (1961) inquiry training share the essential idea of a critical thinking process. All steps in DR-TA encourage critical thinking and problem solving.

Additionally, according to Almanza (1997), the reason why cooperative learning was not as popular as DR-TA was that teachers tended to teach the way they were taught; cooperate learning did not motivate students to read as did DR-TA. Conversely, DR-TA, as a teaching strategy, had the advantage of motivating students to read. According to

Díaz-Rico (2004), DR-TA could also assist students to set their own purposes for reading, check students' prior knowledge, use preteaching concepts if necessary, and encourage students to predict content using cues. Teachers help students to test their predictions, by locating and discussing bases for conclusion.

Difficulties. Some teachers who attempt to use these strategies may encounter difficulties getting students to respond. When students are asked to make a prediction about what might happen next in a story, some may shrug or mumble "I don't know." Some students may fear of taking a risk or they simply may not understand the task (Johnston, 1993). According to Díaz-Rico (2004), DR-TA is "not well suited to new or unfamiliar material" (p. 135).

Although difficulties are many, some ideas may be useful to increase children's participation in DR-TA. DR-TA has listed several methods to resolve these difficulties: (1) Modeling for students, (2) providing choices, (3) using predictable books, (4) maintaining neutrality, (5) inviting revision, and (6) encouraging students, to write and work together.

Teaching Directed Reading-Teaching Approach

According to Stauffer's (1969) research, DR-TA could be implemented in groups and individually. However, there

are big differences between these two, including their key
ideas, teachers' role, and students' role. Their details
will be explored as follows.

Group Instruction in Directed Reading-Teaching
Approach. Group Directed Reading-Thinking Activity has two
distinguishing features: First, all members of a group
read with about the same competence and second, all read
the same material at the same time (Stauffer, 1970).
Students are grouped for instruction on the basis of their
reading level; group size varies according to situations;
purposes for reading are declared by the pupils; answers
found are reported to and discussed with the group, which
can provide pedagogical and intellectual cooperation. In
the action of a group, students acquire sound intellectual
and emotional dispositions and the result is the
increasing ease, economy, and efficiency of reading. Three
essentials of directed reading-thinking instruction are
the teacher, the group, and the material.

Teachers' Roles in Group Directed Reading-Teaching
Approach. According to Stauffer (1970), the role of the
teacher in group instruction is agitator. Teachers ask
students questions again and again, "What do you think?"
and "Why do you think so?" These directives could stir the
minds of children. Students express their opinions, then

listen to the ideas voiced by others in the group; after that they read to see who in the group is right or wrong, or partially right or partially wrong, and why.

As Polya (1948) argued, the task of the teacher is not easy. On one hand, the teacher must "avoid being the instrument of authoritarian indoctrination" (Stauffer, 1969, p. 26); the group is never intimidated by the tyranny of a right teacher answer; he/she cannot help too much in the DR-TA classroom where the main actors are the students. On the other hand, if the teacher leaves students alone without any help or insufficient help, the students may not make progress. Therefore, the teacher should help, but not too much and not too little.

According to Díaz-Rico and Weed (2002), in the prediction process, teachers guided students until they could do it on their own, and asked students to make predictions and then read the text to confirm their ideas. The teachers' role was to help students generate correct ideas. The teacher here should observe the reading. Stauffer (1969) emphasized that reading was the "big moment" in DR-TA, but it was also the teacher's best opportunity to see how the pupils perform. The teacher should be at hand to watch what the students do, so that students can present their role in the reading process

better--such as how they are holding their books, whether they move their heads, whether there is any lip movement, finger pointing, head nodding, and so on.

Students' Roles in Group Directed Reading-Teaching Approach. With such teaching, the student will not simply read to find an answer that can satisfy the teacher, and fear to answer incorrectly and be criticized by the teacher. In turn, if they fail to find an answer, the teacher is emotionally free from the responsibility of always having to give the correct answer. The opportunity lies with the students, the group, and the text.

All students of the group are involved in predicting, rationalizing, reading, and proving. In the group, the students read and write; it is the group that demands that individual predictions be acknowledged. The group functions as auditors, authorized to examine the evidence, verify the questions and answers, and state the results.

The group is made up of individual students. The total backgrounds of the individuals comprise the sum of their experiences, intellects, language facility, interests, and so on. Stauffer (1969) observed, if one of the group members predicted successfully according to his/her previous experience, the other members seemed happy on the student's behalf. At the same time, their

experiences were being extended, and their knowledge was refined.

Therefore, directing a reading-thinking activity is best accomplished in the dynamics of a group situation (Stauffer, 1969). Students can learn, not only from the DR-TA process, but also from other group members.

Individualized Instruction in Directed Reading-Teaching Approach. Different from the students' participation in group DR-TA, the key ideas of DR-TA in individualized circumstances are self-selection, teacher pacing, and sharing. Its strength is in the individual's use of his/her experience and knowledge, the noting of clues, declaring of hypotheses, weighing of evidence, and drawing of conclusions.

Teachers Roles in Individualized Directed Reading-Teaching Approach. Most essential to the successful use of individualized instruction is the teachers' role, or teachers' attitude. In individualized DR-TA, teachers must understand that students have the freedom to select material in which they are interested. Teachers should know that students will enjoy reading what they select themselves, and interests vary (Stauffer, 1969).

Good teaching in individualized DR-TA increases student differences. Teachers should know students are different even before they come to school. Some students learn at a faster rate than others. Intra-student variance can be greater than inter-student differences. In fact, a basic principle of individual instruction and of pacing is to adjust teachers' expectancy in keeping with the best estimate of students capacity (Stauffer, 1969).

The teacher is constantly available to give help in terms of comprehension and vocabulary. The teacher directs each child to connect reading materials with his/her interests and skills. Teachers also help students to develop reading purposes as well as communication skills (Stauffer, 1969).

The application of individualized DR-TA must meet three conditions. First, teachers should not only give some kind of focus to students, but also provide enough freedom for students to select data and information; and third, they offer the intellectual freedom to process the data so as to satisfy their cognitive needs (Stauffer, 1970). The motivation for this kind of reading is cognitive and personal: the desire to close the gap between what the child thought might be the answer and the right answer (Stauffer, 1970).

Students' Roles in Individualized Directed

Reading-Teaching Approach. In individualized DR-TA, all

the students are directed to select the materials they

need by examining their likes or interests or tastes. The

self-selection practice is a basic tenet of this approach,

and it makes multivariate materials essential. To make

selections, the student must first have determined what

he/she reads. The student must select material that he/she

can understand and that gives him/her the best answers

(Stauffer, 1970). When students are finished choosing,

they can focus on the reading-thinking process.

Another aspect that students do in individualized

DR-TA is sharing, which is done in a number of spontaneous

ways. For example, a student may have a page in a book

that he/she wants to read to the class. Sharing time is

often scheduled either once a week or twice in 3 weeks

(Stauffer, 1970). If a student wants to share something

with the class and wants the class to give its undivided

attention, he/she should prepare, plan, and rehearse

his/her presentation. Thought must be given to personnel;

the student should notify the teacher if he/she is going

to be sharing alone or needs help. Although sharing is an

additional part of the individualized DR-TA, it is a

useful part, which can not only increase students'

understanding of the reading, but also increase students'
interpersonal abilities.

In conclusion, both procedures--the group-type DR-TA
and individualized DR-TA--have a rightful place in a sound
reading program. In the group situation each member of the
group deals with the same material at the same time,
whereas in the individualized activity each pupil may be
reading a different kind of material.

<u>Summary</u>

The general idea of directed reading-thinking
activity (DR-TA) is to boost reading comprehension by
helping students understand how proficient readers make
prediction as they read. In theory, DR-TA is a four-step
cycle of predicting, rationalizing, reading, and proving.
DR-TA has many advantages, such as the possibility of
promoting students' reading comprehension, critical
thinking, and instructional environment. Since it has been
developed for more than 20 years, some variations exist
which include DLTA, silent DR-TA, and DR-TA Source.
However, its difficulties are still evident; for instance,
it is not well suited to new or unfamiliar material.

For pedagogical implication, teachers need to pay
attention to how to teach DR-TA in groups and
individually. There are many strategies such as modeling

activities, small group scaffolding, and so on. It is vital for teachers to thoroughly understand DR-TA approaches and practices.

Students benefit most from DR-TA. Through the process of DR-TA, students realize their roles and what they should do during group and individualized DR-TA.

CHAPTER THREE

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Key Concepts of Controlled and Supported
Mediational Methods and Activities
with the Goal of Free Reading

Reading is one of the most important basic skills

that English learners need. However, it is not easy to

enhance reading comprehension and shorten reading time.

Moreover, how to motivate reading and help students to

find the best reading methods are always key topics for

educators and researchers.

According to various research, students can improve

their reading ability through in and out-of-class training

and motivation; by reading in pairs or in small groups;

and through teachers' guidance.

In-class reading training is vital, because most of

the time EFL students are learning English in a classroom

environment. What teachers teach in class is directly

related to students' language development. So teachers

need to implement effective reading methods for students.

The Interactive approach to reading can be used with

other reading methods, because it connects phonics

(bottom-up model) and whole language (top-down model), and

is the basis for other reading strategies.

Directed reading-thinking activity is typical in class reading activity; it can be done in groups or individually. It motivates and improves students' reading using a four-step reading cycle.

Experiential activities, for example, reading games/plays, field trips, and guest speakers, can be done either in class or outside of class. The essence of an experiential approach is in experiencing or doing; students not only to remember, but also understand the reading material.

Reading in pairs is an effective way to motivate students' reading. Buddy reading/cross-age peer reading should be done in pairs of two children who are in different age/grade levels, but who read together. Many case studies show that during this process, both tutors (older children) and tutees (younger children) improve their reading ability.

Teachers' guidance cannot be omitted in any of these reading methods. Many teaching mediations are possible, such as directed teaching, scaffolding, guided practice, and so on. In scaffolding, for example, teachers take a supporting role by fostering the child's efforts to learn, by providing appropriate materials, and by being around to assist as necessary. As Vygotskian theory addressed, the

100

child is not a mere passive recipient of the adult's

teaching, nor is the adult simply a model or expert.

Instead, the student and the teacher interact together in

the reading process, and finally reach the proximal level

of the student's development (ZPD).

The goal of these methods is to improve free or

independent reading. In the process of growing, students

need to move from teacher control to the ability to work

by themselves, and learn skills to solve problems

independently.

The Theoretical Framework

The key concepts discussed in Chapter Two are

integrated as a model that illustrates the controlled and

supported mediational methods and activities with the goal

of free reading (see Figure 7).

Interactive Approach to Text Processing

The interactive approach is a natural part of text

processing. The interactive approach, based on bottom-up

and top-down approaches to reading, could combined with

any other reading strategies, because it is the basis of

all reading strategies. Students could improve phonics and

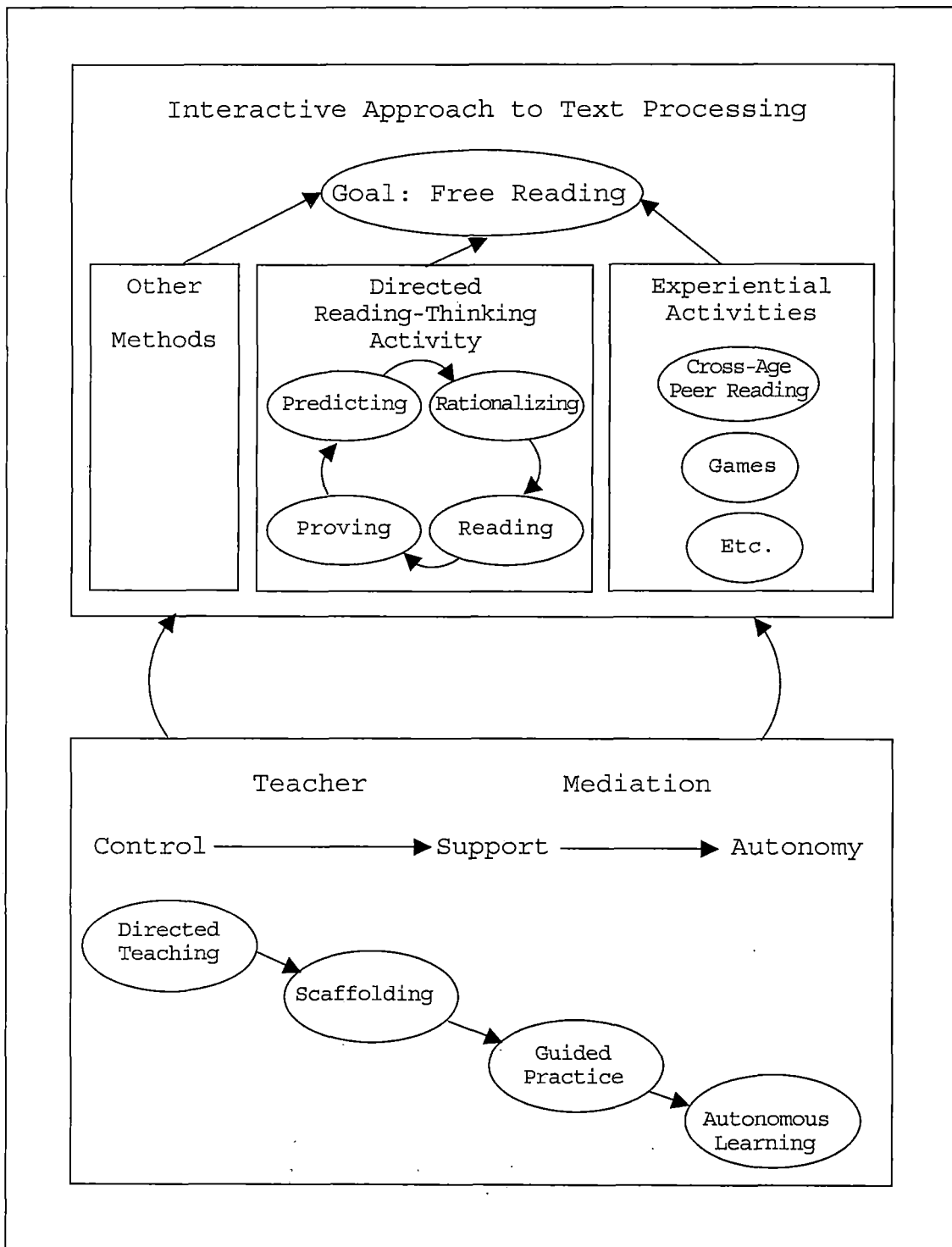whole language skills from interactive approach, which

Figure 7. Model of Controlled and Supported Mediational
Methods and Activities with the Goal of Free Reading

includes experiential activity, DR-TA, and other reading methods.

Free Reading. Figure 7 shows clearly that free reading is the center of this model, and represents the core concept. The goal of this project is to introduce some reading strategies that can improve readers' individual reading ability, help them to take an interest in reading, and be able to read under teachers' guidance.

These five key concepts can all motivate free reading with different functions. The interactive approach improves the individual's reading ability by combining bottom-up and top-down approaches; experiential activities are good for arousing students' own experience in or before the reading process, then motivating them to read easily; cross-age peer reading in which two children of different age children help each other to read can improve individuals' free reading; the teacher's scaffolding cannot be omitted in improving free reading; and finally, directed reading-thinking activity can motivate free reading from a four-step reading cycle.

Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA). DR-TA includes a four-step reading cycle, which can improve students' free reading skills. The predicting-rationalizing-reading-proving cycle provides

students the opportunity to predict using their experience and imaginations, then read the article to prove their predictions. Through this way, it deepens students' understanding and enhances their reading.

Experiential Activities. Games, plays, fieldtrips, inviting guest speakers and so on, are experiential activities for motivating young children's individual reading. It is a direct way to give students first-hand experience, and then help their reading.

There are many other reading methods that motivate students' free reading. From DR-TA to experiential activities, reading is changing from teacher control to teacher support to learner autonomy.

Teacher Mediation

Teacher mediation means teachers' guidance. In the early stage of learning English reading, it is especially important, because young children cannot complete reading tasks by themselves. Teachers need to provide modeling and help until they can do it independently.

Scaffolding. Teachers should use scaffolding, as a mediational strategy to model and help students when they teach students other reading strategies. Usually, teachers model first, students follow teachers' modeling next, and

then teachers provide help and directions; finally, students can do it independently.

Other Teacher Mediations. The other teacher mediations mentioned in Figure 7 go from control to support to autonomy. For example, directed teaching is a method of teacher control; guided teaching is a kind of teacher support; and autonomous learning belongs to student self-management. Teachers can provide modeling and helping when students use any reading strategy to read.

Summary

The model of controlled and supported mediational methods and activities with the goal of free reading is a practical and easy-to-understand model for educators and teachers to use. By doing so, they can develop improved teaching methods based on practicable models for the benefit of students.

This chapter provides the theoretical framework to explain how the five key concepts connect and interact with each other. This theoretical model provides EFL teachers with a clear framework for promoting students' free reading through interactive approaches which include experiential activity, DR-TA, and cross-age peer reading.

CHAPTER FOUR

CURRICULUM DESIGN

Introduction

A curriculum unit is designed based on the review of literature in Chapter Two and the theoretical framework in Chapter Three. The unit plan is designed for Chinese EFL students from kindergarten to third grades to promote their English reading comprehension. All content is related to Chinese culture, such as the Chinese family; Chinese inventions; Han nationality; the Chinese national symbol, the panda; and Chinese folk songs. All classes are taught by Chinese EFL teachers.

Sequence of the Unit Plan

In Chinese elementary schools each class is forty-five minutes long; therefore, the time frame of each lesson plan in this project is designed in forty-five minute blocks. Each lesson involves three objectives: the content objective, the learning-strategy objective, and the language objective. Each objective corresponds to one task chain or series of activities. In the content objective, students will be able to understand the topic of the lesson; the learning-strategy objective implies the

106

teaching of a reading strategy, and the language objective focuses on language skills that students will develop.

Moreover, warm-up sheets, focus sheets, work sheets, and assessment sheets are included in the unit plan. The warm-up sheet can arouse students' interest at the beginning of the class. The topic texts are printed on the focus sheets; they will be passed out before the instructor teaches students how to use learning-strategy objectives to read. Work sheets are used for composition, reading comprehension, and group work. Students are required to accomplish tasks on work sheets by themselves or working with their partners or in groups. At the end of the class, assessment sheets are used to evaluate what students have learned from the lesson.

Content of the Unit Plan

The unit plan contains five lessons, which are based on the principles of Chapter Two and Three. In all the lessons, students are asked to apply a keyword as a learning-strategy objective in reading topic texts. These learning strategies include an interactive approach to reading, experiential activities, cross-age peer reading, scaffolding and directed reading-thinking activities

(DR-TA). The instructional unit is arranged from the easiest to the most difficult lesson (see Table 2).

Table 2. Interrelationship Between Key Concepts and Lesson Plans

Key Concepts	Lesson One	Lesson Two	Lesson Three	Lesson Four	Lesson Five
Interactive Approach to Reading					✓
Experiential Activities that Motivate Free Reading	✓				
Cross-Age Peer Reading			✓		
Scaffolding Emergent Literacy				✓	
Directed Reading-Teaching Approach		✓			

In Lesson One, students will learn to use experiential activity (the learning-strategy objective) to motivate their reading as they draw a picture of their own family according to their experience. The content objective is to have students learn a text about Chinese families. For the language objective, students will be able to study together and learn from each other through

discussion in English. In the end, they need to write down their discussion results on Work Sheet 1-4.

In Lesson Two, the learning-strategy objective is to have students use directed reading-thinking activity (DR-TA) to improve their reading. They need to predict the content of the reading material first, then justify their prediction. After that, they begin to read the article, and confirm or disconfirm their prediction. The content objective is to learn about Chinese inventions. For the language objective, students will study together and discuss questions on Work Sheet 2-3. In the end, they need to write a short paragraph to express their opinions about the article.

In Lesson Three, the content objective is that students will be able to learn about the Han nationality. The learning-strategy objective is reading with cross-age peer readers in order to improve each other's reading. The language objective is that students will be able to prepare a presentation of their reading among the pairs of peer readers and present it to the whole class.

During Lesson Four, students learn about pandas as the content objective. The learning-strategy objective is using small-group scaffolding. In this strategy, students work on Work Sheet 4-3 about reading comprehension, and in

Work Sheet 4-4 students learn extensive information about pandas, and then make comparisons between pandas and dogs in small groups mediated by teachers' scaffolding. For the language objective, each group of students will make a presentation in class.

The content objective of Lesson Five is that students will read the lyrics of the folk song "Small Swallow." They will use the interactive approach to learn the surface meaning including the words and phonics of the song; they will also discuss the deep meaning of the song. In the language objective, students try to sing the song following the teacher.

This chapter has expounded how the five reading key concepts be used to design curriculum and the unit plan. In the next chapter, the assessment of the unit will be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

UNIT ASSESSMENT PLAN

Introduction

Assessment is a process for evaluating students' learning performance. Types of assessments are varied, including standard assessment, teacher- and student-created rubrics, portfolio assessment, teacher observation, and so on. Assessment in this project is simple and short, because it is designed for K-3 Chinese students. Descriptions of the assessment used in the five instructional plans will be discussed in this chapter.

Formative and summative assessment, peer-response and group evaluation assessment, and teacher observation are used in this project to evaluate students' performance. Each of them will be introduced in the following sections.

Types of Assessment in the Instructional Unit

Formative Assessment

The function of formative assessment is to evaluate students' performance on each task of the lesson, make sure that students are on track, and provide students helpful feedback during the process of each activity. There are three task chains in each lesson, so each

instructional plan contains three formative assessments and one summative assessment.

For example, the formative assessment of the first task chain in Lesson One is the teacher's walking around to see if all students are on track with the learning-strategy objective--drawing a picture of their own families according to their own experiences. During Task Chain II, the instructor has to make sure each student understands the content of the article and enjoys learning all the things about the Chinese family. During Task Chain III, the instructor encourages students to discuss the content in groups.

To sum up, during formative assessment, teachers need to teach the lesson, discover students' learning problems, and give them immediate help. If teachers find students do not understand a question or have some problems in learning, they need to go back to the task chain and focus on students' weakness. If students can answer the questions appropriately, the teacher should encourage them and keep going to the next task chain.

Summative Assessment

The purpose of summative assessment is to examine what students have learned by the end of the lesson. Using summative assessment of Lesson Four as an example, a

comprehension test is provided for students in the end of this lesson. In Lesson 5, summative assessment requires students to sing the song fluently. After this assessment, teachers can ascertain how much students have learned from this lesson and how well students understand the reading material. Summative assessment provides grades and rubrics for teachers, students, and parents' reference, in which 90-100 stands for "excellent," 80-90 stands for "good," 70-80 means a student needs improvement, and 60-70 means there is a need to study harder. Grades below 60 means the student does not meet the minimum point, so teachers should give extra encouragement and pay more individual attention to the student.

Using a Peer Response or Group Evaluation
 Assessment

Because cross-age peer reading and small group scaffolding are learning-strategy objectives in Lesson Three and Lesson Four, a peer-response assessment and a group evaluation assessment must be included in these two lessons. Assessment Sheet 3-5 serves as a peer-response assessment. The purpose of this work sheet is to give students a chance to learn how to assess for their partners' performances in cross-age peer reading, including their attitudes during reading: Did they help

their partner in the process? Did they improve? Assessment 4-5 is the group evaluation assessment. Using this assessment, teachers could ascertain students' performance in group work through their group members' evaluations.

Teacher Observation and Evaluation

All five lessons include teacher observation and evaluation. It is important for a teacher to walk around to observe students' performance and involvement in group work. When students interact and communicate in English, teachers can observe and record how the group works and how students use English, and teachers can give students help immediately. This is particularly vital in the EFL learning environment, because students tend to speak in their first language. Teacher observation and evaluation could increase the chance that they will speak English and increase their confidence.

All types of assessments are designed to help students to evaluate themselves and achieve academic success. Using assessment, teachers can document students' levels of success and adjust their teaching methods accordingly.

Conclusion

This project proposes instruction that integrates an interactive approach to reading, experiential activities that motivate free reading, cross-age peers in English reading, teachers' scaffolding, and directed reading-teaching approach. Based on the key concepts of reading above, it builds the model of Controlled and Supported Mediational Methods and Activities with the Goal of Free Reading. Moreover, how to use these concepts to design curriculum and unit plan are presented in this project. It is hoped that this project can serve as an EFL teaching reference and gives Chinese EFL teachers some insights into the teaching of English reading in a Chinese cultural and language environment. The hope is that all EFL students can achieve greater academic success in learning English as teachers incorporate these ideas into their curricula and instruction.

APPENDIX

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN - CHINESE CULTURE

List of Instruction Plans

Instructional Plan One
The Chinese Family

Teaching Level: Early intermediate, K-3 EFL students

Time Frame: 45 minutes

Objectives:
  Learning-Strategy Goal: Students will use experiential
                   activities to motivate their reading
  Content Goal: Students will read the article "Chinese
                   Families"
  Language Goal: Students will write a short paragraph to
                   compare the differences between the
                   article and their own families

TESOL Standards:
  Goal 1: To use English to communicate in social
         settings
  Standard 2: Students will interact in, through, and with
            spoken and written English for personal
            expression and enjoyment

Materials:
  Warm-up Sheet 1-1: What Does Your Family Look Like?
  Work Sheet 1-2: Draw Your Own Families

  Focus Sheet 1-3: Chinese Families
  Work Sheet 1-4: Write a Paragraph

  Assessment Sheet 1-5

Warm-up:
  The instructor hands out Warm-up Sheet 1-1 and asks
  students to divide into groups of three. The instructor
  asks each group to think about and discuss what their
  own family looks like. During the discussion, the
  instructor encourages students to express their ideas
  actively.

Task Chain I: Drawing students' own families
  1. The instructor passes out Work Sheet 1-2 and asks
     students to draw something they are familiar with
     according to the questions.

2. After finishing, the instructor pairs students and asks them to discuss their drawings with their partners.
3. The instructor walks around among groups to make sure that students talk in English extensively.

Task Chain II: Reading the article "Chinese Families"
1. The instructor passes out Focus Sheet 1-3.
2. The instructor asks students to read the article "Chinese Families" independently.
3. After reading, the instructor asks students, "Do you have any question about this article?" Then the instructor helps them solve problems.
4. The instructor pairs students together and lets them discuss the topic of Chinese families with each other according to the content of Focus Sheet 1-3.
5. After that, the instructor encourages students to present their opinions individually.

Task Chain III: Writing a short paragraph to compare the differences before the article and their own families
1. The instructor pairs students together.
2. The students in pairs discuss the similarity and differences between the article and their own families together.
3. The teacher walks around and makes sure that everyone is on track.
4. After students finish discussing, the instructor passed out the Work Sheet 1-4 to students. Students write a paragraph to summarize the differences of the article and their own families.

Final Assessment:
Formative:
The instructor pays attention to students' performance, helps, and encourages them immediately. During Task Chain I, the instructor walks around to see if all students are on track. During Task Chain II, the instructor has to make sure each student understands the content of the article and enjoys learning all the things about Chinese family. During Task Chain III, the instructor encourages students to discuss within groups.

<u>Summative</u>:
Students will be able to understand clearly their reading. The teacher will grade according to Assessment Sheet 1-5 (100 points).

<u>Scores</u>	<u>Representative</u>
90-100	Excellent
80	Good job
70	Needs improvements
60	Study harder

Warm-up Sheet 1-1
What Does Your Family Look Like?

As you look at the pictures below, please think about these questions: What does your family look like? How many family members are there? Do you often get together? Discuss it with your group members.
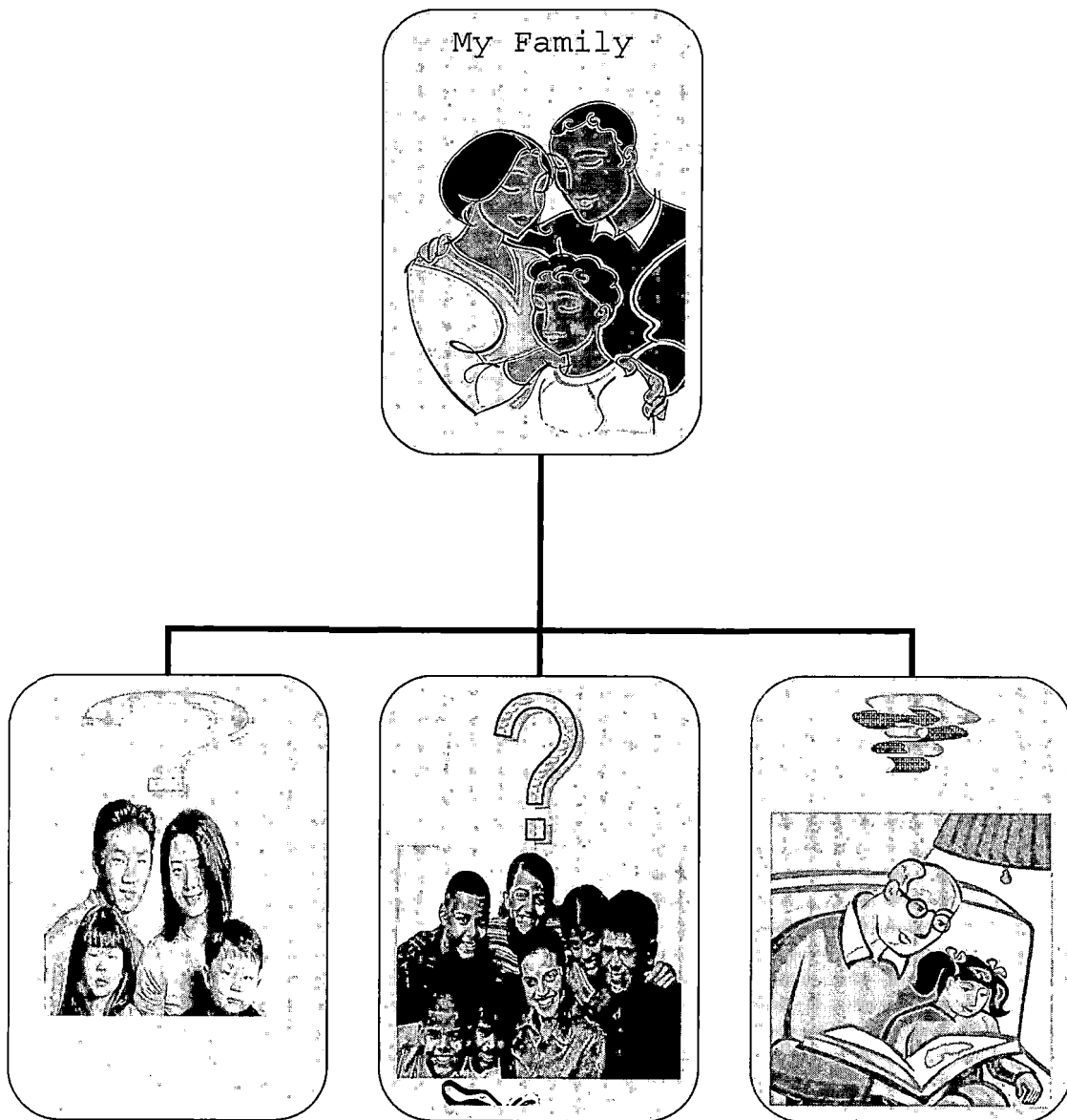
Work Sheet 1-2
Draw Your Own Family

According to the following questions, please draw a picture of your own family below.

1. How many people are in your family? Do you have any siblings?

2. Do you have extended families, such as grandparents, uncle, aunt? Do you often get together?

3. Do you like your family? Please draw a picture to express your feeling of family.
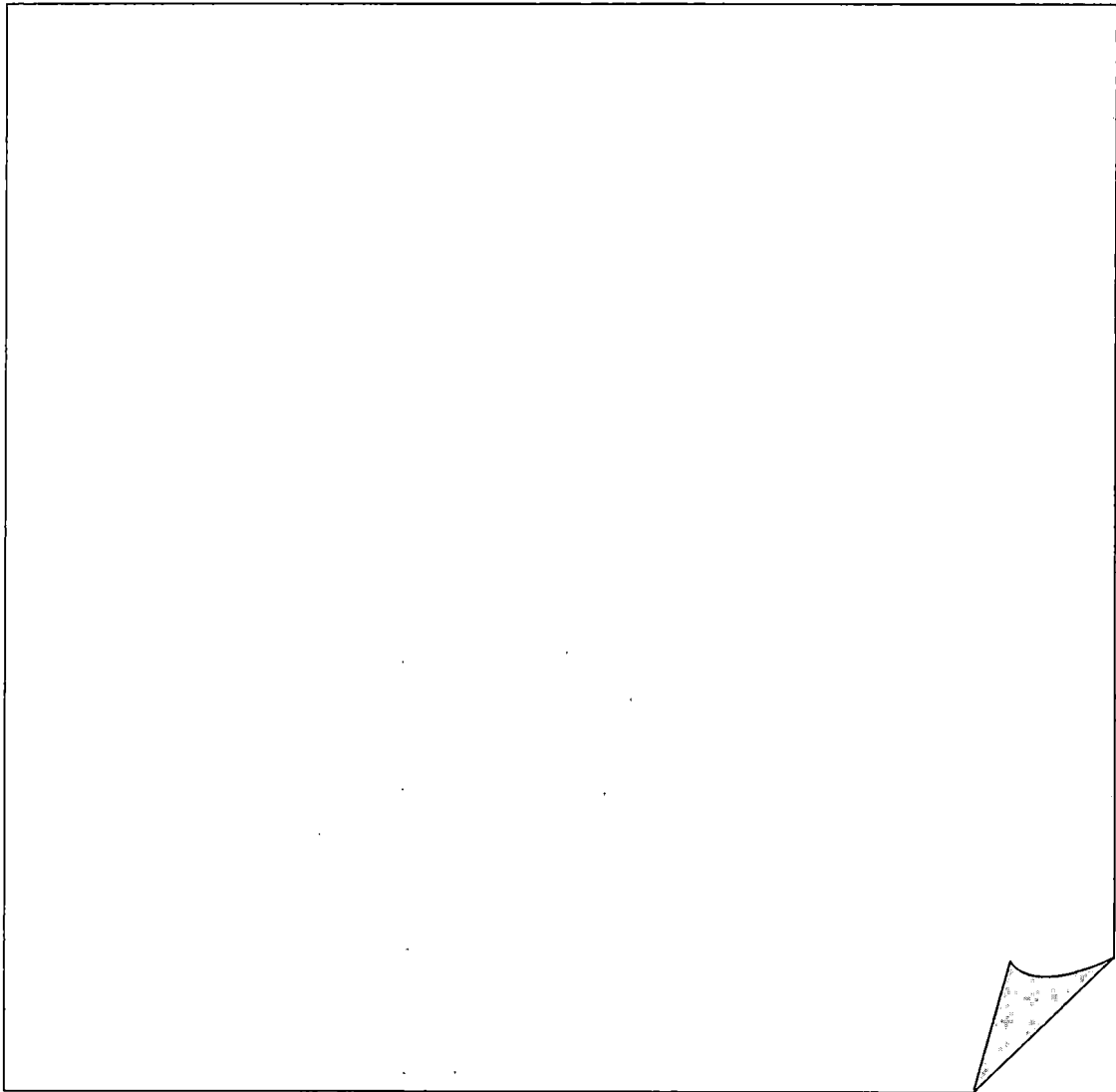
In the past, each Chinese family had a "head," who had
absolute authority at home, and had the final say in
family affairs. But now in most Chinese families, the
husband and wife, or a couple with other family members,
work out together the household plans, and decide family
affairs through consultation. Moreover, family members
share the housework, making the division of labor at home
more reasonable; and the husband and wife support each
other's work.

The Chinese people have the tradition of respecting the
old and loving the young. Though many young couples do not
live with their parents, they maintain close contact with
them. Grown-up children have the duty to support and help
their parents. The Chinese people attach great importance
to relations between family members and relatives, and
cherish their parents, children, brothers and sister,
uncles, aunts and other relatives.

Profound changes have taken place in the people's
viewpoints on marriage, childbearing and the family. Late
marriage, late childbearing, and fewer but healthier
babies are the accepted norms of the most people in China.
Now the people have a common understanding that there is
no difference between a son or a daughter.

123

It has become a custom to set up a small happy, harmonious family, and pursue a scientific and civilized lifestyle. Meanwhile, family planning has helped Chinese women get rid of the burden of frequent childbearing and the heavy family burdens after marriage, thus raising women's status and improving the health of both mothers and children.

Source: http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/china/
people.htm#THE%20FAMILY

Work Sheet 1-4
Writing a Paragraph

Please discuss in pairs about the similarity and difficulties between the article and your own family. Then write a paragraph about your opinion of the differences between the article and your own family.

_____

_____

_____

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Assessment Sheet 1-5

Student's Name_____   Date _____

Category	Comments	Scores
Content is logical		/30
Sentences are well structured		/30
The right words are used		/30
Effort is cooperative		/10
Total		/100

Instructional Plan Two
Four Inventions of China

Teaching Level: Early intermediate, K-3 EFL students

Time Frame: 45 minutes

Objectives:
  Learning-Strategy Goal: Students will use Directed
                    Reading-Thinking Activity to improve
                    their reading.
  Content Goal: Students will learn about Four Chinese
                    Inventions
  Language Goal: Students will write down an opinion of
                    the story

TESOL Standards:
  Goal 1: To use English to communicate in social
          settings
  Standard 3: Students will use learning strategies to
          extend their communicative competence

Materials:
  Warm-up Sheet 2-1: How Much Do You Know about Inventions
                    in the World?
  Focus Sheet 2-2: Four Chinese Inventions
  Work Sheet 2-3: The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity
             (DR-TA) Cycle
  Work Sheet 2-4: Writing Practice
  Assessment Sheet 2-5

Warm-up:
  The instructor hands out Warm-up Sheet 1-1 and asks
  students to divide into groups of three. The instructor
  asks each group to think about and discuss what they
  know about the inventions in the world. During the
  discussion, the instructor encourages students to
  express their ideas actively.

Task Chain I: The DR-TA cycle
  1. The instructor passes out Focus Sheet 2-2 and Work
     Sheet 2-3.
  2. The instructor asks students to predict Chinese
     inventions first, and then write them down on Work
     Sheet 2-3.
  3. The instructor asks students to rationalize their
     prediction by just reading the pictures of Focus

Sheet 2-2, then writing their reasons on Work Sheet
2-3.
4. After students finish reading, the instructor
   explains the whole article to students, and asks them
   if they have further questions.
5. The instructor guides students to talk more and
   encourages them to express their opinions.

Task Chain II: Reading the article "Four Chinese
Inventions"
1. The instructor asks students read the article "Four
   Chinese Inventions." Students check again whether
   there are differences between the reading material
   and their predictions.
2. The instructor asks students to discuss them with
   their group members.
3. The instructor walks around each group and encourages
   students to express their opinions actively.
4. The instructor reminds students to finish Work Sheet
   2-3.
5. The instructor invites some students to present their
   conclusions on the stage.

Task Chain III: Writing a short paragraph
1. The instructor hands out Work Sheet 2-4.
2. The instructor asks students to write a short
   paragraph to express their opinions about this
   article on Work Sheet 2-4.

Final Assessment:
  Formative:
     The instructor pays attention to students' performance
     to help and encourages them immediately. During Task
     Chain I, the instructor makes sure each student
     understands how to use the DR-TA cycle to help their
     reading. During Task Chain II, the instructor walks
     around each group and helps each other read the
     article. During Task Chain III, the instructor needs
     to pay attention to see if students get the idea to
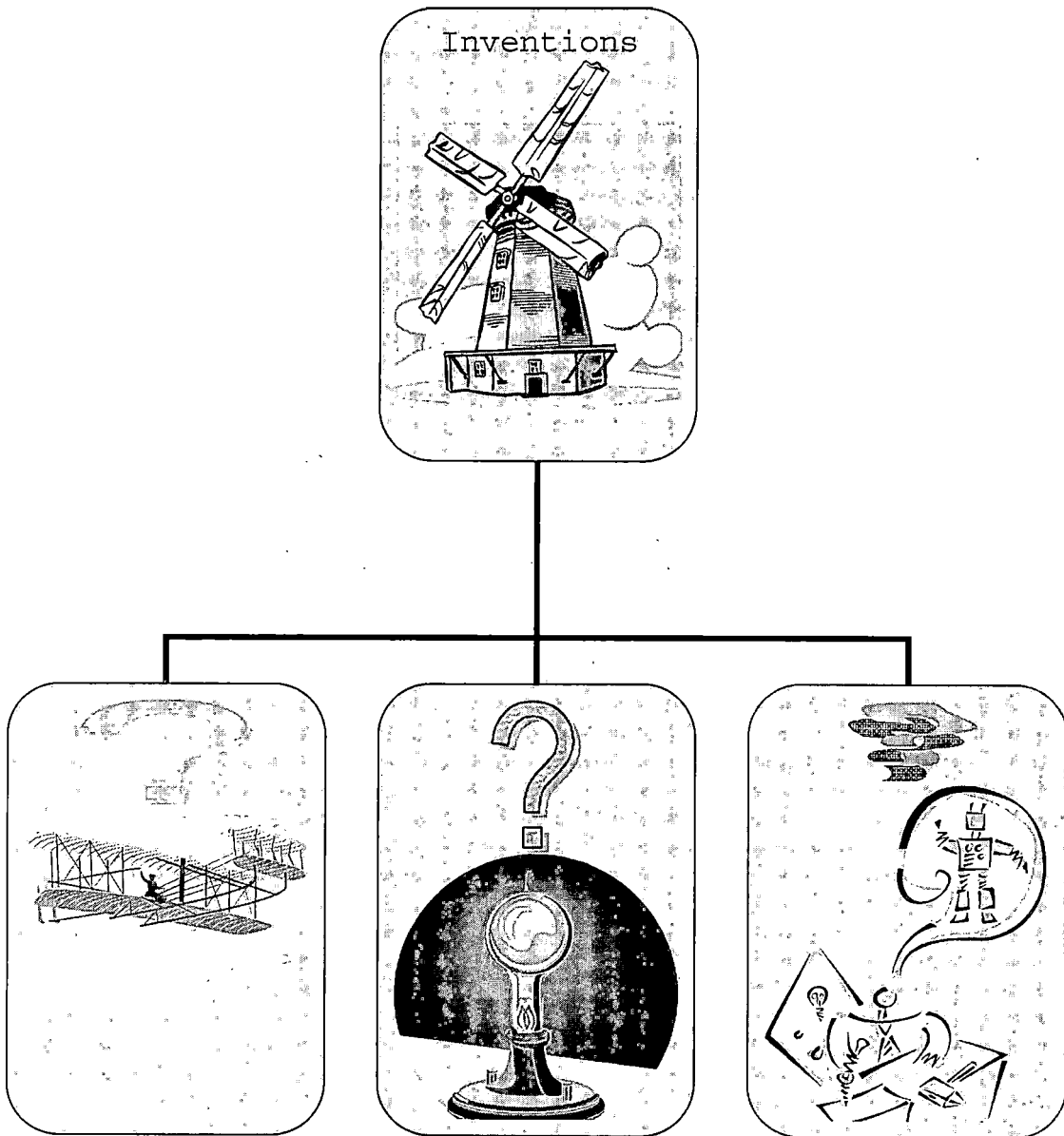   write a short paragraph.

Summative:
   Students will be able to understand the article. The
   teacher grades according to Assessment Sheet 3-5 (100
   points).

Scores	Representative
90-100	Excellent
80	Good job
70	Needs improvements
60	Needs much improvements

Warm-up Sheet 2-1
## What Much Do You Know about Inventions in the World?

As you look at the pictures below, please think about these questions: How many inventions do you know in the world? What are they? Where were they invented? Discuss these with your group members.

Papermaking, gunpowder, printing, and the compass are four ancient inventions by Chinese people that have had a huge impact on the entire world.
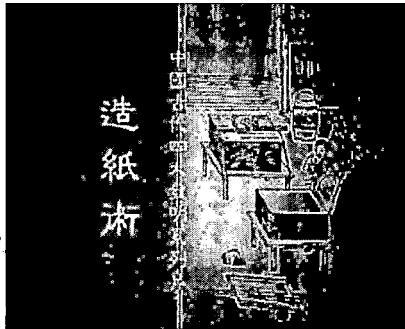
Paper Making
The invention of paper greatly contributed to the spread and development of civilization. Before the invention of paper, bones, tortoise shells, and bamboo slips were all used as writing surfaces, but as Chinese civilization developed they proved themselves unsuitable because of their bulk and weight. Hemp fiber and silk were used to make paper but the quality was far from satisfactory. Besides, these two materials could be better used for other purposes so it was not practical to make paper from them.

Xue fu wu che is a Chinese idiom describing a learned man. The story behind it concerns a scholar named Hui Shi who lived during the Warring States Period. He needed five carts to carry his books when he traveled around teaching. Books at that time were made of wood or bamboo slips so they were heavy and occupied a lot of space. Reading at the time needed not only brainwork but also physical strength.

In 105 A.D. Cai Lun, a eunuch during the Eastern Han Dynasty, invented paper from worn fishnet, barks and cloth. These raw materials could be easily found at a much lower cost so large quantities of paper could be produced.

The technique of paper making was exported to Korea in 384 A.D. A Korean Monk then took this skill with him to Japan in 610 A.D.

During a war between the Tang Dynasty and the Arab Empire, the Arabs captured some Tang soldiers and paper making workers. Thus, a paper factory was set up by the Arabs.

In the 11th Century the skill was carried to India when Chinese monks journeyed there in search of Buddhist sutras.

Europe was set up in Spain. In the latter half of the 16th century, this skill was brought to America. By the 19th century, when paper factories were set up in Australia, paper making had spread to the whole world.
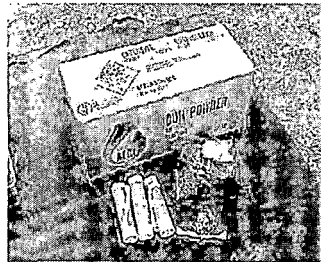
Gunpowder

In Chinese, gunpowder is called huo yao, meaning flaming medicine. Unlike paper and printing, the birth of gunpowder was quite accidental. It was first invented inadvertently by alchemists while attempting to make an elixir of immorality. It was a mixture of sulphur, saltpeter, and charcoal. At the end of the Tang Dynasty, gunpowder was being used in military affairs. During the Song and Yuan Dynasties, frequent wars spurred the development of cannons, and fire-arrows shot from bamboo tubes. In the 12th and 13th centuries, gunpowder spread to the Arab countries, then Greece, other European countries, and finally all over the world.
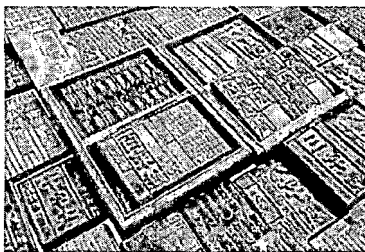
Printing Technique

Inspired by engraved name seals, Chinese people invented fixed-type engraved printing around 600 A.D.

The skill played an important role in the Song Dynasty but its shortcomings were apparent. It was time-consuming to engrave a model, not easy to store, and not easy to revise errors.

During the reign of Emperor Ren Zong of the Northern Song Dynasty, Bi Sheng invented moveable, reusable clay type after numerous tests. Single types were made and picked out for printing certain books. These types could be used again and again for different books. Because of the large number of different characters in the Chinese written language, this technique did not have a dramatic impact at the time. However, today, this typesetting technique is regarded as a revolution in the industry. About 200 years later, this moveable-type technique spread to other countries and advanced the development of world civilization.
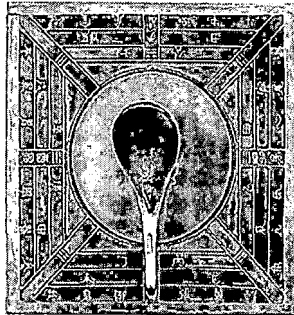

Compass
During the Warring States period, a device called a Si Nan became the forerunner of the compass. A Si Nan was a ladle-like magnet on a plate with the handle of the ladle pointing to the south. In the 11th century, tiny needles made of magnetized steel were invented. One end of the needle points north while the other points south. The compass was thus created. The compass greatly improved a ship's ability to navigate over long distances. It was not until the beginning of the 14th century that compass was introduced to Europe from China.

Source: http://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/focus/
        inventions.htm

Work Sheet 2-3
The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA) Cycle

Please write down your prediction, rationalization, reading contents, and proving parts in the following figure.

Predicting

_____
_____
_____
_____

Rationalizing

_____
_____
_____
_____

Proving

_____
_____
_____
_____

Reading

_____
_____
_____
_____
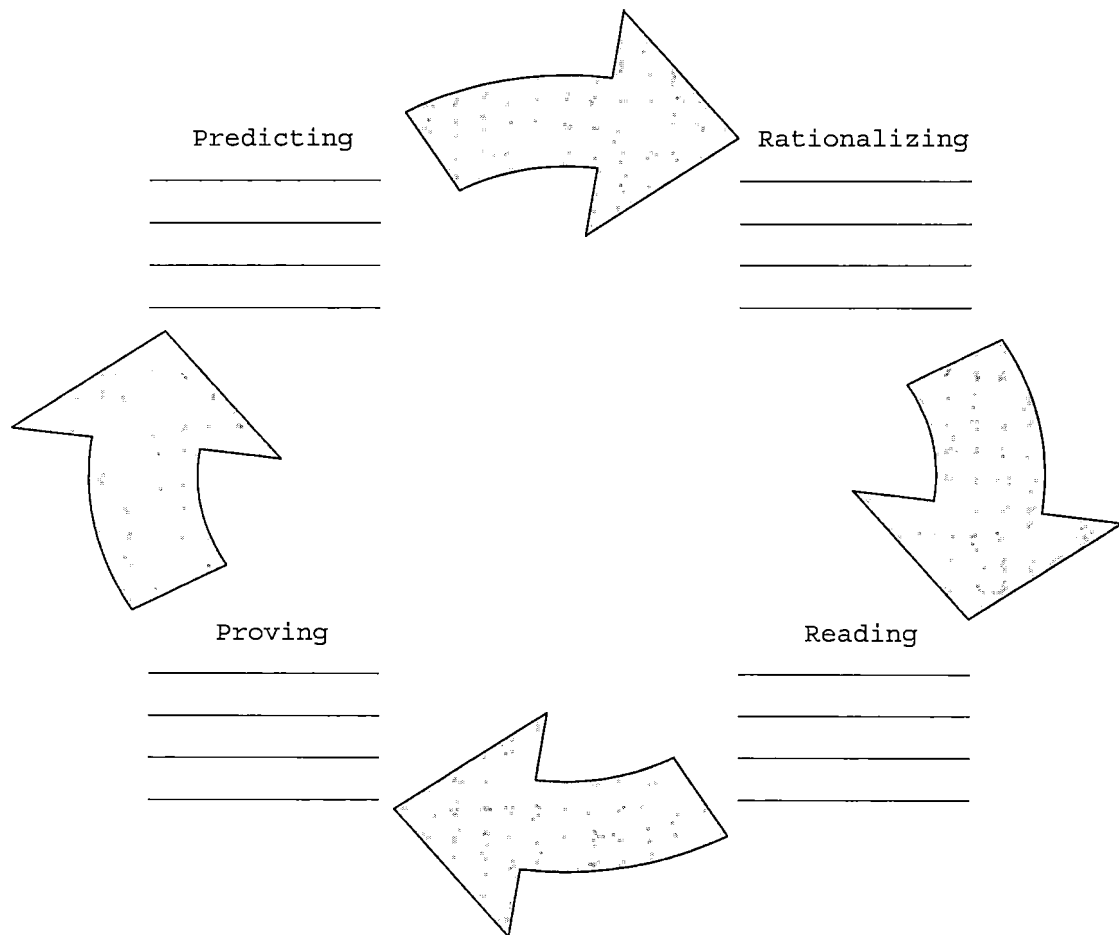
Work Sheet 2-4
Writing Practice

Please write a paragraph to express your opinions about this article.

Assessment Sheet 2-5

Student's Name_____   Date _____

Category	Comments	Scores
Context is logical		/30
Sentences are well structured		/30
The right words are used		/30
Content is fun/interesting		/10
Total		/100

Instructional Plan Three
Han Nationality

Teaching Level: Early intermediate, K-3 EFL students

Time Frame: 45 minutes

Objectives:
    Content Goal: Students will know about the Han
                    nationality
    Learning-Strategy Goal: Cross-age peer readers help each
                    other read the article together
    Language Goal: Two people prepare a presentation of
                    their reading together and present to
                    the whole class

TESOL Standards:
    Goal 2:   To use English to achieve academically in all
            content areas.
    Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning
            strategies to construct and apply academic
            knowledge.

Materials:
    Warm-up Sheet 3-1: K-W-L Chart
    Focus Sheet 3-2: Han Nationality
    Focus Sheet 3-3: Cross-Age Peer Reading
    Work Sheet 3-4: Reading Comprehension
    Assessment Sheet 3-5: Peer Response
    Assessment Sheet 3-6

Warm-up:
    The instructor hands out Warm-up Sheet 3-1 and requests
    students to divide into groups of three. The instructor
    asks each group to think about and discuss how much they
    know about the Han nationality and what they want to
    know about the Han nationality. During the discussion,
    the instructor encourages students to express their
    ideas actively.

Task Chain I: Knowing about Han nationality
    1. The instructor passes out Focus Sheet 3-2.
    2. The instructor explains some difficult words to
       students first, and lets them read it independently
       first.

Task Chain II: Cross-age peer reading
1. The instructor pairs students off and passes out Focus Sheet 3-3.
2. The instructor asks students in pairs to read the article to each other. The instructor directs them how to use peer-reading strategy according to Focus Sheet 3-3.
3. After reading, the instructor passes Work Sheet 3-4 for students to fill out the Assessment Sheet 3-5: Peer Response.
4. After finishing, the instructor asks students, "Do you have any question about this article?" Then the instructor helps them solve problems.

Task Chain III: Preparing a presentation in pairs
1. The instructor asks students to discuss the article in pairs.
2. The teacher walks around and makes sure that everyone is on track.
3. After students finish discussing, the instructor asks them to present in front of the class about their own understanding.

Final Assessment:
Formative:
The instructor pays attention to students' performance during lecturing, and helps and encourages them immediately. During Task Chain I, the instructor makes sure each student has a general idea about the article. During Task Chain II, the instructor walks among the cross-age peers and checks if students interact in English well and they can help each other's reading and understanding. During Task Chain III, the instructor can encourage students to present in pairs.

Summative:
Students will know the words and deep meaning of the article using cross-age peer reading. Moreover, they can present their understanding. The teacher grades according to Assessment Sheet 3-6.
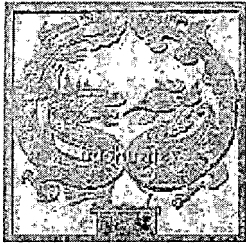
Scores	Representative
90-100	Excellent
80-90	Good job
70-80	Needs improvements
60-70	Study Harder

Warm-up Sheet 3-1
K-W-L Chart

(K) What do you <u>know</u> about the Han nationality?	(W) What do you <u>want</u> to know about the Han nationality?	(L) What have you <u>learned</u> from this class?

Han Chinese (pinyin: hànzú) is a term which refers to the majority ethnic group within China and the largest single human ethnic group in the world. The Han Chinese--though they are not a truly coherent, single ethnic group--constitute about 91 percent of the population of mainland China and about 19 percent of the global human population. The name was occasionally translated as the "Chinese proper" in older texts (pre-1980s) and is commonly rendered in Western media as "ethnic Chinese."

The term is used to distinguish the majority from the various minorities in and around China. The name comes from the Han Dynasty which ruled most parts of China proper where Han Chinese originate and which is considered a high point in Chinese civilization. Even today many Chinese people call themselves "Han persons" (Hànrén). The term Han Chinese is sometimes used synonymously with "Chinese" without regard to the 55 other minority Chinese ethnic groups.

Amongst Southern Chinese, a different term exists within various languages like Cantonese, Hakka and Minnan, but which means essentially the same thing. The term is Tangren (literally "the people of Tang"). This also derives from another Chinese dynasty, the Tang dynasty, which is regarded as another zenith of Chinese civilization. The phrase probably came into existence due to the fact that the Tang dynasty ruled over broader territories southwards than did the Han dynasty, and its influence was felt far more acutely by Southern Han Chinese.

Han Chinese believe they share common ancestors, mythically ascribed to the patriachs Yellow Emperor and Yan Emperor, some thousands of years ago. Hence many Han Chinese refer to themselves as "descendants of the Yan and Yellow Emperors," a phrase which has reverberative connotations in a divisive political climate.
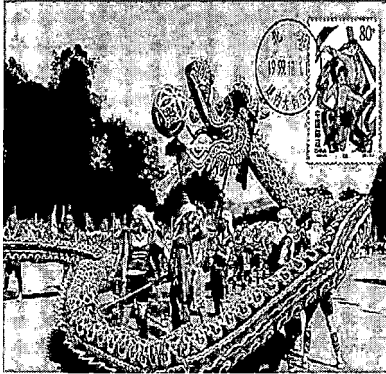
Despite the existence of many varied and diverse Chinese spoken languages, one factor in Han ethnic unity is the Chinese written language. For thousands of years, Literary Chinese was used as the standard written format, which used vocabulary and grammar significantly different from the various forms of spoken Chinese. Since the 20th Century written Chinese has been usually based on Standard Mandarin and not the local dialect of the writer (with the exception of the use of Standard Cantonese in writing). Thus, although the residents of different regions would not necessarily understand each other's speech, they would be able to understand each other's writing. It has also led to dialectal literature being slow to develop in the few dialects where it has developed at all. One of the few dialects to successfully diverge in the written form is Cantonese, particularly in Hong Kong. But with the predominance of Han-based writing and literature, local languages have not become a focus for regional self-consciousness or nationalism.

Han Chinese usually wear Western-style clothing. Traditional Han Chinese clothing is still worn by many people in important occasions such as wedding banquets and Chinese New Year.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Han_Chinese

Focus Sheet 3-3
Cross-Age Peer Reading
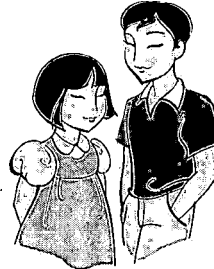
Students could paired to read Focus Sheet 3-2 and do some exercises later according to cross-age peer reading.

1) Two students paired to read together ,

not one student reading alone .

2) Work together as tutor/tutee. Students could choose to read one by one; or one student read and the other helps; The older student helps the younger student get more information. The younger student extends and deepens the older student's understanding. During the process, they should try to perform best for each other.

Work Sheet 3-4
Reading Comprehension

Students could be paired to read Focus Sheet 3-2. Please complete the table below in peers after reading Focus Sheet 3-2. Students could use language or drawings to fill in the blanks.

Categories	Han Nationality
Origination	
Terms	
Ancestor	
Language	
Traditional Clothes	
Modern Clothes	

Assessment Sheet 3-5
Peer Response

Please check "yes" or "no" in each question.

1. The name of your peer reader? _____

2. Your peer reader is responsible for your reading.

   Y__ N__

3. Your peer reader participates actively in the

   discussion. Y___ N____

4. Your peer reader feels happy about your improvement.

   Y___ N___

5. Your peer reader cooperates with you in your

   presentation. Y___ N____

Assessment Sheet 3-6

Criteria	Points	Teacher's Assessment
The presentation shows the main idea of Han nationality	30	
Each student took part in the oral presentation	30	
Duration of presentation was between 3 and 5 minutes	20	
The students exhibited enthusiasm in doing the activities	20	
Total Score	100	

Instructional Plan Four
Pandas

<u>Teaching Level</u>: Early Intermediate, K-3 EFL Students

<u>Time Frame</u>: 45 minutes

<u>Objectives</u>:
  Content Goal: Students will learn about pandas
  Learning-Strategy Goal: Small group scaffolding--
           students learn to finish assignments and
           use the computer to find more
           information and analyze it; moreover, to
           make a comparison in small groups under
           teacher's scaffolding
  Language Goal: Students will make presentations in
           groups

<u>TESOL standards</u>:
  Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all
       content areas.
  Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning
       strategies to construct and apply academic
       knowledge.

<u>Materials</u>:
  Warm-up Sheet 4-1: K-W-L Chart
  Focus Sheet 4-2: Pandas
  Work Sheet 4-3: Reading Comprehension
  Work Sheet 4-4: Small Group Extensive Learning
  Assessment Sheet 4-5: Group Evaluation
  Assessment Sheet 4-6

<u>Warm-up</u>:
  The instructor passes out Work Sheet 4-1 and asks
  students to divide into groups of three. The instructor
  asks students, "What do you know about pandas? What do
  you want to know about pandas?" The instructor
  encourages students to discuss with their partners.
  During the discussion, the instructor gets some idea of
  what students know about pandas.

<u>Task Chain I</u>: Learning about pandas
  1. The instructor passes out Focus Sheet 4-2.
  2. The instructor asks students to read Focus Sheet 4-2
     independently.

3. After students finish reading, the instructor explains the whole article to students, and asks them if they have further questions.
4. The instructor asks students, "Do you have any idea or experiences about pandas that are not included in this article?"
5. The instructor guides students to talk more and encourages them to express their opinions.

Task Chain II: Promoting small group scaffolding
1. The instructor pairs off students in small groups of three to four people, and hands out Work Sheet 4-3.
3. The students in one group discuss Work Sheet 4-3 together, and finish it.
4. After that, the instructor hands out Work Sheet 4-4, and students in groups begin extensive learning about the panda. They will try to find more resources by computer according to the questions in Work Sheet 4-4 and make a comparison with their familiar pet, the dog.
5. The instructor checks each group and makes sure all students know how to work on Work Sheet 4-4. The instructor provides help when necessary.

Task Chain III: Presentation time
1. Students in one group discuss together about how they will present about pandas.
2. Then each group makes a presentation in front of the class.
3. After finishing, students will finish Assessment 4-5 about group evaluation according to group members' performances.

Final Assessment:
Formative:
   The instructor pays attention to students' performance, helping and encouraging them immediately. During Task Chain I, the instructor has to make sure each student understands the content of the article and learns general knowledge about pandas. During Task Chain II, the instructor walks around to each group and checks if students know how to do reading comprehension and extensive work in groups, try to scaffold their learning in the process. During Task Chain III, the instructor makes sure that each student cooperates well with other group members and encourages students to express their opinion in front of the class.

<u>Summative</u>:

At the end of the lesson, the instructor gives students Assessment Sheet 4-6 to evaluate their reading comprehension of the content. Teachers will grade students according to Assessment Sheet 4-6.

<u>Scores</u>	<u>Representative</u>
90-100	Excellent
80	Good job
70	Needs improvement
60	Needs much improvement

Warm-up Sheet 4-1
K-W-L Chart

(K) What do we <u>know</u> about pandas?	(W) What do we <u>want</u> to know about pandas?	(L) What have we <u>learned</u> from this class?

Giant pandas are black-and-white Chinese bears that are on the verge of extinction. These large, cuddly-looking mammals have a big head, a heavybody, rounded ears, and a short tail.
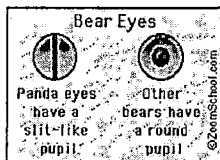
The Chinese people call the panda "Da xiong mao," which means "giant bear cat" in Chinese. The panda is a symbol of peace in China.

This bear is quite different from other bears. It has unusual cat-like eyes, and its front paws have an opposable "thumb."

Female pandas are called sows, males are called boars, and the young are called cubs.

Eyes

Most bears' eyes have round pupils. The exception is the giant panda, whose pupils are vertical slits, like cats' eyes. These unusual eyes inspired the Chinese to call the panda the "giant cat bear."

Pandas have very good eyesight.

Color

Giant pandas are white with black patches around the eyes, ears, shoulders, chest, legs, and feet. This black-and-white coloring may camouflage (hide) the panda in the snowy, rocky environment.
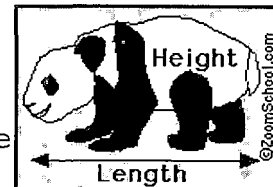
Size

The largest pandas grow to be about 250 pounds (115 kg), about the weight of a large adult human. They are about 5.25 to 6 feet (1.6 to 1.8 m) long. The average adult male panda grows to be about 3 feet (1 m) tall at the shoulder and weighs about 220 pounds (100 kg). The average adult female panda grows to be about 2.5 feet (80 cm) tall at the shoulder and weighs about 180 pounds (80 kg).

Focus Sheet 4-2 (Con't.)
Panda

| Adult Giant Panda	Weight	Height (at shoulder)	Length (snout to tail)
Female	180 pounds (80 kg)	2.5 feet (80 cm)	5.25 feet (1.8 m)
Male	220 pounds (100 kg)	3 feet (1 m)	6 feet (1.8 m)

Diet
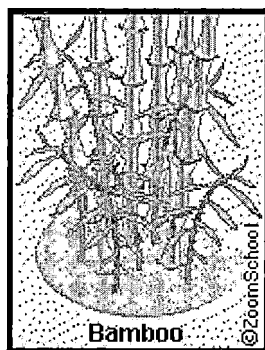
Pandas have the most specialized diet of any of the bears. Their diet is almost exclusively two species of bamboo (arrow and umbrella bamboo).

Pandas eat about 40 pounds (18 kg) of food each day. Bamboo is very low in nutrition. Even though the panda eats this plant, it cannot digest it very well and most of the bamboo passes undigested through the digestive tract. It has to eat for up to 12 hours every day in order to get enough nourishment. Its throat and stomach have extra-tough linings to protect them from the tough food.

Teeth
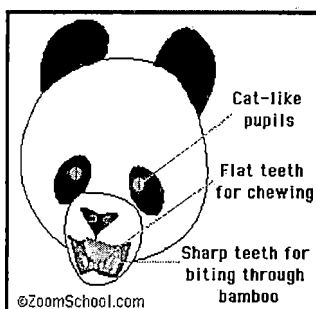
Because pandas spend most of their time eating tough, nutrition-poor bamboo, strong teeth and jaws are very important to a panda's survival. Giant pandas have large molars (flat teeth used for crushing food). They also have a few sharp teeth which they use to bite tough bamboo stalks. Pandas have 42 teeth. They also have strong jaw muscles which they use for chewing tough bamboo.

Source: http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/mammals/panda/
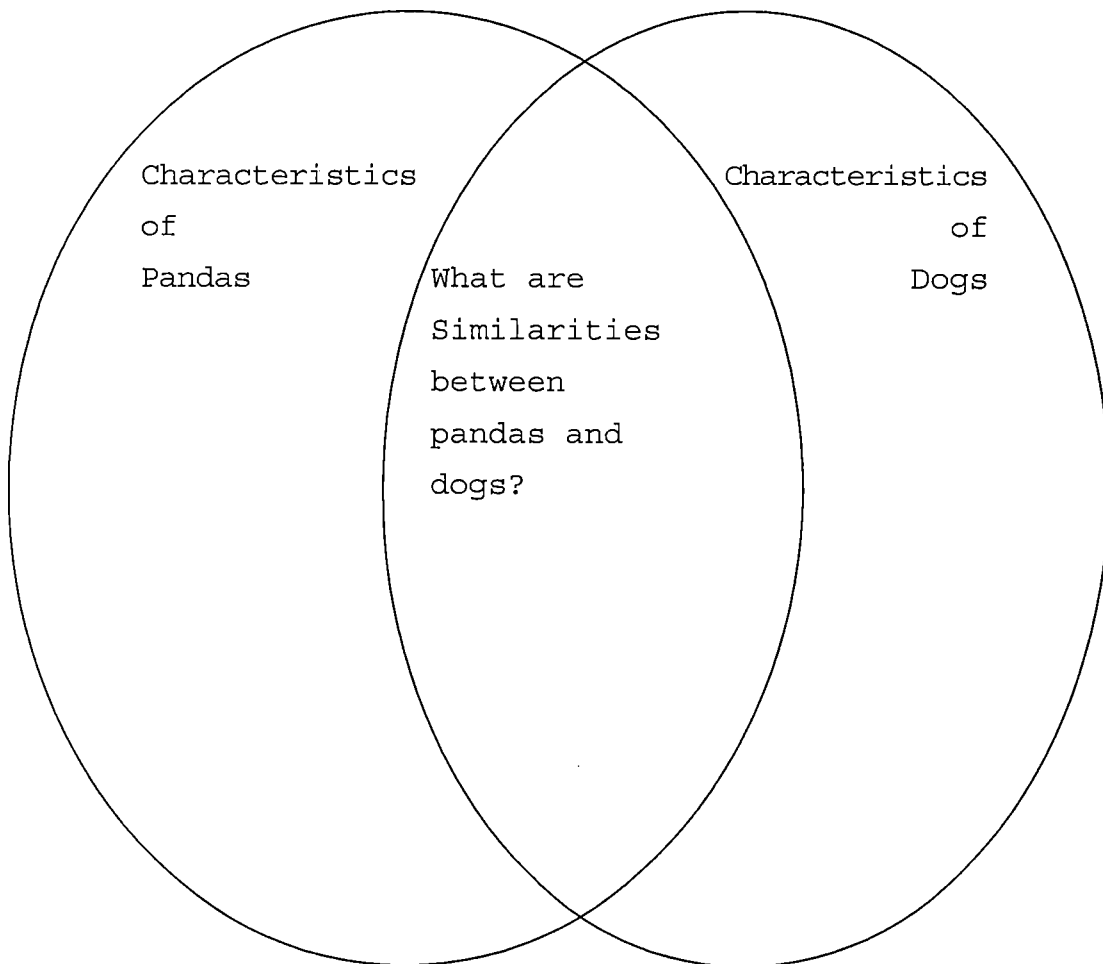
152

Work Sheet 4-3
Reading Comprehension

Please complete the table below in pairs after reading Focus Sheet 4-2. Students could use language or drawings to fill the blanks.

Categories	Panda
Eyes	
Color	
Size	
Diet	
Teeth	

Work Sheet 4-4
Small Group Extensive Learning

Please find more information about pandas using the computer according to the questions below, and make a comparison with the dog. Fill out the Venn Diagram below. Please discuss with your group members, and ask teachers' help if needed.

1. What other informtion you want to know about pandas such as pandas' history, pandas' habitat and so on?
2. Please check about it in www.google.com and find more.
3. If needed, please check information about dogs too.

Characteristics of Pandas

What are Similarities between pandas and dogs?

Characteristics of Dogs

Assessment Sheet 4-5
Group Evaluation

Please check "yes" or "no" to each question:

1. The name of your group members? _____   _____

2. The group member participates actively in the
   discussion. Y___ N____

3. The group member helps you in your improvement.
   Y___ N___

4. The group member cooperates with you in your
   presentation. Y___ N____

Student's Name_____   Date _____

Read each question and circle the right answer (25 points for each).

1. What is the panda's favorite food?

   a. rice b. fish c. bamboo d. cucumber

2. How about the panda's eyesight?

   a. very good b. ok c. very bad d. bad

3. Which one is <u>wrong</u> according to your understanding?

   a. Most bears' eyes have round pupils.

   b. The largest panda has the weight of a large adult human.

   c. The Chinese people call the panda "Da xiong mao," which means "giant bear cat" in Chinese.

   d. The panda has only flat teeth.

4. What is the largest panda's weight?

   a. 200 pounds

   b. 250 pounds

   c. 100 pounds

   d. 50 kg

Instructional Plan Five
Chinese Folk Song

Teaching Level: Early Intermediate, K-3 EFL Students

Time Frame: 45 minutes

Objectives:
    Content Goal: Students will recognize the folk song·
                "Small Swallow"
    Learning-Strategy Goal: Students will use the
                interactive approach to indicate the key
                point including the vocabulary and
                comprehension of the song
    Language Goal: Students will learn to sing the song.

TESOL Standards:
    Goal 3:   To use English in socially and culturally
            appropriate ways
    Standard 1: Uses the appropriate language variety,
            register, and genre according to audience,
            purpose, and setting

Materials:
    Warm-up Sheet 5-1: How Many Chinese Folk Songs Do You
                    Know?
    Focus Sheet 5-2: Small Swallow
    Work Sheet 5-3: Vocabulary Practice
    Work Sheet 5-4: Reading Comprehension
    Assessment Sheet 5-5

Warm-up:
    The instructor hands out Warm-up Sheet 5-1 and requests
    students to divide into groups of three. The instructor
    asks each group to think about and discuss how many
    Chinese folk songs they know and what are their
    favorites. During the discussion, the instructor
    encourages students to express their ideas actively.

Task Chain I: Recognizing the song
    1. The instructor passes out Focus Sheet 5-2.
    2. The instructor asks students to read Focus Sheet 5-2
       independently.
    3. After students finish reading, the instructor reads
       and asks them if they have questions.
    4. The instructor guides students to talk more and
       encourages them to express their opinions.

<u>Task Chain II</u>: Using the interactive approach to
understand the song
  1. The instructor leads students to read the vocabulary
     that are underlined in Focus Sheet 5-2 and explains
     the meaning to students about these words (bottom-up
     processing).
  2. The instructor asks students read these words to each
     other.
  3. The instructor reminds students to pay attention on
     their reading fluency and pronunciation.
  4. Getting familiar with the vocabulary, the instructor
     passes out Work Sheet 5-3 to students. Students will
     finish Work Sheet 5-3 to match the words and pictures
     independently.
  5. Students in one group discuss the meaning of the song
     and finish Work Sheet 5-4 (top-down processing).

<u>Task Chain III</u>: Let's sing the song
  1. The instructor sings the song to students first and
     asks students to clap the rhythm and then hum the
     tune of the music.
  2. Students follow the instructor sentence by sentence
     several times until they can sing the song
     themselves.

<u>Final Assessment</u>:
  <u>Formative</u>:
    The instructor pays attention to students' performance
    during teaching, helping and encouraging them
    immediately. During Task Chain I, the instructor has
    to make sure that each student understands the content
    of the song. During Task Chain II, the instructor
    walks around each group and checks if students pay
    attention to each other's reading fluency and
    pronunciation; moreover, to see if students understand
    the deep meaning of the song. During Task Chain III,
    the instructor may check if students can follow the
    teacher to sing the song accurately.

<u>Summative</u>:
Students will be able to sing the song "Small Swallow" fluently. The teacher grades according to Assessment Sheet 5-5.

<u>Scores</u>	<u>Representative</u>
90-100	Excellent
80-90	Good job
70-80	Needs improvements
60-70	Needs much improvements

Warm-up Sheet 5-1
How Much Do You Know about Chinese Folk Songs?

What do you know about Chinese folk songs? Discuss with your teacher and your partners.

1. How many Chinese folk songs do you know?

2. Which one you like most?

3. Please give a reason why you like it.

4. Except for Chinese folk songs, what other folk songs you know and like most in the world?

5. Can you give an example of it?
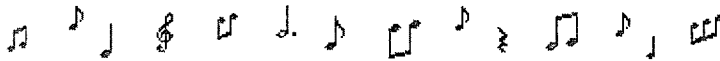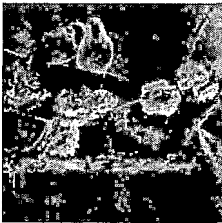
Focus Sheet 5-2
Small Swallow

The small <u>swallow</u>,

Puts on the <u>Spathe</u>,

Year after year <u>spring</u> comes here.

If asked why it comes here,

The small swallow says,

"The Spring here is so <u>beautiful</u>."

The small swallow,

Let me tell you,

Now here is more and more beautiful!

We build new <u>house</u>   and have new lives.
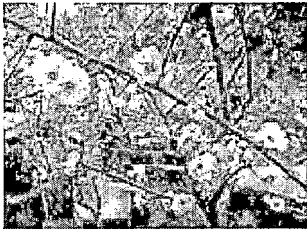
Welcome to stay here forever.

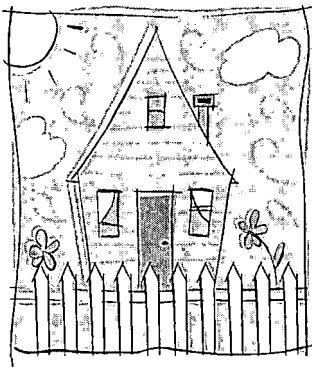# Work Sheet 5-3
Vocabulary Practice

Here are some words that are related to this song. Please match the right picture with the right words with lines.
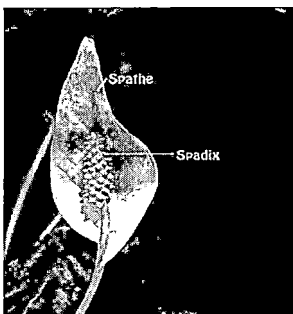
spathe

swallow

spring

house

Work Sheet 5-4
Reading Comprehension

Please answer the two questions below. Please consider
your answer carefully. Your answer will be related to your
understanding of the whole lyric.

1. Could you write down the four steps of the lyric? You
   could draw some pictures to express your ideas too.

1 _____

  _____

2 _____

  _____

3 _____

  _____

4 _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

2. Could you list an example of a metaphor the author used
   in this lyric?

_____

_____

_____

Assessment Sheet 5-5

Student's Name _____   Date _____

Category	Comments	Scores
Understands the lyrics		/25
Is fluent		/20
Is clear		/20
Melody is accurate		/20
Volume is adequate		/15
Total		/100

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