# Reading

The study reported here addressed the question of how foreign/second language learners' beliefs about language learning are related to their learning strategy use. Participants were 505 EFL (English as a Foreign Language) university students in Taiwan; and the relationship between their beliefs about language learning and their use of learning strategies was investigated. It was found that language learners' self-efficacy beliefs about learning English were strongly related to their use of all types of learning strategies, especially functional practice strategies. Additionally, learners' beliefs about the value and nature of learning spoken English were closely linked to their use of formal oral-practice strategies. The results of the study suggest cyclical relationships between learners' beliefs and strategy use. The article proposes a theoretical construct of learners' beliefs, and the pedagogical implications are discussed.

# Reading

**00–496  Arden-Close, Christopher** (Tokyo Inst. of Technology, Japan). Taiwanese university freshmen's difficulties with reading in English. *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Plymouth, UK), **12**, 2 (1999), 325–54.

This article examines, by means of student essays, the difficulties Taiwanese university freshmen had in their English reading. The concept of receptivity to the target language and culture is used throughout. A wider framework than merely what happens in the university classroom is examined. The first section deals with the students' previous learning of English reading in secondary schools and its effect on their present learning. The second section examines the students' attitudes towards the English-speaking culture vis à vis their own Taiwanese culture, and to the English language. These are seen as important determinants of their present difficulties. The third section examines their present difficulties via their attitudes to the methods of teaching used in the university. It is concluded that reading in a foreign language involves much more than what happens in the classroom, and that further studies casting such a wide net should be carried out.

**00–497  Beke, Rebecca** (Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas). Spanish-speaking students reading expository texts written in English. [A leitura de textos expositivos em inglês por alunos falantes de espanhol.] *The ESPecialist* (São Paulo, Brazil), **20**, 2 (1999), 115–42.

The research reported here examines the process used by four Spanish-speaking university students identified as two competent and two non-competent readers when reading academic texts written in English. The main objective of the study was to describe and discover similarities and differences between the two groups in terms of the processes taking place in a foreign language (FL)

reading situation. An additional aim was to generate hypotheses for further research and implications for the teaching of FL reading. In that sense the research was conceived from a heuristic-holistic-synthetic perspective (Seliger & Shiohamy, 1989). Comprehension activities were designed and applied to four text types—description, problem-solution, cause-effect and comparison-contrast following Meyer (1975)–and complemented with retrospection interviews. Both the comprehension activities and the interviews were carried out individually with each reader. The data suggest important differences between the two groups of readers as to the cognitive schemata and strategies underlying reading performance and the readers' attitude towards different text structures. From the point of view of the teaching of FL reading, the need to emphasise bottom-up processes, particularly morphosyntactic aspects such as noun phrases, -*ing* forms and modal verbs, was confirmed as basic linguistic knowledge necessary for effective reading in English.

**00–498  Bougaïeff, André** (Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Canada; *Email*: andre_bougaieff@uqtr.uquebec.ca). Le plaisir de lire en français par internet. [The pleasure of reading in French through the Internet.] *Computer Assisted Language Learning* (Lisse, The Netherlands), **12**, 4 (1999), 361–70.

This article describes a project designed to make second-language reading a less onerous and more pleasurable activity than is usually the case. The author was struck by the cumbersome process of reading a second-language text for most students. Burdened with a dictionary and reference grammar, to which they are obliged to have frequent recourse, students often look upon reading assignments as a drudgery rather than as a pleasure. In addition, they rarely find in their bilingual dictionary the contextual meaning of the word or phrase they do not understand. Thus, it is argued, despite their recourse to the dictionary, their understanding of the text remains only approximate. The article suggests that current computer technology and software have the potential to allow the student to achieve this goal.

**00–499  Carlisle, Anthony** (Wen Tzao Ursuline Junior Coll. of Modern Languages, Kaohsiung, Taiwan; *Email*: a1967721@ms17.hinet.net). Reading logs: an application of reader-response theory in ELT. *ELT Journal* (Oxford, UK), **54**, 1 (2000), 12–19.

Reader-response theory is having a growing influence on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) literature classes. This article introduces the activity of student-written reading logs as a practical application of the theory in EFL literature teaching. Since reader-response theory stresses the synthesis between reader and text, so it is proposed that practical applications should be based on this interaction. Students make notes in their reading logs as they read a novel, setting down their thoughts and feelings. This encourages them to interact with the

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text, and to tap into their individual responses to the literature. While reading logs are already used in first language literature teaching, this article argues that the activity is particularly appropriate for second language use, since it stimulates foreign language readers to go beyond the first barrier of semantic understanding and to move towards critical appreciation. The article describes how reading logs were successfully used in literature classes at a junior college in Taiwan.

**00–500    de Carvalho, Gisele** (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). Contrastive rhetoric and its interface with EAP reading. [Retórica contrastiva e sua interface com leitura em inglês para fins acadêmicos (EAP).] *The ESPecialist* (São Paulo, Brazil), **20**, 2 (1999), 143–55.

Recent years have witnessed a considerable growth in the area of Contrastive Rhetoric studies, which have investigated cultural variation in the writing practices and conventions of different languages. This short paper aims at showing that, although contrastive rhetorical research has concentrated on the study of writing, it does maintain an interface with English for Academic Purposes (EAP) reading. The findings of the field may offer insights to reading teachers and materials designers, who can raise learners' awareness to culturally determined differences in the organisation of texts, and thus make reading in academic settings more efficient.

**00–501    Ehlers, Swantje** (Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen, Germany). Zum Wandel in der Lesetheorie und seine Folgen für die Fremdsprachendidaktik. [Changes in reading theory and the consequences for foreign language teaching.] *Zeitschrift für Fremdsprachenforschung* (Bochum, Germany), **10**, 2 (1999), 177–207.

This paper discusses changing theoretical accounts of second language (L2) reading and the consequences of this for foreign language didactics. It is claimed that research in first language (L1) reading is nowadays less concerned with expectations and processes of word recognition and more with basic reading skills and dependence on data. The author then proposes that a clear distinction should be made between general cognitive processes and reading-specific processes in L2 reading. In contrast to a constructivist viewpoint, it is argued that the key processes in L2 reading are basic, automatised and inferential, and that higher-level, more cognitive or metacognitive processes are dependent on these. A pedagogy of L2 reading would attach importance to the organisation of pre-requisite knowledge and the automatisation of basic inferential skills.

**00–502    Fecteau, Monique L.** (Brown U., Providence, USA; *Email:* Monique_Fecteau@Brown.edu). First- and second-language reading comprehension of literary texts. *The Modern Language Journal* (Malden, MA, USA), **83**, 4 (1999), 475–93.

The study reported here compared the English and French reading comprehension and inferencing skills of U.S. college students enrolled in an introductory French literature course. Participants each read two different texts—one in English and the other in French—by the same 18th-century author, recalled them in writing, and did a multiple-choice task on selected literary features, followed by a character analysis task. In the first phase of data analysis, quantitative measures were used to examine the amount of text accurately recalled in first language (L1) versus second language (L2), the relationship between recall and inferencing scores, and the relative contribution of L2 proficiency scores and L1 scores to L2 scores. Responses to the multiple-choice task were also examined across languages; those findings are also reported. The results revealed more accurate recall of L1 than L2 texts, but L1 scores were found to be a significant predictor of L2 recall and of L2 multiple-choice scores. No significant relationships were found between recall and multiple-choice scores, or between L2 proficiency and L2 recall scores. Analyses revealed that L1 scores contributed more to L2 performance than did L2 proficiency. Multiple-choice responses were more similar than different across languages. It is therefore felt to be important for researchers and instructors to consider and assess the L1 reading skills and knowledge sources of students enrolled in foreign language literature courses.

**00–503    Hayashi, Keiko** (Kansai Gaidai U., Japan). Reading strategies and extensive reading in EFL classes. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **30**, 2 (1999), 114–32.

This paper investigates the reading strategies and extensive reading of Japanese students studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Data were gathered from the 100 participating students by pre- and post-test to measure reading ability, together with a vocabulary test; they were also asked to report strategies via questionnaire and to write reading reports on books read as out-of-class assignments. Results indicate that extensive reading in both first and second/foreign language is the key factor in improving reading skills for EFL students. It is concluded that extensive reading has a number of advantages over simply teaching reading strategies: it gives learners rich background knowledge, improves vocabulary recognition, and increases motivation to read more. It also underpins rapid reading, facilitating the independent development of reading strategies, and increasing students' ability to infer the meaning of unknown words in context.

**00–504    Jacobs, George M., Renandya, Willy A.** (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional Language Centre (RELC), Singapore) **and Bamford, Julian.** Annotated bibliography of works on extensive reading in a second language. *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Plymouth, UK), **12**, 2 (1999), 381–91.

This bibliography attempts to compile references and abstracts for works related to extensive reading in a sec-

ond or foreign language. The key criterion is accessibility: dissertations and conference papers listed here are available through ERIC, and articles appear in readily available journals such as *Reading in a Foreign Language*. The bibliography offers a classification that may be of value to the teacher or researcher in reading as a foreign language, and that may assist course development. Both authors and editors are actively seeking contributions from readers, who may like to suggest further categories or entries to be included in the bibliography. The bibliography will be published in two parts: this issue includes the categories only, and an invitation to readers to contribute to the full bibliography. The complete version, including reader responses, will be published in the next issue.

## 00–505 Nation, Paul and Wang Ming-tzu, Karen (Victoria U. of Wellington, New Zealand). Graded readers and vocabulary. *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Plymouth, UK), **12**, 2 (1999), 355–80.

This study looks at the potential for vocabulary learning using a corpus of forty-two graded readers from one series of graded readers (seven at each of the six levels in the series). It was found that, in order to have 95% coverage of the running words at a level in the series, it was necessary to already know the vocabulary of the current level in the scheme. Most of the words in the scheme would be met often, particularly if learners systematically read several readers at each of the various levels in the scheme. Words which were introduced in the early levels of the scheme occur often in books written for the later levels of the scheme. Learners need to read about one graded reader per week in order to meet repetitions of the new words soon enough to reinforce the previous meeting. Graded reader schemes need to go up to the 5,000 word level in order to make the transition from graded readers to unsimplified texts easier.

## 00–506 Pinto, Abuêndia Padilha (Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Brazil). Fatores afetivos e cognitivos: influência no ensino/aprendizagem de línguas. [Cognitive and affective factors: their influence on language learning and teaching.] *The ESPecialist* (São Paulo, Brazil), **20**, 2 (1999), 91–113.

The purpose of this paper is to identify the influence of features both affective (attitude and motivation) and cognitive (linguistic aptitude and cognitive skills) in the processing of information, and the way these different features might affect learning to read in a foreign language. Diaries, questionnaires and interviews were the main data-gathering measures used to investigate the personal factors, the conscious cognitive processes arising from the reading tasks, and the performance of graduate and undergraduate students. In the initial tasks some of the students had difficulty understanding and interpreting certain passages of the texts. In order to address some of their problems with reading, an English for Specific Purposes course was devised based on tasks

involving reasoning designed to meet the learners' real needs. The results revealed changes in the reading style of the majority of the students. The development of cognitive processes such as inference, deduction and self-assessment, led to an improvement in the linguistic knowledge and strategy use of most of the students and contributed to the achievement of independence in reading.

## 00–507 Ward, Jeremy (Suranaree U. of Technology, Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand). How large a vocabulary do EAP engineering students need? *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Plymouth, UK), **12**, 2 (1999), 309–23.

It is commonly suggested that learners need a vocabulary of at least 3000 word families in order to begin reading efficiently, and that this vocabulary should be based initially on a general word list and then supplemented by an academic and/or technical word list. The study reported here shows, first, that English for Academic Purposes (EAP) engineering students with a vocabulary of only 2000 word families may have sufficient lexical knowledge to read texts; second, that there may be no need for them to start with a distinct, 'general' vocabulary; and third, that using texts based on a specialist vocabulary may not overburden learners with difficult technical vocabulary. This in turn suggests that EAP reading for engineers can be undertaken at an earlier stage than it commonly is.

# Writing

## 00–508 Muncie, James (Hiroshima U., Japan; *Email*: muncie@ipc.hiroshima-u.ac.jp). Using written teacher feedback in EFL composition classes. *ELT Journal* (Oxford, UK), **54**, 1 (2000), 47–53.

In recent years the process approach to writing has become the mainstream orthodoxy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) composition classes. This article describes some theoretical concerns about providing written teacher feedback on mid-drafts of compositions in process writing. The fact that teachers occupy the roles of 'expert' and 'evaluator' means that the learners have a much reduced level of choice in deciding whether or not to use that feedback. The subsequent lack of critical involvement with the feedback by the student means that there is less chance of it becoming internalised and having effect beyond the immediate piece of work. Instead, the author advocates peer feedback on mid-drafts, and teacher feedback on final drafts. Students are required to produce a summary entitled 'How I can improve future compositions' using points from teachers and peers, which the students then use for reference in writing future work. Having tried this with university students in Japan on an academic writing course, the author recommends it as useful in promoting learner autonomy, while ensuring that the