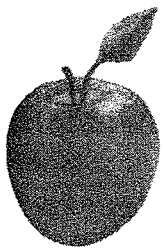

# Reading for Academic Purposes: Guidelines for the ESL/EFL Teacher

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Grabe and Stoller's chapter focuses on reading theory and practice as they apply to academic contexts. The authors outline central concepts underlying academic reading and their implications for instruction. They then highlight issues concerning the development of reading curricula including the analysis of needs and choosing appropriate texts and materials. They describe specific practices that build coherent and effective reading curricula.

## INTRODUCTION

Many have argued in the past 15 years that reading is the most important academic language skill for second language students. Supporting these claims are several student and faculty surveys at post-secondary institutions that highlight the importance of reading for academic purposes. In academic settings, reading is assumed to be the central means for learning new information and gaining access to alternative explanations and interpretations. Reading also provides the foundation for synthesis and critical evaluation skills. In addition, reading is the primary means for independent learning, whether the goal is performing better on academic tasks, learning more about subject matter, or improving language abilities.

In this chapter, we describe how reading abilities can be developed and how teachers can guide student learning. The chapter opens with brief comments on the purposes for reading, a definition of reading, and implications for effective English for Academic Purposes (EAP) reading instruction. We then highlight major differences in first language (L1) and second language (L2) reading and consider curricular goals and instructional practices that support reading. The chapter concludes with our views of future trends in L2 reading practices.

### Purposes for Reading

When we read, we read for a variety of purposes. We sometimes read to get the main idea but not much more (e.g., skimming a newspaper story), and sometimes we read to locate specific information (e.g., scanning for a name, date, or term). Commonly we read texts to learn information (i.e., reading to learn), and sometimes we are expected to synthesize information from multiple texts, or from a longer chapter or book, in order to take a critical position with respect to that information (i.e., reading to integrate and evaluate information). Perhaps most often, we read for general comprehension (i.e., reading to understand main ideas and relevant supporting information). We also read for pleasure, with the intention of being entertained or informed, but not tested.

In academic settings, almost every major purpose for reading comes into play. Thus, an EAP reading curriculum must account for how students learn to read for multiple purposes, including at least the reading

1. to search for information
2. for general comprehension
3. to learn new information
4. to synthesize and evaluate information

Although these purposes might give the impression that there are very different ways to read a text, these differing purposes actually depend on a stable set of processes and skills that underlies all reading, though in differing combinations of relative importance. Thus, we can still talk about reading in the singular and define it as such, as long as we recognize that processes and skills combine in differing ways depending on the reader's purpose (Grabe 1999a).

## A Definition of Reading

The ability to read—taking general comprehension as the example—requires that the reader draw information from a text and combine it with information and expectations that the reader already has. This interaction of information is a common way to explain reading comprehension, though it does not reveal much about the specifics of reading. Recently, research on L1 reading has highlighted the need for readers to develop essential reading processes and abilities such as rapid word recognition, vocabulary development, text-structure awareness, and strategic reading (as opposed to learning individual strategies). Yet, all researchers recognize that the actual ability to comprehend texts comes about through reading, and doing a great deal of it, as the core of reading instruction.

A good way to understand reading is to consider what is required for fluent reading (see Grabe 1999b). Fluent readers, especially good L1 readers, typically do all of the following:

1. Read rapidly for comprehension
2. Recognize words rapidly and automatically (without seeming to pay any attention to them)
3. Draw on a very large vocabulary store
4. Integrate text information with their own knowledge
5. Recognize the purpose(s) for reading
6. Comprehend the text as necessary
7. Shift purpose to read strategically
8. Use strategies to monitor comprehension
9. Recognize and repair miscomprehension
10. Read critically and evaluate information

Using these characteristics of a fluent reader to create an expanded definition of reading reveals the multiple skills and strategies that L2 learners need in order to become fluent readers.

## General Implications from Research for Reading Instruction

Based on these criteria for fluent reading and findings from reading research in L1 and L2 contexts, we see ten key implications for EAP reading instruction. Basically, EAP teachers can address the academic reading needs of their students by doing the following:

1. Helping students build a large recognition vocabulary
2. Providing explicit language instruction to help students build a reasonable foundation in the L2
3. Addressing the range of skills needed for successful comprehension
4. Introducing students to discourse-organizing principles through the use of graphic representations and other practices
5. Helping students become strategic readers by focusing on metacognitive awareness and strategy learning
6. Giving students many opportunities to read so that they develop reading fluency and automaticity
7. Making extensive reading and broad exposure to L2 texts a routine practice, in and out of class
8. Motivating students to read
9. Integrating reading and writing instruction
10. Developing effective content-based instruction for authentic integrated-skills tasks

Beyond these ten implications is the overarching principle that students become better readers only by doing a lot of reading. There are no shortcuts. All researchers agree on this principle.

## L2 Readers and Sociocultural Factors in Learning to Read

Our definition of reading and the implications for instruction that emerge from current research reveal the complexity of reading and

corresponding instruction. A more complete picture of EAP reading requires that we examine the differences between L1 and L2 readers and the ways in which these differences influence instruction. L2 readers generally have weaker linguistic skills and a more limited vocabulary than do L1 readers. They do not have an intuitive foundation in the structures of the L2, and they lack the cultural knowledge that is sometimes assumed in texts. L2 students may also have some difficulties recognizing the ways in which texts are organized and information is presented, leading to possible comprehension problems. At the same time, L2 students, working with (at least) two languages, are able to rely on their L1 knowledge and L1 reading abilities when such abilities are useful (as opposed to instances when L1 knowledge could interfere). Older academically oriented L2 students typically (but not always) have been successful in learning to read in their L1 and know that they can be successful with academic texts and tasks. L2 students also have certain resources for reading that are potentially strong supports: bilingual dictionaries, word glosses, mental translation skills, and the ability to recognize cognates (depending on the L1 and L2).

L2 students often come to class with a range of motivations to read that may be different from many L1 students' motivations. Another potential L1/L2 difference stems from students' social and cultural backgrounds. L2 students generally come from a variety of family, social, and cultural backgrounds. Some families read very little, have few reading materials available, and do not encourage independent reading. Some social settings do not encourage reading. For example, prior schooling may not have emphasized reading, other community institutions may not have encouraged reading, and libraries may have been scarce or inaccessible. Some cultures and social groups place more emphasis on spoken communication for learning, and reading plays a more limited role there. In some cases, educational and religious experiences may center more on the unquestioned truth of powerful texts, leading to the memorization of key text information rather than the evaluation of competing informational resources. Because such issues have the potential to cause problems for students, teachers need to inform themselves about these issues and adjust their teaching accordingly to reach as many students as possible.

In addition to the varying linguistic and sociocultural factors that distinguish L2 readers from L1 readers, differences between ESL and EFL settings are worth mentioning. Prototypically, one thinks of ESL instruction as occurring in an L1 English-speaking country, typically with immigrant students in secondary schools and foreign students in post-secondary settings. In contrast, EFL students may be sitting in an English class in China, Morocco, or Belgium, learning to read English as part of a four-skills curriculum, with three to six hours of English instruction per week. In ESL and EFL settings such as these, goals for language instruction vary, levels of English proficiency differ, and expected reading outcomes are likely to be different.

The differences introduced here play major roles in establishing goals for reading instruction and specifying the levels of reading ability that constitute successful learning in a given curriculum. Each instructional setting defines somewhat different goals for reading achievement, purposes for reading, and uses of text resources. These are issues that all teachers must be sensitive to and that should guide the development of EAP reading curricula.

## Goals for an Effective Reading Curriculum

In this section, we consider curricular issues that should be relevant across a wide range of EAP settings. We recognize, however, that we cannot anticipate every L2 reading context, and that recommendations must be adapted to teachers' individual situations. Nonetheless, we feel that there are at least six important goals that should be considered in planning any extended EAP reading curriculum:

1. Conduct needs analyses to interpret institutional goals and expectations for learning
2. Plan (or fine-tune) reading curricula in relation to specific goals, topics, texts, and tasks

3. Select appropriate text materials and supporting resources
4. Diversify students' reading experiences
5. Work with texts by means of a pre-, during-, and postreading framework
6. Recognize the complex nature of reading through meaningful instruction

These goals, discussed in more detail in the remainder of the chapter, offer a manageable structure for planning effective EAP reading instruction in almost any setting. Even where curricular guidelines are predetermined, exploration of these goals can significantly impact student learning outcomes.

## Conducting Needs Analyses

Reading instruction, much like any instruction, needs to take into account institutional expectations in addition to students' goals, language abilities, and L1 and L2 reading experiences. It is especially important to examine students' motivations and attitudes toward reading in general, L2 reading more specifically, and the particular goals of the curriculum (e.g., topics to be covered, material to be read, means for assessment). In some settings, a certain amount of information can be collected by interviewing students' previous teachers and by becoming acquainted with institutional guidelines, assessment expectations, and reading resources (including textbooks).

Teachers also have a responsibility to gather information about students' goals, prior reading experiences, and attitudes toward L2 reading from other sources, most commonly the students themselves. One quick way to collect useful information is to conduct a short survey and have brief follow-up interviews with students. Questions can focus on how much reading students have done, what students like to read, what they have read, and when they read their last book and for what reason(s). Other questions can be directed at determining how students feel about reading and how successful they perceive themselves to be as readers. Even a simple set of questions gives teachers access to useful information that can be used to plan (or fine-tune) a reading curriculum.

## Planning (or Fine-Tuning) Reading Curricula

After conducting a needs analysis, the goals of the curriculum can be spelled out (or interpreted) in more detail. Because there are many possible goals for a reading curriculum, curricular priorities need to be determined based on institutional goals, number of hours of instruction per week, available resources, and students' abilities, needs, and interests. (See Johns and Price-Machado's chapter in this volume.) Regardless of the number of student contact hours, all reading curricula should focus on comprehension of key texts, but they might also emphasize extensive reading, the development of strategic reading, a large increase in students' recognition vocabularies, greater fluency in reading, systematic analyses of difficult material, and the study of discourse-organization features. After goals and priorities are determined, texts and topics can be selected and tasks designed, with an eye toward creating a meaningful, motivating, and challenging curriculum.

## Selecting Appropriate Text Materials and Supporting Resources

A reading curriculum is heavily dependent on the reading materials used: The choice of primary texts and textbooks, supporting resources, and classroom library materials have a major impact on students' motivations to read and their engagement with texts. Text materials should complement students' intellectual levels and be at appropriate levels of difficulty; potential sources of difficulty for L2 readers include assumed background knowledge, cultural assumptions, demanding topics, grammatical complexity, length of texts, new conceptual knowledge, organization, unusual formatting, and vocabulary. The text materials selected for EAP settings should be interesting and coherently linked (e.g., by topics, tasks, and overall themes) to simulate the demands of academic courses. Text materials and lessons should build in a degree of complexity through the introduction of new, though related, information and

differing perspectives so that students feel some challenge and have the opportunity to develop some expertise and pride in what they are learning. Ideally, free-reading materials should be easily accessible, plentiful, attractive, and available for learner use beyond class time (Day and Bamford 1998).

## Diversifying Students' Reading Experiences

Effective reading instruction should not be limited to activities done in the classroom. An ideal reading curriculum comprises reading in class, in a lab (see Stoller 1994a), in a library, and at home, in addition to reading for different purposes. As noted earlier, reading can develop successfully only if students read a large amount of material. A major task of a reading curriculum, then, is to guide students in doing as much reading as possible in the amount of time available. Silent reading should be part of every reading lesson; extended silent reading should be a major component of reading labs and library visits, and students must be encouraged to read at home.

## Working with Texts by Means of a Pre-, During-, and Postreading Framework

If the heart of learning to read is the act of reading itself, then the heart of reading instruction is the set of tasks that students engage in to achieve learning goals. Countless instructional tasks are used in reading classes (Day 1993); some are more effective than others. Teachers' choices should be guided by instructional goals, student readiness, text resources, and implications from research and theory. One major implication from theory is a general framework based on pre-, during-, and postreading instruction (see Stoller 1994b, for practical applications).

*Prereading instruction* can serve five important purposes. It helps students access background information that can facilitate subsequent reading, provides specific information needed for successful comprehension, stimulates student interest, sets up student expectations, and models strategies that students can later use on their own. Some commonly used prereading activities include the following:

1. Previewing the text (by examining distinguishing features of the text such as the title, subheadings, illustrations and captions, and sections) to determine (or at least hypothesize) the general topic of the reading, relevant vocabulary, and possible challenges
2. Skimming the text or portions of the text (e.g., the first and last paragraphs) to decide what the main ideas of the text are
3. Answering questions about information in the text or formulating questions for which students want answers
4. Exploring key vocabulary
5. Reflecting on or reviewing information from previously read texts in light of the topic of the new text

*During-reading instruction* guides students through the text, often focusing on understanding difficult concepts, making sense of complex sentences, considering relationships among ideas or characters in the text, and reading purposefully and strategically. Some commonly used during-reading activities include the following:

1. Outlining or summarizing key ideas in a difficult section
2. Examining emotions and attitudes of key characters
3. Determining sources of difficulty and seeking clarification
4. Looking for answers to questions posed during prereading activities
5. Writing down predictions of what will come next

*Postreading instruction* typically extends ideas and information from the text while also ensuring that the major ideas and supporting information are well understood. Postreading activities often require students to use text information in other tasks (e.g., reading to write). Some commonly used postreading activities are

1. Completing a graphic organizer (e.g., table, chart, grid) based on text information

2. Expanding or changing a semantic map created earlier
3. Listening to a lecture and comparing information from the text and the lecture
4. Ranking the importance of information in the text based on a set of sentences provided
5. Answering questions that demonstrate comprehension of the text, require the application of text material, demand a critical stance on text information, or oblige students to connect text information to personal experiences and opinions

The pre-, during-, and postreading framework described here is easily adapted to different classroom contexts. All three components of the framework may be integrated into a single lesson (with a short reading passage on a familiar topic) or they may run across numerous lessons. The activities introduced in the upcoming sections of this chapter can also be integrated into the pre-, during-, and postinstructional framework.

## Addressing the Complex Nature of Reading through Meaningful Instruction

Reading is a complex skill—as demonstrated by our definition of reading, the abilities of fluent readers, and the many purposes for which we read. Meaningful EAP reading instruction can account for this complexity by addressing the following: vocabulary development, careful reading of texts, awareness of text structure and discourse organization, the use of graphic organizers to support comprehension, strategic reading, fluency development, extensive reading, student motivation, and integrated-skills tasks. Because it is virtually impossible to develop each and every area with equal intensity, reading teachers need to decide which areas to focus more attention on, while not losing sight of the primary means for reading development: Students need to read extensively.

**Vocabulary Development** There is overwhelming evidence that vocabulary knowledge is closely related to reading abilities (Schoonen, Hulstijn, and Bossers 1998). Students need to recognize a large number of words automatically if they are to be fluent readers. Some part of rapid word recognition skills comes from reading extensively and learning new words while reading. However, reading by itself does not provide full support for vocabulary development. In addition to reading extensively, students benefit from being exposed to new words through explicit instruction, learning how to learn words on their own, familiarizing themselves with their own word-learning processes, and becoming word collectors (see Graves 2000; Stahl 1999). (See also DeCarrico's chapter in this volume.)

With so many words for students to learn, a teacher needs to decide how many and which words to focus on. Inexperienced teachers may have difficulties selecting key words for instruction. Key words themselves should be the most important words for a text, the most useful for organizing and working with other vocabulary, and the most likely to be helpful to students beyond the text being read. Often textbooks highlight specific words for instruction; however, there may be other words that need attention. A useful approach for teachers is to preview the text to be assigned and identify words likely to be unfamiliar to their students. Words should be placed in one of three categories:

1. + + : Words that are critical for comprehending the text and useful in other settings
2. + – : Words that are necessary for comprehending the text, but not particularly useful in other contexts
3. – – : Words that are not necessary for comprehending the text, nor particularly useful in other contexts

Words that fall into the + + and + – categories should be considered for direct instruction. Yet, when texts are difficult for students, a teacher might identify 40 to 50 words in these two categories. The problem here is that trying to teach a large number of words directly at any one time is not an effective teaching strategy. In any given lesson, it is more efficient to focus on four to five key words, because that number of words is likely to be learned and remembered if

used multiple times and in multiple ways. Many of the other useful and important words in a text can be built into exercises and activities (e.g., semantic maps, tables, word families) and explored as part of discussions about the text and what the text means. Ideally, key words can be used to build up sets of related words. For example, the word *computer* can bring up words such as monitor, electricity, software, printers, calculators, robots, e-mail, Internet, programming, writing, and graphics. A semantic mapping activity may place all of these words on a blackboard just by association with the key word. In this way, students gain exposure to other words without treating each one as a key word.

Many words that are difficult for students may be uncommon, specialized, unimportant for the text, or a name or place word. These can be addressed simply by providing glosses, good synonyms, or practice in guessing word meanings from context. More generally, teachers and students need to keep words active in the classroom environment through explicit instruction (see Figure 1) and the intentional recycling of words, and by putting words on walls (see Eyraud et al. 2000) and in notebooks, and incorporating them into larger learning projects.

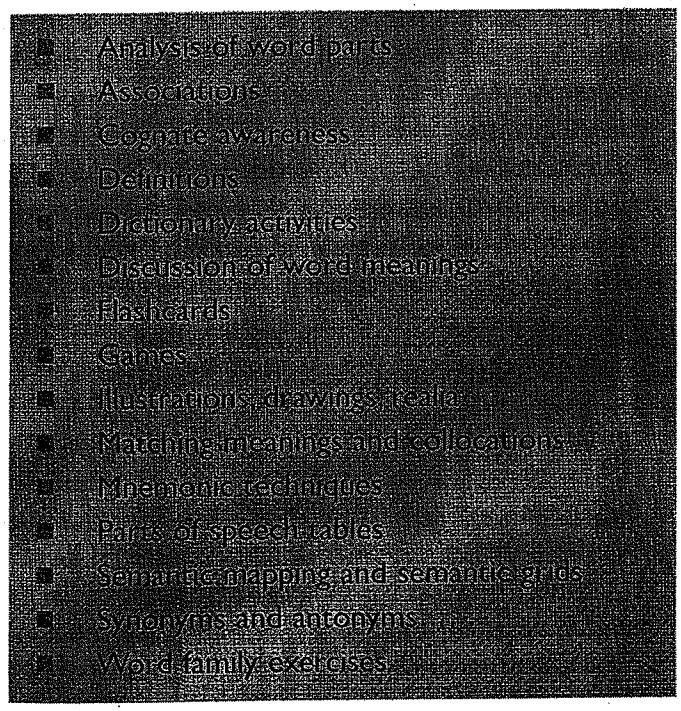



Figure 1. Sampling of Explicit Vocabulary Teaching Techniques

Students can also be taught how to learn words on their own, using, for example, a dictionary, word-part information, and context clues. Students can be encouraged to take responsibility for their own word learning by collecting words from texts (perhaps on index cards), recycling vocabulary from past texts, discussing words that they like, experimenting with words that have more than one meaning, and bringing new words to class to share with classmates.

**Careful Reading of Texts** In academic settings, the careful reading of texts is a common task, one that requires readers to demonstrate a good understanding of details in the text, to learn information from it, and to use that information for other tasks. In EAP classrooms, careful reading activities typically center on questions that ask students to recognize main ideas and analyze supporting information, arguments, or details that explain the main ideas. Activities that require careful reading often focus on unraveling information in long and complex sentences, determining embedded definitions, exploring inferences that connect sets of information, distinguishing more important ideas from less important ones, examining the discourse structure of parts of the text, and using text information for other activities (e.g., filling in a table, writing a summary, comparing information from one text with another). Many of the postreading activities listed earlier can be used to promote careful reading; others include the following:

1. Filling in parts left blank in an extended summary
2. Determining the attitude of the writer, the intended audience, and the goal(s) of the writer and identifying clues in the text
3. Listing examples that appear in the text, adding other pertinent examples to the list, and explaining one's reasons for doing so
4. Matching information or evaluating possible true/false statements

In carrying out careful reading activities, there are some important guidelines to keep in mind. If a text is too difficult for students, additional support should be provided by, for example, putting students into groups to work out

answers together. A second option is to provide some of the answers (and review strategies for how other questions can be answered), thereby making the remainder of the task easier. Students, when reporting answers or working on tasks, should occasionally be asked to explain how they arrived at their answers and point out where they found key information in the text. These confirming activities, though often quite time-consuming, help students sharpen their strategies for careful reading, give teachers insights into how texts are understood, and provide opportunities for discussions about strategic reading.

**Awareness of Text Structure and Discourse Organization** Students in academic settings are often expected to learn new information from difficult texts. It is important that L2 students do not become confused by the larger organization of the texts (e.g., comparison-contrast, problem-solution, narrative sequences, and classification) and features of different genres (e.g., newspaper stories, letters to the editor, "how-to" procedures). A consistent effort to guide students to see the ways that texts are structured will help them build stronger comprehension skills. Activities that focus specifically on the ways in which discourse is organized and on specific aspects of text structure (e.g., transition phrases, words that signal patterns of text organization, pronoun references, headings, and subheadings) are often part of exercises that emphasize careful reading. Some of these activities use graphic organizers (discussed in the next section of this chapter), but there are many other ways to explore discourse organization and text structure:

1. Identifying the sentences that convey the main ideas of the text
2. Examining headings and subheadings in a text and then deciding what each section is about
3. Adding information to a partially completed outline until all key supporting ideas are included
4. Underlining transition phrases and, when they signal major sections of the text, describing what the next section covers
5. Explaining what a set of pronouns refers to in prior text
6. Examining an inaccurate outline and adjusting it so that it is correct
7. Reorganizing a scrambled paragraph and discussing textual clues used for decisions
8. Creating headings for a set of paragraphs in the text, giving a label to each, and discussing the function of each paragraph.
9. Identifying clues that indicate major patterns of organization (e.g., cause-effect, comparison-contrast, analysis)

These text-analysis activities, as representative samples of a larger set, help students understand that texts have larger patterns of organization beyond the sentence. Students benefit from being aware of these patterns when they read for academic purposes.

**Use of Graphic Organizers to Support Comprehension and Discourse Organization Awareness** An effective way to carry out reading instruction that focuses on careful reading comprehension and discourse organization is through the use of graphic organizers (i.e., visual representations of text information). The main goal of graphic representations is to assist students in comprehending difficult texts. By using graphic organizers, students are able to see the key information in a text, the organization of text information, the ways that information is structured, and relationships among ideas presented in a text or a portion of a text. Graphic organizers are sometimes generic; at other times, they are tied to specific patterns of text organization. For example, outlines and semantic maps can be used across a large number of texts regardless of the way they are organized. As graphic representations, simple lines are versatile too, allowing students, for example, to chart events chronologically or rank characters' opinions on a continuum (Mach and Stoller 1997). Grids (or matrices) lend themselves nicely to comparison and contrast texts. Texts with causes and effects can be represented in two-column grids, but they can also be characterized by a series of unidirectional or bidirectional arrows, indicating causes and effects. A classification text (e.g., about different types of whales) might be sketched out with major categories to one side and descriptors across the top, with details in corresponding cells.

Graphic organizers come in many shapes and sizes (e.g., Grabe 1997; Parks and Black 1990, 1992; and websites listed at the end of this chapter). But not all graphics work with all texts. Thus, the teacher needs to read over the assigned text carefully and determine what types of graphic representations will assist students and what kinds of graphics-related activities will enhance learning and comprehension. There are many options for teaching with graphic representations, including:

1. Using a circle with arrows flowing in a circular direction to show an iterative process described in a text
2. Using a Venn diagram to highlight differences and similarities between characters, places, events, or issues in a text
3. Using a flowchart to trace events or steps in a process highlighted in a text

Activities such as these are effective means to help students improve their reading comprehension.

**Strategic Reading** A major goal for academic reading instruction is the development of strategic readers (rather than the disconnected teaching of reading strategies). Strategic readers understand the goals of a reading activity, have a range of well-practiced reading strategies at their disposal, apply them in efficient combinations, monitor comprehension appropriately, recognize miscomprehension, and repair comprehension problems effectively. Strategic readers make use of a wide repertoire of strategies in combination rather than in isolated applications. Commonly used strategies include

- Previewing a text
- Predicting what will come later in a text
- Summarizing
- Learning new words through the analysis of word stems and affixes
- Using context to maintain comprehension
- Recognizing text organization
- Generating appropriate questions about the text
- Clarifying text meaning
- Repairing miscomprehension

The development of strategic readers requires a commitment to teaching strategies. The introduction of strategies, their practice, and their uses should be part of every lesson. Indeed, it is not difficult to talk about strategies in class if every session requires reading, focuses on text comprehension, and includes discussions about the text and how it is understood (see Janzen and Stoller 1998). Ultimately, the goal is to develop (a) fairly automatic routines that work to resolve more general reading comprehension difficulties and (b) a more elaborate set of problem-solving strategies that can be used when routine strategies do not work well.

One instructional approach that is particularly effective is known as *Transactional Strategies Instruction* (TSI) (Pressley 1998). TSI is typically characterized by the following tenets:

1. Strategy instruction requires a long-term commitment from teachers.
2. Teachers explain and model effective comprehension strategies. Typically only a few are emphasized at any time.
3. The teacher coaches students to use strategies as needed. Minilessons are given about when it is appropriate to use certain strategies.
4. Teachers and students model uses of strategies for one another, explaining aloud what strategies they are using.
5. The usefulness of strategies is emphasized continually and students are reminded frequently about the benefits of strategy use. Issues of when and where to use strategies are discussed regularly.
6. Strategy instruction is included in discussions about text comprehension, focusing on not only what the text might mean but also how students come to understand information in the text.

A similar approach, known as *Questioning the Author,* centers on the internalization of comprehension strategies through discussion focused on texts and their meanings (see Beck et al. 1997).

The goal of making every student a strategic reader is central to academic reading instruction. All reading instruction should be tied to reading strategies, their development, and their use in

effective combinations. For any approach to strategy development, students need to be introduced to only a few strategies at a time. Each strategy should be discussed, explained, and modeled. From that point on, the strategies should be reintroduced on a continual basis through teacher reminders, discussions, wall charts, student modeling, and student explanations. Certain strategies, such as summarizing, suggest multiple activities. It is common practice to ask students to summarize a short text verbally. In instructional contexts where reading and writing are combined, summarizing takes on a larger role, integrating the two skills and leading to more demanding types of writing tasks.

Aside from discussions centered on text comprehension and strategy awareness, another approach to building strategic competence involves "elaborative interrogation." This instructional approach involves the addition of "why" questions to class discussions, after students have answered comprehension questions. The "why" questions oblige students to explain their answers and specify where the text provides appropriate support.

**Fluency Development** One of the most neglected aspects of L2 reading instruction is the development of reading fluency, even though research strongly argues that fluency is one of the central foundations for efficient reading. Fluency involves rapid and automatic word recognition, the ability to recognize basic grammatical information, and the rapid combination of word meanings and structural information to create larger meaning units. There are a number of reasons why fluency instruction is not promoted in L2 settings:

1. Reading fluency depends on knowing a fairly large number of words so that a reading task itself is not too difficult. Many L2 students do not recognize a large number of words quickly or easily, so they are very slow at initial efforts in fluency training. However, the best way to develop these skills is through methodical training in reading fluency.
2. Teachers sometimes feel that fluency training is too mechanical and not relevant to reading comprehension instruction. Other teachers question the benefits of fluency training because it requires a long-term commitment and students' reading gains are not immediately obvious. However, the development of rapid and automatic recognition of words is an essential component of skilled reading comprehension.
3. Fluency training often involves reading aloud and many teachers believe that they should never promote reading aloud in class. However, fluency training is one of the areas in which oral reading is a helpful support for reading development.
4. Teachers are typically given few guidelines for building reading fluency into reading curricula. There are, however, a number of ways to promote fluency without requiring a significant investment in resources.

Fluency activities—classified here as activities that develop overall fluency, rate, and word recognition—can be incorporated into any reading program regularly. Extensive reading (discussed more fully in the next section) helps students in all three areas. Activities that specifically target overall fluency include rereading practice and rereading for other purposes. Activities that promote reading rate include timed readings and paced readings. Activities that develop rapid recognition skills include word-recognition exercises, flashcard practice, teacher read-alouds (with students reading along silently), and rereading practice. Students benefit from hearing about the advantages of such activities and the need to work on them consistently to see long-range improvements. The use of progress charts assists students in visualizing their gradual improvement. One particular advantage of most fluency activities is that they take on a gamelike quality as students work against themselves rather than compete with other students. (See Anderson 1999; Samuels, Schermer, and Reinking 1992.)

Rereading practice involves reading aloud and should be done with texts that students can read without great difficulty or that have already been read and used for comprehension activities. Typically—though there are many variations—two students work together. The first student

reads aloud from the beginning of a text while the second student keeps time and helps with any difficulties. After one minute, the first student stops and marks the place in the text where he or she stopped. The students may make a few very quick comments on the difficulties encountered. Then they switch roles. The second student reads from the beginning of the same text for one minute while the first student keeps time and helps with any difficulties. After one minute, the second student stops and marks the stopping point in the text. They switch roles again. At this point, the first student starts reading from the beginning of the text again for one minute with the goal of moving beyond his or her first stopping point. The second student again keeps time and helps if needed. The process is repeated for the second student. The students then note how many additional words they read the second time through the text and note their gains on a chart.

Rereading texts for new purposes provides another option for general fluency. After reading a text for comprehension purposes, a text may be reread to decide what the author's purpose is, to fill in a chart, or to compare the information with another source of information (e.g., a new text, a text read earlier in the course, or, for that matter, a video or lecture). In all forms of rereading, the goal is to give students enough time to actually read the text again, rather than simply skim the text to complete the follow-up exercise. When students reread a text that they are already familiar with, they often read more fluently, with higher rates of comprehension, thereby getting the feel for more fluent reading. They also extend their reading experiences by reading for different purposes.

Reading rates can be directly improved through two common techniques: timed readings and paced readings. In timed readings, students time themselves while reading a passage (typically not very difficult and of a reasonable length) from start to finish. Timed readings are usually followed by a set of fairly simple comprehension questions that can be answered and scored quickly. The results of timed readings are entered on a progress chart so that gradual gains in reading rate and comprehension are noticeable to students. Timed readings, when used as part of a rate development program, need to be a consistent activity throughout the semester or year, usually once or twice a week. In this way, the cumulative practice leads to rate improvements as well as overall reading fluency (see Fry 2000).

Paced readings work on the same principle but oblige students to read at a specified pace (e.g., 120 words per minute) rather than at their own pace. Typically, paced readings are shorter than timed readings, about 400 words in length (though shorter passages can also be used for timed readings). Passages are of a consistent length, with marks of some sort (e.g., a check or dot) in the margin to indicate every 100-word segment. Thus, a 400-word text would have three marks, the first indicating the first 100 words, the second indicating the second 100 words, and so forth.

In a paced reading, students are directed to read at a pace specified (and maintained) by the teacher. For example, at 100 wpm, students would hear a signaling noise (e.g., a light tap on the desk by the teacher) at regular intervals, in this case every 60 seconds, indicating that they should either be at the first mark or move down to the first mark and continue reading from that point. When the signal is repeated again, at the next increment of time, students move to the second mark if they have not yet reached it. Again, simple comprehension questions appear after the text is completed. After answers are corrected, students enter results on a graph. Because paced readings are completed more quickly than timed readings, two or three are usually done in a row, sometimes with varying paces (e.g., the first at 150 wpm, the second at 110 wpm, and the third at 120 wpm). When students are familiar with the process, it is carried out quickly and three paced readings can be finished in less than 20 minutes. (See Spargo 1989, 1998; Stoller 1994a.)

Another way to develop reading fluency is through practice in word recognition under time pressure. Word-recognition exercises generally involve a set of about 20 key words or phrases down the left-hand side of a page, each one followed by a row of four or five words—one of which is identical to the key word, whereas the others are similar in shape or are morphological

variations of the key word (see Figure 2). Students are asked to work as quickly as possible to mark the exact match for each key word. Upon completion, students check their work and record the number correct and the time spent on a chart. Typically, a word-recognition lesson includes three consecutive 20-word exercises and will take no more than 7–10 minutes total after students understand what is expected of them. (See Stoller 1993 for suggestions on creating recognition exercises and using them in class.)

Two other activities for improving the speed of word recognition involve (a) the use of flashcards for sets of key words that appear in readings for the week and (b) teacher read-alouds. Flashcard practice may seem very traditional, but recent research has shown that it works for fluency purposes (Nicholson and Tan 1999). Teacher and students make up 20 cards per text, and for 7–10 minute intervals, the teacher works with the class, or pairs of students work together, to read words aloud that are flashed very quickly, usually within one second. This flashcard practice should be done once or twice per text, or two to three times per week if time permits. Words that cause ongoing difficulty should be recorded in a notebook to be studied and used at later times in student pairs.

**Extensive Reading** Extensive reading, the practice of reading large amounts of text for extended periods of time, should be a central component of any course with the goal of building academic reading abilities. The sustained silent reading of level-appropriate texts is the single best overall activity that students can engage in to improve their reading abilities, though it is not sufficient by itself for an effective reading program. The point is simple. One does not become a good reader unless one reads a lot (see Anderson 1996; Elley 1991). Extensive reading, however, is typically not promoted in L2 reading courses. Teachers sometimes do not feel that they are teaching when students are reading silently in class; they think that extensive reading is something that should only be done at home. Sometimes there are limited re-sources for good class or school libraries. In some cases, schools have resources but they do not include books that interest students or they do not allow students to check out books to be read at home. There are cases in which teachers do not believe that reading large amounts of level-appropriate text is an appropriate goal for academic-reading development. Finally, some teachers would like to involve their students in extensive reading but do not know how to incorporate it into their lessons.

There are several ways to engage students in extensive reading, both in and out of class. We recognize that not every teacher has access to all possible resources for extensive reading, nor do they have unlimited time in their reading courses to promote as much extensive reading as should occur. Below we list ideal conditions for extensive reading, though we expect that any teacher can pursue only a subset of them.

1. Provide time for extended silent reading in every class session, even if it only involves reading from the textbook
2. Create opportunities for all types of reading
3. Find out what students like to read and why
4. Make interesting, attractive, and level-appropriate reading materials available
5. Build a well-stocked, diverse class library with clear indications of topic and level of difficulty for each text
6. Allow students to take books and magazines home to read, and hold students accountable for at-home reading in some simple way

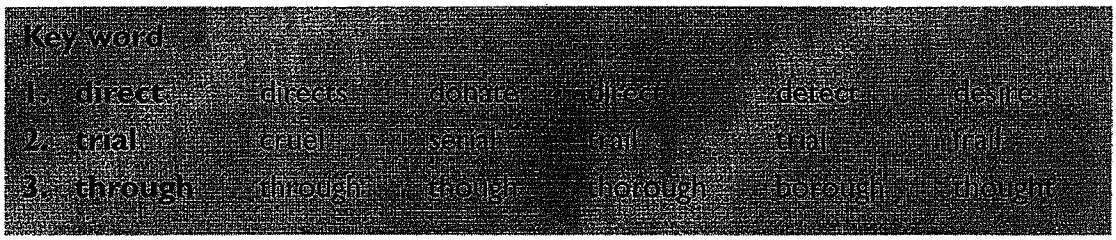



Figure 2. Sample Word-Recognition Exercise Format

7. Create incentives for students to read at home
8. Have students share and recommend reading materials to classmates
9. Keep records of the amounts of extensive reading completed by students
10. Seek out class sets of texts (or at least group sets) that everyone can read and discuss
11. Make use of graded readers, provided that they interest students, are attractive, create sufficient challenge, and offer a good amount of extensive reading practice
12. Read interesting materials aloud to students on a consistent basis
13. Visit the school library regularly and set aside time for browsing and reading
14. Create a reading lab and designate time for lab activities

There are a number of specific instructional practices to consider when engaging students in extensive reading. In-class extensive reading is most often carried out by giving students 10–15 minutes of silent reading time. During this time, students may read a class reader; read a book or magazine of their choice while the teacher circulates to answer questions and offer assistance (free-reading); or engage in sustained silent reading (SSR). In SSR, the teacher does not circulate; rather he or she reads silently throughout the entire SSR period, serving as a role model of an engaged reader. (The teacher should not grade papers or plan future lessons during this time.) Students need to see that teachers really do read and that they enjoy it. After an uninterrupted SSR period, the teacher and students should take a minute or two to share ideas or make recommendations about their reading. Students may be asked to keep a simple log of what and how many pages they read so that a record of reading is built up over time. In SSR periods, there should be no evaluation, no instruction, and no interruptions.

Extensive reading, much like any new routine, is enhanced when the teacher discusses the goals with students and helps students find interesting and readable materials. The teacher should recognize that extended free-reading time or SSR may generate resistance from certain students. Over a number of sessions, with support from the teacher, students will become engaged and even look forward to extensive reading. Teachers also need to understand that extensive reading is not an occasional end-of-the-week, or end-of-the-day "reward." It is fundamental to the development of fluent reading abilities. If pursued as an instructional goal, it must be done consistently or students will not believe the teacher's rationale.

Extensive reading at school should be coupled with extensive reading at home, with as much reading as students can be persuaded to do. At a minimum, the books and magazines read at home should be discussed in class, with recommendations made to other students. There should also be an ongoing log of what is read, how long the student read, and how many pages were covered; this log should be checked regularly by the teacher. (See Day and Bamford 1998 for advice on promoting extensive reading.)

**Student Motivation** Motivation is another key to successful reading, one that is typically ignored in discussions of reading instruction. There is, however, a significant body of research that argues that motivation has an important impact on reading development. Motivation is a complex concept with many associated notions (e.g., interest, involvement, self-concept, self-efficacy). We discuss motivation here (following Guthrie et al. 1999) as an individual trait, related to a person's goals and beliefs, that is observed though task persistence and positive feelings toward an activity. The key idea for teachers is that motivation makes a real difference in students' reading development, and teachers need to consider how to motivate students to engage as actively as possible with class texts and in extensive reading.

There are a number of ways to develop positive motivation to read. First and foremost, teachers should discuss the importance of reading and the reasons for different activities used in class. Second, teachers need to talk about what interests them as readers and why. Students are often surprised to learn about what and why their teachers like to read. Likewise, teachers should invite students to share interests with classmates. Third, all class activities should be related to course goals to which students have

been introduced. Fourth, all reading tasks (short and more extended) should have lead-ins (i.e., prereading activities) that develop initial interest. Fifth, teachers need to build their students' knowledge base so that students can manage complex ideas and develop a level of expertise on some topics. Sixth, teachers need to select texts and adapt activities with students' reading abilities and the inherent difficulties of the reading passages in mind. Seventh, teachers should nurture "a community of learners" among students, thereby ensuring that students learn to rely on each other effectively while working through complex tasks and associated reading materials.

Finally, teachers need to look for ways to help students encounter "flow" in their reading. Flow is a concept (developed by the psychologist Csikszentmihalyi [1990]) that describes optimal experiences. People encounter flow when they are engaged fully in activities in which their growing skills match well with task challenges. Commonly, the tasks have well-defined goals, the means for determining success are clearly understood, and the achievement of success is not easy but is possible. People having flow experiences typically lose track of time, do not get distracted, and lose any sense of personal problems. Csikszentmihalyi has consistently found (across many studies and hundreds of interviews) that a primary way to encounter flow is by becoming engaged in reading. Thus, flow experiences lead students to seek out reading as an optimal experience, resulting in intrinsic motivation to read regularly.

**Integrated-Skills Instruction** In academic settings, a common expectation of reading is that it is used to carry out further language- and content-learning tasks, most typically in connection with writing activities, though listening and speaking activities may also be linked to reading. Although integrated-skills activities take on greater significance as students move to higher language proficiency levels, a goal for EAP curricula should be the use of reading as a resource for integrated-skills tasks.

Taking reading and writing as a primary example, there are many ways in which these skills can be integrated and serve the development of reading, writing, and academic skills. The most obvious and generic options—such as summary writing, report writing, and outlining—should not be downplayed as too traditional. There is clear evidence that summary writing and outlining, when taught well, improve both reading and writing abilities (Grabe 2001). A number of other writing activities can be developed from reading resources:

1. Students keep journals in which reactions to readings are recorded and elaborated upon. Teachers collect journals periodically and add comments.
2. Students keep double-entry notebooks in which they summarize text ideas of particular significance on one side of the page. In later rereadings, students (and the teacher) write additional comments on the opposite side of the page.
3. Students write a simple response to some prompt (e.g., a minilecture, an object, a short video clip, a quick skim of the text to be read) to prepare themselves for the upcoming reading.
4. Students create graphic organizers to identify main ideas from the text, restructure information, or compare content from various texts. Students then write an explanation or critique of the reading(s) based on the graphic organizer.
5. Students connect new texts to previously read texts through speed writes, graphic organizers, or discussions.
6. Students determine the author's point of view in a text and then adopt a different point of view (not necessarily opposing). They develop the alternative point of view through an outline and consultation with other resources, and then write a critique of the text and the author's viewpoint.
7. Students make a list of ideas from the text, prioritize the list by level of importance, get into groups and prioritize a group list, and then develop a visual representation of their response (in the form of, for example, a diagram, outline, or figure) to be shared with classmates.

There are additional reasons for centering EAP reading instruction within an integrated-skills framework. Aside from the authenticity of integrated-skills activities for advanced students, integrated activities open up valuable opportunities for extensive reading (during which students search for additional information). Furthermore, integrated-skills activities engage students in complex tasks that complement their academic goals and require strategic responses. Finally, students inevitably learn a considerable amount of connected, coherent, and stimulating content knowledge from complex integrated tasks. The resulting mastery of a topic and sense of expertise often motivate them to learn even more. The most logical extension, then, from a reading course with integrated-skills activities is a reading course centered on a content- and language-learning foundation. In this way, academic reading instruction leads naturally into various types of content-based instruction.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined components of effective academic reading instruction. When looking across the range of components (vocabulary, fluency, strategies, graphic representations, extensive reading, etc.), a natural response might be to say that all of these ideas cannot possibly fit into a reading course that is coherent and focused. Yet, over the past 20 years, we have become firmly convinced that all of these components can be drawn together coherently and effectively in an appropriately developed content-based instruction approach. (There is, we must add, nothing magical about content-based instruction; it needs to be grounded in the criteria discussed above, just like any other program or course in reading.)

In a content-based approach to reading, one can assume that reading multiple sources of information will be the norm and that there will be many opportunities for meaningful extensive reading. Vocabulary instruction should grow in complexity and there will be ongoing opportunities to recycle vocabulary as students explore sets of related content material. Similarly, there will be many occasions to reread texts for new tasks, for new information, for comparisons, and for confirming information. Furthermore, students will have the chance to extend complex learning, carry out purposeful integrated-skills tasks, build expertise on a topic, and become more motivated. The more complex language and content learning that occurs in content-based classrooms will also open up opportunities to discuss comprehension and focus on the strategies that students use to build comprehension abilities. In brief, we see content-based instruction as providing the best foundation for academic reading instruction if it is planned and carried out well (Stoller and Grabe 1997). It is likely that the development of new ways to engage students through content-based instruction will be a major focus of advanced reading instruction for the coming decade. (See Snow's chapter in this volume.)

Before closing this chapter, we would like to address briefly three other future directions for reading instruction. First, we see technology as growing in importance, and related issues as centering on how to use technology to support reading development. At the moment, the options for computer-based reading instruction are not very advanced; in most cases, they involve little more than putting reading passages on the screen with a few tricks and gadgets. We expect that in the next five to eight years, this situation will change, and computer technologies and instructional software will create new options for reading instruction.

Second, we have not addressed reading assessment in any way, but it is an issue that cannot be ignored. Although assessment might not be considered a direct component of instruction, it certainly should be. Teachers need to know how to assess students' progress in addition to assessing the effectiveness of various practices in a reading course. What works and what does not work should not rest only with a teacher's subjective judgment but should be determined through both formal and informal assessment procedures. (Good sources on reading assessment include Alderson 2000; Hamayan 1995. See also Cohen's chapter in this volume.)

Third, in addition to assessing student progress, teachers need to evaluate course and teaching effectiveness. The most effective way to do this is through teacher-initiated inquiry

(i.e., action research). Through systematic reflection and data collection, teachers can investigate aspects of their own reading classrooms to improve future instruction. They can investigate aspects of reading (e.g., rate, recognition, vocabulary, skimming) in relation to different instructional techniques or learning activities (e.g., the use of graphic organizers, strategy training, rereading) to determine their effectiveness, or classroom materials to ascertain their appropriateness, or a range of other issues. Action research provides teachers with a nonthreatening means for exploring what works best in their own teaching contexts (Grabe and Stoller in press).

Whether or not reading teachers design content-based courses, engage in action research, or use technology in reading classes in the future, we can be fairly certain that EAP instruction will continue to be important for L2 students. L2 teachers, whether they teach in ESL or EFL settings, owe it to their students to make the most of the time they have allotted for reading instruction. If teachers are obliged to use mandated materials, as most teachers are, they should evaluate them carefully, keeping in mind the complexities of fluent reading and effective reading instruction. The goal should be to augment and improve mandated materials so that students have the fullest reading development experience possible. For teachers who are in a position to create academic reading curricula and select materials on their own, this chapter provides many of the "ingredients" needed. It is up to the teachers to put them together to meet students' reading needs. Regardless of setting, teachers must remember that students most often rise or fall to the level of expectation of their teachers. Thus, teachers should set high expectations for their students and assist them in achieving those expectations by means of purposeful and principled reading instruction.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

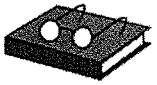
1. How has your conception of reading changed since reading this chapter? Identify three ideas or concepts from the chapter that you think are important and rank order them. Provide a rationale for your decisions.
2. Consider the characteristics of a fluent L1 reader (page 188) as the ultimate goal for an L2 reading curriculum. What instructional practices would you incorporate into an L2 reading class to move your students toward that goal? What activities would you assign to address each characteristic or cluster of characteristics?
3. Reflect on your own experiences in reading for academic purposes. Which purposes for reading have been most important for you? What have you done to comprehend texts that have been challenging for you? What can you apply from your experiences to your teaching?
4. Consider the constraints that you might face if you were teaching reading for academic purposes in an instructional setting of your choice. What would you do to maximize the effectiveness of your reading instruction?
5. In this chapter, Grabe and Stoller assert that there is a difference between facilitating the development of strategic readers and teaching reading strategies. How would you explain the distinction they are making?
6. What is the relationship between content-based instruction (CBI) and reading development in L2 settings? How can CBI contribute to reading development?

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Create a graphic organizer that depicts your current view of reading for academic purposes.
2. Select a short text (e.g., from a magazine, newspaper, textbook) that might be of interest to a class of L2 students.
   a. Analyze the text from the perspective of these L2 students. What aspects of the text might prove difficult to them?
   b. Identify 10–15 words in the text that might be unfamiliar to these students. Place each word into one of the following categories: + +, + –, – –. How would you introduce words falling into the + + category?
   c. Design three postreading tasks that will oblige students to engage in careful reading. Each task should focus on a different

aspect of careful reading (e.g., recognizing main ideas; analyzing support information, arguments, or details that explain the main ideas; inferencing; unraveling information in complex sentences; determining author's attitudes; applying information). Be prepared to explain the aim of each task that you design.

3. Select three L2 reading textbooks. Examine them carefully to determine their effectiveness. Do they include motivating readings? To what extent are the following aspects of reading covered: strategy development, fluency training, opportunities for rereading, graphic organizers, vocabulary building activities, different purposes for reading, exercises on discourse organization and text structure, integrated-skills activities, pre-, during-, and postreading activities, etc.?



## FURTHER READING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Day, R. R., ed. 1993. *New Ways in Teaching Reading.* Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

Day, R. R., and J. Bamford. 1998. *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Silberstein, S. 1994. *Techniques and Resources in Teaching Reading.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Urquhart, A. H., and C. Weir. 1998. *Reading in a Second Language: Process, Product and Practice.* New York: Longman.



## WEBSITES

Repository for information on extensive reading:

**http://www.kyoto-su.ac.jp/information/er/**

Inventory of graphic organizers, with multiple links:

**http://www.graphic.org/goindex.html**

**http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/SCORE/actbank/torganiz.htm**

**http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/learning/lr1grorg.htm**

**http://www.macropress.com/1grorg.htm**

Teacher guidelines for designing graphic organizers:

**http://www.wm.edu/TTAC/articles/learning/graphic.htm**