

Readings on L2 Reading: Publications in other Venues **2004-2005**

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This new feature offers an archive of articles and books published in other venues during the past year and serves as a valuable tool to RFL readers. Articles treat any topic *within the scope of RFL* and second language reading. Articles are organized by topic and are listed in alphabetical order. The feature section includes titles of the articles as well as brief summaries.¹ An additional section includes a list of books, volumes and dissertations that treat second language reading.

ARTICLES

Course design

Gebhard, M. (2004). Fast capitalism, school reform, and second language literacy practices. *Modern Language Journal*, 88, 245-265.

This qualitative inquiry examines the classroom literacy practices of an elementary school in California. Through a two year case study of three second language learners, the author exemplifies how existing literacy practices constrain the efforts of second language learners. The article addresses issues concerning teachers and policy makers involved in the needs of second language learners in the USA.

Individual reader differences

Abu-Rabia, S. (2004). Teachers' role, learners' gender differences, and FL anxiety among seventh-grade students studying English as a FL. *Educational Psychology*, 24, 711-721.

With seventh-grade students studying English as a foreign language, this investigation examines the relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement. Results reveal that anxiety negatively correlates to achievement on a Hebrew reading test, an English reading test, an English creative writing task, and an English spelling task. Gender and teacher attitudes are

significant predictors of foreign language anxiety. The author offers an extended discussion of results with practical implications for the classroom.

Brantmeier, C. (2004). Gender, violence-oriented passage content, and reading in a second language. *The Reading Matrix*, 4(2), 1-19.

Various Latin American authors treat violence as a principal theme in their works. This inquiry examines the topic familiarity levels and comprehension of university level male and female second language (L2) readers with two different authentic violence-oriented texts. The results of this study show that while male and female readers at the advanced levels of instruction indicated being equally familiar with violence-oriented content of the target culture, females outscore their male counterparts on L2 comprehension tasks for texts that involve male-to-female violence. The overall findings suggest that females may have an advantage over males in the free written recall procedure. The author states that it is too early to make the generalization that the apparent gender difference in the comprehension of one passage is due to the victim's gender.

Park, G.-P. (2004). Comparison of L2 listening and reading comprehension by university students learning English in Korea. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37, 448-458.

With 168 university students learning English in Korea, this investigation examines roles of linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, and question types in both L2 listening and reading. Data reveal that L2 readers processed factual information more easily than inferential information, but the reverse is true for L2 listening. Linguistic knowledge plays a significant role on both skills, however background knowledge plays a significant role for L2 listening but not reading. The combination of both linguistic knowledge and background knowledge explains a total variance of 14% in L2 listening comprehension and 20% in L2 reading comprehension.

Salim, A. R. (2004). Teachers role, learners' gender differences, and FL anxiety among seventh-grade students studying English as a FL. *Educational Psychology*, 24(5), 711-721.

With 67 seventh-grade students studying Hebrew and English, the author investigates the relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement. Findings indicate that anxiety was negatively and significantly correlated with a Hebrew reading comprehension test, an English reading comprehension test, an English creative writing task, and an English spelling test. Significant predictors of foreign language anxiety are gender and teachers' attitudes. Practical suggestions are discussed in light of findings.

Schueller, J. (2004). Gender and foreign language reading comprehension: The effects of strategy training. In C. Brantmeier (Ed.), *Adult foreign language reading: Theory, research and implications*. Volume published by *Southern Journal of Linguistics*, 27(1), 45-65.

With students enrolled in German courses, the author examines the effects of strategic training on male and female reading comprehension. More specifically, she analyzes the effects of pre-reading strategy training on conceptually driven top-down strategies and text-bound bottom-up strategies. Findings reveal that participants who received top-down training outperformed those

who received bottom-up or no training. Females outscored males on nearly all assessment measures.

Young, D. J. & Nakuma, C. K. (2004). Why don't you understand? Understanding misunderstandings in foreign language reading. In C. Brantmeier (Ed.), *Adult foreign language reading: Theory, research and implications*. Volume published by *Southern Journal of Linguistics*, 27(1), 66-88.

These authors investigate what happens when misunderstandings occur while reading in a second language. They analyze written recalls of a Spanish passage that contain a higher number of misunderstandings compared to other passages with low numbers of misunderstandings in the recalls. Findings reveal that most misunderstandings could be categorized as linguistically-based or cognitively-related, and that misunderstandings hinder comprehension. In addition, the researchers profile the reading behavior of learners with limited foreign language proficiency and report that readers process the language they understand and then readers fill in the voids with propositions that work, even if they don't make sense.

Lexis

Farley, A. P. & Keating, G. D. (2004). Familiarity effects on lexical access during L2 word reading. In C. Brantmeier (Ed.), *Adult foreign language reading: Theory, research and implications*. Volume published by *Southern Journal of Linguistics*, 27(1), 30-44.

The authors explore whether low-level learners of Spanish can perform as well as or better than more advanced bilinguals on a word-level reading categorization task. Participants had learned the words chosen for the word-reading and categorization task a semester prior to the investigation. Researchers not only examine whether the learners used concept mediation on tasks, but they also account for reaction times. Results reveal that less-fluent readers conceptually mediate while reading and categorizing second language words. The authors contend that it may be more accurate to examine the type of lexical access as associated with the degree of familiarity of lexical items independent of the reader's proficiency level.

Fukkink, R. G., Hulstijn, J., & Simis, A. (2005) Does training in second-language word recognition skills affect reading comprehension? An experimental study. *Modern Language Journal*, 89, 54-75.

With Grade 8 Dutch first language learners, the authors conducted two different experiments to investigate the automatization of lexical access in a second language with computer-based training. In the first experiment, findings reveal that for words on which students were trained, lexical access is faster and less variable. Results of the second experiment show that lexical access for some words is accelerated but is not more automatic. This article is the first to examine the connections between speed of word access and higher-order second language comprehension.

Pulido, D. (2004). The relationship between text comprehension and second language incidental vocabulary acquisition: A matter of topic familiarity. *Language Learning*, 54, 469-523.

With second language learners, this investigation examines the effects of topic familiarity and explores the relationships between the following factors: second language reading comprehension and intake; meaning recognition and production; and retention of new lexical items. Findings indicate a constant function of comprehension in lexical gain and retention. Differential patterns of relationship in intake emerge due to topic familiarity effects.

Wang, M. & Koda, K. (2005). Commonalities and differences in word identification skills among learners of English as a second language. *Language Learning*, 55, 71-98.

With Chinese and Korean university students of English as a second language, this investigation examines word identification skills in a naming experiment and an auditory judgment task. Findings reveal that both language groups were faster and more accurate with naming performance on high-frequency words than low frequency words. The same findings held true on regular words over exception words. Findings offer insights into common and unique processes involved in second language reading with learners of different first language backgrounds.

Metacognition

Van Gelderen, A., Schoonen, R., de Glopper, K., Hulstijn, J., Simis, A., Snellings, P., & Stevenson, M. (2004). Linguistic knowledge, processing speed, and metacognitive knowledge in first- and second-language reading comprehension: A componential analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 96, 19-30.

This study examines the differences in the contributions of processing speed and other components of first and second language comprehension. Findings indicate substantial correlations between most processing speed components and reading comprehension. When linguistics and metacognitive knowledge are controlled for, there are no unique contributions to the explanation of either first or second language reading comprehension. Authors include a discussion of results within a theoretical and conceptual framework.

Practical implications (Methods and materials)

Carlo, M. S., August, D., & McLaughlin, B. (2004). Closing the gap: Addressing the vocabulary needs of English-language learners in bilingual and mainstream classrooms. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 39, 188-215.

With Anglo and Latino fifth graders, the authors investigate whether gaps in reading performance are associated with gaps in vocabulary knowledge. An intervention group received

instruction designed to improved vocabulary knowledge. Findings reveal that, by teaching word analysis and vocabulary learning strategies, reading comprehension improves.

Fonder-Solano, L. & Burnett, J. (2004). Teaching literature/reading: A dialogue on professional growth. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37, 459-469.

Two university professors conducted a comparative qualitative study of their third-year reading course. Through extensive interviews and other data sources, the researchers analyzed teaching beliefs, practices and perceptions. Findings reveal important implications for curricular changes and classroom practices. An important part of this article is the emphasis on the connection between a literature and language education professor.

Helman, L. A. (2005). Using literacy assessment results to improve teaching for English language learners. *Reading Teacher*, 58, 668-677.

With participants from 52 high-risk schools, the author examines the progress of English-only students and English learners on a variety of literacy assessments. Findings indicate that a higher percentage of Spanish-speaking students continue to be at the beginning reading levels throughout primary grades. Overall, the analysis provides ways in which literacy assessments offer a rich understanding of the strategies and needs of English learners.

Jacobs, G. & Yong, S-T. (2004). Using cooperative learning to teach via text types. *The Reading Matrix*, 4(2), 117-126.

This article emphasizes collaboration as a key variable involved in reading varying text types. The authors offer a thorough discussion of teaching text types and cooperative learning. They suggest detailed examples of techniques involved in cooperative learning that expand familiarity of different text types and prior topic knowledge.

The reading process

Donato, R. & Brooks, F. B. (2004). Literary discussions and advanced speaking functions: Researching the (dis)connection. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37, 183-199.

With students from advanced undergraduate literature courses, this investigation examines how classroom discussion about literature enhances the development of advanced language functions. Through transcripts of literary discussions in classrooms as well as instructor and student interviews, the researchers report that students are not using the language in advanced ways. The authors promote classroom discussions that require complex thinking in complex language.

Lee, J. F. & Binkowski, D. (2004). The effects of input frequency, temporal indicators, and pre-reading questions on L2 reading comprehension. In C. Brantmeier (Ed.), *Adult foreign language reading: Theory, research and implications*. Volume published by *Southern Journal of Linguistics*, 27(1), 7-29.

Lee and Binkowski examine the comprehension of Spanish future tense morphology while reading in a L2. More specifically, they investigate the effects of pre-reading questions, input frequency and lexical temporal indicators on reading comprehension. Results reveal that the effect of input frequency is the strongest and most consistent effect. Findings also suggest that answering pre-reading questions does not always enhance comprehension.

Ahmad, I. S. & Asraf, M. R. (2004). Making sense of text: Strategies used by good and average readers. *The Reading Matrix*, 4(1), 26-37.

This article examines reading comprehension strategies of four readers of Malay (L1) and English (L2). The authors discuss the differences in how good and average readers utilize a hierarchy of subskills. Findings support the importance of teaching comprehension monitoring strategies and vocabulary. The authors recommend reflective reading that encourages process-oriented instruction in order to enhance critical reading.

Reviews

James, C. J. (2004). Reading about reading German: A sample of readings. In C. Brantmeier (Ed.), *Adult foreign language reading: Theory, research and implications*. Volume published by *Southern Journal of Linguistics*, 27(1), 88-93.

James reviews selected research from two major journals on the teaching and learning of reading skills in German. He emphasizes studies that have been conducted on the learner, the teacher, and the instruments used to assess reading in German. The review of articles highlights the selection of different types of reading texts for classroom instruction and also notes the contributions of research on reading processes.

Testing and assessment

Brantmeier, C. (2005). Effects of reader's knowledge, text type, and test type on L1 and L2 reading comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89(1), 37-53.

With 293 learners from Costa Rica and the USA, this study examines how a reader's subject knowledge, the analogy versus nonanalogy difference in text type, and type of test (written recall, sentence completion, and multiple choice) affect L1 and L2 reading comprehension. Subject knowledge relates significantly to reading comprehension as measured by three different assessment tasks. The addition of analogies does not compensate for the lack of subject knowledge. A positive effect of the nonanalogy version of the text held true for the written recall only.

Theoretical issues

Bernhardt, E. B. (2005). Progress and procrastination in second language reading. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 25, 133-150.

In this chapter Bernhardt begins with a discussion of the evolution of L2 reading research and thought from the 1970s and 1980s, and then moves into a review of research from the 1990s that examines the interdependence of language and literacy hypothesis versus the threshold hypothesis. The author details the necessary components of a contemporary second language reading model, and includes a discussion of impediments to conducting second language reading research. The author exemplifies how research on second language reading goes "well beyond the borders of applied linguistics" (p. 133).

Brantmeier, C. (2004). Building a comprehensive theory of adult foreign language reading: A variety of variables and research methods. In C. Brantmeier (Ed.), *Adult foreign language reading: Theory, research and implications*. Volume published by *Southern Journal of Linguistics*, 27(1), 1-6.

The author reviews the most comprehensive, interactive model that captures both bottom-up and top-down processing. She discusses how new research, with adult learners of several different languages across stages of language instruction, validates the theory. A review of reading research methods that includes both qualitative and quantitative procedures is included. This article could be used for a reading research methodology course.

Proctor, C. P., Carlo, M., August, D., & Snow, C. (2005). Native Spanish-speaking children reading in English: Toward a model of comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 97, 246-256.

Through a structural equation model of second language reading comprehension, the authors test the reading comprehension of 135 Spanish-speaking 4th grade English-language learners. Overall results indicate that along with adequate second language decoding ability, second language vocabulary knowledge is crucial for enhancing English reading comprehension of Spanish-speaking English language learners.

Books and volumes treating L2 reading

Brantmeier, C. (Ed.). (2004). *Adult foreign language reading: Theory, research and implications*. Volume published by *Southern Journal of Linguistics*, 27(1).

This special volume consists of a collection of up-to-date articles that reflect the multifarious nature of foreign language reading with adults. Each report either offers new empirical evidence or examines existing investigations to support a comprehensive theory of reading research (see articles in volume listed above by topic). This volume is not an exhaustive representation of all facets of reading research and theory; rather, it serves to advance existing knowledge on the

topic. Each paper went through a rigorous review process and was anonymously reviewed by two different applied linguists or second language acquisitionists in the field. The purpose of bringing these papers together is to illustrate the diversity and unique perspectives of each researcher while simultaneously showing that there are pieces of a shared, comprehensive, and interactive theory reflected in each paper.

Byrnes, H. & Maxim, H. (Eds.). (2004). *Advanced foreign language learning: A challenge to college programs. Issues in Language Program Direction. Massachusetts: Heinle.*

This special volume includes explores advanced instructed learning at university levels with different learner groups and learning goals. The volume includes a chapter concerning genre reading and cultural literacy through the précis, and another chapter involving a genre-based cognitive approach to advance second language literacy. The chapters offer literature reviews as well as practical implications.

Koda, K. (2005). *Insights into second language reading: A cross-linguistic approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

This volume explores the multiple dimensions of second language reading while emphasizing the differences and similarities in first and second language reading. The book covers major aspects of the reading process including theoretical foundations, lexical development, sentence level processing, text structure, individual differences, and comprehension. The book provides operational definitions for key variables involved in the L2 reading process. The author explores directions for future research in L2 reading. Finally, the book includes practical implications that are based on recent theory and research.

Dissertations treating L2 reading

Chung, L. L. (2005). A qualitative study of peer-assisted learning for college English as a foreign language learners in Taiwan. *The Humanities and Social Sciences*, 65, 2474.

Florencio, D. C. (2005). The role of prior background knowledge in the reading comprehension of EFL Brazilian college students and American college students. *The Humanities and Social Sciences*, 65, 2488.

Guikema, J. P. (2005). Learners as agents of development: An activity theory and folk linguistic analysis of foreign language literacy. *The Humanities and Social Sciences*, 65, 3312.

Sáez, L. M. (2005). The influence of working memory functioning on the reading and language performance of bilingual second grades. *The Humanities and Social Sciences*, 65, 2899.

Shen, H.-J. (2005). Motivational and self-regulated learning components in relation to language learners' self-assessment, reading strategy use and reading achievement. *The Humanities and Social Sciences*, 65, 3279-80.

Note

1. The Editor of this feature attempted to include all related articles that appear in other venues. However, undoubtedly, this list is not exhaustive.

About the Editor

Cindy Brantmeier is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics and Spanish, Washington University in St. Louis. She is Co-Director of the Graduate Certificate in Language Instruction and Director of Advanced Spanish. She also oversees language program assessment and placement. Dr. Brantmeier has published articles concerning interacting variables in adult second language reading, reading research methodology, testing and assessment, and other related areas. She was recently nominated to the College Board's World Advisory Committee for Advanced Placement, and she is also a new member of RFL's editorial board.

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