Meeting of English faculty to discuss Reading
March 17, 2014
Notes

Present: Jason Adachi, Phil Bennett, Monica Hamciuc, Anne Howard, Brendan Rodda, Johanna Sandberg, Tim Stoeckel (is this right?)

Summary of Reading
1. J. Sandberg summarized *Learning to Read in Another Language* and *Extensive Reading* (both Nation):

   a. The first chapter outlines some differences between reading in the L1 and the L2; it also describes the four strands of an L2 program

   b. The second chapter discusses extensive reading
      - ER can be a part of two strands of an L2 program: fluency (where all language encountered is known) and meaning-focused input (where nearly all language is known)
      - Planning an ER program requires care
        – about 500,000 words per year
        – learners need access to many enjoyable, interesting texts
        – need to define learners vocabulary level so that appropriate texts can be read
        – ER should be supported with speed reading, explicit vocabulary & grammar work
        – it is important to read regularly
        – it is important to read 5+ books per level so that level-vocabulary gets recycled
        – It is important not to skip levels so as to gain exposure to targeted words at each level
      - simplified words are used in ER to reduce number of low-frequency words
2. P. Bennett summarized *Reading Faster* (Nation)
   a. This chapter describes the physiological features of reading
      - fixations – most, but not all, words are fixated upon (grammar words are not)
      - jumping – jump over some words, averaging 1.2 words per fixation
      - regressions – skilled readers regress, or reread, about 15 of 100 words
      - the physiological limit for careful reading is 300 wpm (scanning/skimming would be faster)
      - slower readers tend to fixate on smaller features, take more time, and make more regressions
   b. nature of fluency development
      - need to improve word recognition
      - improve recognition of longer chunks of text
      - it is a set of sub-skills that become automatized
        – through repeated tasks (e.g., repeated reading)
        – rich are varied exposure (e.g., ER)
      - three groups of activities for fluency development
        – increasing oral reading speed: important for decoding texts (e.g., repeating

reading, paired reading, 4-3-2, ER aloud, read and look up)
- – careful silent reading: speed reading, easy ER, silent repeated reading, issue logs
- – expeditious reading: skimming, scanning (Nation claims this is somewhat less useful as a classroom activity because it is a combination of skimming and careful reading)

3. B. Rodda summarized *Fluency in Reading* (Grabe)
   a. reading fluency is defined as the ability to read quickly and accurately
   b. the sub-skills of fluency
      - include
         - – word recognition
         - – reading rate
         - – accuracy in comprehension
      - require automaticity
      - take much time to develop
      - occurs in implicit learning
   c. activities recommended for fluency development are
      - ER
      - rereading
      - word-recognition development
   d. L2 research
      - we used to think that fluency and accuracy competed with one another; we now think they are complementary (based on correlations between the two)
      - word recognition training
         - – improves word recognition
         - – improves reading comprehension
      - re-reading practice
         - – improves fluency
         - – comprehension
      - ER develops
         - – comprehension
         - – fluency
         - – vocabulary
      - timed reading develops reading speed

Points of Discussion

1. Re-reading is well supported in the literature

2. We need to get many more ER books. Johanna has started making a list of Oxford Bookworms books to add to our collection.

3. Is a goal of 500,000 words per year a good target for our students?

   a. We discussed how to make ER books more available to students if the word target were increased significantly. A problem, especially during breaks, is that currently students may check out just one ER book at a time.

      - We could have ER books available in the ARC, but there would be no gimmick to ensure that they are returned promptly.

- There are some graded readers available in regular circulation in the library; these can be checked out in greater number.
- We should try to get the library policy changed; this may be possible if we had a greater number of books in the collection.

4. There are some class sets of ER readers in the ARC.

5. It would be useful to learn how well students like each book and to possibly get multiple copies of well-liked books.

   a. We could add a rating sheet to the inside cover of all ER books in library as an easy way for students to rate books and to see other students' ratings.

6. We talked about the importance of explaining the purpose for fluency-building activities to students because otherwise students may not understand their importance.

7. We could add a timed reading section to the assessment to help us learn more about students' reading speed and to help them understand its importance.

8. We talked about whether having students read aloud in content classes was done and whether we thought it was useful.

9. We talked about the relationship between comprehension and the ability to read aloud with appropriate prosody.