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**Beyond ABC: Investigating Current
Rationales and Systems for the Teaching
of Early Reading to Young Learners of
English**

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English
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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my parents and also of Mr Hedley Jones, an inspired primary headmaster who shaped the futures of many young readers.

Declaration

None of the material included in this thesis has been published before. The thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

Abstract

The premise of this thesis is that the role of the first steps in reading in courses for Young Learners of English (YL) at the beginner stage is a neglected area, with anomalies centred around the fact that 'words on the page' are often treated as if they were facilitative from the outset for language work in areas such as speaking while very little support is offered to children as to how to decode these words.

Chapter 1 (Introduction) traces the rapid spread of YL teaching worldwide and considers the preparation of teachers for their roles. Materials are discussed as an important source of support and structure for teachers and a case is made for a focus in the main study on systems and rationales for early reading found among teachers themselves or evidenced in published materials.

Chapter 2 (Literature Review) discusses relevant issues for systematic support for YL in their first steps in reading English. Areas discussed are: Teacher Cognition, Sociocultural inductions to reading, Orthographic Depth, Phonology, research on reading development across languages and influences in the YL world of established early reading methods for English native-speaking children.

Chapter 3 (Research Methodology) justifies the decision to investigate the area via two main studies: (1) questionnaires and in-depth interviews with EYL professionals and (2) close analysis of course materials. It is argued that the qualitative stance of the former is not in conflict with the more objective and quantitative handling of course material data since both are appropriate ways of focusing on the same issue. A third, small-scale, study of the publishing experiences of curriculum experts and materials writers is justified and described.

Chapter 4 (Findings) reports and integrates the findings of both main studies and summarizes the findings from the study with curriculum experts and materials writers. Main findings are that EYL professionals tend not to put linguistic considerations high in their priorities for decision-making and that materials analyzed had an underlay in the Alphabetic Principle but were dominated by 'ABC' ordering of Reading-Focal items and included activities which tended not to promote pattern-seeking or other behaviour likely to lead to 'self-teaching'.

Chapter 5 (Discussion) discusses the significance of the findings of the two main studies and uses the results of the third study to add balance to the materials analysis study. Limitations of, and reflections on, the research are discussed.

Chapter 6 (Conclusions) draws implications for professional education, pedagogy and materials illustrated by examples in the Appendices. Claims are made for the contributions of the study that (1) it opens up discussion on an area of YL teaching which has been neglected both in the research literature and in practical materials creation (2) through the use of in-depth interviews it allows a voice for EYL professionals which has not been heard before (3) the concepts of Reading-Focal versus Vehicular language in YL course materials are claimed as new and useful, leading directly (4) to procedures and analysis tools which can be used with any set of YL materials. Directions for further research building on this thesis are indicated.

Key Terms and Abbreviations Used

BANA	British, Australasian and North American
CA	Conversation Analysis
CLIL	Content-Language Integrated Instruction
CV	Consonant-Vowel
CVC	Consonant-Vowel-Consonant
DFES	Department of Education and Science (UK)
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
GA	General American
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELL	Early Language Learning
EYL	English for Young Learners
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LFC	Lingua Franca Core
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
MOE	Ministry of Education
REL1	Reading in English as a First Language
REYL	Reading in English for Young Learners of English as a Foreign or Second Language
RL1	Reading in one's First Language
RP	Received Pronunciation
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
YL	Young Learners

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Chapter 1: Background and Premises for the Thesis

1.1 Introduction and Overview

This thesis concerns the rationales with regard to early reading instruction found in the field of teaching English as a foreign or second language to primary school children. The rapid spread of English Language Teaching in primary schools worldwide not only places new responsibilities on many teachers who now need to teach a foreign language to their pupils, but in many contexts involves aspects in which mainstream ELT intersects with mainstream education and requires particular skills and knowledge on the part of teachers and materials creators. One high-profile specialist example is Content-Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). However, it is my contention that the area of first steps in reading is another such area and has gone almost untreated in either pedagogical or research literature. My special focus is on whether there are rationales and well-developed systems in both activities and syllabus content. The word 'rationale' and related terms are key to this study and more discussion of the meanings assigned to them and of my justifications for this orientation will appear in section 1.9.1. The main study will investigate not only rationales held by a set of EYL teachers but also the support that is available to teachers in building their rationales via the content and organization of teaching materials designed by other professionals for Young Learners. I am writing from the point of view of a teacher educator with a background in primary textbook writing and textbook project work and therefore a strong interest in course materials.

For the purposes of this thesis, the term 'Young Learners' (henceforth also YL) will be used to refer to children for whom English is not a first language, learning English in instructional situations in contexts outside those in which English is the official first language. This essentially means children learning at school in countries to which Kachru (1990) refers as belonging to the Outer and Expanding Circles as far as the role of English is concerned. The process and practice of teaching English to such children will be referred to as English for Young Learners or EYL. The age range focused upon in the thesis is one which encompasses the variety of age ranges for primary school education in most contexts, that is, between 5 and 12 years old. However, where relevant, there will also be discussion of the teaching of children who may meet English at an earlier age, in nursery school or kindergarten, as well as of the teaching of some children who may be over 12 years old by the time the transition to the secondary stage of schooling is made. The main focus is on English in the state sector, although the teaching of English in the private sector will also be

discussed in the cases where private and public sector teaching intersects or competes in a particular context.

Overview of the chapter:

- 1.2 English for Young Learners in Outer and Expanding Circle Contexts
- 1.3 The Development of Professionalism in the field of EYL
- 1.4 Curricular Advice and Requirements in EYL
- 1.5 Anomalies and Doubts with Regard to Roles for Reading in EYL
- 1.6 Course Materials as Sources of Guidance and Teacher Development
- 1.7 Developments in Materials Provision in EYL
- 1.8 Motivation for a Focus on Early Reading in English in this Thesis
- 1.9 Orientations of this study
- 1.10 Use of Terms concerning system and rationales

- 1.11 Possible contributions of this study

1.2 English for Young Learners in Outer and Expanding Circle contexts

The decision to cover both Outer and Expanding Circle contexts is one which I acknowledge gives the study a broad scope. However, it is a decision that I have taken for at least one powerful reason, in that I hope to make a contribution to the particular area of teacher education in which I have been engaged for the past 20 years, that is the area of in-service and postgraduate study for experienced EYL professionals. Postgraduate and most other courses in this field the UK do not distinguish in their intake between professionals from Outer and Expanding Circle contexts, and I feel that it is appropriate therefore to address issues relevant to both sets of contexts. A second benefit of the broad scope is that the similarities and contrasts between issues in the two types of context may serve to throw each into clearer relief.

1.2.1 English for Young Learners in Outer Circle contexts

A fundamental difference between EYL in Outer and Expanding Circle contexts is that for the most part English has been much longer established at primary school level in the often ex-British colonial territories that make up Outer Circle contexts. In a number

of cases, especially in some African contexts, English is the official language of instruction in the state primary school sector, but in all it holds a focal position in the curriculum. This longstanding presence of English in the curriculum has not excluded the EYL profession in Outer Circle contexts from innovations. In the last two decades, new curricula, new materials projects and new primary teacher education projects have been implemented in contexts such as Cameroon, India, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka, all of which contexts will have a place in my study. A number of these projects has specifically involved attention to early literacy in English.

1.2.2 English for Young Learners in Expanding Circle contexts

Expanding Circle countries are those in which English is traditionally called a Foreign Language, although, as supported by discussions in McKay (2002, pp. 9 - 11), in a number of them such as The Netherlands and Costa Rica it seems to have greater currency outside formal schooling than in some territories of the Outer Circle. In the history of education seen internationally since the Second World War there have been two periods of time in which educationists and researchers have shown particular interest in the teaching of languages to younger children in Expanding Circle contexts. The first, extending from approximately 1960 to 1975, and concentrated mostly in Europe, was notable for its interest in the methodological potential of new technologies of the time such as film strip and language laboratories (see, for example, Bonjour Line (Gauvenet & Hassan, 1963) but also in linguistic issues such as the repertoire of structures and vocabulary that should be aimed at with the children. Studies of children's language were prominent, such as the CREDIF child language survey with French speaking children in France (Leclercq, 1969) and its reciprocal counterpart in the UK (Handscombe, 1969). There were also large scale experimental teaching projects with accompanying evaluations such as the French from Eight experiment in the UK (see Burstall, Jamieson, Cohen, & Hargreaves, 1974) which have had an impact, at least on educational rhetoric, to this day. This period generated a major book by Stern (1967) and was discussed in detail in a survey article by Stern and Weinrib (1977).

The second period, which is that with which this thesis is concerned, can be dated from approximately 1980 to the present day. The term English for Young Learners (EYL) is one which came into use over this period and it neatly demarcates this present phase of interest from the earlier one. EYL had a relatively slow beginning, mostly in European countries, and an acceleration during the 1990s and first

decade of the present century which saw near globalization of interest in Primary School English. English at primary level expanded during the 1990s into a large number of countries outside Europe, with, for example, South Korea (Lee, 2009) and Taiwan (Butler, 2009, p. 25) investing major resources in the late 1990s in a switch from starting English at Junior High or Middle School to starting it in primary school. In China (Wang, Lin, & Ma, An Impact Study of a TEYL Innovation Project in Beijing, China, 2009, p. 223) a major curriculum reform in 2001 added English to the primary curriculum from Grade 3 with a further lowering of the starting age in some regions in subsequent years.

Although educational authorities in many contexts, particularly in Europe, as we can see from Eurydice reports (Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2008 Edition, 2008), demonstrate interest in and commitment to teaching a number of different languages at primary school, the attainment of English of an ever more important international role during this period has meant that in most countries English will normally be one of the options for children learning another language at primary level and in many it is the only option. Graddol (2006, pp. 88-91) discusses the state of EYL teaching in the early 21st century, emphasizing the degree to which it has become integrated into social planning or at least political ambition in some countries:

Indeed EYL is often not just an educational project, but also a political and economic one. A remarkable number of governments talk not only about the need to learn a foreign language but of an ambition to make their country bilingual.

Much of the decision-making concerning the introduction of primary English during our era seems to have been heavily top down (Enever & Moon, 2009, p. 5) and often spurred by political responses to parent-power in a climate of public debate in which the slogan 'The Younger the Better' with regard to foreign language learning tends to be uncritically accepted. It is not the purpose of this thesis to engage further with the debate about the optimum age for beginning language learning in a school setting, but rather to investigate the consequences in classroom and materials design terms of an early start with English with particular reference to the role that reading plays in EYL courses.

Several summaries of the progress of EYL introductions exist, amongst which is an early state of the art article (Rixon, 1992) which overtly responds to issues raised in the 1997 article by Stern and Weinrib mentioned above. At later dates, Kubanek-German (1998) and Blondin et al (1998) discussed developments in primary foreign Language teaching specifically in Europe, an account by Moon and Nikolov (2000) was given of progress with primary English teaching worldwide drawn from papers given at a research conference and Nikolov and Curtain (2000) edited a volume of similar scope for the Council of Europe. More recently, we have the proceedings of a major international conference on EYL policy and practice held in Bangalore in 2008, edited by Enever, Moon, & Raman (2009). This volume was enriched by a comprehensive introductory chapter on EYL expansion and its consequences (Enever & Moon, 2009). A recurring theme in these accounts is the speed, sometimes haste, with which changes have been implemented within school systems, with a particular stress point being adequate provision of EYL teachers, or rather provision of teachers who were adequately prepared and oriented for their new tasks or, in many cases, their radical career-change.

Rixon (in Moon & Nikolov, 2000, p. 161), reporting on findings of a questionnaire-based survey of EYL policy and practice set up for the British Council in 1999, stated:

Teacher supply problems in the state school sector were reported in a high proportion of the countries so far addressed. ... In a large proportion of these cases, the teacher supply problem seemed to result in a relaxation of the official criteria or qualifications for eligibility as a teacher of English in the primary school system. Informants in other countries reported an adequate supply of officially qualified teachers but considerable controversy about whether those teachers were adequately prepared in terms of language and methodology.

In a repeat of this survey, conducted in 2011 (Rixon, forthcoming), the results were similar concerning the challenges to teachers and the need for adequate training to be provided. Of the responses from 62 contexts received by July 2011 in only 17 (27%) contexts was it reported that there were sufficient teachers of English to cover the needs of all primary schools and in the comments by respondents there were

frequent references to the lack of fully- trained EYL teachers. For example:

Training teachers takes a long time. The training that is done in Taiwan simply cannot catch up with the demand. Too many teachers of English are originally teachers of other subjects.

Israel struggles to recruit and keep English teachers. It is constantly advertising fast-track retraining programmes. Proficiency of the English teachers is often an issue, as it is not uncommon for a teacher to be moved from their specialisation into English.

1.3 The Development of Professionalism in the field of EYL

Different solutions have been sought to address the problem of supply of adequately equipped EYL teachers. A measure which aimed at ensuring staff supply for the longer term was the creation during the early to mid 1990s of specially designed pre-service teacher training courses in countries such as Hungary, Poland and The Czech Republic. Projects in the aforementioned countries were originally supported with professional advice by the British Council and training in the UK for key staff but after some years became autonomous. See, for example, Komorowska, McGovern, & Potter (1999) on Poland and Coleman & Griffiths (2004) on the Czech Republic. In many contexts, attempts have been made to extend the repertoire of existing qualified primary school teachers who were not English Language specialists by providing in-service training in language teaching methodology and intensive language improvement courses, some of which culminate in examinations and the certification of teachers as ready for EYL teaching. The British Council 2011 survey shows this in-service certification to be the case in contexts such as Italy and China. Shim and Baik (2003) report on the courses set up in South Korea to allow would-be EYL teachers to raise their language attainment and develop classroom skills. Another cadre from which EYL teachers may be drawn is that of already-established English specialists, often originally trained as secondary school teachers. According to the first British Council EYL survey (2000) secondary school teachers were eligible to teach YL in a number of contexts such as Croatia, Cyprus, France (with a quoted 35.3% of EYL teachers in this category at the time), Greece, Hungary and several others. Recent results from the 2011 survey suggest that this option continues in a number of contexts. For secondary school English specialists, who are often highly

proficient in English, training in methodology suitable for teaching younger children has often been seen as the main need. For example, South Korea according to the 2000 survey allowed secondary school teachers to teach primary children provided they had passed a specialist retraining course. Courses in this area are, however, more rarely found in the literature than language improvement courses for existing primary school teachers.

In the early days of this present period of EYL teaching, in most contexts the majority of recruits to EYL teaching had not themselves been learners of English at primary school but had started their English learning careers either at some point in the secondary school system or, less frequently, in a private language school. Empathy with the concerns and responses of young children learning languages as part of the school curriculum would thus not have been augmented by their own memories of the process. Only now in the second decade of the 21st century, in countries such as Greece, where EYL teaching has been established in the state school system since the early 1990s, are we meeting recently-appointed teachers who have had the experience of learning the language as state primary school pupils and have moved through the educational system, eventually emerging as EYL teachers themselves. The situation with regard to educators of EYL teachers has been even more stark, in that in the first years of EYL in most contexts there were few academics or recognized teacher trainers who themselves had had substantial classroom experience in this field. Again, although some have emerged from the teaching body in recent years, often after successful involvement in national or international projects involving materials creation or in-service training, it is still true to say that not all contexts demand or even expect that senior advisory or training figures should have their roots in the same primary school professional area as the people to whom they act as teacher educators or mentors.

The result of these pressures and movements is that, although there is by now beginning to be a recognizable profession in EYL, from context to context it is populated by a highly diverse set of individuals in terms of their backgrounds and methodological training and in terms of their subject knowledge concerning the English language. This thesis is in no way preaching the need for greater uniformity of profiles for members of the EYL profession, but part of my purpose is to investigate an area in which care in construction of syllabus and materials may help to bring greater coherence and confidence to teaching.

1.4 Curricular advice and requirements in EYL

If we investigate the language of officially-stated aims for EYL, particularly in Expanding Circle contexts, considerable uniformity may be found, to the extent that some cross-fertilization, if not direct appropriation, of aims from one context to another may be suspected. Pinter (2006, p. 38) provides a useful summary:

The aims and objectives of primary English programmes usually include the following possibilities:

- Develop children's basic communication abilities in English
- Encourage enjoyment and motivation
- Promote learning about other cultures
- Develop children's cognitive skills
- Develop children's metalinguistic awareness
- Encourage 'learning to learn'.

Appendix 1.1 shows extracts from a range of curricular documents which may serve to substantiate this point.

The findings of the British Council survey of 2011 suggest that in a number of contexts, even though the teaching of EYL is strongly supported, even reinforced, by the authorities, this is often counterweighted by very open and general specifications of exactly what should be included in terms of language and skills content and of what is expected in terms of language attainment by the end of primary school. This raises an issue strongly underlined by Giovanazzi (1991) with regard to the aims and objectives of the introduction of MFL (Modern Foreign Languages) in primary schools in Scotland, but which holds good for all ELL (Early Language Learning). This is whether the teaching of foreign languages at primary school level should be seen as a period of gentle awareness-building (what Giovanazzi calls 'softening up') or one in which appreciable proficiency in the language is the aim. There are many in the profession who agree with Giovanazzi that, given the high hopes, the considerable government investment and the upheavals in the personal and professional lives of teachers that have accompanied many of the introductions of primary foreign language teaching in Expanding Circle contexts, to aim at less than appreciable proficiency is unacceptable. In the case of Outer Circle contexts, English is often the key to accessing the school curriculum, and even where it is not the medium of

instruction, English is seen as the key to social and economic advancement in societies in which it has important day-to-day functions (Coleman, 2011). Arriving at an appropriate level of proficiency by the end of primary school is a strong imperative in these contexts.

Where detailed specifications are provided in curricular documentation, it is often the case that, for primary level children, the speaking and listening modes of the language are emphasized as priorities. The actual or perceived burden thus placed upon teachers who are not confident in their own oral fluency in English has been widely discussed, most recently and at length in Garton, Copland, & Burns (2011) in their large international survey of EYL practitioners.

1.5 Anomalies and doubts with regard to roles for reading in EYL

In spite of the focus on listening and speaking both at official level and in the concerns of teachers themselves, there is evidence from accounts of class observation and other research with Young Learners teachers, for example El-Okda (2005), that reading is seen by many teachers as a very significant mode of operation in the EYL classroom. In the survey of EYL practitioners carried out by Garton, Copland & Burns (2011) 'children reading out loud' had a more than 70% combined response rate for 'every lesson' or 'often'. This was in spite of the fact that, in the rankings given by the respondents for importance of the language areas of Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Vocabulary and Pronunciation, Reading came fifth out of seven, with Pronunciation only marginally higher, and Writing and Grammar in joint lowest ranking. This leads us to one of the main themes of this thesis: the possible tension between (1) a 'taken for granted' use of activities involving reading in class as vehicles or assumed facilitators for language learning in other areas such as speaking and (2) a view of reading in English as a goal for learning that in itself requires systematic development.

Cameron (Cameron, 2001, p. 106) sees the question of the teaching of reading and writing, or rather of their use as a prop to other learning, as one of the key problems in the practice of EYL.

A further important issue is over-reliance at primary level on literacy skills in English. ...when classroom teaching and learning depend on being able to read and write, some children will always begin to fall behind or to fail – not because they cannot learn to speak English but because they need more time to master the complications of reading and writing.

This issue, which of course requires elaboration of the different definitions of 'literacy' and 'reading' that may operate within EYL teaching, will be discussed further in the Literature Review, section 2.2, and probed in the interviews and materials analysis that make up the main study.

Reading (with some writing) also seems to be vital, in many teachers' views, for the implementation of assessment. In a questionnaire survey undertaken in the late 1990s (Rea-Dickins & Rixon, 1999) all the primary teachers from nearly 20 countries surveyed said that their main teaching goals were to develop the children's listening and speaking. However, their major means of assessment was through written 'pencil and paper' tests and none of them reported carrying out any oral/aural assessment. In some sectors of Expanding Circle EYL and in elite institutions in some Outer Circle contexts, the Young Learners tests provided by Cambridge ESOL since 1996 have become very widespread and it should be noted that the Cambridge ESOL tests, even at the lowest 'Starters' level, involve some element of reading and writing in addition to listening and speaking. Specifications for approximate input text-lengths in the 3 levels of tests as given in the Handbook for Teachers (Cambridge ESOL, 2007, p. 23) are 100 words for the 'Starters' test (typically for age 7, or a Year 1 to 2 elementary student) 500 words for 'Movers' (typically for ages 8 to 11) and 700 words for 'Flyers' (typically for ages 9 to 12).

1.6 Course materials as sources of guidance and teacher development

The above discussion of the state of EYL teacher education in many contexts, leads to the consideration of teaching materials as a potential contribution to the professional support of many teachers. It is perhaps useful here to underline the point that much teaching of EYL, and reading within it, is heavily structured by textbook material, unlike the more teacher-created experiences familiar for the teaching of L1 reading in mainstream primary schools in contexts such as the UK, in which a range of resources such as worksheets, board work and reading schemes is normally deployed. The 2011 survey by Garton et al shows a large majority of teachers characterizing the textbook as 'very useful' in planning lessons and most others finding it 'somewhat useful'.

Hutchinson & Torres (1994) in their classic article The Textbook as Agent of Change make a clear case for the role of course materials in teacher support and

development in three main areas. Firstly, new materials may often, when resources allow, form a nucleus for face-to-face teacher orientation courses, through which new concepts and approaches may be shared and discussed using the concrete examples provided by the new materials. Secondly, and this is a major thread in this thesis, carefully-conceived and transparently-presented materials have the potential in themselves, even when no training is available, to guide teachers through the implementation of new activities and sequences of activities. The third, less immediately visible, area of support, also very important for this thesis, is that materials carry within themselves a syllabus in terms of linguistic content, and the sequencing, manner and frequency of presentation and recycling of that content.

The potential of course materials as support and guidance for teachers is only likely to be strongly realized in cases where the materials writers themselves are working from a firm set of principles regarding the aims of their materials and have a stable basis of technical knowledge that will allow them to imbue the materials with those principles in a manner that conveys itself clearly to the teachers. Even in such conditions it is well documented (Karavas-Doukas, 1995; Dendrinos, 1992) that teachers are adept at adapting or subverting materials to suit their own interpretations, styles or capacities. It is not, however, my purpose in this thesis to follow materials into the classroom from what Rea-Dickins and Germain (1992) refer to as their 'workplan' state on the page, to their 'materials in use' state in which they are implemented by teachers. Rather, I shall be considering the materials as 'found objects', as they would appear to most teachers, unacquainted with their authors. I shall be attempting to devise instruments that provide a good indication of the messages that materials convey about what it is to read and how early reading is best addressed in English as a Foreign Language.

1.7 Developments in materials provision in EYL

Near the beginning of the EYL era under discussion, there were few published EYL materials available. In those Outer Circle countries in which English was already established as part of the school curriculum, locally-published course materials or materials supplied by international publishers with branches or offices in the locality were used. However, most 'new' EYL contexts from the Expanding Circle had no existing local materials for children available and internationally-available EYL materials from large publishing houses were at a minimum. In 1980, the major publisher Longman, for example, had only *Look Listen and Learn* (Alexander, 1968). The picture more than 30 years later is very different, with a recent survey (Arnold &

Rixon, 2008) identifying 78 courses mentioned by one or more of 76 informants, representing 28 countries. Since the responses for this survey came from individuals contacted through EYL networks, the sample was not representative of the world-wide incidence of EYL teaching. The total number of published EYL courses available world-wide must therefore be very considerably greater than 78. As documented by Arnold and Rixon the development in EYL materials provision followed a similar pattern to that of EYL introduction, with a gradual start in the 1980s and great acceleration from the early 1990s onward. A number of types of materials provision were found:

1.7.1 Materials aimed at an international EYL market

Typically, these were created by writers appointed by a publishing house based in an Inner Circle country. Some of the authors had a UK primary mother tongue teaching and/or a primary English Language Teaching background while others were established general course material authors with no particular Young Learners profile but with known skills as writers.

Early examples, with the publication dates of the first level of each course, are: Snap! (Heinemann, 1983), Outset (Dunn, Macmillan, 1987), Early Bird (Vale, Cambridge University Press, 1988), Stepping Stones (Ashworth & Clark, Collins, 1989, later Longman ELT/Pearson Education), Tip Top (Rixon, Macmillan, 1989) Chatterbox (Strange, Oxford University Press, 1989). International publishers have continued to invest in what proved to be a lucrative market and new courses are still being published, with Primary Colours (Hicks & Littlejohn, Cambridge University Press, 2002) and the Bugs series (Papiol & Toth, Macmillan, 2004) as leading recent examples.

1.7.2 Materials originally intended for an international EYL market, but adapted or created in special editions to fit the needs of a particular context

A number of international courses, including some of those mentioned above, have at various stages been adopted or approved for use by Ministries of Education in particular contexts, usually resulting in a special edition, particularly with regard to the Teacher's Book. This frequently occurred on the introduction of English to the state primary schools in a particular country, often to be discontinued when suitable locally-produced materials became available. Such course materials might have been designated as the sole ones for authorized use, or chosen to be among sets of

materials from different publishers which it was permitted to use in state primary schools. This was an important area for publishers, particularly in the early 1990s when educational systems found themselves under pressure to provide suitable teaching materials to support novice EYL teachers in their work. An example is the relationship of Oxford University Press with educational authorities in Greece in the early 1990s, resulting in the use of Chatterbox in all Greek primary schools, until the locally produced and published Fun Way course was ready for introduction. Macmillan had similar arrangements with publishers and educational authorities in Hungary, Bulgaria and the Baltic States, resulting in special editions of Tip Top. These special arrangements of the 1990s terminated when the educational authorities were, as in the example of Greece, in a more stable position regarding materials provision. In more recent years, the People's Republic of China has made arrangements, according to different regions, with different foreign publishers in order to supply specially-tailored editions of course materials. One example is Longman's international course Gogo Loves English (Methold, McIntosh & Fitzgerald, Longman, 1994) jointly adapted by the Guangdong Education Bureau Teaching and Research Institute and Pearson Education North Asia Ltd to become Friends with English and which was used in the Guangdong region in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Another is Bingo (Methold & Curtis, McGraw-Hill, 1999) adapted by Beijing Normal University to become Pioneer English. See Wang (2002).

1.7.3 Locally produced and published materials

In some contexts local writers and publishers produced material intended for use either as sole course, or in competition with other local or international materials. In a number of cases (e.g. Greece, Sri Lanka, South Korea) a Ministry of Education has at some stage acted as the commissioner and sponsor of a sole set materials to be used in all state primary schools.

Local textbook creation projects may be funded and controlled entirely locally, but there have also been, especially in the 1990s, a number of EYL writing projects which received funding and professional support from outside organizations, the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) and the British Council prominent amongst them. In the area of primary textbook production, British-supported projects were implemented in countries such as:

- Sri Lanka from 1999 to 2002

http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CELTE/eltarchive/Archive/overview_bycountry.php#84)

- Russia in the early 2000s (<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/elt-projects/textbook-project-russia>)
- Macedonia in the early 2000s (<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/elt-projects/primary-elt-materials-project-macedonia>).

For further information on these and other projects please see the database of British Council supported projects maintained by the Centre for Applied Linguistics, the University of Warwick

<http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CELTE/eltarchive/Archive/overview.php>

Conditions have changed in some contexts regarding the identity and status of local course material writers in that, whereas the position 20 years ago was that high-status individuals such as university teachers tended to write materials for school use, more writers from a primary school teaching background are being invited to join writing teams. In externally-supported or funded projects, a common and often novel pattern emerged, in which the transparent appointment of local writers on the basis of merit and demonstrated skills (Hayes, 2002, p. 39; Fernando, 2002, p. 54) was laid down as a condition by the donors. Training in materials writing for publication was often provided for the successful candidates, and the writing process was supported in-country by curriculum and editorial experts as well as by outside consultants making regular visits. I should declare an interest here in that, between 1999 and 2001, I, acting for the University of Warwick, was consultant to the Sri Lankan primary textbook project. See Fernando (2002). Projects such as this, and a later one, referred to above, for Russian primary textbook writers, managed by the College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth and with professional input from colleagues at the University of Warwick, may be said to have been influential in forming new cadres of materials writers with roots in the primary classroom. Most materials writing projects included provision in-country for orientation and training of teachers who would be receiving the new course materials. The involvement of course writers in this orientation and training has in a number of cases led to their emergence as teacher-educators and a future career in this area.

1.8 Motivation for a focus on early reading in English in this thesis

As we have seen above, data in recent research by Garton et al (2011) neatly

pinpoints the anomaly that in many contexts reading is not seen as a priority area for official focus in EYL teaching yet, in one form or another, is a daily presence in many EYL classrooms. It has also been shown to be an important factor in much assessment. This is a tension that has been of concern to me for some years in my different professional roles as will be explained below.

1.8.1 Considerable uncertainty about English reading by EYL professionals encountered

Between 1991 and 2009 I co-ordinated the English for Young Learners MA course in the Centre for English Language Teacher Education at the University of Warwick (subsequently Centre for Applied Linguistics). This, like most MA courses, is aimed at teachers and other professionals, such as curriculum advisers and materials writers, who have spent a substantial quantity of time in the field, and therefore have had experiences upon which they may draw. My other contacts were with doctoral students with an interest in Young Learners. To these I should add participants on seminars and short courses for teachers of Young Learners both at Warwick and at other institutions.

EYL professionals such as these brought many very diverse notions of the nature of, purposes for, and best approaches to English reading as it figured in their work with YL. A variety of views is to be expected and welcomed if it springs from and fits well with different contextual needs and conditions. However, it often became apparent from class discussion that notions concerning the roles of reading in their contexts were difficult for them to 'unpack' and articulate.

It did not seem to me that the standard ELT training course or teacher advice book on reading covered what these people needed. Much discussion of the methodology of teaching reading to ELT learners of all ages seems to start with the assumption that learners are already able to recognise most of the words on the page or screen and that the teacher's main responsibility is thus to help them to develop useful strategies with regard to their processing and comprehension of written text in English. It is of course appropriate to have successful engagement with text as an ultimate aim, and therefore as a major focus of training courses, yet there seemed to be a considerable gap (including in courses for which I was responsible) in the detailed consideration of ways in which beginners, particularly children who may be at different stages in their development in L1 literacy, and whose L1 may or may not employ the Roman alphabet, can usefully and effectively be given a start towards confident dealings with written or printed English words.

1.8.2 Debate about Early Reading within a Number of EYL Contexts

In some countries at different stages in their introduction of EYL which I have been able to visit for professional purposes uncertainties and debates regarding reading have also emerged, either in terms of methodological choices or at a broader, policy, level. One debate on broad issues concerns the appropriate stage in English learning at which to introduce the written or printed word at all. In countries such as Oman and South Korea there have been discussion and policy changes over relatively few years concerning whether or not the printed and written word should be used from the outset in teaching English to Young Learners or delayed until some level of oral/aural proficiency has been established. See Al-Zedjali & Etherton (2009), for example, on Oman and the reflections of Lee (2009) on South Korea.

1.8.3 Issues Concerning Applications of L1-based Insights to the Teaching of EYL Reading

There is a richly abundant, not to say passionately argued, literature (See for example Chall, 1996) on different approaches to guiding the first steps in reading taken by children for whom English is their native language. There is also evidence that discourse in this area has had an influence on policy makers in different contexts. As Yaacob (2006) reports, the whole structure and terminology of the UK Literacy Hour as specified by the National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching (Department of Education and Employment, 1998) was adopted and used as the basis of primary school English lessons in some parts of Malaysia. At the level of methods, the term 'Phonics' has become current in EYL discourse since the late 1990s and is particularly evident in East Asian countries such as Taiwan. See Sun & Hsieh (2000) and Kuo (2011). The term appears even in the titles of some course materials and in headings and rubrics within others. In addition, UK-based early reading schemes such as Jolly Phonics (Lloyd, 1992) have become well-known in overseas contexts. See, for example, the report for the Gambia on the use of Jolly Phonics (Curriculum Research, Evaluation and Development Directorate, 2009). Many students at Warwick were aware of the penetration of L1 early reading discourse into their professional worlds, but some of them claimed to have found it a source of confusion rather than support. Others, who chose to write dissertations or theses in the area of reading tended to produce Literature Reviews which treated differing approaches to early reading which were hotly debated in the L1 reading world, as if they were neutral, compatible and interchangeable choices.

1.9 Orientations of this study

It should be clear from the above discussion that in the field of YL reading there are many gaps left to fill. Because of my professional situation, largely institution-bound except for short visits away but with ample contacts with the YL professionals discussed above, it seemed logical as well as practicable to undertake a study which at least in part called upon the experiences and views of these professionals. However, the study needed a clearer and more powerful focus than would be provided by simply attempting to add to the few accounts of practices in different contexts to be found in the literature.

The project gradually assumed shape after consideration of some of the key features of the current situation discussed above: the still on-going professionalization of EYL teaching; the textbook-bound nature of much EYL teaching; the potential anomalies presented by 'words on the page' in these printed course materials. This led to a proposal for an investigation of an area of EYL teaching which I have not found addressed in any substantial way in other research but which I would claim to be fundamental: the rationales, systems, approaches and range of strategies for structuring and handling YLs' first encounters with the words printed or written in their English courses. I stress 'first encounters' in that my focus was on what occurs within the first year of EYL teaching. The investigation was to be carried out through elicitations from EYL professionals using questionnaires and interviews and through close examination of the contents and activities of course materials used in EYL contexts.

It was hoped that the findings on ways in which first steps in reading in English may be conceptualized and systematized for Young Learners would be a contribution in itself but that it would also provide the basis for a sustainable set of proposals relative to professional training, to materials design and concerning materials designed to be one means of teacher support and awareness-raising. The credibility of such proposals at this stage must depend on the quality and coherence of discussions carried forward from the Literature Review combined with findings from the main study since empirical investigation of how teachers or children function in this area will not be part of the present study. Nonetheless, I would claim that proposals can feasibly be attempted on this basis. I am working on the premise that views that have been rationalized and approaches that have been systematized are not inimical to other aspects of successful teaching such as warm relationships or sensitive

interactivity between learner and teacher.

1.10 Use of Terms concerning system and rationales

While considering how to characterize the focus and frame the overall argument of this thesis a considerable time was spent weighing the connotations of a cluster of terms in the areas of system and reasoned decision-making and the degree to which it was possible to assign specific meanings to them which would adhere for the duration of the thesis without constant reminders to the reader. The candidate terms, discussed below, were:

Cognition, Principle, Rationale and System.

Cognition and Cognitions, Principles, Rationales and Systems

In section 2.2 of the Literature Review I follow the literature on Teacher Cognition and take 'cognition' in its now accepted value in this context: that is adding opinion as well as affective values to the core connotation of thought processes and reasoning to be found in most dictionary definitions, 'what language teachers think, know and believe' (Borg, 2006 p 1) in short.

The terms 'principles' and 'system' were also considered. Both are useful for a discussion of underlying and coherent plans for action or organization. 'System' seems more focused on static relations or results, for example selection, categorization and listing of language items for presentation, although 'systematize' usefully suggests the processes involved. 'Principles' suggests a set of rules for action already arrived at and consciously-available to the principle-holder. A satisfactory more general term for describing what I hoped to investigate concerning professionals' directly expressed views in this study proved to be 'rationale' – understood not only as a justification of a static current belief but also as a reasoned view of what **courses of action** are necessary for a desired outcome to take place. It seems to encompass not only views of what items should be focused on in learning (whether, for example, letter-names, phonemes or whole words) how they should be selected, sequenced and 'dosed' in a course outline or teaching programme but also to take in views or how teachers and children might best act, that is how they might work with those items and interact in class during that work.

By focusing on the presence and or nature of **rationales** concerning reading in EYL and by making it a key word in the title of the thesis, I am inevitably in this study

foregrounding cognitive issues, both at the level of how teachers and materials writers plan and justify their plans for instructing children, and at the level of the choice and sequencing of the content of what is presented to children. The approach I take is similar to that of Vousden (2008) who, in an article on choice of linguistic input for reading, makes the case for focusing on the characteristics of the patterns of English sound-spelling mapping. However, as I hope the Literature Review and Discussion Chapters will show, I do not in my own cognition isolate and privilege cognitive issues over affective and socio-cultural issues connected with early reading. The reason for the focus in the study is an interest in what materials can help teachers achieve and on the reasonable limits that can be put on the types of influence we hope they may have.

While a textbook can be designed so as to encourage or leave openings for affective work by the teacher or, in terms of motivation, raise some awareness of reading in English as a passport to future leisure, study or work-related activity, it cannot of itself change attitudes on the part of teachers or make dull unpaced teaching engaging. On the other hand, an area in which course materials are potentially very powerful is in giving **system** to contents, mustering and ordering elements of the language in a **principled** way, 'dosing' and pacing the elements. They can propose activities to be performed with these elements that, according to the **rationale** of the writers, may lead towards the types and quality of learning desired. If the activities are repeated and sequenced within materials so that routines are built up and developed with new challenges and ways of working with the elements introduced over time, it could also be said that there is coherence and system over a whole arc of time in the teaching. There are no guarantees, here, either. As has been discussed above (Dendrinis (1992), Karavas-Doukas (1995), teachers are adept at ignoring or re-interpreting activities within material but it is less likely that they will make adjustments to elements of linguistic content and their ordering. Figure 1 attempts to relate the terms above as they are used in this study.

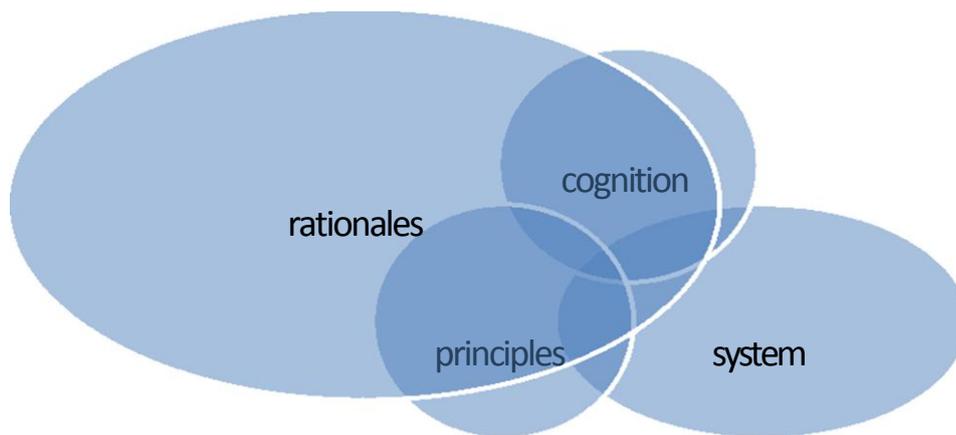


Figure 1 Terminology associated with systematic teaching used in the study

1.11 Possible contributions of the study

The investigations stemming from the above discussion could lead to a number of contributions to the field of early reading in EYL teaching:

1. An enhanced understanding of the nature of the rationales that EYL professionals apply to the teaching of early reading to Young Learners
2. The identification of questions to ask and topics to address with EYL professionals in order to help them reflect on their understandings of EYL early reading instruction
3. An enhanced understanding of how EYL materials construct and present early reading to their users and of the choices made in terms of activity type and of selection, sequencing and presentation of language content relevant to early reading development
4. A framework for analyzing EYL materials to reveal the constructs used and the choices made regarding early reading development

The general statements above will later be refined to form Research Questions which will be elaborated at the beginning of Chapter 3, Research Methodology. It will be seen that contributions 1 and 3 concern understandings whereas contributions 2 and 4 concern methods of arriving at understandings. It is hoped that the findings of the thesis will be of particular interest to materials designers, teacher educators and curriculum advisers as well as to teachers and that the resulting proposals for teacher education and materials construction in the area of early reading for YL will

also be found of value.

1.12 Terms Used to Refer to Different Types of Early Reading

In the interests of clarity with regard to the different types of early reading under discussion, I will from this point on make use of the following abbreviations, also listed in the preface page Key to Terms and Abbreviations Used:

RL1 (the teaching and learning of) reading in a child's mother tongue (which is not English)

REL1 (the teaching and learning of) reading in English where English is the child's mother tongue

REYL (the teaching and learning of) reading in English involving children for whom it is not their mother tongue. This term will normally include children in both Outer Circle and Expanding Circle contexts. Where a distinction needs to be made between children in these two types of contexts this will be clarified within the text itself

Figure 2 Terms associated with the teaching of reading used in the study

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2. 1 Introduction and Overview

The purpose of this literature review is to underpin the main study by elaborating the issues set out in Chapter 1. My aim in sections 2.2 to 2.5 is to lead into explorations, from 2.6 onwards, of existing rationales for the teaching of reading in pedagogical settings. This is a foundation for my own study, which sets out to investigate EYL professionals' conceptions of reading in the EYL classroom and the extent to which clear rationales can be identified in current approaches to REYL found in course materials.

Literacy development is amongst the areas categorized by Geary and Bjorklund (2000) as 'biologically secondary' in terms of human development, that is, access to the language modes of reading and writing in the mother tongue depends on some degree of induction or instruction and, unlike listening and speaking, is not developed 'naturally' in the early stages of a child's life purely through interaction with carers and those in the surrounding community.

My focus in what follows is on school-based learning, with an avowed interest in tracing rationales and system within EYL reading instruction. This may give at this stage the impression that I adopt a narrowly cognitive, skills-based, view of reading such as has been characterized by Street (1984) as 'autonomous'. However, this is not the case. I fully acknowledge the need to embed consideration of literacy within the value-system of the society in which it is built, which would match Street's 'ideological' view. I would further say that it is worth considering the extent to which views of reading in English in societies in which it is not a mother tongue, are coloured by the experiences, values and conceptions attached to L1 literacy development in those societies. In this thesis I can only tap into the perceptions and concepts of those participants with whom I had contact, EYL professionals, but that may offer us at least a useful glimpse.

Overview of the Chapter:

2.2 Teacher Cognition and studies on Teacher Cognition concerning the teaching of

early reading

2.3 Sociocultural Factors Affecting Views of the Teaching and Learning of reading

2.4 Linguistic Issues Relevant to the Teaching and Learning of Reading in English

2.5 Research into Learning Processes in Early Reading and Particularly Reading across Languages

2.6 Cultures of teaching and localized responses to the issues of early reading to Young Learners

2.7 REL1 and other specific systems and their relevance to REYL teaching

2.8 REL1 approaches discussed

2.9 Conclusion

2.2 Teacher Cognition and Studies on Teacher Cognition Concerning the Teaching of Early Reading

The work of Borg (2003; 2006) is a key source for this chapter both for his survey of different areas and origins of Teacher Cognition and for his discussion of the options for researching it. I am throughout this thesis using Borg's broad definition of Teacher Cognition as signifying 'what language teachers think, know and believe' (Borg, 2006 p. 1). Behind this definition lie a number of strands of research and differing interpretations of Teacher Cognition which have developed over time and which Borg (2006, pp. 1 - 41) discusses in detail. I am extending Borg's terms of reference from 'Teachers' to 'Professionals' because of my concern for the part played by figures such as teacher educators and producers of course materials in shaping notions of appropriate systems for teaching EYL reading. In fact several of my participants, who were senior people in their own contexts, had such multiple roles.

Teacher Cognition studies, as Borg presents them, have developed from a concern in the 1970s and 1980s with tracing the factors and processes accounting for teachers' classroom behaviour (often in the spirit of assisting them to conform with some prescriptive model of optimum teaching) towards the present-day, less instrumental, interest in how teachers function in their own right. Borg (2006, p. 14) highlights Clark's (1986) contribution in promoting a view of the teacher less as a rational decision-maker and more as a 'constructive sense-maker'. At the beginning of the period, *Teacher Planning Strategies* (Clark & Yinger, 1977) and *Teachers' Practical Knowledge* (Elbaz, 1983) were key centres of interest, while later on more holistic views developed of what drove teachers compared with the strongly cognitive models prevalent at first. Serious attention began to be paid to Teacher Beliefs e.g. Munby

(1982). These early centres of interest were notable for their emphasis on classroom processes rather than on the teachers' relationship with and handling of the content of the curricular subject for which they were responsible. The contributory factor of Teacher Subject Knowledge to teacher thinking and decision-making was first highlighted by Shulman (1986) who further in 1987 with associates (Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987, p. 108) emphasized the need to balance a concern for teachers' practical knowledge with that for their subject knowledge:

Teachers have theoretical, as well as practical, knowledge of the subject matter that informs and is informed by their teaching: any portrait of teacher knowledge should include both aspects.

I would argue that as part of ELT professionals' potential Subject Knowledge there is a body of linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge that should not necessarily be transmitted direct to learners but which nonetheless usefully informs what teachers do in the classroom and can contribute to principled, coherent approaches to teaching. This applies to teachers of children just as much as to teachers of older learners. To argue otherwise is to trivialize the EYL profession. Candidates for EYL professionals' Subject Knowledge repertoire concerning early reading are awareness of and ability to operate with language systems such as phonology and orthography, as will be discussed in Section 2.4 of this chapter.

Borg's 2006 book also very usefully covers areas such as research into the possible origins of teacher cognitions of different kinds. Consideration of teacher biographies, the role of the 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975), that is, what teachers carry forward in terms of beliefs from their own experiences as pupils, as well as the role of formal study and teacher education are all relevant. What is missing from the research literature as summarized by Borg, and also, according to my own searches in the literature for the years after the publication of his book in 2006, is substantial and relevant discussion of the role of course materials used in the classroom as possible influences on Teacher Cognition. The article by Hutchinson and Torres, discussed in the Introduction, section 1.6, asserts a supportive role for course materials, but is not in itself a report of research into the cognitions that teachers may build through using materials.

Research projects reported in the literature vary in terms of the level of experience of

the teachers concerned; teachers-in-training are normally studied in contrast with teachers-in-service, with another common comparison being made between qualified but novice teachers and seasoned professionals. There is scope for the same types of cognition to be investigated among all these different categories of teacher, although detailed findings are expected to differ. The section of my own study which concerns Professionals' cognition will be with individuals who, from their presence on Postgraduate courses in the UK, are expected to have had substantial experience in the field of ELT although some may be newer than others to the particular field of EYL.

I reproduce below as Figure 3 the diagram first published in Borg 2003 (p 82) but also reproduced in Borg, 2006 (p. 41) which very clearly shows his view of the nature, sources and scope of Teacher Cognition.

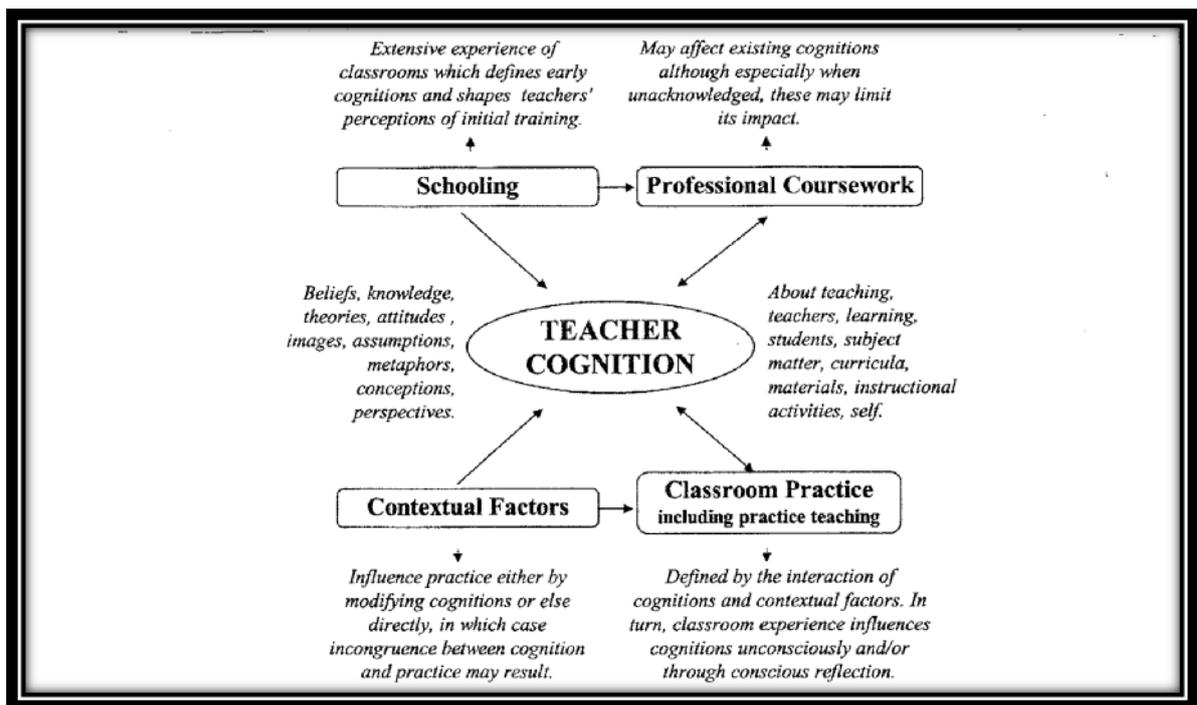


Figure 3 Teacher Cognition from Borg (2003)

Since my study is of EYL professionals outside the environment of the classroom, there is no scope for direct investigation of teachers' on-the-spot decision-making or actual procedures concerning reading instruction. However there seems to be ample scope to investigate beliefs and subject matter knowledge as well as to pay attention to what professionals might themselves see as influential on their cognitions, such as their own early experiences with

reading, both in the L1 and in English, as well as any training in the area of teaching reading that they might have received.

Borg's review of the literature up to 2006 supports my own searches to the effect that studies of REL1 teachers' cognitions and orientations abound but that there is surprisingly little to be found in the area of Teacher Cognition concerning reading in ELT in general and almost nothing in REYL. Borg cites 13 major REL1 studies (see for example, Richardson, Anders, Tidwell and Lloyd et al (1991) with Elementary school teachers in the USA, and Wray (1988) with teacher trainees in the UK). To these we may add Medwell, Wray, Poulson, & Fox, (1998) and Wray, Medwell, Poulson, & Fox (2002) on the characteristics of effective teachers of literacy. Of the seven studies on ELT Teacher Cognitions regarding reading that Borg identifies, only one (El-Okda, 2005) involved the teaching of REYL, and the participants here were pre-service teachers-in-training rather than the more experienced professionals who will be the subjects of my own research.

This article, which concerns the beliefs of teachers-in-training in the Sultan Qaboos University in Oman is, however, of interest, both for the methodology of the study and for what it revealed about trainees' beliefs concerning early reading instruction in that context, in which new course materials had recently been introduced. It will therefore be discussed in some detail. Participants were asked to respond to a set of hypothetical vignettes concerning a new teacher's pedagogic decisions regarding reading, and to select from suggested justifications for the choices. The first two vignettes concerned primary school beginners. I discuss the findings concerning the first vignette in detail since they foreshadow some of the debates that will emerge later in this chapter concerning the role of reading in EYL contexts and are suggestive of the areas to be investigated with participants in my study. The first vignette reads as follows:

After graduation, a colleague of yours was appointed as a teacher in a primary school to teach English to children in a grade 1 class in a Basic Education school. She was surprised to find that the textbook contained no reading tasks. All work in class was supposed to be oral and consisted mainly of games, songs and physical activities. She was told not to teach the letters of the alphabet. But she felt worried that children might forget a lot of the words she presented in those activities and games. So she decided to teach children the names of the letters of the alphabet and the written form of some of the

words she presented.

Participants in the study were first asked to indicate whether this decision was right or wrong. The vast majority, 51 out of 57 (89.5%) of the participants, considered the teacher's decision to be right. The participants were then asked to select from some possible justifications for supporting or rejecting the teacher's decision. There were four 'practical arguments' offered in support of the teacher's decision, which were as follows:

1. Learning a language is primarily being able to read its alphabet
2. Without knowing the written form of the word learners will probably forget it.
3. Learners won't be able to revise these words without knowing how to read them
4. Parents expect the teacher of English to teach children how to read words from the very beginning

The first three, which seem to concern the pedagogic utility of using the written form of the language from the very start of learning English, were given strong support, ranging between 68% and 74% of the participants, while the fourth, concerning the need to meet parents' expectations, was supported by just under half (47.4%). The two propositions which could be used to support the view that the teacher had not taken the right decision were as follows:

1. We know our first language orally before we know its letters
2. Presenting the letters of the alphabet confuses those young children

These received very little support (7% and 8.8% respectively), interestingly from even fewer participants than the number who had actually responded that the teachers' decision was wrong.

These results may be interpreted as showing that a majority of trainee teachers in this sample held views consonant with what I characterized in the Introduction (1.5) as a 'taken for granted' use of activities involving reading in class as vehicles or assumed facilitators for language learning in other areas such as speaking. This is a fundamental underlying pedagogic belief which, if held particularly strongly, could over-ride considerations of which approach to early reading could be most effective for teaching YL, since a need to devote focused attention to reading as a skill in itself

would not be registered.

Beyond this one work indicated by Borg, a literature search revealed two other investigations in EYL contexts into teachers' knowledge and beliefs concerning REYL. Both investigations seem to start from the premise that seeing words in print or writing could be a challenge rather than a facilitator for children in the early stages of learning English and that some 'ways in' to learning to read may be more successful for some children than others. Both use categories and contrasts that are directly derived from pedagogical approaches developed for REL1. Another major theme of this thesis will be the extent to which EYL professionals may see REYL through the optic of approaches first developed for REL1. This seems to be particularly the case with the first study, that by Ghaith (2003) which uses the TORP (Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile) questionnaire (DeFord, 1985), originally developed for use with REL1 teachers. It is designed to profile teachers with regard to their orientations concerning Phonics, Skills or Whole Language approaches to early reading. (Please see section 2.9 of this chapter for discussion of L1 approaches to reading instruction). Ghaith reports on the use of TORP with Lebanese teachers of English to determine their readiness for a new initiative in elementary school EFL teaching.

The second study is a questionnaire-based survey by Rixon (2007a), comparing specialist EYL teachers with other ELT teachers. One set of questions invited teachers to indicate their familiarity with REL1-based approaches to early reading instruction such as Phonics or Look and Say by indicating 'YES' or 'NO' to the following questions:

- I have heard of it
- This approach was used on me when I was learning to read in English
- I use this approach with my Young Learners
- I could explain this approach confidently to another person

While the proportion of EYL teachers who had both heard of Phonics and felt that they could confidently explain it to another person was far greater than that of the non-EYL teachers, some of the responses to the follow-up open question inviting explanations of Phonics suggested that individual and idiosyncratic understandings had been arrived at by EYL teachers. Some for example, saw it as a method of teaching pronunciation or requiring the use of phonetic script.

One section of this questionnaire contained an item designed to elicit respondents' views of the effectiveness of presenting beginners with new language in the written form at the same time as it was taught for oral use, an area similar to that covered by El-Okda above. This was a multi-response item and results were not clear-cut but the majority of EYL respondents saw presentation of new language in the written form as both effective and necessary.

All the research found in the literature relevant to EYL teachers' cognitions concerning early reading is questionnaire-based. Although two out of the three studies discussed above (those by El-Okda, 1995 and Rixon, 2007) invited participants' open written responses, little latitude for extensive personal expression or sustained explanation was provided. Borg's (2003, p. 104) comment therefore still seems relevant:

Teachers' voices are somewhat lacking in the studies of reading discussed here (only in one case were teachers given the chance to talk about their work), and this is clearly an issue future studies of reading might address.

It is my hope that the interviews with EYL professionals that form a major part of the main study will help to fill this gap.

2.3 Readers' Biographies: Social Values Affecting Views of the Teaching and Learning of Reading in the L1

First Language Literacy, seen as the ways in which people can operate with written (and other visual) modes in the dominant language(s) in the society in which they live, penetrates deep into individuals' well-being and status. My study focuses on reading in English as an L2, but with acknowledgement of the importance of L1 literacy learning in many people's early lives both in its remembered processes and in its outcomes. We shall start with a discussion concerning the early steps in the establishment of L1 reading (and, where related, writing) in young people in different societies, whether this be through family and societal support, formal instruction or a combination of the two.

2.3.1 Literacy Events and Literacy Practices

As Barton (1994, p. 34) puts it: 'Literacy is a social activity and can best be described in terms of the literacy practices which people draw upon in literacy events.'

The term 'literacy event', was coined by Heath, (1982, p. 50) to refer to 'any occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of the participants' interaction and their interpretive processes'. Individuals or groups of participants may be involved in particular literacy events and these events may be strongly associated with particular settings or occasions. Examples might be an adult reading a bed-time story to a child (Barton, 1994, p. 149) or a group of children poring over a comic-book adventure in school break time.

A related term is 'literacy practice'. In some of the ELT literature, possibly by association with pedagogic literature which also uses the term 'practice', the terms 'practices' and 'literacy practices' seem to be used to refer to the sub-behaviours making up a literacy event. Yaacob (2006), for example, refers to activities involving reading within the EYL classroom as classroom literacy practices. This however, seems to be a somewhat different use of the term 'practice' from that originally intended, which seems to take in more abstract concepts and views of literacy. As Barton and Hamilton say (2000, p. 7) literacy practices 'are not observable units of behaviour because they also involve values attitudes feelings and social relationships'. In order to avoid ambiguity, I shall use the term 'pedagogical literacy procedures' (rather than practices) when referring to components of a literacy event in instructional circumstances such as a school lesson.

2.3.2 Ideological versus autonomous models

As a result of his study of literacy practices among different social groups in Iran, Street posited (1984) in a similar way to Heath (1993) and Scribner & Cole (1981) that reading is embedded in social practices. It is not an autonomously-operated value-free purely cognitive capacity, and learning to read is not a pure skill-getting matter. Street saw literacy as a capacity that societies shaped to serve the ends of already-existing social practices. He and his associates took issue with the views of Goody (1968) and Goody & Watt (1968) who emphasized the influence of literacy on modes of thought and action, particularly in societies to which it was newly introduced. It could be argued that Street is too harsh, in that Goody does also acknowledge that literacy fits into

societal needs and expectations, however the general distinction between social and technological values for reading is a useful one. In later work, Street (2001, p. 16) described literacy as 'a social practice, not simply a technical and neutral skill'. Like Heath, Street sees L1 reading skills as built up by novice readers in many societies, not necessarily in the first instance through formal schooling but through apprenticeship, through interaction with members of the groups to which they wish to gain entry and whose reading procedures they aspire to emulate. Street (2001, p. 8) focuses particularly usefully on teaching/learning practices within that framework:

The ways in which teachers or facilitators and their students interact is already a social practice that affects the nature of the literacy being learned and the ideas about literacy held by the participants.

Street's mention of facilitators brings into this discussion the experiences that young children in many societies have in a home setting, outside school or before schooling starts, with family members acting as role-models and mentors in an initiation to reading. These are described by Wells (1985) and Weinberger (1996) for the UK and USA respectively. Gregory, Long and Volk (2004) show sibling support to be especially important among many different cultural groups within the UK.

2.3.3 Moving from apprenticeship in the community to formal study in the school

Literacy, as presented in Street's ideological model, is highly value-laden, and what 'counts' as success in one society or group may not be given the same value in another. A major point for my study is that the socialization of the child to L1 literacy events and their component procedures carries heavy messages about which ways of dealing with written texts are considered worthwhile and legitimate. These may or may not chime with what formal schooling offers. In her classic study of Trackton and Roadton, Heath (1983) shows two differing communities making very different uses of, and having very different responses to, the written word and thus providing very different forms of apprenticeship to literacy for their young pre-school children. Heath (1983, p. 235) makes the telling point that when these children entered school, unfamiliar demands were made, not just on children from the less materially privileged group but on both groups in her study: 'Neither community's ways with the written word prepares them for the school's ways'.

Children's failure to grasp or to conform to the construction of reading that is endorsed

within formal schooling has been adduced in a number of contexts as a major problem underlying low achievement and low motivation in early reading (Holt, 1964). A requirement for the child in school to demonstrate, in a public way, detailed understanding of a read text might be one example of demand not experienced outside school. In Trackton, Heath says (1983, p. 191), reading alone for oneself was construed as unsociable and this understanding might lead to conflict when different school values came into play. When discussing REYL, rather than school reading in the children's L1, we may find ourselves dealing with further layers of differences in interpretations concerning the significance and purpose of reading in English.

2.3.4 Teacher Subject Knowledge

However, before this move towards investigating the primary school EYL classroom is made (see 2.6), it is necessary to elaborate the important strand of Teacher Subject Knowledge, mentioned above in 2.2, and consider, alongside understanding of influences on children's views of reading from outside the school, what other elements might make up a potential repertoire of information and knowledge concerning early reading. I have identified two areas:

1. Understanding of and views on linguistic issues - the nature and 'fabric' of the English Language itself and the challenges that these raise for beginning readers. This is divided into the areas of orthography and phonology.
2. Knowledge of what research into early reading in L1 and across languages has to offer to EYL teachers.

Linguistic issues will be discussed first, since the concepts and terminology in this area need to be established in order to appreciate the discussions concerning theories of learning to read and approaches to teaching reading.

2.4 Different writing systems and orthographies and their implications for learning to read

When considering reading and writing systems, the appropriate direction of description moves from the language in its spoken form to the graphic means developed to represent it. Nonetheless, in terms of the structure of the argument in this chapter, more coverage of fundamental concepts and terms needed for what follows seems to be provided by discussing writing systems and orthographies first, It is hoped therefore that this 'reverse order' discussion will be understood in that spirit.

Three types of writing system can be identified; alphabetic, syllabic and logographic. These are distinguished by the differing linguistic units that are represented on the page or screen by the graphic units employed: the phoneme, the syllable, and the word (or morpheme) respectively. Table 1 below (informed by Perfetti and Dunlap, 2008) summarizes the position:

Writing system	Linguistic units represented	Examples
Alphabetic	Phonemes Group 1 alphabetic systems which provide graphic representations of all phonemes in words, but with different degrees of correspondence in different languages	Group 1 English, Bahasa Malaysia, French, Italian, Portuguese, using Roman script Greek, using Greek script Russian, using Cyrillic script Korean, using Hangul
	Group 2 alphabetic systems which have variations, according to the function or supposed audience of the text, in the	Group 2 Arabic, using Arabic script Hebrew, using Hebrew
Syllabic	Syllables	Sinhala, Japanese Hiragana and
Logographic	Whole words or morphemes	Chinese

Table 1 Writing systems and the linguistic units they represent

A distinction is made by Baker (1997, p. 93) and also supported by Cook and Bassetti (2005, p. 3) and Perfetti and Dunlap (2008, p. 15) between the terms ‘writing system’ and ‘orthography’. Writing systems are graphic systems for representing a language or group of languages, while orthographies are particular applications of writing systems that are used to represent specific languages. ‘Script’ refers to the physical appearance of the elements used to write a language or languages – Cyrillic, Roman,

or Arabic script for example. For example, it can be said that Bahasa Malaysia, English and Italian all make use of an alphabetic system using Roman script, but that, in writing the three languages, the resources available are used differently to represent the different phonemic values appropriate to each language. The different conventions of use of the letters for this purpose, along with punctuation, diacritics and other graphic signs within Bahasa Malaysia, English and Italian constitute their different orthographies. When discussing English, I shall from now on use the term orthography and derived forms to refer to the way in which it is written or printed on the page employing the letters of the Roman alphabetical script with associated punctuation and other signs. Perfetti and Dunlap (2008, p. 15) suggest that the nature of the different scripts within a particular writing system is of less importance than the distinction between writing systems which are fundamental:

The defining feature of a writing system is its mapping principle – graph to phoneme (alphabetic), graph to syllable (syllabic) and graph to word or morpheme (logographic).

However, for my study, practical issues of variations in script for beginning REYL readers without many out-of-school opportunities to encounter written or printed English may be of importance in some contexts. In the case of Bahasa Malaysia, for example, it is worthy of note that the language can be written in two different scripts, Roman and Jawi, in which Arabic script is used to represent the language for religious and cultural purposes. Malaysian Muslim children switching between Jawi and Roman script in Bahasa Malaysia and then encountering the different orthography of English with the seemingly familiar Roman script are dealing with some complexity. There will also be discussion (Section 2.6.3) of the English learning issues that may arise for Chinese- or Japanese-speaking children whose first encounter with the Roman script has been in the phonemic ‘bridging’ devices of Pinyin and Romaji, used with beginning readers in Chinese and Japanese respectively.

Within script, there may also be issues of typeface, the different ways of representing letters in printed form. The outlines of printed ‘a’ and ‘g’, in a serif font such as ‘Times Roman’, for example are seen as less supportive to beginning readers compared with those of a sans serif style like ‘Comic Sans’ which mimics block lettering handwriting, ‘a’, ‘g’. Generally, sans serif fonts such as ‘Helvetica’ or ‘Comic Sans’ are favoured for early reading materials in REL1 contexts as clear and easily-

recognizable , while other fonts such as ‘Print Clearly’ are available as models for ‘block lettering’ handwriting and ‘Learning Curve BV’ for cursive. See The Best Fonts for Educational Publishing <http://www.ehow.com/info 7907054 fonts-educational-publishing.html#ixzz1cG76RN11>

In pedagogical systems in which reading instruction is paralleled or supported by instruction in handwriting, as a kinaesthetic as well as a visual reinforcement to recognition of letters and words, compatibility between the style of what is seen on the page or board and what is written by pupils is particularly important.

In the context of alphabetical writing systems, ‘grapheme’ is a term used (Coulmas, 1996, pp. 174 - 175) to refer to alphabetical letters conventionally and regularly used to represent phonemes in words written or printed in a particular language. A grapheme may be a single alphabetical letter, but it may also be a sequence of letters, such as the English digraphs (two-letter graphemes) <sh>, regularly used to represent the /ʃ/ phoneme or <th>, which may represent / θ/ or /ð/. Graphemes are conventionally indicated as shown immediately above by appearing between arrow brackets < > and this convention will be used in this thesis.

2.4.1 Orthographic depth and learning to read

English is, in the terminology coined by Katz and Frost (1992) an **orthographically deep** language. Orthographic depth (or conversely ‘shallowness’ or ‘transparency’) reflects the symmetry and closeness of relationships between the phonemes of a language and the graphic means that are used to represent them. That is, if there is a high proportion of one-to-one exclusive pairings between single phonemes and graphemes in a given language, that language is said to be highly transparent or ‘shallow’ orthographically. The concept applies most readily to alphabetically-written languages although it is also valid for syllabically-written languages. Logographic languages do not represent phonemic values and are therefore orthographically opaque. These factors are important for understandings of learning to read in particular L1s and in studies of learning to read across languages and across different writing systems. Figure 4 below places some European languages on a scale of shallowness or depth:

Shallow	Deep
Finnish	Greek
Spanish	Portuguese
Icelandic	Norwegian
	Swedish
	Danish
	French
	English

Figure 4 Comparison of languages in terms of orthographic depth (based on a chart in University of Dundee (based on a chart in University of Dundee <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/psychology/external/>))

2.4.2 Expected rates of progress in early reading in different languages

There is abundant evidence to suggest that the deep orthography of English makes the first steps in learning to decode words inherently more challenging than they are for many other alphabetical languages. One source of evidence is empirical and comes from reports of the different amounts of time customarily expected for children to learn to decode fluently in different languages.

In languages where there is a close correspondence between letters and their realization as phonemes, L1 beginning readers tend to make more rapid early progress, at least at the level of decoding, than in a deep language, like English, See, for example, Spencer and Hanley (2003) for a comparison of 5- and 6-year-old children's early reading progress in Welsh compared with English:

The children learning to read in Welsh performed significantly better at reading both real words and non-words than children learning to read in English. ...The Welsh readers also performed better on a phoneme awareness task. These findings support the claim that children learn to read more quickly in a transparent orthography, and provide further evidence that the consistency of the orthography influences the initial adoption of different strategies for word recognition.

Hanley and Spencer go on to quote research concerning time needed for learning to decode fluently in orthographically transparent languages, claiming that in German, Italian and Turkish, for example most children attain this stage by the end of Grade One.

If English is indeed a language which it is challenging for its REL1 beginners to learn to decode, then it seems reasonable to argue *a fortiori* that, for non-native learners of

the language, the first steps in learning to decode in English are highly likely to present particular and additional difficulties unless handled by teachers with care and technical insight. This is especially likely to be the case for beginners in English if they have little, if any, prior grounding in the spoken language.

2.4.3 Establishing the Alphabetic Principle

An appreciation of the Alphabetic Principle is a cognition that is by many authorities considered fundamental for all learners taking their first steps in learning to read an alphabetically-written language. As Morais and Kolinsky state (2004, p. 606):

In order to read and write alphabetic material, it is highly advantageous, if not necessary, to acquire conscious knowledge both of the alphabetic principle i.e. that letters stand for phonemes, and of the particular alphabetic code i.e. which letters stand for phonemes.

For orthographically shallow languages this requires little or no manipulation of the linguistic input, and, as we saw above in Section 2.4.2, children typically become fluent decoders in periods ranging from weeks to months. On the other hand, within an orthographically deep language such as English the Alphabetic Principle is less immediately apparent to most learners without assistance although it is generally accepted today that the cognition is vital to effective and independent learning in the reading area. Stanovich (1986), for example, says that learners who develop alphabetical awareness early in their reading careers reap long term benefits. Ehri (1991) emphasizes the need to exercise this awareness through practice in phonologically decoding the same words repeatedly so as to become familiar with spelling patterns as a path to automatized recognition. For the Alphabetic Principle to be rendered maximally appreciable to beginners of reading in English requires the identification and use of a subset of the language in which the orthography is transparent. Focus on that subset at an early stage will help to establish awareness of regular correspondences between letters and sounds. Use of such procedures is well documented with English native speaking children who already have a substantial oral competence in their language, but little is known of optimum pedagogic procedures with EYL who do not have such prior competence. For English, it is then necessary to build experience with and coping strategies for other areas of the language in which the phonology is less transparently represented on the page.

2.4.4 Analyses of systems within English orthography

An attempt to document the complexity of English phoneme-grapheme correspondences may be found in the vast phoneme-based tables showing possible graphic realizations of each phoneme in association with the work of Gattegno (1969a). These do not of themselves contribute greatly towards solving the pedagogic problems with young child readers. Teaching with either set of charts requires a knowledge of phonemic script and is pitched more at older learners, although the colour-coding used in the work books intended by Gattegno himself (1969b) for children to use attempted to by-pass this need. In either case, showing the complexity does not of itself lead to pattern-seeking activity from which the learner may draw useful analogies and generalizations or solve the issues of how learners are to cope when learning to decode, still less when they are learning to encode (spell) in English. Chomsky & Halle (1968), although without particular pedagogic intent, attempted to show systems by which pronunciation and spelling were related through deep structures, unusually seeming to put the orthography before the phonology. Analyses of English spelling such as those by Albrow (1972) and Carney (1994) have attempted to find groupings and relationships which are accessible for pedagogic purposes. In a monograph written as a contribution to the Schools Council programme in Linguistics and English Teaching of the 1970s Albrow divided English spelling into three systems, of which System One (the 'basic' system) contains those words in which the spelling and the pronunciation are maximally transparent, being directly derivable from one another according to regular rules, or accountable for in another way according to clear principles. An important example of the latter is the principle in English of transparently maintaining grammatical information through visual morpheme-preservation, as, for example, with the unvarying graphic form of the regular past –ed suffix, even though its pronunciation varies through /d/, /t/, /ɪd/ according to the preceding phoneme. Another example is the regular plural suffix –s, which is differently realized as the voiced /z/ or the unvoiced /s/ by voicing assimilation with the preceding phoneme (as in 'dogs and cats' /'dɒgz n 'kæts/). Albrow's System Two also shows regularities but these are differently distributed from those of System One. System Three seems to be more of a catch-all and contains many borrowed words of recent foreign origin and a number of trade names such as 'Daz' whose spellings do not exhibit the regularities which can be found in Systems One and Two. The analysis by Albrow provided some useful indications of how major patterns might be ordered and sequenced in a systematized teaching syllabus, to support a pedagogy which goes beyond simple listing and rote learning of instances. However, although sub-systems and patterns were found, they were

nonetheless numerous, leaving teachers and learners with the multiple challenges of English as an orthographically deep language.

More detailed recent statistical research has looked within patterns of different languages and for English has shown (Treiman, Mullenix, Bijeljac-Babic, & Richmond-Welty, 1995) that within CVC words 80% of words sharing a rime element (VC) had a consistent pronunciation compared with only 62% of CVC words which shared only a vowel spelling and 55% of CVC words sharing spellings of the first consonant and vowel. This led Treiman et al. to suggest that this characteristic of English orthography could make it profitable for readers to use onset-rime divisions when decoding words. The same strategy would not apply for a more transparent orthography such as Spanish. Empirical research with beginning L1 readers by Goswami and associates, for example Goswami & Mead (1992) and Goswami, Gombert & de Barrera (1998) supports this hypothesis.

2.4.5 Contrasts across languages

It is important also to mention the particular issues that there may be for REYL learners concerning contrasts found between English orthography and that of their L1s, seen in a broader sense than purely the management of letter-phoneme correspondences. Cook (2005, pp. 427- 430) in a chapter concerning the role of the written word in materials for teenage and adult learners of English and some other European languages, encapsulates matters which are also relevant for Young Learners and materials designed for them. Given that these features as presented by Cook are seen as potentially problematic for fully L1-literate teenagers and adults approaching foreign language learning, we can argue, *a fortiori*, that materials creators and publishers need to be even more careful, when producing materials for YL involving words on the page. They need to find a palatable and accessible way to raise awareness of such key features rather than ignoring them. Some of the L1 writing systems in contexts figuring prominently in my study, for example Korean Hangul, do not make use of a set of upper case letters as part of their script, and the function of upper case letters in English orthography would seem to be an area in which Korean learners would need overt explanation. Other examples include different orthographical choices across languages such as capitalization or not of certain lexical sets (months and days for example) or different forms or uses of punctuation. Cook notes that these, too, tend not to be covered overtly in teaching materials, thereby leaving many sources of misunderstanding and minor inaccuracy.

2.5 Phonology and Learning to Read in English

2.5.1 The role of pronunciation in early reading

If the claims in many national EYL programmes (see Appendix 1.1) are accurately reflected in materials and pedagogy, the spoken language will be found at the heart of most early teaching. It might therefore be expected that the phonological system of the variety of English to which Young Learners are being exposed should be an important aspect of what they learn of the new language, whether it is focused upon in overt pronunciation instruction or in less direct ways such as intensive and extensive listening to samples of the variety of English that is core to the context. The ambitions stated in curriculum documents may not always be translated into classroom practice, but even in cases where building fluency in aural/oral discourse is not truly at the heart of EYL learning, there should be in general an expectation that a learner of English should vocalize it to some extent and thus will need to map it on to a phonological system.

The first steps in reading will also require a mapping of phonology and written mode language and thus a good operational knowledge of the phonemes of English will be needed by YL for this purpose. As Table 2 below shows, this operational knowledge may, rightly or wrongly, be assumed to exist in complete form already, or it may be a deliberate pedagogical decision to build it up step-by-step with each phoneme-grapheme link that is taught.

Learner status with regard to reading (assumed by teachers and materials-creators)	Possible roles for pronunciation teaching/coverage of phonology
Acknowledged as beginning readers, receiving systematic instruction in early English reading	Learners may already have a firm grasp of the pronunciation of the spoken language through teaching or exposure prior to the start of reading work OR Learners may be expected to build up knowledge of the phoneme inventory at the same time as they are learning how they may be represented by graphemes
'Taken-for-granted' readers, assumed to be able to use words on the page as stimulus and framework for other English learning	Learners need already to have a firm grasp of the pronunciation of the spoken language through prior teaching or exposure

Table 2 Learners' assumed statuses regarding reading and pronunciation teaching

If the decision is made to apply systematic teaching of reading with children for whom English is not the mother tongue, the phoneme inventory of the variety of English to be used by the learners needs to be clearly established and operationally available before reading instruction begins. In all contexts, because of the 'speaking out' element of early reading, there is the possibility that teachers and materials creators may conflate first steps in learning to read with a framework for teaching or reinforcing pronunciation in English. This will also be an element investigated in the main study.

2.5.2 Reference Accents for REYL

The concept of what Wells (1992, p. 117) calls a 'reference accent' is useful when considering the spoken representation of English that Young Learners in different contexts will be dealing with in relation to their first steps in learning to read. The term 'reference' rather than 'model' accent recognizes the affordances in speakers' actual pronunciation, whose features may reflect those of one of the reference accents without exactly reproducing them. We may speculate on the effects on Young Learners teaching that the growing interest in International English and within that in Jenkins's (2000) Lingua Franca Core (LFC) may have in future, but from the evidence of syllabus documents (See Appendix 1.1) this issue was not at the time of writing in the forefront of listening or pronunciation issues confronting most teachers of Young Learners. Likely candidates as reference accents would be an Inner Circle accent such as British RP (Received Pronunciation) or GA (General American) or, in an Outer Circle context, the pronunciation of the recognized local variety.

To illustrate the argument in this section the phonology of RP will be given major focus since it was chosen as the initial basis in the main study for the analysis of teaching materials used in Expanding Circle contexts. This was to allow a 'like for like' comparison between word lists from courses. In order to take account of the fact that there are contexts in which GA is more likely to be the reference accent the instrument used for collecting information on words in courses has space for annotations so that adjustments may be made for contrasts with RP. This approach seems justified since the consonant inventory for the two accents is the same, with a few differences in phonetic realization in certain contexts. The vowel inventories are somewhat different but can nevertheless be covered in a series of contrastive tables. In the materials analysis I shall also be focusing in some detail on materials from the Outer Circle

contexts of Cameroon and Malaysia. Again, in order not to occupy too much space in this present chapter, the information concerning the phonologies of the varieties of English used in those contexts will be covered through the literature and references to this will be made ad hoc in the Findings chapter onwards.

2.5.3 L1 Pronunciation interference

It is relevant to consider issues of pronunciation interference from the L1 to English as they might affect decoding. Pronunciation is still one area of SLA in which the notion of L1 influences on L2 outcomes are relatively unchallenged. See, for example, Flege (1987) and Flege, Munro & MacKay (1995). An additional source of complexity in Outer Circle contexts is that, although distinct varieties of spoken English have been recognized and described by scholars for these contexts (see for example Bobda (2000), Ebot (1999) on Cameroon and Rajadurai (2004) on Malaysia) official statements made locally are often ambiguous or negative in this regard. Public discussions of the issues can also be strong and vivid. It seems often to be the case that a phantom of the prevalent standard accent of past colonists is to be found in the syllabus goals and specifications in such contexts, or at least in the beliefs of classroom teachers and the general public about 'good pronunciation'. Wells (2001) discusses a similar issue with regard to the guidelines and materials supplied for the National Literacy Strategy (Department of Education and Employment, 1998) where the RP reference phonemes used for Phonics are an imperfect match with those of the varieties of English spoken in different UK regions and teachers need to be aware of this in order to take pedagogic decisions. I have not encountered references in the literature to this issue in EYL early reading. It will be investigated in the interviews in the main study particularly with regard to Cameroon and Malaysia.

2.5.4 Relevant Components of English Phonology and Phonetics in relation to learning to decode words

Phonological systems may be described at different levels: phoneme inventories, phonotactics, stress and intonation systems, for example. However, with regard to decoding from the written word in English, the relevant aspects of English phonology to isolate and discuss are those that are actually encoded in the English writing system. For example, the systems of stress and intonation are not encoded, and no indication of how rapid speech phenomena such as elision, vowel weakening or assimilation are realized is available in the orthography, beyond the conventional representations of fixed forms of elision shown in contractions such as *it's* and *hasn't*. Developing fluent

speech with appropriate stress-placement and rhythm in learners is the province of the teaching of speaking rather than reading, although skills thus developed will be necessary for reading aloud of sentences and texts as part of learning activities. The two aspects of English phonology that need to be focused on with regard to early reading are those encoded into the written form of the language - the phoneme inventory and phonotactics.

2.5.4.1 The Phoneme Inventory and the Alphabetic Principle

The Alphabetic Principle, discussed for REL1 in Section 2.4.1.1 above, is a concept which some L1 beginning readers apprehend more easily than others (Stanovich, 1986) but for REYL learners there is the additional key issue that the linguistic foundation in terms of the phoneme inventory of English does not in most cases already fully exist in their repertoires.

2.5.4.2 A Sample Phoneme Inventory: RP

The phoneme inventory of RP is shown here in as Table 3 in the main text since this makes for easy reference during the discussion that follows. These examples are derived from a table in Notes of Guidance (DfES, 2007, p. 23) for the materials pack Letters and Sounds developed in support of the UK National Literacy Strategy. The examples suggest some of the wide variety of spellings that may represent each phoneme, particularly in the case of long vowels and diphthongs. I originally intended to use the DfES table exactly as it appeared in the Notes of Guidance but found it problematic in a number of respects, particularly in its ordering and grouping of phonemes and in the very confusing modifications of phonemic symbols (‘/j/’ to represent /dʒ/, for example). We may ask why the authors felt the need to adapt the standard internationally-recognized notation to meet the needs of UK primary school teachers. Although it is interesting to see what example words are felt relevant to primary schools in England and Wales I am using this table purely for illustrative purposes and not suggesting that the particular words shown are all suitable fare for YL teaching.

Phoneme	Sample words (taken from Letters and Sounds)	High-frequency words containing rare or unique correspondences
consonants		
p	pen, happy	
t	tap, butter, jumped	
k	cat, kit, duck	school, mosquito
b	bat, rabbit	
d	dog, muddy, pulled	
g	go. Bigger	
m	map, hammer	lamb, autumn
n	net, funny	gnat, knock
ŋ	ring, pink	
f	fan, puff, photo	rough
θ	thin	
ð	then	
s	sun, miss, cell	
ʃ	shop, sure, mission, mention, partial	special, chef, ocean
tʃ	chip, catch	
v	van	
z	zip, buzz, is, please, breeze	
ʒ	vision, measure	
dʒ	jet, giant, badge	
w	wig, whale	language
r	rat, carrot	write, rhyme
l	leg, bell	
j	yes	
h	hen	who

short vowels		
ɪ	in, gym	women, busy, build, pretty, engine
e	egg, head	said, says, friend, leopard, any
æ	ant	

ɒ	on, was	
ʌ	up, son, come	young, does, blood
ʊ	look, put	could
ə	corner, pillar, motor, famous, favour, murmur, about, cotton, mountain, possible, happen, centre, thorough, picture, cupboard	
long vowels		
i:	feet, sea, he, chief	these, people
u:	boot, grew, blue, rule	to, soup, through, two, lose
ɜ:	hurt, her, girl, work	learn, journey, were
ɔ:	for, saw, Paul, more, talk	caught, thought, four, door, broad
ɑ:	farm, father	calm, are, aunt, heart
diphthongs		
eɪ	rain, day, make	they, veil, weigh, straight
ɔɪ	coin, boy	
aɪ	night, tie, my, like, find	height, eye, I, goodbye, type
ɪə	dear, deer, here	pier
ʊə		sure, poor, tour
eə	fair, care, bear	There
əʊ	boat, grow, toe, go, home	oh, though, folk
aʊ	cow, out	drought

Table 3 Inventory of RP phonemes with sample spellings, adapted from 'Letters and Sounds'

RP is normally described as having 44 phonemes, although as discussed by Wells (1992, p. 106) one of the diphthongs, the /ʊə/ of conservatively-pronounced 'poor' (shaded in the table above) is in decline and tends to be used by older RP speakers rather than younger ones, who tend to say /pɔ:/. The modern RP phoneme inventory could therefore said to be 43. Of these phonemes, 24 are consonants and the remaining 19 in Modern RP are vowels. Of the 19 vowels, seven in modern RP are diphthongs. A potential source of conceptual difficulty is that diphthongs in English orthography are often represented by two letters, which may lead to confusion among non-native learners about their phonological status as single phonemes. A feature of both GA and RP that confounds many beginning readers (but more

especially spellers) is the central schwa vowel, /ə/, the most frequent realization of vowels in unstressed syllables, which may be represented by many different spellings. These are all features which contribute to the orthographic depth of English, discussed above, but which may be particularly problematic for those not yet operationally familiar with its phonology.

2.5.4.3 Phonotactics

A command of phonotactics is a less obvious choice as essential for early reading, but, I would argue, is of immense importance for non-native speaker early readers of English. Following Gimson (1989, p. 241 ff) for a detailed definition, we may say that phonotactics is the language-specific rules for **sequential or environmental constraints**, concerning numbers of permitted syllable constituents, permitted sequences of consonants in clusters and permitted environments for some vowels and some consonants.

Rhoticism is an aspect of phonotactics. As Wells (1996, p.75) puts it: 'One fundamental division in English accent types depends on a difference in phonotactic distribution of the consonant /r/. It marks a significant distinction between RP and GA in that GA is rhotic while RP is not. That is, while the /r/ phoneme can be pronounced in all environments in GA, there are contexts in RP which the /r/ phoneme is not permitted even when a spelling may indicate its presence. Following Roach (2000, p. 63) the rules for RP are that /r/ is pronounced only when it is immediately followed by a vowel occurring in the same word or at the beginning of the next word in the stream of speech. Conversely, it can be said that it is **not** pronounced before a consonant or before a pause. Thus, to the ear of the YL who has a native RP speaking teacher of English or one whose pronunciation carefully respects RP rules, words may have confusingly different realizations at different times. There are also implications for learning to read aloud fluently when the 'linking 'r' rule (Roach, 2000, p. 144) for the /r/ phoneme at the end of one word followed by a vowel in the stream of speech comes into play. However, it is quite possible that some teachers will be more rhotic in their speech than a strict adherence to RP would allow, and that this greater transparency might actually be helpful for young decoders.

Since in GA it is permissible to pronounce an /r/ phoneme in all contexts, the links between orthography and phonology are in this respect more transparent than they are for RP. The pronunciation /ka:r/ stands in all contexts. In respects other than

rhoticism, GA and RP phonotactics are the same.

Other characteristics of English phonotactics may present different challenges for non-native REYL teachers and their learners according to their L1 backgrounds. There may be particular issues for learners when the phonotactics of their L1 follow a predominantly CV pattern. The frequent 2- to 3- consonant clusters found word-initially and the 2- to 4- consonant clusters that in English are possible syllable-finally may present both visual and pronunciation difficulties in some EYL classrooms unless an element of systematic grading of words for their potential challenge is applied. To illustrate this point, a brief summary of English phonotactics follows immediately below, with comments on the implications for REYL.

In English a syllable may consist of a vowel alone, up to three consonants as an initial cluster + a vowel (CCCV e.g. /'skru:/ 'screw') and up to four consonants as a final cluster (CVCCCC e.g. /'sɪksθs/ 'sixths'), with a rare but possible maximum of (CCCVCCCC, /'strenʃkθs/). giving a total of 20 possible single-syllable forms as exemplified in Table 4 below. The shaded rows indicate rare but permissible strings, often involving words adopted into the English language from other languages.

	Constituent s of syllable	Phonemic transcription of example	Example in orthographic form
1	V	'aɪ	eye, I
2	VC	'ɑ:m	arm
3	VCC	'ɑ:mz	arms
4	VCCC	'ɑ:nts	aunts
5	VCCCC	æŋsts	angsts
6	CV	'maɪ, 'baɪ	my, by, buy, bye
7	CVC	'taɪm	time
8	CVCC	'fɑ:st	fast
9	CVCCC	'tekst	text
10	CVCCCC	'sɪksθs	sixths
11	CCV	'spaɪ	spy
13	CCVCC	'stænd	stand
14	CCVCCC	'twelfθ	twelfth
15	CCVCCCC	'twelfθs	twelfths
16	CCCV	'skru:	screw
17	CCVCV	'skri:m	scream

18	CCCVCC	'splæf t	splashed
19	CCCVCCC	'strelikθ	strength
20	CCCVCCCC	'strelikθs	strengths

Table 4 Permissible syllable constituents in RP

It is therefore not enough, if the decision is made to use numbers of syllables as one systematic method of grading language for difficulty, simply to count the syllables in English words. The presence and nature of consonant clusters at the boundaries of those syllables needs also to be taken into account. There are also restrictions concerning which consonants may occur in a cluster and in what sequence.

The richness of consonant clusters of English is in strong contrast with the sound systems of many other languages, particularly those such as Bahasa Malaysia, Bantu Languages of Southern Africa, Japanese and Korean in which consonant-vowel-consonant-vowel (CVCV) patterns are prevalent. Here we are dealing with a contrast between languages which has testified effects on pronunciation. Learners from language backgrounds like this may, when speaking English, tend to insert vowels between consonants in a cluster in a process known as epenthesis (Major, 2001, pp. 43 - 44). Other languages permit consonant clusters but with different components and with different sequences of elements. For example, Greek permits /ks/ syllable-initially, whereas this is not permissible in English.

So far, consonant clusters have been treated as a pronunciation and aural word-recognition issue, but problems in early reading may arise if written or printed 'example words' containing unfamiliar consonant clusters are introduced to EYL learners at a very early stage. Another difficulty may come about when letters give visual clues which may cause confusion over the number of elements present phonemically. Examples are the single letter <x> which syllable-finally has the value of the two-consonant cluster /ks/ as in 'six' /'sɪks/. Conversely, the pairing of <ph> creates a grapheme regularly representing a single consonant /f/ which is not a consonant cluster. There is some evidence (Rey, Ziegler, & Jacobs, 2000) that skilled native-speaker readers of English process two-or-more letter graphemes (including graphemes standing for vowels) as a whole, but less for beginning readers and no research found concerning EYL beginning readers.

Awareness of such constraints and features, especially as they apply in contrast with

the L1 of a particular group of YL, is a potential part of Teacher Subject Knowledge. It does not follow, however, that they should be the stuff of direct overt teaching. On the other hand, in the area of syllabus design and of selection and sequencing of elements on which to build a systematic approach to early reading for YL, awareness of these features could be readily applied by course-creators without necessarily becoming apparent to teachers or learners.

The issues concerning English phonology and REYL reading discussed above will be carried forward from this Literature Review to inform the design of instruments in the main study for the analysis of EYL teaching materials.

2.6 Research into reading across languages

In this section, I attempt to link the discussion above with the applied research of linguists and psychologists concerning the impact of different phonologies, writing systems and orthographies on first steps in learning to read in L1 and in an L2.

Although the contents of this section are potential constituents of the Subject Knowledge of some EYL Professionals, it is not assumed that this is likely. However, an attempt will be made here to summarize the research in a way that may become a platform for later discussion particularly of the teaching materials analyzed in the main study.

The debate about more mature readers' strategies for dealing with textual material involves much-discussed Top Down, Bottom Up or Interactive-compensatory processes (see Stanovich, 1984; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). However, I would claim that Top Down strategies have little relevance for Young Learners at the very beginning stages of English and of learning to decode. Most research concerning early routes to reading seems to centre on the processes involved in word-recognition as an assumed step in building reading skills. The transition point at which a child becomes an independent reader is a crucial one for research but I have found nothing in the literature to illuminate the process as far as Young Learners are concerned.

An issue for this thesis is whether children's first steps in developing their L1 reading skills in one or other of the writing systems or orthographies shown in Figure 4 above may influence their later responses to a different one and whether teachers therefore need to be aware of the implications for the language(s) with which they deal. In this regard, Perfetti and associates have posited two Universal Principles concerning

writing systems and their links with learning to read.

2.6.1 The Language Constraint on Writing Systems Principle

This principle, first put forward by Perfetti (2003), states that all writing systems 'encode spoken language, not meaning'. It had often been claimed, previous to the formulation of this principle, that, particularly in the case of 'deep orthography', languages such as English where only some words in the written language were phonically decodable and others needed to be recognized as 'Sight Words', a dual route to decoding via phonology and via direct lexical access was likely to be used. In the case of logographic writing systems such as Chinese and Japanese Kanji it was at one stage posited (See, for example, Forster and Chambers, 1973) that there was only one direct route: from visual sign to meaning, by-passing phonology. However, engagement with the issue by researchers has brought together considerable evidence to oppose this claim as too crude, for example (Goswami, Gombert, & de Barrera, 1998):

In fact, there is now widespread agreement that phonological skills are important for learning to read in every orthography that has been studied, including Chinese and Japanese.

Perfetti and Dunlap (2008, p. 14) summarize research which 'puts to rest' the direct visual-to-meaning view of logographic systems, stating 'writing systems encode spoken language, not meaning'. They continue:

Instead, reading appears to depend on language in the most fundamental way: when a reader encounters printed words, he or she understands their meaning within the context of his language, not as signs that derive their meaning independently.

Nonetheless, there is evidence (Huang & Hanley, 1995) that learning to read in different L1 writing systems does demand different balances of visual skills and phonological awareness. As Hempenstall (1997) points out, referring to the work of Huang and Handley:

Such findings have important implications for the most appropriate instructional emphasis in initial reading. It is suggestive of the need to ensure the development

of phonological awareness in students embarking upon beginning reading in an alphabetic system.

So, for example, although Chinese children have been shown not to lack phonological awareness in their L1, it is perhaps an area for conscious attention by teachers introducing them to reading in English. On the other hand, their well-developed visual acuity and visual recognition skills are an asset that can be exploited by a teacher with this understanding. Interestingly, McBride-Chang and Ho (2000) in their study of Chinese children's character-acquisition used the rapid naming of letters of the Roman alphabet as one of their tests of visual recognition skills. Scores on this task correlated highly with scores on Chinese character-recognition.

2.6.2 The Universal Phonological Principle

This principle, first put forward in Perfetti, Zhang, & Berent (1992), is phrased very clearly in Perfetti and Dunlap (2008, p. 14) as follows:

word reading activates phonology at the lowest level of language allowed by the writing system: phoneme, syllable, morpheme or word.

These units are sometimes referred to as **grain-size**, and the range of grain-sizes typically used by readers in different languages is thought to have contrastive value when reading across languages is concerned. Much of the debate concerning the pedagogy of early REL1 could be traced to different views on appropriate grain-size for teaching focus in English. As will be discussed below, an alternative division of words, cutting across linguistic grain-size has been posited as productive for focus by early L1 readers specifically of English.

2.7 Specific 'ways in' for the Beginning L1 Reader and Reading across Languages

A number of studies have attempted to determine whether particular 'ways in' for beginners to access the written modes of a language are more effective than others and, importantly, whether effective access modes might differ according to language or writing system. Two facts are salient about early L1 reading. In ordinary circumstances, beginning readers already have a substantial degree of aural/oral competence in their languages and they are now learning to deal with a visually-

presented mode of the spoken language. Sound and vision are therefore in play in any discussion of early reading by native speakers of a language.

2.7.1 Phonological awareness

Goswami and Bryant's (1991) summary of their own and others' relevant research suggests convincingly that young native speaker beginner readers in English need to develop phonological awareness as a starting point for early reading. Phonological awareness is a broader term than phonemic awareness, taking in awareness of features of a particular language such as permissible sequences of phonemes as constituents of syllables (phonotactics) as well as the basic ability to divide words into syllables. Phonemic awareness concerns the ability to recognise and segment spoken words in a language into separate phonemes. There is some controversy, as we shall see later about whether it is a pre-requisite for reading-readiness or whether it is developed for readers in an alphabetical language through the visual cues given by letters.

2.7.2 Influences across languages

Perfetti & Liu (2005), importantly for my purposes, having applied the two Universal Principles cited above across writing systems and languages, then proceed to consider the degree to which detailed differences in orthography and writing system are associated with different reading strategies, and the degree to which any statement on this area must be tempered by the fact that we are normally also dealing with different languages. There is ambiguous evidence for the question of whether differences in processing strategies are traceable mainly to orthographical differences or to language-system differences. For example, Yoon, Bolger, Kwon and Perfetti (2002) report on research regarding the syllable-division preferences of Korean readers compared with English readers.

Korean is a language whose orthography although alphabetic, presents its elements in square blocks representing syllables. Yoon et al showed that Korean readers tend to prefer a CV + C syllable-division (as in /pɪ/ + /n/) to the 'onset-rime' C + VC syllable division (as in /p/ + /In/) which as we have seen above is held to be favoured by learners of reading in English (Treiman, Mullenix, Bijeljac-Babic, & Richmond-Welty, 1995). Yoon et al considered the hypothesis that the preference was conditioned by the layout of the visual blocks, but in fact, the preferences were observed with speech-cued as well as in visually-cued syllable-divisions. They also tested young

Korean children using English words presented in Roman script in the 'normal' linear fashion and found that the CV + C preference remained. Their research also took in young native English speakers undertaking word-similarity and phoneme-changing tasks and showed that these English-speaking participants maintained the 'characteristic English' preference for onset-rime divisions. Yoon et al concluded that the differences had their roots in linguistic factors, that is, in the different phonotactics of Korean and English rather than in script-presentation factors. Although it seems important to note these differences since they suggest possible L1- derived preferences of early REYL readers, as Yoon et al point out, it could well be the case that when children gained further experience with the language they might then finely-tune phonological awareness of the new language and switch preferences. By contrast, in a study carried out by Zeigler and Goswami (2005) on the different strategies used by German-speaking and English-speaking children, the differences seemed to be attributable to features of the different orthographies rather than to linguistic differences.

2.7.3 Research into Reading across languages and its links with methodology

As we have seen above, 'grain-size' is a term used to refer to the habitual level of analysis on which a reader in a given language focuses, for example, syllables, phonemes or whole words. While it is acknowledged that a reader is free to switch focus, it is posited that certain languages 'fit' certain grain sizes best. A very clear example is Chinese whose logographs are co-extensive with morphemes. Different pedagogic choices may be made concerning whether to focus for teaching purposes at any one time on syllables, phonemes, whole words or even on phrases and sentences. Treiman et al (Treiman, Mullenix, Bijeljac-Babic, & Richmond-Welty, 1995) carried out analysis of English from the point of view of the units of analysis which yielded the area of greatest regularity and consistency of relationship between orthography and pronunciation. It was found to be the orthographic rime Unit. This is a sub-syllabic unit which cuts across linguistic grain-size but represents a unit that seems meaningful to many users of English. The work of Treiman et al supports the experimental findings of Goswami & Mead (1992) and Goswami & East (2000) that in English focusing on rime is more productive for learners than focusing on the onset of syllables, represented by a single consonant phoneme, (as is often found in early reading instruction). These findings are of great importance for the analysis of words made focal for reading that I shall be reporting as an outcome of my study.

Perfetti and Dunlap (2008, p. 26) raise another important issue: whether cross-

linguistic differences in reading strategies may be partly the result of different instructional practices associated with different languages and contexts, stating strikingly:

Shallow orthographies lend themselves to Phonics instruction and Phonics instruction appears to be used for all shallow orthographies.

Issues of instructional practices will be taken up in more detail in section 2.7 of this chapter. We may note at this stage, however, that English, as a deep orthography, does not fall naturally into Perfetti and Dunlap's candidature for reading instruction through Phonics. This may partly account for the long history of fierce debate about the best 'way in' to English reading for beginners. See, for example, Chall (1996) concerning the USA, Hempenstall (1997) concerning Australia and Rose (2006) concerning the UK.

In spite of the varied approaches actually found in L1 teaching of early English reading, the statement by Perfetti and Dunlap seems to be borne out for some other languages and for other units of analysis. For example, commonalities in grain-size used for teaching are indeed found with a number of languages whose phonotactics involve regular consonant-vowel (CV) sequences. Williams (2006, p. 30), for example, shows that teachers of literacy in the CV-based languages of the Bantu group in Malawi and Zambia use a syllable-based approach known there as 'The Syllable Method', with the initial consonant as the major organizing feature for the grouping of syllables. On the other hand, for English, a Whole Word analysis was used. In Yaacob's study in Malaysia (2006), overall classroom approaches were shared across languages but the linguistic units of analysis again differed according to the language.

With Bahasa Malaysia a syllable-based approach was used, whereas for English a Whole Word approach was used, although, additionally, spelling out words by letter name was a common classroom procedure for all languages.

Although my research cannot contribute to the question of the segmentation routes actually adopted long-term by REYL children the main study may throw light on what assumptions there are in the EYL language teaching profession concerning the question of how words are best analyzed and divided for pedagogical purposes. For example, materials writers and teachers who are convinced (whether or not acquainted with the research) that native speaker-like rime focus is also optimal for REYL, will promote teaching that emphasizes sensitivity to rimes and rhyme. In the

main study, teaching materials will be analyzed for signs of what kind of language analysis underlies their content.

2.7.4 The role of phonemic bridging in non-alphabetical languages

It is clear from accounts of learning to read in Chinese that it is an effortful process, which in different modern contexts is assisted by various phonemic ‘bridging’ stages that allow learners to link the spoken forms of the words with the logographs. In Mainland China and Taiwan, bridges consisting of different transparent phonemic alphabets are employed. According to Snowling and Hulme (2005, p. 320):

All children in the 1st term at elementary school (6-7 years) in mainland China are taught to read an alphabetical script (Pinyin) before formal instruction in reading and writing Chinese characters commences in term 2.

...

Taiwanese children learn a script called Zhu-Yin-Fu- Hao during the first 10 weeks of 1st grade before any exposure to Chinese characters takes place.

In Hong Kong, on the other hand, the older traditional route of learning, without such a bridge, by repetition and kinaesthetic reinforcement by writing characters seems still to be favoured. (Snowling & Hulme, 2005, p. 320):

In Hong Kong, children are taught to read and write characters during their first kindergarten year when they are as young as 3 ... Here, children learn new characters by rote by copying them many times over.

It should also be noted that a bridge similar to that employed in Mainland China is found in Japan: ‘Romaji’, an orthographically transparent form of the Roman alphabet to represent the phonemes of Japanese, is used as a support to early learning of Japanese Kanji. This again raises the interesting possibility, mentioned above in connection with the work of Perfetti et al, that the differing instructional practices associated with these ‘bridges’ may foster different strategies in both teachers and learners when approaching reading in other languages. For example, there is the possibility that Pinyin, or the use of Romaji in relation to learning Kanji, may be felt by some teachers to have a facilitating or possibly a confusing role when Young Learners come to learn English and meet the Roman alphabet used in the differing orthographical system that applies to the English language.

To these phonemic bridges for L1 reading we should add the use in Taiwanese Middle Schools of the 'KK' (Kenyon & Knott, 1944) phonemic alphabet for American English as a bridge to the decoding of English words on the page. When English was introduced to primary schools the use of KK was banned at that level, a decision which has been the cause of some controversy as the article cited below from the Taipei Times of Feb 18th 2003 illustrates.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2003/02/18/0000194999>.

(see Appendix 2.2 for this article).

2.7.5 Decoding and learning to read in an alphabetical language

Whatever the orthography or writing system, it seems that some form of decoding takes place in the early stages of learning to read. Decoding, a term coined by Chall (1996) interestingly, seems to be a term that is now taken enough for-granted not to warrant an entry in the UK National Strategies Glossary nor to be defined in many of the standard works on reading. It is usually presented as a process used mostly by early readers in which they respond to elements of orthography in order to arrive at the identity of a word or words. It requires some sort of 'sounding out' and in some methods of reading teaching such as Analytical Phonics (see later discussion in section 2. 10.2) this is seen as a particularly important early operation for beginning readers. Although it is possible to present decoding as a mere 'word-calling' or 'barking at print' operation in which the importance of comprehension may be lost, the definition given by Gregory (2008: 109) clearly makes the point that meaning and understanding should be its purpose. For her, decoding can be seen as the process of:

reconstruction of the sound forms of a word on the basis of its graphic representation, whereby understanding arises as a result of correct re-creation of the sound form of words. In other words, decoding sounds and pronouncing words is seen as a means to gain understanding.

Given that successful decoding in Gregory's terms requires the children to arrive at the meaning of what they are saying, the role of decoding and decoding-like operations in REYL beginners' materials and teaching is one that warrants careful consideration. I have found no discussion concerning this in the EYL literature and therefore hope that more information on this issue can be one of the outcomes of my study.

2.8 Cultures of teaching and learning and responses to the issues of early reading

This section concerns localized pedagogical responses to the issues of early reading and the views that are generally accepted within certain teaching cultures as to how early reading both in L1 and in English might best be done.

Studies of cultures of teaching and learning are distinct from those in Teacher Cognition in that they set out to capture commonalities of thought, attitude and beliefs within the teaching profession in particular contexts. Comparative studies of teaching cultures in mainstream education have been prominent since the early 1990s with the work, reported below, of Alexander and associates in the UK and Stevenson and Stigler in the USA. In the field of ELT, research such as that by Holliday (1994), Ellis (1994), Cortazzi and Jin (1996) often focuses on discussing versions of language teaching approaches that will be maximally effective as well as acceptable to local traditions and expectations. My own study is not equipped to investigate teaching cultures in any depth, since I am working with individual cognitions and will not (see Methodology, Chapter 3) claim to be able to generalize from individuals to populations. However, an awareness of teaching culture and its relationship with contextual conditions for individual teachers seems a valuable one to engage with in relation to my study.

Alexander (2000, p. 554) usefully critiques overviews of teaching culture which are too broad and set up crude oppositions such as 'Western models' versus 'Non-Western models' or similarly focus on large geographical areas within 'the rest of the world'. Reynolds and Farrell (1996), for instance, set up contrasts among 'Europe' (Germany, Holland, Hungary, Switzerland), 'The Pacific Rim' and England. The culturally-specific tendencies claimed, such as 'emphasis on effort rather than ability' for the 'Pacific Rim' area are, however, felt by Alexander to be useful contributions to a framework of analysis.

Considering teaching culture studies specific to particular contexts, Stevenson and Stigler (1992) also claimed that, in the early 1990s, the focus on individualism and the belief in innate ability identified in the USA was in strong contrast with the collectivism and the belief that all can achieve, given sufficient effort, found in Japan and China. They also suggest that the effort + collectivism cluster of views is very consonant with successful performance in the conditions in the very large classes often found in these contexts.

This concern with effort and responsibility on the part of the learner may in some accounts shade into a willingness to take special measures at some personal cost (for example, private tuition) outside the school in order to catch up with, keep up with or get a head start on the level of attainment stipulated by the school. This attitude is in contrast with the public sense of entitlement and teacher- and school-accountability that has been growing in contexts such as the UK (Burgess, Propper, Slater, & Wilson, 2005) and Australia (McKay, 2005) with strong emphasis on learner and parental rights. Learners and their parents in contexts where schools are held less accountable may be less inclined to critique school provision for their children.

2.8.1 Cultures of School-Based Reading Pedagogy in Different Contexts

The rest of this section attempts an overview of what is to be found in the literature concerning attitudes and procedures with regard to early steps in reading in primary schools in both L1 and English. For reasons discussed in Chapter 1, this includes Outer Circle as well as Expanding Circle contexts. Discussion at this stage will concern general types of interaction set up within the class as well as particular types of focus on elements of language system. Focus on highly systematized reading approaches which may work within or against such general pedagogical frameworks will be reserved until Section 2.9.

Although as an individual matures and gains new experiences, his or her notions may expand concerning the nature of what literacy events and procedures are legitimate and useful, early experiences with L1 literacy learning are likely to influence a child's views of what reading is and how it is to be learned. The work of Gregory (1996, 2008) has clearly suggested that the conceptualizations of children and their carers concerning reading and the most effective ways of learning to read may be highly coloured by the pedagogical literacy procedures prevalent in their own societies. Intercultural and cross-linguistic differences in this area are vividly illustrated by Gregory's story (1996, p.30) of her encounter, in a UK setting, with the family of 'Tony' a small boy with a Hong Kong Chinese background:

Tony and his family: the talismanic value of the book

When Tony does not want to take books home, Mrs. G. (his teacher) visits the family, taking an attractive dual language picture book which she hopes to leave them to read with Tony. She is surprised by the frosty reception she receives from his grandfather: 'Tony can't have this book yet. You must keep it and give it to him later.'

'But why?'

Because he can't read the words. First he must read the words, then he can have the book.'

Tony's grandfather pulls out an exercise book from under the counter and shows it to the teacher. A number of pages have been filled with rows of immaculate ideographs. His grandfather says proudly that Tony has completed these at his Chinese Saturday school. With a skeptical look at the teacher, he pulls out a screwed-up piece of paper. On one side was a shop advertisement from which it had been recycled. On the other was a drawing of a transformer. Tony's grandfather:

'This is from his English school. This is rubbish.'

Pointing to the corner where 'ToNy' is written, he says:

'Look. He can't even write his name yet!'

For 'Mrs. G', it seems that reading is learned through reading, with the continuous texts in the illustrated book as both goal and means; for Tony's grandfather, it is a skill whose component parts must be meticulously practised and established 'bottom up' before reading a book can even be contemplated. As we have already seen from Snowling & Hulme (2005, p. 320) the traditions of establishing literacy in the Chinese language in Hong Kong involve strong kinaesthetic support from simultaneously learning to write the characters that are being learned for reading purposes. This is further described by Kennedy (2002, p. 432).

When learning their first language, Chinese students have to copy out and memorize thousands of written characters. In mainland China and in Hong Kong, the nature of the ideographic script develops children's ability to recognize patterns and memorize by rote.

Tony's grandfather, in his scorn for Tony's attempts at English writing, may also have had such expectations of learning to read in English via accurate copying. Whether or not this is the case, a conflict of views about how best to learn to read is clear.

Gregory's UK-based work on revealing family and community literacy practices in the child's L1 and their possible links and conflicts with pedagogic literacy procedures in school is relevant to the EYL world outside the UK in a number of ways. Firstly, in contexts in which expatriate native English-speaking teaching staff are employed by local schools, or by international organizations such as the British Council, such staff may be bringing a very different 'pedagogical baggage' with regard to assumptions about the teaching and learning of early reading. The relevance of Gregory's work takes on a different dimension, however, in the case of the EYL teachers with which this thesis is concerned. They, for the most part, are lifetime members of the instructional context in which they are teaching English. In cases like these, in which the EYL teachers themselves come from the same L1 literacy background as that in the surrounding society, there are unlikely to be the sorts of cross-purposes between teachers and families illustrated by the story of 'Tony' cited above. There may, on the other hand, be shared contextually-approved approaches to L1 reading and contextually-sanctioned classroom literacy procedures or techniques that have an impact on how REYL is conceptualized and addressed by both teachers and children.

2.8.2 'Localized' responses to early reading instruction

There can be found in the literature a number of accounts by observers or practitioners concerning pedagogical procedures (both in L1 early reading and in early reading in English) with a strong local identity. I shall call these practices 'localized'. This is in contrast with teaching which is presented in the literature as overtly related to or derived from approaches prevalent in other, particularly Inner Circle, contexts.

2.8.2.1 Large class lockstep teaching

A general point is that evidence in the literature suggests, with some exceptions, that the realities of much mainstream primary school teaching in many contexts, with large classes and/or restricted access to teaching materials, seem to make predominantly teacher-to-whole-class operations the most commonly-found general mode of proceeding. See Alexander (2000) and Williams (2006) for example. Reference to the type of one-to-one or very small group scaffolded instruction that it is still the aim in many UK schools to provide at some point in the school week was not found in any of the sources I consulted although, as we have seen above, one-to-one support may be available at home in some sectors of some societies.

In a detailed study of reading lessons, both in L1 and in English in Malawi and

Zambia, Williams, (2006, p. 41) makes the point that the overall ways of conducting lessons are common in other school subjects such as social studies and cites the considerable amounts of choral response and repetition from the learners that is found in these lessons. He points out (pp. 40 - 43) that not only may there be practical reasons connected with class size to account for it but that the practice is described by positively many teachers and students. Outside the school, the practice is widespread and valued in society. Discussing Malawi, (p. 43) he writes:

Given that choral repetition pervades so much of social life in Malawi, what would be surprising would be its absence, rather than its presence in the classroom.

Williams (2006, p. 39) therefore did not take issue with the fact of massed responses as one teaching strategy in large classes in Malawi and Zambia, but he did point out a danger with the teachers' and students' tendency to indulge in a routine of repetition and relentless procedure through the text which maintains 'a façade of effective learning taking place' (Chick, 1996, p. 238) and was referred to by Chick as 'safe-talk'.

Yaacob (2006), in the preliminary studies for her thesis on EYL reading procedures in Malaysian primary schools, analyzed a small set of urban and rural pre-school and Year 1 literacy lessons in Bahasa Malaysia and Yawi /Arabic in addition to English. In a similar way to Williams, Yaacob found common features in classroom interaction in that all reading classes, regardless of language, contained choral reading and repeating after the teacher's reading aloud. Most classes, regardless of language, included drilling.

In an article of more than 30 years ago Gbenedio (1986, p. 48) discussing primary school English reading in Nigeria gives a clear description of a particular whole class reading pedagogy had, at least at that time, a strong local identity in southern Nigeria and which she names the 'reading-while-listening' method.

In almost all schools where it is used for teaching reading, it involves the following procedure: books open in front of the pupils; teacher reads through a passage (usually five to twenty lines in length); pupils do choral reading after the teacher; sometimes only one line is read at a time at others one pupil is called up to say the line or lines after the teacher.

This 'reading-while-listening' approach seems to have elements common with the practices described in Malawi by Williams in terms of the use of choral repetition, although the phase described by Williams in which basic reading comprehension questions are asked appears not to be present. As described by Gbenedio, an important aspect of 'reading while listening' involves memorization by the learners of the words of a text and the reiteration of those words from rote memory, using the marks on the page or the board as minimal cues, if they are used at all. She comments (p. 48):

If one observes such pupils in action, it is easy to see that their gaze is so steady that they could not possibly be reading print as it runs from left to right and top to bottom of a page.

The 'combination' method, which Gbenedio describes as being used by a minority of teachers (from one sixth to one tenth) has a different characteristic set of activities which she describes thus (p. 48):

The teacher holds up an object and calls its name; pupils are asked to repeat the name or word; a word card on which the word is written is then shown to the pupils; first the teacher reads it; then the pupils read it, until the pronunciation has been mastered; the word is then written on the board and sometimes the object it represents is drawn alongside it. Pupils are led to recognize the word on the board and then it is read aloud once more. The letters of the alphabet that make up the word are spelt out one after the other, and then later combined to sound out the word. This, it is claimed, helps pupils learn spelling. When this is mastered, sentences are made with the word – the teacher leads in the activity and the pupils follow. A few of the sentences, usually short, simple ones, are written on the board alongside the illustration of the object, and read in the same way that the single word was read.

It is notable that this 'combined' method seemed to be attempting to introduce new vocabulary items in the same lesson as pupils are taught how to read and spell them. In other words, teaching new language items and teaching pupils to read are conflated in one teaching sequence. The 'alphabetic approach' in which words are spelled out using letter names is also notable.

Alexander's (2000, pp. 278 - 285) account of lessons in primary schools in five different countries suggests that the above concept of overall pedagogic 'style or framework' pervading the conduct of reading lessons and other lessons is a reasonable one to work with, especially when the same teacher is responsible for teaching a number of curricular areas. Condensed outlines of Alexander's vignettes of three L1 literacy lessons, from France, India and Russia (pp. 278 – 285), are shown in Figure 5 below.

Lesson 11.1. France, children aged 6-7 (French Literacy Lesson)

Teacher brings pupils in from playground, tells pupils to read page 39 in the language textbook. They do so, silently.

At the teacher's request, eight pupils in turn read aloud from the prepared page in the textbook.

Teacher asks the pupils to read aloud from another chart pinned to the board. This features, and exemplifies, in 14 words, the sound 's' as represented by the letters 'S', 'SS', 'C' before an 'E' or an 'I', and the letter Ç before an 'A', 'O', or 'U'. One of the words listed, to connect to the previous lesson, is Cécile. Pupils read the letters and words in unison, as the teacher points to each with his ruler. They then volunteer the rules that govern the pronunciation and spellings in question. Teacher asks pupils to find words containing the sound 's' in the material pinned to the classroom walls. This material has been generated in the course of recent lessons. Pupils call out and raise hands, teacher selects.

Lesson 11. 4 India, children aged 5-6 L1 (Hindi Literacy Lesson)

Teacher asks four pupils to come to the board and draw an aam (mango). They do so and the others watch. Teacher asks pupil named Aarti to stand up. She asks the class about the initial sound 'aa' in Aarti and aam. Tells class to look at a card she holds up which has aam written on it.

Pupils chant 'aam, Aarti, aadat, aankh, aam with an aa, Aarti with an aa.' etc.

Teacher then writes these words on the blackboard. Four pupils, at teacher's request, now come to the board to circle the aa in each word. The rest of the class applaud, then resume chanting 'aam with an aa'

... teacher introduces *ither* (here) *itni* (this many) and *itna* (this much) by referring to the pictures on the board, and establishes through questions and chanted response that all begin with 'a small i' which she then shows on a flashcard. She writes *imli*, *itna*, *ither*, on board. Three pupils come to board to circle 'i'.

Lesson 11.7. Russia, children aged 6-7 (Russian Literacy Lesson)

Teacher points to the letters on the board and asks how they should be rearranged. Pupils answer individually.

Teacher selects two pupils to rearrange the letters on the board. She questions them about the categories they are using. Two pupils sort the letters into two groups, vowels and consonants. The other pupils watch and listen in silence. Teacher questions pupils on precise pronunciation of vowels and the similarities and differences between them.

Sustained question and answer move the analysis on to the rules governing combinations of hard and soft vowels and consonants in Russian.

Teacher changes *rozy* to *rosy* (dew) and questions pupils on the difference between 'З' and 'С' (phonetically 'z' and 's'). Pupils provide examples of these phonemes within other words.

Figure 5 Extracts from L1 literacy lessons from Alexander (2000, pp. 278 – 285)

Alexander's focus was not specifically on literacy pedagogy, but it can readily be seen from his data that literacy procedures are there to be identified. Clearly, more data of this type would be needed before it was possible to claim patterns of interaction as regular for one teacher, let alone widespread across schools in a particular context. However, it is of interest that in the lesson samples for France and India, in which the classes analyzed are smaller than in those in Africa and Malaysia discussed above, choral work is still important although there also seems to be involvement of individuals at key points in the lessons. The Russian lesson seems to involve more individual contributions by pupils. There is reference to textbook use in the literacy lesson from France, something not encountered before in this discussion. It is also interesting to note the differences in grain-size teaching-focus among the three lessons, which is a theme elaborated in Section 2.6 above. Whereas the teacher in the Hindi lesson seems to be letter-led, concentrating on initial letters and their sound values, the French and Russian teachers are starting from a phonological analysis of the language, different ways of writing the phoneme /s/ in the case of the French lesson and, differences between vowels and consonants and then pairs of voiced and unvoiced consonants in the case of the Russian lesson.

Sources like these of information about 'local' pedagogic literacy procedures in different contexts outside the Inner Circle seem to be scarce in the literature. There is clearly the need for more direct observation-based studies of school-based literacy

procedures to take place in more contexts. Although such observation was not practically possible as a research activity in my own study, it is hoped that the accounts brought together in this Literature Review and the findings of my study could contribute towards a useful basis for such observations by others.

2.8.2.2 Accepted Purposes for Reading: Reading for Reading's Sake and/or Reading for Building Language Knowledge?

In this section we shall focus on views of reading as regards its role in language development. As long ago as 1926, West (1926, p. 1) expressed the alternatives, or, in his view, the dual purposes for reading:

Reading ability in a foreign language is needed for two reasons:

- (1) For its own sake alone, and
- (2) As an initial stage in the learning of a foreign language (speech, writing, and reading)

Concerning language development in the mother tongue, it is normally presented as uncontroversial that copious independent reading is a route not only to more fluent reading but also to language expansion. Aitchison (2003), for example, refers to the 'spurts' in L1 vocabulary growth at around the age of 12 that can be influenced by the amount of independent reading undertaken. There seems also to be evidence (Krashen, 1989, 2004; Nation 1997; Day & Bamford, 1998) that, once learners of a foreign or second language are able to read substantial continuous texts for themselves, there is scope for language expansion through extensive reading. No references in the literature have been found to similar research on Young Learners, however.

It should be emphasized that there is an important distinction between regarding reading as a means of language expansion once a child has learned to decode confidently and assuming that reading is in itself a vehicle for language development in the very first stages of language learning. Cameron (2003, p. 108) makes this point well:

... it takes time for reading and writing to reach a level at which they can support foreign language learning. Before that point is reached, there is what

we might call a 'literacy skills lag', in which the written form of English creates such high cognitive and motor skills demands for pupils that the oral component of a task may be backgrounded to cope with the written demands.

Cook (2005, p. 431) raises the fundamental issue of the degree to which what is there to be 'read' on the page in ELT textbook materials actually has reading as its main aim rather than support for other language learning, as in a printed dialogue.

A different view of the matter would be to consider learning to read in English as a challenge and a goal in itself, requiring specific instruction in how to decode and achieve comprehension of the written or printed word. 'Reading to Learn or Learning to Read? in short.

There are clear signs in the account of teacher cognition in the article by El-Okda (2005) cited in Section 2.2 above that some teachers favour a 'Reading to Learn' position from the very earliest stages of language learning. Similar indications can be found in Gbedenio's description of the 'combined method' in Nigeria in the 1970s of a view amongst teachers that the process of reading new language items is part of general language learning. One aim of my main study will be to find evidence for this stance, or its converse, amongst teachers interviewed and in the materials analyzed. In Długosz's view (2000, p. 285), concerning Poland, foreign language growth through reading is attainable even for very young children not yet literate in L1:

Including the teaching of reading in language programmes will benefit all young beginners, including pre-schoolers, i.e. children who have not yet been taught to read in their native tongue.

The report of the project however, suggests a narrow definition of language success. In addition, the fact that the writer confounds 'the phonetic method' and 'Phonics' (p. 286) does not suggest a very critical grasp of the issues involved in early reading instruction.

2.9 Systematized approaches for REL1 and their relevance to REYL teaching

EYL professionals could be influenced by what they know or believe about the approaches that have been developed and debated in Inner Circle countries for teaching mother-tongue children to read in English. Before the discussion of particular REL1 methods, however, there will be a discussion of some general issues and of

features in common or strongly distinguishing some REL1 methods from others.

2.9.1 Shifts and Debates Concerning Favoured Methods for REL1

A vast literature has developed since the 19th century, in the USA and UK at least, on approaches to teaching reading in English as a first language. See Stubbs (1986, p. 219) for an account of the early period. At different moments in history and in different parts of the English speaking-world different methods in early reading have become focal, fashionable or officially supported. As documented by Chall (1996) the Reading Wars of the 1950s to 1970s which largely concerned the merits of Whole Word versus Phonics-based teaching, were particularly bitter and hard-fought, with scholarly contributions sometimes as polemic as populist works such as that by Flesch (1955). From the 1980s to the present, the period focused on in this study, the climate has also been turbulent. Take, for example the debate in the early 1990s between the Real Books and graded reading schemes lobbies in both the USA and the UK (Martin & Leather, 1994, p. 8) and the more recent debates in the UK primary sector centered on the Rose Report (Rose, 2006). The choice of methods for teaching reading in formal education tends to be represented not only as a key but as the overriding influence on children's success or lack of it. These discussions often involve politicians and administrators taking a vivid if roughly-tuned interest in the area. This can lead to rapidly-issued edicts based on evidence that is sometimes more media-friendly than deeply founded and in which Street's autonomous/technical skills model of reading development often seems dominant. As Lankshear and Knobel (2006, p. 122) point out, focus on the autonomous model rather than the ideological model is perhaps more friendly at first sight to the 'commonsense' views of many non-specialists. An aspect of my interest in EYL professionals' cognition concerning the possible contributions of REL1 to their approaches to REYL was whether they were aware that they were not dealing with bland alternatives.

2.9.2 Time-limitation of Initial Reading approaches

It is important to stress that the 'initial reading Methods' discussed below should be seen as just that – as initial means to an end and as time-limited – although they are not always discussed in such terms. In a maturely-understood implementation of any early reading approach, a transition to the ability to engage in fluent silent reading when appropriate is usually promoted (Share, 1995) although the alchemy involved in this transition is little understood. Once this stage is reached, children are seen as ready to become independent readers of materials of their own choice as discussed

above. It is perhaps true to say that, once the fluent independent stage of reading is reached, the concept of 'reading method' tends to break down, although strategies derived from one or other method may remain favoured by a reader.

2.9.3 Building a bridge from decoding to independent reading; Shared Reading

Shared Reading (Holdaway, 1979) is seen by many REL1 practitioners as an essential bridge for learners to move gradually from decoding to independent reading of texts. It often takes place with a subset of the class but can also be used with the whole class. In this procedure, a teacher models reading strategies and thinking processes connected with a shared text and structures the efforts of the learners through carefully-chosen questions and an interactive stance. The text is shared in that all learners have access to a copy of the teacher's text. This may be because they can all see a worksheet or reading book or because a single copy of the text is visible to all, either as a Big Book (see below) or as a large printed sheet, copied on the board, or, in technically equipped classrooms, as a projection. Principles familiar in ELT methodology such as activating prior knowledge, inviting predictions and making use of schemata are all part of Shared Reading teaching strategies, but there is also scope for work which focuses on form or on the graphic or phonemic components of individual words. Children may also hear extracts of the text read aloud or be invited to read aloud individually or in chorus..

Al-Hooqani (2006) writes positively of his own experiences in Oman and of colleagues' attitudes to the use of Big Books for Shared Reading. Comments from teachers who made use of them were that pupils enjoyed sitting together and repeating the chunks in the story. and that shared reading developed pupils socially. Class sizes of 48 and short lesson times (35 minutes) were for some, however, a deterrent to using the procedure. Lomeda from the Philippines (Rixon, 2011) also promotes the use of Big Books with teachers creating their own materials to suit language needs and pupils' interests. Some practices (as, for example, in Al-Hooqani's account) specifically involve attention to the text on the page and have the overt aim of building children's awareness of how English print works.

2.9.4 The Role of Grading and selection

Whatever major orientation is taken to learning to read, 'technical skills' issues with regard to English as an orthographically deep language are difficult to ignore

entirely. The variety of REL1 approaches may be seen as differently-oriented responses to the fact that, as discussed above in section 2.4.1.1, English is a language whose encoding system contains on the one hand some degree of transparency in phoneme-grapheme relationships but also a great deal that is not transparent. The degree and type of attention paid by each REL1 method to addressing the orthographic depth issue seems to mark a crucial split and is largely what lies behind so-called 'reading wars' (Chall, 2002, p. 59) in REL1 contexts.

One major possible strategy for early teaching is to use systematic selection, grouping and sequencing of items so as to create a subset of the language which is maximally transparent and is thus an accessible basis on which to build reading ability. This, however, is not an inevitable or a neutral choice. Within the differently-oriented complementary or competing REL1 teaching methods that have developed over the past 150 years the issue of whether selection, sequencing and grading is appropriate or effective, has been the subject of much vivid debate (Chall, 1996, pp. 38 - 39).

Of the five REL1 approaches described in detail below, Phonics alone takes the clear-cut route of carefully selecting and manipulating input on language-system grounds. The Whole Word/Look and Say approach also involves selection and manipulation of language input but this is based more on criteria such as perceived frequency and use of selected items than on linguistic analysis. The other approaches can be seen to base decisions more on the child's interests, experiences and, in the case of Language Experience, current level of development in the spoken language. The degree to which REYL professionals are aware of these different responses and the potential tensions among them will be a theme of my study.

2.9.5 Influences of REL1 on REYL

There is evidence that at earlier periods in the history of teaching English as a Foreign Language there was little contact between L1 early reading experts and the field of ELT. For example, in the first part of the 20th century a major ELT authority, Michael West, devised a system (West, 1926) for teaching reading in English to Bengali boys that made no acknowledgment of the systems for teaching L1 reading, such as Phonics, that were well-developed even by that period. The position seems to be somewhat different in the present era. The 'big name' REL1 methods considered below are invoked in EYL curricular documents and teaching materials in some contexts. Issues for my study are the closeness to canonical definitions with

which REL1 terminology is applied and the conscious or unknowing adaptations that have been made to definitions (and uses) of these methods in the EYL world. There is evidence already that in some contexts, REL1 instruction methods may have undergone re-interpretations. See, for example, Kuo (2011) on understandings of Phonics in Taiwan. In others, there may be an attempt to transplant REL1 ideas wholesale, as in the account by Yaacob (2006) of the framing in Malaysia of Year One English lessons so as to replicate the structure and some of the content of the UK Literacy Hour. Nationwide promotion of Australian remedial L1 literacy materials 'First Steps' was also undertaken (Zain, Abdou, Francis, Khalid, & Albakri, 2006). REL1 methods, therefore, are discussed at this point in the Literature Review, not for their own sakes but mainly so that their interpretations in REYL contexts may be better understood. Some supposedly defunct historical approaches such as the 'alphabetic method' will be mentioned contrastively as part of the discussion. For the sake of clarity of comparison and contrast, it will be necessary to include below accounts of the principles of selected REL1 methods, but this will be done as briefly as possible with an assumption that readers of this thesis will not require an extensive stand-alone description of each one. In actual practice, in REL1 in Inner Circle countries it is rare to find a single method in exclusive use. Many teachers may integrate or switch procedures typical of one method with procedures which show a stronger orientation towards another, and Hall (2003) through her interviews with leading UK reading experts, has shown that although they may have a particularly strong orientation to a particular theoretical or practical stance, even they acknowledge other influences on their work.

2.10 Specific REL1 Approaches

The approaches for initial REL1 instruction that will be treated in this section are as follows:

1. The Whole Word method (or 'Look and Say')
2. Phonics
3. Language Experience
4. Environmental Print
5. Whole Language/Real Books
- 6.

For each, I will first briefly introduce the Inner Circle version(s) with reference to authoritative sources. Then, I will give an account of literature in which there is

evidence that they have been invoked, interpreted, or are present in some form in REYL contexts. The time range for the literature on this area will be from 1980 to the present, from the inception, as I described it in Chapter 1, of the expansion of EYL worldwide. It cannot of course be guaranteed that an approach mentioned in a publication of a particular date continues in use to this day in a given context.

2.10.1 The Whole Word Method or 'Look and Say'

Whole Word reading approaches can be traced back to methods developed for the deaf in North America around 1810 by Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (Fries, 1963), but which were later adapted for all beginner readers. The basis of the method is the building of an extensive 'sight' vocabulary, by-passing consideration of phoneme-grapheme correspondences. Children are trained to recognize words visually by their overall shapes. As Hempenstall (1997, p. 23) puts it:

An assumption behind this approach was that beginning readers should be taught to read in the way skilled readers were thought to do.

Typical training activities for Look and Say are amenable to whole-class use and involve activities which are thought to challenge and build rapid holistic visual recognition. A typical device is 'flash cards', word cards, containing single words or short phrases, which are revealed to the children for a limited duration, the so-called 'flash'. This procedure needs to be distinguished from showing a vocabulary card to a class with no speed-recognition element. Responses from learners could be saying the word(s) aloud, following an instruction on the card, or placing the card on the object named on it. Beyond the 'flash' response to the cards, high importance is put on having a well-labeled classroom with word-cards placed on key items of furniture and other classroom equipment so that children have daily long-term exposure to them.

Materials for Look and Say-based initial instruction thus tend to include a limited set of words and phrases which are repeated very often under various pretexts and in different contexts. Reading scheme materials produced on Look and Say principles involve the frequent repetition of key words within a storybook or whole 'level' of a reading scheme. An example is the Ladybird Key Words scheme (1976).

2.10.1.1 Issues with Look and Say

Proponents of this approach make the following points in its favour:

1. it supports the recognition of the high-frequency 'irregularly' spelled (orthographically deep) words in English (e.g. 'eight' or 'two') that cannot be easily worked out by other means.
2. It fits to some extent with where we want fluent readers to arrive although the final goal is to take in not just single words but whole phrases in one sweep or arc of vision.
3. It brings rapid returns, especially when language-controlled reading schemes are used, in which considerable repetition of words and phrases is built in. Children who can readily recognise repeated items can very quickly feel that they 'can read' and motivation remains high.

Counter arguments are the following:

1. Once children go beyond the words that they have in their sight vocabulary they have no tools that allow them to decode new, unfamiliar words (Tunmer & Hoover, 1993). They lack so-called 'word-attack' skills. Share (1995) estimates that the average L1 5th Year student encounters about ten thousand new words.
2. The positive motivational effects of rapid returns highly language-controlled reading matter may become dissipated when children attempt to move beyond such texts. They may find themselves frustrated by their lack of word-attack skills when reading genuine texts.
3. It may not necessarily be the best or only route to wide arc phrase recognition to force learners to attempt this approach from the start. Studies have shown that there are satisfactory paths to this goal via other dominant approaches such as Phonics based approaches.
4. Instructional materials based on repetition of key words have frequently been heavily satirized and castigated for their lack of content and interest (Flesch, 1955). Exton and O'Rourke (1993, pp. 27-28) put it thus:

Reading and language activities generated by the typical basal reader fail to offer readers any satisfaction and may actually foster a notion that reading and perhaps language in general involves the expenditure of effort upon texts that give back neither pleasure nor information in return.

2.10.1.2 Look and Say and issues for REYL

For 'Look and Say' to be effective with non-native learners of English who are also beginners in the language and have no large oral/aural vocabulary, it is necessary to find a way not only to link heard with seen words but to link both as co-referents with the item or concept referred to. It may therefore be the case that, in YL teaching, Look and Say reading teaching is conflated with the teaching of new vocabulary, supported by word and picture cues. Reports of this, concerning Malaysia, come from Yaacob (2006). In this sense the teaching of reading may be seen from the beginning by teachers as a way of increasing learners' language store, as discussed above in Section 2.6.1. Evidence that this is the case in Malawi and Zambia (but is ineffectively handled) comes from Williams (2006, pp. 32 - 39), with his report of technical scientific vocabulary in science lessons for older primary children being read aloud and transferred directly into students' notebooks without reference to any real-world object.

A Look and Say-based approach to reading does not of itself draw attention to particular phonemes, so overt coverage of the phonemic inventory of a particular variety of English is not implicated in its use.

Whole-word recognition seems as if it should work well for learners whose L1 writing system is logographic (see section 2.4.1) and who by consequence have already had to develop delicate visual discrimination skills. See Gregory (2008, p. 125). Learners developing their literacy in Chinese may seem to be ideal candidates for this method with regard to English, yet, as we have seen in Section 2.6, in two different areas of the world in which the Chinese language is used we find approaches to learning to read in Chinese which make use of phonemic symbols as a 'bridging device' to gloss the first ideographs learned and to support reading for a period of time. These learners will thus also have had an early introduction to reading in their own L1 that is phonemic rather than logographic.

2.10.1.3 Examples from the Literature of Look and Say used in EYL contexts

We have seen that Williams (2006) and Yaacob (2006) report Whole Word approaches to reading in English in Malawi, Zambia and Malaysia which interestingly all differ in 'grain size' from those used for teaching reading in other languages found in the school systems.

2.10.2 Phonics

According to Fries (1963, p. 20), the approach known as Phonics was first developed, in a form that we would recognize today, in 19th Century USA. The first use of the term found is in the 1879 re-print of McGuffey's 'Eclectic Series' readers where it is mentioned alongside the 'Word' method (which seems to have been a version of 'Look and Say'), and set up in opposition to it. Underlying Phonics is the Alphabetic Principle, discussed above in Section 2.4.3, that in an alphabetic writing system the letter symbols have some relationship with the phonemes of the language. However, Phonics takes systematic teaching of these relationships further and into great detail, by selection and sequencing of sound-letter correspondences and patterns and by selective focus on elements.

2.10.2.1 Issues with Phonics

Phonics is not a single approach. Recent government-supported enthusiasm (Rose, 2006) in the UK has resulted in Synthetic Phonics, in which children are first taught to link individual phonemes with letters and then are encouraged to build up words from those elements, being set up against Analytical Phonics, in which sets of whole known words are presented and then similarities and analogies are sought between their letter-sound relationships. This one-sided view has been questioned by many, including Gregory (2008, p. 112) and Wyse and Goswami (2008). There seems to be no logical reason why the two approaches should not be used in alternation or succession, although many Synthetic Phonics proponents, in particular, would not accept this (Johnston & Watson, 2005).

English and Phonics are not a close match. See my comment on Perfetti & Dunlap (2008, p. 26) in 2.7.3. It is ironical, perhaps, that Phonics is reported in the histories mainly in relationship to its development for English, a language to which it is a much less close fit than to many other languages. It may well be that Phonics-style instruction had already been in place for other languages in ways yet unreported by the largely Anglophone-oriented literature in this area. REL1 teaching is approached, at the present moment in the UK at least, by predominantly phonic instructional strategies. Even so, there is in English a set of about 200 very frequent words which cannot easily be decoded using letter-phoneme correspondences and which must therefore be taught as sight vocabulary, making a 'Look and Say' element indispensable even to strongly Phonics-led instruction. Lists of 'Sight Words', chosen on the basis of frequency as well as of phonic incalitrance, have been available for many years within Phonics-based courses. The lists for what

currently remains of the UK National Literacy Strategy (Department for Education and Employment, 1998) are one such example.

The manner and order of presentation of elements in Phonics runs counter to non-specialists' intuitions. Non-alphabetical-order sequencing of attention to letters and sounds has been established as fundamental to Phonics-based teaching. The order of presentation and focus may be based on differing criteria according to the scheme: stability of letter-phoneme relationships or frequency of occurrence of letters and letter combinations are two alternatives. In the case of the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme (Lloyd, 1992) a third possibility was chosen: a set of stable letter/sound relationships was selected for the first lessons that could generate the maximum number of real words. Examples of contrasting selections and ordering of elements, derived from Phonics schemes of different dates, appear in Appendix 2.1.

2.10.2.1 Phonics issues for REYL

As we saw in Section 2.5, whatever conclusion is accepted concerning the route to the development of phonemic awareness, the expectation is that English native-speaking children will have a well-established performative grasp of the phonology of their variety of English on which they and their teachers can draw when teaching early reading. In the case of learners for whom English is not a first language, the issue of their still-developing ability to operate with the phonological system of English is particularly urgent to address if Phonics is to be the chosen basis for teaching early reading. In a similar way to the possible conflation by EYL teachers of 'Look and Say' with vocabulary teaching, some EYL professionals see Phonics as the means of establishing the very competence in pronunciation on which L1 teachers rely for the teaching of early reading. For example, in a survey conducted on English Language teachers' awareness of different methods of reading instruction (Rixon, 2007a), Phonics was sometimes described by respondents as a method of pronunciation teaching. Some went further and conflated Phonics with phonetics.

2.10.2.2 Synthetic versus Analytical Phonics with EYL

Whatever the merits of the argument for Synthetic Phonics with L1 learners (Johnston & Watson, 2005) it would seem to have applicability to EYL learners only in very particular conditions. Most Young Learners of English lack the large oral/aural vocabulary that is needed as a reference point when 'building' up and working towards creating words from individual phonemes - words that they themselves

would recognize as real English words, that is. Analytical Phonics, which works by encouraging learners to observe and compare the sound and symbol correspondences in words with which they are already familiar aurally and orally, seems to have more prospect of usefulness for EYL.

2.10.2.3 A complete system or an edited Phonics system for EYL?

A complete Phonics-based system for teaching REL1 has a considerable number of stages and focuses. For example, Letters and Sounds, an until-recently officially-promoted Phonics programme for schools in England and Wales (DfES, 2007) envisages 6 phases of teaching, spread over Years One and Two of primary school, and runs to 208 A4 pages, not counting Notes of Guidance and other resources. The sheer quantity of time devoted to trying to help REL1 users to learn to decode confidently in the UK can thus be seen to be very considerably longer than that available for all the aspects of teaching English as a Foreign Language over the same period in Expanding Circle countries. The situation is different in those Outer Circle Contexts in which English is the medium of instruction at Primary level, but since not all children in those contexts will start school with a high level of speaking and listening in English, there is a great urgency to establish literacy so that the children can begin to access the English medium curriculum adequately.

2.10.2.4 Examples from the Literature of Phonics used in EYL contexts

As we have seen in Section 2.4, a major issue for teachers using Phonics as a main approach is how far children need already to have developed awareness of the phonemes of the language before they can succeed in learning to read by this method or whether starting to read in itself helps to develop phonemic awareness. The Malaysian Early Literacy Project has specified phonemic awareness as one of the goals of instruction from Year One. The report by Johnson & Tweedie (2010) on an experiment concerning the effects of direct instruction in phonemic awareness in this context seems, however, to describe a process in which letter names were linked with their common phonemic values in a manner which the authors suggest could qualify as instruction that was in the service of Phonics instruction but not Phonics instruction itself. This is in line with the words of the Curriculum Specifications Bahasa Inggeris (English Language, 2003, p. 6):

... teachers must make the pupils aware of the letters of the alphabet (e.g.

a, b, c, d) and the sounds of these letters ('eh' /b/, /k/, /d/) so that pupils can string together these sounds and produce a word (Phonics).

This is an interpretation which suggests that some of the principles on which Phonics is based in REL1 contexts had at that stage become notably adapted and attenuated. It should be assumed that these words from the Curriculum Specifications were a major basis for teachers' understandings and actions with regard to Phonics at the time that the Malaysian materials I analyzed in the main study were designed and in use. Interestingly, the Curriculum documents on the 2011 web pages give a much more nuanced account of Phonics and the recommended letter-sound links for Year One are based on the <satpin> initiation (highly generative of real words) associated with the Jolly Phonics scheme.

Kuo (2011) has written of the role and perceptions of Phonics in Taiwan in a manner that suggests that it has also been extensively reinterpreted in that context.

2.10.3 Language Experience

The Language Experience approach, which was in vigour in the 1960s and 1970s in the UK (Crystal, 1976, pp. 11, 63) and had considerable government and publishing resources supporting it, takes a strong view that literacy is built upon oracy, and that, accordingly, the first reading matter that the child sees should be material generated by his or her own utterances. A child is invited to say something that he or she wishes to express and the words spoken are then sought in a set of ready-made word-cards or else transcribed by the mentor on to blank cards. These may then be arranged to build a phrase or sentence which represents the utterance in written form.

'Breakthrough to Literacy' (Mackay, 1970), the published materials most closely associated with Language Experience teaching, are commended by Crystal (1976, p. 63) for their strong focus on the principle of respecting the child's 'expectancy' with regard to building sentences based on his or her current knowledge of the spoken language, particularly of its syntax, although he stresses the need to move on rapidly to other reading matter in order for the child to learn the conventions of written as opposed to spoken language. He also, interestingly with regard to the discussion in Section 2.8.3 on building language repertoires through reading, describes how this approach can later be used as a means of language expansion, particularly in the

area of syntactic development (Crystal, 1976, p. 63):

After the child has mastered the basic skills of reading, of course, then the medium can be used as a means of extending and experimenting with syntax, and developing a child's linguistic ability in general. But in the early months of reading, it would seem pedagogically unsound to attempt to introduce the reading skill if there is going to be persistent interference from unfamiliar syntax. The point is usually accepted as obvious with vocabulary, but it applies to other levels of language structure besides.

The word cards generated or collected become part of the child's personal 'bank', and activities can be carried out in which different word cards from the 'bank' are substituted for words in the original phrase or sentence in order to create new meanings. It is notable that this approach to reading does not involve the child in learning to form letters or write words at this early stage. Writing, in short, is not in this method seen as integral to the initial reading pedagogy.

2.10.3.1 Issues with the Language Experience Approach

Language Experience approaches depend to a very large extent on scaffolding in one-to-one interactions and thus are highly demanding on staff as well as material resources. Although the approach gained considerable currency in the UK with the publication of the 'Breakthrough to Literacy' materials and manual (Mackay, 1970), it is less well known in the 21st century as a mainstream approach to literacy teaching than the previous approaches discussed.

2.10.3.2 Language Experience Approach Issues with REYL

The Language Experience Approach presents issues concerning its use with beginning REYL readers. The most obvious is that in many contexts where English is a Foreign Language, young beginners lack an adequate pre-existing English language experience and language repertoire upon which to base the building up of sentences expressing their own meanings. It would, however, seem to offer benefits for children who have made some appreciable progress in their oral language and who are ready to start reading and writing. The large class conditions of many EYL contexts might seem to rule Language Experience out in its one-to-one manifestation, yet oral volunteering of phrases and sentences by different class

members for the teacher to write on the board does not seem to be practically unfeasible.

2.10.3.3 Examples from the literature of Language Experience used in EYL contexts

The approach has had a direct influence on localized training and teaching materials produced for African contexts under the auspices of the Molteno Institute of Language and Literacy

http://www.molteno.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=53.

Another account of the Language Experience type of reading pedagogy concerns Young Learners age 6 to 11 in a Philippine refugee camp (Hoyt, 1993). However, this may be seen as an example of direct influence from outside agencies rather than a localized teaching approach in that the trainer/teacher on the programme was from the USA.

2.10.4 Environmental Print

Use of Environmental Print (Prior & Gerard, 2004) involves taking examples of words and phrases found on public view or in the learners' everyday world (such as street signage and product labeling) and working with those that the learner already recognizes and can say aloud. The 'Macdonald's' sign, for example, has become readily recognizable in an increasing number of countries to many children who cannot yet 'read' in English. Use of Environmental print is not a complete approach in itself, in that it does not sustain instruction for very long, certainly not for a period of months. However, in L1 literacy teaching it is a motivating and readily understandable 'way in' for beginning readers, both for children, and for adults undergoing remedial reading instruction. Its main virtue is that it builds on what it is assumed that learners already 'know' about words and reading even before they officially begin to learn to read.

2.10.4.1 Issues with Environmental Print

The strengths of Environmental Print use are in terms of building motivation and self-esteem and as a source of analogy and explicit teaching about the letters/symbols that represent the sounds of already-recognized words (thus moving towards the potential to work with an Analytical Phonics approach).

As it is a 'way in' rather than an approach in itself, the use of Environmental Print can

be made to fit with the outlooks of other approaches such as Language Experience, Whole Word as well as Whole Language (see below). It can also fit with a Phonics philosophy, providing that an analytical approach to Phonics is adopted.

2.10.4.2 Environmental Print issues for EYL

English in the environment is available to very varying degrees in different contexts, but in many places its presence has grown and is growing dramatically. An example is Japan which 25 years ago was famously opaque to foreigners in terms of signage but where these days it is easy to find English words and the use of Roman alphabet signs destined both for a foreign and a Japanese audience. Since English has become a fashionable language amongst the young in many countries, English slogans on school bags and t-shirts (sometimes making little sense to a native speaker) are popular fashion add-ons, notably in Japan and South Korea.

English words in the environment may, outside school, usually receive a pronunciation conforming to the phonological rules of the local L1, which, unless the teacher makes use of contrastive pronunciation teaching, may render their use as a basis for early decoding work less successful than they would be in an REL1 context.

2.10.4.3 Examples from the literature of Environmental Print used in EYL contexts

Little detailed mention of the use of Environmental Print as a teaching strategy in EYL contexts is found in the literature. Yoshimura (2003) is a notable exception. In an account of her Action Research as part of the York University MA in TEYL she describes a project undertaken with Japanese primary school children to raise their awareness of English around them and to build their decoding skills through use of words that they themselves collected from the environment.

2.10.5 Real Books/Whole Language

Real Books/Whole Language approaches to reading instruction have been in named existence since the 1980s. Goodman (1986) describes Whole Language as a philosophy rather than a set of procedures. There is a strong concern for helping learners understand a particular set of aspects (the aesthetic, affective and imaginative) of what reading can be 'for' and Whole Language is thus strongly associated with an apprenticeship rather than 'technical skills' approach to reading. Real Books are 'real' in the sense that they are books created for 'trade' purposes, that is, books with high production values to be bought and enjoyed in daily life and

at home, rather than originally designed for pedagogical use. In REL1, Real Books approaches also aim to build children's understanding of how reading works in society. The roles of authors, illustrators and publishing houses are discussed with children at an early stage. Thus, they link with the discussion of ideological views of reading in Section 2.3.2 and fit closely with Hall's (2003, p. 134) socio-cultural perspective on reading.

Many of the most popular Real Books are now also available in pedagogically-destined form, as Big Books. In UK and USA primary education, Real Books use is especially associated with Shared Reading (see 2.9.3 above) via Big Books as well as with individual reading for pleasure. The introduction of Real Books into REL1 reading instruction seems to have been a reaction against the often arid graded reading schemes (or in US terminology 'basal readers') available in the 1960s and 1970s, as criticized by Exton & O'Rourke (1993). However, many reading schemes of the past 20 years, for example The Oxford Reading Tree (Oxford University Press, 1994) (<http://www.oup.com/oxed/primary/oxfordreadingtree/>) have striven to emulate the production values and interest levels of 'trade' Real Books.

In Real Books-based teaching, schema building and piquing of personal taste often intertwine, with invitations to children to look at the cover of the book and to speculate from the title and the cover illustration what it might be about and whether they feel that it is a book that they might choose to read for themselves. See Hall (2003, pp. 118 - 119). Attention would also be drawn to the author's name and that of any illustrator, to maintain the clear message to children that books are the product of human effort and artistry rather than entities distilled from the ether. Teaching procedures with a Real Book after this first arousal of interest may then vary. There could be a telling of the story using the illustrations as props or even an elicitation of the story from the children making use of the illustrations. There could also be a straightforward dramatic reading of the book by the teacher to the class, or a more measured presentation of the story, drawing attention to items in the text. It is during this type of presentation that the teacher has the option of highlighting phonic features and other regularities in the text. It is therefore, in spite of the objections that some of its originators might have, by no means true that Real Book use precludes systematic teaching about the language system.

2.10.5.1 Issues with Real Books/Whole Language

Whole Language approaches are frequently criticised because of their apparent ineffectiveness with at-risk students (Bateman, 1991) The reason given is often that they may by-pass the basic decoding work of which children at risk are most in need. Counter arguments are that children who lack wide life experiences are the very ones who need special induction into what it is to be a reader and to enjoy books.

2.10.5.2 Real Books and EYL Issues

Because Real Books are not graded for language content, EYL teachers need to develop the skills needed to assess their probable level of challenge and, having done so, either reject a particular book or devise strategies for making it feasibly comprehensible.

2.10.5.3 Examples from the Literature of Real Books-based Approaches Used in EYL Contexts

There is considerable interest in a number of EYL contexts in versions of Real Books/Whole Language approaches. The work of Ghosn (2000, 2010) in Lebanon, for example, is important and there is a long-standing literature on the subject of using authentic children's picture story books as a vehicle of EYL teaching. See, for example, Ellis and Brewster (2002). There have been seminars and conferences (Enever & Schmid-Schonbeim, 2006) on the area and information was further disseminated to the EYL profession via a web site, 'RealBooks', created by Opal Dunn, with an archive currently hosted by the British Council Teaching English website (<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-kids/real-books>).

It is, however, important to seek clarity on exactly what is taking place in each instance under the EYL Real Books banner. As is suggested in the often-used term 'Story-telling' with regard to Real Book use, many EYL procedures tend to involve picture-story books as 'props' for an oral re-telling of the contents in which considerable adaptation and simplification of the original text may take place. In these cases, the pupils may never themselves be involved in any reading activity with the original text, unless the book is made available later, perhaps in a book corner. Such EYL Real Books-based practices are widely accepted as excellent supports for aspects of language learning such as developing listening comprehension, encouraging 'safe-feeling' speaking through 'joining in' with repeated sections, and aiding recall of key vocabulary in rhythmic story refrains (Kolsawalla, 1999). However, for the present study my focus will be on those uses of Real Books that specifically aim to build early reading skills in YL.

A related theme, in the light of comments above about the aspirations of modern Reading Schemes to meet the production values of trade books, concerns EYL teachers' perception of what a Real Book is, and indeed whether they find it useful to make fine distinctions between a Real Book and a well-designed L1 Reading Scheme. Both, however, need to be accessible culturally. See Kuhiwczak (1999) for potential problems, here.

2.11 Conclusion

The several strands of discussion in this chapter are seen as relevant concerns for the teaching of early reading in EYL contexts, but mainly as pertinent to the main focus of this thesis which is the knowledge base and rationales of EYL professionals regarding early reading in English.

It seems that there has recently been substantial and co-ordinated discussion in the field of academic research into early literacy across languages especially in the areas of influences of the first language. Important contributions have been made concerning the awareness and strategies of children themselves confronted with learning to read in a new language. We also have some reports from the field on different classroom approaches to early reading in EYL contexts. However, two major 'gaps' have been revealed in this chapter:

1. Concerning the conceptualization of early reading, Borg (2006) showed that by 2006 there had been very little work available on teacher cognition concerning any aspect of ELT reading, and still less concerning REYL. My own searches in the literature since that date have shown that the position has not altered greatly. Accounts of how EYL professionals consider and work with early REYL reading have been shown to be sparse and scattered. They needed in this chapter to be brought together from a wide-ranging set of sources rather than substantial single accounts. Borg points in particular to the lack of studies allowing teachers' own voices to be heard.
2. Although we have seen how EYL teachers utilize available L1-based materials such as Real Books and how REL1 concepts are current in the Young Learner discourse in a number of contexts, absent from this Literature Review (and to my knowledge from the literature itself) are substantial accounts of how reading is framed and presented in mainstream course materials for children who are beginners in the English language.

In the next chapter, Research Methodology, I take account of these gaps and refine the statement of the possible areas of contribution presented in the Introduction so that they become Research Questions. I also attempt to justify the components of the main study and their design.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction and Overview

It is hoped that the Introduction and the Literature Review have succeeded in suggesting that the way in which early reading is conceptualized and approached by EYL professionals is a matter of some importance and concern rather than an aspect of YL teaching that may be safely be left to take care of itself. I also hope to have demonstrated that constructs of early reading have wider importance for EYL methodology in general. There seems to be evidence that the written or printed word in EYL teaching materials has a range of functions and that activities involving reading may be conflated by teachers or materials writers, for example with vocabulary or pronunciation teaching or seen as an essential support for oral dialogue work.

In this chapter I first set out Research Questions derived from the general statements of possible contributions to be found at the end of Chapter 1.

Then follows a description of the Research Location and contexts. This is followed by an account of the research stance and epistemology that underlie the study and how they relate to the main instruments (questionnaires and interviews with EYL professionals and 'on the page' analysis of teaching materials). Issues with regard to choice of human participants and materials for analysis are then discussed. This is followed by a section on ethics. The rest of the chapter concerns the details of decisions made with regard to the components of the study, the questionnaire-and-interview-based investigation with EYL professionals and the analysis of teaching materials from selected contexts. Details are also given of a small study of the views of curriculum experts, editors and authors that was undertaken to inform the Discussion part of the thesis. The principles and procedures for analysis of data are included in the discussion of the design of each component of the study.

The detailed structure of this chapter is as follows:

3.2 Research Focus and Research Questions

3.3 Research Location, Contexts and Site

3.4 Overall Research Stance and its Coherence with Methods and Instruments used.

3.5	The Components of the Study
3.5.1	Questionnaires and Interviews
3.5.2	Materials Analysis
3.5.3	Questionnaire for Curriculum Experts, Editors etc.
3.6	Sampling Issues
3.6.1	Human Participants
3.6.2	Samples of Teaching-related Material for Analysis
3.7	Ethics
3.8.	Stages of the Study
3.9	Development and Design of Questionnaires and Interviews with EYL professionals
3.10	Analysis Of Content And Messages Contained In EYL Teaching Materials and Available Syllabus Documentation
3.11	Questionnaire for Authors, Editors and Curriculum Advisers
3.12	Conclusion

3.2 Research focus and Research Questions

Although our knowledge of the state of the art in early REYL teaching is patchy in geographical terms and there are thus many gaps in current knowledge of practice that could be usefully filled, the study needs a clearer and more powerful focus than would be provided by simply attempting to add to the few accounts of teachers' practices in different contexts found in the Literature Review. It was felt that a topic of more significance and weight would be an investigation of EYL professionals' notions concerning the role of the written/printed word in teaching children English and the relationships that these may have with the contents of published teaching materials, the most widely-available form of support for teachers in their classroom roles. The focus of the study thus is on how EYL professionals conceptualize early reading, particularly the extent to which they apply rationalized system to it.

However, it goes further to consider how reading intersects with other areas of EYL methodology in the early stages of a course.

As stated in the Introduction Section 1.11, possible contributions of this study are:

1. An enhanced understanding of the nature and influences on EYL professionals' cognition concerning the teaching of reading to Young Learners
2. The identification of questions to ask and topics to address with EYL

professionals in order to help them reflect on their understandings of EYL reading instruction

3. An enhanced understanding of how EYL materials construct and present early reading to their users and the choices made in terms of activity type and of choice, sequencing and dosing of language content relevant to early reading development
4. A framework for analyzing EYL materials to reveal the constructs used and the choices made regarding early reading development

The Research Questions derived from the above agenda are framed as below. These four areas of interest have been arrived at partly from the pre-existing concerns, described in Chapter 1, which initiated my interest in this topic, but also from issues that emerged from the discussion in the Literature Review.

Research Question 1.

Are principled stances found in EYL professionals' notions with regard to suitable pedagogical approaches for helping Young Learners learn to read?

Research Question 2.

What relationships are set up between reading and other skills and language work in EYL teaching? In particular is there a taken-for-granted view that seeing and using English print is a facilitator for general English language learning?

Research Question 3.

What types of awareness are shown amongst professionals in early REYL teaching concerning linguistic and orthographic characteristics of English?

Research Question 4.

What types of system in selection, sequencing and ways of working with reading-related items can be found in REYL teaching?

3.3 Research Location, Contexts and Site

The main physical location for the research between October 2006 and December 2009 was my own place of work, in a teacher education centre at the University of Warwick where most of the interviewees were also situated at some time and where some of the teaching materials under analysis were already available. Much of the

teaching material analyzed was, however, acquired by me by gift or purchase and stored elsewhere. Except for the interview with 'Yoshie', which took place in a museum tea room in Tokyo, all interviews took place on the premises of the University of Warwick. However, since the research was not concerned with processes and interactions taking place in the life of the University of Warwick, the term 'research site' does not seem appropriate to use here.

For practical and work-related reasons, there were no visits to particular EYL contexts undertaken as an integral part of the research. However, during the study period, while on overseas visits made for other reasons to Korea (twice), Malaysia (once), Japan (twice), Cameroon (once) I took advantage of the opportunity to acquire materials, observe classes where possible and gain familiarity with EYL teaching conditions.

3.4 Overall Research Stance and its coherence with methods and instruments used

My position with regard to world view and epistemology is that although they will determine a researcher's confidence in and preference for different methods of data collection and analysis, the content of the research questions is what drives a study in the first place and questions cannot be 'unasked' because they may seem to lead into directions that might seem to mix research traditions. This is very much in tune with what Lankshear and Knobel (2004, pp. 74 - 75) suggest:

While many questions/problems are of a type that presupposes one form of research rather than another, not all problems preclude multiple approaches, and some positively lend themselves to studies that employ a mix.

This view seems to fit the issues as I see them in my own study, as well as the fact that if, like most doctoral thesis writers, I am prepared to countenance evidence from many traditions of research in my Literature Review there is little justification for exclusivity in my own efforts. My underlying proposition is that there may be in existence systematic frameworks or rationalized strategies for teaching the first steps in reading in English to Young Learners, which may or may not have affinities with what is commonly done in REL1. My motivation in that regard is that it would be interesting to try to gather evidence of such frameworks and useful then to critique them with the support of insights from the Literature Review from the rational point of

view (Vousden, 2008) discussed in the Introduction. I would claim that within the study the processes of collecting and analyzing data, which Dörnyei (2007) very usefully emphasizes as separate though linked enterprises, have been appropriately selected according to the types of information, patterns or illumination that were sought. I did not choose, for example, to re-frame the proposition above as a Null Hypothesis: (e.g. There are no systematic frameworks or rationalized strategies to be found in the field for teaching the first steps in reading in English to Young Learners) and follow a research route that would allow me simply to seek counter-evidence and present the outcome as a successful piece of research. This would be entirely coherent, but as a contribution to knowledge that had anything detailed or pedagogically interesting to offer concerning the ways in which early reading is taught to Young Learners it would be profoundly lacking. The issue for the researcher is to find feasible means of carrying out investigations that will be accepted as coherent, authentic and trustworthy (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004, p. 366).

3.4.1 The relevance of paradigm debates to ELT researchers in the 21st century

I have always been very cautious with regard to declarations about paradigms and epistemological positions in theses but after some considerable reflection I would say that my issues are not with the need for transparency and clarity regarding paradigms or epistemology. My reservations are related to occasions when declarations are made in a formulaic spirit by candidates (because the requirement to make them has become routine) and are adopted as a false intellectual carapace, strictly for the duration of a thesis. I find the confession by Dörnyei (2007, p. 9) in the Preface to his well-received book Research Methods in Applied Linguistics that paradigm wars had passed him by in his early career to be refreshingly honest and rather helpful. His more detailed discussion on p. 18 also resonates with my concerns. It is perhaps a reflection of the true case of many who entered the ELT profession from other disciplines and subsequently became involved in research. There are, after all, many respectable traditions of research which use combined methods without particular fear of the accusation of muddled thinking. History, palaeography, art history and my own early first career path of archaeology manage to be rigorous by applying a range of means and approaches. One can, for example, carry out statistically-based studies of the distribution of potsherds and other small artifacts over the surface of a terrain and consider that they give a reasonable picture of inhabitation patterns without needing to believe that they constitute a direct line to the founding fathers or that by carrying out research involving such quantification one is signing up to a logical-positivist credo. Such an investigation may provide a very valid

counterpoint to what literary texts and historical records say, with proper and different research methods attached to the use of each these sources of data.

It is true that the two main strands chosen for my inquiry (in-depth qualitatively-analyzed interviews and rigorous analysis of materials with some quantification) superficially have affiliations with different research traditions and the underlying beliefs of some who exercise them as their main mode of operation. However I would claim that they are compatible and coherent ways of investigating the issue of whether there is system to be found in EYL early reading teaching and what the rationales for any systems found may be.

3.4.2 The Qualitative-Quantitative Relationship

I am making use of the suggestion by Dörnyei (Dörnyei, 2007, pp. 169 - 175), developed from the work of Johnson and Christensen (2004, p. 418), for employing notation to characterize the elements in a research design and the relationships among them. This notation usefully shows dominance as well as sequencing of approaches although I do not find it as it stands a perfect fit for my particular mixed methods, I needed to adjust the notation slightly to show a two-way relationship rather than a clear-cut FIRST – THEN relationship, since chronologically the interviews and the materials analysis proceeded side by side for much of the research period and continual adjustments were made in the light of what was emerging from either.

qual + QUAL	↔	QUAL+QUANT
Interviews with EYL professionals primed by questionnaire with considerable scope for open-ended responses		Commentary and overview notes on materials, leading to quantitative analysis of linguistic components of EYL course books

Figure 6 Configuration of research approaches in the study

3.5 The components of the study

3.5.1 The Interview-and-questionnaire-based Study

Borg (2006, p. 174) comments that although questionnaires still predominate in research into Teacher Cognition including that regarding reading, they are ‘obviously

limited in their ability to capture the complex nature of teachers' mental lives'. They are not an adequate method of research if the aim is to unpack individual teachers' belief or information systems. In-depth interviews and other interactions are seen as more suitable for this purpose. Borg is thus aligning himself with a Constructivist view of cognition and of its interpretation. This is also my general alignment. Choosing the path of interview and thematic interpretation for this particular purpose, does not, however, lead me to reject the more quantitative 'objective' strand of social sciences investigations since I would say that it has validity for other purposes. Today in social studies after many years of debate, there is a pragmatic 'horses for courses' view (Turner, Prochnow, & Chapman, 2000). For example, I would concur that, if we want to investigate trends of thought or belief in large populations, quantitative questionnaire-based studies with meticulously piloted and unambiguous items, strict sampling and careful use of inferential statistics are likely to do as good a job as possible, certainly a better one than a more loosely-constructed study. We do not, however, have to believe that truth has been approached or grasped in a superior way by these means. People en masse may just as much misrepresent themselves in response to 'objective' discrete-point questions as they may as individuals in response to an interactive interview.

I shall try to argue below that my choices and the development over time of a combination of questionnaire and interview represents a viable approach to investigation of EYL professionals' cognitions regarding reading, and an approach which may be a contribution in itself. I shall also try to show how findings from interviews, in particular, can inform a more quantitatively-based materials analysis study such as the one described below.

3.5.2 The Materials Analysis based study

There is a distinction to be drawn between the level of pedagogical and language-syllabus detail that can be elicited through interviews and the delimited but very detailed data that course materials can offer.

It is the intention of the materials analysis component of the study to be as objective as possible in identifying features of materials that can be demonstrated, according to clearly stated criteria, to be absent absolutely, or else to be present in a quantifiable way along a scale. Except where there is direct evidence of writers' claims via a Teacher's Guide, publisher's 'blurb' or other documents, I will not attempt in this part

of the study to penetrate or interpret what the writers thought or intended, although this would be a legitimate pursuit for another type of study involving writers, cf. Johnson (2000, 2003). I am, as stated earlier, treating the materials as 'found objects', as potential workplans (Rea-Dickins & Germain, 1992, p. 29) for EYL teachers in the contexts intended.

The features sought are carefully defined, following discussion in the Literature Review, and criteria for identifying them are transparently presented. The quantification to be carried out is in the service of arriving at a rigorous description of the unique nature (= qualities) of each set of materials as a product of human agency. Where comparison is carried out across the sets of materials, this is only to illustrate diversity or commonalities and no claim about trends or 'natural laws' of materials construction is thereby made.

3.5.3 A mixed approach at a more profound level

It should be clear from section 3.4.2 above that I would claim that my dual approach is not evidence of a confounding of traditions but an appropriate response to what different sources of data can best offer in the way of addressing the Research Questions. Although the term 'triangulation' has been seen as having taken on too many meanings to remain a useful research concept (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), mixed approaches have been defended for their potential for useful triangulation, if it is seen as a way of generating, in Dörnyei's (2007, p. 165) terms: 'multiple perspectives on a phenomenon'. This fits my intentions if we consider the core phenomenon to be systematized rationales for teaching early reading to YL found either internally to teachers or externally (in materials). According to Dörnyei, triangulation may be achieved 'by using a variety of data sources, investigators, theories or research methods'. I have more difficulty with the final phrase of his definition: 'with the purpose of corroborating an overall interpretation'. The position of my research seems to me to be that there is much that can uniquely be found out about rationales and system through each of the studies, but there should also be an area of significant overlap, which as I have indicated above I expect to be more in the area of systematized use of activities than in the area of syllabus and language item selection.

3.5.4 Questionnaire for Curriculum experts editors and writers

At a later stage in the research process, after a number of informal conversations on my topic with people with experience in EYL publishing, a small scale side-study was

also set up using an electronic questionnaire in order to tap into the views and experiences of curriculum experts, editors and materials writers. As stated above, the aim of my thesis was not to investigate the intimate mental processes of materials construction. The focus in this questionnaire was particularly on the degree of freedom these people felt to represent their own understandings of early reading in the materials with which they were associated. Data collected did not feed directly into the materials analysis and is reported separately as a source of extra insights for the Discussion section concerning findings.

3.6 Selection of data sources

3.6.1 EYL professional participants

The researcher has a responsibility to demonstrate that participants in a qualitative study are not a casually-encountered set of individuals but have some claim to be considered in connection with the research issues. Detailed demographic and other background information on the participants in this research may be found in Appendix 3.1. Below is a summary of the relevant academic and career-related characteristics of the participants that led to their involvement:

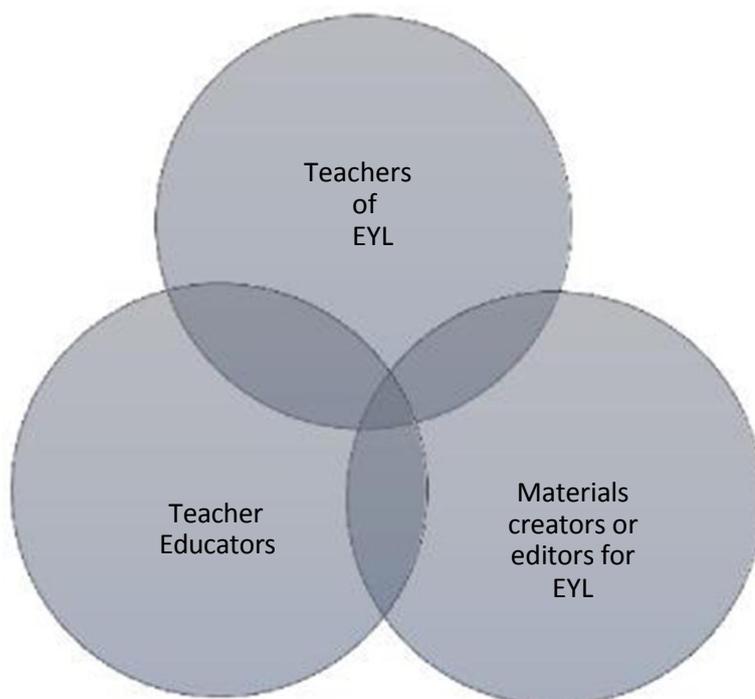
1. They were mostly self-defined as having professional experience relevant to EYL teaching. Their status as EYL professionals in their own eyes was the basis on which most participants were first engaged with, although one primary reading specialist and teacher educator in Bahasa Malaysia was also contacted as a result of an interview with her Malaysian EYL colleague.
2. They were all studying, or had studied, at a postgraduate level, topics related to English Language Teaching or general Education (All were at the University of Warwick).

There were differences among them with regard to a number of factors beyond the different contexts to which they had affiliation. This information was collected through the questionnaires, but it is reported here in summary form, rather than in the Findings Chapter, in order to give a clearer statement of the composition of the group. The professional experience of the participants varied between state-school-only or private-school-only experience to experience in both types of school. Some had relevant roles besides that of teachers, including roles as teacher trainers, curriculum advisors or materials writers. Figure 7 below indicates the overlaps, on which more information can be found in Appendix 3.1. Three participants fulfilled all

the roles, indicated by the central section of the figure. There was a wide range of age, from those in the youngest group (21-25 years old) to some in their forties and fifties. Seniority in the profession varied greatly, from a distinguished professor who had already been involved as a major curricular decision-maker in her context to younger participants hoping to return to teaching jobs in their contexts.

The selection of participants might be characterized as based on convenience (the accessibility of all potential participants to a researcher in the same institution) but it

Figure 7 Professional Roles of Participants in the Study



is also purposive in that the group seemed to me highly appropriate for this study. They were all at least relatively advanced in their careers, educated to Post Graduate level, but within this covered a range of status, ages, nationality, professional roles and experience with private as well as state schools. An additional factor was that their presence constituted a set of 'emblematic contexts' in terms of historical background, writing systems and the status of English in school. They came from twelve different national groups, with nine different writing systems and orthographies amongst them. South

Eastern and Eastern Asian contexts predominated, with the largest number (6) being from South Korea. The majority of participants (24 out of 28) were female, but this reflects the overall predominance of female professionals in the EYL world, as evidenced by the demographic data from the recent surveys by Garvin et al (2011) and Emery (2011). Table 5 shows the array of different contexts, statuses for English and writing-system backgrounds thus achieved.

Over a period of about four years 29 individuals responded to the invitation and volunteered for the study. One participant was not included in analysis since although she was a member of the Young Learners module at Warwick, her profile as a native speaker Teaching Assistant in a UK primary school with no full-class teaching duties was very considerably different from those of the other participants. This left data from 28 individuals. Owing to the practical vicissitudes of research with students who had travel plans and demands in their personal lives, a complete set of data was not obtained from all 28, Two individuals gave interviews but without ever returning questionnaires, and three who completed questionnaires were not then able to keep an appointment for interview. Thus a yield of 23 fully complete data sets was the outcome. Since substantial data is nonetheless available from the five incomplete encounters, I have decided in the Findings to include quotations from these people's interviews or questionnaires, where apposite.

Table 5 Summary of contexts and participants

Region / country	Status of English	L1 Writing system	Qu'aire and Interview participants
Cameroon (Anglophone)	Subject in English Medium	Alphabetic (Roman) but L1 not language of First literacy	3: James, Henry and Elinor
Cameroon (Francophone)	Official language, non-English Medium	Alphabetic (Roman) but L1 not language of First literacy	3: James, Henry and Elinor
Greece	Foreign Language	Alphabetic (Greek)	2: Vera and Oriol
Malaysia	Official language, non-English Medium	Alphabetic (Roman) or Jawi for B. Malaysia Logographic for Chinese Syllabic for Tamil	2: Agnes and Daphne
People's Republic of China	Foreign Language	Logographic (Chinese)	2: Shelly and Rosamund
Russia	Foreign Language	Alphabetic (Cyrillic)	1: Lucy
South Korea	Foreign Language	Alphabetic (Hangeul)	6: Janet, Sandra, Shona, Karen, Young, Min
Sri Lanka	Official language, non-English Medium	Syllabic (Tamil or Sinhala)	0
Syria	Foreign Language	Alphabetic (Arabic)	3: Ali, Atif and Mariam
Taiwan	Foreign Language	Logographic (Chinese)	3: Ilse, Hilary Gail and Jacky
Other (places linked to)	Foreign Language and official	Various	5: Alexis, Yoshie, Vanessa, Iris, Nancy

Status in School: Subject in English Medium; Official language in non-English

medium; Foreign Language.

L1 Writing System: Alphabetic; Syllabic; Logographic

The first interviews had an important shaping and informing role concerning the approach and categories used in the materials analysis as will be explained in more detail in section 3.10.

3.6.2 Selection of teaching-related material for analysis

I am using the term ‘selection’ rather than ‘sampling’ to refer to the assembly of course material for analysis since it does not seem rational to see sets of materials from particular contexts (even if very many are chosen from diverse geographical areas) as a sample whose analysis could in any way point to generalizable truths about materials or their contents. Materials are not naturally-occurring genotypes like species of lizard but the products of human authors whose ingenuity, which although it may be coloured by localized culture and training, may not approach matters in a similar way to that of other authors even from the same context. In spite of avoiding the term ‘sampling’, there is nonetheless a responsibility to show that the selection of materials was principled. As far as possible, materials used in contexts relatable to my interviewees were chosen. Although a major interest of the study is on REYL in state primary schools, some materials used in private institutions were collected and analyzed, particularly when they were discussed by interviewees. The decision to include state and private school materials seemed appropriate because of the complex pedagogical relationships existing between private and public sectors. The majority of materials analyzed are locally-published rather than the internationally-distributed products of big publishers based in what Holliday (1994) refers to as BANA countries. However, as we saw in the Introduction, BANA publishers have often worked closely with ministries of education or local commercial publishers to assist in meeting the demand for EYL materials. Several of the courses under consideration, such as those from China, are the products of such co-operation. There are other cases in which a well-known global course was mentioned by an interviewee as used in a particular context or contexts so that it was also considered as a candidate for selection. The English Today course from Oxford University Press (mentioned by Nancy as used by her in Thailand) met these criteria, as does Wonderland (used in Greek private schools and used by Oriel in this context) which is one of the several editions (see the summary of Munt in Rixon, 2009) of the Pearson Education global course Adventures with English. No claims, however, are made of a cause-and-effect relationship between materials available in a particular context and participants’ cognitions.

The materials analyzed were mostly paper publications, but where a significant multimedia element existed, such as for the South Korean and the Malaysian state primary materials, examples were acquired and taken into account. It was originally planned to analyze the first levels only of courses, but scrutiny revealed that early reading work often spread over more than one level, and in some cases started after Level One. This explains the range of volumes listed below. In particular, the South Korean materials reflected a policy of withholding substantial contact with English print for the first two levels. Scrutiny and analysis took in more materials than the 40 volumes listed below, but it was decided to eliminate contexts such as Indonesia (3 courses) since, in addition to there being no counterpart interviewees, the courses themselves proved barely to attempt any initial teaching of reading. A peripheral case was of materials from India which were a supplementary course specifically aimed at reading instruction rather than being a mainstream textbook. Notes were taken on this, but like-for-like comparisons with other materials were not possible. The single set of materials retained without an interview counterpart was from Sri Lanka. This was because of the interest of the particular approach to early literacy adopted and the wealth of supporting documentation available. Table 6 below shows the final tally of courses analyzed and discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, with an indication of the intended starting age for each course. Full publishing details are given in Appendix 3.3.

COURSE TITLE	CONTEXT OF USE	age
Primary English for Cameroon 1	Cameroon [Anglophone]	6
Primary English for Cameroon 2	Cameroon [Anglophone]	7
Basic Eng for Cameroon 1	Cameroon [Anglophone]	6
Basic Eng for Cameroon 2	Cameroon [Anglophone]	7
Sign in to English Bk 1	Cameroon [Anglophone]	6
Sign in to English Bk 2	Cameroon [Anglophone]	7
Junior Primary English 1	Cameroon [Anglophone]	6
Junior Primary English 2	Cameroon [Anglophone]	7
English all Stars SIL	Cameroon [Francophone]	6
English All-Stars CP	Cameroon [Francophone]	7
Beginning English SIL	Cameroon [Francophone]	6
Beginning English CP	Cameroon [Francophone]	7
Fun Way 1	Greece (state)	8
Fun Way 2	Greece (state)	9
Wonderland A	Greece (private)	8
Wonderland B	Greece (private)	9
Learning to Read English 1	India	6
Learning to Read English 2	India	7

Gogo Loves English 1	International (but esp E. Asia)	7
English Today 1	International (but esp E. Asia)	7
English Today 2	International (but esp E. Asia)	7
Elementary school English 3	South Korea	9
Elementary school English 4	South Korea	10
Elementary school English 5	South Korea	11
Elementary school English 6	South Korea	12
KBSR English Year 1	Malaysia [Tamil and Chinese schools]	6
KBSR English Year 2	Malaysia [Tamil and Chinese schools]	7
PEP Primary English	PR of China	8
Pioneer English 1a and 1b	PR of China	8
New Standard English	PR of China	8
New Standard English 3a	PR of China	9
Millie 3	Russia	8
Let's Learn English! Grade 3	Sri Lanka	8
English for Starters 1	Syria	8
Go SuperKids! 1	Taiwan	8
Go SuperKids! 2	Taiwan	9
Welcome! 1	Taiwan	8
Welcome! 2	Taiwan	9
Darbie Teach Me! 1	Taiwan	8
Darbie Teach Me! 2	Taiwan	9

Table 6 Inventory of courses analyzed

3.6.3 Official guidelines and syllabus documents

Although documentation in the form of Ministry of Education policy statements or syllabus guidelines was not always available, every attempt was made to locate relevant background documents for each context from which an interviewee came. Relevant contents of current syllabuses are reported in conjunction with the materials analysis in the Findings chapter (Chapter 4). For examples of official documents consulted, see Appendix 1.1.

3.7 Ethics

3.7.1 Ethics With Regard to Participants in Interviews

I was well aware that the choice of participants from amongst the Warwick University community raised ethical issues of researcher/participant relationships that needed to be addressed. It will be seen from the discussion above that the interview participants were already known to me (or in the case of 'Daphne' introduced to me by another

participant. In cases where the researcher has a relationship with the participants in a study, especially when the relationship, however cordial, is based on unequal power in favour of the researcher, it is particularly important to consider the ethical position and to do all possible to avoid undue pressure to participate or to participate in a particular manner.

The interviews took place over a period of four years and the University of Warwick's conditions for ethical approval changed over that period. However, I was careful during each phase to gain my supervisor's approval for documentation and procedures for arranging interviews and guaranteeing confidentiality, which were then passed by the Centre Research Student Progress Committee. These procedures conformed with the regulations in place at any one time at the University of Warwick.

I was careful to make my invitation to the potential interviewees an open and general one sent out to the whole current cohort of MA and doctoral students via the Centre Secretary in group e-mails. The onus was on individuals to reply to me and express an interest in taking part. I then followed up with negotiations about time, place and conditions. There were only two cases in which I made a direct approach. One was to an MA graduate ('Yoshie') whom I would be meeting on a visit to Japan, and who by then, I would argue, was well outside my orbit of influence. This was the only off-site interview. The second case was in 2010, when I was no longer teaching at Warwick. I asked one of the then MA students (who had given a presentation of her work on early reading at the 2010 IATEFL Conference) if she would consent to an interview. This, the final interview of the study, was arranged for September 2010.

In 2011, after transcribing the interviews and making preliminary selections of key quotations for the body of the thesis, I made contact with as many as possible of the relevant participants to check that they were happy for me to make use of the quotes from their interviews which I sent them. I asked them to check on my interpretation of the quotes and also to let me know if they had any further thoughts on what they had said. I also offered a complete transcription of their interview. These measures seem to me to address both ethics and methodology adequately. I received 100% responses from all participants contacted. In one case I acted on a request to leave out a section which the participant felt contained too pointed a comment on an institution but no other edits were requested. Please see Appendix 3.9 for a sample exchange between myself and an interviewee.

A second concern, which mingles with a concern for trustworthiness of data, was the

relationship of the content of the interviews with any teaching input or assignments I might have previously given in my role as lecturer. The areas discussed in the interview had not formed a specific part of any teaching that I myself had done with any participants and were not part of any other programme available to Centre students of which I was aware. There was no prospect, therefore, of their feeling the need to regurgitate, or justify resistance to, any previous input with which I was associated.

Thirdly, I had a concern about items in the questionnaire, and particularly tasks in the interview, which might reveal inconsistencies, contradictions or areas where participants lacked knowledge. This was ethically the most delicate area of operation in this part of the study. It was not my purpose to catch respondents out or threaten their face. On the other hand, disjunctions confluences and gaps were among the areas that I wanted to uncover. My response to this issue lies not in avoiding it but in the manner with which I treated the topics during the interviews and the tone with which I try to report the findings. A similar but less fraught issue occurs with the analysis of materials and is discussed immediately below.

3.7.2 Ethics Regarding Treatment of Course Material

Although it was my intention to be rigorous in the analysis of teaching material and to reveal any gaps or anomalies, as I defined them, in the role of words on the page and in the coverage of early reading, I am aware of the need to treat the products of other people's efforts with courtesy and have attempted to maintain an even and neutral tone in the way in which I report findings. I should perhaps declare at this point, as a former textbook author, that my own output of the 1990s (Tip Top) is not distinguished by any great awareness of issues discussed in the Literature Review.

The research thus also provided an opportunity for thoroughgoing reflection on my own past practice. It is my hope that the small-scale study, with editors, authors and others, that followed the materials analysis gives balance to my review.

To the extent that published materials are in the public domain, there were no ethical issues about the acquisition of materials for analysis. They were either materials donated to the Resources Room of the Centre for Applied Linguistics or materials that I had been given or had bought from normal outlets in the countries concerned. In some contexts the availability of course materials for scrutiny by outsiders is not encouraged and this explains some gaps in my data set, to be discussed in

Limitations (Chapter 5, section 5.5).

3.8 Stages of the study

The research was carried out in three main blocks as shown below:

Phase of Study	Main aims and activities
PHASE 1 October 2006 – December 2008	Developing questions and tasks for interviews ↓ First interviews ↓ Amassing and scrutinizing a collection of materials and curriculum documentation. Devising initial instruments for analyzing materials ↑↓ Initial Findings on materials Listening and note taking on first interviews
PHASE 2 July 2009 – August 2011	Completion of materials analysis and interview analysis
May- August 2011	Questionnaire to authors etc. concerning their beliefs and experiences as writers

Table 7 Stages of the study

3.9 Development and Design of Questionnaires and Interviews with EYL professionals

3.9.1 Questionnaires and Interviews

The methods used with human participants in my study differ from the more objectively- and quantitatively-based methods used with regard to materials analysis, but do not, I would claim, conflict with them. Given my central interest in how EYL professionals view reading instruction, it seemed proper to use methods of data collection and analysis that are endorsed by a social constructivist view of our different realities. Semi-structured interviews offer the benefits of being able to gather a large volume of data and of allowing flexibility to the interviewer with regard to probing and to following hints and cues from the interviewees (Richards, 2003).

This can allow data gathered to go far beyond the content of expected responses to a set of interview protocols and possibly lead to insights in unpredicted areas (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 182). The interviews fit within one model of how social science may be done. They seek to throw light on the cognition of others (in itself offering us another level of epistemology to wrestle with) and, as mentioned above, may be befogged by strategies of self-presentation and face-saving. We are therefore in strongly interpretative territory.

The experience of interviews as 'conversational encounters to a purpose' (Powney & Watts, 1987, p. vii) is authentic provided that the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is suitably established and maintained. The content and design of an interview protocol are important but so also is the personal conduct of the researcher in implementing it. Rapport between interviewer and interviewee (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 211) is seen as fundamental to the quality of what emerges from the interview. If the interviewees are to be willing to offer as much of their views and experiences as they can, they need to feel comfortable and not under pressure. In these interviews, which had a component concerned with Teacher Subject Knowledge, particular care was needed to avoid face-threatening approaches. It was felt that, if these conditions could be maintained, the data thus collected would be robust and as honestly intended by the interviewees as is humanly possible. It is hoped that enough evidence of the conduct and outcome of the interviews can be given to make the case that they were adequately though not faultlessly carried out in this regard.

3.9.2 The Questionnaire-interview Sequence

In order to give the participants the opportunity to think about the area of early reading instruction before the interview and to allow them time to provide considered responses to some questions that I judged to require concentrated thought, the participants were given a questionnaire before the interview. This was normally a few days or up to a week beforehand and was conveyed by email attachment where possible. The completed questionnaire was returned before the interview and used as both a support and a point of reference for the interviewer and interviewee. In some cases the content of the completed questionnaire led to modifications in the content of the interview. For example, it emerged that some EYL professionals were also materials writers, and so this topic was included. Others, often in EYL training or advisory roles, did not have relevant primary school classroom experience to discuss

and in those cases related sections of the interview protocol were omitted.

3.9.3 Questionnaire and interview protocol design

Before starting this thesis, I had carried out a large-scale questionnaire-based survey on early reading (Rixon, 2007a) and undertaken in-depth interviews with two MA students of EYL. This was a useful experience for when I began in 2006 to work out the combination of questionnaire and interview protocol used in the present study. Each section of the questionnaire will be discussed in terms of its role in the study, before a general discussion of question formats is undertaken. The sections comprised:

1. Demographic and professional profile data on respondents
2. Respondents' own memories of early reading experiences, both in L1 and English, including their recall of pedagogical reading procedures experienced at school as learners of English
3. Respondents' own experiences and practices as teachers of English in the area of early reading
4. Respondents' opinions about the effectiveness of particular teaching strategies related to the teaching of early reading in English

For the whole questionnaire please see Appendix 3.4.

3.9.4 Demographic and professional profile data on respondents

Collecting this information, called on the form 'YOUR BACKGROUND AND PERSONAL DETAILS', in the questionnaire saved time with regard to the conduct of the interview and also made accuracy more likely. In addition to general information about educational background, experiences and qualifications, one question (6d) focused particularly on whether the respondent had had any special training regarding the teaching of initial literacy. This was prompted both by my observations on the professionalization of EYL discussed in the Introduction, Section 1.3, and by issues raised in the Literature Review sections 2.3 to 2.5.

3.9.5 Respondents' memories of early reading experiences, in L1 and English

This section, entitled 'YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES WITH LEARNING TO READ',

addressed two main areas:

- inductions to reading, discussed in Literature Review section 2.3
- the ‘apprenticeship of observation’ concerning reading instruction (see Literature Review section 2.2).

Responses about remembered attitudes to and perceptions of early reading experiences were also sought. The subsections of Q 14 concerned recall of pedagogic literacy procedures experienced when respondents were learning English at school. This part of the questionnaire had an important function as an awareness-raiser and advance-organizer for questions that would be asked in the interview about the respondents’ cognitions with regard to the teaching of early reading in English. Particularly important, both in its own right and as a trigger for further discussion in the interview, was the open-response prompt, Q 16:

‘Would you say that your own experiences, as a child or young person, of reading and being taught to read (in English and any other language) have influenced the ways in which you think we should try to help Young Learners of English to cope with the first steps of learning to read in English?’

I grant that the reliability of self-reports is not held to be high, especially when they involve recall of events much earlier in a respondent’s life. As Gardner (2001, p. 193) puts it:

[Thus,] remembering is more akin to a state of mind than a mechanical trawl through an archive by an independently conscious ‘I’ (Rorty, 1980). Accordingly, memory cannot be thought of as providing anything like complete and accurate accounts of events and processes.

My argument here, however, is that there is validity in present states of mind or stances attributed by an individual to recalled experiences. Gardner (*ibid*, p. 196) writing of interviewing but with relevance, I would claim, also to personal declarations elicited by questionnaire, sees one function of autobiographical accounts as:

a mode of access to the lived experience of the actor – the meaningfulness of which that actor has privileged access to and understanding of. This lived experience is critical to the researcher being able to at least partially

understand the personal understandings and meanings that actors generate in their engagements with particular worlds; and in turn assess how those meanings and understandings impact upon those engagements.

Thus, if an EYL professional recounts a current feeling derived from childhood experience, say of resentment at never having been taught to read in English but only continually tested (see, for example, Findings Chapter 4.3.1), it is perhaps not relevant whether the events recalled have undergone creative restructuring in memory, if they are understood and represented by the participant as the source of a present-day determination not to cause similar pain to his or her own pupils.

Q17 attempted a direct question concerning respondents' Subject Knowledge in terms of their awareness or opinions of characteristics of English that it could be relevant to take into account when teaching children how to read it. Again, this served both as a question in its own right and as a primer for the interview.

The privacy and lack of time-pressure when responding to a questionnaire seemed likely to lead to richer and more considered responses to both 'lived experience' and 'state of knowledge' questions. Further, it meant that in the interview they would not come to such discussions 'cold'. Thus greater depth and coverage of the issues might be hoped for in the interviews.

3.9.6 Respondents' own experiences and practices as teachers of English

Part C of the questionnaire 'SOME INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR OWN CONTEXT AND TEACHING' addressed respondents' own practices and their perceptions of the practices of others in their contexts. Some common practices, such as (Q 20) children being taught to say the names of the letters of the alphabet before they started to learn to read, were described and respondents were asked if they were normally found in their context. For each one, an open-response follow-up section allowed the respondents to add comments on the practice. Again, as for the questions concerning recall of childhood learning, the research focus was more on the cognitions suggested in participants' comments than on the accuracy of their claims concerning the existence or not of the practice in their context.

The questionnaire ended with an invitation to the respondent to add any remarks or comments that they wished to on issues that they felt they had not been able to address in the rest of the questionnaire.

3.9.7 Questionnaire medium, format and question types

The questionnaire was devised before the facility for members of the University of Warwick to create electronic on-line questionnaires became available to me. The medium for this questionnaire was therefore restricted to a Word document, either a paper printout or an emailed attachment of the same document. Users of the paper version circled or underlined choices and wrote in other answers. Respondents using the emailed version were invited to make their choices plain by whatever method was most convenient, by highlighting, bolding or underlining chosen responses or by deletion of inapplicable responses. Responses were then transferred by me to an Excel form. This was a feasible task given the comparatively small number of questionnaires involved. Response types used were:

1. Short answer, written or typed-in own responses, such as 01 'What is your nationality?'
2. Single choice from a number of given alternatives such as 03 'Which age range do you fit?'
3. A choice of as many alternatives as applied from a given list, such as 07 'What professional roles have you played with regard to the teaching of English to Young Learners?' followed by choices a - g with an 'Other (please specify)' choice as h.
4. YES/NO alternatives, often followed by an invitation to add comments or further information such as 06 'Do you have ... (a) a first degree from a University?' YES/NO (If YES please state the subject area)
5. Responses on a scale, such as Q13 'On a scale of 1-6 what was the experience of first learning to read in English like for you?' with 1 as the negative and 6 as the positive pole with regard to 4 pairs: Boring/Interesting, Stressful/Relaxed, Difficult/Easy, Confusing/Clear. Again comments were invited after this item.

The variety of question types found in the questionnaire was a result of a judgment that particular item formats fitted well with a given function rather than of a particular aim to vary the presentation for respondents. However, the overall principle was to make the answering of core questions as engaging and effort-free as possible in the hope that this would leave the respondents with the motivation and energy to give more extensive responses to the opportunities for open-ended comment that were placed in the questionnaire.

3.9.8 The design of the interview protocol

As argued above, it seemed that a semi-structured interview was an appropriate means of setting up encounters with research participants. There were topics that I needed to guarantee to address yet the framework planned was intentionally loose and baggy enough to allow sub-topics and developments of areas which proved to be of particular interest (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 182). I arrived at a tentative framework in January 2007. This was assisted by reflection on the experience in 2005, mentioned above, of conducting interviews with MA students and by a first interview with a recent MA graduate (Janet) in November 2006. This allowed me confidence in a number of decisions affecting the design of the interview protocol for my main study:

1. Reference to concrete objects and events seemed to elicit strong accounts from participants. Own memories of childhood and of surprises and reactions on visiting UK schools had been powerful triggers for the 2005 interviewees and proved also to be in my 2006 interview with Janet. It was opportune that some of my interviewees had had substantial experience in a local Coventry primary school as members of a volunteer 'Reading Support Squad'. Others had children at local schools or had had other chances to visit UK schools. This gave them a set of experiences which they could compare or contrast with their own practice and understandings. To this trigger, I added the option for interviewees to bring teaching materials that they had used and give spoken commentaries on the contents of a sample Unit.
2. I was interested in whether EYL professionals made use of linguistic rules and regularities when planning or carrying out the teaching of early reading. However, if interviewees' grasp of relevant linguistic concepts (the phoneme inventory, phonotactics and orthographic depth amongst them) was operational rather than declarative, or integrated with their pedagogical use of particular materials (as discussed in Medwell, Wray, Poulson, & Fox, 1998) it could in that case be difficult for a researcher to elicit it as declarative knowledge in a face-to-face interview. I therefore devised two more tasks to use as a part of the interview (shown in Appendix 3.6) in an attempt to elicit explicit evidence for operational grasp or inklings. The Nursery Rhyme task asked participants to respond to lists of words found in nursery rhymes and think aloud concerning their possible challenge for young readers. The Children's Spelling task asked participants to comment on copies of worksheets from a local primary school showing young L1 children's first

spelling attempts.

3. A lesson learned from an earlier questionnaire study (Rixon, 2007a) was not only the difficulty but the delicacy of probing a respondent's subject knowledge. In Chapter 2, section 2.2, I discussed the responses in that survey to an invitation to give a definition of Phonics. The item met with a high incidence of avoidance and I was, even at the time, concerned that respondents might feel under pressure to reveal an area of ignorance. In addition, on reflection, in concert with Borg's view (2006: p 174), it did not seem that even an open-response item in a questionnaire was an effective means of tapping into the complexities of a participant's state of knowledge. It seemed to me that such areas might be more acceptably and informatively addressed through the interaction and step-by-step approach to elicitation that could be set up in an interview. Therefore, in the present study, questions concerning knowledge about and terminology concerning L1 methods did not appear in the questionnaire but were introduced in the interview. Thus an interview schedule emerged and may be seen in Appendix 3.5. The conversational strategies that were employed in an attempt to avoid pitfalls of face-threatening when probing respondents' knowledge will be discussed immediately below under **conduct of interviews**.

3.9.9 Conduct of interviews

The first interview in November 2006 lasted 52 and a half minutes approximately and covered only Janet's own school learning experiences, her recent experience as a teacher of supplementary after-school English lessons in South Korea, a commentary on a Unit from the official course materials and her responses to the progress of the children in the UK primary school she visited as a reading support volunteer. Because I knew that later interviews would contain other topics I decided to concentrate on making sure that the possibility of a lengthy process was acceptable to future participants. I ensured, firstly, that all were warned about a possible duration of one hour or more, secondly, I provided refreshments during each session and, thirdly, announced that each participant would be invited to select a 'thank you' token gift or gifts from a selection of illustrated children's books that I had available for them to choose from. A duration of less than an hour for an interview was seldom achieved, but it was normally the participant who was doing most of the talking.

The content and ordering of the interview schedule were followed for most encounters, but there was some variation according to an interviewee's circumstances. In particular, when it emerged that some curriculum advisers/trainers of primary school teachers had not themselves ever held official posts as classroom teachers of YL, a decision had to be taken. Given their prominent and secure positions as part of the EYL profession, their views on and experiences in other areas were considered valuable and therefore the interviews with them proceeded with sections omitted as appropriate to their career history. An element implemented differently from participant to participant according to their circumstances was the 'practical task' section. Some participants were able to bring teaching materials to the interview but others did not have access to these at the time. The two other practical tasks were not always both implemented, the decision here being largely based on the time that the interview had already taken.

As discussed above, there was a conscious attempt in the interviews to elicit subject knowledge concerning reading while not seeming to set participants a test of technical knowledge. The language used in eliciting data was designed to progress gradually in specificity, from the questionnaire in which class reading procedures were described as clearly as possible, but no technical terms at all were used, to midway in the interview when I introduced the names of some of the L1 reading approaches which might have been familiar in their teaching contexts in one manifestation or another. Rather than asking directly for participants' definitions, I developed the trope of describing these approaches to the informants as 'controversial' in the UK and asking if they had heard about them.

SR: Right I've got another one now em there's a very different approach to reading teaching reading that was quite fashionable about 20 years ago and it's still with us caused a lot of debate and it was called the Real Books movement in Britain ... doesn't ring a bell

O: Doesn't ring a bell

Oriel lines 272 - 276

In this way I tried to avoid giving the impression that I favoured particular approaches or that I expected the respondent to know about them. Other conversational strategies used were:

- Passing on quickly if a respondent said that they were not familiar with a

named method or a piece of terminology but seemed to grasp what procedures were involved well enough to confirm its absence or presence in their repertoire or understanding.

- Giving a quick explanation in order to ensure that a participant who was unfamiliar with a particular term (but might nevertheless know the procedures involved) had the chance to respond.

O: (...)That to me sounds like recycling [laugh] paper. But that you can find in many books printed somewhere at the back. I don't know anything else.

SR: I can just explain that one quickly. It's actually it's more like when you go out in the street in some countries you might see a lot of of English words things like 'stop', 'star' and 'parking' and that's literally the print that's in the environment. And er in in UK schools they sometimes rely on the fact that children may not think they can read but they can actually recognise some things like 'MacDonald's' or OK so that that's

Oriel lines 280 - 289

- Undertaking to tell the participant more about an unknown area at the end of the conversation if it seemed a matter of genuine interest. Occasionally this became a 'break' in the interview immediately after the response had been elicited. In this way it was hoped that the interviews would become, to paraphrase Powney and Watts (1987, p. vii), more like 'conversational encounters to a (number of) purpose(s)', one of which was to communicate genuinely with participants, and apart from the refreshments and the free books, to give back something to them for the effort that they were making to assist me.

As interviews proceeded, better tactics for working with individuals were arrived at. For example, in some cases the use of the completed questionnaire as a physical prompt for further discussion was more of a liability than a stimulus since some interviewees (e.g. Vera) became bogged down in detail and long silent pondering ensued. In later interviews, I referred to the questionnaire myself and only put it physically back into interviewees' hands if they seemed to need it.

3.9.10 Recordings and transcription

Recordings were mostly made in office accommodation at the University of Warwick, using an MP3 recorder (with a conventional audio cassette recorder as back-up). All

but one (June) proceeded without technical difficulties, but in June's case a technical fault with both devices necessitated a follow-up interview which took place some two months later. The resulting recordings were transferred to the hard disk of my computer and transcribed by me. This was facilitated by the SoundScriber software made available to researchers by the University of Michigan (<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~ebreck/sscriber.html>) which allows a 'hands-free' control of chunking, repetition and speed of audio playback via the computer.

3.9.11 Transcription procedures and decisions

The initial procedure for transcription was that the interviews were listened to and notes taken on the location of passages that seemed key. The on-screen timing information provided by SoundScriber was useful for this. In a few cases (e.g. interviews with Jacky and Nancy) it was decided to transcribe only selected sections fully, because the participant proved to have less relevant experience in some areas than expected, but most interviews were transcribed from beginning to end.

Speakers' words were taken down in a number of drafts in normal 'Word' document form. For the first few transcriptions an experiment was made with 3-column-based template for transcriptions based on Richards (2003, p. 80). This provided ready-made line numbering on the left, a 'Talk' column in the middle, and a right-hand column for notes. After some transcription had taken place, it seemed that this numbered line template was needlessly detailed for my purposes and also tended to slow down my computer. Finally, the layout to be found in Appendix 3.7 was adopted, with each interview labelled according to the pseudonym of the participant and line-numbering allowing reference to specific sections of an interview. For further analysis and checking purposes, all transcriptions were collected as they became ready into a single document so that word-searches and comparisons could take place across interviews.

The transcription convention used for speakers' words was based, increasingly broadly, on that used for Conversation Analysis (CA), again as described by Richards (2003, p.81). See Appendix 3.7 for the key to transcription conventions and a sample extract from a transcription. This choice was made because the CA system is orthographically based, and is therefore a comfortably legible style of rendering talk. A full CA style of transcription was not felt to be needed for this study since it was

seemed that the content rather than the manner of what was said would be the dominant basis of the analysis. However, long pauses and emphasis were expected to be of some interest as indicative of attitude or degree of certainty with which some propositions were put forward, so these were shown. As mentioned above, maintaining a cordial non-threatening tone for the interviews was felt to play an important role in encouraging participants to talk about areas of knowledge or information in which they might find themselves unsure or lacking. In order to allow the reader to judge the extent to which this tone was achieved, I have included laughs, exclamations and back-channelling in the transcription. I have also included false starts, stammers and repetitions. Although this latter level of detail may not have been strictly necessary for the purposes of representing content or tone, I should acknowledge that this was a necessary aspect of 'researcher comfort'. I dislike embarking on the slippery slope of 'cleaning up' speech, and including performance features is a part of my normal transcription style which I find difficult to abandon. Finally, I transcribed the words of the interviewer and often include them in citations from interviews in the Findings and later chapters since such context is often very informative in order to approach greater understanding of how interviewer and interviewee might have co-constructed the content of what was said.

The completely transcribed interviews ranged between approximately 8,000 and 20,000 words each and the collected interviews total more than 200,000 words. This is clearly far beyond the extent permitted for the Appendices of a doctoral thesis at the University of Warwick. They are therefore not available in full as part of the hard copy of this document.

3.9.12 Procedure for Analysis of Interview Data

Between January and June 2007, 'full draft' transcriptions were made of interviews 1 to 6 as a first step and detailed marginal notes were made in order to generate categories that could be used to inform the first attempts at the Materials Analysis template. The rest of the transcription and analysis took place as new interviews were undertaken over the following two years. This allowed reflection on the initial Materials Analysis to inform subsequent interviewing and its analysis. There was no change in interview format found necessary as a result of the first Materials Analysis.

3.9.13 Trustworthiness of interpretation

Regarding interpretation of interview data and the trustworthiness of the findings which, following Lankshear and Knobel (2004, p. 366) seems preferable to the term

'reliability' in this context, interpretation will not be identical amongst potential analysts. However, if the procedures for interpretation are made transparent and as much of the raw interview data made available to the reader as space allows, at least a clear route can be traced from data to interpretation. Participant checks were carried out (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004, p. 365) in that key quotations selected for the Findings chapter were, where possible, fed back to the interviewees by email with a request for their comments on my interpretations. Please see Appendix 3.9 for an example of this.

A possible limitation on searching for nuances and ascribing subtle significance to particular choices of words in this data is that, although most of the interviewees were excellent speakers of English, English was not their first language and so some choices of expression may have been constrained by what language was immediately available, and not all long pauses may have been caused by reticence or ratiocination about the subject matter itself.

3.9.14 Arriving at Themes

Analysis of interviews was undertaken 'by eye and brain' with constant re-reading and note-taking aided by use of simple keyword search operations using Word software, rather than with the support of advanced software such as NVivo. This was a matter of personal preference. Marginal notes, colour coding via key word searches and manual colour coding were used to attempt to identify and display themes and issues. In addition, the processes of listening, transcribing and checking transcriptions through multiple drafts and multiple presentation styles seem to have resulted in a very close recall and intimate knowledge of the contents that allowed connections to be made as the store of interviews grew. When the corpus of transcribed interviews began to build up, the 'comment' facility of 'Word' was used to signal cross-references between interviewees' utterances.

An effort was made, as advocated in Braun and Clarke (2006) to go beyond a first pass 'literal phase' of pure reportage of what participants narrated or claimed in which theme headings are largely derived from the content of the interview questions. Instead, attempts were made, on subsequent passes through the data, to identify themes that had resonance with the issues identified in the Research Questions and attention was paid to the emergence of others. The different layers of these attempts can be seen in the Findings Chapter, section 4.3.

3.10 Development and Design of Analysis Instruments for EYL Teaching Materials

3.10.1 Interaction with interview data

The data from interviews are discussed in Chapter 4 in their own right. However, they also had the important other function of combining with insights from the Literature Review to inform and check categories for analysis of course materials. I cite as an example here a short exchange from the 'Henry' interview.

H: So all we read was what the book itself told us so we read what had the sounds in the way we were taught but we also read some basic vocabulary
SR: Right
H: Yeah that would help us that maybe did not have the sound but they were useful vocabulary items you know in the environment

Henry lines 122 - 126

It was this exchange in particular which set me, from 2008 onwards, on the path towards defining different categories of words on the page as **Reading-Focal** or **Vehicular**-for-other-language-learning as described immediately below.

3.10.2 Analysis of course materials

It is very clear that language or skills focuses promoted by course materials are not always strongly influential on the activities that actually take place in a classroom (Littlejohn, 1998). However, I would claim that a defence can be made for the analysis of teaching materials to find evidence for the degree and nature of systematic rationales for addressing early reading in the EYL world. In particular, it can shed light on the ways in which language elements and activities considered key to early reading development can be grouped and systematized for both teachers and learners. This is materials as 'work plan' (Rea-Dickins & Germain, 1992, p. 29) taken as evidence of what educational authorities or leading professionals in different contexts think should be included in Young Learners courses as far as the teaching of reading is concerned.

Materials analysis is probably more informative than interviews with regard to potential choices concerning systematization of language content for reading instruction. Although teachers may be able to tell us what they think they do in the classroom in terms of activities connected with reading, it seems less likely that in an

interview they will provide very great detail about specific items selected for focal reading content, or about linguistic analysis and grading. At least, as we shall see, among the 25 individuals whose interviews are analyzed there was little attempt to speak in those terms even though the practical tasks gave them the scope to do so.

Each set of materials was analyzed in its own right. Comparisons amongst materials will also be made, but only in the spirit of investigating the different ways of addressing the issues of early reading instruction for Young Learners. I shall be using a considerable amount of quantitative analysis, but in the service of rigorously-derived qualitative findings. The analysis of the materials involved the following main elements:

1. the level of engagement with print that that the learners were expected to have at the end of the materials under consideration: word-level, sentence-level or text-level. Where materials for children's full primary school careers were available, the level of engagement with text at the end of primary schooling was also noted
2. linguistic content of materials at the early reading stage: words chosen for early reading instruction (Reading-Focal) versus words found on the page as a means of carrying the general English Language teaching of the course (Vehicular)
3. selection, sequencing and dosage of Reading-Focal words
4. units of language (grain-size) focused upon in activities focal for early reading (e.g. syllables, phonemes, whole words, letters)
5. characteristics of different categories of words found in the early reading stages of course material with regard to length, number of syllables and features of orthographic depth
6. whether activities were **static** (involving only repetition or transfer of a fixed set of letters or words as in, saying aloud, copying, or filling gaps) or **generative/pattern-seeking** (looking for repeated elements, such as rhyme in a set of words, transforming one word to another, building words from separate letters)
7. Any traceable influences of named REL1 approaches within the materials

3.10.2.1 Instruments for Analysis: (1) the Commentary and Overview Form

A commentary and overview form for each set of materials under scrutiny was created as a Word Template (please see Appendix 3.10 for a completed example of the form). This was preferred to a checklist such as discussed by Cunningsworth (1984) because of the need to produce an integrated description of the materials rather than a set of simple responses to discrete points. The first version of the commentary form was developed in early 2007 by bringing together issues arising as the Literature Review was drafted and the first set of interviews analyzed. The template provided headings for notes to be entered concerning areas 1 - 7 listed above. The form was refined by piloting it on materials for contrasting contexts (The South Korean primary series Grade 3 to 6 and *Primary English for Cameroon 1*). For example, it was noticed while scrutinizing the South Korean materials that typefaces did not follow the common practice in primary school materials of using 'printed handwriting-friendly' forms of letters. This was seen as an area to pay attention to in all materials, and therefore appropriate sections were added to the template form. (This also resulted in a return to the Literature Review (2.4.1) in order to present more detailed discussion on typefaces and orthographical features such as punctuation). As the main analysis proceeded, further adjustments to the commentary form were made as new issues became apparent and all materials were re-inspected to include attention to new elements. Where notes on issues unique to a particular set of materials seemed necessary, these were made under the template form. The template ensured consistency of treatment of all materials while allowing flexibility for treatment of special features found. Here, below, I extract the headings and explain the purpose of each section of the form. The numbers of the sections on the form are used here for convenience of reference.

Bibliographical and other publishing data on the materials

These are covered in headings 1- 10 and should be self-explanatory.

Levels of engagement with reading ultimately aimed at

This issue is addressed by section 11 of the form, placed early on in order to keep the potential goals of reading instruction in mind:

Section 11: By the end of this level of materials is the reading work operating predominantly at WORD, SENTENCE or TEXT level?

Pedagogically speaking, different activities fit different supposed stages of reading development. It is not possible in a study like this, which does not include classroom

observation or following of cohorts of children, to gauge at what point the children may actually be operating with a particular quality of reading. However, it is possible, from analysis of teaching materials and the classroom activities proposed within them, to find evidence of the levels of engagement that they are assumed to have reached by curriculum designers or materials writers. The criterion for text-level engagement was that texts of one paragraph or more should consistently be present with associated comprehension activities.

Typography and appearance

Section 12: Notes on Fonts used

This section represents an early intention to identify the fonts used in all materials, and there was originally a separate section for font names. However, accurate identification of all fonts proved impossible since this information was not routinely included in the publishing details of materials and my expertise in fine distinctions of typography was not adequate. It, however, seemed sufficient to note (as discussed in 2.4.1) the main issue: whether the font chosen for the first steps was a close approximation to the sort of handwriting that children might see on the board and might be taught to produce themselves and did not contain any letter forms which departed from this style in a confusing way.

Section 13: Is English print prominent in the material? e.g. as activity headings, words on page for dialogues etc.?

Answers to this section concern two areas. The first connects with section 14 below concerning the use of headings in the presentation and layout of the materials. The second, and vitally important, concerns the amount of reliance that the authors place on the printed word to support or (in cases where no recorded media are supplied) convey the content of oral/aural work in addition to work involving reading and writing. An affirmative answer to this question was taken to indicate an approach to EYL teaching in which words on the page are taken as facilitative of, or at least not an obstacle to, language learning at this stage. Early analysis of some of the materials, and a key interview with Henry (see section 3.10.1.1 above) led to my setting up the categories of 'Vehicular Words' as opposed to 'Reading-Focal Words' for course analysis.

Section 14: Notable orthographical points concerning presentation of headings etc.

This section concerns heading and rubric styles and raises issues which are also relevant to the discussion of the presentation and handling of upper and lower case letters. Headings which reproduce 'normal' orthography of sentences in text, i.e. without the capitalization of content words, provide an unambiguous source for incidental familiarization with the way in which most running text is presented in English. Capitalized headings present a marked form which I would argue is less helpful to children.

Methodology of Approaches to Early Reading

The collection of evidence on this area is prompted by sections 15 to 25 of the form:

Section 15: Is the alphabet presented as a discrete Alphabet Spread section?

Informal scrutiny of EYL materials before the start of the study had suggested that including an illustrated 'A-Z' list of words near or at the beginning of a course was a common practice. Therefore, tracking the extent to which, and the manner in which, this device was used seemed appropriate.

Section 16: Presentation of Upper case and Lower Case letters in the materials

This question is prompted partly by the preceding one, since scrutiny showed that an Alphabet Spread and associated practice activities could involve both upper and lower case letters or just one category, more frequently lower case letters. In addition, I sought evidence of overt instruction within the materials concerning conventions such as the use or not of capital letters for items such as month and day names and some pronouns, since these, as signalled by Cook (2005, p. 439), vary even across those languages which use the Roman alphabet. In the case of materials for children who use a different writing system for their L1, it is an even more relevant question, since some writing systems, such as Korean and Hindi, do not contain the upper-lower case distinction.

Section 17: Is there any overt instruction on punctuation and other orthographic issues?

This question, taken together with Section 16, above, prompts consideration of the stage at which children's attention is drawn to orthographic issues in the area of punctuation and layout.

Section 18: Are Reading-Focal words in the materials grouped/focused on according to ABC or some other order?

This question is a central one for the study. Reading-Focal words are defined as a particular subset of the language which is given special treatment in a way which might support learners' early steps in reading. For example, groups of words containing the same phoneme might be presented, or a set may be shown which have the same initial letter or which share a rime. Learners' attention may simply be drawn to them, or they may be asked to carry out particular activities with them, such as reading them aloud or sorting them. My definition overrode the labels given to items and activities in the materials themselves. Some, for example were labelled as being for the purposes of pronunciation or vocabulary learning (rather than reading). However, if use was made of highlighted letters or if comments on spelling and pronunciation were made, it seemed justified to define the section as 'Reading-Focal'.

Section 19: How are Reading-Focal words 'dosed'?

If a category of Reading-Focal words can be identified in course materials, a further question is asked concerning how frequently and concentratedly this type of item is presented ('dosed'). For example, four examples may be presented in a single lesson, once every four lessons, or a single exemplar may be presented every lesson.

Section 20: Is a category of frequent but non-transparent words given focus for reading?

As we saw in the Literature Review, section 2.10.2, even REL1 teaching which concentrates very strongly on Phonics and sounding out words is likely to include practice which aims at supporting whole-word recognition of frequently-found but orthographically deep words, such as 'two', 'eight' and 'said', which cannot be decoded through phonic means. The EYL course materials were analyzed to discover if such words were overtly identified as a category and, if so, if they were given special

treatment to make them focal for reading.

Section 21: Is the full phoneme inventory of the relevant variety of English overtly covered in some way?

As discussed in the Literature Review section 2.5, a concern with helping YL to decode words, whether using strict Phonics principles or with recourse to the more general Alphabetic Principle, requires them to have a confident operational grasp of the phonemes of the variety of English that they are learning. Since, unlike native-speaking children, YL do not have years of prior experience of spoken English to draw upon, it seems rational for an EYL course with a principled position to try to establish this phoneme repertoire in some way. This question does not presuppose any particular method of doing this. Potential alternatives to be sought in the materials under analysis were: integrating pronunciation with early reading activities, dealing with pronunciation separately through rhymes and chants, or maintaining a speaking-and-listening focus for the first weeks or months covered by the course. Notes were taken on the extent of overt phoneme coverage in each set of materials.

Section 22: Extent to which focal literacy words are integrated into the main body of language taught

This question concerns whether the Reading-Focal words are taught and practised in isolation from the language in the rest of the course or whether they overlap with or are derived from the body of language present in the rest of the course. The detailed discussion below in Section 3.10 will show how a judgment on this area was arrived at during analysis.

Section 23: What activities are carried out with focal words? Are they static or generative/pattern-seeking?

This is a key question. It is first necessary to investigate whether proposed activities are systematic in the sense of consistent and coherent. In this sense, systematic teaching methods involve the same operation being carried out with similar elements over lessons which occupy an extended period of time. This allows for the addition of additional or more complex operations as the course progresses.

With regard to activity types, a set of descriptors (independent of the rubrics used in the materials) was developed to cover the activities found. Examples are: **Listen and Repeat, Match Words and Pictures, Find the Rhyme, Copy Words. Text Plus**

Comprehension Questions. These in turn were categorized into:

- **static** activities in which the learners did no more than reproduce or transfer words from one place to another . An example would be **Copy Words**.
- **dynamic, 'generative'**, activities in which, for example, pattern-seeking or rule-operation were in play and learners were engaged in learning which could be applied to other language data, Overt statement of a rule is not necessary for an activity to be considered dynamic, although it may occur. An example would be Find the Rhyme.

Section 24: Are pupils asked to write words or letters? If so, is there guidance on letter-formation?

It is necessary also to consider any writing that children are required to do in association with reading. In some views of early reading development, writing is seen as facilitative for early reading and proceeds *pari passu* with it. In others, writing is delayed for some time. There is also the issue that, in traditional ELT methodology, writing or copying is frequently viewed as a suitable classroom exercise to help to reinforce the learning of new structures or vocabulary. The commentary form therefore included a section in which note could be taken of whether writing activities were carried out with overt relation to reading development or whether they seemed to be of the language-reinforcement type. The sub-question about guidance on letter-formation serves to prompt indications of whether the ability to form Roman alphabet letters is seen as a skill that is taken for granted or in which pupils require overt instruction.

Section 25: Units of language focused upon in the teaching of early reading

As discussed in the Literature Review 2.5, different traditions of early reading teaching focus on different levels or 'grain-sizes' of linguistic analysis. It might be possible therefore to find REYL materials which show a single focus or any combination of focus, at a phonology-led level on syllables, phonemes, whole words, or as discussed by Treiman et al (Treiman, Mullenix, Bijeljac-Babic, & Richmond-Welty, 1995) and Goswami & Mead (1992) in particular, on the intra-syllabic onset-rime combination which spans orthography and phonology. A focus which is led by the visual components of words on the page, rather than by the phonology of English will be

referred to as letter-led, grapheme-led, whole-word led, or may focus on visual segments such as the letters representing the onset and the vowel element of the rime. Analysis of the activities associated with Reading-Focal words, as well as the ways in which they are grouped, will reveal the particular orientations.

Traces of Named Reading Approaches

The next block of questions on the commentary form (Sections 26 to 32) concerns whether elements of named reading approaches, particularly Phonics or Whole Word/Look and Say, were identifiable in course materials. For example, if a course claiming a Phonics-based approach were found to contain sequencing and selection choices such as strict 'ABC' ordering of focal words, that would suggest a very different understanding of the basic sequencing and selection procedures accepted for Phonics in most REL1 contexts. Criteria were set up to judge the extent of influence of each named approach and will be discussed under the question headings which follow.

Section 26: Is the term 'Phonics' used anywhere (e.g. Pupils' book or Teacher's guide) with regard to the materials?

This question could be answered by a simple search of the text of the materials under analysis. Activity headings and Teacher's Notes were the most likely locations.

Section 27: Is there a recognizable Phonics element in the materials?

Section 28: If yes ... how is this manifested?

These questions catered for any Phonics-like content which might not be overtly signaled as such. The criteria below were used:

Criteria for identifying Phonics-influenced approaches

1. Overt linking of letters/graphemes with particular phonemes
2. Segmenting or highlighting of words to focus on parts often highlighted in Phonics - e.g. onset – rime or the letter representing the central vowel in CVC words
3. Deliberate sequencing of grapheme/phoneme relationships for teaching focus, in other than ABC order

4. Attention to frequently-used consonant digraphs (e.g. <th>,< sh>, <ch>) and/or vowel digraphs (<ee>)
5. Activities in which words and elements of words are dynamically manipulated (e.g. changing letters to make new words) rather than learned by rote. (See comments on dynamic and static activities for question 23 above).
6. Overt teaching of some common 'rules' e.g. the split digraph, 'magic e'
7. Placement of some 'orthographically friendly' words early on in the course in order to facilitate decoding.
8. Spelling/writing practice using phonically regular words
9. Transliteration activities between English and own writing system (e.g. local words and proper names including the children's own names)

Section 29: Is there evidence of a Whole Word Recognition approach in the materials?

Section 30: If yes ... how is this manifested?

Criteria were devised to detect a Whole Word approach:

Criteria for identifying Whole Word or 'Look and Say'-influenced approaches

1. The use of word cards as 'flash cards' requiring rapid shape recognition of words rather than just as items to play games with and match or as vocabulary introduction devices.
2. Deliberate inclusion, focus on, recycling and repetition of common 'Sight Words' (beyond their normal inclusion as part of common lexical sets e.g. 'eight' as part of numbers 1-10)

Other Approaches

It was not expected that other REL1 approaches would be as prominent as Phonics and Look and Say in published materials and so the three approaches of Language Experience, Real Books and Environmental Print were catered for in the above pair of questions. As before, criteria for identifying their possible influences were drawn up as appears below:

Criteria for Identifying Language Experience-influenced Approaches

1. Advice in the materials for teachers to invite children to make up their own utterances orally, which are then shown in written form by the teacher.

Criteria for Identifying Real Books/Whole Language-influenced Approaches

Evidence within the materials that some of the following activities are to be encouraged outside the use of the course materials themselves:

1. Presentation of story and other books to children using Top Down approaches such as consideration of cover, author etc.
2. Giving children awareness of what 'reading' is all about
3. Willingness to let children meet books on their own and try to puzzle them out

Criteria for Identifying Approaches Influenced by Use of Environmental print

1. Photos or pictures found in the materials of objects or scenes showing English words that are often found in the local context
2. Use in the materials of English words known to be found in the local context, even if photos or pictures are not shown

Non-REL1 Approaches

Other approaches to early reading have been identified in the Literature Review as existing in relevant contexts. In particular the 'Listening while Reading' approach from Nigeria, its contrast with the alphabetic (spelling out with letter names) approach. The 'Syllabic Approach' identified by Williams (2006, p. 30) in Malawi and Zambia seems to be catered for in question 25 above concerning grain-size or level of linguistic analysis used for presenting Reading-Focal material.

Linguistic content and orthographical characteristics of materials at the early reading stage

These issues are addressed by sections 33 - 36 on the form. The questions acted as prompts to carry out detailed counts and listing of words fitting the criteria for each heading. These were carried out separately via the Excel spreadsheet discussed below and the raw figures then entered on the form.

Section 33: Number of Reading-Focal words appearing at this level

See the discussion of question 18 above for the definition of Reading-Focal words.

Section 34: Number of Vehicular Words appearing at this level

The category of Vehicular Words comprises all other words appearing in printed form in the materials, that is, rubrics and headings as well as words shown in printed dialogues, speech bubbles, sentence exemplars or other material from which it is intended for children directly to learn. After experimentation with, and reflection on, analysis of sample materials from South Korea and Cameroon at the pilot stage of the analysis, it was decided to put all these words into a single category despite the several different purposes for which they appear on the pages of course materials. The words are all vehicular in that they are concerned in some way in 'carrying' the rest of the learning intended by the course, whether it be, as in the case of printed dialogues, as a presumed support for learning the spoken language, or, in the case of rubrics and headings, as an aide-memoire to children or teacher about how to carry out activities. The justification for this very broadly-based category is firstly, that, whatever their purpose in the eyes of the materials creators, all these 'words on the page' are there to be seen and processed by the children in some way and may all present either obstacles or facilitation without being directly involved in reading instruction. A second justification is that the on-the-page presentational style and layout of course materials is so varied that careful distinctions in analysis between different levels of headings and rubrics and of rubrics and learning content are not possible to maintain consistently across a wide range of material. Nor, I would claim, is it necessary to do so. It seems to provide a fair test of all materials to set up the proposed simple two-way distinction between Reading-Focal words and other, Vehicular, words with the main concentration of the analysis on the Reading-Focal words.

Sections 35 and 36: Two emergent sub-categories of Vehicular Words

It became apparent that it could be useful to isolate two small groups of words found in many courses. The first was 'Character Names' and the second was labeled 'Playful and Onomatopoeic Words'. The justifications for these decisions are given below:

Section 35: Number of Character Names appearing at this level

Many of the course materials introduced named characters, usually appearing in the Vehicular Words in the body of the text. My view was that, since choice of names was under the free control of the authors of the materials, there was the potential to select names which provided clear exemplars of pronunciation and orthography. I therefore decided to give the names chosen special consideration. All personal names were extracted and placed into a list for special analysis. Other proper nouns, such as place or brand names, were assigned, according to their use in particular materials, to the Focal or Vehicular category.

Section 36: Number of Playful or Onomatopoeic words appearing at this level

In some courses, invented words, such as 'pim pom' or 'Doo Warry' were used, for example in choruses for songs. In addition, there was some use of 'animal noise' words such as 'Baa' and other onomatopoeic items, some of which had spellings idiosyncratic to particular courses. Again, because authors were presumed to have a free choice regarding these items and could therefore potentially select them for pedagogic purposes, it seemed appropriate to isolate these items and to give them special consideration. A sub group was therefore set up.

3.10.2.2 Instruments for Analysis: (2) The Excel-based data sheets

Responses to sections 33 to 36 on the overview sheet above are purely numerical, for example, the number of Reading-Focal words found in a particular course. A convenient way of storing and displaying these data, along with the linguistic characteristics of individual words, to be discussed below, was found in the design of an Excel spreadsheet for each category of word. A section of these sheets is shown in Appendix 3. 11.

Characterizing different sets of words found in course material with regard to linguistic features

For consistency, the analysis of words found in all materials was initially carried out and is reported in Findings on the basis of RP as the phoneme inventory. However, since this was not the case for materials intended for use in, for example, Taiwan, the Excel Spreadsheet on which data was collected contained a column allowing for annotations that could fit any given list to a GA phoneme inventory with regard to rhoticism (see Chapter 2.5.4 for a discussion). In the Findings Chapter, notes will be

made of cases where it would be realistic to report findings for GA variety rather than RP and on when a phoneme inventory for an Outer Circle context might be relevant.

Orthographic transparency

It is not presumed in this study that privileging orthographic transparency is the only desirable choice for Reading-Focal words in REYL. There was also no presupposition that this choice had formed part of any of the materials creators' conscious agenda. However, it was felt that it would be illuminating to inspect the Reading-Focal Words in particular, and determine the proportions of orthographically transparent to less transparent words found. This was on the grounds that the orthographic depth of a language (or this case a chosen subset of a language) is an indication of the overall challenge it presents for learners who, as it is argued in Literature Review section 2.7.4, are still coming to grips with the decoding level of reading operation. If there is a substantial quantity of language presented in EYL materials with a consistent relationship between phonemes and letters, this could be seen as fostering the making of connections fitting with the Alphabetic Principle even when the class teacher may not be deliberately assisting it. In moving my analysis framework in this direction, I should acknowledge that I was influenced at an early stage by the content of a particular interview (Shona), which will be reported in Chapter 4 (Findings) and which was later reinforced by my final interview (Elinor). Both participants spoke of autonomous breakthroughs with understandings of letter-phoneme correspondences.

A number of simple formulae were devised or adopted for the purpose of the analysis of orthographical transparency of course contents and are described below in detail:

Letter-Phoneme Difference

This is the simplest formula and possibly sufficient as a way of judging and comparing the overall orthographic transparency of each subset of the English language represented by the words in each set of course materials analyzed. In a perfect letter-phoneme correspondence the difference would be zero as with <c> <a> <t> (3 letters) and /kæt/ (3 phonemes). The use of this formula is attested in studies of children for whom English is an L1, as in for example, Spencer (2007) and a version of it was found useful (Rixon, 2007b) to analyze the vocabulary syllabus of the Cambridge ESOL 'Starters' test (Cambridge ESOL, 2007). English words which fit this zero-difference pattern are those often first taught in a Phonics-based course, and are those which, as we saw in the Literature Review, Albrow

(1972) places in his analysis in the Basic System or Group 1. Words which do not fit this pattern show differences between the number of letters and phonemes. These may be expressed in positive numbers as with 'eight' (5 letters) and /'eɪt/ (2 phonemes) with a difference of +3, or in negative numbers as with 'fox' (3 letters) and /'fɒks/ (4 phonemes), a difference of -1. The latter reflects the fact that <x> here represents two phonemes /ks/ (See Literature Review, 2.5.4. The existence in English of both positive and negative directions of letter-phoneme differences raises our awareness of potential conceptual frustrations for learners if teachers are not sufficiently aware of these tensions to point them out or to explain them adequately. In a minority of special cases a score of zero does not indicate transparency, but greater challenge. A clear case is that of 'one' (3 letters) /'wʌn/ (3 phonemes) when there is no correspondence between the frequent values given to the letters shown and the phonemes represented as they appear in sequence in this word. Special note was taken of these cases in a column on the Excel sheet. Again, cases like these, in which the application of the Alphabetic Principle does not readily bring decoding success, may set up conceptual as well as immediate decoding challenges for both REL1 and REYL beginning readers. Words such as 'one' and 'huge', 'eight' and 'laugh' might therefore be seen as candidates for a Sight Vocabulary element of a course. It will be remembered that Section 20 of the commentary sheet prompts the materials analyst to check for the presence of absence of an overt Sight Vocabulary strand to cater for frequent not orthographically- transparent words.

Grapheme-Phoneme Differences – when common consonant and vowel digraphs are taken into account

This formula takes into account the transparency that is conferred on words for a reader who is aware of letter strings which regularly function in English as graphemes. It seemed appropriate for this study, which has a strong practical pedagogical interest in frequent and regular features of English orthography, to take into account only selected features. I chose to focus on digraphs consistently representing particular consonant values, for example <ph> to represent /f/ and <sh> to represent /ʃ/ as well as some consistent and frequent ways, such as <ee>, in which vowel phonemes may be rendered by digraphs. The full inventory of digraphs factored in appears below in Table 8. I also took into account Cook's (2005, p. 429) discussion of conventions for placement at different points in a word of graphemes <c>. <k> and <ck> (all representing the same phoneme /k/) as a factor in ease or difficulty, although perhaps this applies more to production (writing/spelling) than recognition (decoding).

<sh> realising / ʃ/	<th> realising / θ/	<th> realising / ð/
<ee> realising /i:/	<ph> realising /f/	<ck> in syllable final position realising /k/

Table 8 Selected digraphs for analysis

In this calculation, digraphs are counted as single units on the Excel sheet and as such will reduce the overall ‘difference’ total. For example, the use of this formula results in no change to results for words in which one letter = one grapheme such as the <c>-<a>-<t> and /kæt/ example discussed above, but it will change the results in the case of words such as ‘sheep’ /ʃi:p / (5 letters but 3 graphemes <sh>-<ee> and <p>). The letter-phoneme difference in this case is +2 but the selected-grapheme-phoneme difference yields 0. Behind this decision lies an assumption that it is beneficial to teach these common digraphs.

The split digraph: Magic <e>

It emerged from some of the interviews with EYL teachers that the ‘split digraph’ ‘magic <e>’ rule, whereby the letters <a e i o u> are realised as diphthongs (as in the <mat> → <mate> / ‘mæt / → /’meɪt/ relationship) was not part of their own repertoire of knowledge about English orthography. See in particular the extract from the interview with June which will be reported in Chapter 4 section 4.3.6.1 and of which we have seen an extract in 3.9.8 above. It was therefore decided to add to the materials analysis a consideration of words to which this rule applied and to scrutinize the materials for whether this rule was in any way taught or presented.

Handling the data on Excel in a clear and convenient manner

The procedures described below do not represent sophisticated use of IT facilities. However, I would say that they represent a logical and transparent sequence of simple steps using simple tools and are adequate for my purpose. That purpose is not to carry out a sophisticated linguistic analysis of word lists but to reveal and highlight features worthy of attention concerning the patterns that emerge in particular course materials. This can then be used as part of the evidence for a greater or lesser degree of system in different EYL materials with regard to early reading, and to some extent for the different types of systematization used. The main instruments for storing and manipulating numerical data were four Excel

spreadsheets (Reading-Focal words, Vehicular Words, Character Names and Playful or Onomatopoeic Words). Data were collected on these sheets following a uniform format and procedure. The steps and the associated sorting procedures were as follows:

The entries were gradually built up from what was actually found on the pages of the course materials under scrutiny, not only from wordlists supplied with course materials since these had been constructed on many different principles and would have been a source of unreliability. For the rules that were devised to guide the extraction of words from different courses so that a like-for-like comparison was possible across courses, please see Appendix 3.12.

The relevant words in each category for each course were typed into Word Files and sorted into alphabetical order. They were then entered into a constantly growing alphabetically-ordered list on the appropriate Excel spreadsheet (Windows 2010 for the final stages). The 'cases' on this spreadsheet, entered in column A (the 'word' column), were single words.

Each time an item not previously encountered was found in any of the materials it was inserted by creating a new row running across the spreadsheet. For that course, and all subsequent courses in which the word was found, a '1' was entered in the appropriate column. Where a word was not found in a course, a '0' was entered to indicate absence. This procedure allows the words in any particular course to be identified, analyzed, quantified, and compared with words in others so that shared and unique items can easily be revealed.

The columns immediately to the right of the word column (columns B- D) contained information, as discussed above, on the number of syllables, letters and phonemes in each word, which allowed for a formula to be applied in column E, yielding letter-phoneme difference. Columns F - I contained information on modifications that could be made to the letter-phoneme result, for example by taking digraphs into consideration in the calculation or with regard to GA as a possible reference accent for some courses (as discussed in Literature Review, section 2.4.2.1). To the right of this section on the spreadsheet was a series of columns, each one representing a set of course materials. Table 9 shows the layout for Character Names.

spread sheet used	No of syllables	No of letters	RP phonemes	Letter - phon diff		LLE Sri Lanka	E All Stars SIL	E All Stars CP	Primary Eng for Cameroon 1
<i>Afi</i>	2	3	3	0		0	0	0	1
<i>Aisha</i>	3	5	4	1		0	1	1	0
<i>Aka</i>	2	3	3	0		0	0	0	1
<i>Alex</i>	2	4	5	-1		0	0	0	0
<i>Ann</i>	1	3	2	1		0	0	0	0
<i>Anna</i>	2	4	3	1		0	0	0	0
<i>Batuke</i>	3	6	6	0		0	0	0	1
<i>Ben</i>	1	3	3	0		0	1	0	0
<i>Bill</i>	1	4	3	1		0	0	0	0

Table 9 Layout of the Excel spreadsheet for Character Names

During scrutiny and analysis, in order to provide a clear visual display of key features, a conditional formatting formula was applied to relevant sections of the Excel spreadsheet whereby if the contents of a cell met a particular condition it would be highlighted. In the example below (Table 10) all the cells in which the condition >0 applied, were highlighted.

This had a number of effects: The pink highlights in the Course Material columns make it easy to see which Character Names can be found in each course. We can also clearly see that the names Afi, Aka, Batuke, and Ben have letter-phoneme differences of 0, representing the maximum orthographic transparency.

					Columns showing course materials →→→→ etc.				
Word	N of syllables	Letters	RP phonemes	letter - phon	LLE Sri Lanka	E All Stars SIL	E AllStars CP	Primary Eng for Cameroon 1	
Afi	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	
Aisha	3	5	4	1	0	1	1	0	
Aka	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	
Alex	2	4	5	-1	0	0	0	0	
Ann	1	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	
Anna	2	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	
Batuke	3	6	6	0	0	0	0	1	
Ben	1	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	
Bill	1	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	

Table 10 Using conditional formatting on the spreadsheet

A sort to bring the complete word or name list for a particular course to the top of the table can be carried out by applying a numerical sort in descending order to any Course Material column. In the example below (Table 11) the sort has been applied to the column for Primary English for Cameroon 1. The 9 names (Afi to Tamba) found all still highlighted, are thus brought to the top of the table in alphabetical order.

Words and their characteristics					Columns showing course materials				
Word	N of syllables	Letters	RP phonemes	letter-phoneme difference		LLE Sri Lanka	E All Stars SIL	E All Stars CP	Prim Eng for Cameroon 1
Afi	2	3	3	0		0	0	0	1
Aka	2	3	3	0		0	0	0	1
Batuke	3	6	6	0		0	0	0	1
Elly	2	4	3	1		0	0	0	1
Esoke	3	5	5	0		0	0	0	1
Gerry	2	5	4	1		0	0	0	1
Henry	2	5	5	0		0	0	0	1
Molly	2	5	4	1		0	0	0	1
Tamba	2	5	5	0		0	0	0	1

Table 11 Sorting to reveal orthographically transparent items

This facilitates the observation that, of the nine names shown for characters in 'Primary English for Cameroon 1', six have perfect letter-phoneme correspondences. The other three owe their letter-phoneme difference of one to the presence of doubled letters (<ll> and <rr>). It would therefore be feasible for teachers to make use of these nine accessible names in order to support decoding work, although it is not possible to say, in the absence of testimony from the authors, whether this was an intended feature of the names in this course.

All these procedures, and others based on the same principles, could be applied with any list entered.

Quantifying the most commonly-used words

A SUM formula at the end of each row on the Excel spreadsheet calculated the number of sets of materials in which each word occurred and thus some indication of 'popular' and 'rare' words could be gained. It was expected that there would be a replication of the results of Rixon (1999) on seven international EYL courses which showed a very low incidence of shared items across courses, but a small core of commonly-found words. Any such core identified would not be seen to represent the optimum inventory, but rather to be an indication of current practice. Discussion of this point can be found in Findings, section 4.5.5. and discussions of how the information might be used are found in Chapters 5 and 6.

3.11 Questionnaire for authors, editors and curriculum advisers

Although, as stated in 1.5, my decision was to treat the teaching materials analyzed for the study as 'found objects' rather than trying to investigate the editorial and authorial process in detail, my own work as a writer had taught me that modern course materials are usually not the unfiltered product of an author's own credo and rationale since teamwork and the influence of editors' and publishers' outlooks is also in play. There is also the issue of how far many important aspects of teaching reading (such as maintaining a concern for meaning or a global methodological choice such as the decision to carry out Shared Reading) can successfully be 'built in' to activities on the page. It seemed that a small side study on the experiences of professionals in the EYL publishing area might be a useful and proper counterweight to an account of the materials that might otherwise seem to be over-concerned with perceived gaps and anomalies. This short study is therefore offered in the spirit of balance.

In early 2011, I designed an electronic questionnaire via the FormsBuilder facility which is available to students and staff of the University of Warwick. A copy of this may be seen in Appendix 3.13. A link may be given to any person inside or outside the university to allow them to access an on-screen questionnaire form and to submit their responses directly on-line. Response forms may then be saved by the page-owner on to an Excel spreadsheet for future analysis.

My respondents were selected through personal contacts. Via a personalized email message, I approached about 20 people known to me who were involved in creating materials for Young Learners. This message, as well as the on-screen introduction to the questionnaire, made the purpose of the questionnaire clear and gave a guarantee that confidentiality and anonymity would be respected. Sixteen responses were received. In four cases responses came from interviewees who at the time of interview were authors or who after their time at Warwick had moved into materials writing. Two other respondents were unconnected with Warwick but were part of the authorial team for materials which have been analyzed in this thesis. Others were former textbook project managers and curriculum advisers associated with materials analyzed in this study. I also obtained responses from a UK editor and author and from three well-known authors of international materials for Young Learners, one working at the time for a British publisher to produce a custom-made Young Learners course for an Arabic-speaking Middle Eastern context. There was thus scope for considerable resonance with the concerns and issues covered in the other two studies although I have not tried to establish any one-to-one links between the contents of any set of materials and what one of its authors or editors might say in response to this questionnaire. My aim was mostly to give a group of 'producers' a fair say in a way in which I think may shed interesting light on how materials often come to be as they are. Because of confidentiality, I will not here or in the Findings identify the contexts to which these professionals refer beyond what is revealed by general labels such as 'UK-based' 'Author of international materials' or 'Author of locally-published materials'.

The questionnaire may be seen in Appendix 3.13. The first set of items collected background data on the respondents concerning types of publication with which they were involved, target contexts and their own roles. The core of the questionnaire was a series of three multiple-response items aimed at eliciting respondents' views concerning appropriate approaches to teaching early reading and their views and experiences concerning how feasible it was to accommodate such views within course materials. As the rubric to Question 6 makes clear, I hoped that making choices amongst these items would trigger their own reflections and lead them to give richer data in the follow-up Comments Box which followed each question.

'Please click on all statements that you agree with but these are intended mainly as triggers or stimuli for you to react to [or against]. I am very interested

in your own views which you can type in the box below if you choose.’

The responses to the questionnaire are included in the Findings Chapter, section 4.6, and considerable use of them will also be made in the Discussion Chapter, fitting my intention to use them to provide a more rounded picture of how Young Learners course materials come to be as they are.

3.12 Conclusion

It is hoped that the rationale for using two very different types of main study, interviews and detailed analysis of the contents of materials, will be seen to be justified in that both contribute to the central areas for enquiry. These are what, in Borg’s (2006) terms, EYL professionals ‘know, think and believe’ about how to help YL with their first steps in reading in English and what principles and systems, if any, they apply for facilitating children’s learning in this area. The findings from the data collected and analyzed are discussed in the next chapter. The first section of Chapter 4 discusses the findings from the interview-based study and the second section brings these together with the findings of the materials analysis. Finally there will be a report on the small study with authors, editors and curriculum advisers.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction and Overview

In Chapter 3 (Methodology) I described an integrated process, particularly in the early stages of the study, of working between interviews and course materials, identifying issues for detailed investigation. However, in the accounts of findings given in this present chapter, while still attempting to show areas of resonance and overlap, for the sake of clarity I will devote separate space to findings from each set of analysis. Analysis of questionnaires and interviews will particularly concern participants' accounts of and rationales for the teaching of early reading to YL, and the degree to which principled positions can be identified within them. The analysis of materials will focus on evidence of systematic planning in syllabus terms: linguistic choices and selection, sequencing and 'dosing' of items. It will also consider activity types and whether they may be considered 'static' or 'generative' as defined in Chapter 3.10.2. The report of the small study of authors and others concerned with course material creation follows. The full integration and discussion of the information and insights gained from the three studies and their application to the Research Questions will be reserved for Chapter 5 (Discussion).

Overview of the Chapter:

- 4.2 Distinguishing claims and reports about contextual features from core data on cognition and systematicity
- 4.3 Analysis of interviews and accompanying questionnaires
- 4.4 How interviews analysis feeds into materials analysis
- 4.5. Analysis of materials
- 4.6 Questions for authors, editors and curriculum advisers
- 4.7 Conclusion

4.2 Reports about contextual features distinguished from core data

The interviews yielded very rich data concerning participants' backgrounds, experiences and their reports of their own and others' practices. However, as

discussed in the Methodology Chapter, although the 'reportage' elements can be seen as a necessary matrix within which examples of cognition usefully can be discussed and sought, they do not directly serve to answer the research questions concerning systematicity and principled views regarding the role of the printed word in EYL methodology. It was necessary therefore to sift the data for those aspects of participants' accounts which should be focused on to answer the Research Questions and those which, although containing much of interest, should be set aside for elaboration in other papers and presentations.

4.3 Analysis of interviews and accompanying questionnaires

As discussed in Chapter 3, questionnaire- and interview-based data from 28 EYL professionals are analyzed for this study, with 23 individuals participating in both questionnaire and interview. For purposes of confidentiality, respondents have been given pseudonyms which are used throughout.

It is not appropriate to apply statistical measures to data from this group because of the qualitative orientation and small scale of the study. It is, however, felt appropriate to report raw figures to show how many respondents can be associated with a particular view or experience. This is endorsed by Drever (2003, p. 71) as a transparent and appropriate means of indicating commonalities and otherwise in small-scale research. Details of the more salient results from responses to closed items from the questionnaires will be reported below. Discussion of verbatim open responses obtained from questionnaires will be integrated with the discussion of the interviews. It will be made clear in what follows whether a quotation comes from an interview or a questionnaire by the placing of words from an interview within a box.

Although I shall reserve the main consideration of the significance of findings for the Discussion chapter, it seems justified, even in this Findings chapter, to include some comment regarding selected responses in order to show how they fit with the rest of a participant's contribution and to signal commonalities or contrasts with what other participants said. This is one way of addressing the massive extent of interview data which cannot be directly illustrated in the main body of this thesis or contained within the word-limits of Appendices.

Chapter 3, section 3.9.1.13, discusses the methods by which I arrived at themes. The diagram below shows the hierarchy of the first theme-headings. The diagram shows

the results of the ‘first pass’, a literal analysis of the types of response elicited by the questionnaires and interviews as described by Braun and Clarke (2005) and castigated by them if analysis ceases at this point. To some extent it is a predictable account, derivable from the questions asked, but it is useful at this stage since it supports a later discussion of how some responses may be ‘taken’ in the next stage of analysis. (See section 4.3.5).

I shall take themes one by one, following the order of the main headings in Column 2 of Figure 8 below.

Responses in questionnaires and interviews	Own direct accounts of childhood experiences	memories of family support
		memories of procedures at school
	Accounts of own and others' usual practice during their time as EYL teachers	own
		others'
	Discoveries and departures arrived at	specific training in the teaching of reading
		on the job discoveries
		reaction to own experiences as early readers
	Teacher Subject and Pedagogical Content Knowledge	Contrasts between L1 and English and their implications
		Issues of English Phonology and Orthography
		Knowledge and views of L1 methods and associated terminology

Figure 8 The first themes emerging

4.3.1 Own Direct Accounts of Childhood Experience

4.3.1.1 Memories of family support for early reading at home

This was a rich area. Most participants recounted help from family members, often older siblings, with L1 reading, often initiated before they started to go to school. A considerable number also described help with learning to read in English in early

childhood. However, these data will be discussed here only in cases where a direct effect on later cognition including motivation towards English is suggested by a respondent. Ali talks about an interest in English shared by many family members, which he suggests conveyed itself to him at an early age through reading experiences undertaken with an elder sister. The process he describes seems very like the informal apprenticeship to reading experienced by many English native speaking children in the UK and USA (Wells, 1985; Weinberger, 1986).

A ... er maybe maybe because there was a general interest in English in our family so that's why my sister started to help help me in this
SR: And what types what types of things did she do?
A: I remember we started reading short stories with those lovely illustrations and animals and yeah so I liked that a lot
SR: and those were story books? Or or cartoon books?
A: They were story books and they were English English books yeah I can't remember the publisher but I think it was Longman so these are the sort of things I started reading in English
S: And what would you do would she read to you or you sit and look at the book or?
A: Yeah she would read for me and I would look at the book and follow with her so I would learn the pronunciation though there was there wasn't any formal instruction from her she didn't tell me 'this is read like this and this word' she just read and I followed
S: And that helped you?
A: Yeah exactly helped a lot.
S: And when did school start giving you input, was that later?
A: I started actually I started learning English at school at Grade 7 that was when I was 12

Ali lines 109 - 126

Oriel's father provided early reading experiences in Greek at home, which were didactically-oriented with some syllabically-based activities but her English early reading experiences were more informal, based on songs and story books.

SR: So when you were doing English reading did you play around in any way like that or was it more straight stories?
O: Hmm I don't remember having
SR: Recognise syllables in English as well
O: I don't think so I don't think so. No it was the book and reading and the stories but in a way my father had created an environment to learn English he had found English songs which me and my sister could sing before we knew how to read
SR: So again the oral
O: So we were jumping and laughing and singing English songs and then we started having input from the page then we started reading the stories listening and reading basically

Oriel lines 354 – 364

Usually the memories of family experiences with early reading in English are recounted with far more enthusiasm than those recalled from school.

4.3.1.2 Memories of procedures at school for early reading instruction

These accounts concern the **apprenticeship of observation** (Lortie, 1976) undergone by the participants during their own schooldays. As discussed in the Methodology chapter, 3.9, a person's recall may not be close to the reality of actual events, an issue on which we have no way of judging, but should be taken as the reflection of 'lived experience' (Gardner, 2001) and thus of potential significance for the respondent's current views and understandings.

Recall of apprenticeship of observation events or routines was directly prompted by sections [a] to [v] of Question 14 in the questionnaire and by references back to these during the interviews. The responses to the individual items in question 14 of the questionnaire have been summarized in Table 12 with focus on the cases of extremely high or low numbers of choices.

14a	We had to learn the letter names of the whole alphabet before we learned to read	20
14n	My teacher listened to pupils reading around the class (one after the other with everybody in the class listening)	18
14k	My teacher listened to me reading aloud once a week or more often (just me and the teacher together)	2
14l	My teacher listened to me reading aloud from once to three times a month (just me and the teacher together)	6
14m	My teacher listened to me reading aloud a few times a year (just me and the teacher together)	0
14o	The class would read aloud in chorus, under the teacher's direction	16
14p	The teacher read aloud to us from our textbook while we followed the text on the page	22

Table 12 Questionnaire responses concerning remembered classroom procedures in reading in English. N = 26

The high number of participants who recalled learning letter names as a preliminary to reading is notable, as are the different kinds of lockstep classroom procedure: reading around the class, reading in chorus and listening to the teacher while following in the

textbook. In the case of the three questions (k-m, shaded on the table) concerning reading aloud to the teacher, some respondents chose more than one option, in which case I registered the option indicating the greater frequency. The remembered instances (8) of this one-to-one reading are much lower than those of lockstep procedures. Unfortunately, two of the eight respondents were amongst those not interviewed. I did not in the interviews fully ascertain to what extent these one-to-one encounters with the teacher were scaffolded learning experiences. However, in at least one case (Janet) the interviewee's comments revealed that this was an assessment process rather than a 'reading together' experience.

When these items were referred back to in the interview, participants gave substantial responses and often made evaluative comments. Table 13 below summarizes the main themes emerging from this question and indicates the number of participants who commented. It should be understood that some of the terms, such as 'Reading while Listening' used below are applied by me to the experiences that they described, as defined and discussed in the Literature Review, rather than being terms directly used by the participants themselves. It is hoped, however, that the extracts from interviews below will supply sufficient evidence for the reader to decide whether I am warranted in applying such labels to their descriptions. At this point in the discussion I am dividing comments into those concerning global conditions, language and syllabus aspects and procedures and activities in a way which mirrors the discussion in the Literature Review.

		Discussed by:
Global conditions	Whole class lockstep learning	June. Ali, Elinor, Shelly, Rosamund, Shona, Henry,
	Aspects of procedures in English reading similar to reading practices in own L1	Ali, Hilary, Shona, Shelly
Language and syllabus aspects	Words on the page/board from a very early stage or the beginning	June. Ali, Elinor, Shelly, Rosamund, Shona, Henry
	Combination of letter names and letter sound-values	Henry
	Alphabetical Order and Initial letters of words	Ali, Shelly, Henry
	Bridging devices to English orthography	Shelly, Hilary, Shona, Ilse
Procedures and activities	Reading-while-listening	June, Elinor, Henry,
	Reading aloud by pupils	June, Ali, Elinor
	Shared Reading	Elinor

Table 13 Procedures or conditions at school for early reading instruction as recalled in interviews

Global Conditions: Whole Class Lockstep Learning

Reading was presented in interviews by most respondents as a skill that they recalled as being taught both in its early and late stages to the whole class in lockstep. This fits with the high number of selections in the questionnaire of remembered whole class procedures such as choral reading after the teacher and reading in turn round the class.

Global Conditions: Remembered Classroom procedures in English reading similar to reading procedures in own L1

In the Literature Review section 2.6.1, I discussed the evidence from some contexts that the major architecture, tone and procedures in English lessons were similar to those of other curricular lessons within an overall teaching culture. In a study like this present one, without access to classroom observation, it is not possible to make

strong assertions of this nature, but in interview responses there are some indications of participants having experienced common procedures running across lessons. For example, Ali speaks of learners reading in turn around the class in both English and Arabic lessons.

SR: OK so that reading round the class that's that's um quite a is that something that a lot of teachers would do?

A: In Syria yeah this is the this is the normal thing in Syria in English and in Arabic

Ali lines 246 - 248

Ali also talks of the role of 'the Class Reader' – a human reader rather than a book – operating across curricular subjects.

A: ... I was also the Class Reader.

SR: Oh what what is the Class Reader?

A: This is because because the teacher can't read at all the time so they would be the best reader in class so I that best reader was myself

SR: And what did you read?

A: I I read Arabic I read Islamic Sciences and Islamic and Arabic Sciences

SR: When the teacher was tired you would read the texts to the class?

A: Yeah. Loudly.

Ali lines 70 - 77

Language and syllabus aspects: Words on the page/board from a very early stage or the beginning

Almost all participants reported remembering being taught English with the support or the presence of 'words on the page (or board) from the very beginning. The Japanese participant, who had started English in Junior High, stated baldly in his questionnaire comment:

Our English Learning started with/through reading

Sandra, a South Korean participant who began English at Middle School, is explicit in her questionnaire response concerning the immediate start with words on the page and the lack of pedagogical attention to reading as a goal needing instruction:

I don't think I've ever [been] taught how to read. I became able to read after being test[ed] on spellings of many vocabulary items. That is, as soon as we memorized the alphabets, we were tested on spellings. We had to memorize the whole text of the text book and recite in front of the teacher; if we fail to do it, we had to stay after school hours until we were able to recite it successfully. (I still remember some parts; e.g. 'Once upon a time there was a mermaid. The mermaid looked like a beautiful woman. She had long green hair and a fish tail'). Therefore, there wasn't much teaching but testing. (I hated it -.-;)

There were many other similar accounts. Hilary spoke of dialogues printed in her Junior High text book, but it emerged that these were used for reading aloud and for memorization demonstrated by writing them down rather than as support for the development of spoken interaction.

H: Em but em but I I think when I was in junior high school the teacher focused on reading and writing yeah yeah and ignored speaking and listening
SR: Oh I see so even though it was a dialogue in the book you would be more reading it. Would you read it aloud? Or would you read it silently?
H: Yeah we read it aloud and er we always asked to memorize the texts [I see] by heart and write down it.

Hilary lines 291 – 296

The Russian participant was the one exception in that in her schooldays an attempt had been made to build a degree of oral/aural proficiency before the written word began to be used as a means of teaching and before reading instruction itself began.

SR: So I mean what what did you start when you started English was reading done from the beginning?
L: I don't think we were yeah we were supposed to learn reading rules
SR: From day one?
L: Not from day one half a year was so called em I don't remember I I just let let me remember how it sounds in Russian (says it to herself in Russian) so oral oral course oral introductory course it was it lasted half a year so then we started reading started learning reading rules although ...

Lucy lines 494 - 501

Language and Syllabus Aspects: Alphabetical Order and Initial letters of words

Reporting of an 'ABC' order of focus on the initial letters of key words during their learning was very widespread (20 participants in all, combining questionnaire

responses and interview accounts). Very few comments suggested that this raised any issues for them. For example, Ali from Syria describes the procedure but with no negative comment:

A: Yes yes the alphabet was written on the blackboard <abcdefg> to the end (mm yes) yeah and um <a> apple, book, <c> and etc.', and this was in the in the reading book itself this was the preparatory stage for the actual reading. We used to have I still remember it it's a whole page all boxes small boxes with every letter with its word yeah this is how we started recognizing the letters yeah.

Ali lines 160 – 165

Henry, whose negative comments we will hear later, was one dissenter to ABC order.

Language and Syllabus Aspects: Bridging devices to English Orthography

In the case of the next two participants, from China and Taiwan respectively, in their late twenties at the time of the interview and therefore having started English only as Middle School students, a phonemic 'bridge' was used from the beginning of English learning to try to ensure accurate pronunciation of the orthographic word-cues that were used from the start. Shelly learned IPA notation.

SR: OK so you were 12 and at what age did you first start to learn to in English was that the same age or a bit later?

Sh: I think the same because er I still remember for example it's full of vocabulary 'book, bed, bee' and then what it's like you know starting with and then we were taught about International Phonetics and /b/ you know the pronunciation of it

Shelly lines 379 - 383

Hilary learned the 'KK' (Kenyon & Knott, 1944) phonemic system for American English, much used in Taiwan (See Literature Review 2.5).

H: ...I remember er before I entered er to the entered to the entered Junior High school in the summer vacation before the Junior High school the school have a special course for the new students that taught us the 26 letters and er how to pronounce the word and the the KK phonetics table

SR: Oh the famous KK yes [laugh] I know about

H: So I think it's just like a preparation and er and in the formal class actually in the summer vacation we started to learn vocabulary first and then we can read short conversations

Hilary lines 279 – 286

Later, she speaks of her need as a schoolchild for KK to support her in memorising the dialogues in the school textbook.

SR: OK and did you have tapes to help you do that? Recordings? Or did you use KK?

H: Er sometimes the teacher ah well mm played the tapes yeah but not often

SR: Mm 'cos it would be quite difficult to memorize it without hearing it.

H: Yeah yeah yeah so er when I read the words I need the KK phonetic table to help me to pronounce the word.

Hilary lines 297 - 301

In neither context was an IPA or KK bridge officially seen as appropriate for teaching Primary school learners when the age for beginning English was lowered. Therefore, as prospective teachers of Young Learners, Shelly and Hilary faced curriculum requirements which involved very different styles and contents of classroom teaching from what they had experienced as beginners in English in their apprenticeship of learning.

Procedures and Activities: Reading While listening

The data from the questionnaire suggest that many respondents recalled as learners a cluster of activities similar to that reviewed in Chapter 2.6 and described as 'reading-while-listening' with memorization of the text. Interviews allowed more detailed discussion. Particularly vivid were the recalled learning experiences of

South Korean respondents such as Janet, Shona and Sandra from when they were beginners of English at Middle School.

J: So Unit 1 'Welcome to the Middle School' or there are some passages like two or three pages and my English teacher forced us to memorize all the text

SR: OK so there would be passages (yeah) and ... you memorized them

J: Yeah so she did a test she test us we should go there with our text book memorized from the beginning of the text

SR: So how's that how would you show? Would you say it?

J: Yeah speak memorize and speak

SR: So you would look at the passage. So you would look at the passage and speak

J: So I would try to memorize by speaking at home then on the test day I just go in front of the teacher and then the test

Janet lines 98 - 107

Janet does not overtly say 'I hated it' as did Sandra, above, but her tone of voice on the recording and use of words such as 'forced us to memorize' suggest that this was a practice that she did not evaluate positively. See section 4.3.3.2 below for how Shona, from the same context, was privately, by her own efforts, able to break out of

this pattern of word-by-word memorization.

Procedures and Activities Reading while listening, but with a Shared Reading Focus

Elinor, by contrast, describes in positive terms her own large-class experience as a learner following the teacher's reading aloud. However, the procedure she experienced goes beyond learners merely following and memorising a text and seems to fit the features of Shared Reading as described in Chapter 2.7.1. In Elinor's account, her teacher used a large text visible to all and supported learning by deliberately pointing out features. Elinor regretted that this procedure was not common in present-day teaching in Cameroon because of lack of appropriate resources.

E: Yes but what really happens is this it is it is a little bit difficult for the children to follow along as the teacher is reading because it's such a large class but in my days it was different because I don't know how but I don't know how but I guess British it must have been British Council or something sent us some books that were like charts so the teacher would flip them over

SR: So ... massive

E: Very massive

SR: Big books

E: Big books you you would use a pointer so you'd point and you'd know that words are in groups and there is a space between one word and another so we learned that we do I never knew that it was something that could be learned but that's what we learned about words that when you're writing words you don't jumble them up that if you want a word to be on its own you must ta- there must be a space between one word and another one.

Elinor lines 357 – 369

Reading aloud around the class

Reading aloud with the rest of the class listening was reported in a majority (18) of cases in the questionnaire as a remembered pedagogical procedure from learner days. Janet also speaks of reading aloud at home with her mother to help her to memorize the textbook.

J: When I was in Middle School I read aloud I read aloud a lot to memorize whole textbook [Right]. Then it's quite different

Janet lines 516 - 517

She also claims that it is nowadays a strategy that she uses (reading aloud under her breath) in cases when she is trying to understand rather than simply memorize difficult content in English. Here she is speaking of her approach to academic

reading for her MA course:

J: Mm I maybe not reading aloud like this just make shshshsh
SR: OK so you were moving your lips [laugh] Yeah.
J: Because I should understand completely the content so even it takes time I think it's better to spend more time to understand.

Janet lines 608 - 611

4.3.2 Accounts of Own and Others' Usual Practice during their time as EYL Teachers

It is important not to take participants' accounts of others' or general practice as sure warranty for a claim that a description of 'typical' REYL procedures in a particular context has been arrived at, and it will be remembered that this is not the main aim of this thesis. However it is legitimate, perhaps, to signal cases in which the respondent seems to be aware of salient issues with practice in his or her context that he or she feels should be confronted.

4.3.2.1 Accounts of 'being at odds' with 'typical' practice

Own practice was specifically mentioned by four of the most experienced teachers Lucy, Elinor, Henry and Vera because it contrasted with what other colleagues did.

Defying the Four Reading Rules

Lucy from Russia found herself, in her role as a materials writer, in opposition to a well-established local pedagogical system involving 'Four Reading Rules' for English. It was to the absence of these Rules that, according to her, the officials concerned attributed the failure at first of the published materials with which she was associated to gain approval for use in primary schools.

L: In traditional books the approach to reading is so called er they have got so called Reading Rules but it's not Phonics they are reading rules well
[description of one rule edited out here. Please see below for Lucy's words on this]
...
when I I for the first time went to this Federal committee er Federal experts board well er I heard lots of things how how terrible this book is and so many things are missing here so yeah er that is why well for example some parts were included later because they wanted them.

Lucy lines 79 – 90

Questioning Ways of Connecting Letter Names and Letter Sounds

Elinor recounts how her sister, repeating a class for the third time in Cameroon, had been taught letter names (through The Alphabet Song) and had also been drilled in initial sounds but did not, after several years, yet seem to have connected the two. This led Elinor to question the teaching her sister had received and to develop her own system for teaching her, reported later in this chapter.

E: she just held the book and she couldn't read it and it was a reader of that same class she was repeating so I took it away and I asked her whether she could spell the word 'boy' and she said 'Yes' and I said 'Spell it' and she said <s> and then I was like <s>?' I said 'How can you start spelling boy with <s>?' she said 'No' she said '<m>' and then she was thinking for the very first letter for the letter /b/ for the word 'boy' and I was like marvel and then she said <s> and then she went ahead and gave me <w> and gave me <k> and I was like 'What is happening with you?' and then i-i it struck me that she **didn't know the sounds of the alphabet** so I said 'OK that's fine' and then I stopped teaching her then I went ahead and I said 'OK I'll just buy some books and try to teach her' then I went and bought some little books that said 'Letter <a> sounds /æ/ as in apple, as in bubble'. I tried that it still didn't work because when I asked her she said 'Oh sister this is /æ b k d/ I know it they have taught us /æ b k d/' then I asked her 'They've taught you /æ b k d/?' she said 'Yeah' then I was asking myself if she has learned /æ b k d/ 'cos that's the way they call it and then the way they teachers there they teach them like a drill so like /æ b k d/ and then they go ahead so then I asked her 'Do you know /æ b k d/ ?' and she said 'Yes'. 'OK ' can you recite it for me?' and she did it as if it were a song and she went [sings] <abcdefg> and then she went on and on and on and sings things that have nothing to do with the and I was like 'Where is she coming from?' OK now it hit me that even though she had learned it she had she had all the notions wrong and they didn't make any meaning to her.

Elinor lines 474 – 493

Questioning ABC order

Henry is also one of the few to be critical of 'ABC' practice both as recalled from his learning history and in current approaches in his context. He is explicit about the different decisions he has taken in his own work.

H: OK. Now the textbooks we have now follow the alphabetical order. The way in which I was taught was the alphabetical order. [mm] But what I do now is that I begin with the vowel sounds and I make sure we I teach all the vowels [mm] and I start teaching consonants in relation [uhu] to the vowels that we have already known so that's that's probably the difference that I make [right] from yes [wh] and I do group the consonant sounds following different criteria.

Henry lines 215 - 220

Starting from the Spoken Language

Vera from Greece contrasts her own approach to early reading, which starts from the spoken language, with that of many of her colleagues, especially those who followed the textbook in current use in state schools with little input of their own.

V: so er my approach is that we start speaking in English and er this is definitely what precedes so

SR: OK

V: So when it comes to words written words um I remind them of the sounds because they have come across the the the words when they speak and then I will focus on separate letters

SR: So you are matching up what they already know in spoken form

V: Yeah yeah I did because there is a context for them to think and knowledge **SR:** Yeah

V: Otherwise if I for example show them the letter <a> and then tell them what? That it is an /eɪ/ that it is an /a:/ it is a a what? So it wouldn't be a contextualized it wouldn't make any sense

SR: Would you say that your attitude or approach is a typical one? Would your colleagues

V: I wouldn't say it was typical [mmhmm] but I think that teachers who have been trained to c- certain extent and who have become aware of some new techniques and the reasons behind them [yes] I think they may at a certain point er use those techniques. Others may have been trained and they have decided not to do anything just follow the course book.

Vera lines 265 – 283

4.3.2.2 Accounts of practice with which the respondents align themselves

Alphabetical order of focus

Some teachers did not question an 'ABC' order of focus at all but Yoshie, from Japan, working with a private group of primary-aged children and using the story book Winnie the Witch as a central teaching resource for mainly listening work, followed alphabetical order in his initial-letter-sound work to fit in with the common practice of introducing the alphabet in Japanese primary school classes. He however spoke of reading only as an awareness-raising 'by-product' of his own work, so his alignment with alphabetical order had he been attempting to teach reading as a major strand might have been different.

SR: ... It was interesting you said <a> to <m> so were you following the alphabetical order of the initial letters?

Y: 'cos er they, without me introducing that, in primary school in Japanese class they introduce er the alphabet [Right so they know the alphabet] so so I er go parallel with them.

Yoshie lines 331 - 335

Reading aloud

Reading aloud by children with the rest of the class listening was not only a remembered activity from their own childhood as shown in the questionnaire but was reported in interviews as a present day activity promoted by the majority of respondents in their roles as teachers. Interpretations of its functions and benefits however differed. Often it was presented by the respondent as a form of pronunciation exercise for the reader and listening practice for the other children.

SR: Mmhmm. And for what purposes did you ask them to read aloud?

J: Most of the students can listen [OK] and the students who are reading can be confident of their oral maybe practise their pronunciation.

Janet lines 484 - 486

SR: So would it be true to say that in government school there probably isn't a particular method [yes] except they're interested in the alphabet?

V: Alphabet at the beginning then of course er reading but er

SR: Interesting how how do they go from the alphabet to reading? Big jump isn't it?

V: Ah actually they do not succeed in that. They try it but they do not really succeed because what they do is is they do the rote reading and I mean one person is reading and then the second person and then the third person something like [Round the class yes] that so you read this about er a sentence or two then

SR: So they manage to get even to that stage interesting some magic.

V: Sometimes I mean they take about 3 to 4 years you know to get to that stage.

Vanessa lines 467 - 476

4.3.3 Participants' accounts of how they arrived at cognitions re EYL Reading

4.3.3.1 The impact of formal study of the teaching of reading

Apart from the case of Elinor from Cameroon, there was no account of specific training in the teaching of reading to YL having occurred and having directly facilitated a respondent. In fact, only the two interview participants from Cameroon seemed to have received any substantial training in literacy teaching,

which is in line with the account of the general state of EYL training given in the Introduction to this thesis. Elinor was the only participant spontaneously to mention any reading in the research literature although content rather than authorship seemed to be salient for her.

E: I then I read all the books I just got interested and I read many of the books what are they called again what did I read? Em that was like a main source for my inspiration oh oh it's from America I can't remember well when I remember I'll come back to it but that is what I

SR: Goodman?

E: No not Goodman

SR: Well when you remember

E: When I remember I'll get back to you.

Elinor lines 265 – 272

Even Elinor's own insights seem to have been built more firmly on her own intense experiments with trying to help her sister with her difficulties, described in section 4.3.2.1.

4.3.3.2 Overtly expressed responses as teachers to own experiences as early readers

We have already heard of some of the experiences of respondents during their own time as learners, but not always with explicit comments that they were formative of their present stances towards reading with their own learners. Question 16 of the questionnaire invited more direct accounts of respondents' cognitions. It asked whether the respondents' own learning experiences had influenced the ways in which they, as teachers, felt that Young Learners should be supported with early reading. Twenty out of the 26 respondents took this opportunity. Henry, in his questionnaire response, was unequivocal that he did not wish to replicate for his learners the negative experiences he had had as a learner of reading in English.

My own reading experiences impacted negatively on my ability to read and this has made me look for alternative ways of teaching reading that will help learners in their future.

We have already seen how Henry had deliberately modified the sequence for presenting letters away from what he had experienced in his own school days. The examples below, also from questionnaire responses, show that several participants seem to have felt that their own experiences as learners had more positive

implications for their current approaches to teaching:

personally, I liked listening to the story I was reading before I read it myself. I always found it better if the first reading was done by someone else. This is why I always read myself first for my students.

I listened a lot to English before I started to read. This helped me a lot, I think, to be a good reader. I tried to do the same with my students.

The letter-sound relationship helped me make a lot of errors when I started reading because some of the letters did not sound the way I had been taught (but I was very confident whenever I had to read because I relied on it, made errors but got back on the rails) A vivid example was the word 'danger' I tried reading this off the wall from a bible story about the birth of Jesus ... So I read 'dang...ger' I could not get the ng sound at all. Teachers also used the whole word approach and a good number of the words were easy to remember

Elinor, the writer of the last comment, confirmed my interpretation of her words to mean that in her own learning she saw a place for sight word teaching alongside letter-sound relationships. (See Chapter 3.7.1 for the checking procedure for my interpretations). As we shall see below, as a result of her own early learning and later experiences as a teacher, she is very concerned with how children decode words and has devised systems to help them to do so.

In her interview, Shona from South Korea recounts her private breakthrough (without benefit of teacher's support) with the Alphabetic Principle, which she discovered could apply to English as well as Korean, This allowed her to go beyond the Listen and Repeat memorization strategies promoted by her teacher with regard to reading text.

S: When I learned to read in Korean er I could have a lot of opportunities to listen to Korean and to speak to Korea- speak Korean but in English is different was different so mm just I had to memorise [mmhmm] memorise but it was one day also one day I find er word of 'milk' [mmhmm] I find that 'milk' is connected with a similar Korean sound so I found 'milk' /m/ /ɪ /l/ /k/ so I was shocked with the finding because I COULD understand the relations of the relations between English and Korean so I applied that rules into other words [mmhmm] so er it was encouraged me

SR: So was that something you found for yourself?

S: Yes yes

Shona lines 151 - 163

This could be linked with her own belief, discussed later in this chapter, that instruction in reading with a more systematic Phonics base would be beneficial in her context. A check with Shona carried out in October/November 2011 (see Chapter 3.7.1) endorsed this interpretation of her words.

As we have seen, Henry, in the comments for Question 16 in the questionnaire stated that his current views and practice stemmed from his own learning experiences. In his own practice he had not only moved away from a focus on ABC order but away from initial letters and sounds and isolated words as this extract from the interview shows:

H: The difference now is that what I have added is putting those sounds when I teach them how to the sounds and how to to read those sounds I put them within a context so I will not give them <a> as in 'apple' I would rather give a sentence that has got <a> in several places so they are reading that <a> at the beginning of a word in the middle elsewhere in the middle of a word or at the end so they read that in a sentence and they know that <a> does not only exist as a sound in 'apple' but or in isolated words.

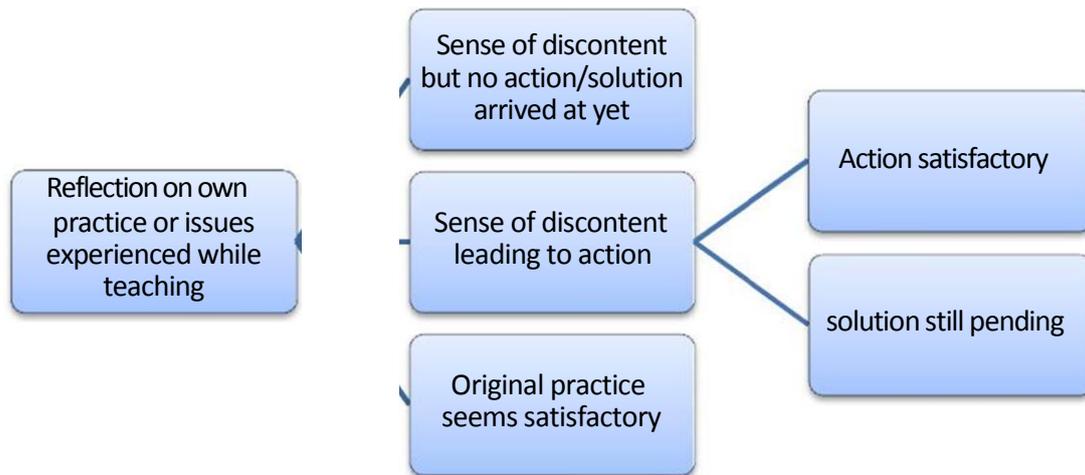
Henry lines 165 - 171

4.3.3.3 Discoveries and departures arrived at

A number of accounts was found of insights that participants arrived at as a result of their own experiences as EYL teachers and observations of their pupils. Often such accounts are occasioned by an issue or a problem encountered. Some claimed that reflections had led to actual change, others that they were on the threshold of

change. Figure 9 shows some possible positions.

Figure 9 Outcomes of reflection



Sense of discontent but no action/solution arrived at yet

Shelly from China reflects on how the 'bridge' device of Pinyin (see Literature Review Chapter 2. 5), used in children's education for supporting the reading of Chinese characters, created some confusions for her Young Learners of English. She recognized that its use could raise issues that needed to be addressed by REYL teachers in her context. She does not, however, report having been able to address it at the time and no longer teaches YL.

Sh: You know what, children were also confused about Chinese Pinyin and English yeah for example <i> this small <i> in Chinese is /i:/ so they couldn't pronounce it as /aɪ /

SR: Oh, as 'l' the word 'l', yes, yeah

Sh: For example they can pronounce it very well when they speak English, when they sing the alphabetic song but when it comes to real words for example children they might pronounce Chinese Pinyin here.

SR: Yeah. We didn't talk about Pinyin did we earlier? Could you just quickly tell me what role it has for Chinese children?

Sh: Pinyin is like l you know before the Chinese characters we all were taught Pinyin **SR:** At school?

Sh: Yeah

SR: Not at home?

Sh: At home as well ...

Shelly lines 585 – 598

Sense of discontent leading to action

Yoshie, who had been running his own home tuition business in Tokyo, spoke of 'doing things more systematically' as a result of experiences with his first group. He also had cut down on the demands he made.

Y: Er with the first group of kids I was still kind of new teacher er experimenting experimenting with EYL I was kind of too ambitious and I tried to er put lots of materials well into one activity like er like er say for initial letter reading [yeah] well I can stop in one lesson I can st- I can do I could I could have done just from <a> to <m> this week but er but I I did from <a> to <x> in one in one shot and that was my well [So you were putting too much] I shouldn't have done that and that kind of thing

Yoshie lines 325 - 330

Elinor, above, described her discovery of her younger sister's difficulties with linking alphabetical letters and sounds in words. Below, she recounts the action she took and the breakthrough that they had (as teacher and taught but outside the school setting) concerning her sister's understanding. I quote the story at some length since the stages in Elinor's thinking are so clearly described. Some of the key sections are shown in bold.

E: so I decided that I would cut out cards I just went I picked a pair of scissors I cut out pieces of paper and I wrote the letters of the alphabet one after the other there and then I would hold them up and tell her the sound and let her give me the sound OK so that is how I got to do this work. Now when I did this I noticed that she was now trying to pay attention to them and I scrambled all the letters and I said 'Pick any letter of the alphabet and now tell me the sound' so I made sure I did that one after the other not as a drill no so this letter is <f> and it sounds /f/ and then I would say 'Give me any person's name that you know of that begins with /f/ ' and I remember she once gave me Philip which is <ph> and then it helped me later on to know that I can put <ph> together and remind children it is /f/ so that's how I got to do this work and then after that I you I would like 'OK' if she picked up for example the letter <p> and she said it sounded /p/ I said 'OK look around the house is there anything that begins with the sound /p/?' and then she would keep looking and she would say 'pan'. **Great, then it started making sense to ME I didn't know that I didn't really know how I could teach her but we when I tried it I noticed that that's how she could learn and then she was so happy and she said 'Sister I can think of a word that has /p/ but it does not begin.'** I said 'Give me an example' and she said 'apple' and then I was so happy and then she she just went on ... **That's how I came up with these cards and then it worked so miraculously fast with her I taught her for one week and after that she could read anything.** [Wow] So it was like a it was some kind it was like I had broken new ground that I never knew that. **I was never taught in that way but I taught her** and she was so happy after one week I was no longer teaching her and even the little books I bought she could now read them she only found difficulties in a few things and even when she found those difficulties she wasn't worried she said 'I know this word /p/ this must be the word. Even if I can't spell it, that's the word'.

Elinor lines 492 - 516

Elinor adds that in the end her young sister, having 'stolen' Elinor's cards, set herself to helping other children in her class who had been suffering from the same lack of understanding of how letters and sounds connected.

Solution still pending

As an example of 'still searching for a solution' we have Ilse's and Hilary's concern that children in Taiwan, with only the minimal indications as to pronunciation of words in dialogues given by the coverage of letter-phoneme relations in materials, were at a loss as to how to say English words. The underlying problem seems to be the children's inability to remember the dialogues printed in course books without an accessible graphic prompt. This is a strong indication that relying on English 'words on the page' for this purpose was not effective because the children had not learned to read them. Ilse had become critical of the textbook she had been using before coming to the UK because of the scattered and unconnected treatment of individual phonemes:

I: For example in each unit every time they just separately introduced different phonemes and it's not related.

Ilse lines 301 - 303

She saw herself in future needing to intervene more with the material contained in the textbook.

4.3.4 Teacher Subject and Pedagogical Content Knowledge

We have seen from the above that a broad range of types of cognition was expressed, from feelings of resentment at not being taught but only tested (Sandra), to views on effective teaching derived from reflection on practice and observation of a child's responses (Elinor). Policies for teaching may be derived from or stimulated by any of the above. In the next section we consider Teacher Subject Knowledge and Teacher Pedagogical Knowledge. (described in Chapter 2 in the discussion of Wilson Shulman & Richert (1987). Teacher Pedagogical Knowledge may be brought to bear on problems identified as above or stand in its own right. In Chapter 2, sections 2.5 - 2.6, I argued that the four knowledge areas below may contribute to principled positions concerning the teaching of early reading in English:

1. Orthography
2. Phonology
3. Research into reading
4. REL1 methods

All participants were put into a position via questionnaires or interviews in which they were given scope to express their knowledge in the areas listed above. I should stress here that it is not the business of this Findings chapter to assess the quality of the information volunteered by any participant, but rather to consider areas where the participant declared knowledge, uncertainty or lack of knowledge and to trace any rationales that seemed associable with this state of cognition.

4.3.4.1 Orthography and Phonology

These areas intersected closely in our discussions of early reading. Many questions asked led to discussion of both areas by participants and clear distinctions were not always derivable. Question 17 of the questionnaire was key and there was scope to follow up in the interviews:

'Are there any particular characteristics of English that you think need to be

taken especially into account when planning how to teach children to read it?
[This could include any contrasts with the written mode of your learners' mother tongue if you think they are important]

A few questionnaire respondents expressed views involving general contrasts in grammar or vocabulary, but others focused more specifically on orthography and pronunciation issues:

a] Capitalization b] Spelling: some words in English has a different orthographic from its spoken one: e.g. write, night, is, cat, fact, etc., c] reading from left to right d] linking letters and segregating them [Arabic speaker]
One main thing could be not to try to make a link between spelling and pronunciation, except for basic pronunciation rules which have no exceptions like, for example, ph=f etc. (Greek speaker)

I think children should be taught that each letter of English alphabet may have several sounds because each letter usually has one sound in Korean alphabet (Hangeul) (Korean speaker)

4.3.4.2 Orthographical contrasts between L1 and English

In the interviews, some respondents did not assign pedagogic significance to L1/English contrasts in orthography, although they were able to give information on the contrasts when probed:

SR: But if um I mean, sorry my ignorance here, is Hindi written in the same direction as English? Is it written left to right?

V: Yeah it's only Urdu that's written in a different way [the other way yes yes] but Hindi is also written left to right.

SR: [some words edited out] So the direction is the same

V: The direction is the same [mmhmm] and er of course er like we can write er cursive and I mean when you write in cursive we write fast [yes] but er in Hindi each and every er letter is written separately.

SR: Ah so there isn't a cursive version of Hindi?

V: There's no cursive version

[extended explanation edited out]

SR: OK so that's that a sort of difference [yeah]. Em do you use capital letters and small letters?

V: No there's no such thing as capital and small.

SR: So what do you think the children make of capital letters and small letters in English?

V: That is a problem actually even that problem is er you know with the teachers that you know who come to us. [mm] They do have problems in er writing capitals and er specially <P>s and <S>

SR: Actually forming them yeah. I mean do they know when to use them? I mean are the children clear about when a capital letter-?

V: They do punctuation of course as part of er you know writing and grammar

SR: And is the punctuation in Hindi similar? Do you have full stops question marks etcetera so that's transferrable?

V: Yes we do have it is there in Hindi also. We have punctuation but of course question mark is the same [yeah] but for a full stop like we have a a dot here. In Hindi we have one vertical line yeah.

S: OK yeah so it's the same concept?

V: It's the same concept. The comma also you know.

Vanessa lines 701 - 740

As Janet was talking through a unit in the Korean Elementary School English book, I probed for an aspect that she had not at first commented on:

SR: They actually write can they write in this book [I think so] it's a bit small and then what do they do here in exercise 2?

J: Just a capital lower case

SR: OK so they are distinguishing capital and lower case. Is it explained to them why we have capital and lower case?

J: No.

Janet lines 349 -354

It is difficult to claim with certainty that her lack of further comment suggests that she does not see this area as of importance. However the incident and subsequent scrutiny of the Korean primary materials led me to investigate all materials for treatment of this aspect of orthography.

4.3.4.3 The Orthographic Depth of English

The implications that a 'deep' orthography presents for learning and teaching reading have been discussed in the Literature Review section 2.4. In the questionnaire, only Shona addressed the issue directly, with a clear view of her own:

I think children should be taught that each letter of English alphabet may have several sounds because each letter usually has one sound in Korean alphabet (Hangeul)

Some asserted the usefulness of Phonics to address issues of English reading but without explaining in detail how this might be done or stating that there were issues concerning orthography:

In case of English reading, I think it is very useful to teach Phonics for the beginners, because [unfinished]

Phonics can help a lot, since Korean writing system also consists of phonetic letters.

As we shall see below, some participants like Ilse and Janet attributed the comparatively long period children in the UK seemed to need in order to learn to read in English to teaching methods and focus or to lack of parental support. The nature of English orthography did not seem to be a salient factor to them or at any rate it was not brought into the discussion.

Where a notion of orthographic depth seemed to be discernible, opinions varied on whether to confront or avoid the issue. Henry's words seem to refer to this. He recommended Whole Word-based teaching as one solution.

Because of the complex phonological nature of English, whole word reading is important.

Elinor, who had arrived at her own independently-developed version of Phonics-based instruction in the materials she created, also briefly stated the importance of whole-word instruction to her as a child:

Teachers also used the whole word approach and a good number of the words were easy to remember

This was a point which I checked with her in my follow-up message of 2011 and which she endorsed.

Extract 1 yes, both methods were helpful because when one failed me, I applied the other

Email message from Elinor October 2011

Ilse is one of the teachers who had gained new insights through contacts with a UK school. She mentions her lack of previous knowledge of sight vocabulary, something she had not found in her EYL materials and had only become aware of in the UK school where she volunteered.

**I: Before coming here actually I was not aware of ... Sight Words
sight vocabulary**

Ilse line 350

She is the only participant clearly to mention sight vocabulary as a category which could be used within an overall approach to teaching early reading. This reinforced my intention to seek for such a category in the analysis of course materials. Rosamund, who is a highly experienced teacher educator in her context, is unsurprisingly one of the few participants who had a fully-formed agenda concerning early reading, moving from Whole Word recognition as a basis for subsequent decoding work using analytical Phonics and moving on quickly to genuine engagement with texts. She does not directly mention the deep orthography of English as part of her rationale, but implies it perhaps in her view of the visual recognition strategies needed for reading in Chinese as highly transferrable to English.

SR: Is there anything to your mind I mean in your experience that is special or peculiar about English [laugh] em that you think you would advise a Chinese teacher to be really careful of when when he or she's introducing children to reading in English? What do you think most tricky?

R: Em I would suggest that reading when em introducing the children to reading [mm] I would go for Whole Word approach [mmhmm] to help them to recognise whole words because I think that can be transferred it's a kind of strategy that can be transferred from learning Chinese to English. [Oh yeah] And children will actually respond very well I think. It doesn't seem to be so difficult with the word 'cat' for example without knowing <c> <a> <t> children still could recognise this shape of the word that's spelled <c> <a> <t> and children at the beginning when they start reading they they they could do that fairly easily I think having and and then secondly I think then then of course we introduce children to letters when they recognise a certain number of words and then secondly I would suggest that we gave children time and things interesting to start reading early

Rosamund lines 357 - 371

4.3.4.4 Phonemic inventory

Few participants spontaneously discussed the phonemic inventory of English with direct reference to the teaching of letter and sound values. Overall, the participants (with the exception of Vera) seemed to take a letter-led rather than a phoneme-led view of early reading. Some moved between the two in their accounts, though it was not possible to determine if this was from a conviction that pedagogically this was a viable position or whether it was a case of confused categories.

Although many interviewees discussed early reading, and particularly reading aloud procedures, as intimately concerned with building pronunciation skills, none except for Henry and Alexis drew overt attention to issues of L1/L2 contrasts and the need to address them.

SR: That those sorts of differences that you mentioned particularly the phonemes do you think it's important to make children aware of those overtly and that teachers should pass that on?

H: Yeah I think teachers tend to ignore that and they just go ahead teaching English er language and er sounds in English as if [mmhmm] the children had no other language.[mmhmm] That is why that is a danger. I think it is important to draw some kind of contrast and analogy [right] between L1 and L2 even if L1 doesn't exist in written form at least an awareness of that.

Henry lines 694 - 701

Alexis's knowledge led her to see the problem for Argentinian Spanish-speaking children as dual: the different phonemic values conventionally assigned to the 'same' alphabetic letters and the different phonotactics of Spanish and English:

SR: ... do you think that this similarity yet not quite identical use of the alphabet has any implications for how you introduce children to reading in English?

A: Oh yes I think so because the consonants in English are dif- are used in very different ways and the clusters you have they become very difficult for children because we are more used to having vowel consonant vowel consonant so it's more a- I find it easier in Spanish but once you start seeing different endings you know things that they are not used to that at first creates a problem with children because they are unfamiliar

Alexis lines 420 - 426

4.3.4.5 Acceptable varieties of English

In the case of the six interviewees from Outer Circle contexts, discussion of letter-sound correspondences or phoneme inventory could be affected by views concerning the value of the local variety of English seen against the prestige power of RP. I counted discussions in this area as examples of Teacher Subject Knowledge only when the ambivalence was overtly framed as a pedagogic issue as was done by Elinor from Cameroon.

E: ... and that is where we've got a good number of problems because when as teachers of English we say well we've been to school and we've been for – we've been taught that this is not the correct thing to say you don't say 'I tink'

SR: Yes but the whole nation says it

E: That's what they say they say they say 'Everybody's saying it' and this is where the argument is. It is not because the whole nation is saying it. It is because when we go to test the children we fail them for it so we should be able to teach the correct thing

SR: And is that influenced by the spelling do you think this <th> looks like something different therefore you've got to do something different?

E: That is it so when when we teach children because when that is when we have a real problem that is when when I stand up to do a presentation they say 'Elinor, come on that is really British you know we got our Cameroonian version' I say 'Beautiful Cameroonian edition is very good but wha- is it a Cameroonian edition you are testing? If you are testing a Cameroonian edition then don't mark it wrong if the learner writes gives you ...' because normally what they do is identify the word that has the same sound as it and then they will give you a word [that's right] now why are you testing the learner when you didn't teach him correctly?

SR: 'Thank' and 'tank' wouldn't be in contrast

E: Yes they would be in contrast yes in a test we would give that 'tank' and 'thank' so that children should learn to start saying 'thank' and not 'tank you'.

Elinor lines 710 - 729

Henry voiced similar concerns but Agnes and Daphne from Malaysia did not represent the issues of choice of phoneme inventory as problematic. When Vanessa from India was asked explicitly how a word list giving RP pronunciations (found in the

Indian EYL storytelling materials that she had given me) would fit with early reading instruction for children using Indian English. She did not problematize this issue and saw a low currency for Indian English:

V: so you are exposed to all kind of English so when it comes to speaking we don't say 'OK we give the accent' but when it comes to formally teaching so then it is always British English RP [laugh] [some words edited out here] Yeah actually Indian English has not really gained ground so far [yes yes] it's because yeah people have been talking about Indian English in fact a long time back maybe 20 or 30 years ago er you know there was this person er R.K Bunson [yeah] er Bunson yeah and who did er some research in GIE it was called 'General Indian English' [yes yes] em but

Vanessa lines 620 – 630

4.3.4.6 Understandings of Different Principles for Grading for Difficulty

Few respondents to question 14 [v] of the questionnaire recalled using graded reading materials as learners of English, and inspection of the subsequent interview data may lead us to think that this term was understood with a more restricted coverage from that familiar in UK school or ELT contexts. Although the concept of step-by-step progression as an aspect of grading seemed to be present, it became clear that the notion of grading materials by taking careful stock of linguistic criteria, as an adjunct to controlling topic or conceptual level, was not widely current. Discussion during the Nursery Rhyme Task of what aspects of the listed words could constitute difficulty often elicited relevant criteria such as their familiarity, frequency of occurrence or the conceptual challenge of the topics with which they might be associated, but was less likely to elicit reference to linguistic features. When linguistic factors were mentioned, many participants tended to work with broad terms such as 'difficult' words that they then found problematic to define.

Shona has a sense that long but phonically regular words such as 'helicopter' are manageable for children and also has a strong sense of the merits of teaching some words for sight recognition. It is interesting, however, that she recommends some words on the Nursery Rhyme task list for Word Method treatment but in the reasons she gives she focuses on their frequency of occurrence and usefulness. She does not comment on their orthographic depth as a potential reason for their difficulty.

S: 'One two three' these are very easy for children I think 'the' is very useful for students to read because when they read 'the' they can read a lot of yes words sentences

SR: It's very frequent yes

S: 'You'

SR: And how would you get them to read that word? Would you use the Phonics method or whole word?

S: For for 'you' we use the Word Method and not Phonics.

SR: And why is that for those two words?

S: Mm because students can be contacted with a lot of opportunities to read to see

Shona lines 657 - 666

Shelly, however, overtly includes language features in her approach to grading, as revealed in one of her responses to the Nursery Rhyme task. She has reflected in the past on children's different responses to the rhyming words 'go' and 'so'. (The interviewer's over-interpretation as to the reason for the children's responses should not detract from Shelly's reflection).

SR: If we were going to grade these words as more likely to be recognized or more difficult to be recognized out of context would you choose any of them as maybe easy to recognise or

Sh: I think er comparatively em there is no rule sometimes even in the past I thought with fewer letters might be easy but actually not you know for example 'go' and 'so' I think students might recognise 'go' but they can't recognise 'so' em maybe this is **SR:** Is that because 'go' is a more familiar word?

Sh: Yeah I guess so.

Shelly lines 661 – 668

In terms of knowledge of potential teaching procedures with graded materials, the possibility of graded materials allowing children to move at different rates during private reading in school time was not mentioned, which is unsurprising given the predominantly lockstep whole class organization of English language learning that was described by most. The example below is from an account of mother tongue teaching of reading in Syria. Lockstep progression with graded but textbook-based material seems to be the normal experience.

A: Yes in we in primary school we have a book called Reading and it starts from Year One to Year Six and I think it is graded

SR: OK but the classes would move through the levels of that one together?

A: Yeah together. There is the book Reading One Reading Two Reading Three Reading Four and it's all in Arabic

SR: I was wondering if there was something like again with the graded reading series you have one child on Level One and another child on Level Three

A: In the same class?

SR: And that would be in reading in English so it would be sort of graded and the children could move at different rates

A: We don't have this in Syria

Ali lines 50 - 60

The most-mentioned resource for individually-paced progress with reading seems to be advice to parents on which books to buy for their children to read at home. Karen mentions this in connection with books for reading development in Korean.

K: These days many teachers recommend the students according to their level

SR: Uhu and again is that according to the teacher's judgment

K: Teachers or publishers

SR: Ah so the publishers are they beginning to

K: Yes

SR: Label their series and that's in Korean? OK

K: Yeah. According to them er teachers usually er gave the students the guidelines [mmhmm] the teachers recommended the books to parents or to students.

Karen lines 94 – 101

A similar procedure is mentioned by Vanessa:

V: OK you know when we go for Parent Teacher meeting in India and they spread a lot of books Ladybird series and all those things and they say 'OK you can ask I mean you can just buy these books from the market and er your child should be reading this and that.'

SR: Mm but they are not supplied by the school?

V: They are not supplied by the school but here they're supplied by the school

Vanessa lines 667 - 672

Purchase of books is clearly a possibility restricted to families in more affluent circumstances.

Rosamund was familiar with individual routes and rates of reading progress within school from her observations in an English primary school and also clear that this contrasted with the lockstep progression in Chinese schools, again determined by

the textbook-based reading resources available. The grading she speaks of for Chinese reading series seems to be based on writers' and publishers' judgments of conceptual and topic suitability although she herself has an awareness of linguistic factors in the grading of English materials.

SR: Mmhmm. And in when learning to read in Chinese em do you have reading material that's carefully graded and maybe has certain words repeated?
R: Er in theory [uhu] er it must be that's my guess [yes yeah] em in terms of topics and em how it relates to children's experiences but they because in China er textbooks are all centrally [right yes yes mm] em decided [mmhmm] so em all schools all children em at that same grade level will be using the same textbook [right] for their reading the same things [OK right] it's done by textbook writers by publishers.

Rosamund lines 54 - 60

4.3.4.7 Awareness and use of Linguistic Rules and Patterns

As discussed in the Literature Review and Methodology Chapter, systematic teaching of early reading may involve carefully considered classroom routines and procedures, but also requires some stance on language systems, even if that stance is that they can or should be downplayed or disregarded in favour of other features of texts such as topic or interest. Lucy's judgements of difficulty were based on cognates and frequency but also on linguistic criteria involving the Four Russian Reading Rules:

L: 'Wonder' is a terrible word
SR: Why?
L: Because er there are such words as 'one, wonder' er and lots of rules
SR: What's
L: Double 'o' then one 'o' what else there are lots of rules with 'o'
SR: OK

Lucy lines 681 – 686

Here is part of Lucy's description of one of the Four Reading Rules required by the Russian Federal Textbook Board:

L: Open syllables closed syllables semi-closed syllables [wow] [laughs] so for example the in the word 'plate' er the first syllable is open it is called we call it 'open syllable' well er that is why I am using I am trying to translate yes I am trying to translate how we usually call it [...] so that is why in an open syllable the rule is and the students usually learn this rule by heart in an open syllable vowels are pronounced as they are pronounced in the alphabet.

Lucy lines 81 – 86

It seems as if Rule number one of the codex, exemplified with 'nine' in the extract below, is 'magic e', although expressed in less accessible terms.

L: 'Nine' is the easiest one because it's Reading Rule number one. **SR:** Aha this is the so-called open
L: That is well why no problems with 'nine'

Lucy lines 652 – 654

June's response during the Nursery Rhyme task concerning the words 'mat' and 'mate' and 'hat' and 'hate' suggested that she was originally unaware of the 'magic e' rule. This resulted in an 'aside' in which I demonstrated it and she worked it out.

J: 'Mat' mmhmm 'mate hat hate'. Because of <e> the sound is changed? Why? Why? It should be changed?
[short section edited out]
SR: Aha. I'm just going to give you another example em (...) can you do this one
J: 'Star stare'
SR: Mmhmm em
J: 'Bit bite' [laugh]
SR: Do you know that rule? Have you met that rule?
J: Er so at the end of the word it makes another ... sound .. change the sound

June lines 604 - 620

June seemed to find this a satisfying new insight into the workings of English orthography. This alerted me to pay attention to it in later interviews. A number of other participants had been exposed to the 'magic e' rule as learners but it is clearly more of an institution in the English teaching cultures of some contexts than of others.

SR: Do they know I mean are they taught a rule which is connected with 'mat' 'mate'?
O: They don't. I do teach it but it's not in the textbook. But then you have to teach the silent <e> at the end and you have to teach lots of things before you get to and the long vowels and short vowels and things like that which means you have to do lots of extra work outside the textbook and I don't think teachers do that.

Oriel lines 586 - 592

4.3.4.8 Expectations about rate and effort in learning to read in English

It emerged from responses to the interview questions that a number of participants

who had spent time in English primary schools were surprised to find that it took a considerable time for native-speaking children to learn to read fluently in English. Some attributed this to problems with teaching or parental support:

I: Is it because of the efficiency ... How teachers teach them to read in class?'. Immigrant students don't have that kind of problem and native speakers do. Maybe native speaker parents don't bother but immigrant children's parents say 'Oh you've got to learn English 'cos it's very important'.

Ilse lines 580 - 584

Karen compared the 'gap' that she saw in levels of reading in the native language in the UK class with the effects of parents' and children's efforts in Korea which resulted in a narrower range of attainment in L1 reading within classes.

K: so I think two groups of them are really of the best [mmhmm] the third group is good but other groups other children.
SR: And do you think that's normal? em to have in the class such a difference of [Er] Any comments on that?
K: I think compared to Korea it's not English class it's Korean class [right yeah] the gap of UK is bigger [OK] because Korean parents want to want children to read in Korean very fluently so they force their children to practise reading so their reading ability is not the gap of their reading ability is not so big but here the gap is
SR: So you mean that the slower ones are forced up? [yeah] Do you have the feeling that the slower ones in the English class could be pushed or?
K: I think they didn't push just they encourage to read books on their level [I see, yes] according to their level they don't push them
SR: Do you have any opinion about that?
K: I think parents their parents maybe help should help their children to read [mmhmm] yeah because em I don't know the exact situation here but in Korea the lower or the slower students er can be er how can I say? The the er many children ignore the kind of students [yes] so many parents doesn't don't want their children to be treated like that so they push.

Karen lines 513 – 530

Janet, too attributed the longer time it took native speaker learners to read (compared with her own recalled 2 months for Korean after first entering primary school) to the teaching, particularly the greater concern she saw with creativity than with focus on language. Neither she nor Karen made reference to English orthography as a potential source of difficulty.

There was, however, also a sense among others that developing reading skills in English truly required special repeated and consistent efforts on the part of teachers and learners. Shona was impressed that even though UK students were growing up

in an English-speaking environment they received a thorough 'logically' ordered grounding in Phonics. She seemed to be contrasting this with more piecemeal attempts in Korea and was determined to provide more thorough teaching through Phonics on return to Korea.

SR: em do you think that anything that you've seen in this school in Coventry has made you think any differently about the way you're going to teach reading when you go home?

S: Yes I think that was the students in Coventry they are so used in reading English in environment so they can already speak they can listen English they can understand but teacher all give them very logical process for Phonics for to Phonics but Korea my students don't have any opportunity to be surrounded by English environment even the case we don't to we don't teach them logical Phonics [right yes] so I think when I go back to Korea er I really want my students to know Phonics

Shona lines 567 – 575

The view of Ilse was the strongest representation of an original expectation that native speaking children should have no problems with learning to read. She had been surprised when, during her volunteer work, she met children who still needed reading support in their third or fourth years. This, she claimed, had made her reassess her practice and attitudes with regard to Taiwanese children learning to read in English:

SR: Did experience in school change your view of how difficult or easy it is to learn to read in English?

I: Yeah. Before that I think for native speaker it's a natural acquirement and you don't have to pay much attention, but after that ... the kids really need to be taught in a very explicit way. .. Catch up how to decode words and even for native speakers. So now that I go back to Taiwan before that I had some misconceptions 'Oh that's very easy, how come you couldn't pronounce that word?' Even for native speakers they have got problems.... I think I need to modify my own way of ...

Ilse lines 560 - 567

However, her view was balanced, or perhaps ambivalent, since, as we saw above, she also speculated that some native-speaking children who were slow in comparison with their EAL peers were perhaps not receiving adequate parental support. There was also a suggestion that ineffective teaching methods might lie behind some children's problems.

A representative of the Outer Circle teachers, Henry, from Anglophone Cameroon, expressed a contrasting view of the attainment of the Year Two children with whom

he worked:

H: Surprised maybe impressed at the level because I've been working with Level 2 yes Level 2 children and the amount of text they can already read it's it's amazing to me. Probably in Cameroon our children who go through the nursery school and private really elitist nursery schools and get to primary schools will be able to to get a bit close to the children I've worked with here but that's that's in for real elite children but for those in the majority of them will go to school in rural communities get straight to primary school they can't

Henry lines 602 - 608

A sense of the need for time for children to make links between language known in one mode and encountered in reading is shown by Shelly in her role as a parent with a child at a UK primary school.

Sh: I can remember my daughter for example she can say for example 'pleasant' very very fluently you know in the past but then when it appear in the new text she just couldn't recognise it and also 'nice' she say it very often but she still couldn't say it in the new text when it appears again.

SR: You mean she didn't recognize that word as representing the word she could say?

Sh: Yes you are right she can say but she couldn't recognise it and another one is an 'already' she took it for granted as 'always' because <al> starts.

Shelly lines 650 - 656

It is notable that the insights above (as well as the striking insights from Elinor reported earlier) all came from the experience of being in a one-to-one reading relationship with a child, a configuration which we have seen is rare in the normal professional life of these participants.

4.3.4.9 Knowledge and views of L1 methods and associated terminology

As discussed in the Literature Review, 2.9, REL1 methods have strong if differing rationales with regard to the teaching of early reading. It was therefore felt to be relevant for this study whether any of the participants saw any REL1 method or combination of methods as the key to an appropriate approach for early EYL reading.

Phonics

The term Phonics was recognized and discussed by far more interviewees than any of the other terms. Yoshie claimed in his final comment to the questionnaire that the term Phonics is part of public discourse in Japan:

... 'Phonics' seem to be used as a sort of byword for EYL in non-professional circles in Japan. For example, when young mothers come to observe my lesson, very often the first question they ask me is 'When do you start teaching Phonics?'

Particularly striking, however, was the frequency with which interviewees who recognized the term represented it with an interpretation which could be seen as differing substantially from the 'standard' representations that would apply in the UK or USA. Phonics and Phonetics were frequently used as interchangeable terms. This occurred for example in interviews with Shelly and Nancy and in some cases the use of phonetic script was associated with Phonics-based teaching. The descriptions of teaching procedures associated by interviewees with Phonics generally indicated that they were aware of its role in emphasizing letter/sound associations. However, most participants put particular focus on initial letters and sounds. None mentioned the full coverage of phonemes or of the special sequencing of items associated with 'mainstream' Phonics programmes. Presentation and practice of letter/sound relationships and sequences according to ABC order were often described by participants as a feature of Phonics-based teaching, although one interviewee, Iris, from Thailand was aware that this sequence was not compatible with Phonics as understood in REL1 teaching:

I: Because it's the way we have been doing for a long time even though I think it could be changed into Phonics like we can start from the sound, easier one to the hardest one instead of ABC.

Iris lines 187 - 189

Iris, along with others, saw Phonics as strongly linked with teaching English pronunciation. She saw advantages in this teaching being undertaken by a native speaker.

I: Mmm I think the na- the native teacher is trying to to teach Phonics principles by em teaching /b/ and then em let the children learn the word 'bat' 'bin' and other words. This is one way that she use in our school and I think it's quite it's quite good to let the children familiar with the sound and to to stress the consonant or the phoneme to the children so they can get to learn how to pronounce correctly from the natives.

SR: Yes yes so when they're doing /b/ is she linking it with the letter?

I: Yes

Iris lines 128 – 135

This conflation of pronunciation with Phonics could be seen as an EYL-specific interpretation of the method which could repay thought and elaboration. The Discussion Chapter treats the subject at more length.

Whole Word/Look and Say

Versions of **Whole Word** or **Look and Say** practices were recognized by several interviewees with confidence. There were, however, variations in detailed accounts of its implementation, particularly concerning the use of flash cards. Words on cards were a salient feature of the approach for most participants. However, the characteristic technique of showing flash cards with a very short-viewing time in order to promote visual memorization of the word was not often part of their accounts. Words on cards were often described as used as cues for close scrutiny and work on letter-sound correspondences.

SR: it it's almost like analyzing

E: Yeah somehow it is like linking it back because I do I do agree with that approach of flashing it and taking it away because in a way you want children to know that when they are reading they don't need to read one word after the other they are supposed to like pick a group of words at a glance but I think that that's a little too demanding for the very young learners that's what I thought maybe because of the children I've been working with in my home so it's like you are not testing them you are training them so give them a longer time so that's what I thought

Elinor lines 314 – 320

O: Yeah we do. The Wonderland series had flashcards as well which which we used **SR:** And how did you use them?

O: Usually show them the flashcards to say the words or show them the words I don't know something like that

SR: Did you flash them or did you sssshhhhhhow them

O: I showed them. I didn't flash them. [Laugh]

Oriel lines 266 - 271

For some interviewees, a connection between reading whole words on a flash card and their introduction as new vocabulary items was closely made. Hilary talks about the very brief introduction she was given to EYL teaching in Taiwan in such terms:

SR: So did that one-week workshop do you remember if it had anything in it about reading?

H: Um reading ... er yes the teachers er taught us how to teach vocabulary [uhu] yeah yeah I think er she er she taught us use the Whole Word method with flash card. [OK] yeah and so activities yeah to enhance students' impression about the vocabulary.

Hilary lines 36 - 40

Again, this conflation of an aspect of a reading method (flash cards in this case) and an area of language accretion (vocabulary) is one which may repay further consideration.

Real Books/ Whole Language

A number of interviewees was aware of the term Real Books, but, as has been discussed in the Literature Review, this term has morphed within the EYL world to mean a range of approaches, often with a more Story Telling basis, in which the Real Book becomes a source of plot and illustrations. Respondents were more likely to describe Real Books use such terms. Yoshie reveals the misunderstanding in Japan about the status of graded reading schemes as Real Books, a misunderstanding that he at first shared.

Y: ... and I am still new in this field back then in one of the seminars I er attended in Japan when I came back to Japan some of the er practitioners kind of veteran practitioners were introducing Oxford Reading Tree series as a good book and I accepted that and I used that I followed their advice and er some of the stories are good interesting ones like er 'Tooth Fairy' and stuff and so on but er later I I found that's not er a Real Book not Real Book for children and and they are kind of artificially er compiled book for a reading programme so so I don't know but er they are Oxford Reading Tree series is kind of popular among among er practitioners practitioners in Japan and er and er and er what I found out they are not used not only as a reading programme but as a genuine storybook and so that's different from the decision other in other countries

SR: So when you said they weren't Real Books does that mean that you didn't feel so happy about them as you do about Winnie?

Y: Since they are for reading so many of the story lines are kind of simple 'cos er yeah its main purpose is for reading so they can't make it kind of complicated and so that's why I I kind of realized that there are many other books that are more interesting to children.

Yoshie lines 46 – 62

Language Experience and Environmental Print

These two terms were not as familiar as the first three with no-one recognizing the terms 'Language Experience' or 'Environmental Print'. Various accounts of what

each might involve were given:

SR: OK and the fourth one is not a whole approach but it's it's one technique which is sometimes used which is called using environmental print.

O: (...)That to me sounds like recycling [laugh] paper. But that you can find in many books printed somewhere at the back. I don't know anything else.

Oriel lines 280 – 283

Views of combinations of approaches

Yoshie in his questionnaire response wrote:

Phonics is not the only answer to the question of initial reading. It should be used in combination with other approaches.

The only sustained discussion of combinations of approaches concerned combining or sequencing Phonics and Look and Say. As we have seen, Elinor was in favour of a dual approach. This, as she says in an email to me of November 2011, is '**because when one failed me, I applied the other**'. In addition, Rosamund advocated a Whole Word start, on the grounds that Chinese students were visually acute, but suggested that this should be followed by analysis of the components of known words for Phonics- and letter-awareness.

Lucy and her colleagues on the Russian textbook project had taken a bold stand in the face of local traditions by introducing Whole Word methods at the beginning of their series. It is interesting that they were prepared to override their own apprenticeship of observation (several months of oral-only English) and the less-than-full endorsement of Whole Word methods they had discerned in the literature, because pragmatically they favoured an earlier start with reading for their course materials. The intention to follow Whole Word methods with Phonics implies that a form of Analytic Phonics awareness-raising was planned for subsequent levels of the series, as inspection of the materials confirmed.

L: ... that is why we have decided er well we read a lot about Phonics well about Whole Word reading and at that time well er Whole Word reading was still popular but I mean I think here in Britain but er it was criticized and er so but we er realized that if we start with er whole sight reading probably we can start earlier and then support it with Phonics because to to start with Phonics you need well some I don't know non reading period and a very long non reading period and we didn't want to waste time because children er it's not their first year in school it's their second year in school and er well they know Russian they can read in Russian already so that is why er and we all of us we wanted to try this whole sight reading with our children with well our friends' children so and we realized that it works to a certain extent but it should be supported.

Lucy lines 211 - 221

4.3.5 Respondents' cognitions as indirectly suggested by their words

The diagram in Figure 10 below presents a set of cognitions less easily recovered from the surface of what was said by participants and derived by me from intensive engagement with the interview data and cross-reference between interview transcriptions. It seems important to give adequate examples through illustrative extracts so that the reader may judge the extent of warranty for the claims made here. The discussion attempts to move from the most global to the more detailed levels.

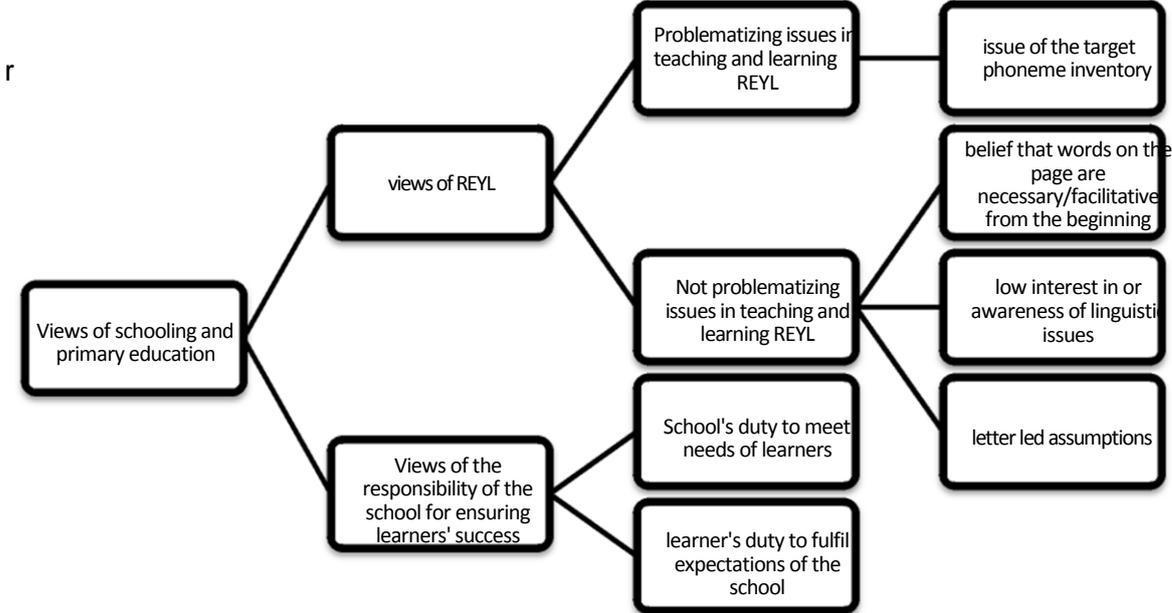


Figure 10 Participants' cognitions indirectly recoverable from their word

4.3.5.1 Problematizing or not problematizing issues in Teaching and Learning REYL

In my interviewing, although I referred to the many debates concerning REL1, I was careful not to depict REYL as a problem but as a centre of interest for me. I was attentive, however, to whether respondents themselves problematized issues concerning how early reading might best be approached with Young Learners. This level of concern was at a more global, policy level than the reports of own and others' practice.

Karen addressed the unease amongst South Korean primary school teachers at official textbook materials in which reading and writing were both deliberately delayed, with the first book of the series (Grade 3) containing only oral/aural work, the only English print in the book being in the form of Unit and activity headings:

K: With respect to reading they start from Grade 4 and with respect to writing they start Grade they start from Grade 5

SR: Mmhmm and is that a that's the fairly new policy?

K: No. [ah] Ten years ago.

SR: OK so they always delayed reading and writing OK start with speaking **K:** But these days many people claim to er teach children English spoken English and written English at the same time so maybe in the future our curriculum will be changed.

Karen lines 379 - 386

Reference to such major issues was rare. Most gave uncommented accounts of REYL policy. Vanessa, as a teacher educator, was not able to give detailed views concerning the way in which government school teachers might handle the considerable transition between not yet being able to decode words and the ability to deal with texts in some way. This was in the context of a recent change in government primary school materials in which the new materials did not start with alphabet work. There did not seem to be a clear-cut remit for her institution to help them develop the specialist knowledge needed for the systematic teaching of reading to children at the younger starting age for English.

V: Er I mean it's a really sorry set of mess but er even the teachers who come to us they are really demotivated. [mm mm] Primary teachers we had er a series of courses for primary teachers [mm] and er because they were - earlier I mean theirs used to start at Class 6 and then because their children are not very proficient so, in state-run schools, so they thought that OK they should switch over to teaching of English from Class 1 so naturally when they did it they also er needed to train their teachers. for that [yes] and they introduced new books. Now in those books there was this problem there was no alphabet I mean and the teachers er said that you know 'If we do not introduce the alphabet how do we teach?' So we had to do some kind of you know er kind of filling in that er gap.

Vanessa lines 376 – 386

4.3.5.2 Views of the Responsibility of the School for Ensuring Learners' Success

Some views have emerged from a number of the accounts above of the degree to which learners' success in reading could be attributed to teachers, schools or parental support. However, it should be borne in mind that the comments on UK children's attainment or lack of it just cited came from 'outsiders' to the UK school system 'looking in'. In different societies, insiders may be differently proactive, critical or otherwise with regard to measures or policies that they perceive as affecting children's chances of success. These issues were raised in the Literature Review, section 2.8, and it seems important to report related data here and discuss them in Chapter 5.

School's duty to meet the needs of learners: Ineffective teaching

Overtly critical descriptions from participants of current teaching in their context were rare compared with accounts of unpleasant or ineffective teaching experienced in childhood. One exception was Elinor, who at first concentrated on her concern that her sister was failing at school. She then developed her account of how she was able to help her learn to read, leading to implications for what she thought should be happening in class regarding the creation of systematic links between letters and sounds, rather than the confusion which seemed to have affected her sister.

E: OK alright I wa- this is what happened. I was working with my younger ones at home my younger sister who was repeating class 5 for the third time [whew wow yeah] and she was about 10 yeah thereabouts she must have been 10 she couldn't read she couldn't spell any word she was repeating class 5 for the third time and I was asking myself 'why does she keep repeating?' and then I had gone to a a teacher training college then I was in a teacher training college where I was I st- I was learning how to teach students not pupils but then we had some very good classes on child psychology and many other things about teaching young learners that I decided 'Look here I'll try to see if I can teach her.'

Elinor lines 465 – 473

As an active teacher educator, Elinor was taking steps to communicate her ideas to others in the belief that change was possible through better practice.

SR: I mean are you familiar with the Primary textbooks in Cameroon?

E: Yes I am. [yeah] and that's because I I'm working very closely with teacher training colleges and the the the heads of the teacher training colleges like stumbled on me they found me and whenever they have their seminars they call me to do a presentation so now they've decided 'OK this is fine and any any time we have a workshop Elinor we can call you' but I said 'I will not always be there so can I train you to now go ahead and train others'

Elinor lines 600 – 607

Vanessa is critical of the level of proficiency of the government school teachers for whom she in her institution provides refresher and upgrading courses. Since they are generalist teachers who also teach English, she sees their skills as being at a much lower level than those of specialist private school teachers who alone are equipped to implement Phonics.

V: Er Phonics is done in mostly in er you know private schools [I see uhu] and er not really in government schools [mmhmm] and er basically er I would say it is (laugh) er some kind of it would come under some kind of er I think like it's mechanics of reading basically [right yes yes] and you know trying to identify the sounds with the shape of the - I think maybe something similar [Yes yes yes] so but er

SR: Why why would it not be in government schools?

V: I mean like in government in government schools we don't have specialized teachers.

SR: OK so it's a matter of their specialized training yeah

V: Yeah I mean even if they are able to do some kind of you know alphabet with them then OK it's a great achievement.

Vanessa lines 433 – 443

In the clarification of her words resulting from my follow-up message of October 2011, she stated that the teachers that she was discussing here were social studies specialists rather than English specialists, good in their specialist topic but less well

grounded in English.

Pressure on learners to take special measures to fulfil the requirements of the school

Some participants reported that in the past they as learners took steps outside the school to try to meet requirements or standards that they did not seem to be able to meet as members of class within the school. Oriel, like others, had given private tuition in order to help children with reading difficulties to 'catch up' with others in a more advanced class.

Private preparation to get a head start for future English literacy learning at school was reported as a childhood memory by several respondents from South Korea, amongst whom were Shona and Karen, who belong to the same family:

SR: OK now can I turn from your experiences of learning to read Korean and change the subject to when you were first learning to read in English. And what age was that when you took your first steps in reading English?

S: Before I entered the Middle School [mmhmm] it was just one one month before [uhu] I learned reading reading some words from my aunt [uhu] yes my age was 12

SR: Mmhmm mmhmm so in those days English began in Middle School uhu and your is that a usual thing that your family or your aunt thought it would help you to have this preparation?

S: Yeah

Shona lines 112 -120

SR: ... I gather you learned to read not in Primary school but in your Junior [Middle Sch-] in your Middle School yes and that that would be normal in in your time. So what age is that more or less twelve, thirteen?

K: Twelve. Twelve to thirteen.

SR: Mmhmm and did you have any preparation at home for that?

K: Yeah.[Uhu] My aunt even though she is not good good at English but she encouraged me to reme- er memorize the alphabet [mmhmm] just alphabet and then we tried we could try to read the first chapt- the first lesson and second lesson of Middle School textbooks which are textbooks so at the time it was a er winter vacation so er in winter during the last winter vacation of primary school I memorized and I remembered the alphabet and then I could read some sentences very simple sentences so when I er when I became a Middle School student I could be a top student and then

SR: OK 'cos you had already prepared some of it yeah

K: Yeah because at that time most of students didn't learn alphabet even alphabet so I was er

SR: So you spent some of your holiday before going to the new school getting [laugh].Is that so it wasn't a common thing in your class so that made you

K: Yes.

SR: Yeah does that happen these days? Have you heard of people preparing? **K:** Even before primary school

Karen lines 130 – 149

Karen recounts her shock as a teacher of First Grade Students to find out about the effect of tuition in reading in the private institutes to which parents were sending their children (two years before the official age for starting English in public primary schools). Again, we hear of L1-based written mnemonics used by children to remind them of pronunciation:

K: it depends on private institution but many of them they taught the students like the old style [right] or or they taught them they want to show the private institutes want to show their students' ability is high [yes] to their parents [yes right so it's about pleasing parents] so they pushed them they pushed the children to memorize the sentences even in Korean but in the story books they are only English alphabet [yes] but my students wrote Korean
SR: Like a Korean version of English
K: 'How are you? How are you?'
SR: Written in Korean
K: Then they read very fluently so every time oh so good then I saw it and I was shocked because their pronunciation is
SR: And do you think the private institute does this because parents er give a big importance to reading even in young children?
K; Yeah I think so [mmhmm] and parents they they don't many parents don't know what is a good method or approach so they just are satisfied with their children reading reading fluent reading so they don't don't er they don't ask or challenge anything about the private institutes

Karen lines 338 – 354

In a similar way, Iris reports on how parents try to prepare their children at home so that they will do well when they come to learn English in her private kindergarten in Thailand.

I: from what I have talked to the parents at school they say that it's because the children want to learn the children want to learn and the parents want to teach them as well so they buy the books like alphabet book and number book to teach their children at home to prepare them before going to kindergarten so when they go to kindergarten school they can they can follow the class quite fast and maybe they will be like the top or the first top of students who can do very well in class and that will encourage them to be good students and encourage them to be more more responsible for their studying
SR: OK yeah
I: Yeah so they think like that
SR: So are some parents actually like preparing their children before they go to kindergarten uhu
I: Yeah yeah and in the kindergarten they are prepared to go to primary school yeah
SR: Always looking forward
I: To a higher level

Iris lines x - y

Vanessa, speaking as a parent about an elite private kindergarten to which she sent her child at the age of just over two, raises the issue of unrealistic expectations on the part of the institution being perceived or presented as high standards. She showed herself to be assertive in this situation.

V: They straightaway said that 'Well OK we'll start with writing the letters' [mmhmm] not even acquainting them with the shapes and it was considered to be a very good school that is why I put him here but I didn't like the practice because you have to you can't expect a child to write so well [mm] so I had to I withdrew my child from there [laugh][oh right] I didn't like that they said that 'OK we have a very high standard'. I didn't like the high standard [laugh]

Vanessa lines 88 - 93

Pressure on private institutions to meet expectations

Iris is clear-sighted about the dilemma of privately-run kindergartens preparing young children for primary schools where there are entrance tests as filters. She speaks of social and commercial pressures on the kindergarten where she works to conform to public non-specialist expectations and primary school requirements both of which mean children focusing on words in ABC sequence and also being able to display their knowledge of the alphabet in 'logical' alphabetical order.

I: Because it's the way we have been doing for a long time even though I think it could be changed into Phonics like we can start from the sound, easier one to the hardest one instead of ABC, and then they don't know how to pronounce correctly but the primary school are are are looking for the students who can remember ABC [some words omitted] OK so the primary school wants the students to be able to remember ABC logically not like to be able to speak

SR: So would they test them on that?

I: Em some schools do test them like they will written <ab> and then blank and then <d> and they will ask the student to fill in the blank, [some words omitted]

SR: And are we talking here about primary schools giving an entrance test?

I: Yeah

SR: So that your concern is to prepare your pupils so that

I: They can enter good schools.

SR: Right yes

I: That's what the parents send their children to kindergarten in Thailand for.

Iris lines 187 - 205

In contexts such as Taiwan, Korea and Greece, private language institutes are attended by many children and they were presented by participants as a recourse for parents who could afford it to ensure that their children achieved well in English.

Oriel tells how she, as a private home tutor, dealt with the consequences of a vigorous private language school system to which a majority of school children in Greece have access. She suggested that state schools are not able to integrate the resulting different levels of attainment in the class.

O: I had two of them and they came from the same school em I don't know why it had been three years before their parents started worrying but the thing is that I realized that they were two of the few people at school that did not go to a language school. They did not get English out of the language school, out of the school, so they needed help because the teacher progresses at school with the students they have in front of them and most of the students go to a language school so you have quite progressed students so the one two or three students that do not go they have

As will be seen from the above, insights in a number of areas were gained from the interviews. Some of these were particular to a consideration of the participants as human beings responding to the pressures and complexities of teaching young children in their contexts, but others overlapped with and informed the content of the materials analysis which follows.

4.4 Analysis of Materials

As described in Chapter 3.6.2, components of 22 sets of materials were scrutinized, making 40 volumes in all. The discussion here is based on items on the overview and summary forms and calculations from the Excel forms used in connection with the materials, with cross-references to questionnaire and interview findings where appropriate. The syllabus content of courses will be discussed first, with discussion of activity-types appearing later in section 4.5.3. I shall broadly follow the sequence of items on the summary form and will remind the reader of related numbered cue-questions where this seems necessary for clarity.

4.4.1 Levels of Reading Operation Promoted

Question 11: by the end of this level of materials is the reading work operating predominantly at WORD, SENTENCE or TEXT level?

The striking disparity in levels of engagement with text promoted at different ages and stages may be seen from the summary in Table 4.4 below. Very different targets were found for ultimate achievement at the end of primary school, the extremes in the

English as a Foreign language material being Elementary School English (South Korea) at the low engagement end and Millie (Russia) at the high end. However, any such findings need to be seen in conjunction with total hours dedicated to English and starting age of children as well as with stated policy for each context.

COURSE TITLE	CONTEXT OF USE	App start age	By end of this level children are reading ...?	By end of Primary school children are reading ...?
Primary English for Cameroon 1	Cameroon [Anglophone]	6	Short texts	Texts
Primary English for Cameroon 2	Cameroon Anglophone]	7	Short texts	Texts
Basic Eng for Cameroon 1	Cameroon [Anglophone]	6	Short texts	Texts
Basic Eng for Cameroon 2	Cameroon [Anglophone]	7	Short texts	Texts
Sign in to English Bk 1	Cameroon [Anglophone]	6	Short texts	Texts
Sign in to English Bk 2	Cameroon [Anglophone]	7	Short texts	Texts
Junior Primary English 1	Cameroon [Anglophone]	6	Short texts	Texts
Junior Primary English 2	Cameroon [Anglophone]	7	Short texts	Texts
English All-Stars CP	Cameroon [Francophone]	7	Short texts	Texts
Beginning English SIL	Cameroon [Francophone]	6	Short texts	Texts
Beginning English CP	Cameroon [Francophone]	7	Short texts	Texts
Fun Way 1	Greece (state)	8	Sentences	Texts
Fun Way 2	Greece (state)	9	Short texts	Texts
Wonderland A	Greece (private)	8	sentences	Texts
Wonderland B	Greece (private)	9	Short texts	
Learning to Read English 1	India	8	Sentences	Not seen
Learning to Read English 2	India	9	Short texts	Not seen
Gogo Loves English 1	International (but esp E. Asia)	7	Sentences	Not seen
English Today 1	International (but esp E. Asia)	7	sentences	Texts
English Today 2	International (but esp E. Asia)	7	sentences	Texts
Elementary school English 3	South Korea	9	No reading	

Elementary school English 4	South Korea	10	Minimal reading- word-level	
Elementary school English 5	South Korea	11	Sentences	
Elementary school English 6	South Korea	12	Sentences	Sentences
KBSR English Year 1	Malaysia [Tamil and Chinese schools]	6	Sentences	Texts
KBSR English Year 2	Malaysia [Tamil and Chinese schools]	7	Short texts	Texts
PEP Primary English	PR of China	8	Sentences	? materials not seen
Pioneer English 1a and 1b	PR of China	8	Sentences	? materials not seen
New Standard English	PR of China	8	Sentences	? materials not seen
New Standard English 3a	PR of China	9	Sentences	? materials not seen
Millie 3	Russia	8	Texts	Texts
Let's Learn English! Grade 3 (Book 1)	Sri Lanka	8	Sentences	Texts
English for Starters 1	Syria	8	Sentences	? materials not seen
Go SuperKids! 1	Taiwan	8	Sentences	Sentences
Go SuperKids! 2	Taiwan	9	Sentences	Sentences
Welcome1	Taiwan	8	Sentences	Sentences
Welcome 2	Taiwan	9	Sentences	Sentences
Darbie Teach Me! 1	Taiwan	8	Sentences	Sentences
Darbie Teach Me! 2	Taiwan	9	Sentences	Sentences

Table 14 Levels of Engagement with text by the end of first levels and end of series

4.4.2 Reliance on Print for Presentation of Learning Material

Except for the South Korean Elementary School English series, all courses analyzed in response to Question 14 of the commentary sheet contained substantial text on the page from the very beginning of the first level. This is the most all-pervasive phenomenon found in the whole study. We saw above that all interviewees except Lucy had had a learning experience working with words on the page from a very early stage. This in itself was not a feature of either their past learning or own teaching experience that was criticized by participants although issues were raised by some participants with the manner in which the words on the page were used by the teachers.

4.4.3 Visual accessibility of words on the page

Fonts and point sizes

It was not possible to determine font name and point size in all cases since this information was not always included in publishing details, and I do not have sufficient expertise to be sure of small distinctions between fonts. However, in most cases choices had been made which provided clear, accessible print on the page for young children. An exception was the South Korean course where some of the print contained letter forms such as ‘a’, which were considerably different from the ‘handwriting-friendly’ styles found in most educational publishing for young children. In most cases font styles and point sizes did not change from level to level of a course series.

Notable orthographical points concerning presentation of headings

With few exceptions (e.g. English Year 1, Malaysia) upper and lower case letters were presented together in the same ABC spread, and inspection of the contents of the Pupils’ Books and Workbooks revealed in most cases no explanation or overt practical exemplification of when upper case letters should be used. This lack of explanation was found even in materials created for contexts such as South Korea where the L1 writing system does not include a similar upper/lower case contrast.

4.4.4 Use of Alphabet Spreads as Presentation Devices

A large number of courses used the Alphabet Spread as an early presentation device. The intended uses of the Alphabet spread were not always clear, although some of the contents were also key words which were included in the Reading-Focal component of lessons in the body of the rest of the book. The linguistic characteristics of words in ABC spreads are discussed as part of the discussion of Focal Reading Words below.

Frequently, it seems that the letter names were intended to be taught in association with an ABC spread given that an ‘alphabet song’ or similar mnemonic for letter names was likely to follow soon after the spread as, for example, in the case of Fun Way. (Please see Appendix 3.14). However, in most courses, the use of the letter names in activities was not frequent thereafter, except in work overtly concerned with spelling. On the other hand, in a very few courses the use of letter names was integral to a reading methodology. The sets of activities in which words were spelled out before being said seemed to have affinities with the ‘alphabetic method’

discussed in association with Gbenedio's description of practice in 1980s Nigeria (see Literature Review, 2.8.2).

4.4.5 The Ordering, Dosing and Grouping of Reading-Focal Words

This section is of fundamental importance to the study. The evidence shows the large majority of courses in which the grouping choice is based on 'ABC' order. 'Dosing' varies greatly, with some courses arriving at the end of their chosen inventory of letter-sound links within the first level of course material, but others continuing into Level Two and even beyond. Children thus receive sparse focus on the elements of reading whilst continuing to be exposed to the Vehicular components of their course materials for all language learning purposes.

4.4.6 ABC ordering of Reading-Focal Words

'Dosing' choices vary between focusing on a single initial letter in a lesson, and grouping three or four initial letters together in a single lesson. The extension over the duration of a set of lessons of Reading-Focal instruction also varies greatly. In some courses such instruction occurs every lesson and in others it occurs in a more diluted manner. The arc of time after which a system is 'completed' (that is, no further overt teaching is provided), thus varies greatly from a few weeks to more than a school year, with some items remaining to be focused on even later than the second year of learning English.

4.4.7 Phonologically-oriented ordering of Reading-Focal words

In a number of courses which are 'letter-led' in their presentation, the labels given to linked letters and phoneme values seem to suggest to the course-users that there is a fixed relationship between letter and phoneme. The Cameroonian Sign in to English Book 1, for example, refers to the letters throughout as 'sounds'. However, some phonologically-based choices for grouping and ordering also exist. One common basis for grouping was by minimal pair contrasts such as voiced/voiceless consonant contrasts, as seen in KBSR1 (Malaysia). It was not always apparent whether these contrasts had been chosen on the basis of a perceived difficulty in this area caused by L1/English pronunciation differences. No course in which phonological presentation dominated covered the full phoneme inventory any more completely than the letter-led courses discussed above.

4.4.8 Other orientations

Let's Learn English (Sri Lanka) approaches early literacy through activities to build handwriting skills to the extent that it could be claimed that reading itself is not made a focal skill. Here, the grouping and sequence of focal letters is determined by similarities in letter shapes and in hand movements required to form letters.

4.4.9 Handling of frequent but non-transparent words

So far, we have looked at the presentation of Reading-Focal words from the point of view of whether it seems to have been structured on a basis – however rough - which might enable transparent sound-letter links to be systematically exploited by teachers. However, as discussed in Chapter 2.4.4, English is also rich in orthographically non-transparent words, many of which are highly frequent. A recognition by authors of this aspect of English might impel them to a principled attempt to create materials which help children to cope with this class of words. This leads to what I would claim is a very striking finding. In only one set of the course materials focused on for analysis (Go SuperKids!, Book 2) were frequent but non-transparent words identified as a special category on which early reading teaching focus could be placed. Even in this case, the coverage was modest. One other set of materials (Learning to Read English : India) included 'Sight Words' but was a dedicated supplementary reading book which fell outside the mainstream category of course book materials analyzed. We have seen that the Russian course Millie adopted a version of the Whole Word approach for its first level, but since this was a general approach not involving the systematic isolation of particular categories of words, it is not considered here.

Many of the 'Sight Words' in the inventories of the UK National Literacy Strategy (Department for Education and Employment 1988b) were indeed found on the pages of many of the EYL courses analyzed. However they occurred predominantly among the Vehicular Words, which by my definition were not overtly utilized by course-creators as focal for reading instruction.

4.4.10 Coverage of the Full Phoneme Inventory of an Appropriate Variety of English

It is notable that none of the courses gave full coverage to the phoneme inventory. Phonemes were invariably done through linkage with letter-values, and, as we have seen above, in section 4.4.5, even in cases where considerable coverage of letter-

phoneme links was given, this was spread out over more than a school year, in some cases continuing into the third year of learning. In other words, elements of letter-phoneme linkage were presented gradually, late and side by side. If phonemic awareness is a requisite pre-condition for successful early reading in EYL, as for example the Malaysian Phonemic Awareness project assumes (Johnson & Tweedie, 2010) none of the courses, including the one set of Malaysian materials analyzed, attempts to set up those conditions before a start is made on early reading.

In the cases above of letter-led ABC-ordered presentation where focus stops once <z> is reached, it is notable that a maximum of 23 phonemes can ever be covered. The reason for this is that <x> duplicates either /z/ or /k/ + /s/, <c> duplicates realizations of <k> and <s>, and <q> + <u> duplicates /k/ + /w/. In cases where course materials contain no pronunciation instruction apart from that associated with realizations of single letters, a considerable quantity of phonemes will remain unaccounted for. This was true of all courses analyzed. For RP, the number of phonemes left uncovered will be 18 (see discussion in 2.4.2). A large proportion of the phonemes unaccounted for will be vowels. In some of the courses analyzed there is no coverage of vowels, beyond the short vowels 'covered' by realizations of <a> <e> <i> <o> <u>. Also missing will be consonant phonemes such as /j/ and /θ/ and their related digraph spellings. This calculation is valid for both RP and GA. When I added Character Names and Playful Onomatopoeic Words to Reading-Focal words, the coverage of phonemes rose slightly in some cases. I have no evidence, however, that these words were included by the authors for such reasons.

4.4.11 The characteristics of items in word inventories

Before turning to questions of methodology and activity types, a report on the detailed analysis of the composition of the inventories of Reading-Focal and Vehicular words will be provided. This is of interest particularly because the linguistic content of course materials also affects methodology in terms of the types of activity which it is possible to carry out. Pattern-seeking activities, for example, require a substantial body of words which contain the patterns to be sought.

4.4.11.1 Quantity and proportions of language presented in course materials

Questions 33 and 34 on the overview sheet prompted for numbers of Reading-Focal and Vehicular Words appearing, while Question 22 cued consideration of the important issue of how much overlap there was between the two, with Reading-Focal

words re-used in other activities in the rest of the text. Level Twos are not included here, because in many cases initial reading instruction terminates within Level One. The table below gives the raw figures for Level One of the courses analyzed:

COURSE TITLE	focal	overlap	vehicular	focal only	total words	overlap as % of vehicular
Darbie Teach Me! 1	28	28	82	0	82	34%
Go Superkids! 1	26	26	152	0	152	17%
PEP Primary English	0	0	152	0	152	0%
English all Stars SIL	88	88	164	0	164	54%
Gogo 1	78	41	141	37	178	29%
Welcome!	72	27	137	45	182	20%
English for Starters	0	0	185	0	185	0%
Pioneer English 1a and 1b	49	35	184	14	198	19%
KBSR English Year 1	134	52	118	82	200	44%
English Today 1	52	52	238	0	238	22%
Elementary school English 5	153	153	273	0	273	56%
New Standard English	0	0	297	0	297	0%
Primary English for Cameroon 1	93	93	325	0	325	29%
Wonderland A	26	11	329	15	344	3%
Millie	137	137	422	0	422	32%
Let's Learn English! 1	8	8	442	0	442	2%
Beginning English SIL	148	37	403	111	514	9%
Basic Eng for Cameroon 1	102	66	506	36	542	13%
Sign in to English Bk 1	87	31	491	56	547	6%
Junior Primary English 1	110	31	511	79	590	6%
Fun Way 1	50	19	636	31	667	3%

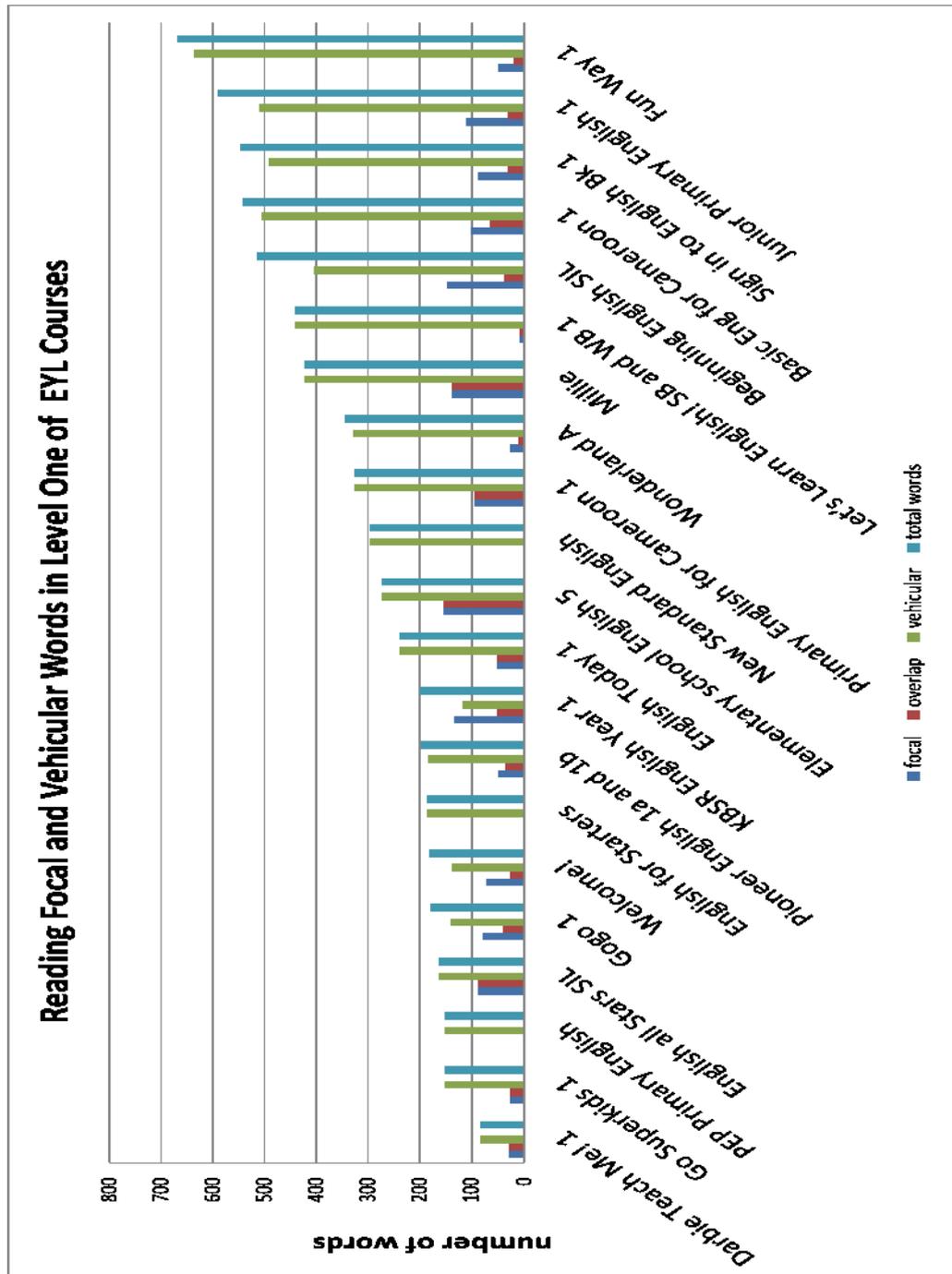
Table 15 Counts of different categories of words in Level One of the courses analyzed

In Table 15, 'focal only' refers to the words which are found only as Reading-Focal words and are not re-used in any other part of a course. Figure 11 below orders and gives a visual representation of the findings which clearly shows the range of content in terms of quantity of words. The sections of the bars on the chart

represent the following values: blue at the left side shows words which function for Reading-Focal purposes only, not being found in the rest of the text; maroon in the middle section shows the 'overlap': those words which appear for both Reading-Focal purposes and in the body of the text; green on the right shows all the other Vehicular Words (from which Character Names and Playful and Onomatopoeic Words have been removed). The right hand column in turquoise shows the overall total (taking into account the overlap between Focal and Vehicular words). It will readily be seen that there is a very wide range of total vocabulary load among courses, even among courses for the same context and at the same learning level, but the major point to be made is that in many cases the proportion of Reading-Focal words, shown in blue, is tiny compared with the Vehicular Words. As we have seen in Table 15 above, three of the courses have no material which fitted my definition of Reading-Focal, all the activities being based on 'words on the page' from the very start.

By considering the overlap columns closely, it may be seen that different policies, or perhaps degrees of craft skill, by the authors are at work in the courses analyzed. From a rationalized point of view it would seem that a high degree of re-use of Reading-Focal words in other parts of the course would conduce to more learning opportunities, particularly in terms of pronunciation and vocabulary learning, whereas a set of Reading-Focal words that is treated in isolation is likely to have less chance of impact.

Figure 11 Reading-Focal and Vehicular Words in Level One EYL Courses



Below, I have summarized the position concerning integration of Reading-Focal words with the rest of the course by using percentages rather than raw figures so that

we may compare like with like. The basis of calculation is total overlap of Reading-Focal Words as a percentage of Vehicular words in a course.

Degree of Overlap	no	Course titles and contexts
Zero because no Reading-Focal material contained	3	English for Starters 1, Syria New Standard English, China PEP Primary English, China
Below 10%	5	Fun Way 1, Greece Wonderland A, Greece Junior Primary English 1, Anglophone Cameroon Sign In to English 1, Anglophone Cameroon Beginning English SIL, Francophone Cameroon
11% to 30%	7	Basic English for Cameroon 1, Anglophone Cameroon Go SuperKids! 1, Taiwan Pioneer English Ia and Ib, China Welcome! 1, Taiwan English Today 1, International/East Asia Gogo Loves English 1, East Asia Primary English for Cameroon 1. Anglophone Cameroon
31% to 50%	3	Millie 2, Russia Darbie, Teach Me! 1, Taiwan KBSR English Year 1, Malaysia (Tamil and Chinese schools)
Over 50%	2	English All-Stars! 1, Francophone Cameroon Elementary School English 5, South Korea

Table 16 Integration of Reading-Focal words with the rest of the course

It will be seen that Table 16 includes two extremes. On the one hand, there are ‘zero overlap’ courses such as English for Starters (Syria) and New Standard English (China), which contain no Reading-Focal material by my definition, and thus appear on the chart with zero Reading-Focal words and therefore zero overlap. On the other, there are courses whose Reading-Focal words have seemingly been deliberately replicated in the main text rather than conceived separately. Millie is a strong example, with the 137 words chosen for Whole Word method reinforcement via word cards all derived from the main text. The high degree of overlap of English All-Stars! seems to be the result of deliberate choice and the result for the Korean course is probably due to the recycling of all language items in all four skills and the

heavy use of the printed and written word for presentation and consolidation of language. In some cases of partial integration of Reading-Focal items it is not clear whether this is due to policy.

4.4.11.2 Orthographic Characteristics of words for Reading Focus

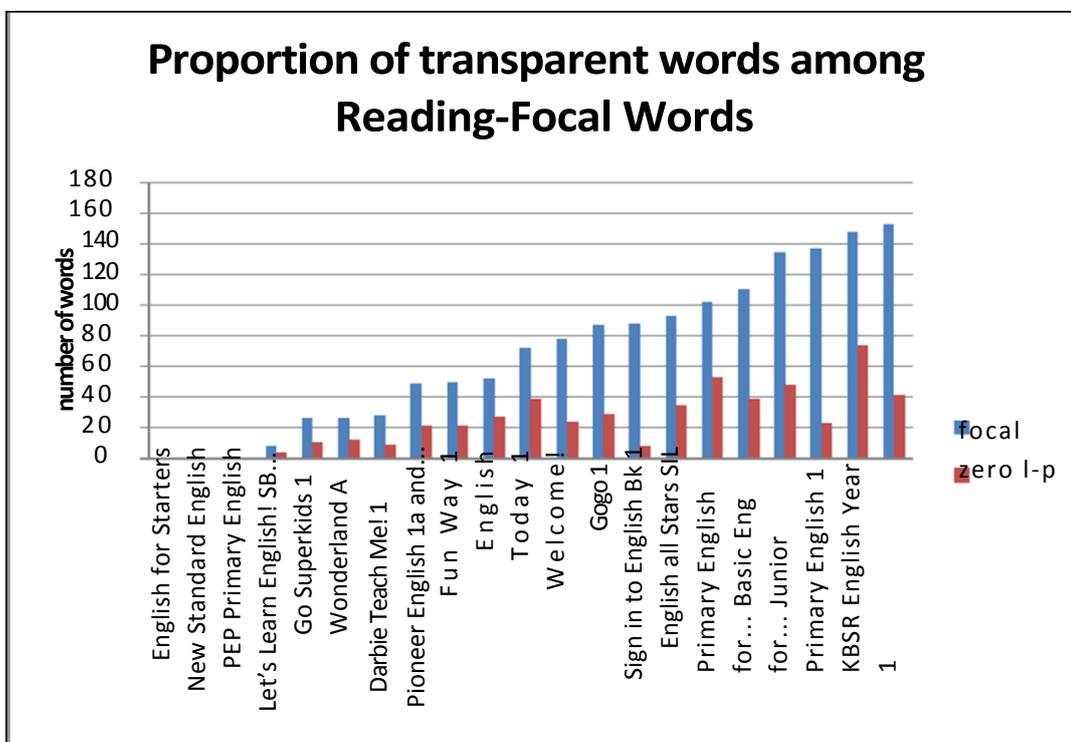
It may fairly be said that most choices of words for reading focus (including those in ABC spreads) seemed to reflect an attempt to represent simple, accessible, sound-symbol relationships, with a preference, for example, for CVC words such as 'dog', containing short vowel phoneme values for <a> <e> <i> <o> <u>, and for words beginning with <a> <e> <i> <o> <u> to have initial short vowels, as in 'ant'. Finding feasible short words to represent these short vowel phonemes in initial position can present a challenge. In the cases of the letters <o> and <u> short words that meet the criteria are few. 'Octopus' and 'umbrella' seemed popular, transparent, if multi-syllable, solutions. Policies over the value to be given to the letter <x> varied. The majority of courses chose to show it in final position with the value /ks/ in words such as 'fox', and 'box'. Only Pioneer English, Beginning English and Junior Primary English presented it as an initial letter with the value /z/ (in 'xylophone'). This choice seemed to be the result of privileging strict alphabetical order of initial letters over frequency of pronunciation and utility of the exemplar word.

In a few cases of materials for the Outer Circle context of Cameroon, where, as we saw from the interview with Elinor, the prevailing view in the teaching profession was that the target phoneme inventory should be RP, there are instances in which pronunciations typical of the local variety have seeped into Focal Reading lists. A case may be found in the <o> group for Sign in to English from Cameroon (page 61), where 'onion' is presented alongside 'ostrich', 'orange' and 'ox' as an exemplar of words beginning with <o>. The rubric 'Listen to your teacher and repeat the sound **o**' implies that all words begin with the same phoneme: /D/. With RP as the target phoneme inventory the initial letter of 'onion' would have the value /ʌ/, rather than /D/ so we have here a confusingly hybrid set of items. See Ebot (1999). The comments made by Elinor in her interview suggest that this usage would be controversial if attention were drawn to it.

4.4.11.3 Orthographic transparency

The methods employed for analysis of words for orthographic transparency have been explained in Chapter 3, section 3.10. 2. The discussions below are illustrated by charts generated from the Excel spreadsheets used.

Table 17 Numbers and proportions of ‘zero-difference’ orthographically transparent words compared with deeper words in Reading-Focal word lists



When course-writers select Reading-Focal Words, compromises might reasonably be envisaged in order to temper orthographic transparency with interest and relevance, so it was not expected that analysis of Reading-Focal lists would result in average Letter-Phoneme differences of zero or very close to it. However, course materials containing more transparent words in Reading-Focal sets may be expected to have greater potential for pattern-seeking and generative activities.

The transparent ‘zero-letter-phoneme-difference’ words in Reading-Focal word lists were identified and their quantities shown alongside the total number of Reading-Focal words in each course, as in Table 17. Again, because many Level Two materials have passed the stage of using Reading-Focal material, Table 17 shows only results for Level One of each series studied.

We can see from Table 17 that in most courses orthographic transparency tends to be found in only a small proportion of words in the Reading-Focal lists. Exceptions are to be found among the Cameroonian courses Beginning English and Basic English for

Cameroon, interestingly from Francophone and Anglophone Cameroon respectively. The fact that nearly half the words in the lists for these two books are transparent suggests that this could have been the result of a policy on the part of the writers rather than of happenstance. For courses with smaller proportions of transparent words, it is not possible to judge whether this was the result of policy or lack of consideration of the potential role of the 'example words' in such sub-sets of the textbook language.

4.4.11.4 Potential for pattern-generation/seeking among Reading-Focal Words

Within any list of words selected for Reading-Focal purposes, there is the potential for setting up groups within them containing patterns that children can begin to notice and make use of. Even if they are not deliberately grouped by the authors or noticed by teachers, the presence of such words in Reading-Focal materials may assist learners to make their own connections in the way that Shona reported in her interview (4.3.3 above). Some of the pattern-potential within existing lists may easily be sought if data is analyzed as described in Chapter 3.10. The Excel-based database of words is proposed as one of the contributions of this study. However, it seems not to be fruitful to carry out an exhaustive investigation of patterns within existing word-lists for this Findings chapter unless there is evidence that course writers are making deliberate use of such patterns. We need therefore to scrutinize the activities overtly proposed by the materials. See 4.4.4 below. Brief notes on each potential pattern are, however, given below.

Consistently spelled rhyme/rime patterns

Without committing the user to a full Phonics approach, it is possible within materials in which the Reading-Focal words contain repeated rime elements for these to be used in the course of pattern-seeking or pattern-noticing. Only Millie, Sign In to English, and Beginning English made use of rhyme in direct connection with reading. See Appendix 3.14 for examples from Sign In To English and Beginning English.

Consistent digraph graphemes

As discussed in the Literature Review, section 2.4.1, there is a set of digraphs in English that are highly consistent in their representation of particular phonemes. A selection was made of these, as discussed in Methodology 3.10.2 to take note of in Reading-Focal lists. The rationale was that if such digraphs were successfully learned, this would raise the transparency of words encountered from the point of view of the children. Because, however, scrutiny of the materials showed a very low instance

either of highlighting of digraphs in exemplar words or of activities designed to focus on them, I am offering only one sample to show the potential (or challenge) that exists in course materials as they at present stand. Results for one set of materials, Korean Elementary School English Grade 5, are given in Table 18 below.

word	no of syllables	no of letters	RP phonemes	letter phon diff	digraph issue
backyard	2	8	6	2	<ck>
bathroom	2	8	6	2	<th>
brother	2	7	5	2	<th>
camping	2	7	6	1	<ng>
chair	1	5	2	3	<ch>
chopsticks	2	10	8	2	<ch> <ck>
church	1	6	3	3	<ch>
father	2	6	4	2	<th>
fish	1	4	3	1	<sh>
fishing	2	7	5	2	<sh>
hiking	2	6	5	1	<ng>
kick	1	4	3	1	<ck>
kitchen	2	7	5	2	<tch>
long	1	4	3	1	<ng>
lunch	1	5	4	1	<ch>
mother	2	6	4	2	<th>
mouth	1	5	3	2	<th>
shopping	2	8	5	3	<sh> <ng>
short	1	5	3	2	<sh>
sing	1	4	3	1	<ng>
telephone	3	9	7	2	<ph>
three	1	5	3	2	<th>
Thursday	2	8	5	3	<th>
wash	1	4	3	1	<sh>
watch	1	5	3	2	<tch>

Table 18 Presence of selected digraphs in Elementary School English Grade 5

Letter-phoneme differences which do not strongly obscure the phonemic character of a word: Catering for ‘r’

As we saw in the Literature Review, users of varieties of English which affiliate with RP would not pronounce the <r> as an /r/ phoneme before a pause or in pre-consonantal or word-final position. Therefore while on an RP-based analysis list words like ‘father’

would register an ‘extra’ letter-phoneme difference, we may consider this as relatively trivial and less likely to obscure the identity of a heard word for a child than other letter-phoneme differences. However, for users of rhotic varieties the <r> would be pronounced in all environments. Therefore on a GA-based list the presence of <r> would not contribute to a Letter-Phoneme difference. As an example, we could adjust the RP-based letter-phoneme difference findings for the South Korean course book Elementary School English 5 to reflect the predominant use of GA as reference accent by a sorting operation which reveals that in 24 words an allowance for rhoticism has to be made so that in GA there would be a smaller letter-phoneme difference. The relevant section of the sort results is shown below as Table 19.

word	no of syllables	no of letters	RP phonemes	RP letter-phon difference	Adjustment For GA
backyard	2	8	6	2	1
bird	1	4	3	1	0
brother	2	7	5	2	1
chair	1	5	2	3	2
church	1	6	3	3	2
computer	3	8	7	1	0
dinner	2	6	4	2	1
door	1	4	2	2	1
eraser	3	6	5	1	0
father	2	6	4	2	1
fork	1	4	3	1	0
hair	1	4	2	2	1
mother	2	6	4	2	1
park	1	4	3	1	0
pear	1	4	2	2	1
river	2	5	4	1	0
ruler	2	5	4	1	0
Saturday	3	8	6	2	1
short	1	5	3	2	1
sister	2	6	5	1	0
Thursday	2	8	5	3	2
tower	2	5	3	2	1
under	2	5	4	1	0
yesterday	3	9	7	2	1

Table 19 Adjustments made for GA with regard to rhoticism

Although rules for doubling of consonants represent some difficulties for young spellers, we may say that, for beginning readers, words with doubled consonants do not represent a change in the consonant value represented (although vowel-values preceding doubled consonants may differ). Words like 'ball' or names like 'Molly', have letter-phoneme differences of one, due solely to the double consonant. They are thus not considered importantly more difficult to recognize than words with a zero letter-phoneme difference. A total of 47 words from the whole set of word lists with a letter-phoneme difference of 1 can be accounted for by doubled consonants and, as an example, a sort for Primary English for Cameroon 1 shows that 9 Reading-Focal words in this book are of this type:

ball
cassava
dress
gorilla
kettle
kitten
ladder
lorry
umbrella

No activities in any of the courses analyzed focused on doubled consonants, but their presence amongst Reading-Focal words in a course raises the quantity of relatively transparent words.

'Magic <e>' patterns

Magic <e> is a Reading Rule (as Lucy from Russia described it) which opens the way from short vowel values in words like 'kit' to diphthongs in words like 'kite'. With the restricted vocabulary with which Young Learners work, compared with that of their native-speaking counterparts, there may be considerably less scope for noticing and using this transformation pattern with meaningful words. However, examples of 'e' ending words such as 'bike' and 'cake' were sought in the Reading-Focal lists, and particular attention was paid when 'pairs' such as 'bit-bite', 'hid-hide' or 'kit-kite' were overtly signaled for transformation in activities found in course materials. The number of 'magic <e>' words present in the overall list was 49, but again this is only significant for the courses as they stand, if authors make use of them. Results are given for KBSR English Year 1 (Malaysia).

five
kite
name
nine
nose
rice
rose

Special case word-lists

It will be remembered that in the Methodology Chapter (3.10.2) a case was made for separating out character names and onomatopoeic words. A total of over 250 different names was collected, but little evidence was found of a strategic choice of particular names to help children find patterns or regularities. The same was found for the 57 onomatopoeic and playful words, through 'chaka-chaka', 'oink' and 'Yuk'. In terms of accuracy of analysis of the relationship between the Focal and Vehicular words, however, the decision to separate these lists was justified since many of the spellings of the names and other words were certainly in Albrow's Type 3 list. In addition, the difference in policy over how many of each to include in a course (some courses were heavily-populated with named characters appearing only once) would have skewed results.

4.4.12 Vehicular Words

Since the words defined as Vehicular are not those overtly engaged with by course creators for the specific purpose of building early reading skills, a less detailed set of analyses is reported here. However, since these words need nonetheless to be coped with by learners, it seems appropriate to show some rough measures of the challenge that they offer. See Table 20 below.

Of the overall list of 1861 Vehicular words found 462 (25%) had a zero letter-phoneme difference, but the distribution of such transparent words differed over courses, with for example, KBSR 1 having 45, representing 38% of the Vehicular words present in the book, and Pioneer English having only 9% transparent words. Since, however, the key to coping with Vehicular words is, by my definition, to be sought through the way in which Reading-Focal material is handled for reading development, perhaps there is little reason to consider manipulating Vehicular words for transparency or to analyze material very closely for such characteristics. Perhaps more interesting is to consider the three courses for which no Reading-Focal material could be identified (shaded on Table 20 below), to see whether perhaps there was a strongly transparent Vehicular

content which might to some extent support young beginning readers even without dedicated activities via Reading-Focal material. As Table 20 below shows, none of these three courses in fact had a higher than average % of transparent words.

COURSE TITLE	vehicular	zero l-p difference	%
Pioneer English 1a and 1b	184	16	9%
Let's Learn English! 1	442	72	16%
Welcome	137	24	18%
Junior Primary English 1	511	96	19%
New Standard English	297	60	20%
Millie	422	84	20%
Beginning English SIL	403	87	21%
English for Starters	185	41	22%
Darbie Teach Me! 1	82	20	24%
Primary English for Cameroon 1	325	78	24%
PEP Primary English	152	38	25%
English Today 1	238	60	25%
Elementary school English 5	273	74	27%
Wonderland A	329	89	27%
Basic Eng for Cameroon 1	506	137	27%
Fun Way 1	636	172	27%
Gogo 1	141	39	27%
English all Stars SIL	164	47	29%
Sign in to English Bk 1	491	145	29%
Go Superkids! 1	152	50	33%
KBSR English Year 1	118	45	38%

Table 20 Percentages of transparent words amongst Vehicular material

4.4.13 Activities related to building early reading skills found in the materials

Data for this section were prompted by sections 24 to 33 of the overview form. This section is divided into two parts:

- activities themselves
- evidence of influence from REL1 approaches

4.4.13.1 Activities found in course materials

In this section I discuss activities which fall within my definitions of providing reading development work and which are the potential locus of systematic teaching in this area. As stated in Methodology 3.10.2, in systematic teaching methods the same operation is carried out with similar elements over lessons which occupy an extended period of time. As already stressed, the materials are taken at face-value, as 'work-plan' so that no assumptions are made about teachers' own additions and modifications to the materials in actual classroom implementation. There is the additional point that the rubrics which indicate activities are framed differently in different courses and some are more explicit than others. In some courses rubrics were even absent, so that no precise description of the intended activity could be recovered.

Static or Pattern-seeking Activities?

In section 24 of the overview sheet, evidence was sought of whether activities were static or generative/pattern-seeking. A very restricted but consistent range of 'static' Reading-Focal activities was found across all courses. These are listed below:

Read and repeat. Repeat after the teacher, Copy the words, Fill the gaps. Find a word (hidden in a puzzle-picture or grid).

Almost no activities which might be called generative or pattern-seeking were found beyond the rhyming activities already mentioned. One course which provided an exception was Primary English for Cameroon which had a repeated exercise in which a central vowel letter had branches before and after it containing consonants, giving the possibility of making several CVC words. Picture clues gave hints as to some of the words. This activity had the rubric 'Write and Say' but I would claim it as an example of a pattern-seeking activity.

Writing in Support of Reading

A very broad, distinction is to be made between courses in which writing is introduced immediately or very early on and those in which it is delayed until learners have had some appreciable exposure to English print.

There is only moderate correlation in this set of materials between the learners' backgrounds concerning L1 writing systems, the timing of the introduction of writing

and the presence or absence of guidance in letter-formation. By contrast, in Sri Lanka careful support in letter-formation is given, and as we have seen above, the ordering and grouping of letters for literacy focus in this course based on their shapes and the correct hand-movements for forming them. The course starts with some complete words as exemplars, but this diminishes soon and children are given letter-formation practice without example words that it would therefore be difficult to see as integrated with reading support. Elementary School English (South Korea) Grade 5 follows ABC order, for introduction of letters and example words beginning with those letters, and writing practice is given immediately afterwards with The Teacher's CD allowing the hand movements for letter-formation to be demonstrated on-screen or on the classroom whiteboard. Please see Appendix 3.14 for instructions from the Grade 5 Teacher's Guide (2008).

Units of Language Focused upon in the teaching of early reading

Evidence was found in the rubrics of a number of courses of the default 'Reading while Listening' presentation, applied to passages. In other cases it is applied with separate words, amounting to a Whole-Word presentation preference. The listening presentation may be provided by the teacher or in two cases (Elementary School English 5 (South Korea) and KBSR1 (Malaysi) through CD Rom material used in class with children listening to and later repeating words presented through this means. In terms of activity on the page, most courses move immediately to focus on single letter-phoneme relationships, and, as discussed above in section 4.4.9 the great majority in this category were letter-led. KBSR1 (Malaysia) included some activity in which a phoneme was the starting point and different ways of representing it graphically were presented to the learners but this was not consistently followed in these courses and the switches of direction were not overtly pointed out to the users of the course.

In an isolated case (Beginning English 1), syllabic-based practice similar to that described by Williams (2006, p. 30) for CV-based Bantu languages is incorporated.

4.4.13.2 Evidence of influence of REL1 approaches

Phonics

In a number of materials, particularly those from Taiwan, activity headings containing the term 'Phonics' are to be found, and in others it is found only in Teacher's Notes. Since Teacher's Notes were not available for all materials, there

may be an underreporting of mentions of Phonics.

Analysis of what is required in the activities themselves suggests, however, that what is being practised in all cases is a very limited application of Phonics. Please see Appendix 3.14 for some sample pages from Taiwanese courses. All followed an A-Z ordering of Focal Words based on initial letters and thus cannot be said to be following one of the fundamental tenets of Phonics teaching: an ordering based on either supposed facility or maximum generativeness, as discussed in Literature Review section 2.10.2. In addition, materials which do not pay attention to the rime-element of Focal Words do not include an important facet of most interpretations of Phonics-based teaching.

Whole Word approaches

In a number of sets of materials, such as Millie, Welcome and Korean Elementary School English 5, word cards and other visual aids provide facilities which could be used in furtherance of a Look and Say/ Whole Word Recognition style of teaching. However, Millie, as signaled above, was alone in adopting a thorough-going rationalized Whole Word approach in Level One described in the Teachers' Notes. This, of course provides no guarantee as to how the materials are actually used in class. In other instances, the writers' intentions are less clear-cut, and the high probability is that word cards supplied are used in a more leisurely manner by teachers as a support for vocabulary presentation and memorization.

Other Approaches found

No other REL1 approaches were found in the course materials analyzed, either named or identifiable from presentation or types of activities.

4.4.14 Frequency counts of word contents of all courses

No substantial common core of favoured words was to be found, but in spite of my experience (Rixon, 1999) with analyzing other courses in similar ways, the sheer range of Reading-Focal words was a surprise. The total words fitting the definition of 'Reading-Focal' found in these courses was 860. (See Appendix 4.1 for an alphabetized list of the top 200 words). The full list is largely composed of items with four or fewer single occurrences, so we can see that the shared element is very low. As discussed in Chapter 3, this compilation of Reading-Focal words from courses analyzed is not seen as constitute a finding in itself, but use will be made of its

contents in the activities in Appendix 6 where examples are given of how such lists derived from actual materials may be employed in awareness-raising and other teacher education activities.

4.5 Questionnaire for authors, editors and curriculum advisers

The picture which emerges from the materials analyzed will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, Discussion. However it will be remembered it was felt that a better balance in that discussion could be achieved by making some attempt to investigate the experiences of writers and other professionals associated with the process of creating materials for Young Learners. The findings from this attempt are described below.

Sixteen returns for the on-line questionnaire were received. Of the 16 respondents nine had some connection with six of the courses analyzed above. A range of roles was distributed amongst these individuals, as follows:

Member of a writing team	12
Single author	7
Leader of a writing team	5
Adviser to a publisher	3
Adviser to a ministry	3
Commissioning editor	2
Other	3

The tally of choices made in response to each of the three multiple response items at the core of the questionnaire is shown in tabular form in Appendix 4.2. In this section I will focus particularly on the qualitative data provided by the comments that respondents made after responding to these questions. In this present section, I attempt to group and summarize those using verbatim extracts as evidence. I have not corrected respondents' typing mistakes and other small errors, but in cases where a word seems to have been missing or a gloss on an abbreviation is needed, I have supplied words between square brackets.

It might be expected that amongst this group of EYL publishing professionals, in which five different nationalities and a larger number of target contexts are represented, there would be differing views and experiences. The pedagogical views of the optimum ways of treating early reading in course materials were very various in some aspects although there was agreement on a number of issues. However,

the area in which there was most agreement concerned the need they had experienced in materials creation projects to compromise their views in more or less serious ways. (The two exceptions owned their own companies!).

4.5.1 Pedagogical views

A large majority (12 and 13 people respectively) agreed with the following two propositions:

- It is very important for Young Learners who are starting to learn to read to learn the initial sounds and letters of key words
- The use of rhymes is especially beneficial to learning to read in English

Focus on initial sounds is a very common practice revealed in the materials analysis above where it was found that attention was often exclusively on the initial letters of Reading-Focal Words. The use of rhymes with direct links to reading instruction was much rarer, found only in 2 sets of materials.

A striking finding was that among this group of authors and other publishing professionals only one person agreed that it was desirable to present the alphabet before the start of early reading and no-one agreed with presenting the alphabet with letter names before the start of early reading. This does not reflect what we saw in 4.4.6 above to be a prominent policy in the materials analyzed. Respondents gave clear comments explaining their views. A comment from one suggests that she sees a value in the alphabet in terms which seem to be an informal expression of its role in establishing the Alphabetic Principle.

I think it is alright for the learners to know all the names of the letters of the alphabet, not all in a stretch before they start learning to read. The idea is that they should be made to know that all those letters are what make up whatever they read or say.

Another respondent writes of her teacher training work in which she encourages teachers to expose children to story books from a very early age, She also seems to support the value of gradual familiarization with letters:

I want the kids to be familiar with English characters for some time, not

knowing the exact alphabet awareness.

Only two respondents agreed with the proposition that an alphabetical, ABC, sequence was appropriate for the introduction of Reading-Focal items. Again, this is remarkable when we consider the prevalence of this alphabetical sequence in the materials analyzed. Amongst the comments was one which modified the content of the question but made opposition to ABC order very clear.

I agree that children should focus on just a few letters at any one time when they are learning to read in English but I do not agree on having an ABC order.

From those who did not agree with ABC order, there came various other criteria for ordering and grouping. Prominent amongst them was similarity in appearance in written form of certain groups of letters. The respondent below conflates 'letters' and 'sounds' in her answer, but it is not clear whether this is due to loose use of terminology in a quickly-typed answer or a genuine confusion.

I think learning all the vowel sounds first and then adding consonant sounds to the vowels is appropriate as long as the teacher has a logical criteria for selecting the ordering of the consonant sounds. I would suggest closeness in written form to previously studied sounds e.g. 'n' before 'm' or 'd' 'g' and 'q' after 'c'.

One respondent, in whose materials reading and writing are closely linked, suggests a grouping criterion led by writing and based on the directionality of the hand movements in forming the letters rather than the superficial resemblance of the letter forms. She also raises issues of the need to support children whose L1 writing system differs significantly from the Roman one.

The reading letters has [sic] already been introduced in listening, so it will be a matter of linking the cognate word initial sound and the read letter, the written letters are introduced according to the directionality of how they are written e.g. a, c, e, o anticlockwise (because of Arabic script).

The same respondent is also concerned with how generative sound-letter choices can be in terms of building meaningful words and borrows from the Jolly Phonics

policy of introducing the highly generative <s,a,t,p,i,n> group of letters first.

I think the s,a,t,p,i,n order of introducing the sounds is useful because you can start to blend and segment words with 6 sounds.

The same person was the only one to make specific reference to the possibility of focusing at an early stage on frequent orthographically-deep words that are not amenable to phonic treatment:

I think the high frequency words which are not blendable need to be introduced in the written form quite early so children have automaticity in recognizing them before they start to write them.

A criterion favoured by a different respondent is familiarity and usefulness of words:

We should select the words from their immediate surrounding. The words should be very simple and familiar to the children. I'm very fond of using word & picture flash cards, visuals, story books in the language teaching.

4.5.2 Autonomy of choice of authors

There are several suggestions in the responses to Question 7 that authors felt that they knew better than publishers on some matters. A detailed account of publishers 'playing safe' in the face of established contextual teaching traditions is given by one experienced author.

'those in charge of the project': in reality, those in charge increasingly base their views on detailed and, these days, highly sophisticated market research to find out what teachers in the context want, or say they want. Unfortunately, this may lead to poor pedagogic decisions. The reason for this is often the lack of training and/or experience of many teachers who are frequently under pressure from school directors and parents to deliver reading and writing skills to children too young too quickly. This leads them to ask for 'methods' based on discrete building up of reading and writing as not all publishers are willing to think about changing what might already be happening in the EYL classroom worldwide ... Often, it is the teachers who 'have always done it like this' that make it difficult for 'innovative' approaches, though often those [are] based on sound pedagogic knowledge, to

be applied and used in new courses/course books.

Another author, working for a large international publisher in co-operation with local authorities in a Middle Eastern context, reports a compromise between her own wish for an extensive listening/speaking introduction to reading and the Ministry of Education's wish for reading to become a part of the course at an early stage.

The important battles were won in [country name], introduction of sounds and linked to vocabulary being introduced in listening/speaking only but by week 6 in Grade 1 the MOE insisted on introducing reading (sight letters) and writing (2-3 at a time).

Another author, while working on materials to be used in state schools under ministry guidelines, was also required to create materials that did not reflect her own views about the sequencing of reading and writing within a course.

Ideally I would have preferred the reading to come first and then writing but I had to compromise.

Locally-based writers creating materials for mainstream state school use stressed the need to conform to pre-decided guidelines in a National Curriculum although more freedom was possible in supplementary resources.

When I wrote a textbook, it was based on the National Curriculum, and therefore I had to follow the curriculum even if I had different views or beliefs. However, I could produce the materials [that] reflected my ideas for teachers' resources such as worksheets.

It depends on the purpose for creating the materials. If the materials are created for using in schools officially, we should follow the national curriculum, but if the materials are created as a camp textbook or as sub-resources, we can make the resources reflect our ideas very well.

Starkest of all we have:

I have had violent debates especially with my European-based publishers and

editors making it difficult to include all my ideas.

These experiences recall the interview data with the story of Lucy and the Federal Board of experts, except that some of the writers above had made their compromises and adjustments before their materials were actually published. Issues of power and resistance to innovation are strongly in play here.

4.5.3 Views on methods

Only two respondents thought that learning conditions for native and non-native speaking children were so different that little could be transferred from REL1 methods, while 12 thought that there were some usable ideas in L1 methods. Respondents generally showed awareness of the impact of different conditions for learning to read English. For example:

Phonics can be useful in small doses arising from meaning-based input but I don't think materials used in UK classrooms can be transferred directly for a number of reasons e.g. length of contact time, learners' lack of vocabulary. Other techniques such as 'shared reading' and 'shared talking' are useful techniques but need good levels of both language and teaching competence on the part of the teacher.

Our learners have different learning conditions so some of the materials are not easy to adapt. If they need to hear the sounds for example, we may not have such facilities so we have to rely almost entirely on print and the teachers' ingenuity.

Many reading methods that are commonly used with native speaking children could be applied to my teaching context effectively. However, it needs to be

controlled properly for my students, because my students [are] learning English as a foreign language.

4.6 Conclusion

The Findings in this chapter have a common core amid a range of views and understandings. The teachers interviewed varied in their pedagogic experience and

sophistication but most showed concern for child-centered teaching. On the whole they did not express rationales which contained a strongly linguistic component. In materials, a similar lack of linguistic rationale can be traced in that Reading-Focal material often seems mostly to be selected on the basis of initial letter-sound correspondences and alphabetical order seems to dominate. Reading-Focal material is also a very small proportion of the total text content, which nonetheless needs to be read in order for presentation and practice for other work in class to be activated. In addition, it does not cover the full phonemic repertoire that learners would need for their reading aloud and speaking work. In most courses, activities with Reading-Focal material are not pattern-seeking or generative.

In the next chapter, Discussion, I attempt to show the significance of what has been found and the ways in which both interviews and materials analysis have contributed to answering the Research Questions.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction and Overview

This chapter starts with a discussion of Research Questions with regard to how far analysis of interview and materials data contributed to answering them. The contribution of the questionnaire for authors and other publishing professionals will also be assessed. There will then follow a more general discussion in which aspects of the data that were of particular salience or which uncovered relevant new issues will be addressed. This is followed by discussions of Limitations of the Research and my reflections on the process and outcomes. The structure of the chapter is as shown below:

5.2 Research Questions

5.3 The Balancing Role of the Authors', Editors' and Curriculum Advisors' Study

5.4 Salient and New Issues Raised

5.5 Reflections on the Research

5.6 Conclusion

5.2 Research Questions

Each Research Question will be discussed in turn in terms of the extent to which it has been answered and the nature of the answers claimed. Each discussion of a research question will be followed by a concluding summary.

Research Question 1:

Are principled stances found in EYL professionals' notions with regard to suitable pedagogical approaches for helping Young Learners learn to read?

This research question has been answered in a number of general areas and some very specific ones.

Confidence of claims by professionals themselves

Taking the interviews first, in general it could be said that most members of this group of professionals did not express themselves as confidently working to a fully-

developed rationale for teaching YL to read in English, either one directly assimilated from outside authorities such as Ministry programmes or one arrived at through their own experience. In some cases challenges presented by approaches to early reading did not seem to have been part of participants' conscious concerns before issues were raised in the interviews. Eliciting accounts of their ideas concerning early reading required considerable probing. This fits with my contention in the Introduction that this is a neglected area, not frequently covered in depth in professional discussions of EYL teaching.

Although the teaching of early reading was not an area for which many of the participants offered a confident set of general principles, a number had started to work out their own stance – moving away from exclusive focus on initial letter-sound correspondences (Henry) for example. These moves were often reactive and based on their own bad experiences as learners. Others (such as Ilse) were critical of current procedures which they did not find effective. However their accounts often saw them still considering possible solutions to localized areas of perceived difficulty rather than working with principles or systems on a grander scale. An exception was Rosamund who is a seasoned curriculum adviser in her context.

Several participants seemed to be at a stage in which they were aware of difficult issues. One example was the need to take into account the potentially confusing effects of earlier learning concerning L1 reading (for example the different phonemic values given to the Roman characters used in the Pinyin writing system for Chinese, and to the Roman alphabet used for Spanish). Related to this in contexts such as Taiwan and South Korea, was the perceived dependence by children on the written word as a prop to memorising language for oral practice. This included attempts at phonemic representations of English through Zhu-Yin-Fu-Hao or Korean script. This raises issues of the effectiveness of oral language teaching itself, which may not have been addressed by all participants, but which is an issue for the recommendations in Chapter 6.

For many of the participants (supporting the account in the Introduction 1.3) their own learning experiences, whether attractive to them or not, had not provided an apprenticeship of observation which was relevant to their later own efforts in teaching younger children. This was because of the later age at which they themselves started to learn English and the different approaches used at that time. Shelly, for example, was taught at the age of 12 by a system strongly supported by use of the IPA phonetic

alphabet and seems to have flourished. She had a more sophisticated knowledge of the phonology of English than most other participants demonstrated, but by the time she began to teach 7 year-olds more than 10 years later the recommended approach and the materials in use at that time did not require or support the employment of this kind of knowledge. Her reported default approach was the global 'Reading While Listening' that has been often discussed in this thesis.

Participants such as Elinor (a trainer as well as a teacher) who were more advanced in their conceptualization of an effective global system for teaching early reading in their contexts seemed to have one important factor in common along with those who were still actively seeking solutions. That is that they were amongst those who had had the opportunity (in or out of school) to work closely with particular children as individuals, closely observing their responses and learning breakthroughs. Elinor helped her young sister; Shelly closely observed her daughter's progress in English; Shona and Karen, as experienced primary teachers, had closely observed children within school. The last two, in addition, drew upon experiences in the UK with native-speaking early readers to help them formulate their views and plans for future teaching. Ilse, from Taiwan reported a major modification in her views of the length of time and systematicity needed for early reading instruction. This was also a result of close work with individual children in the UK.

It is notable that the contexts of most participants to this study, in which lockstep full class teaching was prevalent, did not normally seem to provide easy conditions for this type of development in teachers' thought, often associated with one-to-one scaffolded reading work and observation of children's reactions. The interviews, and their accompanying questionnaires, revealed few examples in which professionals expected learners in school to receive individual support or to be given space for their own efforts. While this study is unable to assert from the types of data collected that children in the participants' contexts were sitting bewildered by their early English lessons because of the way in which words on the page at an early stage are addressed, there seems to be enough evidence from the interviews to suggest that alertness to this possibility would be a reasonable recommendation. The citation by Williams (2006, p. 39) of Chick's (1996) coined term 'safe-talk', which allows lockstep class teaching to proceed smoothly while obscuring the difficulties of individuals, seems highly relevant in this regard. It is not proposed that the solution to better reading lies in unrealistic calls for changes in the sizes or structures of classrooms

worldwide or that attachments to BANA primary schools are the key to stimulating reflection on early reading. However, in terms of implications for EYL professional education, to be discussed in Chapter 6, this observation suggests that it is worth devising means by which close observation of a child's responses can be echoed if not replicated and by which possibilities of making best use of time and resources in crowded classrooms are explored. Developing Shared Reading approaches in the place of 'Reading While Listening' seems one promising avenue, for example. Some professionals who held roles as EYL teacher educators seemed not to have a closely worked-out rationale for the very first steps in reading and seemed to base their training work more on promoting strategies for teaching reading comprehension which would be useful at a later stage with learners who are already able to deal with substantial text. Again, this supports my contention that the area of first steps in reading is a neglected area. Two of the exceptions among trainers, Lucy and Rosamund, who did have rationales for early reading, had had experiences with curricula and materials creation and adaptation which most likely had involved them in more reflection concerning the often-neglected area of very first steps.

The extent of borrowing from ready-made REL1 systems

In the Introduction, I described my informal observation that terminology related to REL1 systems of teaching early reading seemed to have become current in EYL professional discourse in many contexts. With regard to Phonics and Look and Say systems of teaching, this impression was borne out by the fairly high degree of recognition of these terms found in the interviews. However, the currency of Phonics and Look and Say seems to be mostly restricted to the use of terms. Almost none of the participants in this study claimed to have made substantial use of concepts or practices relating to one or either of these approaches as a possible contribution to their REYL issues. (Lucy, however, was an exception as a fairly recent convert to Whole Word approaches in the materials for which she was partly responsible). In their responses to questions concerning their understandings, most other participants either openly stated that they knew little of the details of an approach or gave a partial answer. In some cases participants' responses referred to procedures which would not fit with a conventional understanding of the system under discussion. Some participants such as Iris, who had gained more knowledge of Phonics than most and who saw potential in aspects of it for her teaching, expressed frustration that moving away from the traditional ABC order of focus could be unacceptable to parents and school authorities. Thus the system remained untried. This raises the issue of attitudes and beliefs within the profession and among the public as possible

deterrents to moves toward unfamiliar approaches even when individual teachers are modifying their own thinking.

Evidence from materials analysis

Little direct evidence on the personal credos of materials-creators can be gathered from materials apart from explicit statements found in Teacher's Guides. The only case found from available Guides was that for Millie, concerning the use of Whole Word techniques. Beyond such statements, it seems legitimate also to seek internal evidence in materials themselves concerning whether a fully-worked out rationale for early reading was in operation or (for reasons which we may reflect on in Section 5.3) not fully acted upon. Evidence was found of:

- a lack of consistency within single courses (sudden switches from letter to phoneme focus, for example, or scattered uses of multiple techniques within one course)
- incompleteness, such as the universal failure to encompass the full phoneme inventory that a rational view would suggest is an important prerequisite for early reading, particularly when reading aloud is an important component of classroom procedures.

The extent of borrowing from REL1 approaches in EYL materials

Phonics

Since Phonics has a strong syllabus element in its emphasis on selection and sequencing of focal items it is a teaching system amenable to attempts to 'put it on paper'. It was clear from the study that of the REL1 approaches current in most BANA or Inner Circle contexts, Phonics has been the most widely taken up at the level of official discourse in EYL contexts. We saw that, in Malaysia, various accounts of Phonics have been built into the official Syllabuses for Primary English during the 1990s, making an inclusion of a Phonics element obligatory in approved textbooks. The same is the case for Taiwan. (Kuo, 2011). Thus the term 'Phonics' was found in Taiwanese material both in rubrics and headings in Pupils' books and in notes for teachers in Teacher's Books. However in no case did any of the course materials which included the term seem to approach early reading instruction with all the hallmark features of Phonics discussed in section 2.8.2 of the Literature Review. The term 'Phonics' in these REYL materials often seemed at most to mean a general

concern for the Alphabetic Principle, which was demonstrated largely through concentration on initial letters and seldom moved beyond those phonemes which could regularly be represented by the 26 letters of the alphabet for English used singly in initial position. Consequently, the materials failed to give full coverage of English phonemes, which is a disservice both to pronunciation teaching and to the teaching of early reading. Courses such as Beginning English switched between letter-led and phoneme-led activities, but not in a way which suggested that a principled switch of focus was operating. In addition, this was done in a way that was unaccounted for and unexplained to learners and so very likely to increase levels of confusion. In a number of courses, letters on the page were referred to as 'sounds' or phonemes were referred to by letter names in a haphazard fashion. This is pointed out not in the spirit of punctilious pedantry, but because of a concern (to be elaborated in Chapter 6) for how small changes in precision within materials might bring immense dividends in clarity for pupils.

Look and Say

As has been discussed earlier, 'Millie' alone promoted a particular method (Whole Word/Look and Say) for some of the course. In terms of this Discussion, points worth stressing are that this was a deliberate artifact/construct by the authors who, in spite of some misgivings regarding what they read in the literature about its theoretical validity, nonetheless decided to introduce this unfamiliar approach to the Russian context, partly for the pragmatic reason that reading could thereby be started sooner.

An issue spanning Phonics and Whole Word considerations - the absence of strategies for dealing with orthographically-opaque words

One area of early reading teaching fits closely with notions of syllabus construction and spans both Phonics and Whole Word approaches in its relevance. That area is the handling of orthographically opaque but frequent words, on which only one set of materials analyzed had any presentation or practice items. If teachers and curriculum experts had sought inspiration in REL1 schemes in a thoroughgoing manner they might have been expected to address this area in some way. I am unable to offer reasons for this omission beyond lack of attunement to the orthographic fabric of the English language and a focus mainly on meaning. Although I am not claiming that the group interviewed represents the EYL profession as a whole, it will be remembered that these people are what could be called 'high-end' professionals yet many of them did not seem strongly oriented to

or indeed well-informed about orthographical depth as a factor in estimating the challenges posed in early reading in English. This issue will be developed below in the discussion of Research Question 3.

Other Approaches

No use or overt invocation of other REL1 approaches to teaching reading was found in the materials analyzed. One reason might be that other methods discussed, Real Books, Language Experience, Use of Environmental Print, depend more on the principled choices and actions of the teachers themselves in interaction with the children than on what can be shown on a page. They also often require specially-created or -sourced materials which fall outside the scope of a textbook.

Conclusions regarding Research Question 1

From the above we can say that a conclusion of this study is that there were few strong overall REYL rationales to be found among the professionals involved. This is not a generalizable finding although it reflects those of a wider scale survey carried out by me (Rixon, 2007a) and is consonant with one interpretation of the study by Garton, Copland & Burns (2011) discussed in the Introduction, concerning the anomaly of the low priority accorded to teaching reading but the high prevalence of reading aloud as a classroom procedure. It seems to be the case that REYL teaching currently works with a restricted set of practices, some widespread such as ABC ordering and focus on initial letters, and others, such as excursions into syllabic analysis, of more local appeal. However, there was no case in which the procedures described by participants or found in materials seems to have gelled into a locally-appropriate coherent approach to REYL learning.

An unexpected and important finding is that it not possible to assert that REYL instruction in the contexts addressed is actually heavily influenced by modern REL1 methods. Where REL1 methods are part of the discourse, REYL is influenced by localized interpretations of such methods, and as with much ELT teaching, powerful prestigious terminology seems to have been appropriated and applied to practices that it was not originated to describe. This finding presents somewhat of a contrast with sections 2.10.2 to 2.10.5 of the Literature Review, in which accounts are given of EYL professionals as aware of, and making use of, the principles of REL1 approaches in a number of contexts. However we should remember that these accounts were not numerous and that it tends to be innovative or otherwise high profile teaching that is reported in the literature, rather than widespread, textbook-

led, practice.

Research Question 2:

What relationships are set up between reading and other skills and language work in EYL teaching? In particular is there a taken-for-granted view that seeing and using English print is a facilitator for general English language learning?

Relationships between reading and other language learning seen by Interviewees

It was reported in Chapter 4 that a number of participants (e.g. Henry) saw aspects of early reading work as combining with other areas of language learning, particularly vocabulary and pronunciation. This is not seen as necessarily evidence of methodological misunderstanding or confusion. It could be (see Chapter 6, Implications) that some of these teachers are seeking economical ways to develop reading in parallel with language growth (see Literature Review section 2.6.1) in the restricted time available for teaching English. Evidence as to whether such an attempt at combined work is supported in a principled way by available materials will be discussed below.

We saw from the Findings that interviewees generally did not raise issues concerning the use of words on the page or the board from a very early stage as a source or a support for general EYL learning, that is, aspects of language learning in which the skill of reading was not specifically focused on as a goal. This could be related with their own early experiences as learners which (except in the case of the Russian participant) all involved this practice. Even in cases in which the learning experiences associated with 'words on the page' were not pleasant or successful, participants (e.g. Janet) seem to focus on other, associated, aspects such as forced memorization, constant testing or the sheer volume of text involved. In the descriptions of their own teaching it seems that the majority of participants used seen words from an early stage as part of the support for general language teaching. The careful teasing out of Vehicular versus Reading-Focal words will, I hope, be accepted as one of the contributions of the study regarding REYL materials. Pedagogical implications of this finding will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Relationships between Reading and other Language Learning Set up by Materials

Evidence from the materials analysis suggests that relying on seen words from the

start of English learning is not controversial, or that at least 'words on the page' from the start is very widespread publishing practice. All materials analyzed, except for one set (The Korean Elementary School course) started immediately with substantial quantities of printed English words.

Sometimes activities overtly labeled 'Reading' and seemingly intended for building reading skills were present from the first or first few lessons, suggesting that learning to read in English was seen as a separable goal. In others, however, no activities specific to developing reading were signaled, yet words read from the page were integral to the performance of speaking and other skills work. This suggested an assumption that words on the page were facilitators rather than goals.

We should, however, also bear in mind (See comments below on the Materials Writers' questionnaire in Section 5.3) that publishers' views of what books should be like, could have been in play here, too, perhaps coupled with views based on market research amongst the most traditional teachers in many contexts. It is also the case that many teachers appreciate words on the page as a support for their own efforts. The one case (that of South Korean Elementary School English) in which the materials deliberately eschewed substantial print in English for a protracted time, is one that, according to one interviewee (Karen) raised some opposition amongst teachers. A cogent reason for words on the page being an expectation from the outset of a course in some under-resourced contexts such as Cameroon or Sri Lanka is that when facilities to use audio recordings or other media support cannot be taken for granted, words on the page are the only sure way of representing the content of the course. In such cases they provide both a syllabus and a 'script' for the teacher, a function which is openly and practically acknowledged in the English All-Stars materials (Francophone Cameroon) in which classroom instructions and suggested words for the teacher to use are printed in the margins of the Pupil's Book. It should be acknowledged that none of the research approaches in this study enabled me to collect evidence (beyond the hearsay of participants' reports and memories) that might indicate that the practice of having large quantities of words on the page from an early stage actually creates discernible difficulties for learners. However, the 'rational view of material' stance I made clear in the Introduction prompts the following observations:

1. All courses featured a considerably greater quantity of Vehicular words than Reading-Focal words, but in some cases the difference was massive. The

number of Focal Words in all cases is modest, and as we have seen there is very little system or patterning discernible in their choice, sequencing and 'dosing' or in the types of learning activities to which they are central.

2. Pattern-seeking is not amongst the normal activities with Reading-Focal material. It does not therefore seem that patterns learned through Focal Words are intended to be used generatively - as keys to help to unlock Vehicular words sharing similar patterns - in the type of way that could lead to 'self teaching' in Share's (1995) terms.

3. We have seen that the current practices regarding the choice and sequencing of Reading-Focal words lead to large 'gaps' in the material concerning overt coverage of the sound system and even greater gaps concerning a range of phoneme-letter correspondences. Materials in which much of the fundamental fabric of the formal components of a language is untreated cannot be said to be systematic or expected to be effective.

4. Attention to frequent but non-transparent words, to be built into sight-vocabulary was, with one exception, not systematically built into materials. Although such words might be present in the body of the text, a special category was not set up for overt attention by teachers and learners. This may perhaps be an area in which a tentative cause-effect relationship could be suggested between experience with materials and teachers' cognitions in that very few interviewees seemed to have such a category clearly in mind, even though the Nursery Rhyme activity gave some scope for it to be elicited. Only Ilse spoke of Sight Vocabulary, a notion which she attributed to her recent contact with literacy teaching in a UK school and signaled as an important change in her professional outlook. The presence of such a category in materials would thus not only ensure coverage of this area of the language but serve to raise awareness of it in the teachers using the materials.

It will be seen from the materials analysis that, although an alphabetical-order initial letter-focus on early reading is very common, no one solution is predominant, even in the same teaching context. In the case of so-called 'glocal' adaptations such as were undertaken in the People's Republic of China, the adapted books seemed to retain the orientation to early reading of the original course materials rather than having a centralized view of reading imposed upon them. The result is that we have a wide range of suggested practice in the Chinese books of the early 2000s, from an

approach whose intention seems to be largely oral, with only Vehicular words and no Focal reading words in PEP Primary English to the firmly simultaneous development of oral skills with reading skills in Pioneer English.

Conclusions Regarding Question 2

The conclusion with regard to Research Question 2 is that there is considerable lack of clarity among EYL professionals with regard to the potential and actual role of reading with regard to general English language development and other language teaching methodology. Teachers using materials may or may not question connotations and omissions resulting from this lack of clarity, but on the evidence of the interviews it seems likely that many may follow materials without yet perceiving a need to supplement or re-focus them. The development of the type of Teacher Pedagogical Knowledge discussed by Wilson et al (1987) that allows them to question or to override the content of poorly-conceived materials is a recommendation to be discussed in Chapter 6.

To an objection that perhaps it is not the policy in the contexts studied to pay particular attention to reading at primary level, there is the counter-evidence provided by the contents of curricular documents cited in the Introduction and elsewhere referring to the contexts in question, many of which openly state an interest in equipping Young Learners with reading skills by the end of primary schooling (see Appendix 1.1). Even leaving that fact aside, it could be said that, by loading the pages of the course-materials at an early stage with text which by necessity must be read in order for any activities to be implemented, some course-providers have created an unsustainable position with regard to both reading and other language development.

Research Question 3:

What types of awareness are shown concerning linguistic and orthographic factors in early REYL teaching?

Evidence from Interview data

The interviews did not succeed in eliciting many highly nuanced discussions of English phonology and orthography and the challenges they might offer to early readers, in spite of the fact that two out of the three practical tasks offered centred on the composition of words. Findings from the Nursery Rhyme Task, the most

successful of the tasks, showed that, in their judgment of difficulty and challenge of words to be read from the page, interviewees were largely concerned with whether topic and content were of the appropriate level for the age and developmental stage of the children. In Vousden's (2008) terms it was the developmental rather than the environmental aspect of reading that predominated in their cognitions concerning grading and judging levels. The divide in English words between the more or less phonically regular and the orthographically opaque did not seem strongly salient to many of these participants. Only Ilse, who had gained this knowledge while in the UK, was aware of Sight Vocabulary as a pedagogical category. Even Shona, who worked fluently with the notion of Sight Words, seemed to stress frequency rather than intransigence to decoding as the motive for including Sight Words in courses for Young Learners. Other participants were not aware of regularities such as the split-digraph 'magic <e>' pattern.

Evidence from Materials

As has been discussed in a number of places in this thesis, many of the materials analyzed were both inconsistent in their treatment of elements of reading and incomplete in their coverage of both phonology and orthography. More evidence on these issues will be discussed in the section on RQ 4 below, but the relevant comment for this present section is perhaps that, although such omissions or inconsistencies might be attributed to lack of professional and linguistic grounding in the course writers involved, this would be a crude as well as a disagreeable judgment. It should be remembered that it takes more than a writer to ideate and create course materials. This is the reason for the Questionnaire for authors and others involved in EYL publishing which will be discussed in section 5.3 and which will return to the issues raised in this and the next section.

Conclusions Regarding Question 3

It will be clear to readers of the transcriptions of interviews that the low level of language awareness that I am claiming for some of the professionals interviewed is not associated with a poor command of English or lack of professional engagement with their learners. It will also be remembered that this group of EYL professionals is in many ways a highly-developed and privileged set of individuals by comparison with much of the profession, in that they were on a career path which had led them to postgraduate level study in the UK. Similar conclusions may more tentatively offered concerning the writers of the materials analyzed. A possible cause of the low level of awareness may be sought in the orientation of past training that has not focused

attention on the relevant aspects of language analysis.

As we saw in the Introduction, many new recruits to EYL teaching in many contexts receive only basic training aimed at improving their own language and methodology skills but not including grounding in phonology, orthography or other technical areas relevant to the teaching of early reading. I am not claiming that heavily augmenting existing teacher orientation courses with specialist components on teaching reading is a feasible or affordable option in the climate of haste in which much EYL innovation has taken place and is still resolving itself. It is, however, one of the aims of this thesis to consider practical ways of supporting teachers and giving them the sort of 'self-teaching' launch that may help them cope better with the challenges of supporting their own learners into reading competence. The options for Teacher Education will therefore be discussed at more length in Chapter 6.

Research Question 4:

What types of system in selection, sequencing and ways of working with reading-related items can be found in REYL teaching?

Evidence from Interviews

It is a difficult matter to elicit from individuals in an interview detailed responses concerning content of envisaged syllabuses, particularly those in which language items are in play. However, as was discussed in 3.9, items in the questionnaire attempted to elicit such responses as well as giving some preparation for follow-up in the interviews. Responses to Question 17 of the questionnaire and the follow-up in the interview were, as we have seen in 4.3, low in evidence of language awareness and generally short on detail.

Evidence from Materials

The materials analyzed do not demonstrate high use in their syllabus and activity design of the phonological and orthographic factors that were signaled in the Literature Review (Section 2.4) as being relevant if decision-making concerning how to support REYL reading in a systematic manner is to take account of linguistic factors. The choices with regard to the content of ABC Spreads and Reading-Focal inventories often suggest considerable care with regard to their interest and relevance to the child's world, an aspect which is made clear by the strong 'local colour' that individual word lists display. However, very few courses contain

Reading-Focal words that appear to be chosen on any linguistic principle other than the realizations in pronunciation of their initial letters. Nor are words often grouped so that generative patterns may be noticed. Even rhymes and chants used in courses were seldom found in close connection with reading activities, such as facilitating and adding pleasure to the rote memorization of items in which patterns might be found or on which analogies might be based.

Even at the level of format and layout, awareness of the possible pedagogical impact of choices did not seem to be high. This may be seen as the province of Editors/Publishers rather than writers, but it is an area on which writers might aim to have input based on clearly-expressed views. It seems to make pedagogical sense, for example, to show headings in conventional 'sentence' form with upper case initials only for the first word rather than needlessly to show them in elegant adult-friendly style with initial capitals for all content words. Another area for consideration is the choice of typeface for the first encounters with printed English and ways, later on, to meet the need to make effective transitions to other typefaces in which the forms of some letters are fundamentally different in appearance so that children can read with confidence outside the textbook.

Another important issue, connected with the above, is that in most materials, upper and lower case letters were frequently shown together in Reading-Focal material, without overt indication in the materials of the functions of Upper Case letters in English. The exception - the Malaysian materials - ironically came from a context in which the Roman alphabet was used for other languages and the Upper Case/Lower Case distinction was therefore likely to be encountered and reinforced outside English lessons.

Phonological coverage

It seems that a partial grasp of the Alphabetic principle may lie behind the common confluences found of Phonics with phonetics and Phonics with pronunciation teaching. A major problem with these confluences seems to be not so much the loose use of terminology as the resulting incompleteness of coverage of any one system.

1. Systematic coverage, through pronunciation practice, of the sound system of the target variety of English is not provided in any of the courses analyzed, either in conjunction with or independently from the initial reading work.
2. Where phonemic transcriptions are provided for guidance of teachers, these

are aligned either to RP or GA even in cases in which an acceptable local variety has a different phoneme inventory. Occasionally, however, in contexts where a different variety of English from RP or GA is normally used in society, the fault lines show when there are traces of the local variety winning through as we saw in the Cameroonian course Sign in to English.

If materials are inexplicit or lacking, a considerable onus is thereby placed on teachers themselves to clarify or supplement their contents. This is particularly necessary in contexts in which the writing system of the L1 of the learners is different from that for English, but it is relevant also in contexts in which the Roman alphabet is used and different conventions apply. It is hoped in Chapter 6 to address the issues in two main strands:

1. supporting teachers in exploiting deficient materials to best effect
2. suggesting a framework for writers so that future materials might emerge with better coverage and provide a reliable framework from which teachers may learn more about the language systems relevant to early reading

Orthographic transparency

The analysis of the four types of word lists derived from the materials (Reading-Focal, Vehicular, Character Names, Onomatopoeic) revealed varying but on the whole low incidence of orthographic transparency. This was less surprising in the Vehicular Words lists where focused reading instruction was by my definition not the purpose, but in the Focal Words and the Character Names lists, if we accept the general utility of the establishment of a sense of the Alphabetic Principle, this low level of transparency seemed to be a pedagogical opportunity missed, particularly where Look and Say approaches did not seem to be favoured. Missing it in the Onomatopoeic words is perhaps less grave although rather odd.

Different vocabulary inventories for different worlds

Although I have focused strongly on the orthographic and phonological properties of Reading-Focal words included in the different course materials, this is because it seemed to be an under-emphasized factor, not because it is my belief that these considerations should override all others. Course materials need to reflect the world of the Young Learners concerned, and it is through vocabulary choice that this most easily occurs. Many of the words reflecting local realities in, for example, the Anglophone Cameroonian course materials, seem to be of the very three-letter CVC

pronunciation type that make them extremely convenient for Alphabetic Principle teaching or even for narrower Phonics-based teaching. Words such as 'pot', 'pit', 'pod', 'dig' have a real significance at least in the many rural schools in this context, whereas they might be considered artificial inclusions in a course intended, say, for urban areas of South Korea or Taiwan. If a larger stock of similarly transparent short words for these contexts is required, the course designer will need to find them within the centres of interest of children living there (cf. Handscombe, 1969). Although I have signaled that the word lists compiled from the analysis of the materials in this study reflect actual rather than necessarily optimum choices, the critical analysis, as a teacher education activity, of this type of course content may be one step towards raising awareness.

It is clear from the Findings that there are stark differences not only in the nature of words included but in the number of words included in courses for the Outer Circle and Expanding Circle contexts chosen for the study. The children in Outer Circle contexts have an urgent need both to label their environment and, in cases where English is the medium of instruction, to access the curriculum. Therefore the Outer Circle vocabularies might be expected to be large, and those for English medium contexts larger still. Although it is strictly outside the ambit of this thesis, it might be questioned, however, whether the Vehicular component of some courses is itself well-conceived and crafted. It seems unlikely that a single occurrence (token) of a word (type) within a course with an ever-growing vocabulary load constitutes an effective means of making it salient for learners. However, many of the very large overall vocabularies of some Cameroonian books were built of such single occurrences. The same proved to be true of some of the Expanding Circle courses, and again issues of course book crafting may be in play here.

Beyond initial reading and on to coping with text

Very few course materials from the Expanding Circle contexts arrived at the presentation of texts, even short ones, for reading comprehension within the one or two levels (representing two school years) on which the analysis concentrated. In the extreme case, the South Korean Elementary School English series, no texts were found before near the end of the final book, Grade 6, and these were minimal, as in short postcard messages. The roles of reading throughout this series seem to be restricted to presentation and consolidation of language. The Outer Circle materials, particularly those of Anglophone Cameroon where English is the medium of instruction as well as a curricular subject, might be expected to focus on more

substantial text engagement, and at an earlier stage. This expectation was borne out, but there was considerable variation about when text-reading came into play and the level of challenge of the texts in the final levels of the series.

Conclusions Regarding Question 4

Many of the courses offer a rich and locally-relevant universe via their themes and vocabulary contents. However it seems that there could be additional pedagogic opportunities offered by adding more system to choices of words and their uses within the courses. This issue will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

5.3 The Balancing Role of the authors, editors and curriculum advisors study

The most striking overall finding from this supplementary study was that many of the views expressed by a majority of the authors and editors group ran counter to what was reported in Findings concerning materials analysis. It is acknowledged that not all the respondents had direct responsibility for the actual materials analyzed, but it remains striking that even 7/16 should agree with the proposition:

‘It is a good idea to delay reading in English until some time after listening and speaking have been established.’

In the materials analyzed we see quite the opposite embodied on the page. The low incidence of enthusiasm for teaching the alphabet as a first step also contrasts strongly with practice in the materials analyzed. The open-response items, particularly the remarks on the conservatizing forces of market-led publishing, and those on the need to compromise personal views raise issues ripe for future research on the forces that support or militate against particular pedagogical principles finding their way into print. Issues pointed out above concerning format or heading style are not normally under the control of writers, but there seems to be room for awareness-raising on the part of editors and designers.

5.4 Other Issues Emerging

5.4.1 Perceived emblems of success

While, as we have seen (Introduction 1.4, Appendix 1.1) great emphasis is placed in policy and syllabus documents on oral/aural development in English at the early stages of learning, this seems to be accompanied by a public esteem and appetite,

whether formally acknowledged in policy or not, for signs of literacy development in children at an early stage. One widely-esteemed emblem of this development seems to be the ability to display knowledge of the names of letters of the alphabet in alphabetical order ('ABC as child cultural capital'). Whether this feeds or is itself fed by the very common practice of including an ABC Spread and a mnemonic song or rhyme in the very first lessons of an English course is an inextricable issue. However it is a practice that differs greatly from much current practice in REL1 contexts, where letter names and alphabetical order tend to be reserved for a later stage when children might be making use of them for reference purposes with dictionaries and other alphabetically-ordered materials. Taken alone, this enthusiasm for early ABC naming might be considered a harmless and neutral phenomenon, but if it is bundled with, and possibly influences, the ordering of elements in a reading syllabus, reinforces exclusive focus on initial letters and sounds of words and (through the practice of spelling out words by letter names) creates confusion about letter-sound relationships, there is probably good reason to revisit the assumptions implied. Where it also deflects teachers from attempting new syllabus systems such as an ordering of Focal Words based on perceived challenge or reliability of letter-sound links, it can be seen to have a stagnating effect on pedagogy.

5.4.2 Views of School Accountability

In a number of contexts it seemed that emphasis is placed on the responsibility of learners and their families to take special steps in order to help the learner meet the school's expectations for attainment, including preparing privately for the next level of education, taking extra tuition in order to close gaps between expected and actual achievement. Such cultural practices sustain a vigorous private provision in a number of contexts, both in terms of private institutions offering language development work and individuals offering private tuition, often in the home. In a number of cases in the interviews we saw that it was the children not taking private instruction who were seen as creating problems of uneven levels of attainment in English, including English reading, within a state school class. Where such an attitude prevails, less onus is perhaps placed on the state school both to explain and justify its targets and to take its own measures to ensure that the maximum number of learners achieve targets through what is provided within the school itself. This factor, coupled with a lack of clarity within school about what success in reading means and how it is to be measured could be said to contribute to a climate in which the conceptualization and handling of early reading is unlikely to undergo spontaneous revision.

5.4.3 Market-led publishing

We saw from the EYL authors and publishers survey discussed above that it could be the case that nervousness about attempting change in markets in which traditional localized approaches to reading instruction are strongly represented could play a part in the conservative shaping that editors and publishing directors impose on authors' ideas and proposals. An effective response to such a tendency might in the first instance be through supplementary materials which are 'Trojan Horses', convincing enough to pass the proposal stage and successful enough in both pedagogical and sales terms to begin to raise issues. Chapter 6. addresses this area.

5.4.4 Catering for the transition to fluent independent reading

It seems in many cases that overt treatment of reading as a skill in its own right is not fully in place in a way that aims to take pupils systematically beyond the first steps towards decoding supported in the activities surrounding Reading-Focal items discussed in section 4.4 That transition point may not be covered by materials although it is tracked in pupil records in the more process-oriented REL1 classroom. Amelioration of the situation seems more likely through teacher action in class rather than through materials, making Teacher Development in this area important. The modeling function for children of procedures such as Shared Reading has already been mentioned and will be discussed further as a topic for Teacher Development in Chapter 6.

5.4.5 Roles of Writing Found

One issue of interest for this study is whether writing is seen as having the function of directly contributing to EYL children's development of the ability to read (decode) the language in the same way as it is in a number of views of initial teaching of reading of English as a first language as well as in several other reading cultures. See, for example, the anecdote about 'Tony' from Gregory (2008) quoted in section 2.8.1 of the Literature Review. Although in many of the courses analyzed handwriting and letter-formation are taught step-by-step with learning letters as part of reading instruction, in most there are other activities involving the copying and writing out of words and sentences, which have a different function. A major purpose for writing in many of the course materials under study seemed to be a more general 'ELI' one: as a means of practising and consolidating new language such as vocabulary items or

structures. This language consolidation rather than literacy focus is particularly clear-cut in courses such as the South Korean Elementary School English where children are asked to copy and gap-fill recently-presented new language.

5.5 Limitations of the Research

This study is the product of a particular interest stemming from my work as a writer and editorial consultant with EYL materials and also in EYL teacher education. In that sense I had good access to the elements I needed in order to put together a viable research project in terms of data collection. However, there are areas, both contextual and in its design, where limitations may be found.

Contextually, during most of the period of the study I was institution-bound, and had not the flexibility of use of my time that might have enabled me to implement a design which followed through into the classroom use of selected materials. Such follow-through would not have required massive observation or have been applied to all contexts, but would perhaps have allowed for more depth in the analysis of materials and allowed a focus on one or two contexts to be taken as Case Studies. It was my original hope to be able to do this in the case of South Korea, from which context (as a result of another project) I had permission to make use of eight hours of classroom video of consecutive lessons with the course materials that have been analyzed in this study. However, a combination of factors, including the lack of matching classroom data for other contexts, resulted in a decision not to pursue this path. A classroom-oriented study will therefore be signaled in Chapter 6 as a subject for future research.

A major limitation which must beset many studies involving an element of Teacher Subject Knowledge is that it is not only difficult to elicit what participants hold to be true regarding theory or the factual components of their subject area but even more difficult to demonstrate acceptably what participants do not know. I did not in the interviews ask if participants were acquainted with research on reading, perhaps too easily taking it for granted that the lack of training in reading claimed by most of them accounted for that area.

Although as I discuss in Methodology 3.5, the study covers contexts which are emblematic of different conditions and L1 writing systems, it focuses on professionals and materials from only some parts of the world. It therefore has little to say, except in

the general survey of practice in the Literature Review, about European contexts beyond Greece and Russia or about other parts of the world such as Central America. However, as stated in Section 3.2, an attempt at a completist survey of reported world-wide practice seemed a less appropriate project than an attempt to gain deeper insights into ways in which early reading might be conceptualized and rationalized. I would therefore say that the geographical scope of the project is not the issue so much as the value of the insights from the individuals involved.

It is recognized that the quantitative work undertaken, particularly that in sections 4.4.1 to 4.4.3 above, can only indicate levels of challenge in materials-as-workplan. Materials-in-action levels of reading challenge may depend somewhat on the amount of recycling and repetition built into the course as a whole but it is affected very largely by the classroom implementation of the materials by individual teachers. Both are beyond the scope of this study, but it is felt nonetheless that the materials analysis provides a useful starting point for reflection on materials and ways in which their 'crafting' may be improved.

There are some gaps in the range of materials analyzed. The state-sponsored or state-approved textbooks in many contexts are extremely hard to come by for outsiders to the system and their export may either be not allowed or not encouraged. The series Friends with English, adapted from the international series Gogo Loves English, by the Educational Department of Guandong Province in the People's Republic of China would have provided a very interesting set of data and increased the number of series from China under review. I had seen the first levels of this series in the past but, at the time of the study, samples from the series were available to me only in the form of Book 3, which was not of use in this study. The only books from Malaysia that I was able to obtain (after extensively touring educational and second hand booksellers in the country) was the series intended for Chinese- and Tamil-medium schools. This represents the national syllabuses for English, but it would have been ideal also to have had course materials for Malay-medium schools. Only one level of the Syrian course book was available. The Sri Lankan primary school materials were analyzed without access during the study period to any interviewees from Sri Lanka. I decided, however, to retain these materials amongst the set analyzed since they (in their use of a 'writing first' organizing principle) provided an interesting counterpoint to other material. A gap that I regret in terms of both interviews and materials analysis is in data from Oman. Because of the interest of the controversy surrounding the Omani early primary

textbooks (See 1.7 and 2.2) I should have liked to obtain copies of the first and later editions of these books for analysis, but this was not possible. Neither did I have access to Omani EYL professionals. I hope, however, that the range of materials that was obtainable for analysis has nonetheless been sufficient to reveal the different solutions to early reading adopted in the EYL field, and that this, coupled with the manner of analysis, will be seen as a contribution over and above the precise contextual information revealed.

In terms of detailed design, there are things that I would have done differently if starting again. The materials analysis framework was originally devised in 2007 and remained static for a considerable time. It was only when a large block of materials was analyzed together in the last year of the study that the need for refinements to capture relevant data became strongly apparent. In particular, it was in late 2010 that I added the item concerning whether the full phoneme inventory of English had somehow been overtly covered in the course materials. This item required a redesign of the summary and commentary form and another pass through all the materials. This in itself presented no problem. However the topic might have had relevance for the interviews, which were by then at an end. My original idea at the outset of the study was that the talk from EYL professionals would inform the materials analysis more than the other way round. Although there was in fact some interaction between early findings in both materials and interviews, I am now of the opinion that the analysis of the materials raised more issues for what could have been included in the interviews. For example, overt attention to the participants' knowledge and views of the phoneme inventory of English could have provided more grist for my emerging interest in the Alphabetic Principle and how it might be related with pronunciation teaching. However, given the difficulties of eliciting responses in these 'knowledge areas', discussed above in 3.9, and in this present section this might in any case not have been a fully successful part of the interviewing process.

Eliciting some inkling of a participant's linguistic knowledge of orthography and phonology via practical tasks was to some extent successful, but avoidance strategies were always possible and argumentum *ex silentio* is hardly conclusive. It is always possible also that the participant did not interpret the task as a cue to display knowledge. Of the two tasks concerning orthography and phonology, the Nursery Rhyme task which had an element of practical physical sorting (separating challenging from less challenging words on cards) was by far the more successful. The task involving young children's spelling attempts, proved less fascinating than I

had hoped and, since it only required comments rather than choices, generally elicited little.

The Literature Review was under construction throughout the research period. It was only at a relatively late stage that I retrieved the article by El-Okda (2005) (see Chapter 2.2) with its extremely interesting use of ‘scenarios’ to which respondents were asked to react. This is a technique that I feel would have had much to offer in the preparatory questionnaire and for interview follow up. I intend to experiment with it in future research.

5.6 Reflections on the Research

5.6.1 Relationship of Questionnaires and Interviews

It was always my intention to use the closed-ended as well as the open-ended items in the questionnaire as a priming device for the interviews as much as a source of primary data. Therefore although I have been cautious in my assessment of the reliability of questionnaire data, I am not presenting it as a limitation on this research. The reliability of questionnaire responses in the area of professional cognition seems, however, a generally interesting point for discussion. This is particularly in view of Borg’s statement (2003) that until that date, at least, there had been considerable questionnaire-based research but very little of the ‘voices’ of reading teachers heard. In cases where a participant modified a questionnaire answer during the interview, the amount of detail provided in the new account gives us warranty, I would suggest, to prefer the interview version over the questionnaire response.

5.6.2 Coping with face-threatening inquiries

The conversational strategies discussed in Methodology (3.9) to try to lessen face-threatening direct questions about professionals’ subject-area knowledge concerning teaching methods seemed to be successful in that participants did not seem to be embarrassed if they did not know about particular REL1 teaching approaches. I would in future keep to the indirect approach of introducing a ‘knowledge’ area such as a teaching method via accounts of debates it had aroused, and in this regard the scenario approach of El-Okda mentioned above and discussed in 2.2 would also be useful.

5.6.3 Extending the Research Methodology to a Teacher Development Approach

Some participants declared that the interview itself had been a formative, if not quite a therapeutic, experience. June, who was interviewed in two phases (see Methodology 3.9.1), said after her second interview:

J: It was a really actually I have to say 'thank you' because I could I could take time to reflect my learning process [Oh good and after I forced you to [laugh cough]]. It was really joyful and after the interview when I talked to my brother it was really good because I can I could reflect my times so maybe it is very helpful to teach my students in the future so reflection thinking or reflection time is very meaningful.

June lines 704 - 707

The potential of extending this research technique to tutorial and teacher development use will be explored further in Chapter 6.

5.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to assess the findings and, taking account of limitations of and reflections on the study as a whole, to draw out their significance in terms of what steps may be taken to augment not only the capacity of teachers to arrive at more complete and coherent concepts of early reading teaching and how best to engage in it, but also to make positive suggestions for improving the craft and rigour of materials creation for YL. It will be remembered that the latter aim is based on the premise that well-conceived and well-constructed materials can act as a very positive framework for the increase of teacher subject-knowledge as well as acting as a day-to-day script and set of guidelines for their classroom work.

I now pass to the final chapter of Conclusions and Recommendations in which perhaps I may be more speculative in the consideration of solutions for areas in which I feel that problems have been securely identified. The proposed solutions and their coherence with the findings of the main study coupled with the Literature Review are offered as part of the claimed contribution of the study.

Chapter 6: Conclusions Recommendations and Future Research

6.1 Introduction and Overview

The study has filled a number of gaps in previous research on teacher cognition concerning REYL, and has indicated that support could usefully be provided for the subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge base of some teachers with regard to the teaching of early reading to Young Learners. I do not claim that the findings are generalizable to all contexts in the world or to all EYL professionals, but it seems that there were common features revealed in the data that suggest areas of concern that would repay wider attention. The Discussion chapter has indicated in what areas and how support may be given. These will be elaborated in the present chapter in which some possible ways of addressing the areas are offered.

The contributions of the study and suggestions for future research then follow.

The chapter is structured as shown below:

6.2 Implications and Recommendations

6.3 Contributions of the study

6.4 Suggestions for future research

6.5 Conclusion

6.2 Implications and Recommendations

The main part of this section covers considerations of what might be implied by this research in terms of Materials Methods Resources and Teacher Education.

A comparison may perhaps be drawn with one of the findings of a report concerning the characteristics of effective REL1 teachers of literacy (Medwell, Wray, Poulson, & Fox, 1998, pp. 133-134). In this study, effective teachers, like the participants in mine, were not necessarily able to display overt knowledge about language and command of the technical language concerning reading but they:

appeared to know and understand the material in the form in which they taught it ...The knowledge about content and ... knowledge about teaching

and learning strategies were integrated. The knowledge base of these teachers was thus their pedagogical content knowledge.

The difference between the teachers in the report by Medwell et al and those in my study is that the UK teachers were working with very explicit and carefully-structured literacy teaching materials which (however they may be judged for quality) clearly embodied the linguistic and pedagogical notions that the creators felt were necessary for effective teaching. This seems to chime with my claim that well-crafted and well-structured teaching materials can contribute importantly to the profiles of effective teachers even when those teachers could perhaps not have ideated the content of the teaching programme themselves. Therefore, materials are to be promoted which, beyond the support and challenge offered to the children using them, offer a systematic and rationalized approach that is transparent to the teachers implementing them. By making this recommendation I am not undermining the professional freedom of teachers, since, given adequate orientation to critical materials analysis, they will be equipped to differ and to make their own modifications. I would say that differing from a systematically-presented set of materials puts one in a more powerful position and is more likely to lead to a rationalized position of one's own than differing from randomness. The suggestions I am making under the heading below 'Small changes – big dividends' are exactly that: the types of changes which make little difference to the outward aspect of the materials but, because they build in encounters with aspects of English reading which are planned and not random, are likely to provide more opportunities for children to reach the self-teaching stage (Share, 1995).

6.2.1 Small changes, big dividends

6.2.1.1 Considering Phonics, the Phoneme Inventory and the Alphabetic Principle

From the study, we have seen that the term Phonics seems to be in widespread use among EYL teachers and in course materials but not always with understandings that would coincide with those of Phonics proponents in countries where it has been long established. Rather than limiting ourselves to pointing out or even lamenting this terminological inexactitude, it seems more profitable to acknowledge that the term Phonics seems to have been used in a number of cases (such as by Shelly and Henry) in this study to express a more general underlying view of a useful approach to early reading. This seems in fact to be an expression of the Alphabetic Principle, which, without the detailed systematizations of a teaching method such as Phonics, nonetheless maintains the fundamental 'big idea' that in an alphabetical language

the marks on the page have some relationship with the speech sounds of the language. Even in those teaching materials in which a very limited number of such relationships are explored, the creators seem to be working with this principle. I would suggest only that they have not taken the insight far enough.

A proposal for training and materials upgrading purposes might therefore be to encourage teachers and materials writers to start from 'where they are at' (Bolitho & Wright, 1995) by discovering for themselves the gaps in coverage in existing materials and to challenge them to do more work on new sound-letter correspondences on the same lines similar to those in the areas that have already been covered, or possibly more enterprising ones. A sample activity for an in-service workshop, teacher education module, or Specialist Seminar appears in Appendix 6. This will act as an awareness-raiser or even a source of direct input on what phoneme inventory the teachers feel they are or should be working with. Having identified what items have not yet been presented in the course materials, the challenge is then for the participants to find acceptable, and if possible, palatable means of focusing on and practising them.

6.2.1.2. More complete pronunciation coverage

A point that has been made repeatedly is that teachers and materials writers, could pay more attention to establishing in the children an operational command of the complete phoneme system of the language, since this is certainly amongst those areas of the language that an EYL beginner, unlike his or her EL1 counterparts, will not have a grasp of from the start. In the materials analyzed, little overt attention was paid to pronunciation but when it was in focus it was often linked with early reading activities. There is no reason why this should be the case since predominantly orally presented rhymes and chants could very effectively be used to cover the ground perhaps without the interference that orthographical representations bring, but since time-effective teaching seems to be an issue, a proposal is made in Appendix 6 for combined pronunciation and phonemic-awareness activities. Note that the words in focus are drawn from the analysis of word lists reported in Chapter 4.

6.2.2 Implications for Professional Education

Specialist orientation of teachers to issues in early YL reading is desirable but is unlikely to be the first priority in many contexts in the present period. As discussed in the Introduction, the professionalization of EYL in many contexts is still inchoate, with

the most pressing need for new teachers being to receive basic support in their general language teaching methodology and in many cases support for their own developing command of English. It does not therefore seem realistic to recommend that specialist training in the teaching of reading should take precedence over urgent general preparation for the role of classroom teacher of English. For these cases, I have made some 'reading lite' suggestions for additions which might be incorporated into such general courses.

However, in circumstances in which EYL has come of age to the extent that young people plan to become EYL teachers and substantial pre-service courses are established, specialist modules in the teaching of REYL would be appropriate. I make recommendations for the content of such a module in Appendix 6. Some of the strands and activities listed here would also be suitable for In-Service teacher development. A number of the activities proposed start from teaching materials in actual use in a particular context and use frameworks for analysis and comment by course members derived from research methods used in this present study. In this way, the teacher development starts from shared familiar material and, through work with that, aims to expand the perspectives from which teachers might view the teaching of reading.

Other activities might take as their starting point verbatim quotations from the professionals involved in my study on the grounds that responding to authentic voices is more motivating and 'grounding' than debating more abstract propositions. The use of emotive quotes in training can also be powerful. Some of the less measured statements encountered in my reading for this study such as that by Flesch (1955) claiming that Whole Word teaching was akin to Pavlovian animal training could be collected for this purpose.

Until the time that the professionalization of EYL has reached the stage when specialized courses for entrants to YL teaching are established and expected, my recommendation is that curriculum advisers and materials designers should consider the merits of what Vousden (2008) calls a 'rational' approach to syllabus and materials design. This would operate on two fronts:

1. Firstly greater awareness and Subject Knowledge in teachers could be built by the use of materials in which early Reading-Focal words are selected so as to be orthographically amenable and there is also overt presentation of

sets of non-transparent 'tricky words' and a clear message that these need to be managed in a different way.

2. Secondly, a rational approach could render the early contents of reading instruction rather less confusing for children than interviewees such as Elinor suggest it often is at the moment. I am not assuming that systematic presentation leads to ready assimilation by all, but, it seems proper to try to avoid the kind of random disconnected experiences which Elinor saw as underlying the difficulties that her sister had over a number of school years.

6.2.2.1 Inventory of features which a rational view would predict as helpful

The lack of system and substance in the reading instruction syllabus of many materials seems to suggest a lack of focus on, and knowledge of, the fabric and nature of phonology and orthography of English. This is a serious issue in the conditions of much EYL teaching, in which course materials are an important guide and support for relatively inexperienced teachers without specialist training.

1. In particular, it was revealed that none of the courses analyzed provided guidance for systematic coverage of the complete set of phonemes of the particular variety of spoken English that was the target. This gap may have been promoted by the fact that most of the courses were 'letter-led' rather than phoneme-led. This was so, and particularly anomalous, even in cases in which Reading-Focal sections were seen also as a way of practicing pronunciation. This made the courses not fully serviceable for either speaking or early reading.
2. In one Outer Circle context cases (Cameroon) a tension between RP as an officially-imposed target accent and the realization of phonemes in the local variety became apparent in some of the choices of exemplar words.
3. A very notable omission in all the courses analyzed was any overt signaling (for either teachers or children) of a subset of very frequent but orthographically opaque words that in most REL1 teaching, (even that which is most dominated by Phonics) is seen as important to cater for. Most of these words are in fact present on the pages of EYL course materials but they most often form part of what I have defined as 'Vehicular Words', those words apparently taken for granted as facilitators for other language work such as dialogues. This means that teachers are not overtly guided towards giving these frequent but opaque words any special focus.

6.2.2.2 Making the best use of limited time and resources

It is acknowledged that the conditions of time (limited time to be dedicated to English in a teaching year) and resources (often very large classes) in many contexts make it unfeasible for EYL children to experience the type of long-term induction to English reading that is in many REL1 contexts still valued and felt important for good progress by children, that is carefully staged with frequent access to scaffolded practice as individuals or in small groups working with an adult or other mentor. However, rather than staying with the approach to teaching reading characterized in Gbedenio's (1986) 'reading while listening', methods of working with larger groups (which I have come to call privately the 'Osmosis and Neglect' approach) it would be of benefit in many contexts to provide instruction in which clear pedagogical points are made.

As recent discussion within the research group Teaching English in Large Classes (TELC) <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/research/projects/telc/> has underlined, research does not find the solution to large classes by creating smaller classes but in more effective teacher responses to the large class: improving the quality of classroom talk and management rather than lamenting large numbers or attempting to find ways of reducing numbers. Experiences such as those related by Elinor from her schooldays, in which a teacher worked systematically with a large text visible to all, could provide indications for similar situations. Part of the teacher's expertise in handling such a resource lies in responsiveness to individual and group needs and reactions rather than following a pre-programmed path through a text. This, too is a teacher-development issue, but Shared Reading requires (and develops) the ability to 'scaffold' with a group rather than an individual and thus has transferrable benefits for the rest of teaching. In the time-limited conditions of much EYL learning, self-teaching, with its potential for more rapid independent progress in English in general as well as in reading skills in English, seems to be a vital area for promotion. Autonomous work at higher levels when children are supposed to be at a stage in which they can cope with texts by themselves is well documented (Ghosn, 2010) although it tends to be costly in terms of resources such as collections of books to equip book-corners or libraries. However, at the neglected first steps stage I know of no systematic provision for autonomous work for EYL, either within course books or as supplementary learning materials. One solution seems to be more care in the selection of

Reading-Focal items for inclusion in courses, following the indications shown in the Discussion Chapter. Within this, there needs to be a particular regard for ensuring that there is enough material within which patterns may be actively sought or 'noticed'. A self-use Puzzle Book approach seems feasible both as a publishing project for supplementary materials and as a home-made materials project to which children themselves might contribute.

6.2.2.3 *Appropriate Methodology and Conscious Affordances*

Beyond the positive recommendations above regarding syllabus and teaching content we might have regard to Holliday's concept of Appropriate Methodology (1994) when addressing issues of how early reading is taught in different contexts. The concept I should like to introduce is one of 'conscious affordance', that is, acknowledging practices that might not chime exactly with what research based in other contexts suggests as optimal, but doing so in a spirit of awareness and preparedness to try small changes should the conditions become more welcoming. A good example of such a change, discussed above, is the role of teacher scaffolding, via Shared Reading of first steps in reading and towards more independent reading. With the limited time and the large classes which prevail in much of the world, one-to-one or mentored small group reading seems scarcely feasible. The Appropriate Methodology response to this could be connected with the quality of a teacher's overall use of classroom language with the whole class. As we saw, Williams (2006, p. 39) took issue not with the fact of choral responses in large classes in Malawi and Zambia, but with the teachers' and students' tendency to indulge in 'safe-talk' in which a smooth surface routine obscures the fact that little real interaction or learning is taking place.

Other areas in which some 'conscious affordance' could be given in particular contexts include accepting the 'cultural capital' of a child 'knowing the ABC' in terms of knowing the order and names of the letters at an early stage. As discussed in Chapter 5.4.1, this seems to be a highly valued emblem of success among public and teaching profession alike in many countries. My recommendation would be that, provided that it does not come to dominate syllabus-making or become a proxy for more fundamental learning, the small and precious performance of the 'ABC' song or other fun mnemonic by children need not be affected.

Pragmatic acceptance of the parallel teaching of reading and other skills for YL also seems defensible under certain conditions. I started this thesis committed to the view that having a secure operational command of some spoken English before reading

instruction begins is highly beneficial, if not essential, for a less troubled passage into reading skills. Nothing I have read or been otherwise engaged with during this period has changed that aspect of my own cognition. However, it is clear that, whatever the force of the arguments may be concerning this issue, the value of a substantial period of oral/aural only work prior to the initiation of reading will not easily become a part of the belief system of many practising EYL teachers. Indeed such a period of oral/aural work will not be feasible in the practical conditions of many teaching contexts where teachers' own oral English may not be of a high level and where support from audio recordings or other media is not practicable. We have also seen that market-minded publishers are unlikely to propose unwelcome changes to the many EYL teachers who rely on published materials. Even in contexts (e.g. Oman and South Korea) where an innovation promoting oral work before reading instruction begins has been imposed by the educational authorities, it has not prospered. While that debate continues, we need to find ways of working in the most effective manner with 'words on the page' from a very early stage. Some proposals appear below:

6.2.2.4 Building bridges between Vehicular words and teaching language skills

One way of improving both early reading and other skills work, in circumstances in which working in parallel from a very early stage seems inescapable, is to pay attention to the content of the Vehicular word inventory for early Units. This need not involve a ban on high-frequency, highly useful, social or other language which does not happen to be orthographically transparent, but rather requires conscious manipulation of elements such as Character Names and the prioritizing of some rather than other vocabulary for use at the very earliest stages.

A second way of improving the links is through conscious deliberate grouping of items which fit both topic and linguistic criteria. For example, taking a phoneme-led but topic-friendly approach to the area My Body, the insight that a 'face and head' set of vocabulary items (boy's face, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, hair) can exemplify the pronunciation of all seven 'modern' RP diphthongs (see Rixon, 1999, p. 66) can be used to support work on these key sounds, without unduly heavy metalinguistic baggage required to make the point. See Appendix 6 for a similar idea for a Teacher Education activity: **'Why are bears trickier than dogs and cats?'**

Common but orthographically deep words which would benefit from being treated as Sight Words, should be promoted from the Vehicular Ranks, or rather be given a period

of attention as Focal items with which activities such as Flash Card Recognition games may be played. The analysis columns of the Excel spreadsheets used in this study may be applied to reveal these, or simply be used as an awareness-raiser so that A 'tricky words' inventory suitable for YL is ready to hand. See Appendix 6.

6.2.2.5 Trojan Horses

Listening to the voice of one of the authors in the small scale study supports the idea that change is most immediately practically possible through supplementary materials or books of advice for teachers which are less of a commercial risk than highly innovative mainstream course materials. We already have examples in books such as 'Tell it Again!' (Ellis & Brewster, 2002) which has certainly been influential in promoting Story-Telling approaches in EYL teaching world-wide. Well-conceived books of word puzzles and short catchy rhymes for classroom use for well-defined early reading support may have a chance of impact on practice and perhaps later on may have an influence on more mainstream course materials.

6.3 Contributions of the study

The contributions claimed for the study are listed and discussed below. The intention is to express them here in a manner which makes clear links with the potential next steps described in 6.2 above and 6.4 below in terms of pedagogical action and future research (in both teacher education and Young Learners teaching).

6.3.1. Research Methodology

1. The study has filled a gap, as signaled by Borg (2003) in the methodology of researching the views of teachers involved in reading instruction in that for the first time to my knowledge in-depth interviewing (supported by priming questionnaire items) was a major instrument for the investigation of EYL reading teaching and the 'voices' (Borg, 2003) of teachers and other EYL professionals began to be heard.
2. A second contribution is the devising of a simple instrument which, via spreadsheets and manipulation of data on tables, allows quantitative analysis of the detailed characteristics of words on the page of course materials to be used in conjunction with a template containing a set of prompts for qualitative analysis of those same materials. These templates and spreadsheets, and the wordlist with its data on more than 2,000 words in actual use in EYL courses can be applied with other materials.

6.3.2 Findings concerning conceptions of early reading and the role of the written/printed word in EYL teaching

Findings concerning the EYL professionals in my group cannot be generalized to all in the field but they may resonate with the observations of other researchers and trainers and with teachers themselves. These were that:

1. Many EYL professionals in the group studied did not emphasize linguistic rationales for their work in reading. Their focus was on how to deal with children in terms of maintaining motivation and interest rather than on how to manipulate and manage the language input that they provided.
2. The teaching of early reading in both EYL and RL1 was described by this group as a largely whole-class, lockstep matter. It emerged that syllabuses and methods which can help teachers work more effectively with early reading in these situations would be beneficial.
3. In the cases in this study where EYL professionals had more nuanced ideas of early reading, there was usually an account of having worked one-to-one with children, at home with family members such as a younger sibling or in a private tutorial capacity. Finding ways of bringing more teachers the benefits of such experiences (in training or daily teaching) would be beneficial. A good example would be through the study of videos or of transcripts of children and teachers reading together as in Hall (2003).

6.3.3 Novel findings concerning common characteristics of the reading component of EYL materials

These can be summarized as follows:

1. The presence of 'taken-for-granted' Vehicular Words from the early stages of most of the courses reveals a very common underlying assumption about EYL methodology - that the presence of words on the page is facilitative of learning even when the learners cannot yet read fluently. The highlighting of this is claimed as one of the main contributions of the study,
2. The favouring in many courses of an 'ABC' initial-letter-based ordering of attention on Reading- Focal Reading words leads in many cases to neglect of common digraphs.
3. The favouring of an 'ABC' initial-letter-based ordering leads in all cases to incomplete coverage of the phoneme inventory required either for

pronunciation purposes or for early reading instruction.

4. EYL materials lack focus on developing the ability to recognise frequent but orthographically-deep words.
5. Early reading activities in EYL materials tend to be 'static'. That is, they are based mostly on copying and transposing words and do not promote pattern-seeking and 'noticing'.

6.3.4 Tentative Solutions for Training, Teaching and Materials Development Drawn from Rational Implications of the Study

These have been described above and are exemplified in Appendix 6.

6.4 Areas for future research

The following proposals for future research seem to spring naturally from this study:

1. In this study, I was not able to follow course materials into the classroom and collect qualitative data concerning their use and teachers' and learners' perspectives of the ways in which they support early reading. However, doing so seems a reasonable follow-up to 'on the page' analysis. This is an area in which bilingual researchers able to communicate with young children in their own language would be in an excellent position to contribute.
2. An historical study of the permeation, borrowing and handing down of traditions of the methodology of early reading is an area that would repay further research.
3. An intervention study in a context in which lockstep whole class teaching is the norm, to evaluate the impact of simple Shared Reading techniques with homemade or cheaply available large text materials could be a useful contribution.
4. An experiment study in which the same Focal Reading content is treated through different types of activities: 'static' and 'generative/pattern-seeking' as defined in this thesis would be a useful test of the views expressed here about the greater effectiveness of generative/pattern-seeking activities for early reading.

6.5 End Note

Although there has not been space in this study to explore this theme at length, it is my contention that by revisiting YL early reading (which on the one hand seems to be

neglected, yet on the other hand seems to be required for much of the rest of EYL teaching to function at all) we have been revisiting YL methodology as a whole. It is currently an area in which, for virtuous reasons, motivation and age-appropriate content seem to be dominant concerns for many professionals. My proposal is only that we should remember that we are language teachers and that the business of helping children to learn to read in a foreign language requires expertise that also includes language awareness and even solid knowledge-about-language. In the light of the attested obstacles to ready access to early decoding skills presented by the orthographic depth of English, it seems a missed opportunity if YL are offered less systematic exposure in their early encounters with the written or printed word in English than native users of the language are normally felt to need. Share's principle (1995) of leading children to a stage when self-teaching can start is very relevant here, if our aim is to launch children as learners who are not merely, and eventually, learning to read but will be capable as soon as possible of learning through their reading.

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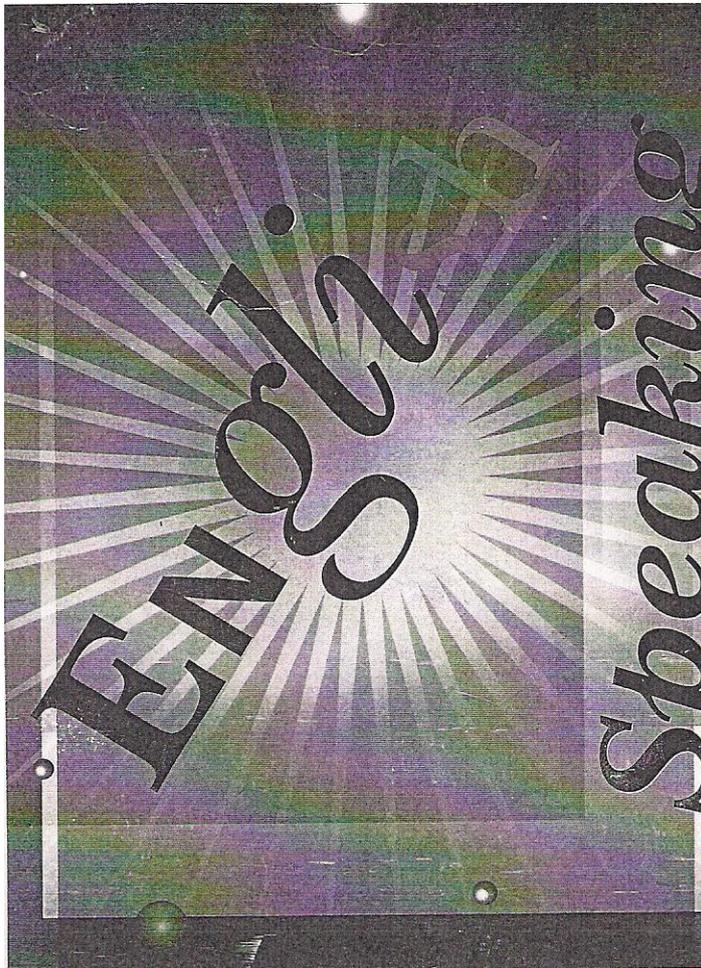
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Appendices

Appendix 1.1 Extracts from Curricular Documents Concerning Primary English Language Teaching

Anglophone Cameroon Primary English Syllabus



ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PREAMBLE

The increasing international and National importance of English as a language of instruction and communication cannot be overemphasized. At the level of basic education in Cameroon, the mastery of English by the pupil enables him or her to grasp with ease the other subjects of the curriculum.

Moreover, English in Cameroon in addition to being one of the two official languages of instruction, serves as a language for office and business transactions. This entails that the primary school pupil must acquire a good command of the language at four levels: listening, speaking, reading and writing. This will help the pupil to work and use English efficiently in the Cameroon society and the world at large, besides using it as an essential tool for research, trade and communication.

All the four language skills should be developed to avoid training pupils who could master reading and writing well but not be able to express themselves orally with efficiency.

This English syllabus, in addition to being interdisciplinary tries to cater for the three main domains of learning i.e. the cognitive, the psychomotor and the affective and also stresses the importance of participatory methods.

GENERAL GOALS

The English Speaking Cameroonian Primary School pupil after six years of schooling would be able to:

- ✓ • communicate his feelings, ideas and experiences both orally and in writing,
- ✓ • listen attentively to utterances, stories, news items, instructions, poems and songs, and respond correctly to them orally and in writing,
- communicate correctly his/her ideas, feelings and experiences orally,
- read and understand authentic documents,
- ✓ • write correct sentences or/and texts,
- further his/her education,
- pass the FSLC and Common Entrance examinations,
- integrate actively in society with ease,
- behave well individually and in a group.

Grades
1-6
Level 1-6
Exam.

CLASS ONE: ORAL/AURAL LANGUAGE SKILLS (Listening, Speaking, Reading)

OBJECTIVES	CONTENT/SAMPLE STRUCTURES
<p>SPEAKING AND LISTENING</p> <p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen to common sounds in the environment Listen to classroom commands and respond appropriately Greet their peers and adults Introduce themselves and others Ask about other pupils name Identify things and colours Count things up to 100 Describe what they or others are doing Ask questions about school and games Listen to each other Listen to rhymes and say them correctly Describe one's and others' possessions Ask for permission, information, directions Give the names of different games Describe the rules of a game Organise a game and play it Give the names of different parts of the body Tell the different functions of the main parts of the body Say what water is used for Ask about peers and other peoples' health situations Identify and name toiletries Identify and name tools used to keep the house, the classroom and school clean Say what they are used for Describe actions in a chronological order Identify kitchen utensils Say what they are used for Name and appreciate different meals... Describe a journey Tell a story Make polite requests Appreciate other peoples' actions Express their feelings Identify and name different professions/trades using simple sentences State what a medical doctor, a farmer, a teacher, journalist... does Locate an event in relation to time Tell the days of the week Tell the duration of an event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> common sounds Simple commands Greetings Self introduction and introduction of others Identification of objects Counting Use of present simple continuous tense Simple questions Listening and responses rhymes Possessions Polite requests Types of games common games and rules Parts of the body Functions of various parts of the body Importance of water Questions on health Toiletries Cleaning tools Cleaning First I... second I... finally I... Kitchen utensils and their uses Kitchen utensils and their uses At home, I eat fufu corn, with huckleberry, fufu and eru, rice and pudding... Description of journeys Story telling Polite requests Appreciation I like it, it is good Types of professions and their functions occupations Yesterday, today, tomorrow... Days of the week Activities and duration

OBJECTIVES	CONTENT/SAMPLE STRUCTURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for time and date Describe the weather locate an object, a person in relation to space make the portrait of an animal express their love for animals and nature state how old they are sing nursery rhymes, songs and recite some poems <p>READING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will be able to: read pictures correctly describe pictures and some real objects produce simple oral sentences from previous oral/aural activities identify characters, objects and actions in a story label objects act on written orders identify meaningful parts of a text (title, capital letters, full stop, dashes in a dialogue...) make sentences with jumbled words form words with jumbled letters describe pictures and some real objects <p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use proper posture and eye movement for reading Relate words read to life situations Identify and read correctly words containing phonemes studied Indicate words having the same phoneme(s) or diphthong(s) Associate words and pictures Use picture and context cue words recognised on sight and phonic cues on reading Recognise other words or letters in familiar context Say letters of the alphabet Identify and read a passage or sentence containing the phoneme studied <p>WRITTEN EXPRESSION</p> <p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trace lines and shapes of all the letters of the alphabet Differentiate between drawing and writing sounds and letter names Use at least single letters to build whole words Identify cues and use them to produce writing to match them Describe events chronologically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the time... date of today Description of weather Location of objects, persons and animals Portraits of animals pets and nature ages Nursery rhymes, poems <p>A. PRE-READING SKILLS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> picture reading Description of pictures numbering labelling of objects colouring parts of a text sentence construction word formation Description of pictures <p>B. READING PROPER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posture and eye movement Situational language Reading of words containing phonemes studied Phonemes and diphthongs Picture talk Picture talk Letter-and word recognition Word and letter identification Use of correct pronunciation, stress and intonation patterns <p>PRE-WRITING SKILLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing letters of the alphabet Writing and drawing practice Writing activities Writing activities Writing activities Before, now, after Yesterday, today, tomorrow

Extract from the English Language Syllabus for Malaysia 2001

INTRODUCTION

English is taught in all primary and secondary schools in the country in keeping with its status as a second language in the country.

The Cabinet Committee Report on the Review of the Implementation of the Education Policy 1979 states that the teaching of English is to enable learners to use English in everyday situations and work situations as well as to pursue higher education.

At present, English is still taught for the purposes of higher education and the workplace. English is the language of Information Communications Technology [ICT] as well as the language for establishing international relations in a borderless world. To enable our learners to access information on the Internet and other electronic media as well as to network with students in other parts of the country and abroad, it is important that they are proficient in the language. Such proficiency will also help learners to read and listen to academic, professional and recreational materials and to speak in seminars and conferences.

The English curriculum for primary schools is designed to provide learners with a strong foundation in the English language. Learners will then be able to build upon this foundation and use the language for various purposes. The development of learners' linguistic ability is in keeping with the goals of the National Education Philosophy and the Education Act of 1996 which seek to optimise the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical potential of all students.

In learning the English language, learners are taught the fundamentals of English grammar and how to use it correctly in both speech and in writing. Learners are also taught the English sound system to enable them to pronounce words correctly and to speak fluently with the correct stress and intonation so that from these early stages, pupils learn to speak internationally intelligible English.

Learners differ from each other in their individual strengths, abilities and learning styles and preferences. In teaching the curriculum, these differences are taken into account so that the aims and aspirations of the curriculum are fulfilled and the potential of the child is maximized.

This document is the English Syllabus for primary schools. It gives an

overview of the English language curriculum to be taught from Year 1 through to Year 6. This syllabus is for use in both the national primary schools [SK] and the national type primary schools [SJK]. To help teachers teach this curriculum in the classroom, supporting documents known as syllabus specifications or *Huraian Sukatan Pelajaran* are made available. In these documents, the curriculum is explained in greater detail for each year of schooling. There is one set of specifications for each primary level schooling. The syllabus outlines the Aims, Objectives, and Learning Outcomes to be achieved. The Language Content to be taught has also been given and this includes the sound system, the grammar of the English language, and the word list.

The contents of the syllabus can be expanded upon if learners have the ability and are proficient in the language.

AIMS

The English language syllabus for primary schools aims to equip learners with basic skills and knowledge of the English language so as to enable them to communicate, both orally and in writing, in and out of school.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the primary school, learners should be able to

- i. listen to and understand simple spoken English in certain given contexts;
- ii. ask and answer questions, speak and express themselves clearly to others using simple language;
- iii. acquire good reading habits to understand, enjoy and extract information from a variety of texts;
- iv. write legibly and express ideas in simple language; and
- v. show an awareness and appreciation of moral values as well as love for the nation.

CURRICULUM ORGANISATION

The English language curriculum is developed in line with the way English is used in society in everyday life when interacting with people, getting information, and when enjoying a good book or film. This is reflected in the learning outcomes of the curriculum.

The learning outcomes are based on the four language skills

Extract from the English Language Syllabus for Malaysia 2003

Curriculum Specifications Bahasa Inggeris [English Language]

By the end of primary school, pupils should be able to:

iii] read and understand different kinds of texts [from print and electronic sources, if available] for enjoyment and information.

...

Vocabulary and sentence patterns introduced in the oral component also need to be taught and used by pupils in reading and writing

...

The Year 1 programme is focused on providing the basis for literacy in the English language.

...

Schools are encouraged to use a good reading scheme. Teachers can use the whole language approach by reading aloud stories from a book [e.g. Big Books] and allowing children to follow the words being read so that they get to know how words are pronounced. In addition, teachers must make the pupils aware of the letters of the alphabet [e.g. a, b, c, d] and the sounds of these letters ['eh' /b/, /k/, /d/] so that pupils can string together these sounds and produce a word [phonics].

Republic of Korea: Extract from a statement of the National Curriculum for English, valid until the end of 2011

The National School Curriculum: English

1. Characters

As the interaction among countries is increasing in diverse areas, interdependence among countries is deepening. As a result, along with international competition, international cooperation is becoming more important. Due to the development of information technology, a move towards a knowledge and information-based society requires all the components of the society, from individuals to government policies, to be able to understand and produce knowledge and information.

Under these circumstances, English, being the most widely used language, is playing an important role in the communication and bonding among people with different native languages. Therefore, for elementary and middle school students who have to survive in the future world, the ability to communicate in English is an essential ability that they must learn at school. To contribute to the nation and society, show leadership as a cosmopolitan citizen, and to enjoy a wide range of cultural life, the ability to understand and use English is essential. The ability to communicate in English will act as an important bridge connecting different countries, and will be the driving force developing our country by forming trust among various countries and cultures.

English, at the elementary school level, should focus on training the ability to understand and express basic language used in everyday life, which is the basis of communication. The technical education of language, especially phonetic technical education, is essential. The written language education teaches students to read and write simple contents which are composed in connection with phonetic language education. In middle school, English education, based on the English taught at the elementary level, stresses a basic ability in English, in order to understand foreign cultures and cultivate the potential to live in the world of the 21st century. English education in elementary school has to consider the character of an elementary school student. Elementary students have strong curiosity, and the experiences of their practical lives deeply affect their ideas and actions. Therefore, the teaching/learning activities of English will be more effective if they are comprised of real life activities where students can experience the joy of discovery through personal experience. Although elementary students learn easily, because they have weak long term memory and can focus only for a short period of time, appropriate pedagogy should be applied to the teaching and learning. Various interesting education media such as multimedia resources and Information and Communications Technology [ICT], should be properly used.

On the other hand, in middle school, English education should continue to increase the interest students have developed in English from elementary school, and develop the basic ability to communicate in English, while maximizing educational experiences which can increase their fluency and precision. Therefore, the teaching/learning method that stresses the acquisition of language should be applied in order to let the students become the center of English classes.

English classes at the elementary and middle school levels should consider the different learning ability of individual students, and carry out different levels of lessons according to each school's circumstances. In-class exercises and activities should be stressed to enable students to carry out self-initiated study.

Fostering the ability to communicate in English is an important goal of English education. However, humanity education is also important, so the lessons should help students to cultivate a sound morality and an independent citizen spirit. Also, proper understanding of foreign cultures, an international appreciation, and a cooperative spirit as a cosmopolitan citizen should be developed.

2. Objective

Cultivate the basic ability to understand and use English in everyday life. Moreover, have a correct perception of foreign cultures to develop our culture and introduce it to other countries. In order to achieve this, firstly, build a basis to achieve confidence to carry out life-long education in English. Secondly, foster the ability to communicate in everyday life and about ordinary topics. Thirdly, foster the ability to understand diverse foreign information and make full use of it. Finally, by understanding foreign cultures, newly understand our own culture and acquire a correct perspective.

The objective of elementary English is to increase students' interest in English and foster their basic ability to comprehend and express themselves in English.

- a) Acquire interest in English.
- b) Build confidence in basic use of English.
- c) Build a basis for basic communication in English in everyday life.
- d) Understand foreign customs and cultures through English education.

Based on the English learned in elementary school, middle school English should cultivate the ability to understand and communicate in English about general topics in daily life.

- a) Understand the necessity to communicate in English.
- b) Effectively communicate in daily life and about general topics.
- c) Understand diverse foreign information in English, and put it into practical use.
- d) Through English education, appreciate diverse cultures and introduce our culture in English.

Extract from Curriculum Specifications for EYL in China, adapted From Wang, 2002

Basic Requirement for Primary School English in China*

*The Basic Requirements are designed into two levels for primary school pupils from age 8-12. Level One is for Grade 3 & 4, Level Two is for Grade 5 & 6. It is effective from Sept. 2001.

Performance Descriptions

Listen and Do

- ⌚ Be able to recognize and point at objects or pictures according to what is heard.
- ⌚ Be able to understand and react to simple classroom instructions.
- ⌚ Be able to do things according to instructions, such as pointing, coloring, drawing pictures, acting physically, doing hand craft.
- ⌚ Be able to understand and react to simple English stories with the help of pictures or actions.

Speak and Sing

- ⌚ Be able to imitate from the recordings.
- ⌚ Be able to greet each other in simple English.
- ⌚ Be able to exchange simple personal information, such as names and age.
- ⌚ Be able to express simple feeling or emotions, such as likes and dislikes.
- ⌚ Be able to guess meaning or say the words from acting or miming.
- ⌚ Be able to sing 15-20 children' songs and 15-20 nursery rhymes.
- ⌚ Be able to speak out words or phrases according to pictures or printed words.

Play and Act

- ⌚ Be able to play games in English and communicate with each other in the game with simple English
- ⌚ Be able to do simple role plays in English
- ⌚ Be able to perform English songs and act out simple English plays, e.g. the Little Red Riding Hood.

Read and Write

- ⌚ Be able to recognize words printed with pictures.
- ⌚ Be able to recognized objects first and then understand words describing them.
- ⌚ Be able to read and understand simple picture stories in English.
- ⌚ Be able to write correctly letters and words that have been learned.

LEVEL 1

Audio and Visual

- ⌚ Be able to follow simple English cartoon films or other English programmes at a similar level
- ⌚ The time spent for audio and visual should be no less than 10 hours per school year with an average of 20-25 minutes a week.

Primary School English Teaching in China – New Developments Wang Qiang

Performance Descriptions

Listening

- ⌚ Be able to understand simple spoken English or recorded English.
- ⌚ Be able to understand questions in classroom activities.
- ⌚ Be able to understand and react properly to repeatedly-used instructions.
- ⌚ Be able to understand simple English stories supported with pictures.

Speaking

- ⌚ Be able to pronounce English clearly with the right intonation.
- ⌚ Be able to make short dialogues on familiar personal or family topics.
- ⌚ Be able to use very common daily expressions e.g. for greeting, farewell, gratitude and apology.
- ⌚ Be able to tell simple stories with the help of the teacher.

Reading

- ⌚ Be able to recognize learned words and phrases.
- ⌚ Be able to pronounce simple words according rules of spelling.
- ⌚ Be able to read and understand simple instructions in the textbook..
- ⌚ Be able to read and understand simple information from cards.
- ⌚ Be able to read simple stories or short texts with the help of pictures, and form the initial habit of reading in a sense group.
- ⌚ Be able to read aloud correctly the learned text or stories.

Writing

- ⌚ Be able to write sentences based on given models.
- ⌚ Be able to write out simple greetings.
- ⌚ Be able to write captions for pictures or simple descriptions for objects.
- ⌚ Be able to use capital and small letters in writing and use correct punctuations for simple sentences.

LEVEL 2

Playing and Acting

Audio and Visual

- ⌚ Be able to play games in English according to instructions.
- ⌚ Be able to perform stories or short plays with the help of the teacher.
- ⌚ Be able to perform simple rhymes or poems 30-40 [including Level 1].
- ⌚ Be able to sing English songs 30-40 [including Level 1]
- ⌚ Be able to follow simple English cartoon films or other English programmes at a similar level. The time spent for audio-visual should be no less than 10 hours a school year with an average of 20-25 minutes a week..

Vocabulary requirement: 600-700 words based on topics such as numbers, colours, time, weather, food, clothes, toys, animals and plants, body parts, personal information, family, school, friends, entertainment and sports, holidays, etc.

Appendix 2.1 Alternative systems for sequencing letter-sound relationships in Phonics-based courses

Based on Spache and Spache, *Reading in the Elementary School* (1986)

<u>Element</u>	<u>Examples</u>
Simple consonants	b p, m, w, h, d, t, n, hard g, k, hard c, y, f
Short vowels	a, e, i, o, u, y
More difficult consonants	v, l, z, s, r, c, q, x, j, g, s
Consonant blends and digraphs	ck, ng, th, zh, sh, th, wh, ch
Simple consonant blends	with l, r, p, or t, as bl, pl, gr, br, sp, st, tr, thr, str, spl, scr
Long vowels	a, e, i, o, u, y
Silent letters	<u>k</u> nife, <u>w</u> rite, ta <u>k</u> , g <u>n</u> at, bla <u>ck</u> , <u>h</u> our
Vowel digraphs	ai, ea, oa, ee, ey, ea
Vowel diphthongs	au, aw, oo, oo, ow, ou, oi oy, ow
Vowels with r	ar er, ir, or, ur. Same with l and w
Phonograms [rimes]	ail, ain, all, and, ate, ay, con, eep, ell, en, ent, er est, ick, ight, ill, in, ing, ock, ter, tion

Based on 'Jolly Phonics' (Lloyd, 1992)

Jolly Phonics claims to start from 42 [sic] phonemes of British Standard English and in addition is influenced by the frequency of letters and their potential for combination to make simple words. The earliest letters and letter combinations taught are placed in seven groups, sequenced as is shown below:

1. s, a, t, i, p, n
2. c k, e, h, r, m, d
3. g, o, u, l, f, b
4. ai, j, oa, ie, ee, or
5. z, w, ng, v, oo, oo
6. y, x, ch, sh, th, th
7. qu, ou, oi, ue, er, ar

The Jolly Phonics promotional webpage <http://jollylearning.co.uk/> explains that the first group of six letters has been formed for the reason that they can make 'more simple three-letter words than any other six letters'. Note also that the letters 'b' and 'd' have been presented in different groups in order to minimize the chance of confusion. Digraphs such as 'th' which can have two different pronunciations are written in two different font styles, but not kept apart.

MOE ban on KK phonetics ruinous: Sun

BAFFLING BABBLE Sun Ta-chien says school kids are resorting to Bopomofo in a bid to make sense of English -- a move he says is having a disastrous result on their studies

By Melody Chen / STAFF REPORTER



Enlarged copies of a sixth-grader's English textbook were displayed at a press conference called yesterday by PFP Legislator Sun Ta-chien. Sun said many primary school students are using Bopomofo to help them memorize the pronunciation of English words, which is impeding their learning.

PHOTO: SEAN CHAO, TAIPEI TIMES

Primary school kids are using unwieldy Mandarin phonetics in their English-language textbooks after the Ministry of Education ruled out teaching young pupils KK [Kenyon & Knott] symbols, a lawmaker claimed yesterday.

At a press conference, PFP Legislator Sun Ta-chien [孫大千] held up a Taipei sixth-grader's English textbook full of Zhuyin Fuhao [注音符號, commonly known as Bopomofo] to illustrate how students are learning pronunciation following the ministry's launch of natural phonetics in primary schools.

With natural phonetics, students learn English through listening to and speaking the language rather than through memorization and using KK phonetic symbols to pronounce English words.

Sun said that the pupils, unable to memorize pronunciation without the help of KK symbols, marked Bopomofo characters under almost every English word in the textbook.

In one example, the pupil jotted down eight Bopomofo characters and two English letters under the English phrase, "Let's go in and have a look."

Taken phonetically, the sentence read: "Lai Tzu Kou m Hai F Erl Lu Ko" -- far from the correct pronunciation of the sentence, Sun said.

"This is only one example in this pupil's English textbook. Examples like this fill the whole book. The student even reads 'and' as 'm,'" Sun said.

Pointing at other examples in the book, Sun said, "The way this kid assembles Bopomofo symbols to show English pronunciations is really beyond my imagination."

"The pupil is very inventive. But the reason he has resorted to this method is because he has never been taught KK phonetic symbols," Sun said.

"Without other means to help him pronounce English, he can only use this method," he said.

The ministry decided to adopt natural phonetics in primary schools because it considers KK phonetic symbols too difficult for fifth and sixth-graders to grasp.

Sun said that he is very concerned about the future of the nation's English education because more and more primary school students are learning English using Bopomofo.

"The natural phonetics approach is only effective in English-speaking countries. In those countries, students speak correct English without learning KK phonetic symbols because they practice the language in their daily lives," Sun said.

"But Taiwan is not an English-speaking country. Students forget the pronunciations after classes. Why should we copy the teaching methods of English-speaking countries? It is simply unrealistic," Sun said.

Arjay Lin [林正捷], a primary school English teacher from Hualien County, said half of his pupils are learning English with the help of Bopomofo.

"I try very hard to ask my pupils to read aloud after me in every class. We only have one hour for English every week. As we don't teach KK phonetic symbols, most students forget the pronunciations after class," he said.

Deniro Lin [林世慶], a junior-high school English teacher, said that it is still necessary to teach primary school students the KK method.

According to Deniro Lin, the English proficiency of his first-grade students has polarized.

Those who can afford to attend private language schools find KK phonetic symbols boring, whereas students who have never learned the symbols hardly know how to pronounce English, Deniro Lin said.

Meanwhile, Chen Ming-yin [陳明印], senior chief of the ministry's Department of Elementary and Junior High Education, said the ministry will consider whether to teach KK phonetic symbols in primary schools.

This story has been viewed 6410 times.

Appendix 3.1 Demographic Details on Participants in the Study

Nationality	Code name	Mother tongue	Age range	gender	Years of teaching	Years of EYL teaching	Degree?	Questionnaire?
Argentinian	Alexis	Spanish	41-45	F	20	10	Eng Lang & Lit	Yes
Cameroonian	Henry	Aghem	36-40	M	10	10 [trainer]	Eng Lang & Lit	Yes
Cameroonian	Elinor	Bakwerri	41-45	F	16	10 [trainer]	Eng Lang & Lit	Yes
Cameroonian	James	Menkwa	36 -40	M	10	10	Eng and Theatre Arts	Yes
Chinese	Rosamund	Chinese	46 – 50	F	Over 20	10 [as trainer]	Eng Lang & Lit	Yes
Chinese	Shelly	Chinese	26 – 30	F	3	3 yrs part time	Eng Lang & Lit	yes
Greek	Oriel	Greek	21-25	F	3	3 yrs part time	Eng Lang & Lit	Yes
Greek	Vera	Greek	41-45	F	22	10	Eng and Greek Lit	Yes
Indian	Vanessa	Hindi	41-45	F	18	18 [trainer]	Eng Lang and Lit [MPhil in Eng Lit]	Yes
Japanese	Yoshie	Japanese	46 – 50	M	24	2 [own school]	American Studies	yes
Malaysian	Agnes	Malay	31-35	F	10	10 [trainer]	Applied Linguistics and ELT	Yes
Malaysian	Daphne	Malay	36-40	F	14	0 [Malay reading expert]	Malay Language	Yes
Russian	Lucy	Russian	46-50	F	25	15	English and German Lang	Yes
South Korea	Shona	Korean	31-35	F	10	6	Primary Education	Yes
South Korean	Karen	Korean	31-35	F	9	9	Primary Education	Yes
South Korean	June	Korean	36 – 40	F	10	10	History	Yes
South Korean	Marian	Korean	26 -30	F	3	1	Biotechnology	Yes
South Korean	Sandra	Korean	31-35	F	10	10	Korean Linguistics and Lit	Yes
South Korean	Janet	Korean	31 -35	F	7	5	Philosophy, Eng Lang and Lit	Yes
Syrian	Ali	Arabic	21-25	M	2.5	1	English	Yes
Syrian	Mariam	Arabic	26-30	F	2	1	Eng Lang & Lit	Yes
Syrian/Palestinian	Atif	Arabic	26-30	M	3	1	Eng Lang & Lit	Yes
Taiwanese	Jackie	Chinese	-	F	-	-	-	No
Taiwanese	Ilse	Chinese	-	F	4	4	-	Yes
Taiwanese	Hliary	Chinese	31-35	F	7	0 [homeroom teacher]	History	Yes
Taiwanese	Gail	Chinese	26 – 30	F	5	2	Applied English	Yes
Thai	Nancy	Thai	-	F	-	-	English	No
Thai	Iris	Thai	26-30	F	2	2	English	Yes

Appendix 3.2 Copy of email message sent out in 2009 to all students expressing an interest after the first mass email invitation

Some time ago we discussed the possibility of your allowing me to interview you on your experiences as a teacher of English to children with a particular focus on anything you have to say about reading. I am also interested in your own experiences as a learner of English and of when you were a beginning reader in your own language as well as in English.

If you are still willing, here is some practical information:

Times and dates:

I have time free at some point on most days between 10th July and 31st August. I am also free from around 25th August to 12th September.

What is involved:

1. If you agree to take part in an interview, I will first send you by email or on paper a questionnaire which will cover some of the background as well as asking some important basic questions about your experiences. If you could send that back before the interview, that would be very helpful.
2. Then at a time agreed, we can have the interview, in my office or some more salubrious place. This should not take more than an hour [though in the past people have got quite interested and it has taken longer].
3. I would like your permission to record the interview, transcribe it, and perhaps include extracts from it in my book or thesis. Your anonymity and confidentiality will be respected in that I will not give anybody's name in the body of the text or report my results in a way that would allow any reader to identify you.

What I can offer:

A place in the Acknowledgements section of book or thesis, if you give your consent to that, but otherwise anonymity and confidentiality as stated above.

A summary of the research when it is in a state to be reported on. This could be 2010 or 2011, but one thinks long term!

Tea/ coffee juice and biscuits to keep you sustained during the interview.

An opportunity, for those of you interested in interviews and questionnaires, to experience someone else's efforts. I would be very happy to receive your critical feedback and discuss the reasons for which I did things as I did them. In the past, other students have said that they found this very useful for their own thinking.

I have a large collection of Real Books and Graded Readers for children of this age range. If, as a small

'thankyou', you would like to choose a book or books from this collection to keep for your own teaching or children, you would be most welcome.

So, that is my request. You should, however, not feel under any pressure to agree to be interviewed, just because one of your lecturers is making this request. I fully understand how busy you are with other things.

If you would like to take part, just email me or send me a message in any other form, stating that you would be happy to do the questionnaire and interview on the terms stated above. Then I can send you the questionnaire and we can arrange a time that is convenient to you for the interview.

All the best

Shelagh

Appendix 3.3 Bibliographical details of course materials analysed

Series title	Authors [if known]	Date of edition analysed	Publisher	Context of use
Primary English for Cameroon	Forbin, D; Nyambi, R; Nama, M,D	2004	PBP, Presbyterian Book Depot and Printing Press Ltd	Cameroon [Anglophone]
Basic Eng for Cameroon	Enang, N, A; Ali, N,A; Mangi, G; Forcha, B	undated	Cosmos Educational Press Limited [CEPL]	Cameroon [Anglophone]
Sign in to English	Yong, T, J; Mbayu, M, N; Sale, E, S; Asana, N, Z	2008	Cambridge University Press	Cameroon [Anglophone]
Junior Primary English	Lukong, O, T; Nkwantang, S,O; Nyema, L; Azaah, B; Ebane, G,P, Ngam, G	2005	ANUCAM	Cameroon [Anglophone]
English All-Stars!	Nama, M; Forbin, D; Fouda, M, Kuchah, K; Ningo, D	2007	Macmillan/Hatier International	Cameroon [Francophone]
Beginning English SIL	Forcha, B; Mangi, G; Ntui, A,N	2007	Cosmos Educational Press Limited [CEPL]	Cameroon [Francophone]
Fun Way 1	? not stated in English	2007	Greek Ministry of Education	Greece [state]
Wonderland	Copage, J	2005	Pearson Education	Greece [private]
Learning to Read English 1	Shrinavasan, M	1998	Orient Longman	India
Gogo Loves English	Methold, K; McIntosh,M; FitzGerald, P	1998	Longman	International [but esp E. Asia]
English Today 1	Howe, D.H	1990	Oxford University Press	International [but esp E. Asia]
Elementary school English	Not stated	2005	Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, South Korea	South Korea
KBSR English	Lan, Y,Y; Eng, L,T; Kanagamani, K	2004	Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka	Malaysia [Tamil and Chinese schools]
PEP Primary English		2003	? not stated in English	PR of China
Pioneer English	Methold, K	2001	? not stated in English	PR of China
New Standard English	Not stated in English	2003	Lingo Media	PR of China
Millie	Not stated in English [15 authors]	2005	British Council and Brookemead English Language Teaching	Russia
Let's Learn English!	Benadict, K et al [15 authors]	2000	Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
English for Starters	Nasr, R. T; Dallas, D	2008	York Press	Syria
Go SuperKids	Krause, A; Cossu, G	2002	Pearson Education, Taiwan	Taiwan
Welcome!	Pelham, L, M; Evans, M; Nunan, D	2003	Pearson Education, Taiwan	Taiwan
Darbie, Teach Me!	Chen, C, Y	2004	Kang- Xuan Publishing Company	Taiwan

Appendix 3.4 Pre-interview questionnaire developed for use from June 2007

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK CENTRE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

Research into the Experiences and Practices of Teachers Introducing Young Learners to their Early Steps in Reading English as a Foreign or Second Language

Dear Colleague,

My name is Shelagh Rixon and I work in the Centre for English Language Teacher Education at the University of Warwick, where I co-ordinate the MA in the Teaching of English to Young Learners. I am conducting some research for a doctoral thesis into experiences and practices of specialists in different contexts who work with Young Learners taking their first steps in reading in English.

For the purposes of this research, Young Learners are defined as children up to and including the age of 12 learning English as a second or foreign language. If you have experience with children in this age group I should be very grateful if you could answer the attached questionnaire. It should take you from 10 to 20 minutes. In a number of cases people have also kindly agreed to an interview which will be arranged later on.

For both questionnaire and interview, I will make sure to respect the confidentiality of respondents and will not report results so that individuals can be identified in any way.

However, if there is any personal or professional background information that you do not wish to disclose on the questionnaire just leave that question blank.

I hope that the findings will be helpful to the EYL profession at large and I will make them known in due course, I hope, through wider publication. If you are interested in receiving a personal copy of the findings at a later stage, please indicate and give contact details at the end of the questionnaire. This will not affect the confidentiality with which I will treat your details.

A note on how to show your responses

If you are replying via email, any clear way of indicating your answers is acceptable – highlighting, placing asterisks, ticks or other marks next to selected items and deleting non-selected items are some methods used successfully before. [I found during piloting that supplying boxes to tick can result in weird symbols appearing on transmission and so have decided not to use them in this version!]. I am happy to work with answers that are presented in the way that suits you best. You may also make a printout and send me a paper version if you prefer.

For open response items, just type in what you want to say. There is no length restriction.

If you can complete and return this version of the questionnaire through email to S.Rixon@warwick.ac.uk that would be simplest. If you prefer to send a paper version, the postal address is: Shelagh Rixon, CELTE, The University of Warwick, CV4 7AL, Coventry, UK or the fax no. is 0044 024 76524318

Thank you very much!

SHELAGH

Part A: YOUR BACKGROUND AND PERSONAL DETAILS

1. **What is your nationality?**

2. **What is your mother tongue?**

3. **Which age range do you fit?**
 - a) 18 – 20
 - b) 21 – 25
 - c) 26 – 30
 - d) 31 – 35
 - e) 36 – 40
 - f) 41 – 45
 - g) 46 – 50
 - h) over 50
 - i) I'd rather not say!

4. **What is your gender?**

Male Female

5. **How many years' experience have you had in ...**
 - a) teaching in general?
 - b) teaching English to Young Learners?

6. Your academic and professional training

Do you have

- a) A first degree from a university? YES NO

[If YES please state the subject area]

- b) A teaching qualification that is officially recognised in the country where you teach?
YES NO

[If YES, please give details of level, e.g. secondary school or primary school, and the subjects you are qualified to teach]

- c) Qualifications specially related to teaching Young Learners English. e.g. Cambridge ESOL or Trinity College certificates in teaching Young Learners, MA in Teaching Young Learners? YES NO

[If YES, please give details]

- d) Special training in the teaching of initial literacy? YES NO

[If YES, in which language[s?]] and please give details of the course]

.....

- e) Other qualification[s] or present studies that you find relevant YES NO

[If YES, please give details]

7. What professional roles have you played with regard to the teaching of English to Young Learners?

[please indicate all that apply]

- a) Classroom teacher
- b) Teacher with extra managerial responsibilities [e.g. Head of Dept, Director of Studies]
- c) Pre-service trainer of future teachers of Young Learners of English.
- d) In-service trainer of existing teachers of Young Learners of English
- e) Curriculum advisor in the area of Young Learners of English
- f) Creator of Young Learners teaching materials for a ministry
- g) Creator of Young Learners teaching materials for a publisher
- h) Other [please specify]

Part B: YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES WITH LEARNING TO READ

- 8. At what age did you start learning to read in your own language?**

- 9. Do you have a clear memory of your own first steps in learning to read in your own language?**

- a) NO
- b) YES

- 10. On a scale of 1- 6, what was the experience of first learning to read in your own language like**

14. Can you remember anything about the methods that your teachers used when you were learning to read in English?

[indicate all that are true for you, and add your own comments if you wish]

- a) We had to learn the letter names of the whole alphabet before we started to learn to read
- b) We had separate study materials [books etc.] for learning English language and learning to read in English
- c) Learning the English language and learning to read in English were covered by the same study materials [books etc.]
- d) The importance and purpose of reading was made clear to us from the start
- e) I was systematically taught the letters and the sounds they represented
- f) I was taught to recognise words as a whole, by the shape they made
- g) Learning to read and learning to write in English started and progressed together in the teaching we received
- h) Learning to write in English was not started until we had made considerable progress in learning to read in English
- i) Our teacher checked that we understood what we read by asking us to talk about it/retell it in our own way.
- j) Our teacher checked that we understood what we read by asking us comprehension questions about it.
- k) My teacher listened to me reading aloud once a week or more often [just me and the teacher together]
- l) My teacher listened to me reading aloud from once to three times a month [just me and the teacher together]
- m) My teacher listened to me reading aloud a few times in a year [just me and the teacher together]
- n) My teacher listened to pupils reading aloud around the class [one after the other with everybody in the class listening]
- o) The class would read aloud in chorus, under the teacher's direction
- p) The teacher read aloud to us from our textbook while we followed the text on the page
- q) The teacher read story books aloud to us while we silently followed the text on the page

- r) The teacher read story books aloud to us while we listened, without following the text on the page
- s) We were explicitly encouraged to start silent reading as soon as possible
- t) We were never explicitly encouraged to start silent reading
- u) We were encouraged to start reading things of our own choice by ourselves from an early stage
- v) We used a graded reading scheme [reading books for independent reading specially designed to be at different levels, so that a learner can progress step by step choosing more and more difficult books]

[If you wish, please add your own comments and describe any activities not mentioned above that took place when you started to learn to read in English]

.....

15. Can you remember something about the first book or long text that you read by yourself in English?

- a) NO
- b) YES *[please give details below]*

Title *[or description of the text if you can't remember the title]*

 Age at which you read it

16. Would you say that your own experiences, as a child or young person, of reading and being taught to read [in English and any other language] have influenced the ways in which you think we should try to help Young Learners of English to cope with the first steps of learning to read in English?

YES NO

[If YES, can you give some examples of the way in which you feel that as a teacher you are influenced by your past experiences of learning to read?]

17. Are there any particular characteristics of English that you think need to be taken especially into account when planning how to teach children to read it? *[This could include any contrasts with the written mode of your learners' mother tongue if you think they are important]*

.....

Part C: SOME INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR OWN CONTEXT AND TEACHING

18. What age[s] are the children when they start their first year of English?

19. In this question, I am interested in the types of experience that Young Learners have with beginning reading/ seeing the written word in English in their first, second and third years of learning English. [Please choose the relevant boxes in the table below and put ticks or other marks to show the type of contact these Young Learners typically have with reading in English in each year of learning].

	First year of learning	Second year of learning	Third year of learning
a] None. The work is all speaking and listening.			
b] Little. The work is mostly speaking and listening. Some words are printed in the course materials but without a special focus on teaching the children how to decode them.			
c] Some. The work is mostly speaking and listening with some words printed in the course materials, but there is also an attempt to focus on these words so that the children can learn how to decode them.			
d] Considerable. There is a focused attempt to introduce children to written/printed words and sentences so that they will be able to decode them, recognise and say them.			
e] Strong. There is a focused attempt to get children reading and understanding the sense of sentences and coherent texts			
f] None of the above			

[Please add any comments you have on the amount of contact with the written word pupils have at different stages]

.....

20. Are children in this context normally taught to say the names of the letters of the alphabet in

'ABC' order before they start to read words or phrases?

- a) NO
- b) YES

Have you any comments on teaching approaches in your context with regard to this?

.....
.....

21 . Do teaching materials for young beginners in this context typically focus on presenting key reading vocabulary in 'alphabetical' order [i.e. the first reading lessons would focus on words beginning with 'A', the next on words beginning with 'B' and so on]?

- a) NO
- b) YES

Have you any comments on teaching approaches in your context with regard to this?

.....
.....

22. Are children in this context typically given material that gets them to pay special attention to the initial letters and sounds of words [e.g. the 'b' /b/ at the beginning of boy/book/boat/ball] when they start to learn to read?

- a) NO
- b) YES

Have you any comments on teaching approaches in your context with regard to this?

.....
.....

23. Are children in this context typically given material that gets them to pay special attention to rhyming parts of words [e.g. the 'at' part of cat/ bat/ rat/ hat] when they start to learn to read?

- a) NO
- b) YES

Have you any comments on teaching approaches in your context with regard to this?

.....
.....

24. Is any use made of songs or chants containing rhyming words when children in this context start to learn to read in English?

- a) NO
- b) YES

Have you any comments on teaching approaches in your context with regard to this?

.....
.....

25. In what year of learning/at what age would your young learners receive teaching in class which aimed to enable them to read and understand whole texts in English [such as stories or short factual articles]? *[Please select an answer and indicate what age the children would be at this point].*

- a) In their first year of learning English
- b) In their second year of learning English
- c) In their third year of learning English
- d) In their fourth year of learning English
- e) In their fifth year of learning English
- f) In their sixth year of learning English
- g) Never at primary school in my experience

h) Other *[please comment below]*

.....
.....

26. Is any use made in your context of authentic texts [e.g. Real Story Books] in English when teaching Young Learners?

- a) NO
- b) YES

If 'YES', please comment on the stage of learning, the types of text used and the purposes for which they are used

.....
.....

27. Are Young Learners [not necessarily beginners] in this context encouraged to read English for pleasure or interest outside their English classes?

- a) NO
- b) YES

If 'YES', please comment on at which stage in their learning this starts, and how it would continue and be supported [e.g. through the internet, a class book corner or library made available to children at certain levels in the school, through parents buying recommended story books]

.....
.....

28. In your context, when Young Learners meet and see written words on the page, what purpose[s] do you think this contact can have with regard to their overall language learning?

[please select the statements that you personally agree with and add notes in section e] if you wish to comment on how far you agree. If you think that many colleagues in your context might have a different opinion from yours, please also comment on this in section e.]

- a) Young beginners [first year] in English are able to add to their English vocabulary by first meeting words in their written form and by being taught the pronunciation and meaning at the same time as they first see the words.
- b) Young beginners [first year] in English should not see words in the written form unless they have already been made familiar with their pronunciation and their meanings and had substantial experience of these words through their previous work with the spoken language.
- c) Children who already have a post-beginners' amount of English [some time after first year] are able to add to their English vocabulary by first meeting words in their written form and by being taught the pronunciation and meaning at the same time as they first see the words.
- d) Children who already have a post-beginners' amount of English [some time after first year] should not see words in the written form unless they have already been made familiar with their pronunciation and their meanings and had substantial experience of these words through their previous work with the spoken language.
- e) Your comments on any of the above answers:

.....

29. Are there any comments or observations that you would like to make on issues raised [or perhaps not raised!] in this questionnaire?

.....

30. If you would like to receive details of the findings of this research in future, please give a contact address [email or postal]

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

Shelagh

Appendix 3.5 Outline Schedule for the interviews

Interview date and time : Name of interviewee:	any notes and comments
<p>1. Thanks and identify person.</p> <p>Establish if has done questionnaire first – and if has questionnaire with them. Ask if any questions or comments on the questionnaire.</p> <p>2. Confirm/elicite if they are a recently active teacher of YL or have had past experience of YL</p> <p>3. What country/ies? What age range?</p>	
<p>Let's talk about you first</p> <p><u>4. OWN LI reading experiences [expansion/check on questionnaire responses]</u></p> <p>What was the first language in which you learned to read? [was it your L1?] At what age? In what context [e.g. home/school] Who is seen as responsible for developing children's early L1 reading in your country? How was that experience for you [pleasant, difficult?] [shut up and let them expand] About how long did it take you to 'master' reading in your L1? Was that faster or slower than usual? What were the first things that you read? [stories, comics guided reading schemes, reading textbook? Are graded reading approaches used for your L1? Would you call yourself a reader in that language today? [shut up and let them expand] Would you describe your culture as a reading culture?</p>	
<p><u>5. OWN experiences in learning to read in English</u></p> <p>At what age did you take your first steps in learning to read English? In what context [e.g. home/school] How was that experience for you [pleasant, difficult?] [shut up and let them expand] Was it a similar process to learning to read in your L1? [shut up and let them expand] About how long did it take you to 'master' reading in English? Was that faster or slower than usual? What were the first things in English that you remember reading? [stories, comics guided reading schemes, reading textbook?] Was any sort of graded reading scheme approach used when you were learning? Did you learn to read long-ish texts in English at school? Would you call yourself a 'happy reader' in English today? [shut up and let them expand. Probe if necessary. Do you read for pleasure? How do you get on with heavy [MA] stuff?]</p>	

<p><u>6. Own Experiences In Teaching Reading With YL</u></p> <p>As a teacher have you helped YL with English reading? In what context[s]? If so, at what ages and stages? <i>[e.g. first meeting with the written form, developing reading skills in children who can already 'read'=decode???</i>] Can you describe some typical activities for developing English reading in your context? Do you generally fit in with these typical activities or have you some of your own or some different ideas? Is one of the 'BIG NAME' reading approaches recommended and used [and named] in your context? I will say some of the names and you tell me how you react {<i>I will name – Phonics, Look and Say. Whole Language/Real Books and also mention Environmental Print. I want to 'test' how much they know of them and, if they have heard of one, what they think, it is. Is this acceptable?</i>] Do you feel that your own experiences with learning to read in English have contributed to the way you teach Young Learners? How?</p>	
<p><u>7. Optional bit, if we have access to their actual textbooks – yes in most cases</u></p> <p>You have kindly brought one of your textbooks today. Could you name it for the recorder and tell me a little about its origins and how it is used?</p> <p>Can you take me through some of the parts in which Reading is particularly focused upon and explain what would normally happen in class? <i>[I will take photocopies of bits discussed and be sure to give the page numbers for the recording]</i></p> <hr/> <p><u>8. Optional Antepenultimate bit – for the reading squad people only – or adapted for parents with children in UK primary school</u></p> <p>You have recently been doing some volunteer reading support in a British Primary School. Was that mostly with native speaking or EAL children? Which years?</p> <p>Can you give me some of your reflections on the following: Did anything surprise you about the teaching methods or materials that you saw? Did anything surprise you about how the children themselves were developing reading? <i>[shut up and sit back and let them expand]</i> Do you think that anything you experienced with the British children has made you think differently about teaching reading or learning to read in English?</p>	
<p><u>9. Penultimate 'Task' for all</u></p> <p>I'm very interested in teachers' perceptions of the way in which the English language writing system 'works' in comparison with their own, and to help the discussion I have brought some 'stimulus' tasks that we could try, but first</p> <p>Are there any special points of similarity or contrast between the writing systems in [your L1] and English that you think it would be helpful for teachers to be aware of?</p> <p>Do you think that it is helpful to make children aware of any of these? If so how? <i>[Then pass to the tasks on separate cards and sheets]</i></p>	

10. Final bit for all

Is there anything you would like to ask or comment on that you don't think we have covered so far?

[Sit back and let them expand]

[Thanks and end]

Appendix 3.6 The two practical tasks offered to interviewees

The Nursery Rhyme Task

Participants were first shown the words of 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' and 'One, Two Three, Four Five' and asked if they used these songs with their children.

Then the highlighted words from both songs were presented out of context on separate cards, and participants were asked to look at them and sort them into groups according to whether they thought they would be challenging for the children to read out of context or not.

They were then asked to explain their choices

Twinkle Twinkle, little star
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky

One, two, three four five
Once I caught a fish alive
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten,
Then I let him go again.
Why did you let him go?
Because he bit my finger so.

Young Children's Spelling Attempts

Participants were shown a photograph of worksheets lying on a school table with some Reception children's first attempts at writing three-letter words from their Phonics-based programme. The words were very similar to the words commonly presented in the Reading Focal sections of the first lessons of EYL courses. The photograph did not show the children's writing clearly enough, so I supported the photograph with the sheet below, on to which I had made accurate copies of what each child had written. The aim was to stimulate reflection on the fact that the path of native speakers towards literacy is not a smooth one.



March 2008

Have a look at the photo of worksheets that were filled in by 6 young children in a UK primary school.

Their task was to write the correct three letter word under each of the pictures.

The correct words are shown at the top of the table on this page, with the children's answers below.

	mat	dog	cup	pin	net	ant	bun	tap	six
Child A	mat	ogc	oqw	qin	ntz	atp	bbn	tpa	zjx
Child B	mat	qog	Cup	pin	net	ant	qon	top	siCS
Child C	mat	DOG	cap	wsn	net	ano	sun	tap	six
Child D	mat	dOG	mUg	pin	net	ant	bun	tap	six
Child E	atat	rog	cup	pin	-et	ant	sun	rap	qix
Child F	mat	DOG	k-	pin	net	ant	bug	tap	scs

Have you any observations about:

What difficulties some children seem to have. Any ideas about why?
Which words seem to be most difficult. Any ideas about why?

Appendix 3.7 Transcription Conventions and first layout for transcription

1. Turns are indicated by the initial of the participant's pseudonym and the initials of the interviewer, who appears throughout as SR:.

Example

SR: ... It was interesting you said <a> to <m> so were you following the alphabetical order of the initial letters?

Y: 'cos er they, without me introducing that, in primary school in Japanese class they introduce er the alphabet [Right so they know the alphabet] so so I er go parallel with them

2. Where a speaker says a few words during the turn of the other, these words are shown in square brackets

Example

Y: 'cos er they, without me introducing that, in primary school in Japanese class they introduce er the alphabet [Right so they know the alphabet] so so I er go parallel with them

3. Punctuation has been used with its conventional functions, so that commas serve as a visual cue to the analysis of an utterance rather than as indications of pauses. The use of full stops and the opening of a new sentence can be justified by the speaker's use of intonation and pause. Where a speaker runs on and creates an utterance that is not amenable to punctuation the words have been left with use of lower case and no punctuation.

Example

SR: So would it be true to say that in government school there probably isn't a particular method [yes] except they're interested in the alphabet?

V: Alphabet at the beginning then of course er reading but er

SR: Interesting how how do they go from the alphabet to reading? Big jump isn't it?

4. False starts and stammers are indicated by a dash

Example

and then i-i it struck me that she didn't know the sounds of the alphabet so I said
'OK that's fine'

5. Hesitation noises and backchannel noises are represented by:

em er mmm mmhmm

6. Phonemic script has been used when a participant utters a phoneme by way of example or explanation.

Example

and then she was thinking for the very first letter for the letter /b/ for the word
'boy' and I was like marvel

7. When a participant names a letter of the alphabet the <x> convention, normally used for indicating graphemes has been adopted for use here.

E: she just held the book and she couldn't read it and it was a reader of that
same class she was repeating so I took it away and I asked her whether she
could spell the word 'boy' and she said 'yes' and I said 'Spell it' and she said <s>
and then I was like <s>?' I said 'How can you start spelling boy with <s>?' she
said 'No' she said '<m>

8. Quotation marks are used for attributed words or inner dialogue, and also to indicate when a participant cites a word or words from a course or syllabus.

Example

I tried that it still didn't work because when I asked her she said 'Oh sister this is
/æ b k d/ I know it they have taught us /æ b k d/' then I asked her 'They've taught
you /æ b k d/?' she said 'Yeah' then I was asking myself if she has learned /æ
b k d/ 'cos that's the way they call it and then the way they teachers there

they teach them like a drill so like / æ b k d/

9. The Word line-numbering function is used to facilitate reference to particular parts of a transcription.

Example

Details: Transcription name: Yoshie date: February 2008

duration: 37 minutes 40 seconds

001 **SR:** And This is in your home
 Y: Yeah yeah home and so I am my own boss
002 [Mmm] And I can choose my own material and I can
003 build up my own syllabus but er but er so what I've
004 been doing is that I been trying to to explore a
005 variety of er coursebooks but er but er er in the first
006 year I I used my own er syllabus [mmhmm] and er
007 after that I've been er using three three types of er
008 books er tr- I was trying to to to I don't know to er
009 try using and er explore the ideas so that's why I
010 sort of it's a pilot class
011 **SR:** So it's pilot for your own sort of experience and
012 growing .
 Y: Yes right
013 **SR:** And how how often do you see the children?
014 **Y:** Once a week a fifty minute lesson and er I have
 w- well other classes not many but er but er this is
015 the er I don't know this this class has been following
 my lessons all the way through
016 **SR:** Er what is it you aim to do with them has this
 developed over time?
017

018
019
020

021
022

Appendix 3.9 Sample of a Participant Check message

Notes, Quotes and Queries for Shona from Shelagh

1. The quotes you will find below are sections of my draft Findings chapter. In the chapter I will use a pseudonym for you, but at the moment you are referred to as 'S'.
2. If someone says a few words during the other person's turn, I have put them in square brackets like this: 'I was going [Yes, mmhmm] to school'.
3. For each section, if you have any comments on your own quoted words or what I say in the surrounding text, please make them. You could use the 'comments' facility of Word, type directly on the text or use any other way of communicating that is convenient for you.

Quotations from the draft thesis featuring Shona, for Shona to comment on

Extract 1

Preparing oneself for the next stage of education

Dear Shona, In this section of the thesis in which I am considering quoting your words, along with those of respondents from some other countries like Taiwan and Thailand, I am looking at a theme which concerns whether people try [or have tried] to prepare themselves or to do extra work to meet the requirements of the school. Several participants say that they have done this in their lives and/or report children and parents doing this today. [This contrasts very much with attitudes in other contexts where people think it is the school's or teacher's responsibility to adapt the teaching programme to meet the level of the learners]. Do you think that I am interpreting your words accurately? [Yes, I think you are interpreting my words correctly.]

SR: OK now can I turn from your experiences of learning to read Korean and change the subject to when you were first learning to read in English. And what age was that when you took your first steps in reading English?

S: Before I entered the Middle School [mmhmm] it was just one one month before [uhu] I learned reading reading some words from my aunt [uhu] yes my age was 12

SR: Mmhmm mmhmm so in those days English began in Middle School uhu and your is that a usual thing that your family or your aunt thought it would help you to have this preparation?

S: Yeah

Shona lines x - y

Extract 2

Dear Shona, Here I give you part of my proposed text in which I interpret the choices that you made in the task [Do you remember? I gave you some isolated words from 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' and from 'One, two, three, four, five. Once I Caught a Fish Alive'. And asked you which ones you thought would be challenging for children to read, outside the context of the song]. Do you think that I have interpreted your choices correctly? The problem here is that in the interview I interrupted you and gave my own interpretation [highlighted in yellow]! Bad interviewer! [No! You are a very helpful and thankful interviewer because you interpreted my intention correctly and gave me a guideline in speaking when I hesitated to speak since I did not know how to convey my ideas effectively and clearly. When I had an interview in your office, you made me feel very comfortable.] But did you agree with my interpretation that it was about sight words? I have put the words you chose in bold and between quotes. [I agree with your overall interpretation, but I want to say my intention more clearly about some part of my words.]

Thesis extract reads:

S has a strong sense of the usefulness of teaching sight words but focuses more strongly on the frequency of the candidates that she identifies in the task rather than on their orthographic depth. In parallel with this, she also feels that phonically regular words such as 'helicopter' would be manageable, even if they were long and not part of the syllabus as in this case.

S: 'One two three' these are very easy for children. I think '**the**' is very useful for students to read because when they read '**the**' they can read a lot of, yes, words sentences
SR: It's very frequent yes
S: 'You'
SR: And how would you get them to read that word would you use the Phonics method or whole word?
S: For for '**you**' we use the Word Method and not Phonics
SR: And why is that for those two words?
S: Mm because students can be er contacted, with a lot of opportunities to read to see ...
SR: That's because they are very frequent yeah. **OK, so that would be a principle of frequency 'cos it' really about sight vocabulary isn't it?** How about a word like '**helicopter**'
S: They don't read that the word but they know '**helicopter**' in Korean it's the same It's not [In this line, my intention to say is that "They don't read the word but they know 'helicopter' in Korean and can pronounce it similarly in English even though they cannot pronounce it correctly. In Korea, we have no corresponding Korean word for the helicopter. 'Helicopter' is just 'helicopter' in Korean, too.]
SR: OK so you think they could manage that if you showed that as a new one do you think they could manage it?

S: I think students can manage this word because it's not they know they already know the meaning and pronunciation. [In this line, I meant that "I think students can manage this word because the word "helicopter" is the word students already know the meaning and they have similar pronunciation even in Korean. So, I think 'helicopter' is a good word to teach the relation the letters and the sounds because it is a familiar word to students in Korean, and it is a phonically regular word."

SR: How about the letters and the sounds in that word?

S: It's a long word [mm] so some students are, yeah, hesitating to read but if they know the Phonics they can read very easily

Shona lines x - y

Extract 3

Dear Shona, In this extract below, which is very important for my discussion, you report how you had your own 'breakthrough' in reading English as a child. Would it be justifiable to say that this discovery of the Alphabetic Principle on your part as a child was influential on your beliefs [also mentioned in Extract 4 as something you took from your [school name] experiences] as a teacher about the importance of teaching Young Learners Phonics? [You mention this opinion in your questionnaire, too]. Any other comments would be very welcome!

Thesis extract reads:

In her interview, S from South Korea recounts her private breakthrough [without benefit of teacher's support] with the Alphabetic Principle, which she discovered could apply to English as well as Korean. This allowed her to go beyond the Listen and Repeat memorization strategies promoted by her teacher with regard to reading text.

S: When I learned to read in Korean er I could have a lot of opportunities to listen to Korean and to speak to Korea- speak Korean but in English is different was different so mm just I had to memorize [mmhmm] memorize but it was one day also one day I find er word of 'milk' [mmhmm] I find that 'milk' is connected with a similar Korean sound so I found 'milk' /m/ /ɪ / /l/ /k/ so I was shocked with the finding because I COULD understand the relations of the relations between English and Korean so I applied that rules into other words [mmhhmm] so er it encouraged me

SR: So was that something you found for yourself?

S: Yes yes

SR: So how did your teacher introduce you to words? Did she give you sounds?

S: She didn't introduce any other phonics work [uhu] the relationships between sounds and spelling she just give some sentences or words and she read aloud [mmhmm] and we repeat.

Shona lines x - y

Extract 4

Dear Shona, For the extract below, I just want to double-check that you were impressed

that the English-speaking children [in spite of their advantage of already knowing the language] got a more thorough and logical training in English Phonics than Korean children,. You seemed to feel that it was important for you in the future to give Korean children a more logical and thorough training in Phonics than you had given them before. Is this a reasonable interpretation of your words? How do you feel about this issue now?

I think your interpretation is reasonable. Even now, I have the same idea about this issue. After I came back to Korea, I have usually taught the students in Grade 5 or 6. Especially this year [from March], I have been teaching just English to students in Grade 5 and 6. Frankly speaking, I have not taught Phonics systematically because I have to follow our national textbooks [from the next year, we will not have just one national textbook for grade 5 and 6. We can choose one textbook from several textbooks.] in the given time, and my students are not in the beginning stag [grade 3, 4] to learn English. However, I have tried to teach Phonics whenever I think I need to teach.

Thesis extract reads:

S was impressed that even though UK students were living in an English speaking environment they received a thorough 'logically' ordered grounding in Phonics. She seemed to be contrasting this with more piecemeal attempts in Korea and was determined to provide a more thorough grounding in Phonics on return to Korea.

SR: em do you think that anything that you've seen in this school in Coventry has made you think any differently about the way you're going to teach reading when you go home?

S: Yes I think that was the students in Coventry they are reading English in environment so they can already speak, they can listen English, they can understand but teachers all give them a very logical process for Phonics, for to Phonics, but in Korea my students don't have any opportunity to be surrounded by English environment even the case we don't - we don't teach them logical Phonics [right yes] so I think when I go back to Korea er I really want my students to know Phonics

Shona lines x - y

END

Thanks!

Appendix 3.10 Completed example of the commentary and overview form for materials analysis

Beginning English SIL (Section Initiation Langue) level one of series		
1	Title of series	Beginning English
2	Main country/ies of use	Cameroon (Francophone)
3	What school years/grades are covered by the material?	Year 1
4	Target starting age	6
5	Media used: [book, CD ROM etc]	Pupils' Book, Workbook, Teacher's Guide, Charts
6	Publisher	Cosmos Educational Press Ltd (CEPL)
7	Year of publication of this edition	2007 Third Edition originally published 2002 (reissue of a course originally published in 1999 As 'Mon Livre d'Anglais')
8	Is the material used in state and/or private sector contexts?	State
9	Which elements of the materials were available for scrutiny?	Pupils' Book
10	No of pages and lessons and approximate number of intended teaching hours	68 pages, 12 Units of 4 lessons each
11	By the end of this level of materials is the reading work operating predominantly at WORD, SENTENCE or TEXT level?	<i>Short texts. Sentence level reading comprehension starts on p 38 with True or False sentences about pictures. p. 49 first short descriptive text. Listen and Read aloud. Short poems and chants</i>
12	Notes on fonts used	Handwriting-friendly
13	Is English print prominent in the material? e.g. as activity headings, words on page for dialogues etc?	Yes, from page 1, although the pre-Unit lesson is word-free, called 'Picture Talk' and devoted to children talking about pictures with home scenes with their teacher. After that, heading, rubrics and lesson content is all printed on the page.
14	Notable orthographical points concerning presentation of headings etc	Unit headings have initial capitals for content words. Lesson headings and rubrics are in normal sentence format
15	Is the alphabet presented as a discrete Alphabet Spread section?	Yes

16	Presentation of Upper case and Lower Case letters in the materials	See note 14 above
17	Is there any overt instruction on punctuation and other orthographic issues?	No
18	Are Reading Focal words in the materials grouped/focused on according to ABC or some other order?	The progression starts with the short vowels in CVC words in <aeiou> order. Then the alphabet is introduced in Unit 7, lesson 1 and focus on initial letters begins.
19	How are Reading Focal words 'dosed'?	Lesson 1 of each Unit has a 'Sound and Word Building' activity, but others are interspersed in other lessons
20	Is a category of frequent but non-transparent words given focus for reading?	No
21	Is the full phoneme inventory of the relevant variety of English covered in some way?	No
22	Extent to which focal literacy words are integrated into main body of language taught	37 of the 148 Focal words also appear in the main body of the text = 9% of the overall Vehicular words total of 403
23	What activities are carried out with focal words? Are they static or generative/pattern-seeking?	Considerable pattern-seeking Some rhymes e.g. 'Ben's hen' p. 12 Point and say the name of the picture with the 'a' sound (I therefore included the relevant words in the Reading Focal total) p. 44 Point and say the word that ends with 'at' p. 52 'Magic e' found in i-e and ie words
24	Are pupils asked to write words or letters? If so, is there guidance on letter-formation?	Yes, in the Activity Book, filling in letters and writing whole phrases and sentences. Some of this writing is for language-item consolidation
25	Units of language focused upon in the teaching of early reading	Letter-sound correspondences, some rhyme/rime work
26	Is the term 'Phonics' used anywhere [e.g. Pupils' book or Teacher's guide] with regard to the materials?	Not at this level (though Teacher's Book not available). The term is found in Pupil's book at higher levels in the series. There is a Phonemic Awareness test (named as such) on p. 24 Unit 4 Lesson 4

27	Is there a recognisable Phonics element in the materials?	Yes
28	If yes ... how is this manifested?	with some pattern-seeking work
29	Is there evidence of a Whole Word Recognition approach in the materials?	No
30	If yes ... how is this manifested?	-
31	Is there evidence of the influence of other 'big name' approaches to reading?	No
32	If yes ... how is this manifested?	-
33	<i>Number of Reading-Focal words appearing at this level</i>	148
34	<i>Number of Vehicular Words appearing at this level</i>	514
35	<i>Number of Character Names appearing at this level</i>	39
36	<i>Number of Playful or Onomatopoeic words appearing at this level</i>	2
37	OTHER NOTES?	<i>Signs of local variety of English mixed in with RP goals – e.g. 'horse' in Unit 1, Lesson 1 is not a good example of short <o> if RP is the goal</i>

Appendix 3.11 Section of Excel sheet

Word	No Of syllables	letters	RP phonemes	letter phon diff	digraph issue	Magic 'e'?	issue with <x> /j/ etc	rhotic adjustment for GA	Fun Way 1	Fun Way 2
A										
Acrobat	3	7	7	0					1	
Actor	2	5	4	1						
Afternoon	3	9	7	2				1		
Again	2	5	4	1						
Age	1	3	2	1		1				
All	1	3	2	1						
Always	2	6	5	1						
Am	1	2	2	0						
Ambulance	3	9	8	1			/j/			
And	1	3	3	0						
Angry	2	5	5	0						
Ant	1	3	3	0						
Antelope	3	8	7	1						
Apple	2	6	3	3						
Are	1	3	1	2				1		
Arm	1	3	2	1				1		
Art	1	3	2	1				1		
as	1	2	2	0						
Ashamed	2	7	5	2	<sh>					
At	1	2	2	0						
Ate	1	3	2	1		1				
Aunt	3	9	8	1					1	
Awake	2	5	4	1		1				
Away	2	4	3	1						
Axe	1	3	2	1			<x>			
Baboon	2	6	5	1						
Baby	2	4	4	0						
Back	1	4	3	1	<ck>					
Backyard	2	8	6	2	<ck>			1		
Bad	1	3	3	0						
Badminton	3	8	8	0						
Bag	1	3	3	0						

Appendix 3.12 Rules for paring down and turning the word lists derived from ‘manual’ analysis of materials into harmonised lists allowing like-for-like comparisons among different sets of materials

1. Do not list multipart verbs like *stand up* and formulaic utterances like *Good Morning* as entries on the list in their own right – include just the single elements of these phrases on the list.
2. Where a difference exists between courses about whether a vocabulary item is a one or two-word entity, regularise it to a one-word form or hyphenate it e.g. *icecream*, *blackboard*
3. List personal names of characters in courses in a separate section for analysis of whether these seem to have been chosen with a phonics or a pronunciation motive
4. List ‘playful’ or onomatopoeic words [e.g. *Mooh*, *Beeh*, *Doo Warry*] in a separate section for analysis
5. Include word forms of all of numbers appearing in a course
6. include all days of the week when present in a course
7. include all months of the year if included in the course
8. Include all parts of irregular verbs like ‘be’ or ‘have’ when they are present in a course, even if only the headword is listed in the word list. Otherwise, do not include third person singular forms of present tenses of regular verbs.
9. If the –ing form of a verb is found in a course list it as a separate item
10. If a past tense form of a verb is used in a course, include it as a separate item on the list, whether it is a regular or an irregular past tense form.
11. Do not include regular plural forms where ‘s’ or even ‘es’ is added to the word stem, but do include irregular plurals e.g. ‘teeth’ if they appear in course materials, even if not provided in the word list for the materials themselves
12. Include USA/UK variants in spelling [but note the orientation of each set of materials included in the study]
13. A syllable count of words will be valid for both GA and RP English oriented courses.
14. A Letter/phoneme count cannot be valid for both GA and RP oriented courses because of the effects of GA rhoticism. It is too picky to include two counts for each word on my list. **Solution:** note this and use the Letter/Phoneme difference data only in the case of the RP-oriented courses to make the point. Include a column on the Excel sheet to note /r/ differences with GA.

Appendix 3.13 Copy of contents of the FormsBuilder questionnaire for authors etc.

Questionnaire for authors, editors and curriculum advisers

Welcome and many thanks for coming this far! If you have reached this page this will be because we have been in email or other communication, or you may have received the link address via a colleague.

You may know that I am working on a doctoral thesis which reflects my great interest in Young Learners teaching, specifically the first steps that Young Learners in different learning contexts take in establishing reading skills in English. The definition of 'Young Learners' is children between the ages of 3 – 12 learning English as a foreign or second language in state or private schools.

A major focus of my study will be published teaching materials and the roles that they play in guiding or supporting teachers of Young Learners in their work concerning reading. I am developing a number of instruments that will help me analyse the materials themselves, but in order to inform that analysis I regard it as essential to communicate with the people most concerned. I have so far conducted in depth interviews with a large number of teachers, but I should now like if possible to hear from those concerned with the planning and creation of materials for Young Learners, that is curriculum experts, publishers, editors and authors. If you could spend a little time answering some questions from me this would be very much appreciated. I realise that there may be commercially or otherwise sensitive matter involved and would firstly assure you that if you wish not to answer a particular question that is fine and will not be interpreted in any detrimental way. I have supplied an option for 'no answer' for each question. Further, I will anonymise all responses and will not discuss your answers in the thesis or any other publication in a way that would allow you or the course materials or organisation with which you are associated to be identified.

1. YOUR NAME You do not need to give your name or other personal details, but it would be useful for me to be able get back to you with any queries or follow up questions. Please type in the box below or pass directly to the next question

2. YOUR ORGANISATION, INSTITUTION, COMPANY OR PUBLISHER You do not have to give

this information but, again, it would be very useful to have this. Please type in the box below or pass directly to the next question

3. What role[s] have you played in the creation of English language teaching materials for Young Learners? Please click on all that apply. There is an optional text box below for you to add any details that you wish*

- Single Author
- Member of a writing team
- Leader of a writing team
- Editor
- Commissioning editor/publishing director
- Adviser to a publisher
- Adviser to a Ministry of Education
- Other

details of role[s] played

4. For what context[s] were the materials that you have been involved with created? If more than one context, please click on all responses that apply. There is an optional box below for any further comments*

- International use – a single uniform edition used across a wide spectrum of countries
- International use – different editions which were modified to suit particular countries
- National use – materials used in state primary schools in a particular country
- National use – materials used in private institutions in which English is taught to Young Learners in a particular country

- Other
- No answer

space for any comments on your responses to [4] above. If you have no comments, please go directly to the next question

5. If you are prepared to give details of Young Learners projects with which you have been involved please give the title[s] and any other details you wish in the box below. If you do not wish to give this information please pass directly to the next question

6. Do you have specific beliefs or principles that you think should be followed with regard to the introduction of Young Learners to their first steps in reading in English? Some general ideas are given in the alternatives opposite. Please click on all statements that you agree with but these are intended mainly as triggers or stimuli for you to react to [or against]. I am very

- It is necessary to take account of whether the children can already read fluently in their own language or are still working towards this goal
- The state of children's first language reading need not be a particular concern when introducing them to reading in English
- If the children's first language has a different writing system, English Language Teaching should take account of this.
- It is a good idea to delay reading in English until some time after listening and speaking have been established
- Reading and writing should be introduced simultaneously in English Language Teaching to children
- Only children above a certain age are ready for reading in English. Before that listening and speaking should be the focus
- Children should not see words written or printed in English during

interested in your own views which you can type in the box below if you choose*

their first classroom experiences with English

- When teaching children English, writing should be delayed for some time after reading has been introduced
- Learning to write letters and words is an important support to the development of reading skills
- It is important to have words printed on the page from very early in course materials used for English Language Teaching
- It is important to introduce the whole alphabet, but without letter names, before Young Learners of English start learning to read in English
- Young Learners of English need to know the whole alphabet with letter names before they start learning to read in English
- Young Learners of English should focus on just a few letters at any one time when they are learning to read in English and the sequence should follow alphabetical A, B, C order
- Learners need to have developed a good pronunciation in English before they can tackle the first steps in reading
- The use of rhymes is especially beneficial to learning to read in English
- It is very important for Young Learners who are starting to learn to read to learn the initial sounds and letters of key words
- The words focused on for learning to read should be drawn from the vocabulary that is taught in the rest of the English Language course
- The words focused on for learning to read need not be the same as the vocabulary that is taught in the rest of the English Language course
- From their very first lessons in reading English, children need to be made aware of the benefits that this skill could offer them in the future [e.g. enjoying story books, access to webpages]
- Other
- No answer from me

Please add any details or elaboration of any of your responses to [6] above. If you do not wish

to do this, please pass directly to the next question

7. How easy have you found it to incorporate your beliefs about early reading into the teaching materials that you have been involved with? Please click on all the statements that you agree with, but as before, it would be very valuable if you treated them as triggers for your own responses to be typed in the box below if you choose*

- No problems. The materials reflected my ideas very well
- Generally the materials reflected my ideas, but it was necessary to compromise on some details
- Some of my ideas are hard to put 'on the page' and would be more effectively addressed by teacher training than through published teaching materials
- It would have been possible to incorporate some of my ideas into teaching materials but they were opposed by those in charge of the project
- Some of my ideas required the use of supplementary materials [e.g. story books] outside the course materials
- Other
- No answer from me

If you have any comments on [7] above, on trying to incorporate your ideas on reading in the teaching materials for which you had responsibility, please type them in the box below. If not, please pass to directly to the next section

8. What are your views

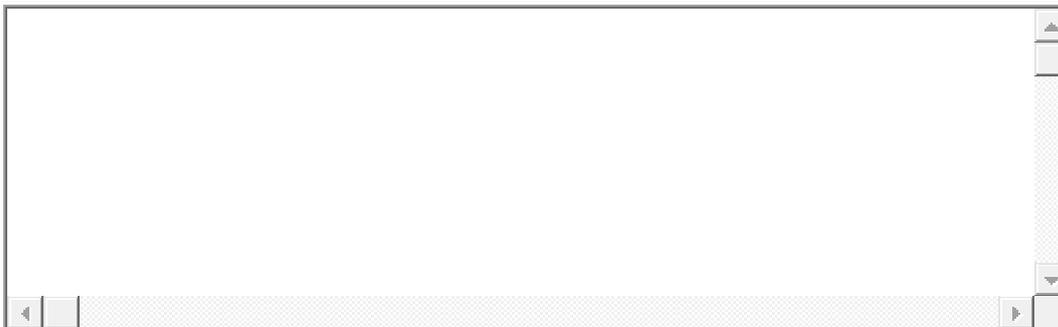
- Some of them can be directly transferred to Young Learners

on the usefulness for Young Learners of Reading Methods [e.g. Phonics] that are commonly used with native speaking children? Please click on all the responses that you agree with, but it would be useful if you could treat them as triggers for your own views and responses to be typed in the box below if you choose. Please name any particular methods that you are aware of or have been influenced by*

classroom teaching, but they are difficult to put directly into published materials

- Some of them contain ideas which can be used directly in course materials for Young Learners of English
- There are very few ideas in them which apply to Young Learners of English because their learning conditions are so different
- They contain useful ideas, but the teachers of Young Learners would need special training to implement them
- Other
- No answer from me

If you have further comments on [8] above, on the use of native speaker Reading Methods with Young Learners please type them in the box below. If not, please go directly to the next part of the questionnaire



FUTURE CONTACTS
You do not need to give personal details, but if you would be prepared for me to contact you in future for any clarifications or if you would like to

hear about the findings of this research in due course, please type your email address here so that I can contact you

That is the end of the questionnaire. Please click on the 'Send form' box below to submit.
Thank you so much for your help. It is greatly appreciated
Shelagh Rixon

** indicates a required field*

Privacy statement

An undertaking is made to all who complete this form that the information collected will be kept confidential and no responses will be reported in any way which could lead to the identification of a particular individual or the organisations with which they may be associated. This form is anonymous. No data which personally identifies you is collected on the form, and the data you provide is used solely to help us improve the delivery of our courses.

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Page contact: [Shelagh Rixon](#) Last revised: Wed 7 Sep 2011

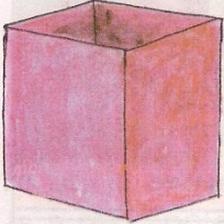
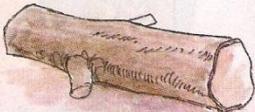
[Back to top of page](#)

Appendix 3.14 Samples from Materials Analysed

Unit 6

LESSON 1 Letter 'o' as in orange 

Look and say.

 a box  a dog  a log

Listen and read.

b o	bo	d o	do	g o	go	c o	co
f o	fo	h o	ho	j o	jo	m o	mo
n o	no	p o	po	r o	ro	s o	so
t o	to	n o	no	w o	wo	y o	yo
z o	zo						

Say this rhyme.

Motor car! Motor car!
Can you carry me to school?
Pim! Pim! Pim! Pim!
Pom! Pom! Pom! Pom!
Motor car! Motor car!



22

Is it an elephant?

1 Listen, point and repeat.

Langage : *Is it a...? Yes, it is/No, it isn't.*
Mots nouveaux : *lion, elephant, an*

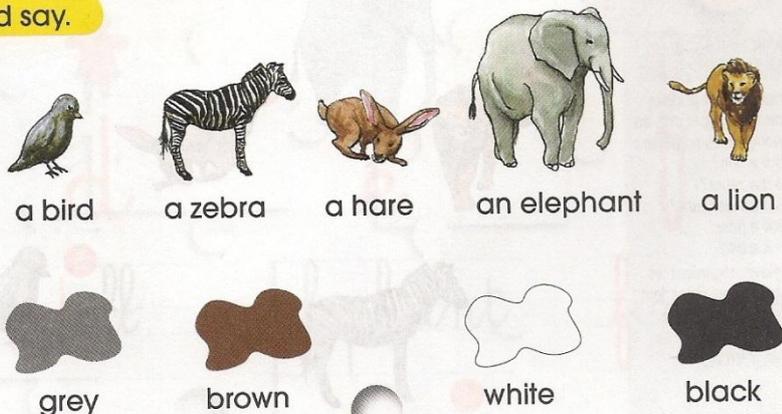
- Introduire *an* : devant une voyelle, le déterminant *a* devient *an* (*an elephant*).
- Lire l'histoire.
- Les élèves montrent chaque image en répétant les phrases.



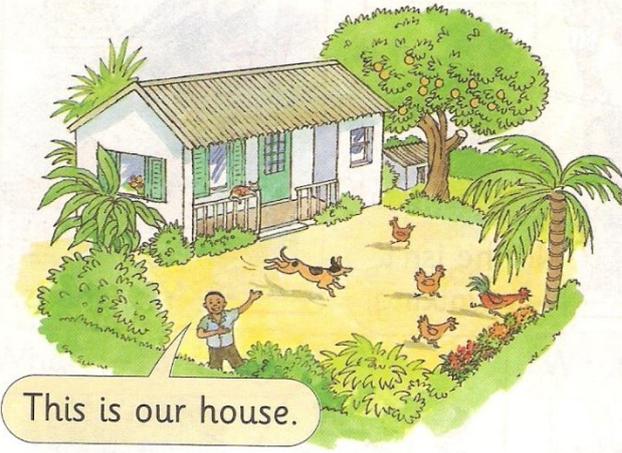
2 Point and say.

Mots nouveaux : *zebra, hare, bird, grey, brown, white, black*

- Montrer les animaux en les nommant. Faire de même avec les couleurs.
- Associer les couleurs avec les mots, dire *a black and white zebra*...
- Demander aux élèves de trouver les mots dans l'activité 1.



1 Look and say



This is our house.

This is the door.
 These are the windows.
 This is the roof.
 This is the compound.
 This is the garden.
 These are chickens.
 These are trees.
 These are flowers.

2 Practise with a friend



What's this?

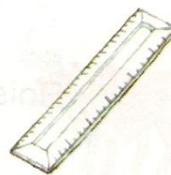
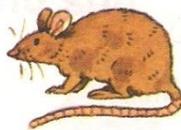
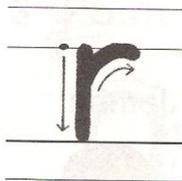
This is the garden.

What are these?



These are trees.

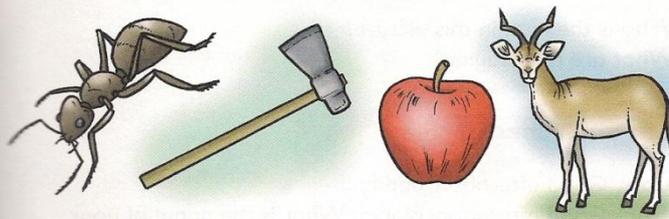
3 Point and say



Practise in pairs



Look and do



ant axe apple antelope
a a a a

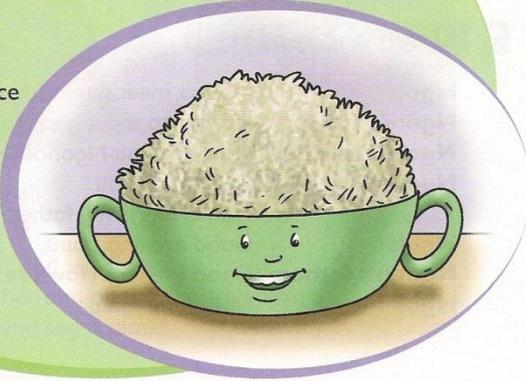
1. Point to each object and say its name.
2. Listen to your teacher and repeat the sound **a**.
3. Copy the sound **a** and say it aloud.

 **Practise in pairs**



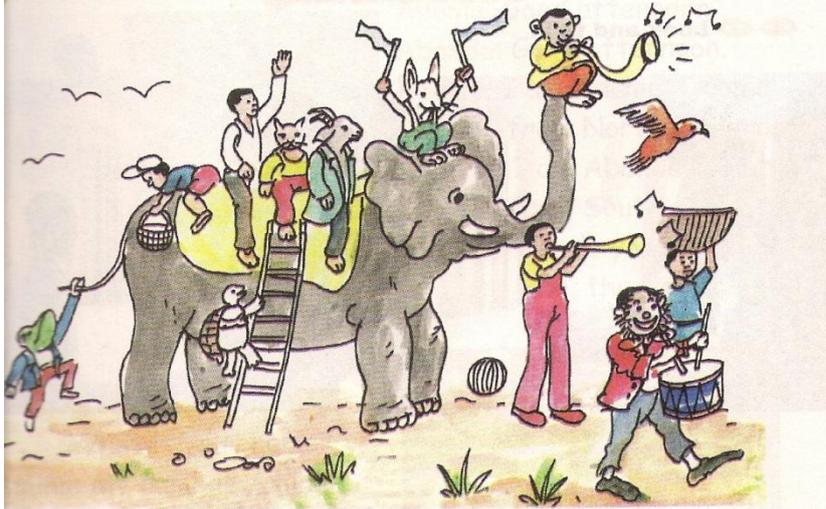
 **Say the rhyme**

My name is Lunch Rice.
I know you like lunch rice.
Take this bowl of rice.
And make your lunch nice
Without any price.



Lesson 2: **The Elephant (rhyme)**

Listen and say the rhyme.



 **Rhyme**

The elephant has big ears.
Says the monkey with the bugle.
The elephant has large legs.
But it can run fast, says the eagle.

Directions: Cat and mat are rhyming words because they have the same ending sound. Listen to the rhyme and say the rhyming words.

Look and Listen Again

- Do you remember the dialog we studied?
Let's listen to it again and think about the key expressions.
- Present the first period dialogue on the CD-ROM Title again to remind the key expressions.
- Where is *Namdaemun*? Can you tell me the directions?
- Go straight and turn right at the bank.
- Excellent. What does Nami's mom say?
- You can't miss it.
- Good job.

Let's Read

1. Look and listen carefully.

- Open your book to page 44.
- There are words that are matched with pictures.
- Watch the screen and listen carefully.
- Present 'Word Reading' on the CD-ROM title.
- (Students listen to the pronunciation of the words while watching the screen.)

2. Let's read.

- This time, listen carefully and repeat the words as you hear them.
- (Repeat watching the screen.)
- Now, listen to the words and point to the matching pictures in your book.
- (Students point to the matching pictures in their books.)
- Very good. Read them out aloud by yourselves.

○ Present words muting the sound on the CD-ROM title.

- (Read the words out loud by themselves.)
- Excellent.

3. Do it yourself.

- Let's read the words.

Then, find the words in the puzzle and connect them to the picture.

- Look at your book. There is a word puzzle. Can you find words in the puzzle? Find the words and connect them to the matching pictures.

○ OK.

● Try it.

○ While students do the activity, the teacher circulates around the classroom assists them.

● What's this?

S1: Bank.

● Right. How do you spell it?

S1: B, a, n, k.

● Very good.

● Have you finished?

○ Yes.

● Let's check the answers with the CD-ROM title.

○ Present the answers of reading on the CD-ROM title .

Let's write

1. Look carefully.

● Now, look at your book on page 44.

Let's read the letters of the alphabet.

Can you write the letters?

○ Yes./No.

○ (Students read letters that are in the book.)

● Watch the screen to learn how to write them.

1 다음 낱말의 뜻을 생각하며 읽어 봅시다.



breakfast



lunch



dinner



study



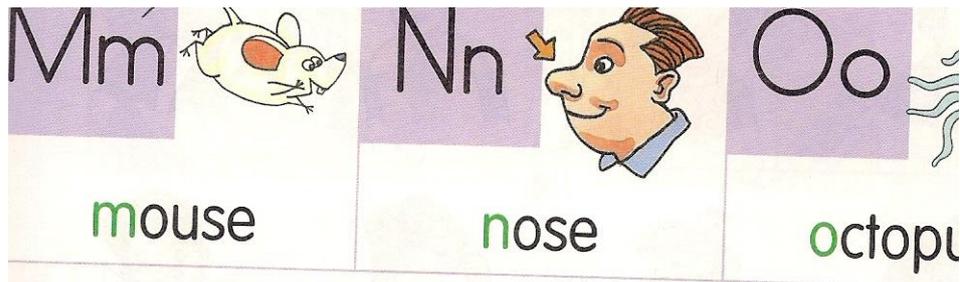
homework



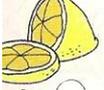
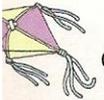
bed

2 그림에 맞는 낱말을 찾아 연결해 봅시다.





Match

	•	M	•	kite
	•	L	•	octopus
	•	K	•	nose
	•	J	•	lemon
	•	O	•	juice
	•	N	•	mouse

Note: A dashed line connects the first dot (juice) to the letter J.

Match the words with the letters J K L M N O. (See pages 53 and 54.)



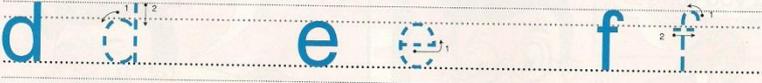
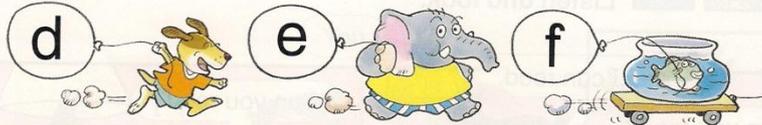
Go SuperKids! 1 Taiwan



E Let's practice.



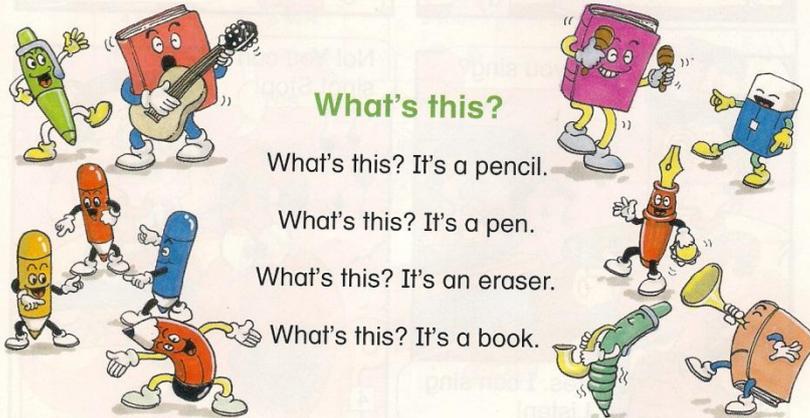
Listen, say and write.



F Let's sing.



Listen and sing.



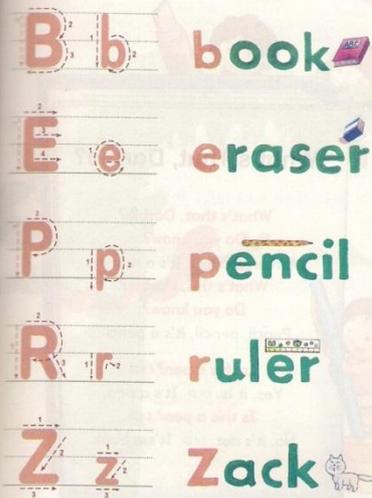
What's this?

What's this? It's a pencil.

What's this? It's a pen.

What's this? It's an eraser.

What's this? It's a book.



2. 若時間充裕的話，可以進行下面一個活動。

活動：超級比一比／

教具：會話短句卡 1 組

1. 各排第一位同學跑至臺前，教師出題，一題包含二個會話短句（如：Good afternoon. / Oh, no!）。
2. 等該生走回所屬排前後，由教師發號施令。該生始可叫下一位學生轉向他，比出題目內容。
3. 最先比完之組別，由最後一位學生答題。答對者，該組得一分。
4. 第二題由各排之第二位學生負責至臺前領題，各排第一位則改排至最後，再進行比賽。
5. 可視時間，決定遊戲題數。時間一到，學生則不能有任何動作，否則視為違規，被判出局，最後一位學生為勝利者。

(四) 字母教學 (Let's Read) : 10分鐘

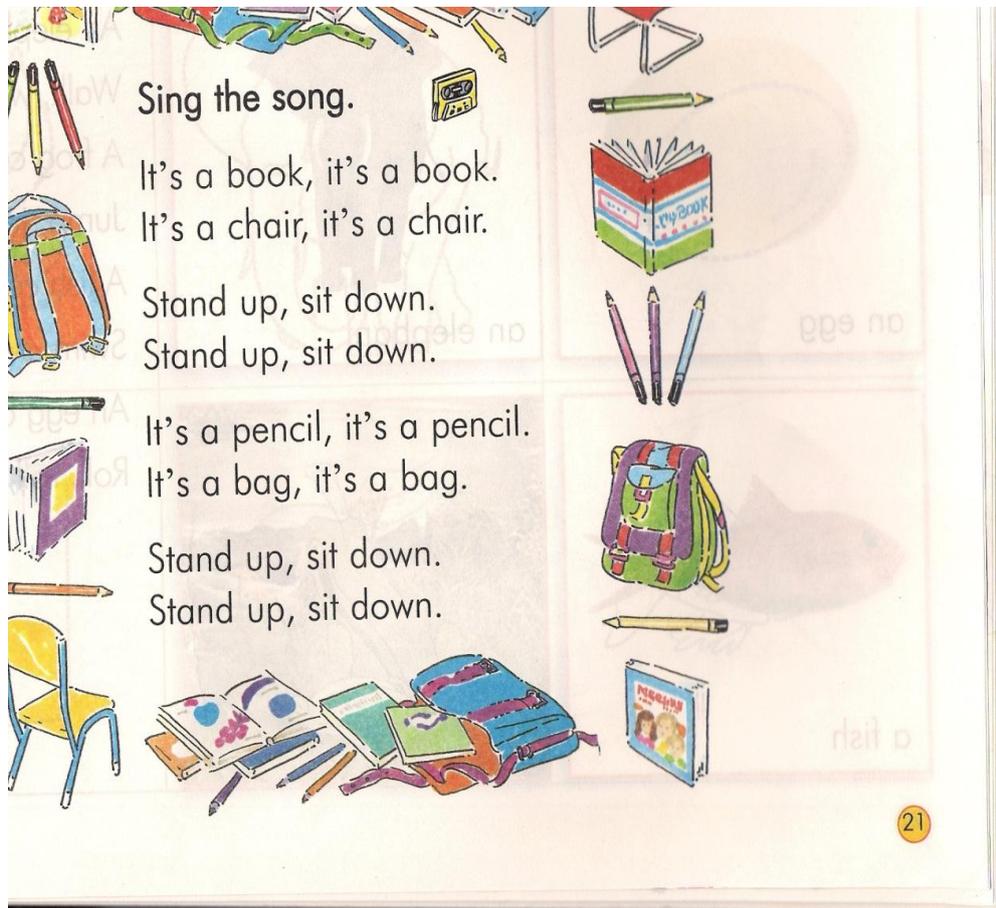
1. 介紹字母 Bb, Ee, Pp, Rr, Zz 的念法及大小寫的字形與筆順，並提醒學生注意課本上不同的書寫方式，然後一一帶領學生在空中書寫，接著在習作小白板上練習。
2. 介紹與字母相關的單字如：Bb—book, Ee—eraser, Pp—pencil, Rr—ruler, Zz—Zack。
3. 待學生熟悉各字母後，可進行下面活動。

活動：字母五子棋／教具：字母卡 10 張

1. 將學生分成兩隊，並請學生由前向後報數做為其次序。
2. 請各組學生按次序，每人一個字母依序念出 Bb, Ee, Pp, Rr, Zz，教師同時將字母卡隨機與學生念字母之速度出示給學生看。
3. 若學生所念的字母和教師所出示的字母相同，則二人要到教室前方去拍黑板。先拍到的人所代表的隊伍可得一分。
4. 設定計時器在一分鐘之內得分最多的組得勝。

(五) 指定作業 (Assignment) : 3分鐘

1. 解釋習作本第三課第前 3 大題作答方式，要學生回家完成該大題。
2. 擔任角色扮演的小組要準備道具並事先練習。



Sing the song.

It's a book, it's a book.
It's a chair, it's a chair.

Stand up, sit down.
Stand up, sit down.

It's a pencil, it's a pencil.
It's a bag, it's a bag.

Stand up, sit down.
Stand up, sit down.



Remember:

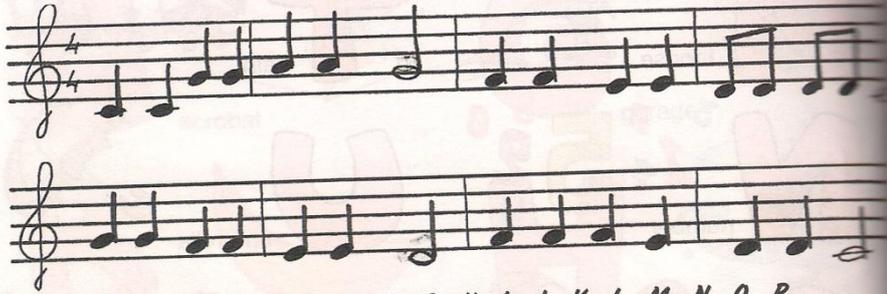
- Use capital letters to start a sentence.

Examples : **G**ood morning.
 : **H**ello.





ALPHABET SONG!



*A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P.
Q. R. S. T. U and V. W. X. Y and Z.
Come dear children. come to me,
while I sing the ABC.
a. b. c. d. e. f. g. h. i. j. k. l. m. n. o. p.
q. r. s. t. u and v. w. x. y and z.
Come now. Johnny. come to me,
let me hear your ABC.
A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P.
Q. R. S. T. U and V. W. X. Y and Z.*





Fun Way 1 Greece

Appendix 4.1 List of the top 200 most frequently-found Reading Focal words from the courses analysed

am	dog	ice-cream	nose	six
ant	doll	in	not	small
apple	door	ink	number	snake
arm	dress	insect	nut	sock
axe	drum	jacket	octopus	spoon
bag	duck	jar	on	star
ball	ear	jeep	one	sun
banana	eat	jet	orange	Sunday
bat	egg	jug	ostrich	table
bean	eight	juice	ox	take
bed	elephant	jump	pan	tap
bee	eraser	kangaroo	park	tea
bell	eye	kettle	peg	teacher
big	family	key	pen	ten
bin	fan	king	pencil	this
bird	fat	kite	pet	three
black	father	ladder	pig	Thursday
blue	fish	lamp	pin	tin
book	five	leaf	pot	tomato
box	flag	leg	queen	tooth
boy	fly	lemon	quilt	top
brother	four	lid	rabbit	tree
bug	fox	lion	radio	two
bus	Friday	lock	rat	umbrella
cake	frog	log	read	under
can	full	man	red	van
cap	fun	mango	ring	vase
car	gate	map	ruler	violin
carrot	girl	mat	run	wash
cat	glass	men	sad	watch
chair	goat	Monday	Saturday	web
chin	hair	monkey	school	Wednesday
clean	hand	moon	seven	well
clock	hat	mother	she	window
cot	he	mouse	ship	yam
cow	hen	mouth	shirt	yellow
cup	horse	name	shoe	yo-yo
desk	hot	nest	short	zebra
dig	house	net	sister	zip
doctor	hut	nine	sit	zoo

Appendix 4.2 Responses to the Questionnaire for EYL authors etc.

The questions have been sorted according to the number of selections of each possible response.

Question 6 Specific Beliefs or Principles Held by Respondents

The use of rhymes is especially beneficial to learning to read in English	13
It is very important for Young Learners who are starting to learn to read to learn the initial sounds and letters of key words	12
Learning to write letters and words is an important support to the development of reading skills	12
If the children's first language has a different writing system, English Language Teaching should take account of this	11
From their very first lessons in reading English, children need to be made aware of the benefits that this skill could offer them in the future [e.g. enjoying story books, access to webpages]	10
It is necessary to take account of whether the children can already read fluently in their own language or are still working towards this goal	9
The words focused on for learning to read should be drawn from the vocabulary that is taught in the rest of the English Language course	9
It is important to have words printed on the page from very early in course materials used for English Language Teaching	9
Reading and writing should be introduced simultaneously in English Language Teaching to children	8
It is a good idea to delay reading in English until some time after listening and speaking have been established	7
Only children above a certain age are ready for reading in English. Before that listening and speaking should be the focus	5
When teaching children English, writing should be delayed for some time after reading has been introduced	4
The words focused on for learning to read need not be the same as the vocabulary that is taught in the rest of the English Language course	3
Children should not see words written or printed in English during their first classroom experiences with English	3
Young Learners of English should focus on just a few letters at any one time when they are learning to read in English and the sequence should follow alphabetical A, B, C order	2
The state of children's first language reading need not be a particular concern when introducing them to reading in English	3
It is important to introduce the whole alphabet, but without letter names, before Young Learners of English start learning to read in English	1
Learners need to have developed a good pronunciation in English before they	1

can tackle the first steps in reading	
Young Learners of English need to know the whole alphabet with letter names before they start learning to read in English	0
Other	0
No answer from me	0

Question 7 ease of incorporating own ideas into materials

Generally the materials reflected my ideas, but it was necessary to compromise on some details	11
Some of my ideas required the use of supplementary materials [e.g. story books] outside the course materials	8
Some of my ideas are hard to put 'on the page' and would be more effectively addressed by teacher training than through published teaching materials	6
It would have been possible to incorporate some of my ideas into teaching materials but they were opposed by those in charge of the project	4
No problems. The materials reflected my ideas very well	3
Other	1
No answer from me	0

Question 8 usefulness of L1 methods

Some of them contain ideas which can be used directly in course materials for Young Learners of English	12
They contain useful ideas, but the teachers of Young Learners would need special training to implement them	10
Some of them can be directly transferred to Young Learners classroom teaching. but they are difficult to put directly into published materials	4
There are very few ideas in them which apply to Young Learners of English because their learning conditions are so different	2
Other	0
No answer from me	0

Appendix 6.1 Examples of Professional Training materials for teachers new to EYL teaching

These three activities represent three accessible steps on the way for teachers in initial or in-service training to think about early reading in English in a way that suggests its dependence on other language learning and may help to balance the ‘words on the page as facilitative’ view with a view of oral language as facilitative of reading.

Activity 1: A sound start

Premise: Adding to trainees’ burden by doing half an arid job on areas such as phonology (often translated into a meaningless acquaintance with IPA symbols) would do little service. An issue with the activities below is to make them accessible and non-technical but WITHOUT ‘dumbing down’.

Aims:

1. To raise awareness of the phoneme inventory of the variety of English that trainees wish or need to teach
2. To encourage them to use pronunciation teaching activities that are not rigidly tied to ‘words on the page’
3. To help them critique and supplement course materials if they do not offer sufficient orally-based work on pronunciation

Materials:

A supply of local and some non-local course materials

The list of 200 frequently-found Reading-Focal words from Appendix 4.1

Discussion Starter Questions:

- How many key sounds are there to learn in the variety of English that is used in this context?
- What example words and phrases would be suitable to use to help children learn them?

Work in a group to come up with a list of key sounds and some example words to fit them. [If you can use IPA use this to help you. If not, work directly with example words].

(10 minutes into the discussion, to provide support, the trainer feeds in the list of 200 most popular Reading Focal words from Appendix 4.1 but without saying what they are. Participants can use them to try out pronunciations in order to identify more phonemes for their list).

Discussion Continuation Question:

Now that you have your list, what ideas do you have about how to teach those sounds?

Discussion and Feedback

(The aim is to elicit a variety of means and ideas, including purely oral practice via rhymes, chants, songs etc)

Task continuation

- Now that you have your list and your teaching ideas, take a look at [selection of local and some non-local course books]. Find out how the course-writers suggest you teach sounds. How many sounds are actually included in the courses that you look at?

(The aim is to breed discontent when they find out that pronunciation tends to be linked to one-word Reading Focal practice and that not all the sounds they had identified are included in the books)

Homework for next session

What would you add to 'course x' to make sure that it covers pronunciation in the right way for your children? Try to find a song or a rhyme or an activity that helps.

(Next session, trainees bring back some ideas for activities as well as sounds)

Activity 2: The Power of Rhyme

Premises:

1. *Rime/rhyme awareness has good research support as an important faculty to promote in early readers.*
2. *It also leads to enjoyable classroom activities.*
3. *If learners can become aurally/orally confident of a number of rhyming words BEFORE they encounter them in print, this may help them towards the important second step after the Alphabetic Principle, that in English you often need to move beyond it.*

Materials

A supply of catchy rhymes, to add to the inventions of the teachers in the session.

Discussion Starter Questions:

- Do your children enjoy rhymes and chants?
- What are your favourites?
- Are they more than 'just fun'? Share your views.

Feedback and Discussion

- Sharing rhymes and discussing how they could benefit learning.

(Suggestions from the trainer, if they do not naturally emerge from the group: All the below are rhymes to be shared orally-only for some time before the children encounter the key words in print).

Classroom rhyming jingles and slogans:

In the **bin**! (when offending items are thrown away)

Here, there and everywhere!

Oh **dear**, x isn't **here** (while taking the register)

Oh **no**! Where did it **go**? (when an item is lost)

One-off fun rhymes:

Quick, **quick!**

The cat's been **sick!**

Where, **where?**

Under the **chair**

Discussion with the teachers of:

1. 'Obvious' 'on the page' rhymes where the spelling and the pronunciation of the rime are both the same (bin, in) (cat, sat, mat, hat, fat)
2. Rhymes where the children need to pay attention to what (owing to all their fun practice) they **know** the pronunciation is and not be distracted by the spelling when they see it. The next step is to help them develop an awareness that, in English, letter-sound correspondences are not always one-for-one.

Activity 3: Tricky Words

Premise:

*This activity moves one step beyond the 'moving away from only the Alphabetic Principle' that we saw in **The Power of Rhyme**, above. From the main study we saw that non-transparent words are not a category that is paid attention to in Reading-Focal activities in course materials and that participants often saw the function of Sight Vocabulary as catering more strongly to frequent than to frequent-but-non-transparent words.*

Materials:

Lists of words fitting different topics (e.g. animals, food, numbers) some of them orthographically transparent and others 'tricky', i.e. non-transparent. This example works with the topic of animals.

Task:

Teachers are given the list below (with accompanying visuals) and the 'starter question'

'Why are bears trickier than dogs and cats?'

mouse	deer	hare
dog	elephant	leopard
cat	squirrel	rat
Monkey	hippopotamus	camel
donkey	chimpanzee	rhino
bear	rabbit	

(The first part of the task is to sort the animal names into groups according to perceived reading challenge for children and then justify the groupings. Possible criteria offered might be familiarity of the animal, length in letters or syllables, dense consonant clusters, or orthographic transparency.

The next part is to decide how to deal with any animal names that seem to be 'tricky' in terms of analogy with other words (e.g. 'bear' rhymes with 'pear' but not with 'ear', and 'monkey' and 'donkey' do not rhyme) and what to promote in terms of metacognition in children regarding transparent words versus less transparent words.

e.g. Do the teachers consider that a similar task for children, to sort lists of animal names into ones that are 'easy' and ones that 'it is hard to work out first time' would be a valid way of raising children's awareness of the territory Beyond the Alphabetic Principle? Would designing a zoo with different compartments for the 'easy' and the 'tricky' animals be an appropriate activity for metacognition? Why or why not?)

Appendix 6.2 Working with writers and more senior teachers

The activities below are designed to set up controversy and discussion about terms such as 'reading' in more experienced professionals with classroom memories to draw upon.

Activity 1: What is going on here?

Materials:

(Everyone in the session gets the following information on a slip of paper):

A recent survey (Garton, Copland and Burns, 2011) revealed that more than 70% of YL teachers surveyed said they used Reading Aloud as a regular activity in their classrooms. However, Reading came near the bottom of the teachers' list of priorities, just above Grammar.

(Subgroups are then given 'key questions' although they are expected to range more widely than the key question itself).

Group A: Is this true in your own teaching? Why or why not?

Group B: What are some of the reasons why YL teachers might use reading aloud?

Group C: When a child is reading aloud, what is he or she learning? What are the other children learning?

(Groups then exchange members and relay their discussions and conclusions).

Activity 2: What to include and why

Materials:

A set of course materials (not written by any participant) to which to react.

(Participants are asked to consider the following questions about the materials and to extend the discussion to their own practice)

Look and discuss:

In this set of materials:

- Which words are put into focus for reading?
- Can you estimate how many these words are? Do you think it is too many, too few or about right? Why?
- Why do you think these words were chosen?
- Are the 'reading' words used in other parts of the course? Do you think that they should be integrated or is it better to keep them separate?