Performance-Based Chinese L2 Reading Instruction:

A Spiral Approach

Dissertation

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Abstract

Reading is a social activity. It happens in a social context with identifiable purpose. The reading purposes determine what the readers will read and how they will read. In daily life, reading is assessed by the fulfillment of a reading task. Good readers can successfully sense the reading task, visually perceive the signs, go through cognitive process, achieve certain interaction with the text, and finally display a response to the task.

However, current L1 and L2 reading research treats reading comprehension as the most essential part of reading, and focuses on reading cognitive process. Consequently, current reading instruction is comprehension-oriented and concentrated on fluency instruction and reading strategy instruction. In the case of Chinese L2 reading instruction in the United States, where Chinese has very little similarity with the learners’ native language, the situation is even more severe. Reading instruction is primarily focused on linguistic factors, especially at the beginner and intermediate levels.

This dissertation proposes a new Chinese L2 reading instruction model, which is performance based. In the new approach, the objective of instruction is to train the learners to perform reading tasks successfully in appropriate social context. It moves beyond reading comprehension and treats it as the prerequisite of the performance. To
implement, performance-based reading instruction constructs social contexts for learners, provides opportunities for the learners to read in these contexts, and trains the learners to fulfill the recognized reading tasks. This new approach usually includes three phases. The three phases are built around the same theme and spiral up from reading comprehension of the text, to the demonstration of reading comprehension through tasks, and finally to handling authentic reading materials in simulated culturally appropriate tasks.

Theoretical support from previous literacy research and by preliminary observations and surveys indicate that this new approach has many advantages over conventional instruction. It can enhance the learners’ comprehension of the text, improve their reading competence, and motivate them to extend their engagement in reading activities. Specifically, the culturally appropriate context in the performance-based reading instruction can trigger learners’ prior knowledge and L1 reading strategies, and thus can facilitate comprehension. In addition, the learners can tap into more mental resources during the reading process so that they will retain better long-term memories. Last but most importantly, the learners can retrieve their memory better by matching the daily situation with their learning contexts during the performance-base instruction. As a result, the learners will have better chance to perform successfully when expected to do so in later life.
Dedication

Dedicated to my family
Acknowledgments

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Chapter 1: Pedagogical Definition of Reading

Reading, by its nature, is a purposeful social activity. The reader reads within a social context to fulfill a reading task. The reading task is a very important factor during reading. It actually determines, at least to a great extent, the manner of reading. For example, if one is looking for a phone number from the phonebook, he will quickly browse the book to find the last name he is looking for. If the last name starts with the letter S, the reader will skip the last names from A to R. If there is a name very close to what he is looking for, he will read with more care, sometimes even letter by letter, to make sure he gets the number of John R. Smith instead of Joe R. Smith. However, when the same person reads an operation manual of a machine, he will read every step without skipping any information. Nevertheless, no matter how careful he is, he is not likely to read the manual letter by letter.
From this nature of reading, the reading instruction, including Chinese L2 reading instruction, should reflect the social reading context and the reading task. However, my thirteen-year Chinese teaching experience tells me the opposite. As will be reviewed in the following chapters, especially Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, Chinese L2 reading instruction focuses on the reading competency training, more specifically, Chinese orthography and grammar. I feel that this derivation from the nature of reading hinders the efficient instruction, and would like to propose a performance-based reading instruction for Chinese L2 reading, which focuses more on social context and fulfillment of reading task. In this Chapter, I will provide my definition of reading.

### 1.1 Definition of reading

Reading is a social activity which contains three components: the social context, the reading purpose and the interaction between the reader and the text. Driven by the social context, the reader generates the desire of reading (reading purpose). Then, the reader will choose reading material and reading manner, which is referred to “interaction” in my definition of reading. The interaction is both a psychological and social process. On one hand, it is affected by the readers’ linguistic skill, prior knowledge and reading strategy skills. On the other hand, it is also affected directly by the social context, such as the social value of certain type of text. The product of this interaction is comprehension of the text. Starting with the comprehension, the reader will take actions to fulfill the reading task. This definition can be illustrated in Figure 1.1.
Figure 1.1: Three components of reading and their relationship.
This definition of reading is different from most contemporary definitions. Most theories focus on the psychological aspect of reading. For example, in the yearbook *Reading in the Elementary School* by National Society for the Study of Education, Gates (1949) described reading as “essentially a thoughtful process”. Goodman (1965, 1973) defined reading as a psycholinguistic process in which the reader actively reconstructed a message encoded graphically by the writer. Clearly, these definitions merely considered the interaction component of reading and neglected the social context and reading purpose components. Thus, I feel it is more appropriate to consider these theories as the definition of the interaction component of reading. A more detailed review of the psychological studies about reading will be reviewed in Chapter 2.

### 1.1.1 Social Context

As a communication skill, reading is not merely a psychological act of individuals, but rather a set of complicated social practices that are determined by social context. Chartier (1999) defined reading from the way the reading behavior was being conducted: “reading is a practice with multiple differentiations varying with time and milieu, and that the signification of a text also depends on the way it is read: aloud or silently, in solitude or in company, in private or in public, etc.” (p. 276). The social context includes the social cause for the reading purpose, the value of the text in the community the reader belongs, the social reading preference on what types of reading acts are appreciated by the community, when and where the reading act happens, why it happens, with whom the reading act happens, etc. Reading education in school and
family reading habits should also be included in this social context. The social context can differentiate various reading interactions that involve the same text.

Culture as part of the social conventions for reading plays an important role in the sociocultural context. Hewett (1985) claimed that cultural values intrude on the reading (interaction) process. What is read, by whom, and under what circumstances (when, where and why) are all considerations influenced by culture that will have repercussions on reading comprehension. At the complex levels of rhetorical organization, culture may play a major role in determining in which part of the text, paragraph, or even sentence, key cues may be found. Hewett claimed that East Asian paragraph rhetorical organization is different from English and other languages. In addition, he found that reading culturally weighted materials in a second language is more difficult than reading culturally unweighted materials, confirming the intrinsic relationship between language and culture.

Warnick (1996) claimed that in L2 reading instruction, we should consider social and cultural factors about why and how people in the given culture read a given text. Noda (2003) defined reading as a social activity as well as a cognitive activity. She claimed that the kind of reading, the genre of materials to read, and the reading purpose are defined by the culture of that society. In addition, culture also exists in reading materials, reading habits, value of reading, reading philosophy, and reading training. In her investigation of the reading culture in late imperial China, Yu (2003) argued that
reading was an indispensable component in the tapestry of cultural life and occupied a unique position in the landscape of social history in late imperial China.

1.1.2 Reading Purpose

The reading purpose initiates the reading behavior and further determines the reading performance. During reading, readers may search for the needed information directly. For example, when reading the news about a football game, if the reader just wants to know the result, he will search for the result. If the reader wants to know the performance of some players, he will certainly search for the description of the players’ performance and pay close attention to that information. Sometimes the purpose of reading emerges as the reader reads and can be modified during reading (McKillop, 1952). Mature readers can approach a text with different purposes or perspectives which can override conventions a linguistic community ordinarily uses to structure a text (Pichert & Anderson, 1977).

There are three major types of reading purposes, namely informational reading, perspective reading, and affective reading. Informational reading treats text as a source of information. Therefore the accurate comprehension of the information is crucial (Noda, 2003). “Functional literacy”, which refers to the ability to read common texts such as newspapers and manuals and to use the information gained to secure employment (Resnick & Resnick, 1977), is the capability of informational reading. Perspective reading looks for new viewpoints. Reading academic papers, film reviews, editorials, biographies, personal letters, etc all belong to this type of reading. Readers can engage in perspective reading effectively by knowing the conventional expressions, discourse
organization, genre-specific vocabulary, and discourse markers of opinions and viewpoints. These elements can be crucially important prerequisites to successful perspective reading. Affective reading treats the text as a source of affective experiences, and thus the rhetorical power of the text becomes vitally important. Readers pay attention to the rhetorical styles as well as their messages. The purpose of affective reading resides predominantly within the reader. What individuals gain from affective reading may vary drastically depending on their experiential backgrounds and their state of mind as they encounter the text. Eller (1973) advocated that reading comprehension should also deal with the affective aspect (personality and emotional factors), especially when the higher order comprehension skills are called into use.

Among the reading purposes, traditionally the informational reading has been described as the canonical one. Duke (2000) advocated that “informational literacy is central to success, and even survival, in advanced schooling, the workplace, and the community. A primary aim of U.S. education is to develop citizens who can read, write, and critique informational discourse, who can locate and communicate the information they seek.” (p. 202).

1.1.3 Interaction

Interaction process might be the most intriguing component of reading and certainly attracted a lot of research interest. Many scholars have realized the “interaction” process during reading, but very often they equate it with the entire reading
Everson (1994) defined reading as a skill that involved the reader and the text in an interactive and dynamic process of meaning construction. Warnick (1996) defined reading as an interactive process in which the reader and the text interacted with each other to achieve the comprehension of the text. Despite the confusion, I feel these research works are very interesting and offer great insights on the interaction component of reading. In this section, I will provide a review about the studies on the interaction. I need to clarify that most of the references in this section regard interaction as reading process. In these cases, I will try to be loyal to the original documents and use the term “reading” with an annotation of “interaction” in a parenthesis.

The interaction process in reading has undergone significant development. What counted as appropriate reading “has varied substantially across historical epochs and cultural context” (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991, p. 435). At the early stage of reading, the interaction between the reader and text is more like decoding since the focus was the sound of the text instead of the meaning of the text. The text meaning either preexisted in the reader’s mind before his reading behavior or was simply overlooked. The sound was so important at this stage that the emergence of silent reading was an important transition in the evolution of reading. Saenger (1982) asserted that in western history, “silent reading was an uncommon practice in classical antiquity” (p. 370). It was the adoption of word spacing from the 1100s to 1400s that gave rise to silent reading. Saenger (1997) further argued that silent reading emboldened the reader “because it placed the source of his curiosity completely under his personal control” (p. 399). Farnham (1895) also pointed out the power of silent reading, which will be introduced later in this section.
Accordingly, at this stage, the dominant pedagogical goal was accurate and fluent pronunciation, not the ability to comprehend the reading material. The reading instruction was characterized by instruction in the letter names or sentence repetition after the teacher. Thabault (1971) provided the following description of the reading instruction in a study of a village in western France:

The children were not required to make any effort to understand the words or to attempt to associate the shapes with sounds and meanings. They merely repeated what had been said to them and gradually discovered—by the place on the page or the approximate shape of what they were being given to read—the sounds they were required to emit to avoid being beaten. (p. 61, as cited in Resnick & Resnick, 1977, p. 377).

These European-developed approaches influenced the reading instruction methods in the United States. In the classic alphabetic method, children were drilled on the letter names first and then on syllables. The instruction focused on accurate and fluent pronunciation, but no attempt was made to select meaningful syllables or to emphasize comprehension. Mathews (1966) described the reading instruction in the Sessional School in Edinburgh, Scotland, which was reported to American educators in 1831:

English reading, according to the prevailing notion, consists of nothing more than the power of giving utterance to certain sounds, on the perception of certain figures; and the measure of progress and excellent is the facility and continuous fluency with which those sounds succeed each other from the mouth of the learner. If the child gathers any knowledge from the book before him, beyond that of color, form and position of the letters, it is to his own sagacity he is indebted for it, and not to his teacher. (p. 55, as cited in Resnick & Resnick, 1977, p. 380).

Moving from the early stage, many forward-looking educators advocated reading (interaction) to derive meaning. The “reading for deriving meaning” concept appeared in the sixteenth century but thrived in the nineteenth century in the books by Putnam (1836),
Farnham (1881) and Butler (1883). Fries (1963) pointed out that “concern for the understanding of what is read appears repeated from the very beginning” (p. 10) and provided quotations from 1570 to 1900. He cited the word by Hart (1570) that “…the effect of writing consisteth not in the letter, but to shew what is ment by the letter” (Hart, *Methode*, 1570).

In 1836, Putnam (1836) stressed the need for comprehension in the preface of his book *The Analytical Reader*:

A leading object of this work is to enable the scholar, while learning to read (interact), to understand, at the same time, the meaning of the words he is reading (interaction)…if, for example, when the pupil is taught to read, he is enabled, at the same time, to discover the meaning of the words he repeats, he will readily make use of the proper inflections, and place the emphasis where the sense demands it. The monotonous sing-song mode of reading (interaction), which is common in schools and which is often retained in after life, is acquired from the exercise of reading (interaction) what is not understood (as cited in Fries, 1963, p.10).

Farnham (1895) noticed that the success of a reader laid in the comprehension of the author’s thought. In *The Sentence Method of Teaching Reading, Writing and Spelling: A Manual for Teachers*, Farnham (1895) defined reading (interaction) from its two-fold function: “Reading (interaction) consists: —first, in gaining the thoughts of an author from written or printed language: — second, in giving oral expression to these thoughts in the language of the author, so that the same thoughts are conveyed to the hearer. It is important that this two-fold function of reading (interaction) should be fully recognized.” (p. 11). Farnham (1895) further claimed that the reader’s ability to look at the written text with the least possible consciousness of the words but with a full comprehension of the thoughts expressed was extremely important. According to him, “one who has
acquired the power of directly receiving thought from the printed page, is endowed with a
new intellectual faculty” because “the mental power, being relieved from the necessity of
translating, concentrates itself upon the thought, and the thought is understood and
remembered” (p. 15). In comparison, during the translation of written into oral language,
the thought was not formed in the reader’s mind or “the words as they appear have no
meaning” to the readers (p. 15). Therefore, “while oral expression is subject to laws of its
own, its excellence depends upon the success of the reader in comprehending the thought
of the author” (p. 11).

Corresponding to this development of the reading interaction, scholars and
educators suggested to reading instruction with the meaning. Since the twentieth century,
scholars criticized the mechanical methods of the previous “decoding-oriented” reading
instruction. In*Why Do the Schools Teach Reading as They Do,* Fries (1963) criticized
the focus on spelling words and letters and the neglect of meaning. He stated that:

For hundreds of years reading was taught by having children spell words and
sound letters. For many weary weeks after pupils had entered first grade their
reading instruction consisted of dull drill on the alphabet and the sounds of the
letters. Nothing was considered of any importance except to teach the child these
word elements as a means of enabling him to pronounce reading symbols. The
child, himself, felt no particular need for memorizing these elements; they had no
meaning for him, and this interaction with words must have been extremely
uninteresting and boring to him. (p. 4).

For centuries absolutely no attention was given to teaching children how to get
the thought from what they read. If they had learned to ‘pronounce the words’
their reading achievement was supposed to have been completed. The reading
recitation throughout the elementary grades was given over to oral reading in
which pupils took turns in calling words aloud to see whether or not they ‘could
pronounce them’. No attempt was made to teach pupils to read for meanings nor
to check their reading after it was done to find out how much of the content they
had absorbed…. (p. 5).
*The Common School Journal, Volume IV* (1842, p. 42) proposed that in reading (interaction), “first and chiefest”, “let the lesson be understood; its words, its phrases, its connections; its object, if it have any object; if not, it is not proper for a reading lesson. Every word and sentence to which no meaning is attached is an enemy, lying in ambush”. Butler (1883) in his reading textbook *The First Reader* suggested that “we would guard instructors against teaching words without first developing the ideas they represent” (as cited in Fries, 1963, p.11). To do so, Butler made most of the lessons in his textbook *The First Reader* illustrated. He even suggested the instruction in great detail:

Begin the lesson by showing the children the picture. Let them tell all they see in it. Have a familiar talk about it. Call upon one to name an object in the picture. Show them on the board the word by which the object is known. (as cited in Fries, 1963, p.5).

The concept of “reading for meaning” laid the groundwork for new methods and standards in literacy. It was applied to common mass education in the early twentieth century in the United States. The reading instruction standards fundamentally changed with the advent of child-centered theories of pedagogy, which stresses on the importance of intrinsic interest and meaningfulness in learning, and the introduction of standardized group testing. The ability to understand an unfamiliar text, rather than simply declaim a familiar one, became the new standard of literacy.

However, in this intermediate stage, readers were assigned a passive role to comprehend the meaning. In 1917, scholars started to question the practice of passive interaction. Thorndike (1917) agreed with the definition of reading (interaction) as understanding the meaning of printed words, but he also addressed the complex and dynamic procedure of reading (interaction) “involving a weighing of each of many
elements in a sentence, their organization in the proper relations one to another, the selection of certain of their connotations and the rejection of others, and the cooperation of many forces to determine final response” (p. 323). Later some scholars have adopted this complex and dynamic response definition by Thorndike. McKillop (1952) defined interaction as an individual’s complex response to printed verbal symbols, but he still considers text as the dominant factor: “the reader receives a communication from the writer and interprets what the writer is saying to him” (p.1). Goodman (1965, 1973) defined reading (interaction) as a psycholinguistic process in which the reader actively reconstructs a message encoded graphically by the writer. Reading (interaction) is a receptive psycholinguistic process in which language is the starting point. However, the reader also brings his knowledge of the language, and relates language sequences to experience and conceptual structures during his interaction between language and thought processes. Wardhaugh (1969) argued that interaction was an active process because the reader “must make an active contribution by drawing upon and using concurrently various abilities that he has acquired” (p. 133).

When a person reads a text, he is attempting to discover the meaning of what he is reading by using the visual clues of spelling, his knowledge of probabilities of occurrence, his contextual-pragmatic knowledge, and his syntactic and semantic competence to give a meaningful interpretation to the text. (p. 133).

In my definition of reading, comprehension is the goal of the reading interaction process. Goodman (1965) asserted, “reading (interaction) must involve some level of comprehension. Nothing short of this comprehension is reading (interaction)” (p. 639). Related to the development of reading, the definitions of reading comprehension also
developed. Early scholars defined or implied comprehension as the meaning of the text. Readers read passively to interpret the meaning and the linguistic rules contribute to the meaning. Starting from the end of the 1970s, scholars noticed the constructive, dynamic, and dialogical process of comprehension. Researchers (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Bernhardt, 1985) defined comprehension as the process of relating new incoming information to information already stored in memory. Snow and Sweet (2003) defined reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning. Extracting meaning refers to the process during which the reader figures out how print represents words and engages in the translation of print to sound accurately and efficiently. Constructing meaning refers to formulating a representation of the information being presented in the text, a process which requires building new meanings and integrating new with old information. Bormuth (1969) proposed comprehension ability as “a set of generalized knowledge-acquisition skills which permit people to acquire and exhibit information gained as a consequence of reading printed language” (p. 50). Some more discussion about the psychological interaction process to achieve comprehension will be included in Chapter 2, especially in the section of 2.1.3.

1.2 Summary

In this chapter, I proposed the definition of reading. This definition included three components of reading: the social context, the reading purpose, and the interaction between the reader and the text. The social context affects the reading purpose and the interaction with the text. The reading purpose affects the selection of reading text and the manner of interaction. When interacting with text, the readers actively construct meaning
and achieve the comprehension of text. Based on what they understand, the readers will perform in the social context to fulfill the reading purpose.

The contemporary reading researches are limited to the interaction process of reading and consider comprehension as the sole purpose of reading. Researchers (such as Sweet & Snow, 2003) have realized affects of the social contexts, but limited their research on the school and classroom factors, such as economic resources, class membership, ethnicity, neighborhood, school culture, etc. According these reading theories, the reading instruction is limited to the interaction component and deems comprehension as the ultimate goal of reading.

Based on the definition of reading in this chapter, this dissertation is proposing a new reading instruction approach. It starts from the social context and aims to train student to fulfill the reading purposes. In this approach, comprehension is a prerequisite but not the goal of reading. Instead, its goal is to train students to perform well in their later social activities. Based on this, the approach is named as “performance-based reading instruction”.

Chapter 2: Reading Theories and Reading Instruction in First Language and Second Language

In Chapter 1, reading is defined as the reader’s interaction with the text in social context with the purpose to fulfill reading tasks. Different reading tasks require different degrees of the interactions. Some tasks demand intensive word-by-word reading, while some other tasks only require skim reading. However, the modern reading theories and reading instruction only focus on the interaction component and are comprehension oriented. For example, Scholars (Durkin, 1993, cited in National Reading Panel 2000, p.13; Snow & Sweet, 2003) clearly stated that comprehension was the essence of reading. This neglection of the purpose of reading and readers’ activities after comprehension makes the reading instruction less efficient.

Nevertheless, a review of the current reading theories and reading instruction is still beneficial for this dissertation. First, my theory about the performance-based reading instruction evolves from these current reading theories. It is not against them; instead, it is a development beyond them. Besides, as will be introduced in Chapter 6, the task-based reading instruction still requires comprehension. It applies the current comprehension-oriented reading instruction but further asks students to fulfill the reading tasks. In this chapter, I will review the current reading theories and reading instruction in both first language (L1) and second language (L2) contexts. For the L1 reading, I will
include the current theories about the factors influencing reading comprehension, the
cognitive models in reading comprehension research, and the pedagogical approaches.
For the L2, I will describe the difficulties encountered by L2 readers, the relationship
between L1 reading and L2 reading, and the implications of the theories on L2 reading
instruction.

2.1 Current Reading Theories and Pedagogical Approaches in L1 Reading

2.1.1 Development of Current Reading Theories and Reading Instruction

Reading research remarkably developed since 1970s with the joint efforts of
reading educators and psychologists. On one hand, reading educators were inspired by
cognitive reading theories and applied them in the practical instructional research. On the
other hand, this application of the theories inspired the psychologists to revisit their
cognitive traditions and participate in reading comprehension research (Pearson &
Gallagher, 1983). This joint effort yielded the comprehension-oriented reading theories.
In the field of reading instruction, Durkin (1978-79) complained that he hardly observed
any comprehension instruction in classroom observation. This shocking finding finally
initiated the growth of the comprehension-oriented reading research and instruction to fill
the gap between reading theories and instruction.
2.1.2 Factors Influencing Reading Comprehension

In this dissertation, I adopt Pressley’s system that categorizes the reading factors as lower order level and higher order level (Pressley, 2000, 2002). Decoding and vocabulary are at the lower order level, and prior knowledge, knowledge of text structure, cognitive strategies, metacognition strategies, and affective factors are at the higher order level. As will be discussed below, most current reading research and reading instruction study focus on the factors.

2.1.2.1 Decoding

Decoding refers to the process that a reader converts a printed word into his spoken representation. The decoding process does not include the understanding of the meaning (Samuels, Schermer, & Reinking, 1992). Based on children’s acquisition of L1 reading ability, researchers think that a reader is able to recognize a word if he can pronounce it. Indeed, a child usually is already fluent in speaking before he starts to read. Because the words in the reading material are often already in his speaking vocabularies, he will be able to connect the graphs of the written word with the meaning as long as he can pronounce it. If the reader cannot decode the word, he cannot understand it or comprehend the text (Pressley, 1998, 2001, 2002).

Decoding automaticity is required to maximize comprehension. LaBerge and Samuel (1974) introduced the “automaticity model”. They argued that each reader has limited cognitive capacity. If the reader is not fluent in decoding, he has to use a lot of the cognitive capacity in decoding so that he cannot perform other reading processes to achieve fast and accurate comprehension. Actually, as early as 1908, Huey (1908)
already proposed the importance of automaticity. He found that readers with automaticity could free up the limited capacity of short-term memories.

Addressing the automaticity issue, educators believe that explicit instruction on decoding is the starting point to develop good reading comprehension. Huey (1908) claimed that repetition can facilitate perception because repetition “progressively frees the mind from attention to details, makes facile the total act, shortens the time, and reduces the extent to which consciousness must concern itself with the process” (p. 104). Bernhardt (2000) found that speed of processing is related to fluency and phonological factors are keys to word recognition even in the non-alphabetic languages.

2.1.2.2 Vocabulary Knowledge

Vocabulary knowledge refers to the ability to understand the meaning of the printed words. Variation in vocabulary knowledge accounts for the differences in reading comprehension ability (Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, 1982; McKeown, Beck, Omanson, & Perfetti, 1983; Stahl, 1983). Generally speaking, readers with good comprehension often have good vocabularies (Nagy, Anderson, & Herman, 1987; Padak, Rasinski, & Mrza, 2002). Based on those observations, researchers believe that vocabulary instruction is beneficial for reading comprehension.

Researchers agree that the inductive learning of the unknown words encountered in oral and written language can help vocabulary growth. Stanovich (1986) emphasized that reading could significantly contribute to vocabulary growth. Nagy, Herman and Anderson (1985) found that incidental learning from context accounted for a substantial proportion of the vocabulary growth that occurred during the school years.
Many researchers think that direct vocabulary instruction is an efficient approach. Padak et al. (2002) believed that explicit instruction could help students learn how to use context clues and word derivations. Pressley (2001) also argued that an explicit and thorough teaching of vocabulary could promote comprehension.

Some researchers (Nagy & Anderson, 1984) doubted the effectiveness of direct vocabulary instruction. Based on their analysis of a random sample of 7,260 words drawn from American Heritage Word Frequency Book which contains 5,088,721 words in school English, Nagy and Anderson (1984) have estimated that there are 88,533 distinct word families in printed school English. Each word family has a base word and additional semantically transparent derivatives (a range between 1.57 and 2.57 derivatives for each base word). They further claimed that even the most ruthlessly systematic direct vocabulary instruction could neither account for a significant proportion of all the words children actually learn, nor cover more than a modest proportion of the words the children will encounter in school reading materials.

Decoding and vocabulary knowledge together make the process of word recognition. Researchers proposed fluency as a bridge between word recognition and comprehension (Kuhl & Stahl, 2003). Fluency is defined as “the ability to read a text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression” (National Reading Panel, 2000, Chapter 3, p. 5). Fluent readers can recognize words as well as comprehend the meaning at the same time while less fluent readers must focus much of their attention on word recognition and leave less attention to comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000). Researchers have proved that repeated reading (Dowhower, 1987; Padak et al., 2002;
Samuels, 2002), assisted reading (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003), and extensive reading practice (Biemiller, 1977 - 1978) can help readers develop fluency.

### 2.1.2.3 Prior Knowledge

Prior knowledge was first investigated in cross-cultural reading by Bartlett (1932). However, there was little research interest in it until the 1970s when researchers started to notice the influence of prior knowledge on reading comprehension. In his pioneering study, Bartlett found that the recalls of cross cultural stories by most participants were not accurate although the subjects tended to retain the underlying text structure. The English participants frequently added their own interpretations that were different from the original stories. For example, when recalling the Native American Indian story “The War of the Ghosts”, the English readers often changed “canoe” into “boat” because “boat” was a more familiar item in their social life. What is more, they tended to neglect the words that were not important in their culture. For example, they did not recall the concept of ghosts because it was far less important in Western culture despite the fact this concept was a key word of the story. Based on these findings, Bartlett claimed the existence and the function of prior knowledge in reading. He then introduced a new concept of “schema” and defined it as mental entities including expectations, attitudes, prejudices and stereotypes.

In the 1970s and 1980s, researchers studied prior knowledge (schema) in greater detail. Pichert and Anderson (1977) identified schema as “an abstract description of a thing or event” (p. 314). They believed that interpreting a message in the text during reading was to match the information in the message to the slots in a schema.
Researchers have demonstrated the influence of prior knowledge on information processing during reading. Anderson and Pearson (1984) found that prior knowledge affected information selection and information evaluation; Symons and Pressley (1993) found that prior knowledge affected the text search and information extraction process. Mousavi, Low and Sweller (1995) found that prior knowledge could help the reader categorize information into “to be used” and “to be stored” in long-term memory so that it could reduce the requirement on working memory.

Researchers have also proved that prior knowledge can affect reading comprehension. Bernhardt (2000) found that reader’s prior knowledge and manipulation of the content influenced comprehension. Readers with rich prior knowledge about the topic often understood the text better and recalled more information than those with less knowledge (Chiesi, Spilich, & Voss, 1979; Spilich, Vesonder, Chiesi, & Voss, 1979). Steffensen, Goetz and Cheng (1999) also found that cultural background knowledge pertinent to the text in cross-cultural reading had a crucial impact on the depth of the understanding.

These findings have implied that reading process and reading comprehension can be enhanced by developing reader’s prior knowledge. Researchers have proved that several instructive approaches can enhance readers’ schema, such as repetition or repeated exposure of materials (Bartlett, 1932), exposure to topic related materials (Pressley, 1993), and extensive reading of high-quality, information-rich texts (Pressley, 2001).
2.1.2.4 Knowledge of Text Structure

Research about the text structure, such as story grammar and visual representation of text, thrived in 1970s and 1980s (Duke & Pearson, 2002). The knowledge of text structure is often conceived as a network of propositions and macropropositions. Proposition refers to the understanding of component ideas while macroproposition refers to the general overall understanding of the text. Readers will process individual ideas in propositions and understand how the ideas are connected together in the text to construct the macropropositions. Researchers (Bartlett, 1978; Meyer, Brandt, & Bluth, 1980) found that good readers with more knowledge of text structure recalled more textual information and showed better comprehension, indicating that understanding not only occurred through schema, but also occurred from the text.

The approaches to teach text structure include sensitizing students to structural elements (Bartlett, 1978), hierarchical summaries of key ideas (Taylor & Beach, 1984), and visual representations of key ideas (Armbruster & Anderson, 1980; Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1987). Researchers have reported positive effects of text structure instruction. The benefits include improved sensitivity to the structural elements, improvement in comprehension, and more recall of key text information (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Researchers also reported that the text structure could help readers apply reading strategies, such as predicting the content of articles from the title of the newspaper and journal articles (Nara, 2003).
2.1.2.5 Cognitive Comprehension Strategies

Comprehension strategies are specific procedures that guide students to become aware of how well they understand as they read (National Reading Panel, 2000). Researchers demonstrated that good readers read actively and use a repertoire of cognitive comprehension strategies during reading (Pressley, 1998). Among the many strategies, the most effective ones, and thus most interesting ones to instructors, are making predictions about the upcoming text, generating and answering questions, associating prior knowledge with the ideas in the text, interpreting text structures, guessing the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary based on context clues, summarizing, monitoring comprehension, and learning cooperatively. (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Readers implement these strategies based on what the situation requires, and in most cases readers combine and use several strategies together instead of using them individually. Explicit strategy instruction is believed to be effective in improving text comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000). As will be discussed in detail in section 2.1.4, comprehension strategy instruction often follow a self-regulated fashion, which starts with extensive explanation and modeling, deepens by teacher assisted strategy-use, and finally achieves the internalized, self-regulated use of these strategies.

2.1.2.6 Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognition is defined as thinking about one’s thinking (Duffy, 2002), or the reader’s reflection and monitor of how well he constructs the message (Bernhardt, 1991). Pressley (2002) defined it as the knowledge about the thinking processes occurring in both the immediate term and in the long term. The most important immediate term
metacognition in reading is the awareness of whether a text is being understood. Long-term metacognition pertaining to reading includes knowledge of comprehension strategies as well as the knowledge that good readers use the strategies consciously during reading. As an implication, reading instruction should also help readers become conscious of the strategic nature of comprehension.

2.1.2.7 Affective Factors

In addition to the above factors, scholars like Eller (1973) pointed out that reading comprehension should also deal with the affective aspect, i.e., personality and emotional factors, especially when using the higher order comprehension skills. However, Eller (1973) also noted that the reading researchers hardly gave any consideration to the influences of affective factors on understanding of the printed word since they all tended to treat comprehension almost entirely as a cognitive function. McKillop (1952) revealed that the correlation between the reader’s attitudes and his reading varied with the complexity of the questions. The correlation was less significant when dealing with less complicated questions on the facts and details of the text which involved literal comprehension, but more significant when dealing with judgment and prediction questions or questions at interpretation and evaluation levels.

As comprehension is considered to be the essence of reading, these above factors and instruction strategies developed thereof are comprehension oriented. Among these factors, reading strategies play a crucial role in higher order level processes. Therefore, comprehension strategies instruction has been very popular in reading instruction and
will be discussed in detail in section 2.1.4. But first, I will describe the cognitive theoretical models which reveal the comprehension processes.

### 2.1.3 Cognitive Theoretical Models

Cognitive psychologists have applied their information processing perspective to reading and worked on cognitive models to explain reading processes for a long time. Most scholars have identified two reading processes, albeit they named these two processes differently. The names of the two processes include “decoding and comprehension” (Samuels, 2004), “word recognition and comprehension” (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974), “decoding and encoding” (Swaffar, Janet, Arens & Byrnes, 1991), and “extracting and constructing” (Sweet & Snow, 2003). Despite the different names of the processes, the first process refers to the process when readers choose to attend primarily to letters and words; the second process refers to the process when fluent readers correlate multiple reader and text factors and synthesize them into a larger meta-system of meaning. In other words, the first process is the replication of textual language and the second process is the construction of text meaning on the basis of multiple interactive factors.

Clearly, the first reading process involves lower level factors and the second reading process involves higher level factors. From this aspect, there are “bottom-up” and “top-down” models. In this section, I will first review the bottom-up and top-down models. Then I will introduce the other three most accepted theoretical models, namely Automaticity Model, Interactive Model and Construction-integration Model. All three models explain the functions of these two processes during many reading behaviors.
2.1.3.1 Bottom-up and Top-down

The bottom-up model (Gough, 1972; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974) holds that reading begins with the symbols in the paper. Readers perceive the language-specific orthography and connect it with meaning, then organize the meaning into progressively larger meaning units. Harada (2003) described in bottom-up approach, smaller unit’s meanings are combined together systematically to reach the meaning of sentences, paragraphs, and passages. This model corresponds to pedagogical approaches such as the grammar-translation method, which is a product of post-Bloomfieldian structuralism in the 1950s. The post-Bloomfieldian structuralism believed that language could be characterized as a system of structured paradigms and could be understood in terms of the relationship between the paradigms. The influence of post-structuralism has weakened as well as the grammar-translation method, but the bottom-up model remains popular in today’s reading instruction in both L1 and L2 contexts. The bottom-up model focuses on the learning of lower-level factors such as orthography, vocabulary and grammar as the goals of reading instruction.

The top-down model views reading as an activity that is initiated and negotiated by the human mind. Goodman (1973) and Smith (1973) believed that the readers first created a partially completed hypothesis of the meaning and continued to revise this hypothesis as they accumulated more information. This model notices the relationships among reading, genre and context. In addition, it also notices the interaction among the reader and the text, reading strategies, and the purpose of reading.
The biggest contribution of the bottom-up and top-down models is that they explain the two different kinds of reading processes. However, both of them have their limitations. Each emphasizes one reading process but neglects the other one. The most accepted modern reading models believe that both bottom-up and top-down processes are involved in reading. Some scholars further point out that these two processes are complementary and mutually supportive (Nara, 2003). In fact, a fundamental difference between the theoretical models introduced below is how they consider the relationship between the bottom-up and top-down processes.

2.1.3.2 Cognitive Models

2.1.3.2.1 Automaticity Model

The LaBerge-Samuels model of automatic information processing (1974) is the most canonical cognitive model in reading. This model believes that the internal attention of human mind has limited capacity to process information. When learning a complicated skill, people use all their attention resources and can pay attention to only one task at a time. This point of the automaticity model has been supported by selective characteristics of the short-term memory. Since Human beings cannot process simultaneously all stimuli they encounter, they must select certain stimuli and ignore others (Samuels & Kamil, 1984). However, with sufficient practice, the attention demands by the skill can be reduced. When automaticity is achieved, little attention is needed to perform the skill so that people can simultaneously perform different tasks.

In the case of reading, the model argued that limited attention will be allocated between decoding and comprehension (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Decoding and
comprehension are two different processes and compete for attention capacity in short-term memory (Samuels, 2004). When the attention demand of decoding and comprehension exceed the capacity, readers will put their attention on decoding. The more effort required by decoding, the less capacity is left over to comprehension. As fluency develops, readers can switch most attention to comprehension and can perform decoding and comprehension simultaneously.

This model emphasizes the bottom-up processes and points out that insufficient bottom-up skills will impair the top-down processes. LaBerge and Samuels (1974) conceptualized the reading process as going through various stages, namely feature detection, letter coding, analysis of spelling patterns, and word code analysis. They believed that during reading the reader went through serial stages from visual memory to phonological memory and further to semantic memory. Insufficient or inaccurate information extraction in the bottom-up will seriously impair the meaning construction process (Koda, 1996).

2.1.3.2.2 Interactive Model

Interactive Model recognizes both bottom-up and top-down processes and emphasizes the interactions between them. This model is based on the empirical findings that higher level perception can affect lower level processes. This foundation determines that this model assigns a more decisive role to the higher level. Rumelhart (2004) reported the help of a syntactic environment on the perception of words. Nara (2003) reported the help of a text format on the ability to extract information. Nara used the newspaper article as an example. The format of a newspaper article can help readers
recognize the genre, and the layout of the newspaper article can further give the reader information about the text’s canonical discourse structure and the information type it contains.

The Interactive Model also considers that interactive variables operate simultaneously rather than sequentially to achieve comprehension (Bernhardt, 1991; Samuels & Kamil, 1984). In this model, outside graphemic input first enters the processing system and is registered as visual information. Next a feature extractive process will start to obtain the critical features of the visual information. Functioning as sensory input, these features will come to a pattern synthesizer with other nonsensory independent knowledge sources such as syntactical knowledge, semantic knowledge, orthographic knowledge and lexical knowledge. Through a simultaneous interaction and joint application of all the sources, the pattern synthesizer produces a most probable interpretation of the graphemic input. The interactive model argues that, during reading, readers focus on the generation and evaluation of the hypotheses by both the top-down and bottom-up processes.

Stanovich (2000) added “compensatory hypotheses” to the Interactive Model to explain the individual differences of readers. The compensatory hypotheses theory argues that a process at one level can compensate for the deficiencies at the other level. For example, a reader with insufficient word recognition skills may rely on the contextual factors to achieve comprehension.
2.1.3.2.3 Construction-Integration Model

Kintsch (1988, 1998, 2004) proposed a Construction-Integration model to fully account for reading comprehension processes. This model has a construction phase and an integration phase. In the construction phase, readers construct several plausible (even contradictory) mental representations of the text in parallel through bottom-up processes such as decoding and vocabulary knowledge. Later, when a rich context is available, an integration process will suppress those incorrect representations and sort out the right well-structured one. The correct proposition wins out because it is connected to prior knowledge. Although this model contains both bottom-up and top-down processes, Kintsch (2004) assigned a more decisive role to bottom-up processes. He viewed comprehension as a “loosely structured, bottom-up process that is highly sensitive to context and that flexibly adjusts to shifts in the environment” (Kintsch, 1998, p.94).

2.1.3.3 Implication of Cognitive Reading Theories

Corresponding to the decoding and comprehension division in the reading process, reading instruction in L1 is divided into two stages. The first stage is learning to read at pre-kindergarten through 4th grade and the second stage is reading to learn at grade 5 through grade 12. Through the comparison between good and poor readers, empirical research works have found that in the first stage, the struggling readers display difficulties mainly in decoding and fluency, such as lack of phonological awareness, the concepts of print, reading automaticity, and expressive reading. Therefore, the reading instruction at this stage is focused on bottom-up factors, such as phonemic awareness instruction, syntax instruction, and vocabulary instruction. In addition, reading texts at
this lower-grade level is to help students learn the words in print that they have already known in spoken language. In fluency instruction, there are repeated reading and assisted reading. Reading while listening and closed-caption television are also used to assist reading fluency.

In the second stage, struggling readers display new difficulties in comprehension, such as lack of comprehension strategies, the background knowledge about the topic and the text structure. Thus, the reading instruction at this stage is related to top-down factors such as story grammar instruction and cognitive strategy instruction. Students encounter more formal language, more abstract vocabulary, and more complex sentence structures which demand more complex knowledge and cognitive ability. In the following section, I will talk about comprehension pedagogical approaches.

2.1.4 Reading Comprehension Pedagogical Approaches

The discovery of comprehension failure and the lack of teaching of comprehension process in elementary schools (Durkin, 1978-79), together with the crucial role of reading strategies in higher level reading process, required the identification and instruction of reading strategies. Correspondingly, the comprehension strategy instruction remains to be the focus of reading instruction research. A substantial body of reading cognitive research finds that comprehension is correlated with a range of cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Armbruster, Anderson & Meyer, 1991; Armbruster et al., 1987; Baker, & Zimlin, 1989; Dole, Valencia, Greer, & Wardrop, 1991; Dreher & Brown, 1993; Fitzgerald & Spiegel, 1983; Rosenshine, Meister, & Chapman, 1996). Since the 1970s, comprehension-based reading strategy instruction,
which refers to teaching students to use specific cognitive strategies, has become very popular in reading instruction. In 2000, National Reading Panel reported that they found that reading strategy instruction can increase students’ comprehension, accompanied with their awareness and use of the reading strategies (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Educators and researchers have proposed a self-regulated model for comprehension-based reading strategy instruction based on Vygotsky’s developmental theory (Palincsar, 2003). Vygotsky (1978) proposed the concept of the Zone of Promixal Development (ZPD). ZPD is the distance between the actual developmental level determined by individual problem solving and the developmental level determined through problem solving under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. Vygotsky (1978) argued that ZPD can be internalized. He claimed that every function in the child’s cultural development would appear twice: first on the social level and later on the individual level. In other words, the development appears first between people and second inside the child’s mind. These two concepts laid the foundation for guided instruction and self-regulated instruction.

In the self-regulated model for comprehension-based reading strategy instruction, teachers scaffold the knowledge about comprehension strategy use and guide peer students’ discussion on the use of the strategies. The responsibility of learning and applying the strategies is gradually shouldered from the teacher to the students. Through such a process, the students can internalize and self-regulate the comprehension strategies. There is also a tendency in the strategy instruction from an individual strategy to a package of multiple strategies, from explicit/direct explanation of the strategies to scaffolding assistance on an as-needed basis, from rigid structure to flexible structure,
from the mastery of strategies to the engagement with text to generating text comprehension. Currently, there are four most accepted approaches, namely Direct Explanation, Reciprocal Teaching, Transactional Strategy Instruction, and Collaborative Comprehension Instruction.

2.1.4.1 Direct Explanation (DE)

DE was developed by Duffy, Roehler and their colleagues. Earlier DE instruction always taught strategies individually while later DE instruction taught several strategies in combination. Direct explanation is considered as the starting point for the students’ development of strategic processes, and is usually used shortly before and/or after guided practice. In this approach, teachers usually explicitly explain to learners the mental processes employed in successful reading comprehension through thinking aloud to make the mental activity visible. It provides explicit and detailed information about the declarative, conditional and procedural knowledge about the strategies, such as how to carry out a strategic process, the effects produced by the process, as well as when and where to use the strategy (Pressley, Goodchild, Fleet, Zajchowski, & Evans, 1989). DE does not want the explanations to be proceduralized or packaged. Good explanation should organically combine explicit information giving and sensitive responsiveness to students so that students can develop awareness of strategies as well as richly textured understanding of text.

DE can increase students’ awareness of the strategies, and competence in using the strategies during reading, and their comprehension of text ((National Reading Panel, 2000). This effect is more distinguishable in the cases of the reading strategies that have
been taught during instruction (Duffy et al., 1987). Gersten, Fuchs, Williams and Baker (2001) observed moderate positive effects of teacher’s modeling and monitoring of strategy use on reading comprehension in their review of 16 studies of strategy instruction on expository text to learning disabled students.

However, some research works show that the students do not perform significantly better in comprehension after DE (Duffy et al., 1987). DE is also questioned in the aspect that it is mostly about acquiring and practicing strategies in an isolated manner but the proficient reading requires interaction of individual strategies. In addition, DE does not include the flexible adaptation of cognitive processes per the reader’s schema and text, which is required in proficient reading. In another word, DE is insufficient in providing instruction on the interaction among reading strategies and the selection of the most suitable strategies according to an individual’s personal knowledge. A good reading strategy instruction must respond flexibly and opportunistically to students’ needs.

2.1.4.2 Reciprocal Teaching (RT)

Unlike the explicit explanation in DE, RT works through dialogues during which teachers and students take turns to execute the various strategic components that are being taught (Pressley et al., 1989). The teacher’s role is to support and assist students when needed and to provide feedback at the end. This approach involves a gradual transition of responsibility from the teacher to the students.

The think-aloud studies revealed that good readers orchestrated a variety of strategies as they read. Based on this finding, researchers begin to explore the
approaches to teach repertoires of comprehension strategies. The best known approach was developed by Palinscar and Brown (1984). In this approach, four comprehension strategies, namely predicting, questioning, seeking clarification and summarizing, were deemed to be the ideal comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring activities. These four strategies are modeled and practiced in a rigid sequence. A typical reciprocal teaching session begins with a review of the main points from the previous session’s reading, or with predictions about the text based on the title and perhaps other information. Following this and the silent reading of the first paragraph, a student is assigned to act as teacher to ask questions about the paragraph, summarize the paragraph, ask for clarification if needed, and predict what might be in the next paragraph.

RT has been used with both good and struggling readers in small reading groups. Research has shown that RT can significantly improve the awareness of the implementation of the four strategies as well as summarizing and questioning skills (Pressley, 2002). In addition, RT can also improve students’ comprehension and memory of text by the cognitive measurement developed by the experimenter (Brown & Palinscsar, 1989; Rosenshine & Meister, 1994). Furthermore, RT results in greater gain and retain of memory over time. However, there are also some conflicting results when using standardized tests of comprehension. Moreover, RT is questioned because fluent readers do not use strategies in the rigid order taught in RT.

### 2.1.4.3 Transactional Strategy Instruction (TSI)

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, TSI gained its name by focusing on the transactions among teacher, student and text (Pressley et al., 1992). Strategies are taught
as interpretive vehicles that help students get beyond literal understanding of the text. Similar to DE, TSI includes explicit explanation. However, the teacher in TSI does not cue students to use any specific strategy, but consistently encourages and prompts students to actively choose and apply strategies to understand the text. In addition, the discussions in TSI result in more collaboration among students than DE (Williams, 2002).

The most salient difference of TSI from DE and RT is that TSI is result-oriented. TSI emphasizes on students’ interpretation of text instead of implementation of strategies. Students practice the strategies in various settings, with teacher’s assistance about when to use and what to use. There are also some detailed differences between RT and TSI. Similar to RT, TSI also teaches a package of comprehension strategies. However, TSI includes more strategies so that the students can have more strategy choices according to the different requirements of the text and the learning context. Specially, TSI incorporates the strategies related to the text and the reader’s experiences, such as Story Grammar Analysis and Text Structure Analysis. Furthermore, students are not taught to use strategies in a rigid order as in RT, but are encouraged to use strategies when needed at their discretion. The strategy use in TSI depends flexibly on each individual’s case. TSI provides assistance on an as-needed basis through lively interpretive discussions of texts.

TSI motivates interactions around text and causes students to use more sophisticated strategies over time on an individual basis. It has been reported that students by TSI became more aware of comprehension, outperformed the control group in standardized tests of comprehension, used more strategies spontaneously, and
remembered more content of the story (Klingner, Vaughn, & Schumm, 1998; Palinscar & Brown, 1984).

2.1.4.4 Collaborative Comprehension Instruction (CCI)

A current shift in comprehension strategy instruction is collaborative instruction. CCI emphasizes the text comprehension rather than teaching of discrete comprehension strategies. Strategies are treated as means to the comprehension. Examples of this instruction include Questioning the Author (QtA), Collaborative Reasoning and Instructional Conversations.

This type of instruction uses open-ended discussion and exchange of ideas to promote the reader’s engagement with the text and internalize their thinking and reasoning about text. After reading a text, the reader grapples with some ideas and then constructs the meaning collaboratively through discussions. The discussions may take many approaches, such as querying a text and reasoned augmentation. Through the open-ended discussion, students will develop improved understanding of the texts and internalize their comprehension abilities.

This instruction gives students a greater role in the overall text discussions, nearly doubling their participation in discussion and initiating many more interactions (Palinscar, 2003). The students score significantly higher on both literal and interpretive comprehension (Nystrand, 2006; Shen, 2005). Most importantly, students become much more successful at higher order comprehension and monitor their comprehension much better (Palinscar, 2003)
To summarize, all four strategy instructional approaches include modeling, scaffolding, guided practice and independent use of strategies, which help students achieve a gradual internalization and independent mastery of the comprehension strategies covered in the approach. The focus of the four strategies instructional approaches has shifted in the past 30 years. Specifically, they developed from particular individual strategies to a package of different strategies, from rigid procedure to flexible procedure, from modeling to transaction, and from grasp of strategy to comprehension of the text.

2.2 Reading Theories and Instructional Approaches in L2 Context

Reading is important in second language learning. Schulz (1981) claimed that reading is probably the most useful skill for students since the most upper-level courses are based on the study of authentic literary or informational texts. Walker (1984) pointed out the importance of reading in advanced Chinese learning: reading in the long run “is probably the most important skill a learner can gain from formal instruction in Chinese” (p. 67). Similarly, Nara (2003) also predicted that reading ability became the most important skill for Japanese L2 learners because of the increase in Japanese technical document reading in the United States.

However, L2 reading research has not been treated importantly for a long time. Scholars often assert that L2 reading is derived from L1 reading research and thus not original (Bernhardt, 1991, 2000). They argued that L2 reading research often follows research trends in L1 reading (Weber, 1991) and much of the L2 reading research works in the 1980s were imitation and replication of the research in L1 reading (Bernhardt,
As a result, reading research has over-generalized the L1 and L2 by surface manifestation. This over-emphasis on the similarity makes L2 reading research superficial.

L2 reading research has not been conducted fully, although it is developing due to the integration of diverse ethnic groups in the United States and the convergence of global economies. Most current academic discussions are still about English as a second language (Fitzgerald, Garcia, Jimenez & Barrera, 2000) or English-cognate languages like French, Germany, and Spanish (Everson, 1994). Little research has been conducted on the less commonly taught languages, such as Chinese and Japanese (Garcia, 2000; Lee-Thompson, 2008).

In this section, I will first discuss the difficulties that L2 readers encounter during reading and analyze the reasons. Then I will describe the differences between L1 reading and L2 reading. Finally I will bring up my opinions on instructional practices that could help overcome these difficulties.

### 2.2.1 Difficulties Encountered by L2 Readers

Compared to L1 reading, L2 reading is more laborious and more cognitively fatiguing even for the highly literate adult subjects. The barriers exist in both the bottom-up and top-down reading processes. In another word, the barriers are from the deficiencies in both linguistic knowledge and background knowledge (including topic knowledge and cultural knowledge).
2.2.1.1 Linguistic Barrier

Bernhardt (2000) studied the contribution of L1 literacy to a second language reading by regression analysis of five previous works. Those works included two Turkish/Dutch studies, one French/English study, and two Spanish/English studies. A consistent finding across the studies was the influence of second language ability in L2 reading including both word knowledge and syntax. Based on the findings, Bernhardt (2000) proposed a model that L2 reading was a combination of L1 reading ability and L2 linguistic ability. According to this model, L2 readers, especially the adult readers who have already developed their literacy in L1, will face two tasks in L2 reading: to get familiar with L2 and to transfer the L1 literacy to L2 reading.

Previous eye movement studies have revealed that the lower level processing is inefficient in L2 reading even for the advanced learners (Bernhardt, 1985; Koda, 1990). Consequently, readers have little attention capacity for higher-level processing so that the entire reading comprehension is greatly hindered. For example, Bernhardt (1985) found that most L2 readers treated the texts as linguistic artifacts and did not attempt to apply story structure or schema to the texts. By think-aloud analysis and comparison between Japanese L1 reading and advanced L2 reading of American students, Warnick (1996) found that L2 readers focused on the linguistic domain of the text and mostly used bottom-up processes and metacognition strategies while L1 readers use more top-down and social affective strategies. Even the successful L2 readers used less sophisticated strategies than the L1 (Garcia, 1998; Garcia, Jimenez & Pearson, 1998). The only exception is metacognition. Compared to successful L1 readers, successful L2 readers showed more monitoring of their comprehension. However, most L2 readers’
metacognitive capacities are primarily used at the lower level such as vocabulary knowledge (Bernhardt, 1985; Garcia et al, 1998). This further indicated the key factor of linguistic knowledge in L2 reading and the laborious lower level processes in L2.

The poor lower-level processing of L2 readers originated from the limited L2 linguistic knowledge, including orthography, vocabulary and syntax. This linguistic barrier becomes more severe when L1 and L2 share less similarity. The linguistic barrier is considered to be the first barrier to overcome. Without overcoming the lower-level processing difficulties, L2 readers cannot use other knowledge resources to construct their text comprehension. In the following, I will discuss three major linguistic barriers in L2 reading, including orthography, vocabulary and syntax.

2.2.1.1.1 Barrier 1: Orthography

Similar to L1 reading, word recognition efficiency in L2 is a prerequisite for reading comprehension. Without automatic word-level processes, L2 readers do not have enough capacity to carry out the higher order processes for comprehension. During word recognition, in most cases L2 readers will first encounter a different orthography in L2 reading. Traditionally, human writing systems are categorized into logographic, syllabic, and alphabetic. This classification of orthographic systems represents two dimensions (Koda, 1996). One is representational units, such as phonemes in alphabet writing system, syllables in syllabic writing system, and morphemes in logographic writing system. The other one is orthographic depth which refers to the degree of regularity in sound-symbol correspondence. Previous cross-linguistic comparisons of word recognition processes suggest that different sound-symbol regularities in different
orthographies require different reading processing (Everson, 1994, 1998; Koda, 1996). Alphabetic writing systems, such as Spanish and German, have predictable sound-symbol correspondence between the spoken language and the script. The phonological code is assembled from translation of orthographic subcomponents of the letter string. Readers can apply general principles of spelling and sound mediation. Syllabic writing systems, such as Japanese Kana and Korean, have predictable sound-symbol correspondence between the spoken language and the script, but sound maps onto the symbol at the syllable level. Readers can sound out and reproduce the limited amount of syllables after short term instruction. The written symbols represent morphemes in logographic writing systems and readers could not easily connect the graph with the sound.

L2 readers with substantial L1 processing experience tend to transfer their L1 orthographic knowledge and corresponding processing mechanisms to facilitate their L2 word recognition (Garica, 2000; Jimenez, Garcia & Pearson, 1995; Koda, 1996). Consequently, L2 readers with orthographic similarities can release more capacity for simultaneous use of multiple processing skills to comprehension (Bernhardt, 2005; Koda, 1996) and perform better than those with less related background. Alderson (1984) proposed a language threshold. After L2 readers’ processing competence reaches this level, the orthographic distance effects start to vanish on the performance efficiency or processing strategy, and L2 readers can transfer their L1 reading abilities to L2 reading. Therefore, scholars (Garcia, 2000) pointed out that phonological or orthographic elements of L2 must be taught in class.
2.2.1.1.2 Barrier 2: Vocabulary

Vocabulary knowledge is a significant contributing factor in L2 reading comprehension. The unknown vocabulary in L2 adversely affects L2 readers’ reading performance (Garcia, 1998, 2000; Jimenez et al, 1995). Jimenez et al (1995) found that unknown vocabulary was a major concern for L2 readers, but not for L1 readers. In the regression analysis by Bernhardt (2000), word knowledge explained about 27% of the variance in L2 readers’ comprehension scores. Koda (1990) found that vocabulary significantly contributed to reading comprehension at both sentence level and paragraph level. However, in her experiments of Japanese L2 reading, Koda (1990) found that vocabulary knowledge accounted for 64% of the variance in paragraph comprehension and 15% of the variance in sentence comprehension in cloze test.

Vocabulary knowledge in L1 can be transferred into cognate L2 through the use of cognate strategies (Garcia et al, 1998; Jimenez et al, 1995). Cognates in linguistics refer to words that have a common origin. In other words, cognates are descended from the same ancestral root. English words “Atlantic” and “automatic” are cognate to Spanish words “Atlántico” and “automático”. When a L2 student is aware of the possible cognate relationship and knows the cognate, he may be able to transfer L1 knowledge to help understand the meaning of unknown L2 cognate. However, research found that L2 readers’ actual use of cognate is quite limited (Garcia et al, 1998). The possibility of transfer and the actual limited use of cognate knowledge require explicit instruction on cognate knowledge.
2.2.1.3 Barrier 3: Syntax

Syntax is a very important component in the conceptualization of L2 reading process (Bernhardt, 2000; Garcia, 2003) although syntactic complexity does not necessarily predict text difficulties for L2 readers. The importance of L2 syntax depends on the familiarity between L1 and L2. Bernhardt (2000) found a consistent influence of second language ability in terms of syntax in L2 reading but the syntax does not account for a big portion of the variance. Koda (1990) investigated the syntactic features in L2 reading of Japanese and found that particle knowledge in Japanese explained 60% of the variance in sentence comprehension and 12% of the variance in paragraph comprehension. Thus, Koda (1990) argued that syntactic knowledge such as case-marking particles is an important factor in Japanese text comprehension of L2 readers and that some syntactic feature is language specific.

In summary, linguistic barriers are mainly composed of orthographic barriers, vocabulary barriers, and syntax barriers. Linguistic complexity is one factor that impedes bilingual students’ performance on culturally relevant texts. Droop and Verhoever (1998) found that when texts were linguistically simpler, bilingual Dutch learners performed better. The effect of text complexity on reading performance requires careful selection of literary texts for L2 instruction. Schulz (1981) concluded that linguistic complexity of literary work often affected the L2 reader’s accessibility, comprehensibility and enjoyability. McGuigan (1979) reported the frustration and even anger about the difficulty of assigned readings from many fourth quarter students of German who spent often more than one hour on one page of a literary narrative. He
further warned that the frustration encountered with inappropriate literary texts often caused students to abandon their language study.

Researchers believe that L2 readers have to overcome the linguistic barriers before they have the capacity to apply upper-level processes. I would like to emphasize here “overcoming linguistic barriers” should be considered to be fulfilling a minimum requirement rather than to be completely mastering the orthography, vocabulary and syntax knowledge of the second language. In my opinion, the language threshold as proposed by Alderson (1984) is flexible depending on the L1 and L2 similarity, L2 readers’ educational background, and even the complexity of the text. For example, the American L2 readers will face much thicker linguistic and cultural barriers when reading Chinese and Japanese texts than those when reading French or Spanish. In addition, L2 readers with more prior knowledge can compensate for the insufficiencies in lower level processes, and thus the threshold will be lower. This actually agrees with the experimental observations (as will be discussed below) and the interactive reading model (see 2.1.3.2.2).

2.2.1.2 Knowledge Barrier

Knowledge about a text topic can affect L2 comprehension (Allen, Bernhardt, Berry, & Demel, 1988; Bernhardt, 2000). Readers show better proficiency on familiar topics (Bernhardt, 1985). Successful L1 readers usually have a rich knowledge base and can easily integrate prior knowledge with a text, while L2 readers, even the relatively successful ones, usually do not have such a sophisticated semantic knowledge base (Garcia, 2000; Jimenez, et al, 1995; Jimenez, Garcia & Pearson, 1996).
L2 readers also have very limited experience in L2 cultural knowledge and this hinders their ability to comprehend the text. The reading of texts and responses to texts are socially constituted behaviors. Warnick (1996) compared the L1 Japanese reading and advanced American Japanese L2 reading on three newspaper articles, and discovered that L1 readers drew on personal knowledge or experience in L1 culture while L2 readers focused on linguistic elements of the text. In addition, L1 readers thought more of the author’s style or viewpoint and evoked some kinds of reactions such as agreeing or disagreeing with the author.

I also observed such a knowledge barrier in my own reading instruction in the United States. While teaching a Chinese reading class for second year students, the students were reading a dialog between a Chinese family (Mr. Gao, Mrs Gao and Miss Gao) and their America friend, Bai Wenshan (lesson 23 in Character Text for Beginning Chinese by John DeFrancis, 1976). The story occurred on the day Mr. Bai left China for the United States. His friends, Mr. Gao, Mrs. Gao and Miss Gao accompanied him to the airport by car. Mr. Gao and Mr. Bai expressed their willingness to sit in the front seat of the car and finally Mr. Gao sat at the front seat. Several lines into the dialogue, the author intended to make the students aware of Mr. Gao’s politeness while Mr. Bai was in China: the host should sit in the front as a guide for the guest. During the class, I noticed that none of the students grasped this intention regardless the fact that all the students understood the literal meaning. Clearly, this failure of the reading comprehension was due to the lack of understanding Chinese culture. Through the class discussion of the cultural issue, they understood the reason and solved the mismatch between their constructed meaning and the author’s intended meaning.
Schematizing (readers’ prior knowledge applied to text assertions) theory suggests that, in both L2 and L1 reading, the achieved meaning of the text is up to the reader rather than up to the text (Steffensen, Joag-Dev & Anderson, 1979). However, I feel the schematizing theory over-emphasizes the effect of prior knowledge. In this aspect, I am more in agreement with the Construction-Integration reading model (Kintsch 2004). The CI model proposes that readers construct several plausible (even contradictory) mental representations of the text through bottom-up processes, and a following integration process will abandon the incorrect representations and sort out the right well-structured one based on the readers’ prior knowledge. CI assigns a more decisive role to bottom-up processes yet still recognizes the influence of context and environment on comprehension.

In summary, culture is important for reading. The socio-cultural information related to texts is gained by experience. Considering the profound relationships between culture and reading, and the limited amount of L2 reading instruction time, overt instruction will be beneficial.

2.2.2 Differences between L2 Reading and L1 Reading

Although L2 reading research has been accused of being derived from first language reading research, L2 reading is not a mere imitator of L1 reading. In contrary, L2 reading research included significantly more complicated factors than L1 reading (Bernhardt, 2005). Bernhardt (2005) summarized the variables involved in the L2 reading process laid out by the research in the 1970s and 1980s into “the grammatical nature of a language, the orthographic nature of a language, socicultural reader variables,
sociocultural text variables, and additional influences” (p. 135). L2 reading research since the 1990s noticed on the uniqueness of L2 reading. First, the L2 reading process involves both L1 and L2 (Bernhardt, 2003). Second, L2 reading has some unique factors in transferring and interference processes, such as L1 literacy level (Bernhardt, 2000, 2005), L2 knowledge level (Bernhardt, 2000, 2005), knowledge and strategy transferring from L1 reading to L2 reading (Garcia, 1998; Koda, 1996). Third, L2 readers use strategies that are unique to L2 reading context, such as accessing cognates for unknown vocabulary (Bernhardt, 2005; Garcia, 1998, 2000), code mixing, switching and translating (Garcia, 1998).

Bernhardt (1985) asserted that L2 reading is “linguistically, conceptually, culturally, and socially different from the usual audience of literary texts” (p. 23). Later, Bernhardt (2003) also pointed out that the L2 reading process is considerably different from the L1 reading process because of the nature of information stored in memory in terms of visual processing dimension, phonological dimension, syntactic dimension and semantic dimension. L2 readers come to the L2 reading process with representations in memory that possess varying degrees of usefulness and relatedness for cognitive processing.

I would like to treat L2 reading and L1 reading as two related subfields toward constructing general reading models across languages (“literacy in general”, Bernhardt, 2000). From this point, reading models like limited capacity, compensatory interaction among different knowledge sources, construction-interaction, and reading instructional approaches are still applicable for L2 readings. Below I will describe the differences
between L2 reading and L1 reading in terms of oral language proficiency, knowledge, strategy use, and cross-linguistic transfer of reading skills.

### 2.2.2.1 Oral Language Proficiency

Compared to L2 readers, the L1 readers have more linguistic skills and experience living in the culture. The first skill that L1 readers (often children) need to learn at the beginning of the reading instruction is to connect the graph and sound. Therefore, the departure point of L1 reading instruction is the child’s oral vocabulary (Bernhardt, 1991, 1994) and L1 reading is to learn the conventionalized connection among graphs, meaning and sound that the reader is already familiar with (Nara, 2003). In contrast, L2 readers haven’t developed linguistic skills in the second language, and they need to map the graph sequence into phonological and semantic domains (Garcia, et al., 1998).

Almost all the researchers have realized the role of oral language proficiency in L1 reading. However, there are some debates about the function of oral language proficiency in L2 reading (Garcia, 2000). Langer, Bartolomé, Vásquez, and Lucas (1990) found that oral proficiency has no use in L2 reading (as cited in Garcia, 2000). Nevertheless, more scholars found the importance of oral language proficiency in L2 reading. Geva, Wade-Woolley and Shany (1993) warned that bilingual children’s limited second-language status can affect their reading comprehension of L2 text. Other researchers such as Weber (1991) insisted that bilingual children must have a certain level of oral proficiency in L2 before they can optimally learn to read and write in a second language. Bilingual children who are not fluent in English as L2 develop their English literacy slower than their English monolingual peers (Seda & Abramson; 1990;

Among the different voices in the debate, I agree that L2 oral proficiency can improve L2 reading, especially for L2 learners whose L1 orthography shares less similarity with L2 orthography (more details could be found in chapter 3. This oral proficiency can release L2 readers’ capacity to reading processes other than decoding. Also, it can reduce the challenges faced by L2 readers and thus promote their motivation and engagement with text. However, the oral language proficiency might not always be the most important factor in L2 reading (Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt, 1993; Geva et al, 1993; Verhoeven, 1994). It is actually related to the linguistic barriers. When readers are well above the threshold proposed by Alderson (1984), they will be able to transfer their L1 reading skills to L2 reading. In this case, other factors, such as L2 reading skills might become the most important factors.

Which factor is most important for L2 reading is also under debate. Durgunoglu et al (1993) and Verhoeven (1994) implied that a key predictor of bilingual children’s L2 reading is their ability to transfer knowledge about reading from one language to another, while Alderson (2000) claimed that knowledge of the second language is more important than first-language reading competence. I believe the important factor actually changes from case to case. Students’ ages, reading levels, types of assessments, type of instruction, and so on will all affect the key factor influencing L2 reading. In addition, it is worthy to note that most research works mentioned above are conducted on English or English-cognate L2 languages. Researchers found oral language proficiency even more
important in L2 reading when L1 and L2 share less similarity, such as Chinese as a L2 for American learners, which will be elaborated in chapter 3.

2.2.2.2 Knowledge

2.2.2.2.1 Metalinguistic Knowledge

Metalinguistic knowledge refers to the ability to define and control language processes. Young bilingual children often hold the advantage on metalinguistic tasks over the monolingual children (Garcia, 2000; Titone, 1985). Metalinguistic tasks “assess the children’s ability to play with, talk about, analyze, or make judgments about language” (Garcia, 2001, p. 230). Garcia et al. (1998) found that bilingual children up to six years old tended to outperform monolingual children on isolated tasks about metalinguistic awareness related to reading. Göncz and Kodzopeljic (1991) found that bilingual children had advantages in explaining how words differed in their length and referents. Bruck and Genesee (1995) found that English-speaking kindergarten children enrolled in French immersion schools in Canada outperformed on tests of onset-rime awareness.

Bialystock (1997) reported that 4- and 5-year-old bilingual preschoolers (French-English and Mandarin-English speakers) in Canada outperformed on a metalinguistic task, specifically when it was related to beginning reading such as a moving word task. The superior performance of both groups of bilingual children indicated that they not only had a heightened knowledge of symbolic representation as encoded in text, but also could transfer this knowledge from one language to the other. More interestingly, 5-year-old Mandarin-English bilingual children outperformed on a word-size task while 4-year-old children were still confused when exposed to two different writing systems. The 5-
year-old bilingual students could figure out the differences and develop more advanced awareness of specific representational properties than monolingual children.

To explain the advantage, Bruck and Genesee (1995) mentioned that bilingualism provides a type of “contrastive linguistics instruction which leads bilingual children to compare and analyze the structural aspects of language in more advanced ways than monolinguals” (p. 308). Garcia et al. (1998) explained the reason that this advantage will disappear after the age of six is the predominant tendency to school bilingual children only in one language, and as a consequence, limit their continued bilingual development.

2.2.2.2 Text Knowledge

L1 readers have firsthand experience on the knowledge of text schemata specific to a language and culture, text genres, the fuller range of signification (Garcia et al, 1998). These researchers reported that L1 readers could easily integrate information by drawing upon a rich knowledge base. L1 readers also demonstrated sensitivity to textual information and sophisticated semantic knowledge base. Comprehension increases when a reader has specific knowledge of the particular kinds of text structure. Unfortunately, L2 readers do not possess such a sophisticated semantic knowledge base.

2.2.2.3 Prior Knowledge

Compared to L2 readers, the L1 readers have been immersed in the culture. Bernhardt (1991) reviewed L2 reading research published in academic journals and books since 1974. She found that the previous studies examined two types of knowledge: cultural background knowledge and topic knowledge. Cultural background knowledge
impacts the reading comprehension. Readers tend to have a better comprehension of the text that matches the readers’ cultural background knowledge (Steffensen et al., 1979). Some researchers found that, in some cases, cultural experience is a greater predictor for comprehension than linguistic proficiency and knowledge of text structure (Carrell, 1987).

Many researchers consider that the topic familiarity is a greater predictor of comprehension than text-based linguistic factors including vocabulary knowledge and syntactic ease (Alderson and Urquhart, 1988; Nunan, 1985). Garcia (1998) and Jimenez et al (1995, 1996) reported that both unsuccessful and successful L2 readers have less knowledge about the topics than the successful L1 readers. L2 readers with less knowledge about topics performed worse than L1 readers (Garcia, 2000). When differences in prior knowledge were controlled, the difference in performance also disappeared (Garcia et al., 1998). These findings indicated the importance of prior knowledge in L2 reading. Bernhardt (1985) reported that L2 readers’ reconstruction of the setting seemed to be critical for their understanding of the story. Specifically, L2 readers constructed the intratextual perceptions at the outset and maintained them throughout the task. However, this reconstruction process is impacted by linguistic features and prior knowledge. Less successful L2 students tend to bring irrelevant prior knowledge to their interpretation, which can mislead them.

2.2.2.3 Strategies Use

Strategies are important in L2 reading. L2 readers share some strategies with L1 readers. Garcia (1998) reported that successful bilingual readers did not differ from
successful monolingual readers in the use of prior knowledge, meaning construction, making inference and comprehension monitoring, although they encountered more unknown vocabulary. As a result, scholars in L2 reading research tend to use same kind of category of reading strategies for both L1 and L2 reading. Garcia (2000) and Chamot and O’Malley (1994) identified three types of interrelated strategies to characterize monolingual and bilingual readers: metacognitive reading strategies, cognitive reading strategies, and social and affective strategies. Jimenez et al (1996) categorized the reading strategies of L1 reading and L2 reading into another three categories: text-initiated strategies, interactive strategies, and reader-initiated strategies.

On the other hand, L2 readers also demonstrated some differences in strategy use from L1 readers. Researchers consistently found that L2 readers focus more on bottom-up strategies while L1 readers use more top-down strategies. Garcia et al. (1998) reported that bilingual students focus more attention on unknown vocabulary and use a variety of bottom-up strategies while monolingual students do not use the same kind of strategies as much since they know more vocabulary. Through the comparison of the oral reading errors of 7th grade English French learners with those of native French speakers, Cziko (1980) found that less proficient readers primarily employed only bottom-up strategies, while native and advanced L2 readers used both top-down and bottom-up strategies. This trend is more distinct when L2 shares no similarity with L1, as even advanced L2 readers use more bottom-up strategies. By comparing the reading strategies used by native Japanese readers and Japanese L2 advanced level readers, Warnick (1996) reported that L1 readers draw on personal knowledge or experience while L2 readers focused on linguistic elements of the text. He found that native Japanese readers did not go through
every symbol in the text to gather information. Rather, they used the knowledge of sentence and discourse structures to predict many of the discrete words. In contrast, Japanese advanced level L2 readers used more bottom-up and metacognitive strategies. Researchers argue that the employment of top-down strategies by L2 readers can only be realized at a certain level of proficiency (Harada, 2003).

L2 readers also differ from L1 readers in terms of their use of metacognition strategies. Garcia et al. (1998) reported that bilingual students monitored more of their comprehension. They could identify comprehension obstacles while monolingual students lacked visible monitoring since the texts were fairly easy for these L1 readers to comprehend. Warnick (1996) reported a similar finding that Japanese L2 readers, even at advanced level, used more metacognitive strategies. Bernhardt (1985) reported that L2 readers’ reconstructions were impacted by linguistic features and L2 readers used their metacognitive capacities primarily at the lexical level.

L2 readers also use some unique strategies. Research argues that there are some bilingual strategies or cross-linguistic strategies uniquely applied by bilingual readers, such as code-mixing (Garcia, 1998; Jimenez et al, 1995, 1996), code-switching (Garcia, 1998; Jimenez et al, 1995, 1996), translating (Garcia, 1998; Jimenez et al, 1995, 1996), and cognate strategies (Garcia, 1998; Jimenez et al, 1995, 1996). Some strategies, such as translating, can enhance bilingual students’ comprehension. Garcia (1998) also reported that bilingual readers used different translating processes, such as direct or word-for-word translating, paraphrased translating and summary translating, and paraphrased translating was more effective than direct translating. The ability to use cognates could be developmental but require explicit instruction (Garcia, 1996, as cited in Garcia 1998;
Garcia & Nagy, 1993). Garcia (1998) also reported that cross-linguistic strategies can help bilingual students figure out cognates.

The lack of proficiency in L2 is the main factor causing the differences in the uses of strategies between L1 and L2 readers. Garcia (1998) and Jimenez et al. (1995, 1996) reported that both less successful and successful bilingual readers encountered more unknown vocabulary than the successful monolingual readers. The difficulty is bigger for L2 readers when L2 is non-cognate to L1. Through the comparison of L1 and L2 readers, Warnick (1996) found that Japanese L2 readers encountered difficulty in linguistic part. In comparison, Japanese native readers drew more on their personal memories and experiences during reading. As a result, the interpretation and resulting response to the text for Japanese L2 readers focused on the linguistic features of the text while Japanese native readers responded personally to the content of the text. Moreover, Japanese native readers did more in terms of thinking about the writer’s style or viewpoint, as well as connecting the text to prior knowledge and guessing the meaning by using context.

2.2.2.4 Cross-linguistic Transfer of Reading Skills

L2 readers are unique in terms of cross-linguistic transfer of reading skills. Nara (2003) proposed a continuum of transferability. Nara (2003) divided the reading skills into transferable and nontransferable. Transferable skills refer to those less culture-specific skills. They include general skills and competences such as monitoring one’s own reading activity. Nontransferable skills are bound by culture and language including the knowledge of text genres, and pragmatic knowledge necessary for the interpretation
of sentences and discourses. The least transferable is linguistic processing skills, like knowledge of semantics and syntax. These transferable and nontransferable skills form a continuum of transferability.

Researchers studied the cross-linguistic transfer of reading skills from different angles. One angle is from the cognitive aspect. Garcia (2000) reported that bilingual readers used the same strategies in their L1 and L2 reading, which implied cross-linguistic transfer. However, he found that the transfer process was difficult to identify because it varied with genre, complexity of the text, students’ language dominance, and general reading ability. Garcia also found that better readers used a wider range and a greater number of strategies which indicated the expertise transfer. Other researchers (Durgunoglu et al., 1993; Verhoeven, 1994) also found that bilingual children’s cross-linguistic transfer was indicative of their metalinguistic competence.

Another angle is through linguistic analysis. In the case of TESOL, Durgunoglu et al. (1993) found that first language phonological awareness and first language word recognition significantly predicted English (as L2) word recognition and pseudo word recognition, indicating cross-linguistic transfer. This transfer can be done without formal instruction when the two languages require similar types of word recognition processing. Fashola, Priscill, Richard and Kang (1996) found that Spanish-speaking children made significantly more predictable errors in English based on their Spanish phonemic and orthographic knowledge than the English-speaking children, which indicated that bilingual children learn to spell in their second language relying temporarily on their first-language phonological and orthographic processes to spell second-language words with unfamiliar phonemes or graphemes.
2.2.2.5 The Purpose of Reading

In reading instruction, educators mentioned different reading purposes for L1 and L2 reading. Nara (2003) proposed that the ultimate goal of L2 reading was to obtain information through use of the written language. Noda (2003) also pointed out that education in a native language placed emphasis on affective and perspective treatment of text rather than informational reading while nonnative reading focused on informational reading.

2.2.2.6 Age Difference

Usually, L2 readers start L2 reading learning later than L1 readers. L1 readers start to receive reading instruction at age about 5. L2 readers usually do not start at quite a later age unless they are raised in a bilingual setting. By the time they start L2 reading learning, they usually have a longer attention span than beginning L1 readers. They have an ability to monitor their learning process and progress. They are more cognitively capable to perform more abstract thinking and reasoning. Despite these advantages, L2 readers are less likely to develop competence equal to the L1 readers.

2.2.3 Implications of L2 Reading Theories

The analysis of the difficulties of L2 reading in section 2.2.1 above provides some implications on L2 reading comprehension instruction. In this section, I will discuss pedagogical instruction in word recognition development, how to select text and how to teach strategies to engage students in text comprehension in the L2 context.
2.2.3.1 L2 Word Recognition Development

As introduced before, L2 readers have to overcome some linguistic barriers before they can utilize sophisticated top-down strategies. Since L1 children can develop fluency based on their oral language proficiency relatively easily, L1 reading instruction mainly focuses on comprehension strategies and application. However, for L2 learners, especially when L2 shares no similarity with L1, more attention on the word recognition and fluency is needed. To develop fluent word recognition in L2, we first should provide instruction and practice to build up students’ orthographic awareness in L2 since every L2 reader has to learn new orthographies or new processing strategies.

In L2 word recognition instruction, we should first consider L1-L2 orthographic distance, interaction between L1 and L2 orthographic knowledge and the amount of L2 orthographic processing experience. Then we should decide 1) whether explicit instruction on the orthographic system is needed, 2) whether we should introduce the orthographic system after L2 learners have a firm ground in the L2 spoken language, and 3) whether we can introduce the cognate knowledge and transfer the L1 word recognition to L2 reading. Repeated practice should be used since it has been found efficient in developing automaticity in cognitive theory and is widely applied in L1 reading. Moreover, we can provide L2 learners aids in other sources such as pinyin romanization in Chinese (Everson, 1994, 2002), audio tapes (Garcia, 2000) to facilitate their L2 fluency in word recognition.
2.2.3.2 Text Selection

Text selection is important in L2 readings. When properly selected, the reading text can help in vocabulary, syntax, text knowledge and topic knowledge. When selecting reading materials in L2 reading comprehension instruction, we should ensure that the texts are appropriate for each level, by considering density of vocabulary and difficulty level of grammar. Texts should also include the grammatical structures for each unit of a reading passage and vocabulary support, such as the traditional vocabulary list. Garcia (2000) summarized previous findings and pointed out the need for explicit instruction on structural features of L2 that is not characteristic of L1.

Authentic material should be used in L2 reading instruction since communicative language teaching should focus on the learning of natural discourse. Artificially constructed texts based on word lists and syntactical inventories do not reconcile well with either the teaching or the learning of natural discourse (Allen et al, 1988). In reality, L2 reading instruction often delays the introduction of authentic materials until higher level courses based on a worry that L2 learners could not handle the texts well. However, this worry is not necessary since Allen et al (1988) found that most foreign language learners enrolled in first through fifth-year courses in French, Spanish and German were able to capture “a surprising amount of information” of the authentic text (p. 168) and the ability to gather more information from text also increased with more learning time. Based on this finding, Allen et al (1988) proposed to use authentic text in all levels of L2 reading. In addition, previous studies (see Bernhardt, 2000) found that providing L2 learners with authentic instead of grammatically sequenced or altered texts over time could promote the greatest gains in comprehension over time.
Similar to L1 reading, we should also select texts that are interesting, motivating and useful to the readers in L2 reading instruction. In addition, since readers perform better on topics with which they are familiar, texts with familiar topics to L2 readers should be introduced especially at the beginning or intermediate levels of learning so that more of the learner’s capacity can be freed to word recognition and application of reading strategies. Then gradually the texts can be shifted to unfamiliar topics that are culturally relevant. The authentic texts with more L2 cultural knowledge can bolster L2 learners’ background on the topic and culture.

When selecting texts in L2 reading instruction, educators should pay attention to genres. A number of studies which examined text structure found that L2 readers are sensitive to structural differences in texts (Bernhardt, 2000). Another reason to control genre is that L2 readers’ strategy use seem to depend on the genre of the text rather than on the language of the text (Garcia, 1998, 2000).

2.2.3.3 Strategies Instruction to Achieve Text Comprehension

Comprehension is important for reading instruction. Comprehension strategies should be the tools but not the end of comprehension. Similar to L1 reading instruction, L2 reading comprehension instruction should also take self-regulation as the final goal. Garcia et al (1998) proposed that explicit focus on strategies, modeling, teacher-student interaction, and teacher scaffolding through the use of a modified think-aloud approach has resulted in positive improvement.

I believe the discussion between teachers and L2 students in class will be an efficient tool. Bernhardt (1985) mentioned that sometimes L2 students may construct
different mental representations of the text from the teachers. When students could not understand the text, educators should find the reason and discuss with them about the situation with a focus on the cause. Specifically, if L2 readers understand the text differently because of the different cultural surrounding, a discussion about the cultural difference should be provided.

In addition, question generating and answering should be used in L2 reading instruction to get a deeper understanding of the text. Jimenez et al (1996) found that even successful bilingual readers applied the strategy of questioning to aid comprehension less frequently than the successful monolingual readers. Therefore, educators should help students generate and answer questions, especially those which can not be answered by direct copy from the text with matching words from the questions. Based on the finding that sometimes students may not understand the reason a teacher asks certain questions (Bernhardt, 1985), I suggest that the teacher becomes an active participant in constructing meaning with the students instead of simply imposing his or her own questions. One way is to ask students to generate and ask questions in class they prepared beforehand, and then the teacher will only bring up questions that are missed and discuss with students the reasons.

In summary, in L1 reading, decoding, vocabulary knowledge, prior knowledge, knowledge of text structure, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and affective factors all affect the reading comprehension. During reading, the upper level and lower level processes work together and compensate each other to reach comprehension of the text. Current comprehension instruction focuses on strategy instruction.
L2 reading is related to but not equal to L1 reading. L2 readers face linguistic barriers and knowledge barriers. They are different from L1 readers in terms of oral language proficiency, knowledge, strategy use, cross-linguistic transfer, reading purposes and age. Current L2 reading research suggests that in L2 reading instruction, based on the relationship between L1 and L2, and other factors, educators should consider the function of oral language proficiency, text selection and use more authentic materials, and include strategy instruction.
Chapter 3: Chinese L2 Reading Instruction

In this chapter, I will review and summarize Chinese L2 reading research and instruction. I will first review Chinese orthography related topics, which includes the characteristics of Chinese orthography, the difficulties it poses to L2 learners, and the ways to process it. Due to the limited amount of studies on Chinese L2 reading, sometimes I will refer to Chinese L1 reading research, with the hope that it can help shed some light on L2 reading research and instruction. Then I will review current trends in Chinese L2 reading instruction. Following this chapter, a detailed analysis of three Chinese reading textbooks will be provided.

3.1 Chinese Orthography

As described in Chapter 2, there are two barriers in L2 reading: the linguistic barrier and the prior knowledge barrier. The linguistic barrier includes the L2 orthography, vocabulary knowledge and syntactic knowledge. The prior knowledge barrier includes cultural knowledge and topic knowledge. For an L2 that is very different from the L1, such as Chinese for American students, the orthography will pose a much more significant obstacle to L2 readers. Discussing Chinese orthography is unavoidable when we analyze the difficulties that American Chinese learners encounter in reading. In fact, a large portion of the research on Chinese L2 reading is on the decoding of Chinese characters.
3.1.1 Chinese Orthography

There are some debates on the classifications of the Chinese orthographic system. Traditionally scholars (and recently by Koda, 2000) classified Chinese as an ideographic writing system because they believed that Chinese graphic symbols (characters) convey meaning without connection to the sound. In other words, the Chinese writing system does not represent the Chinese oral language. As to the Chinese instruction, this classification implies that Chinese learners must memorize by rote thousands of graphic symbols when learning Chinese written language.

However, such a classification neglects the phonetic aspect of Chinese. In fact, pictographic characters only represent about 3% of modern Chinese characters (DeFrancis, 2002). Among the several character formation procedures, semantic-phonetic compounding is the most dominant method. About 90% of Chinese characters are compound characters formed by a phonetic component and a semantic component (Chen & Tzeng, 1992; DeFrancis, 2002; Li 2002 counted this number at about 80-90%; Wang, Inhoff, & Chen, 1999). In fact, Chinese characters started to indicate the pronunciation to some extent a long time ago. About 2000 years ago, 96% of the characters in Xu Shen’s Shuowen Jiezi dictionary had a phonetic or compound element (Erbaugh, 2002a). Furthermore, each of the many language reforms in Chinese history has emphasized phonetics rather than semantics (Erbaugh, 2002a).

Related to the sound-symbol correspondence, DeFrancis (2002) proposed a theoretical continuum of writing system from pure phonography to pure logography. The pole of pure phonography comprises highly precise but grossly impractical visual
representations of speech, while the pole of pure logography comprises equally impractical cryptographic codes that completely mask the phonetic identities of the words. DeFrancis suggested that actual writing systems fall between these two extremes and there never has been a pure logographic or phonographic system of writing. On one hand, every writing system functions in coordination with a spoken language (Li & Thompson, 1982; Stubbs, 1980). On the other hand, all full writing systems also contain semantic elements to some extent.

DeFrancis (2002) further proposed to consider phonography as primary and logography as secondary. He suggested a first-level classification of writing systems as either phonemic or syllabic, and morphology/semantic as a sub-classification of phonemic and syllabic systems. Since in Chinese, the main trend was to use an original semantic symbol for its phonetic value, and then to disambiguate the resultant homonyms by adding semantic determinatives, i.e., radicals, DeFrancis classified Chinese as morphosyllabic instead of ideographic. He classified English as a morphophonemic system which preserves both phonemic and morphological information in its graphic representation. English has 1,768 graphemes for its approximately 40 phonemes (Nyikos 1988, as cited in DeFrancis, 2002, p. 16). An example of morphology is the spelling “ette” which explicates the idea of smallness.

Although the Chinese writing system has a phonetic component, its sound-symbol correspondence is much lower than alphabets or syllable scripts (Everson, 1986). Chinese characters comprise an extremely inefficient system of phonetic representation. Based on the level of resemblance of the phonetic component’s pronunciation to the target compound character (which is called phonological regularity), DeFrancis (2002)
divided the phonetic components of Chinese compound characters into three types. The first type accounts for about 42% of compound characters whose phonetic elements are accessible enough to aid pronunciation: 25% has phonetic components which completely represent the actual pronunciation even with tones while the remaining 17% has phonetic components which represent the actual pronunciation of the compound characters without tones. Some researchers (Chen & Tzeng, 1992; Wang et al., 1999) gave a different estimation that about 26% of compound characters are pronounced just like their phonetic element. The second type accounts for about 24% of compound characters and the phonetic components of this type represent only the onset or the rhyme of the target compound characters to permit a guess of the pronunciation. The phonetic components of the third type, 34% of compound characters, cannot provide any useful phonetic clue to the pronunciation. In addition, most phonetic elements are characters that have very limited or no indication of their pronunciation. To utilize the phonological regularity in word recognition, learners must first remember the large amount of phonetic radicals. Koda (2000) claimed that there are approximately 700 phonetic radicals currently in use while DeFrancis (2002) proposed 895 phonetic components.

Similar to phonetic components, semantic radicals of the Chinese compound characters only yield partial information related to character meanings. Therefore it is unlikely for a learner to elicit the meanings of unknown characters through the semantic radical information alone (Koda, 2000). Koda (2000) claimed that there are 200 semantic radicals currently in use in simplified Chinese characters. Kangxi Dictionary started to regulate traditional Chinese characters into 214 radical components.
In summary, Chinese orthography is morphosyllabic with low sound-symbol correspondence. The phonetic elements and the semantic radicals can yield some but limited information about the pronunciation or the meaning. The difference between Chinese orthography and L2 learners’ native language, such as English, along with the low sound-symbol correspondence in Chinese characters makes the orthography a very challenging first obstacle for L2 readers during reading.

### 3.1.2 Difficulties of Chinese Orthography on L2 Readers

Chinese orthography is a significant hurdle for American learners (Everson, 2002; Ke & Shen, 2003), especially at the beginner level. Everson (1994) claimed that Chinese recognition at the beginning was slow and laborious. He further argued that the demands of Chinese orthography on American Chinese L2 learners are the primary factor that makes Chinese a “category IV” language. The Defense Language Institute categorized foreign languages into four categories from the easiest to the hardest, based on the difficulty native speakers of American English may have in learning (see Table 3.1). Chinese is a category IV language, which means it requires the longest contact time (1320 hours) to reach the “Advanced Low Level”. In comparison, for American students who are learning Spanish or French, the contact time is only 480 hours to reach the same level.

The difficulty first comes from low sound-symbol correspondence of Chinese characters, the limited indication of phonetic components, and the partial information conveyed by semantic radicals. Although about 90% Chinese characters are compound characters formed by a phonetic component and a semantic component, the phonological
information is not accessible due to the low sound-symbol correspondence, the huge amount of phonetic components (about 700 according to Koda, 2000, and 895 according to DeFrancis, 2002), and the opaqueness of the pronunciation of these phonetic components. In addition, semantic radicals of the Chinese compound characters only yield partial information related to the character meanings. Therefore, the word recognition process of the readers who have a phonographic first language is seriously impaired. (Koda, 1989, 1990).
### Table 3.1. Four language categories determined by the Defense Language Institute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Contact hours to reach advanced-low to advanced-mid level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category I</strong></td>
<td>English, French, Italian, Portuguese (Brazilian), Portuguese (European), and Spanish</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category II</strong></td>
<td>German, Romanian</td>
<td>720 (reach advanced-high level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category III</strong></td>
<td>Czech, Greek, Hebrew, Persian-Farsi, Polish, Russian, Serbian/Croatian, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category IV</strong></td>
<td>Arabic, Chinese Mandarin, Japanese, and Korean</td>
<td>1320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The huge amount of characters needed to be learned also contributes to the difficulty. The amount of characters for everyday use can be found in various documents issued by the Chinese government. One is the *Xiaoxue Yuwen Dagang* (*Syllabus of Chinese for Elementary School*) which regulates the amount of characters to be learned. Since the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, this syllabus has been updated five times. As shown in Table 3.2, the amount of must-learn characters varied between 2,500 and 3,500. In 1988, the State Language Commission of China and the State Education Commission of China published *Handai Hanyu Changyong Zibiao* (*List of Common Characters in Modern Chinese*) based on statistics from the Modern Chinese corpus during the years 1928 to 1986. This list includes 3,500 most frequently used Chinese characters, including 2,500 characters with high frequency and 1,000 characters with second-level frequency. Chen (1999) described that the threshold for literacy in Chinese “is generally set at around 2,000 characters” (p.136). Koda (2000) claimed that 3,500 are designated as modern Chinese characters for everyday use.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name of the Syllabus</th>
<th>Amount of Chinese characters to be grasped by elementary school students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>The Chinese syllabus</td>
<td>3,000 – 3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>The Chinese syllabus</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>The Chinese syllabus</td>
<td>about 3,000 to be recognized, about 2,500 to be grasped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>The Chinese syllabus</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>The Chinese syllabus of the nine year compulsory education</td>
<td>about 2,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.2.** The amount of Chinese characters regulated by the Syllabus of Chinese Language for Elementary School
Besides the reasons mentioned above, scholars recognized an additional orthographic difficulty layer in the word recognition for Chinese L2 learners. In text, Chinese characters are arrayed without space between them (character spacing) so that there is no apparent word-unit boundary in Chinese (Chen, 1996). In addition, Chinese text does not have orthographic cues such as letter configurations, spelling patterns, and capitalization as in English, French and German (Everson, 1994; Everson & Ke, 1997). The absence of these components makes Chinese orthography more difficult for L2 readers since it is impossible to recognize a word if the students cannot isolate it in the first place (Everson & Ke, 1997). This represents a significant hurdle since about 75% of Chinese words are formed by two characters (Yu et al., 1985). In fact, even intermediate Chinese learners have difficulties in isolating meaningful word units in the text (Everson, 1986; Everson & Ke, 1997). Everson and Ke (1997) argued that the ability to rapidly parse constituent units in Chinese text is not an easy feat, and appears to be a characteristic of advanced proficiency.

As discussed above, Chinese orthography is a significant hurdle for Chinese L2 readers. A specific level of word recognition efficiency is a prerequisite for L2 reading comprehension. Below this threshold, L2 readers will not have sufficient capacity to carry out the higher order processes to achieve comprehension. Consequently, word recognition is a task for both Chinese L2 research and instruction. Everson and Ke (1997) called for the need of effective word recognition. They proposed that one research tasks for Chinese language educators is to explore how Chinese L2 learners learn, store, remember, and utilize Chinese characters. Their research further suggested
that educators need to establish a more theoretically rich relationship between spoken language and reading proficiency during Chinese L2 instruction.

However, the Chinese orthography barrier may not be as thick as it seems to be. Shu, Chen, Anderson, Wu, and Xuan (2003) analyzed the properties of the 2570 Chinese characters explicitly taught in Chinese elementary schools from the aspects of types of characters, visual complexity, spatial structure, phonetic regularity and consistency, semantic transparency, independent and bound components, and phonetic and semantic families. They found that visual complexity, phonetic regularity, and semantic transparency of the Chinese characters increase from the early grades to the later grades. In addition, low-frequency characters tend to be visually complex, phonetically regular, and semantically transparent whereas high-frequency characters tend to be the opposite. Therefore, the analysis suggests a rule in written Chinese that has some application in L2 Chinese instruction: at the beginning of Chinese reading instruction, when the students are learning the high-frequency characters they may have greater difficulty, but as their learning goes they will benefit from the logic and the regularity. As mentioned earlier, DeFrancis (2002) estimated that about 42% of the phonetic elements are accessible enough to aid pronunciation. Taking advantage of the high availability of phonetic elements should greatly enhance the learning process for L2 Chinese learner.

In the section below I will summarize research findings in Chinese character processing. The whole section will be organized by the approaches to process Chinese characters. For each approach, I will include and compare L1 and L2 readers’ processing approaches as I hope the inclusion of L1 reader’s processing and its difference from L2
reader can shed light on L2 reading instruction. I will also try to distinguish the level of Chinese learners whenever the research data is available.

3.1.3 Processing of Chinese Characters

3.1.3.1 Phonological Encoding Strategy

Phonological encoding strategy refers to the strategy of processing orthography from its pronunciation. Researchers found that L1 Chinese readers use phonological encoding when processing the visually presented Chinese characters (Tzeng, Hung, & Wang, 1977; Tzeng & Hung, 1981; Tzeng & Hung, 2002). In addition, the extent of phonological strategy used by Chinese L1 readers is greater than previously thought (Tzeng & Hung, 1980; Treiman, Baron & Luk, 1981). Chen, Shu, Wu, and Anderson (2003) found that Chinese children who made good progress in the stage of learning to read attended to the phonological cues in characters with different sound-symbol correspondence, i.e. fully regular characters, semiregular characters, and phonetic families. Fully regular characters provide complete information about pronunciation; semiregular characters contain partial information about pronunciation; and phonetic families consist of characters sharing the same phonetics that are usually related in pronunciation. Li (2002) found that both literate and less literate Chinese L1 readers used phonological cues in processing unknown compound characters with different sound-symbol correspondence.

Researchers consistently found that Chinese L2 readers tried to employ phonological strategies. Everson (1998) found a very strong correlation between knowing a word’s meaning and knowing its pronunciation in beginning learners
regardless of reader’s proficiency levels and character pronunciation/identification ability. When learners knew the meaning of a word, 91.4% of them also knew the pronunciation. Although this research could not infer causal relationships, it seems that Chinese L2 learners are employing strategies that are in some way very reliant upon their ability to pronounce the characters when trying to remember these characters.

Studies on the readers’ mistakes when they are trying to recognize or produce Chinese characters also support the existence of the phonetic mental processing in both L1 and L2 Chinese readers. Jiang (1999, as cited in Erbaugh, 2002a) reported that 56% of the character mistakes in the writing of Hong Kong students majoring in Chinese came from phonetic interference. I also observed a similar phenomenon. L2 students who confused the pronunciations of “duo” 多 (many) and “dou” 都 (all) also tend to mix these two characters in both reading and writing. An extreme evidence is Xu Bing’s Book from the Sky (Erbaugh 2002b). All characters in this book do not exist, but are formed by combining existing semantic radicals and phonetic components in Chinese. When reading this book, the readers always tried to pronounce the characters before trying to figure out the meaning.

Similarly, researchers found that advanced level L2 Chinese learners also rely on spoken language skills when reading. Everson and Ke (1997) found that advanced learners of Chinese excessively use different forms of sound remediation (mutterings, lip movement, outright reading aloud, etc) when performing a silent reading. They concluded that Chinese learners “are attempting to bring spoken resources to bear on the reading task, although the exact nature of this process is yet to be established” (p. 14).
One explanation was that Chinese L2 learners used overt vocalization to better isolate words since there were no spaces between words in Chinese. They further hypothesized that this strategy was used to refresh characters in working memory while constructing textual meaning, which indicated the lack of automaticity in rapid linking printed word with its sound. In fact, Everson (1998) pointed out the benefits of phonological encoding are to facilitate information processing in short-term memory, provide a trace in short-term memory superior to visual, and aid in the visual and semantic processing of orthographically unfamiliar words.

In conclusion, there is a phonological encoding process in Chinese reading. Tzeng, Hung, and Garro (1978) argued that phonological encoding is a universal processing strategy employed in reading regardless of orthography. More recently, Erbaugh (2002a) claimed that “reading is impossible without a mental model of a spoken language” regardless of the types of orthography, (p. 27). These statements support the primacy of speech in the process of reading.

3.1.3.2 Visual Strategy

Visual strategy is the strategy that processes orthography from the shape of linguistic elements. Visual processing exists in reading all types of orthographies. Erbaugh (2002a) proposed that reading characters, syllables and alphabets all require an intricate coordination between phonetic decoding and processing of whole shapes (p. 40). Recent research indicates that both phonological encoding and visual processing occur when reading Chinese, and the latter needs more attention when handling deeper orthographic systems (Everson, 1998).
The low symbol-sound correspondence in Chinese orthography makes Chinese L2 readers use more visual orthography structure to compensate for the unreliable phonetic encoding process (Everson, 1998). He (Everson, 1994) found Chinese L2 students relied more on the visual aspects of the Chinese character to aid in word recognition than Chinese L1 readers. Hayes (1988) also reported that non-native Chinese readers made significantly more visual errors. This indicated the use, albeit not very skillful, of visual strategy by Chinese L2 readers. Hayes further specified that native readers used phonological encoding strategy at word level while non-native readers used a mix of phonological and graphic encoding. At sentence level, native readers used a mix of graphic and semantic strategies while non-native used more graphic features.

Ke (1996) proposed that lower-level Chinese L2 learners used more visual strategies in reading Chinese characters. As a result, the density of Chinese characters is an important factor in decoding. Through a character naming experiment on beginners, Sergent and Everson (1992) found that number of strokes in a Chinese character accounted for a significant amount of the variance in the speed and accuracy of non-native Chinese learners. Less densely constructed characters were named more promptly and more accurately than denser ones. However, how the character density affects proficient L2 readers is not so clear. Sergent and Everson (1992) found that more proficient L2 learners tended to name the characters more promptly and accurately, but the speed and accuracy declined with character density. But another research by Hayes (1987) reported that the density of character did not affect the proficient learners.

Chinese L1 readers perceive major functional components of characters as chunks instead of strokes. Thus, to facilitate the application of visual strategies, we should help
learners to build up the ability to see characters in terms of chunks. Anderson et al. (2008) found that Chinese L1 children become aware of the internal structure of Chinese characters when they are in first grade. Some of them even started to decode characters in terms of chunks as the major character components. This ability to see characters in terms of chunks is acquired gradually over the early elementary school years and is correlated with vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and teacher’s rating of reading level.

3.1.3.3 Radical and Phonetic Components Strategies

Radical and phonetic components strategies are about recognizing Chinese characters in terms of chunks instead of strokes. Indeed, major functional components of Chinese characters are more readily to be perceived as chunks than the subcomponents that do not represent semantic or phonological information. Native readers use this strategy extensively (Anderson et al, 2008).

The knowledge of radical and phonetic components is also very useful to L2 learners. Ke (1998) reported that this knowledge can help new character learning, word recognition and producing. Students who learned to use character components strategies performed better in character recognition and production tasks. Shen (2000) found that the knowledge of radicals has obvious influence on character learning. Students with richer knowledge can grasp and absorb new compound characters faster.

However, the Chinese L2 learners do not use the radical and phonetic components strategy sufficiently. In the tests of semantic-radical transfer and phonetic-transfer, Jackson, Everson, and Ke (2003) found that students’ performances on the transfer tests
were variable and rather poor. Although the students showed some knowledge of how to use both the semantic radical and phonetic components, only a portion of the students can clearly apply the principle. The others performed at chance-level or apparently did not.

Ke (1998) found that the first year students believed that memorizing a character holistically was more effective. Students thought that continually practicing writing characters was more important than breaking down the character into semantic and phonetic parts. McGinnis (1999, as cited in Everson, 2002) found that half-way first year students in a short intensive program employed a variety of approaches including rote repetition, character-specific mnemonic aids in the form of devising personal stories as to how specific characters look or sound, or the use of semantic and phonetic components. However, these students did not clearly favor any one approach including the radical component and phonetic strategy.

Ke (1996) proposed a three-stage model of orthographic awareness. At the accumulation stage, learners are primarily adding whole characters to their lexicon without much component processing. They may value the learning and using radicals and phonetic components but they have not yet accumulated sufficient characters in their mental lexicons to generate the recurring components. They do not have orthographic awareness for those recurring components (either radical or phonetic components). Thus they mainly rely on creating idiosyncratic mnemonics based on the shape or the sound of a character, or they must memorize it as a whole by repetitive practice. At the transitional stage, learners often apply their knowledge of the structure of the orthographic system to derive sound and meaning. They have accumulated large numbers of characters and can generate the frequently used radicals and phonetic
components. At the component-processing stage, students can recognize and produce characters from the perspective of recurring components, including those that are not sound- or meaning-based. This model explains the insufficient use of radical and phonetic components by beginning level learners.

Everson (2002) also explained the lack of the employment of radical and phonetic components strategy among Chinese L2 beginning learners in a similar way. He found that the beginners understood that they needed to study recurring components such as radicals and phonetics. However, due to the sheer number of recurring components in the system, they needed to learn enough characters to generate rules to facilitate effective character learning and memorizing. At the initial state, the learners may be taught to use and value the radical and phonetic components strategy but they are not able to take advantage of them to decompose characters. They must resort to other strategies that are irrelevant to with the semantic and phonetic makeup of characters.

### 3.1.3.4 Context Strategies

Advanced level learners can use more strategies. Because of their extensive knowledge of Chinese orthography, morphology and vocabulary, they could more easily isolate what they did not know, and make intelligent, purposeful, and less random decisions on their remediation (Everson & Ke, 1997). Advanced learners can infer the meanings of multi-character words through “character networks”, or guess an unknown combination by the meaning of one constituent character, or deduce the meaning from the meaning of other combinations which also contains individual character occurred. This ability, coupled with the ability to isolate meaningful units, was very effective.
However, for the intermediate readers who did not possess this ability, word recognition was “all or nothing”. They could recognize known vocabulary but had limited ability to infer or guess unknown vocabularies (Everson & Ke, 1997). Those students usually felt that practicing characters in context of vocabulary items (such as two-character compounds) was more effective than learning characters individually. For these less literate readers, the two-character word reading situation seemed more helpful, especially when they are dealing unknown characters with medium to low phonological regularity (Li 2002).

In summary of the Chinese Orthography section, Chinese Orthography is very different from English, and is considered as the first obstacle by most of current Chinese L2 instruction considers. They believe that Chinese L2 learners have to meet a minimum orthography requirement before they can apply any high level reading skills. Accordingly, the current Chinese L2 research focus on the instruction approaches to help students learn, memorize, utilize Chinese characters, and develop vocabulary. Previous studies highlighted the importance of orthographic awareness and decoding strategies, but hardly ever moved beyond the topic of Chinese orthography.

3.2 Chinese Reading Instruction in L2 Context

Scholars (Everson, 1986; Walker, 1984) have pointed out the importance of reading instruction in the Chinese foreign language curriculum in the minds of Chinese language educators. However, for a long time, L2 reading research was mainly conducted on French, German, and Spanish, and the reading research on Chinese L2 has been neglected (Everson, 1994). Therefore, research conducted to understand how
foreign language learners come to learn Chinese is still in its infancy (Everson, 2002; Everson & Ke, 1997). Empirical investigation into the reading behaviors of non-native readers of Chinese is quite limited (Everson, 1986), and Chinese L2 reading is an area with particular interest for further research (Everson & Ke, 1997).

Everson (2002) also pointed out that the small strand of research investigating Chinese L2 reading during the past few decades. First, the most current researches are based on the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} year learners of Chinese, and there are very few researches about the advanced learners since only a small percentage of students enter the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} year. Second, many researches are still at character and word level as many researchers still think that teaching of Chinese writing system is essential in Chinese L2 reading instruction. In this section, I will summarize the current progresses in Chinese reading instruction in L2 context. First, I will focus on the explicit instruction on Chinese character. Then I will describe the sequential approach in Chinese L2 reading. Other instruction will be included briefly at the end of this section.

3.2.1 Explicit Instruction on Chinese Characters

The characteristics of Chinese orthography and the linguistic barrier it creates for Chinese L2 learners have a direct bearing on Chinese L2 reading pedagogy. Ke and Shen (2003) reviewed and summarized that early research (Hayes, 1987, 1988; Sergent & Everson, 1992) focused on how Chinese learners develop basic recognition skills and learning strategies, whereas in recent years, people paid attention to the radical knowledge and character learning (Shen, 2000), recognition and production, and pronunciation and meaning (Everson, 1998).
Based on intensive classroom observations of first-year Chinese L2 instruction, Jackson et al. (2003) found that the students relied primarily on classroom instruction for information about Chinese orthography principles and their applications, but very little instructional time was spent on the basic orthography principles that were novel to the first-year Chinese learners. They also found that instruction on phonetics was less than half as often as the instruction on semantic radicals (about 25% of the total classes observed). Based on these findings, Jackson et al. (2003) suggested that educators should explicitly explain the structure of semantic-phonetic compounds during the beginning instruction. They pointed out that after a minimal but explicit classroom instruction enables adult Chinese L2 learners to apply a principle that is achievable by Chinese children after a year or more of formal reading instruction. They also pointed out semantic radicals in character meaning was easier for adult Chinese L2 learners, while the use of the phonetic element to pronounce novel compound characters may be more difficult (p. 151). They believe the reasons include the variability of phonetic relationship between the phonetic part to the pronunciation of the character, and the learners’ insufficient oral language experience.

Ke (1998) pointed out students who are aware of the importance of the learning and using of character components strategy performed better in tasks of character recognition and production. In addition, those students also feel that practicing characters in context of vocabulary items (such as two-character compounds) was more effective than learning characters individually. Therefore, they suggested using context when teaching components.
However, McGinnis (1999) found that, in the first few months, Chinese L2 reading learners have very mixed feelings about the value of these strategies to learn and retain Chinese characters. Many beginning Chinese L2 readers describe themselves as using logo-graphic strategies. Jackson et al. (2003) argued that the actual reading processes were not assessed yet at this stage. The result of the study by Shu et al (2003) found that high-frequency Chinese characters, which are mostly involved at the first few months, tend to be phonetically irregular and semantically un-transparent. However, as the learner started to contact the low-frequency Chinese character, which tends to have more strokes but is more phonetically regular and semantically transparent, the learner will benefit more from these strategies.

In summary, in the field of Chinese Character instruction, scholars and educators have recognized the potential benefit of character components strategy to Chinese L2 learners’ word recognition ability. However, debate still exists, especially in the aspect of how effective this strategy is, and when and how to introduce it to students. Interesting as the strategy is, further research is needed to design a more effective instruction approaches for the Chinese character instruction.

### 3.2.2 Sequential Approach

Sequential approach is another topic in Chinese L2 reading instruction that has recently received much attention. It addresses the question of when Chinese reading instruction should be introduced. Some scholars argued that Chinese characters should be introduced at the beginning with the first day of class, while some scholars argue to postpone the study of written Chinese until the students have acquired a substantial
amount of spoken Chinese via Romanization (Everson, 1998). DeFrancis (1976) expressed his opinion that students should start with spoken Chinese, and spoken Chinese as the primary goal. In the *Introduction* of his textbook *Beginning Chinese* (2nd ed.) (1976), DeFrancis described that “all students, of whatever age and whatever object (whether a speaking or a reading knowledge), should start with spoken Chinese” (p. xix). This concept was revitalized when the concept of sequential approach was introduced in 1980s. In this section, I will briefly review the sequential approach.

Scholars (Walker, 1984, Everson, 2000) have proposed a sequential approach in the development of four language skills. They argued that speaking/listening instruction should take precedence ahead of reading/writing instruction so that the students can progress from speaking/listening to reading/writing rather than dealing with all four skills equally from the beginning. Although there is no agreement about the best time to introduce Chinese characters and reading in Chinese curriculum, the suggestion by scholars (DeFrancis, 1964/1976; Walker, 1984) to precede reading with a firm ground in the spoken language through Romanization has been widely accepted and has become a consensus (Hayes, 1988; Everson, 1994, 1998, 2002; Everson & Ke, 1997). In agreement with Walker, Everson (1994) pointed out that this ground of spoken language in sequential approach is the knowledge of the sound system and rudimentary spoken proficiency.

The sequential approach also addressed on “what to teach in the first reading class”. This approach proposes that the characters introduced at the beginning of the reading course should be those that the students have already practiced in the spoken language environment (Everson, 1994, 1998, 2002; Everson & Ke, 1997; Walker, 1984).
Scholars (Everson, 1998) argue that, by starting with the characters students already learned in their oral/aural lexicons will help students practice sound-to-symbol correspondence.

The theoretical foundation of the sequential approach is the primacy of spoken language. Erbaugh (2002a) claimed that all writing scripts are mediated by spoken language. In other words, every writing system functions only in coordination with a spoken language and reading is impossible without a mental model of a spoken language. Erbaugh further proposed that people read characters by matching them to the phonetic cues. Chinese and Japanese languages are much harder to learn for American because of the intricate coordination between phonetic decoding and processing of whole shapes.

Walker (1984) also identified three more reasons for delaying the introduction of Chinese orthography. First, such a delay follows the order of natural language acquisition. In all cultures, oral and aural skills are learned before literacy skills. Second, in this way, the readers do not need to learn the shape, sound and meaning of a character all at once. They are simply adding the shape of the written representation to the sound and meaning that they have already learned. It allows learners to focus on the orthography with less grammar and vocabulary barriers. Third, it provides a review of previously learned material.

Everson and Ke (1997) provided more theoretical support for the sequential approach through the study on the advanced L2 readers’ reading behavior. Advanced L2 readers use reading strategies more extensively due to their more abundant spoken language resources they can employ in the reading task. Specifically, they found that
advanced readers consistently use sound remediation during reading. These findings support the theory that background knowledge in spoken language is important for readers and should be acquired before reading instruction commences. Hayes (1988) reported that foundation in the spoken language is beneficial before working with characters so that students shall come to the Chinese reading task with strongly developed phonological inferencing skills, and will not have to dwell excessively on the printed characters.

Packard (1990) proved the benefit of delayed introduction of Chinese characters in terms of enhanced phonetic discrimination and oral production. In his study, he evaluated two sections of a first year Chinese course. In one section (the control group), Chinese characters were introduced simultaneously with the listening/speaking skills at the beginning of the semester, while in the other section (the experiment group), characters were introduced three weeks after the introduction of speaking/listening skills. The number of characters was controlled to be the same for the first semester for both sections. Due to the different time to start Chinese character instruction, students in the experiment group actually studied characters three weeks less than the control group.

However, one semester later, the experiment group scored significantly better than the control group in the area of phonetic discrimination, which means that they were better at transcribing syllables and were more fluent in spoken Chinese. There were no significant differences between the two groups in terms of listening comprehension or in knowledge of grammar and pinyin. The same situation sustained to the end of the second semester and there was no significant difference in character reading or character writing. This study suggests that delaying the introduction of characters in the initial few weeks
allows learners to become more familiar with the sound system of the language, which results in better oral skills, without any detriment in their learning, retaining, recognition, or production of characters.

Everson (1994, 1998, 2002) also addressed the benefits of the sequential approach. Everson found that, first acquiring a substantial amount of spoken Chinese before attempting the study of the written language is the most efficient way to help students to overcome Chinese orthographic barrier. This method can promote the quickest sound-symbol correspondence since the learners only need to learn the graph of the characters. Everson (1994) also stressed the benefits of using the characters that represent vocabulary learners already know in romanization and have practiced in the spoken language environment. He pointed out that this method can bring benefits such as 1) students attend immediately to comprehension rather than decoding, and 2) students will be more sensitive to grammar and morphology.

Pinyin Romanization is an important tool for the sequential approach. It should be used as a mediating tool to help students overcome the opaque sound-to-symbol correspondence in Chinese characters and receive a firm grounding in the spoken language before they attempt to read in characters (Everson, 1994, 2002). For American learners, the opaque sound-to-symbol correspondence inherent in Chinese means that they must learn a “helping language” to acquire vocabulary from the first day of class. Pinyin Romanization fills that role and some scholar argues that it can stay throughout Chinese learners’ learning career (Everson, 2002) to mediate the opaqueness and can fill up some capacity for readers (Everson, 1994). However, I feel that pinyin Romanization should be limited mainly to speaking class material, or just in a vocabulary list in reading
class material. I do not agree to provide pinyin above each character or each unknown character, nor allow students to read the text with pinyin in the margins for unknown word. The reason is that in China, the reading materials do not contain pinyin Romanization, and it will slow down the students’ reading process if they rely on pinyin Romanization all the time.

In Chinese L2 reading instruction, we should introduce reading/writing after the students have built up a foundation in spoken Chinese. What the students first read should be what they have practiced in speaking instruction. Thus in the very beginning stage of Chinese L2 reading instruction, we can use some pedagogically based texts to reflect most parts of the materials used in speaking instruction. The primary texts can be the written script (character version) of the dialogue studied in their speaking classes a couple of months ago.

### 3.2.3 Other Instruction Approaches

There are also other instructional approaches in Chinese L2 reading instruction. Everson (1986) suggested that we should encourage students to read paragraph-level texts sooner and more often so that the learners can take advantage of the context and redundancy inherent in longer passages. Ke (1994) suggested that educators should train students to recognize characters accurately (fluency) and practice should be provided both in and out of class with good quality and quantity. Everson (1994) also suggested using authentic material with cultural issues as enhancing materials. He proposed that authentic materials and larger units of text should be used when students begin to
accumulate larger vocabulary. Hayes (1988) suggested providing learners advanced organizers or background knowledge before reading texts.

### 3.2.4 Chinese L2 Reading instruction in China

对外汉语阅读写作教学研究 (Research on Chinese L2 reading and writing instruction) was published in China in 2006. This book included the most influential research papers on reading and writing written in China. In the book, several Chinese educators proposed their understanding of reading instruction objectives. Some educators also proposed the different focuses for each level.

Lü (1996/2006) stated that Chinese L2 reading instruction has three objectives and tasks: to train reading comprehension ability, to train reading skill, and to improve the students’ holistic language ability through reading ability training. According to him, Chinese L2 reading training must include word recognition training, language training, introduction of relevant cultural knowledge, and reading strategy training. At the beginning level, reading instruction should focus on word recognition and vocabulary comprehension. At the intermediate level, reading instruction should focus on lexicon analysis, grammar training, introduction of cultural knowledge, and reading strategies such as guessing and induction. At the advanced level, reading instruction should incorporate different genres to help the students know the styles and characteristics of different genres, and incorporate domain-oriented materials to train content reading in the students’ domains, i.e., their fields of study.

Li (1997) claimed that at the beginner level, Chinese L2 reading instruction should prioritize word recognition and vocabulary learning, and enlarge the students’
vocabulary bank. Li (1998) believed that reading instruction at the beginner and intermediate levels are equal to language classes. The goal of Chinese L2 reading instruction at the beginning level is to review vocabulary and grammar. She also proposed that reading instruction at the intermediate level should match with the core textbook in vocabulary and grammar, but more importantly, the instruction should provide students texts with different genres, different styles, and different communication scopes. While the reading instruction at the advanced level should emphasize on training the students’ ability to recognize the deep Chinese cultural elements in the writing and understand their meaning as well as the ability in reading domain Chinese.

Liu Songhao (2001/2006) also believed that reading instruction at the beginner and intermediate levels are language classes with an objective to accumulate language knowledge based on reading comprehension. In other words, the purpose of Chinese L2 reading instruction at this level is to accumulate language knowledge based on reading comprehension. Therefore, reading classes have two focuses: one is comprehension and the other is accumulation of language knowledge. Comprehension is the means and language knowledge accumulation is the main purpose. He claimed that the students take Chinese reading classes not to know information, nor to study Chinese culture. To him, vocabulary training is the core of the Chinese L2 reading instruction. Liu also proposed the final destination of reading instruction is to improve the students’ language competence. However, he did not provide details.

Qiao (2001/2006) asserted that insufficiency in vocabulary is the biggest difficulty for the L2 Chinese reader, and lack of background knowledge is another important factor. Qiao distinguished the purposes of native language reading and second
language reading. He claimed that the purpose in native language reading is to obtain knowledge, while that in second language reading is to improve language ability. Qiao proposed the following tasks in Chinese L2 reading instruction: learning Chinese, specific purpose reading, reading ability training, reading habit formation, and educational nature. Specifically, Qiao listed twelve reading tasks: knowledge input, wisdom, characteristics formation, review characters/words/sentence patterns, enlarge vocabulary, other language skills, adjustment to genres, grasp of text structure, increase reading rate, apply reading strategy, deal with language elements, and special purpose reading. Interestingly, among the twelve reading tasks analyzed, none are communication oriented. Qiao also analyzed the importance of several tasks in Chinese L2 reading instruction using a scale from 1 to 5 (1 refers to the least important while 5 refers to the most important). At the beginner level, the most important tasks include: to review characters, vocabularies and sentence patterns (5), and to deal with language elements (5). Task with high importance is to enlarge vocabulary (3).

Li (2006) proposed the objectives of reading instruction from two perspectives. One perspective is reading skill, for which reading instruction should train the students’ reading abilities. The other perspective is the holistic Chinese L2 instruction, for which reading instruction should emphasize the training of communicative competence. However, similar as Liu Songhao (2001/2006), Li (2006) also did not talk about how reading instruction can be used to improve the students’ language competence or communicative competence.

A couple of educators discussed about the incorporation of diverse materials. Qiao (2001/2006) included the use of advertisements, signs, maps, forms, cartoons, etc in
the genres that the students need to become familiar with in Chinese L2 reading instruction. Liu Zhengwen (2001/2006) concluded that a common characteristic of the reading textbooks published at the end of the 1990s is the emphasis on practical reading materials. Material examples include RMB currency exchange rate table, price, train schedule, advertisement, TV guide, instruction, etc. He claimed that if Chinese L2 students read these kinds of materials carefully and understand the materials, their lives in China will be more convenient. Thus, their language communication skill has been improved by reading. However, immediately after this statement, Liu Zhengwen (2001/2006) quoted the instruction purpose of one such textbook as follows: “this textbook does not pay special attention to the learning of language knowledge, rather, it pays attention to the grasp of language communication skills; in the language communication skills, the focus is on the grasp of reading skills. So the communication is equal to reading skills in the last statement.”

In summary, in China, the Chinese L2 reading educators believe: (1) reading should be used to improve language ability. (2) reading is separated from communication. Reading instruction is equal to comprehension factors training and comprehension assessment. (3) Most recently, some scholars realized the importance of practical reading instruction, which is only limited to the usage of practical reading materials. A few scholars mentioned the importance of a communicative approach and connected reading and communicative competence. However, how to connect reading instruction with the communication competence is left silent.
3.3 Summaries and Conclusions

Generally speaking, Chinese L2 reading instruction is very underdeveloped. Affected by the general reading research, Chinese L2 reading research focuses on the reading comprehension factor training. Because of the difference between Chinese orthography and western languages, researchers treat Chinese orthography as the primary task and the majority of Chinese L2 reading research focuses on the Chinese character recognition. There are a few reading strategies mentioned in Chinese L2 reading research, but these strategies again focus on recognition of Chinese characters, word and vocabularies.

Explicit Instruction on Chinese Characters and Sequential Approach are the two recent progresses in the field of Chinese L2 reading research. Explicit Instruction on Chinese Characters proposed to teach students about the composition of characters so that students can gain the ability to guess the characters from their components. Inspired by cognitive process of the development of L1 reading competency, Sequential Approach suggested to introduce reading instruction after the speaking and listening instruction so that students can better connect the sound and meaning of Chinese word with the graph. Overseas, in China there is also a lot reading research targeting on the instruction to western students. The research is still comprehension oriented, and actually, focuses on the training of Chinese linguistic knowledge. Some researchers even argued that the Chinese L2 reading class is equal to the Chinese linguistic class.
Chapter 4: Chinese Reading Textbook Analysis

In this chapter, I will analyze three Chinese textbooks. Textbooks are powerful media for teaching and learning. It drives instructional scope and sequence (Elliott, 1990, p. 53), defines the goals and objectives, and reflects the authors’ pedagogical approaches. Thus, a good analysis of the textbooks that are widely used in Chinese L2 reading instruction will efficiently reflect the current status of the instruction. Through the textbook analysis, I will reveal the educators’ notion of reading and reading instruction, especially, which reading factors are most important and how will the textbooks train students.

4.1 Textbooks Analyzed

The three Chinese textbooks to be analyzed are: (1) Character Text for Beginning Chinese (2nd edition) (DeFrancis, 1976), (2) first three volumes of New Practical Chinese Reader (Liu, chief ed., 2002), and (3) Level 1 of Integrated Chinese (3rd ed.) (Liu, Yao, Bi, Ge & Shi, 2009). These textbooks are selected because (1) they are widely accepted and currently used in Chinese programs at college level in the United States, and (2) they are written for English native speakers. With the purpose to keep this research at the forefront of the field, the latest version of each textbook was used. The companion materials for the textbooks, such as the workbooks and character books, were also analyzed. By the time this research was performed (January, 2009), only the first three
volumes of New *Practical Chinese Readers* (2002) and Level 1 of *Integrated Chinese* (3rd ed.) were available in the market. As will be introduced later, these volumes or Level of the textbooks are designed for the beginner level and the low-intermediate level. Therefore, although I would eventually like to extend the analysis to the high-intermediate and advanced Chinese L2 reading levels, the present research is limited to the beginner and low-intermediate levels.

4.2 Analysis Method

4.2.1 Coding Categories

As stated earlier, this textbook analysis aims to reveal the educators’ notion of reading and reading instruction. It focuses on the educators’ purpose for including the materials comprising the textbooks. What kind of reading activities would they like to initiate when students reads the materials? Why would they like to initiate such reading activities? By answering these two questions, we can reconstruct a picture of current Chinese L2 reading instruction, particularly with a goal to learn the focus of current Chinese L2 instruction.
Figure 4.1: Categorization of reading activities in the textbooks
I was unable to find literature on Chinese reading textbooks analysis, so I generated the coding categories (see Figure 4.1) based on the purposes for including the materials and the approaches. The three categories at the top level, “comprehension skill training”, “comprehension assessment” and “situated reading performance”, reflect the educational process from training to application, from specific skills to holistic grasp. If a reading material is designed to build up or enhance students’ skills in certain comprehension factors, such as grammar and vocabulary, the material was placed into the “comprehension skill training” category. If a reading material is designed to assess the students’ comprehension, the material was placed into the “comprehension assessment” category.

As discussed in Chapter 1, reading is a social activity and happens under certain social contexts with certain tasks. Therefore, reading instruction should not stop at the stage of comprehension. Instead, it should bring students beyond comprehension to the performance level. To test how the textbooks do in terms of training the students to perform reading in an authentic context, the category “situated reading performance” was added. Performance is “the basic stuff of social life” and is “the presentation of self in everyday life” (Turner, 1987, p. 81-82). Walker (2000) further defined performances in language pedagogy as “conscious repetitions of situated events” that are defined by five specified elements inferred from Carlson (1996): place, time, script, participants, and audience (p. 228). If a material provides all or at least some of the five elements, and triggers the students to read and perform as the native speakers do in daily life, the material was placed into the “situated reading performance” category. For example, if a material provides a train schedule and specific task (destination, time requirement, and so
on), and asks the students to decide which train to take, the material was considered to be “situated reading performance”.

The materials in the category “comprehension skill training” focus on building up students’ abilities in the factors related to reading comprehension. As described in Chapter 2, there are seven factors affecting reading comprehension: decoding and vocabulary at a lower order level, and prior knowledge, knowledge of text structure, cognitive strategies, meta-cognition strategies, and affective factors at a higher order level. In addition, there are five barriers for L2 readers, namely orthography, vocabulary, and syntax at the linguistic knowledge level, and topic knowledge and cultural knowledge at the background knowledge level. According to the above factors and an initial analysis of a few volumes of the textbooks, I further divided the “comprehension skill training” category into five groups. They are “orthography training”, “vocabulary training”, “grammar training”, “knowledge training”, and “strategy training”.

“Orthography training” activities lead the students to process Chinese characters better. Activities in this group often include the connection between the sound and the graph (decoding), the graph and the meaning, the components of the graph, reading aloud for fluency, etc. “Vocabulary training” activities lead the students to have a better knowledge of the vocabulary. Activities in such a group include knowing more vocabulary, grouping vocabulary into a certain theme, the formation of vocabulary, etc. “Grammar training” activities lead the students to be familiar with and be able to use the syntactic structure that constrains the way words fit together to make phrases and sentences. Activities in such a group include explanation of the syntactic features, practice of syntactic features through drills such as cloze, true/false questions, multiple
choice questions, etc. “Knowledge training” activities enhance the students’ knowledge about the topic, the genre and the culture, trigger the students’ prior knowledge, etc. Activities in such a group include exposure to the texts containing the knowledge, explicit explanation of the knowledge, etc. “Strategy training” activities facilitate the students’ familiarity with and ability to implement the reading strategies, such as guessing the meaning from the context.

The category “comprehension assessment” includes the reading activities that assess the students’ comprehension of the text. It includes two types of assessment: “text-based comprehension assessment” and “task-based comprehension assessment”. “Text-based comprehension assessment” assesses the students’ comprehension through text-based measures, such as answering questions about the text, translating Chinese into English, and so on. In the textbooks I analyzed, there are five major types of drills to assess the text comprehension: “true/false questions”, “multiple choice”, “fill-in blanks”, “questions-and-answers”, and “translation”. Accordingly, I divided the “text-based comprehension assessment” into these five subgroups. In addition, I added one more subgroup “miscellaneous” to cover the other reading activities that assess the students’ comprehension of the material but do not belong to any of the other five subgroups, such as summarizing, retelling, and narrating.

“Task-based comprehension assessment” assesses the students’ comprehension of the material through tasks. For example, in daily life, people read the calendar to mark out the important days. Thus “successfully marking out the date” is one task of the activity “reading the calendar”. From this point of view, the drill of circling a birthday in
a calendar to assess the students’ comprehension about a text involving reading a calendar is “task-based comprehension assessment”.

### 4.2.2 Coding Protocol

Not every material in the textbooks and their companions were coded in the analysis. To be coded, the material must trigger some Chinese reading activities. In addition, the following protocols were followed.

1. A few sections were excluded from this analysis. The core text and the list of new vocabularies were excluded. The core text is a compounded material and not designed for one specific purpose. It is not solely for “orthography”, “vocabulary”, “grammar” or any other reading comprehension factor. The list of the new vocabularies could be considered into “vocabulary training”. However, the occurrence of new vocabulary is primarily decided by the core text since the authors may feel it mandatory to list all the new vocabularies. Additionally, coding the vocabulary list will overstate the number of “vocabulary training” reading activities and cloud the authors’ real purpose. In addition, the teacher’s manual was also excluded since it is not designed for the students to read. Companion audio tapes, audio CDs, CD-ROMs, DVDs were also excluded since they are simple duplications of the textbook materials onto another media.

2. The material must contain Chinese characters. The reading materials written solely in pinyin or in English were excluded. Although this kind of exercises may involve some Chinese writing or speaking activities, the stimulus of the exercises is not in Chinese and therefore it could not be treated as Chinese reading activity. On the other hand, if an exercise involves Chinese reading activity, it was included even though the
exercise is labeled under other skills such as speaking or writing. In addition, some “describing the picture” exercises were excluded because the pictures do not contain characters. However, if the picture contains some characters and the students have to read them to do the exercise, the exercise was analyzed and coded.

(3) Students must rely on reading Chinese characters in order to do the exercise or drill. Some notes or pictures, despite the fact that they contain some characters, were excluded because students do not need to read the characters to proceed. Furthermore, reading must be the crucial skill to complete the exercise. If the exercise relies more on the students’ other language skills, it was excluded. A good example would be sentences generating with the provided words such as the exercise “make sentences with the words given” in New Practical Chinese Reader Workbooks. This kind of exercise was excluded since reading is not the crucial skill of this kind of exercise. However, the exercise of arranging the provided words into a sentence was included, such as the exercise “write sentences with the words given” in New Practical Chinese Reader Workbooks because the exercise provides a complete list of words for the sentence. Students need to read the words, and then apply proper grammar to arrange them into a sentence.

4.2.3 Coding Method

After determining the coding categories, I coded all of the eligible materials in the selected textbooks. I read all of the materials in the textbooks and then gathered related information (such as the instruction for the drills and exercises). Based on the information, I reconstructed the authors’ purpose for including these reading materials, and coded each eligible reading material into different categories. A second examiner
checked all of the coding to avoid bias. Most of the drills were easy to code and the examiner did not provide a different opinion. A few drills were difficult to code and there were differing opinions. In these cases, we discussed about the differences until an agreement could be reached.

The next step was to analyze the weighting of each category. If one piece of material was found designed for one of the categories of reading activities, the reading activity would be given 1 point. In most cases, one reading material is designed for one reading activity, and the reading activity obtained 1 point for one category. However, sometimes the reading material requires students to take more than one actions. In this case, the point was split into the two or more categories. For example, the exercise “A charge account” in Lesson 4 in *Character Text for Beginning Chinese* states: “supposing a Chinese bookstore which you patronize sends you the following bill at the end of the month. Translate the bill, state how much one of each item costs, add the figures, and tell how much change you would get back if you paid for the bill with a twenty-dollar check”. The total value “1” of this exercise was divided into two halves: 0.5 point for “assess comprehension by translation” and the other 0.5 point for “task-based comprehension assessment”.

4.3 Analysis of *Character Text for Beginning Chinese*

4.3.1 Introduction

*Character Text for Beginning Chinese* was first designed as “the companion volume” for *Beginning Chinese*. *Beginning Chinese* is a speaking/listening textbook and is written all in Pinyin. To aid Chinese teachers who are more fluent in Chinese
characters to prepare for the class, *Character Text for Beginning Chinese* was introduced as the character version of *Beginning Chinese*. Interestingly, as the author indicated in the Preface of *Beginning Chinese*, “the character version has been widely used as reading text by those who, with good pedagogical reasons, believe that it is useful to study in written form what one has already learned in spoken form” (p. xvii). In fact, *Character Text for Beginning Chinese* is used at several universities as the beginning reading and writing material following the sequential pedagogical approach.

### 4.3.2 Coding

*Character Text for Beginning Chinese* has twenty four lessons altogether including twenty core lessons and four review lessons (lessons 6, 12, 18 and 24). The core lessons consist of four sections: a chart of new characters, vocabulary (character, pinyin, and English equivalence), dialogue, and drills. The review lessons only have drills. Per the coding protocols in the section of 4.2.2, the chart of characters, vocabulary, and the core text (dialogue) were excluded from this study. Drills are the only qualified sections for analysis of this textbook.

Not every drill in *Beginning Chinese* appears in *Character Text for Beginning Chinese*. Drills like “Pronunciation drills”, “What would you say”, “Putting on an act”, and so on are not included in the character book. In addition, as the companion volume of *Beginning Chinese*, *Character Text for Beginning Chinese* does not include the instructions for the exercises. Instead, it shows the page number of the same drill in *Beginning Chinese*. To fully understand the purpose of the exercise, I referred to the
instructions in *Beginning Chinese* and all the page numbers in the parentheses for the quotation below are from *Beginning Chinese*.

Some drills appear frequently and consistently with the same name, for example “pattern drills”, “sentence build-up”, and “substitution table” in core lessons, “insertion drill” and “analogy drill” in review lessons, “answering questions” in both core and review lessons. Some drills only appear once, such as “number practice” in lesson 4, “a charge account” in lesson 4, etc.

Most drills were easy to code. “Pattern drills”, “sentence-buildup”, “substitution table”, “analogy drills”, “expansion drills”, “insertion drills” were coded into “comprehension skill training” and further into “grammar training”. This kind of drills usually contains one or more characteristic key words such as sentence, structural, pattern, grammar (or grammatical) in the instruction. For example, “substitution tables” can “enable the student to construct a number of different sentences on the same structural pattern, by substituting a variety of appropriate vocabulary items into a given sentence known to be grammatically correct” (p. 7). “Insertion drills” ask the students to insert the provided expressions into the sentence at some appropriate place.

Several drills are named differently but share the same function, and thus were coded into one category. One example is the drills asking for sentence transformation. One group of transformation exercises targets at the transformation between synonymous sentences. This group includes “definite vs. indefinite” drill in lesson 7, “the topic-comment construction” drill in lesson 14, “a little variety” drill in lesson 15, and “sentence conversion” drill in lesson 17. As an example, “a little variety” in lesson 15
“shows how to give variety to your speech by saying the same thing (or virtually the same thing) in two different ways” (p. 237). Another group of transformation exercises is the transformation between sentences of opposite meanings, such as “transformation drill” in lesson 18. The students need to add or change a grammatical component to transform from affirmative to negative or from indefinite active to definite passive. Of course, all these sentence transformation drills were coded into the “grammar training’ group in the “comprehension skill training” category.

Some drills have similar names but different functions and were coded into different categories. For example, the “single replacement drill” and “double replacement drill” in lesson 6 have a similar name but were coded differently. In a “single replacement drill”, the teacher first reads a sentence and a student repeats it. Then the teacher reads an expression that can replace some part of the original sentence. At the end, the student makes the replacement and reads the new sentence. Clearly, this drill is more about the change of the words instead of learning the grammar and thus was coded into “vocabulary training”. However, “double replacement drill” in lesson 6 was split into both “grammar training” and “vocabulary training”. In this drill, the students need to change the given word and the measure word correspondingly to make a correct sentence. The author instructed that “this exercise is to be conducted like the preceding one (the single replacement drill), except that the student must make whatever additional changes are required so that the replacement item can be used” (p. 61).

Another set of drills with similar names but different functions are “answering question”, “questioning answer” and “questions and answers”. “Answering question” appears eleven times and all of the drills belonged to “assess comprehension by
questions-and-answers”. “Questioning answer” appears once in lesson 6 and was placed into “grammar training”. Students need to supply the grammatically correct and semantically appropriate questions “for which the given statements would be appropriate answers” (p. 64). The textbook further provides hints like: “there may be several possibilities: a choice-type question, a split-choice-type question, a question with the particle ma or with a question word. Give all the questions you can think of which might elicit the given statement.” (p. 64). The drills in lesson 3 and lesson 11 were put into “assess comprehension by translation” in “text-based comprehension assessment”. In these drills, both the questions and answers are provided in mini dialogues and the students need to read the dialogues and compare with the English translation provided to ensure comprehension. The drill in lesson 13 was put under “grammar training” since it asks the student to “practice the following questions and answers. The questions all contain le, and the negative answers require the use of mei or meiyou” (p. 184).

Some drills do not provide the instructions so that they were coded according to some other information from the textbook. “Number practice” in lesson 4 does not provide any instruction or any English translation. However, the next drill “multiplication table” from the same lesson also includes numbers and its instruction mentioned that “practice extending the table until you feel at ease with the numbers” (p. 42). The word “at ease” indicates that the “multiplication table” drill was designed to help the students construct the graph-sound relationship and thus was coded to “orthography training”. Since the two drills are similar to each other, I coded both into “orthography training” in the category “comprehension skill training”.

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Some drills were divided into multiple categories. For example, section A of “numbers and measures” in lesson 4 asks the student to “answer the following questions, using ‘one’ in the first sentence, ‘two’ in the second, and so on” (p. 42), while section B asks the student to “answer the following questions, using ‘eleven’ in the first sentence, ‘twelve’ in the second, and so on, taking care to use an appropriate measure in each case” (p. 43). I coded this drill into both “vocabulary training” and “grammar training” because the reader needs to recall the vocabulary from his memory, substitute a number, keep the sentence pattern and practice the measure words. Another example is “definite vs indefinite” in lesson 7, which was coded into both “grammar training” under “comprehension skill training” and “assess comprehension by translation” in “text-based comprehension assessment” because the drill supports the grammar and lists the translation next to each sentence.

Some drills have multiple functions expressed in their instructions. For example, “Chinese menu” in lesson 21 asks the students to “translate the names and practice them until you feel confident enough to offer a full-course dinner for yourself and several friends” (p. 372). This drill was coded into two subgroups “assess comprehension by translation” and “vocabulary training” because the students need to practice the names of dishes until fluency. Another example is “snatches of conversation” in lesson 2: “imagine that you overhear the following bits of conversation. Translate the excerpts and invent some concrete situations in which they might be said” (p. 19). The translation part of this drill was coded into “assess comprehension by translation”. The part to invent the context was coded into “strategy training” because it helps the reader recall his prior knowledge of similar content and its context.
Some drills focus on comprehension assessment but do not follow the traditional measures including fill-in the blanks, true/false statement, multiple choice, questions-and-answers, and translation. As a result, I coded these drills into the subgroup “assess comprehension by miscellaneous”. For example, “let’s be reasonable” in lesson 11 asks the students to correct the mistakes. It says: “each of the following sentences contains an expression which makes the meaning absurd or unlikely. Make whatever changes are necessary to turn the sentence into a reasonable statement” (p. 151). Another example is “listening in” in lesson 5 which asks the students to “imagine that you are a Chinese telephone operator eavesdropping on the following conversation between Mrs. Wang and Mrs. Qian. Relate what you heard” (p. 54). “Foreign correspondence” in lesson 24 is another example which asks the students to read and note the format of two Chinese letters, which belongs to the text knowledge of the genre. I coded this drill into “knowledge training” in “comprehension skill training”.

There are very few authentic materials in the textbook. Strictly speaking, these materials are mainly simulated authentic items. The drill “Chinese menu” in lesson 21 uses authentic names of the dishes, but as the author indicated, the menu is a simulated authentic item because it “isn’t exactly the way a Chinese menu would look” (p. 372). Another example is “checkboard problem” in lesson 8. The drill states that “suppose the accompanying figure represents a city laid out in a checkerboard pattern, in squares measuring one Chinese mile on each side. The white squares are residential blocks, while the black squares contain business establishments and public institutions, such as the library. In the blocks indicated by initials are residences occupied by Mr. Zhang, Mr. Wang, and Mr. Qian. Answering the following questions based on straight-line distances
between the library and the residences, and between pairs of residences” (p. 99). Clearly, the map is a simulated one, and this drill was put into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” under “text-based comprehension assessment”. “Three tiger” in lesson 10 is the only one authentic item in the textbook. The author noted “this round can be sung to the tune of Frere Jacques”. Thus, I felt the author would like the students to sing out the “three tiger” so it is more like “reading aloud” or “repeated reading” to reinforce the decoding ability. Accordingly, I put it into “orthography training”.

### 4.3.3 Results and Discussion

There are 140 drills in *Character Text for Beginning Chinese*. As shown in Figure 4.2, this textbook does not include any materials designed to provide students the opportunities to perform reading in contexts. All coded materials are designed for “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment”. The “comprehension skill training” category occurs most frequently (F = 95, P = 67.86%, with “F” referring to the occurrence of the first-level category, and “P” referring to the percentage of the occurrence of the first-level category out of all materials). It contains all five groups in this textbook. “Grammar training” appears most frequently (f = 80, p = 84.21%, with “f” referring to the occurrence of the group, and “p” referring to the percentage of the occurrence of a group in a second- or third-level out of their first-level category). The other four groups appear with relatively low frequency: “vocabulary training” (f = 9.5, p = 10.00%), “orthography training” (f = 4, p = 4.21%), “knowledge training” (f = 1, p = 1.05%) and “strategy training” (f = 0.5, p = 0.53%). The focus on grammar is also
reflected in the organization of the textbook: the grammar-oriented drills are often the first few drills in both core lessons and review lessons.

“Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 45, P = 32.14%). Most materials in this category belong to “text-based comprehension assessment”. Only one reading material belongs to “task-based comprehension assessment” (f = 0.5, p = 1.11%). “Text-based comprehension assessment” contains four subgroups in this textbook (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “translation” (f = 18.5, p = 41.11%), “questions-and-answers” (f = 16, p = 35.56%), “miscellaneous” (f = 9, p = 20.00%), and “true-false” (f = 1, p = 2.22%).

4.3.4 Conclusion

As a textbook for Chinese reading instruction, Character Text for Beginning Chinese focuses on comprehension skill training and comprehension assessment. There is no exercise with the purpose of “situated reading performance”. In addition, this textbook is not strong in reading strategy training and knowledge training. Moreover, authentic materials are not used. There is only one simulated authentic item. The textbook does not mention a communicative approach since this approach did not exist at the time.

Most of the drills in the textbook are used to train comprehension skill. This skill training stays mainly at lower level factors, such as grammar, vocabulary, and orthography. The author seemed to be less familiar with reading comprehension strategy instruction as there is hardly any material designed for reading strategy (f = 0.5). In addition, the author only included one item for knowledge training, which is about the
text knowledge. No activity is designed to enhance the students’ prior knowledge, topic knowledge, and cultural knowledge. These limitations are understandable since the textbook (1st version) was first published in 1964 while the reading strategy instruction and knowledge factor training boomed until the 1970s.

The author also realized the importance of assessing comprehension. In addition, the author almost exclusively used “text-based assessment” and used mainly “translation” and “questions-and-answers”. Interestingly, all of the “questions-and-answers” drills ask students to answer questions based on the core dialogue or their real situations. There is no drill designed to direct the students to ask questions. The only “questioning answer” drill in lesson 6 was determined to be a grammar-oriented drill. This might be another limitation of this textbook since it is widely accepted today that both abilities to ask and answer questions about the text can indicate the reader’s comprehension of the text.
Figure 4.2: Reading activities in *Character Text for Beginning Chinese.*
4.4 Analysis of *New Practical Chinese Reader*

4.4.1 Introduction

Despite its name, *New Practical Chinese Reader* is a comprehensive set including all four language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. This series of textbooks consist of seventy lessons in six volumes, covering beginner and intermediate levels in three years’ learning. The first four volumes consist of fifty lessons and are designed for beginners and pre-intermediate level learners, while the last two volumes are for intermediate level learners. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, this analysis only includes the first three volumes due to the unavailability of the last three volumes at the time of this research.

Each volume has a textbook, a student’s workbook, an instructor’s manual, audiotapes and CD-ROMs. Per the coding protocol, the audiotapes and CD-ROMs were excluded. The instructor’s manual was not included in the analysis of reading materials but was used as a reference for this study to better understand the authors’ notion.

The authors recognize the importance of both communicative functions and a firm grasp of language structure. They claimed that this series of textbooks notices the communication-oriented pedagogy. Specifically, they pointed out that more and more Chinese language teachers have recognized the cultivation of the learner’s communicative ability as the primary goal of instruction. “What is taught must be determined by students’ needs and must enable them to learn creatively, gradually strengthening their motivation and sense of achievement” (p. V). The authors also believed that “the study of pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence patterns, grammar, and
speech are the foundation of linguistic communication” (p. V – VI). Therefore, this series of textbooks aim to “develop the learner’s communicative ability in Chinese by learning language structures, functions and related cultural knowledge as well as by training their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills” (p. V).

Accordingly, the authors set their goal of creating a “synthesis of all pedagogical schools, ranging from the grammar-translation method to the communicative approach” (p. V). The textbooks allow students to “gain grounding in the four basic skills by means of a large number of drills and exercises while also mastering the necessary grammatical knowledge and rules for word and sentence formation” (p. V). As explained in the Letter to Instructors at the beginning of Instructor’s Manual, the purpose of vocabulary and grammar instruction is to help the learners understand and express certain functions, and communicate in the topics covered in the text. This new set of textbooks “breaks with the emphasis on structure at the expense of function characteristic of earlier teaching materials” (p. VI). Functional items are included in all six volumes to constantly improve the students’ communicative abilities in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The textbooks are organized by the four cycles of language structure instruction. Cycle 1 (lessons 1-6) focuses on pronunciation learning, and students are “exposed to various basic sentence patterns by engaging in simple dialogues” (p. VI). Cycle 2 (lessons 7 – 26) focuses on fundamental sentence patterns and the students should have “an elementary command of basic Chinese language structure” (p. VI). Cycle 3 (lessons 27 – 50) “further consolidate, expand and deepen students’ understanding of lexical items and sentence patterns” (p. VI). Cycle 4 (lessons 51-70) concentrates on complex sentences and paragraphs. The authors pointed out that “these four large cycles contain
smaller ones that interact closely with the unit reviews, not only increasing the students’
command of linguistic structures and functions, but also (and more importantly) giving
them a sense of accomplishment in communicative abilities at each stage of the learning
process” (p. VI).

The authors explained the teaching tasks in the four cycles in the *Letter to
Instructors* at the beginning of each *Instructor’s Manual*. Cycle 1 includes three major
tasks: pronunciation foundation, basic daily life conversation and classroom instruction,
and basic Chinese characters. Both Cycle 2 and Cycle 3 include four major tasks: basic
sentence structure and vocabulary use, communication in all four language skills within
the topic of each lesson and cultural knowledge, character recognition and writing, and
pronunciation. Clearly, this series of textbooks introduce the four language skills
simultaneously.

An outstanding feature of *New Practical Chinese Reader* is that it pays great
attention to cultural knowledge. The authors pointed out that “language teaching
materials must help students understand the culture and society of the target language so
that they can use the target language more effectively” (p. VI). Volumes 1 and 2
interweave campus life with everyday experiences, introducing cultural norms and
customs closely associated with speaking and comprehension. Volumes 3 and 4
concentrate on topics of interest to students, illustrating cultural differences between
China and the West. Volumes 5 and 6 introduce various aspects of Chinese society,
highlighting traditional and contemporary cultural life. Cultural knowledge is presented
in authentic materials as the authors wrote in the *Preface*: “Some pictures and culturally
authentic materials such as selections from timetables, menus, advertisements, announcements, newspapers and classical literary pieces are also used” (p. VI).

In the Preface, the authors pointed out that dialogue at two paragraph length is used in each lesson in volume 1 and volume 2 to facilitate audio-lingual practice and provide an overall grounding in the reading and writing of elementary Chinese. The textbook claims that it emphasizes the instruction of functional items, and the students will learn to use Chinese from the very beginning. In this section, I will analyze volume by volume. Comparison between different volumes will be made at the end of the section.

4.4.2 New Practical Chinese Reader Volume 1

4.4.2.1 Coding

4.4.2.1.1 Textbook

New Practice Chinese Reader volume 1 has fourteen lessons including twelve core lessons and two review lessons (lessons 6 and 14). The authors introduced the layout of this volume in the Preface: text, new words, notes, conversation practice (in lessons 1-6), drills and practice (in lessons 7-14), reading comprehension and paraphrasing, phonetics and pronunciation drills (in lessons 1-6), grammar, characters, cultural notes. The topics and scenes of each lesson are supplied in the “text” section. Starting from lesson 7, the section “phonetics and pronunciation drills” is removed and “conversation practice” is integrated into a new “drills and practice” section. “Drills and practice” normally has the following components: master the following phrases, pattern drills, answer the following questions, conversation practice, and communication
exercises. The other new exercise after lesson 7 is “reading comprehension and paraphrasing” which paraphrases the content of the dialogue in the “text”.

Per the coding protocol, the “text” and “new words” were excluded in the analysis. However, the supplementary material in the dialogue of lesson 7 was coded. In the dialogue, Professor Zhang gives his business card to a student Ding Libo during their first time meeting and greeting. A supplementary material, an image of Professor Zhang’s business card, is attached with no additional explanation or caption. Based on the authors’ statement in the preface about the use of pictures and culturally authentic materials, I feel the authors attached the image of the business card to enhance the readers’ cultural knowledge and thus it was coded into “knowledge training”.

Exercises only providing pinyin or English were excluded. Therefore, “pronunciation drills and phonetics” in the first six lessons, and “conversation practice” and “cultural notes” in most lessons were excluded. The only exception is “cultural notes” in lesson 14. It provides a China map in Chinese characters and was coded into “knowledge training”. The pronunciation drill 8 in lesson 6 provides a Tang poem for the students to read aloud. Although it provides both the pinyin and characters, students could not recognize most of the characters in the poem at that level. Therefore, this poem was not treated as Chinese character reading.

The “notes” in lessons 1-6 does not provide Chinese characters. From lesson 7, each note starts to provide a Chinese sentence without pinyin or English translation. Therefore, the “notes” section starting from lesson 7 was included in the analysis. According to the authors, “for the most part, notes contain explanation of new words,
develop grammatical points taught previously, or introduce necessary cultural background” (p. VII). All of the “notes” sections were placed into “grammar training” since they are focus on grammatical points.

The “grammar” section was included in the analysis since it does have Chinese characters. This section usually asks students to read the sentences and understand the grammatical rules. The authors pointed out in the Preface, “grammar” sections articulate the most important grammatical structure and rules for sentence formation. All of the “grammar” sections were coded into “grammar training” in the category “comprehension skill training”.

“Chinese characters” provides knowledge of characters. The exercise aims to teach students about the history, the formation, the basic strokes, and the components of the Chinese characters. In the Preface, authors stated that the text in this section first introduces character components and then the combination to form characters. The authors further expressed their preference to teach students multi-component characters by introducing the components first and then the rules for constructing and writing characters. From this point, this section was coded into “orthography training” in the category “comprehension skill training”.

I screened every drill in “drills and practice” to locate any drill involving reading activities. As a character of this section, there is always a “key sentences” section, which is a box listing a few grammatical sentences. In the Preface, the authors expressed their hope that “students will thoroughly master the key sentences illustrating the fundamental linguistic structures and functions introduced in the text. By practicing phrases, doing
pattern drills, and taking part in dialogues and communicative exercises, students can move successfully from mechanical exercises to proficient interaction” (p. VII – VIII). Therefore, it is clear that “drills and practice” is very grammar-oriented and most of the drills in this section belong to “grammar training” under “comprehension skill training” category. The first drill in “drills and practice” is always about “master the following phrases”. It provides a list of phrases and asks the student to read till fluency. However, the phrases in each group share the same grammatical feature so that this drill is still about grammar training. The second drill is always “pattern drills” which provides a short conversation and asks the students to substitute the underlined parts with the words in the box. Since students need to keep the same sentence pattern, this drill was coded into “grammar training”.

The third drill varies in each lesson. “Solve the following math problems verbally” in lesson 8 was excluded because the stimulus is written in mathematic formula. The third drill in several lessons (lessons 7, 12, 13) is “make sentences according to the picture below”. It asks the student to fill in blanks based on the information provided by the picture. The drills in lesson 7 and lesson 13 were coded into “grammar training” because lesson 7 focuses on the function word “ye” (also) and “dou” (all) while lesson 13 focuses on the use of “le” (the completion of an action). However, the drill in lesson 12 asks the student to fill in the blanks based on the picture without the grammatical focus. Thus, it was coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks” in the “comprehension assessment” category.

Several lessons have the third drill in the format of questions-and-answers. The drills in lesson 9, 10, and 14 ask students to answer questions or complete the
conversation and were coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”. Lesson 11 asks the student to ask a question concerning the underlined words. It was coded into “grammar training” because all four sentences express time and ask the students to ask about time, which is one of the key sentences in the lesson. Lesson 10 has one more drill after the third drill which asks the student to “change the following declarative sentences into questions with interrogative pronouns” and it was coded into “grammar training”.

The fourth drill in “drills and practice” is “conversation practice”. Starting from lesson 7, it is written in Chinese characters. It provides Chinese sentences in the topics introduced in the lesson, leaves some blanks and asks the student to fill in the blanks based on his own information. Therefore, it was coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks”.

The fifth drill in “drills and practice” is the “communication exercises” section. Normally the drill provides some context in English and asks the student to communicate in Chinese. Some drills list authentic items under the exercise, such as a student’s registration form in lesson 7, next week’s schedule in lesson 9, a note in lesson 11, a note requesting leave in lesson 12, a Chinese song in lesson 13, and a Christmas card in lesson 14. However, most of these authentic items (in lessons 7, 11, 12, 13 and 14) are not an integrated part of the exercise. They are listed under the exercise, but there are no descriptions or instructions about them in the exercise. Since most of the items are relevant to the topics of the exercise, they were coded into “knowledge training”. This coding is in agreement with the authors’ claim of using culturally authentic materials in the Preface. There are two exceptions. The first one is the song in lesson 13. It was
coded into “orthography training” because the reader needs to read many times to reach fluency and sing the song repeatedly. The other exception is the “next week’s schedule” in lesson 9. It asks students to reply a friend’s inquiry of making an appointment with him/her according to the schedule for next week. This exercise was treated as authentic reading performance and was coded into “situated reading performance”. Therefore, although textbook volume 1 includes some authentic items, most times the authors do not include them for communication purpose.

The “reading comprehension and paraphrasing” section provides exercises to “review some of the sentence patterns and lexical items already taught, thereby developing the students’ discourse abilities in both oral and written forms” (p. VIII). In volume one, the exercise includes a passage that paraphrases the content of the dialogues in the textbook. Therefore, I coded it under “assess comprehension by miscellaneous function” because it provides a summary. The text in “reading comprehension and paraphrasing” is used in the workbook to assess comprehension, which will be also discussed in the workbook portion. Occasionally, the textbook also provides an authentic item under this exercise that is similar to the topic of the lesson. For example, lesson 9 provides a birthday card, and lesson 13 provides an envelope. But the item is not discussed in the exercise. Therefore, I coded the two authentic items into “knowledge training”.

4.4.2.1.2 Workbook

There are two kinds of exercises in the workbook: “listening and speaking exercises” and “reading and writing exercises”. “Listening and speaking exercises” in
lessons 1-6 use only pinyin and were excluded. The only exception is drill 6 in lesson 6, which lists both characters and pinyin and asks the student to practice the syllables with attention to the pronunciation. This drill was coded into “orthography training” under “comprehension skill training”. Starting from lesson 7, “listening and speaking exercises” use Chinese characters. All listening exercises were excluded even if the exercises provide answers in Chinese characters because the stimulus is not provided in Chinese characters.

Starting from lesson 7, “pronunciation drills” is written in Chinese characters. It asks the student to read and pay attention to the pronunciation and thus was placed into “orthography training”. Three lessons use authentic items in speaking exercises such as “interactions” and “ask and answer questions”. Lesson 9 drill 7 asks the student to talk about a class schedule provided. Lesson 11 drill 7 directs the student talk about a timetable with a partner. Lesson 13 drill 7 instructs the student to talk about the dormitory floor layout with a partner. All these three drills were coded into “situated reading performance”. Lesson 9 drill 8 provides a student I.D. and asks the student to ask and answer questions according to the I.D. with a partner. It was coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”. Different from the authentic items in the textbook volume 1, the authentic items in workbook volume 1 are integrated part of the exercises.

I screened every exercise listed under “reading and writing exercises”. Some exercises were excluded either because the exercises do not include Chinese characters, or because the main action of the student is not reading. Examples include “translate from English into pinyin or into characters”, “describe the picture below” (if there is no
character in the picture), “write as many characters as the student can”, “make sentences with the words given” (that only provides one word), and “fill in blanks with questions words” in lesson 1 since it is written in pinyin.

Some drills were coded into “orthography training”, such as the first two exercises in each lesson. The first exercise asks the student to “trace over the characters, following the correct stroke order. Then copy the characters in the blank spaces” while the second exercise asks the student to “write the characters in the blank spaces, paying attention to the character components”. Other exercises coded into “orthography training” include: “give the pinyin of the following characters and write the stroke numbers in the parentheses”, “find the correct drawing of each Chinese character”, “find a character in the second line which can be combined with a character in the first line to make a word according to the pinyin provided”, “divide the characters into character components”, “organize the characters in parentheses into Chinese sentences according to the pinyin given, and then translate the sentences into English”, “add character components to each side of the character to form characters which we have learned”, and “seek and find”. “Character riddles” starting from lesson 7 was coded into “orthography training” because it provides another opportunity for students to practice the character. Obviously, all these drills ask the students to practice the sound, script, meaning and English translation of the orthography.

Some drills were coded into “grammar training” such as “change the following statements into questions” and “decide whether the following statements are grammatically correct or wrong”. “Make sentences by matching words from part I with those from part II” tests the student’s ability to form a sentence following proper sentence
structure and thus was coded into “grammar training”. “Choose the correct answer” was coded into “grammar training” because the students need to read both the stimulus and the options and choose one option that is grammatically correct.

Some exercises were consistently coded into the category “comprehension assessment”. “Decide whether the statements are true or false according to the text of this lesson” was coded into “assess comprehension by true-false question”. “Complete the following passage” in lesson 10 was coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks”. “Complete the following dialogue” and “read the dialogue and answer the questions” were coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”.

Some exercises share similar names but have different functions. “Fill in the blanks” in lesson 4 actually tests the student’s comprehension of the dialogue. Therefore it was coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks”. “Fill in the blanks with the correct characters” in lesson 6 was coded into “orthography training” because the exercise asks the student to pick up the correct character from the homonyms and characters with similar graphs. “Fill in the blanks” in lesson 6 was coded into “grammar training” because the students need to read the sentence and provides a word or phrase that can function appropriately in terms of grammar.

This workbook uses some authentic items. Some items are used in a way that asks the student to read the item and communicate with others. This kind of activities was placed into the category “situated reading performance”. Lesson 9 asks the student to read a class schedule and talk about it. Lesson 11 asks the student to read and talk about a timetable with a partner. Lesson 13 asks the student to talk about a students’
dormitory with a partner. Lesson 12 asks the student to read a portion of an application form for student I.D and then fill it in with characters. Interestingly, the first three items are listed in the “interaction” exercise under “speaking and listening exercises”. Apparently, the authors do not consider these exercises as reading exercises. However, in my opinion, the exercise is a close simulation of reading in daily life: people read something and then take actions accordingly. Possible actions could simply be discussing the reading material with others or reading and then acting by writing.

Other authentic items in the workbook are used to provide knowledge or assess the students’ comprehension. Lesson 13 asks the student to read a note and write one by imitating it. Lesson 14 asks the student to read a Christmas card and write one. These two exercises were coded into “knowledge training” because the students need to follow the format. Lesson 9 instructs the student to ask and answer questions with his partner based on the information on a student I.D in the “listening and speaking exercises”. Therefore, it was coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”. Some exercises ask students to read the authentic item and find out information to fill in the blanks. These exercises were coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks”. Authentic items include newspaper clips in lesson 9, clips from a Chinese periodical in lesson 10, a receipt for a telephone card in lesson 10, an advertisement for a grocery in lesson 10, an advertisement for books in lesson 10, a chart of standard world time in lesson 11, train schedule and taxi receipt in lesson 11, and an advertisement for tourist in lesson 14.
4.4.2.2 Results and Discussion

4.4.2.2.1 Textbook

This textbook provides 96 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.3, the majority of activities (F = 75, P = 78.13%) were coded into “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment” (F = 20, P = 20.83%). Only one was coded into “situated reading performance” (F = 1, P = 1.04%). The “comprehension skill training” category appears with the highest frequency. It contains four subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “grammar training” (f = 49, p = 65.33%), “orthography training” (f = 15, p = 20.00%), “knowledge training” (f = 9, p = 12.00%), and “vocabulary training” (f = 2, p = 2.67%). There is no “strategy training” in this book. The emphasis on grammar and orthography is also reflected in the Preface where the authors talk about the four cycles of the language structure instruction in the whole series of textbooks, and its emphasis on letting the students know the characters by components.

“Comprehension assessment” is the category that appears with the second highest frequency (F = 20, P = 20.83%). All materials in this category belong to “text-based comprehension assessment”. It contains three subgroups in this textbook (from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess comprehension by fill-in blank” (f = 11, p = 55.00%), “assess comprehension by miscellaneous” (f = 8, p = 40%), and “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 1, p = 5.00%). There is no “task-based comprehension assessment”. The large amount of “fill-in blanks” comes from the drills “conversation practice” and “describe the pictures”. The “miscellaneous” all comes from
the “reading comprehension and paraphrasing” which provides a text to summarize or retell the text in the lesson.
Figure 4.3: Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader Textbook* Volume 1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business card</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s registration form</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Communication exercises</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule for next week</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Communication exercises</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthday card</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reading comprehension and paraphrasing</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMB</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cultural Notes</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Communication exercises</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note requesting leave</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Communication exercise</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Communication exercise</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Envelop</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Reading comprehension and paraphrasing</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas card</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Communication exercises</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.1:** Authentic reading materials incorporated in *New Practical Chinese Reader Textbook Vol. 1*
Practical Chinese Reader Textbook Volume 1 included some authentic materials (N = 10) (shown in Table 4.1). However, this book does not fully utilize the authentic materials as it separates the authentic materials from communication. 9 authentic items are listed without any description or direction to guide students to use them, such as the business card in lesson 7, the students’ registration form in lesson 9, etc. Only one authentic item is used for students to read and communicate. However, this item is put under “communication practice” in “speaking and listening”. All of these give me an impression that the authors realized the importance of using authentic materials, but are not familiar with how to use them. They incorporate authentic materials mainly to enhance students’ cultural knowledge. Nevertheless, in daily life, the readers read authentic materials not just for knowledge. In most cases, they read and take different actions, such as initiating a communication with others, following the instructions, going from one place to another, etc. From this point of view, the authentic materials should be used to construct a communication context so that the students can perform authentic reading activities. To use authentic materials solely as the knowledge accessory is a big compromise of the function of the authentic materials.

4.4.2.2 Workbook

This workbook provides 166 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.4, the “situated reading performance” occurs rather occasionally (F = 4, P = 2.41%). The rest of the exercises are “comprehension skill training” (F = 120, P = 72.29%) and “comprehension assessment” (F = 42, P = 25.30%). The “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently (F = 120, P= 72.29%). It contains four subgroups
(from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “orthography training” (f = 86, p = 71.67%), “grammar training” (f = 31, p = 25.83%), “knowledge training” (f = 2, p = 2.67%) and “vocabulary training” (f = 1, p = 0.83%). There are no activities in “strategy training”. This indicates that the workbook focuses on orthography and grammar. “Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 42, P= 25.30%). All activities in this category belong to “text-based comprehension assessment”. It contains four subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “questions-and-answers” (f = 19, p = 45.24%), “fill-in blanks” (f = 13, p = 30.95%), “true/false” (f = 6, p = 14.29%) and “translation” (f = 4, p = 9.52%).

There are four reading activities counted as “situated reading performance”. However, three of them are actually from the “speaking and listening exercise” section. The other one is from the “reading and writing exercise” section, but is considered to be writing by the authors. For example, in lesson 12, the students are requested to read and fill in a student ID card form. This is a typical reading communication where readers read text with a purpose, comprehend the text, and then take action to achieve the purpose (or, in other words, fulfill the reading task). However, the authors would rather treat the exercise as a character-writing exercise. This indicates the difference between reading and communication performance in authors’ mind. Indeed, this is also what this dissertation is arguing for: to realize the communication role of reading and to teach reading in a communicative approach.
**Figure 4.4:** Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader Workbook Volume 1*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class schedule</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Listening and speaking</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student I.D.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Listening and speaking</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper clip</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper clip</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clipping from a Chinese periodical</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A receipt for telephone card</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement for grocery</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement for books</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A timetable</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Listening and speaking</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart of standard world time</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A train schedule</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A taxi receipt</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A student form</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ dormitory layout</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Listening and speaking</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A note</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Christmas card</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An advertisement for tourist</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.2:** Authentic reading materials incorporated in *New Practical Chinese Reader Workbook* Volume 1
The workbook also used some authentic materials as shown in Table 4.2 (N = 17). Unlike the textbook, where most authentic materials are not integrated, the workbook volume 1 integrated the authentic materials as part of the exercises. However, authentic materials are mainly used as the stimulus to assess the students’ comprehension in fill-in the blanks or in questions-and-answers. 11 authentic materials are used to ask the students to read, find out information, and fill in the blanks. 2 items are used as a model for writing by providing the format, thus they were coded into “knowledge training”. Only 4 materials, as discussed above, were coded into “situated reading performance”, but three of them appeared as the listening/speaking exercise, and one appeared as writing.

### 4.4.2.2.3 Summary

As a whole, New Practical Chinese Reader volume 1 (both textbook and workbook) provides 262 reading activities (Figure 4.5). “Situated reading performance” activities only appear occasionally (F = 5, P = 1.91%). The rest are “comprehension skill training” (F = 195, P = 74.43%) and “comprehension assessment” (F = 62, P = 23.66%).

The “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently. It contains four subgroups in this volume (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “orthography training” (f = 101, p = 51.79%), “grammar training” (f = 80, p = 41.03%), “knowledge training” (f = 11, p = 5.64%) and “vocabulary training” (f = 3, p = 1.54%). There is no “strategy training”. Apparently, in this first volume, the authors focus on character learning and basic grammar learning. They also pay attention to provide background knowledge such as cultural knowledge, topic knowledge and text
knowledge. The knowledge is mainly presented by authentic items in the textbook. In addition, in many cases, these authentic items are not provided in an integrated way. They are just listed as a supplement to the theme of the text, exercise, or cultural notes.

“Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category. All materials in this category belong to “text-based comprehension assessment”. It contains five subgroups in this volume (from the highest to the lowest): “fill-in blanks” (f = 24, p = 38.71%), “questions-and-answers” (f = 20, p = 33.87%), “miscellaneous” (f = 8, p = 12.90%), “true/false” (f = 6, p = 9.68%) and “translation” (f = 4, p = 6.45%). There is no “multiple choice”.
Figure 4.5: Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader* Volume 1
New Practical Chinese Reader volume 1 includes 27 authentic items. The items in the textbook are mainly used to provide supplementary information on cultural knowledge, topic knowledge, or text knowledge (8 out of 10 items in the textbook). In the workbook, authentic items are mainly used as a stimulus to assess students’ reading comprehension (11 out of 17 items in the workbook). Two materials are designed to enhance the students’ knowledge. Occasionally the authentic materials are used for the students to read and then perform speaking or writing exercises (as shown in Table 4.1 and 4.2). Among the total 27 authentic materials, only 5 were coded into “situated reading performance”: 1 in the textbook and 4 in the workbook. However, most of the materials are put under other language skills, such as speaking and writing.

4.4.3 New Practical Chinese Reader Volume 2

4.4.3.1 Coding

4.4.3.1.1 Textbook

New Practical Chinese Reader Volume 2 has twelve lessons: ten core lessons and two review lessons (lessons 20 and 26). Each lesson is composed of the following sections: text, notes, drills and practices, reading comprehension and paraphrasing, grammar, Chinese characters, and cultural notes. As pointed out in the Preface of the textbook, the author started to use longer reading materials from the second volume to strengthen the students’ reading comprehension.

Per the coding protocol, the “text” section and the “new words” section were excluded in the analysis except for the supplementary authentic materials. Textbook
volume 2 provides five authentic items in the text: a library card in lesson 16, a form to send a parcel in the post office in lesson 18, a bus ticket in lesson 18, an apartment layout in lesson 21, and a ticket for opera in lesson 22. As in textbook volume 1, these authentic materials are related to the topics of the lessons but are not integrated in the text. In the Preface, the authors claim that authentic materials are used to provide cultural knowledge. Therefore, they were all coded into “knowledge training”.

Same as the coding of textbook volume 1, “notes”, “key sentences” at the beginning of “drills and practice”, and “grammar” were coded into “grammar training”. “Chinese characters” was coded into “orthography training”. “Reading comprehension and paraphrasing” was coded under “assess comprehension by miscellaneous function”. Unlike textbook volume 1, this volume does not provide any authentic materials under this section.

The “drills and practice” section was also coded similarly as the textbook volume 1. Both “master the following phrases” and “pattern drills” were coded into “grammar training”. The third drill “classroom activity” in volume 2 is not written in Chinese and thus was excluded from the analysis. The fourth drill “conversation practice” was coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in-the-blanks” since the drills leave blanks for students to fill out. In some lessons, between “conversation practice” and “communication exercises” there is a drill “describing the following pictures”. Three lessons use authentic materials in this drill: lesson 17 (price tag for fruit), lesson 21 (map, apartment layout and campus map) and lesson 26 (a map of China). These drills were all coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks” because they left blanks for the students to fill in based on their comprehension of the text. The final drill is always
“communication exercises”. This drill was excluded from the analysis in most lessons because it does not provide Chinese. The only exception is lesson 16 which provides a form for the students to read and fill out to apply for a library card. This material is integrated into the exercise. It represents a daily life activity, and thus was coded into “situated reading performance”.

“Cultural note” was excluded in most cases since most are written in English. There are only three exceptions. Lesson 20 provides a song after “cultural note”, lesson 24 provides a table of administrative divisions of China, and lesson 26 provides a dynasty table in China. The song was coded into “orthography training” because students need to read it many times before they could sing from memory. The other two materials were coded into “knowledge training” because they are not mentioned in the “cultural note”. My coding is consistent with the authors’ claim of the function of the cultural note: “at first, cultural notes in the English language are provided so that students can gain insight into cultural information related to their language studies. As learners’ Chinese proficiency improves, cultural notes are incorporated more and more into the Chinese texts” (p. VIII, volume 1).

4.4.3.1.2 Workbook

Workbook 2 follows the format of workbook 1 and the exercises are also categorized into “listening and speaking exercises” and “reading and writing exercises”. Many drills in workbook 2 keep the same name and function as in workbook 1. Thus the coding is kept the same as in workbook 1 for these drills. Examples in “orthography training” group include “pronunciation drill” in “listening and speaking exercise”, “trace
the characters, following the correct stroke order. Then copy the characters in the blanks”, etc. Examples in “knowledge training” include the drill “imitating the example and write---”, etc. Examples in “grammar training” include “make the sentences by matching the words of part I with those of part II”, “write sentences with the words given”, etc. Examples in the category of “comprehension assessment” include “decide whether the following statements are true or false according to the text in ‘reading comprehension and paraphrasing’ of this lesson”, “translate the following sentences into English”, and so on. In “reading and writing exercises”, similar to the coding of workbook 1, I excluded exercises such as “make sentences with the words given”, “give the Chinese characters of the following pinyin and translate the words into English” but included the exercise “write sentences with the words given”.

Workbook volume 2 has some new exercises. Among the new exercises, “fill in the blanks with the correct characters according to pinyin”, “write the pictophonetic characters you have learned so far with the sound components on the right and the meaning components on the left”, “add character components to the following characters to form the characters and words/phrases which we have learned” were coded into “orthography training”. “Fill in each of the following blanks with a verb”, “change the following sentences into the ones with the xxx (i.e., a certain grammatical function, such as the particle le in lesson 15)”, and “change the following sentences according to the requirements in the parentheses (such as “negative sentence”)” were coded into “grammar training”. “Answer the following questions” and “read the passage and answer the questions” were coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”. “Complete Lin Na’s diary according to text II of this lesson” was coded into “assess
comprehension by miscellaneous functions” because the drill provides the first sentences and asks the student to complete the diary. To complete the diary, students need to comprehend the text of the lesson. “Give the pinyin of the following words and then translate them into English. Try to guess the meanings of the words you haven’t learned and then confirm them with the help of your friends, teachers, or dictionaries” was coded into “orthography training” and “strategy training”.

Authentic materials also appear in the workbook. In “reading and writing exercises”, the authentic materials include a currency exchange table (lesson 15), a ticket (lesson 23), maps (weather broadcast in lesson 23 and administrative divisions in lesson 24), medical records, a prescription, and a receipt (lesson 25). An improvement from volume 1 is that some drills using authentic materials in workbook volume 2 ask the students to take diverse types of actions based on the reading, such as telling what the material is about, filling in the ticket, locating provinces, and discussing and comparing. However, these exercises do not offer contexts and tasks. Therefore, all these materials were coded into “comprehension assessment” and further into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks”, “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”, and “assess comprehension by miscellaneous”. In addition, what the students are asked to do may differ from daily life. For example, drill 20 in lesson 25 asks the student to “read the following medical record, prescription and charge receipt, and compare them with the ones in your country. Discuss with your partner the similarities and differences” (p. 120). This is not an authentic reading performance because very seldom do people need to compare prescriptions, medical records and charge receipts. Instead, the purpose is primarily to offer students an opportunity to acquire more cultural knowledge. Another
example is the drill 17 (1) in lesson 23 which asks the student to “read and fill in the air ticket with your own information”. It is not an authentic task since now-a-days passengers do not fill in the air ticket.

Interestingly, there are some exercises using authentic reading materials but they are included under other language skill exercises. One authentic reading material is used for writing. Exercise 19 in lesson 18 asks the student to “fill in the following forms with characters”. It is a form used in the post office to send a parcel. According to the routine that writing exercises appear at the end of the “reading and writing exercises” section, I interpreted the authors’ intention of using this exercise to train students’ writing skill. However, I would rather consider it to be “situated reading performance” since reading and filling out a form to send a parcel in the post office is an authentic communicative performance.

Five exercises in the “speaking and listening exercises” section use authentic materials. Among the five exercises, two require students to read and do questions-and-answers with a partner, two ask the students to read and tell about the materials, and one requires the students to discuss and compare. Drill 9 in lesson 15 provides a train schedule from the Beijing Railway Station and asks the student to read and do questions-and-answers with a partner. Reading a train schedule occurs in daily life. But in most cases people read to find the train they should take. Apparently the authors intend to assess the students’ comprehension of the train schedule and thus this exercise was coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”. Similarly, drill 9 in lesson 16 provides a library card and asks the student to read and do questions-and-answers with a partner. This drill was also coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”.

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Drill 9 in lesson 17 provides advertisements for groceries and asks the student to read and discuss with a partner the prices of the goods, and then compare them with those of another shopping mall. It was coded into “assess comprehension by miscellaneous”. Drill 9 in lesson 18 provides different transportation tickets and asks the student to read the tickets and tell what tickets they are. It was coded into “knowledge training”. Drill 9 in lesson 20 provides three tickets (movie tickets, concert tickets, opera tickets) and asks the student to “look at” the tickets and tell what tickets they are and where the performances are played. The word “look at” in the instruction of the drill reflects the authors’ distinction between reading and looking at something. In fact, the drill 8 of lesson 19 asks the student to “look at the following traditional Chinese paintings and western oil paintings. Discuss the similarities and differences with your partner”. The authors seem to treat the performance tickets as paintings, and would exclude the tickets from reading materials. However, in this dissertation, I coded them into “knowledge training” and “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” because the students need to determine the location of the performance.

Another interesting phenomenon is where three lessons in the workbook volume 2 mentioned authentic materials under “culture experience” in “speaking and listening exercises”. In these exercises, the authentic materials are not provided and students need to find on their own. Exercise 10 in lesson 21 asks students to find an advertisement for an apartment rental in the local Chinese newspaper and then find an apartment with certain conditions. Exercise 8 (3) in lesson 22 says “do you know any other Chinese local opera? Search on the internet and introduce to your classmates”. In this exercise, students need to read and find authentic materials online, and then introduce the content.
Exercise 8 (3) in lesson 23 says “search and find the cheap air tickets from Los Angeles to Beijing. Let’s see who can find the cheapest ticket”. This exercise may request students to read online or read newspaper, or flyers. These potential reading activities to handle authentic tasks is not included in my coding because the authentic materials are not provided. But clearly we can see that the authors do not consider these authentic reading performances in daily life as reading. Rather, they believe these activities can provide a channel for the students to know the culture.

4.4.3.2 Results and Discussion

4.4.3.2.1 Textbook

The textbook volume 2 provides 116 reading activities (Figure 4.6). Only one activity asks students to read and perform (F = 1, P = 0.86%). This activity provides a form for the students to fill out and apply for a library card. It is listed in “communication exercises”. The rest of the activities are all “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment”.

Similar to textbook volume 1, “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently (F = 81, P= 69.83%) and both volumes do not contain “strategy training”. In addition, in this category, “grammar training” appears most frequently (f = 61, p = 75.31%), followed by “orthography training” (f = 13, p = 16.05%), and then by “knowledge training” (f = 7, p = 8.64%). The frequency order of these three subgroups is the same as that in textbook volume 1. However, when compared with textbook volume 1, volume 2 does not contain “vocabulary training”.

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“Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 34, P= 29.31%). All materials in this category belong to “text-based comprehension assessment”. It contains three subgroups in this volume (from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks” (f = 17.5, p = 51.47%), “assess comprehension by miscellaneous” (f = 13.5, p = 39.71%), and “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 3, p = 8.82%). The three groups and their frequency order in this category remain the same in textbook volume 2 as those in textbook volume 1.

The textbook volume 2 also uses authentic reading materials (N = 12) (Error! Reference source not found.). Similar to textbook volume 1, these authentic materials are scattered into “text”, “cultural notes”, and “practice and drills”. In addition, the authentic materials in this textbook are mainly used to “knowledge training” (7 out of 12). Some are used to assess the students’ comprehension (3 out of 12). One is used for “orthography training”. Only the library card application form provides the students opportunities to perform reading in daily life.
**Figure 4.6:** Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader Textbook Volume 2*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>price tag for fruit</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Describing the following picture</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map, apartment layout, campus map</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Describing the following picture</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Describing the following picture</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form to apply library card</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Communication practice</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library card</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form to send a parcel in the post office</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus ticket</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout of an apartment</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket for opera</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Cultural notes</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative divisions of China</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Cultural notes</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynasties in China</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Cultural notes</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.3:** Authentic materials incorporated in *New Practical Chinese Readers Textbook* Volume 2
4.4.3.2.2 Workbook

Workbook 2 offers 219 reading activities (Figure 4.7). “Performance in real life” only appears 2 times (F = 2, P = 0.91%). The rest are all “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment”. Similar to workbook volume 1, the “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently (F = 168.5, P= 76.94%). But in this workbook, there is no “vocabulary training” but is “strategy training”. Among the four subgroups, “orthography training” appears most frequently (f = 90.5, p = 53.71%), followed by “grammar training” (f = 67, p = 39.76%), and by “strategy training” (f = 6.5, p = 3.86%), then by “knowledge training” (f = 4.5, p = 2.67%). The frequency order of the three subgroups that appear in both volumes keeps the same.

“Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 48.5, P= 22.15%). All materials in this category belong to “text-based comprehension assessment”. But in this volume, it contains five subgroups while volume 1 only contains four subgroups. In the five subgroups, “questions-and-answers” appears most frequently (f = 23.5, p = 48.45%), followed by “translation” (f = 9, p = 18.56%), then evenly by “true/false” and “miscellaneous” (f = 6, p = 12.37%), and finally by “fill-in blanks” (f = 4, p = 8.25%). “Questions-and-answers” appears most frequently in both volumes. “Translation” appears the second most frequently in volume 2 but the least in volume 1. “Fill-in blanks”, which appeared the second most frequently, became the least frequent.

Workbook volume 2 uses 12 authentic reading materials. A complete list can be seen in Table 4.4 As discussed above, the authentic materials are scattered in “speaking and listening exercises”, and “reading and writing exercises”. Most authentic materials
are used to “assess comprehension” (9 out of 12), and some are designed for “knowledge training” (n = 2). Only one material provides opportunity for the students to perform in daily life. Specifically, the exercise asks student to read a post office form and then fill in information to send a parcel. Although this reading behavior is a typical reading communication in daily life, the authors again considered it to be writing practice.
Figure 4.7: Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader Workbook* Volume 2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Train schedule from the Beijing Railway Station</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postcard written by Lin Na</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currency exchange table</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library card</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement (in a shopping mall)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets (for bus, taxi, train, student’s monthly pass front and back)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>form used in the post office to send a parcel</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets for performance (movie, concert, opera)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air ticket</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of weather forecast</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The picture of the Chinese administrative divisions</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical record, prescription, charge receipt.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Authentic materials incorporated in *New Practical Chinese Reader Workbook* Volume 2
4.4.3.2.3 Summary

As a whole, New Practical Chinese Reader volume 2 (both textbook and workbook) provides 335 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.8, “situated reading performance” activities only appear occasionally (F = 3, p = 0.90%). The rest of the exercises are “comprehension skill training” (F = 249.5, P= 74.33%) and “comprehension assessment” (F = 82.5, P= 24.63%).

Similar to volume 1, “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently. It contains four subgroups in this volume 2: “orthography training”, “grammar training”, “knowledge training” and “strategy training”, while volume 1 also contains the subgroup “vocabulary training”, it does not include “strategy training” activities. In this category for volume 2, “grammar training” appears most frequently (f = 128, p = 51.30%), followed by “orthography training” (f = 103.5, p = 41.48%), and then by “knowledge training” (f = 11.5, p = 4.61%) and “strategy training” (f = 6.5, p = 2.61%). While in volume 1, “orthography training” appears most frequently, and “grammar training” appears the second most frequently.

Apparently, in volume 2, the focus starts to shift from orthography learning to grammar learning, although both are treated as very important. In addition, the authors also notice the importance of knowledge, and both volumes contain a similar frequency of “knowledge training” (11 in volume 1 while 11.5 in volume 2). The knowledge provided in volume 2 also includes cultural knowledge, topic knowledge and text knowledge. The knowledge is mainly presented in authentic items, and in many cases, these authentic items are not an integrated part of the sections in which they appear.
“Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category ($F = 82.5$, $P = 24.63$%), and all materials in this category belong to “text-based comprehension assessment”. This volume also contains five subgroups (from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “questions-and-answers” ($f = 26.5$, $p = 32.12$%), “fill-in blanks” ($f = 21.5$, $p = 26.06$%), “miscellaneous” ($f = 19.5$, $p = 23.64$%), “translation” ($f = 9$, $p = 10.91$%), and “true/false” ($f = 6$, $p = 7.27$%). There is no “multiple choice” in both volume 2 and volume 1.

Volume 2 includes 24 authentic materials. In the textbook, authentic materials are mainly used to provide supplementary information on cultural knowledge, topic knowledge and text knowledge (7 out of 12). In most cases, the authentic materials in the textbook are not integrated into the sections in which they appear. Some are used to assess the students’ comprehension ($n = 3$). Only one provides the opportunity for the students to perform. In the workbook, authentic materials are mainly used as the stimuli to assess the students’ reading comprehension (9 out of 12). Two materials are used to enhance the students’ knowledge. Only one material is used for the students to read and perform. But the authors always categorize them into other language skills (writing).
Figure 4.8: Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader* Volume 2
4.4.4  *New Practical Chinese Reader* Volume 3

4.4.4.1 Coding

4.4.4.1.1 Textbook

*New Practical Chinese Reader* volume 3 has twelve lessons: ten core lessons and two review lessons (lessons 32 and 38). Each lesson in this volume has the following sections: text, notes, drills and practices, reading comprehension and paraphrasing, grammar, Chinese characters and words. There is no “cultural notes” section in volume 3. In addition, “Chinese characters” in volumes 1 and 2 has been changed into “Chinese characters and words” which offers a lot of lexicon formation. Therefore, it was coded into “vocabulary training” instead of “orthography training”.

Similar to the coding of textbook volumes 1 and 2, the “text” section and the “new words” section were excluded in the analysis except for the supplementary authentic materials. Textbook volume 3 provides seven authentic items in the text: moon cake and its box in lesson 28, Chinese chess board in lesson 30, map of China in lesson 31, newspaper data and weather report in lesson 36, advertisement for a tour in lesson 36, menu and dishes with prices in lesson 37, and wedding ceremony invitation in lesson 38. As in volumes 1 and 2, these authentic items are related to the topics of the lessons but are not an integrated part of the text. Therefore, they were all coded into “knowledge training”.

Many sections and drills keep the same format and function as in volumes 1 and 2, thus they share the same coding as in volumes 1 and 2. The “notes” section, the “key
sentences” at the beginning of “drills and practice”, and the “grammar” section were coded into “grammar training”. In the “drills and practice” section, “master the following phrases”, “pattern drills” and “classroom activity” were still coded into “grammar training”.

Volume 3 has some areas which are different from the previous volumes. “Conversation exercises” do not have “fill-in-the-blanks” any more. Before each conversation exercise, there is a list of expressions whose usage is emphasized in the exercise. Thus this exercise was coded into “grammar training”. “Communication practice” does not include any authentic reading material or any Chinese characters. Therefore it was excluded from the analysis. In volume 3, the “reading comprehension and paraphrasing” section provides a short passage that is no longer a summary or paraphrasing of the text in the lessons. There is no instruction for this drill, but the short passage has similar linguistic content, and appears to be used to assess the students’ comprehension. The passage is more like an extensive reading material to support the intensive reading of the text. Thus I placed it into “assess comprehension by miscellaneous”.

Only two lessons provide authentic materials in the section of “reading comprehension and paraphrasing”. Lesson 32 provides a course flyer and lesson 35 provides a sale event flyer in a market. These two materials are not integrated into the passages though they are related to the themes of the passages. They are supplementary materials for knowledge use and were coded into “knowledge training”.

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4.4.4.1.2 Workbook

Workbook volume 3 follows the format of volume 1 and volume 2 and the exercises are categorized into “listening and speaking exercises” and “reading and writing exercises”. Similar to the coding in previous volumes, “pronunciation drill” in “listening and speaking exercises” was coded into “orthography training”. Different from volumes 1 and 2, drill 9 in lessons 33 and 34 in volume 3 provide a couple of sentences (a common saying and a tongue twister respectively), asking students to read the sentences as quickly as they can. Both were coded into “orthography training”.

In “reading and writing exercises”, I excluded exercises such as “make sentences with the words given” and “translate the following sentences into Chinese, using the words given in the parentheses”. Many drills in workbook volume 3 keep the name and function as in the previous two workbooks. Thus the coding of such drills keeps the same. “Orthography training” examples include “trace over the characters, following the correct stroke order. Then copy the characters in the blank spaces”, “give the pinyin of the following words and phrases and then translate them into English”, etc. “Grammar training” examples include “fill in the blanks with the proper verbs”, “make sentences by matching the words from part I with those from part II with lines”, etc. “Comprehension assessment” examples include “decide whether the following statements are true or false according to the text in ‘reading comprehension and paraphrasing’ of this lesson”, “answer the questions according to the passage”, etc.

There are some new exercises in workbook volume 3. “Read the passage and translate selected words” asks student to guess the meaning of the selected word in the
passage by reading the text. Thus, it is a training of the “word guessing” reading strategy and was coded into “strategy training”. “Read and recite” the poem (f = 4) was coded into “orthography training” since both Chinese characters and pinyin appear, and to recite, students must read repeatedly first to reach fluency. “Read and retell” was coded into “assess comprehension by miscellaneous function”.

Authentic materials also appear in the workbook volume 3. In “reading and writing exercises”, there are only two authentic items: a weather forecast in lesson 27 and prices for drinks in lesson 29. Drill 23 in lesson 27 asks the student to read the weather forecast table of some cities across the world, find out what this table is, and tell what information he can find in the material. On the top of the table, there is a caption identifying it as a weather forecasting table. Thus, as long as students can understand the text in the caption, they will be able to answer the first question of the drill. Besides, if they can retell what they can understand from the table, they will be able to answer the second question. Thus, this authentic material is used to assess the students’ comprehension through questions-and-answers. Similarly, drill 23 in lesson 29 provides the price list of drinks in a store and asks the student to read and do questions-and-answers with a partner. It was also coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”.

There are a few authentic reading materials used in “speaking and listening exercises”. Drill 9 in lesson 27 asks the student to read the audience rating of TV programs in the Beijing area and do questions-and-answers with a partner. Drill 10 in lesson 34 asks the student to read a piece of data about the Three Gorges project and do questions-and-answers with a partner. Both drills were coded into “assess
comprehension by questions-and-answers”. Drill 9 in lesson 29 asks the student to point out the characters known from the calligraphic copybook and try to imitate the characters. It was coded into “orthography training”, because although it also contains some cultural knowledge about calligraphy, the authors did not clarify it. Drill 9 in lesson 35 asks the student to read an advertisement about an apartment sale and make up a dialogue with a partner “enquiring about the following apartment you want to purchase and about the formalities you need to go through to get the loan from the bank”. Similarly, drill 9 in lesson 37 asks the student to read a menu and make up a dialogue with a partner imagining ordering dishes or paying bills at a restaurant. Both drills were coded into “situated reading performance”.

This workbook includes many “culture experience” in “speaking and listening exercises”. The exercises in “culture experiences” aim to provide the students insight of the differences between the target Chinese culture and their native culture. Exercise “culture experience” in lesson 33 asks the student to find articles about environment protection and introduce the articles to classmates after reading. This exercise does not provide reading materials and thus was excluded from the analysis. But this is a potential a daily life reading performance.

### 4.4.4.2 Results and Discussion

#### 4.4.4.2.1 Textbook

The textbook volume 3 provides 118 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.9, there are no “situated reading performance” activities in this volume. All materials were coded into “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment”. Same as in
the previous two volumes, the “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently (F = 106, P= 89.83%). It contains four subgroups (from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “grammar training” (f = 84, p = 79.25%), “vocabulary training” (f = 12, p = 11.32%), “knowledge training” (f = 9, p = 8.49%), and “orthography training” (f = 1, p = 0.94%). There is no material in “strategy training”. Compared to volumes 1 and 2, “orthography training” appears with much less frequency in volume 3. Instead, starting with this volume, the authors begin to introduce some vocabulary knowledge. However, grammar still seems to be the focus of the textbook as it accounts for 84 out of 118 reading activities.

“Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 12, P= 10.17%). All materials in this category belong to “assess comprehension by miscellaneous tasks” in “text-based comprehension assessment”. However, in this volume, all 12 materials are the passages in the “reading comprehension and paraphrasing” section which were used to assess the students’ comprehension through miscellaneous activities. There is no material in the other subgroups such as true/false, multiple choice, fill-in blanks, questions-and-answers, and translation.

Textbook volume 3 mainly uses scaffolding materials but occasionally also uses some authentic reading materials (N =9). Seven appear in the “text” and two appear in the “reading comprehension and paraphrasing” section. A complete list can be seen in Table 4.5. Different from previous volumes, all these authentic materials in volume 3 are used to enhance the students’ knowledge. While previous volumes used authentic materials not only to enhance the students’ knowledge, they are also occasionally for the students to perform, and be familiar with orthography or vocabulary.
**Figure 4.9:** Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader Textbook Volume 3*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moon cake and moon cake box</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese chess board</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of China</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspaper data and weather report</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement for tour</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>menu and dishes with prices</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wedding ceremony invitation</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flyer of curriculum/course</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Reading comprehension and paraphrasing</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sale event flyer in a market</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Reading comprehension and paraphrasing</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.5:** Authentic materials incorporated in *New Practical Chinese Reader Textbook* Volume 3
4.4.2.2 Workbook

The workbook volume 3 offers 267 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.10, only 2 activities can be coded into “situated reading performance” (F = 2, P = 0.75%). The rest are all “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment”. Similar to workbook volumes 1 and 2, “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently (F = 197, P = 73.78). Different from previous volumes, this category in volume 3 includes all five subgroups. “Strategy training” appears for the first time in a workbook. Among the five subgroups, “orthography training” appears most frequently (f = 111.5, p = 41.76%), followed by “grammar training” (f = 71, p = 26.59%), then by “strategy training” (f = 12.5, p = 4.68%). “Vocabulary training” (f = 1, p = 0.37%) and “knowledge training” (f = 1, p = 0.37%) appear only occasionally.

Similar to the previous two volumes, “comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 68, P = 25.47%). In this volume, the category contains five subgroups (from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 31, p = 45.59%), “assess comprehension by true/false” (f = 12, p = 17.65%), “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks” (f = 12, p = 17.65%), “assess comprehension by miscellaneous” (f = 10, p = 14.71%), and “assess comprehension by translation” (f = 3, p = 4.41%).
Figure 4.10: Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader Workbook* Volume 3
Workbook 3 includes some authentic reading materials (N = 7). Table 4.6 summarizes the authentic materials included in the workbook. However, only two authentic materials provide the reader opportunities to perform like in daily life. Again, the authors do not treat the students’ performances as reading performances because the students read authentic materials and then perform in other language skills, such as talking. Four materials are used to assess the students’ comprehension through questions-and-answers. One authentic material is specifically used for orthography training. There is no authentic material specifically used to enhance the students’ knowledge, which is a difference from previous volumes. Still, the authors did not use authentic material in reading communication. Rather, they equate reading with comprehension and thus treat authentic materials as stimulus to assess the reader’s comprehension, especially by questions-and-answers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience rating of TV programs</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather forecast of some cities in the world</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calligraphic copybook</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>price for drinks in a store</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data in Three Gorge project</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House sale</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Speaking and listening</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.6:** Authentic materials incorporated in *New Practical Chinese Reader*  
*Workbook Volume 3*
4.4.2.3 Summary

As a whole, *New Practical Chinese Reader volume 3* provides 385 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.11, two activities are “situated reading performance” (F = 2, P = 0.52%). The rest are “comprehension skill training” (F = 303, P = 78.70%) and “comprehension assessment” (F = 80, P = 20.78%). Similar to the previous two volumes, “comprehension skill training” appears most frequently. This category in volume 3 contains all five subgroups (from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “grammar training” (f = 155, p = 51.16%), “orthography training” (f = 112.5, p = 37.13), “vocabulary training” (f = 13, p = 4.29%), “strategy training” (f = 12.5, p = 4.13%), and “knowledge training” (f = 10, p = 3.30%). A big difference between volume 3 and volumes 1 and 2 is the occurrence of “strategy training”. In this volume, the strategy used in the textbook is “guessing the meaning of words from the context”.

Similar to the previous two volumes, the “comprehension assessment” category appears with the second highest frequency. This category in volume 3 contains five groups (from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 31, p = 38.75%), “assess comprehension by miscellaneous” (f = 22, p = 27.5%), “assess comprehension by true/false” (f = 12, p = 15%), “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks” (f = 12, p = 15%), and “assess comprehension by translation” (f = 3, p = 3.75%).


**Figure 4.11:** Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Reader* Volume 3
In addition, this volume mainly uses scaffolding materials and only 16 authentic materials are used. The 9 authentic materials incorporated in the textbook are used purely to enhance the students’ knowledge. Among the 7 authentic materials in the workbook, 4 are used to assess comprehension, 2 to provide opportunities to perform, and 1 to provide a chance to read and become familiar with orthography. So in general, the authentic materials in volume 3 are designed mainly to enhance cultural knowledge (n = 9) or assess comprehension (n = 4).

4.4.4.3 Conclusion

The *New Practical Chinese Reader volumes 1 – 3* focus more on the reading comprehension skills training and comprehension assessment. As shown in Figure 4.12, the three volumes altogether provide 982 reading activities. Only 10 activities are “situated reading performance” (F = 10, P = 1.02%). The rest are “comprehension skill training” (F = 747.5, P = 76.12%) and “comprehension assessment” (F = 224.5, P = 22.86%). The typical reading practices are still mechanical drills of characters, sentence structures, and comprehension assessment. When assessing comprehension, the authors used more on the text based assessment approaches such as “questions-and-answers”, “fill-in blanks” and “true/false” questions. The authors did not assess any reading comprehension by the fulfillment of the task.
**Figure 4.12:** Reading activities in *New Practical Chinese Readers Volumes 1-3*
New Practical Chinese Reader volumes 1-3 use 67 authentic materials. While it will surely help the reading instruction, and it is clearly an improvement over Character Text for Beginning Chinese, these authentic materials were rarely used as an opportunity to practice for reading performance. Most of these authentic materials are still used in either comprehension training or comprehension assessment. Specifically, 28 of the 67 authentic materials are used to enhance the students’ knowledge in the culture, topic and text; and 27 more were used to assess the students’ comprehension of the materials. Only 9 of the total 67 authentic materials are used to provide opportunities for students to perform a realistic scenario. Moreover and interestingly, 6 of these 9 situated reading performances are not considered as reading performance in New Practical Chinese Readers. Rather, they are listed as speaking and writing.

The above observations provided some hints about the authors’ concept regarding reading and reading instruction. The authors do not consider reading as a kind of communication. They would rather equate reading to comprehension, or a way to obtain information, which is a one-way process, instead of a social communication activity. This is supported by 1) the majority of the reading materials are used for reading comprehension training and comprehension assessment and 2) the authors categorized reading communication behaviors into speaking or writing. For example, in lesson 18 of workbook volume 2, students were asked to read a post office form and then fill in information to send a parcel. Although this reading behavior is a typical reading communication performance in daily life, the authors again consider it to be writing practice. Specifically, the authors would rather treat the exercise as a character-writing
exercise. This clearly indicates the authors’ notion that reading is for comprehension instead of for communication.

As a result of this notion, the authors did not assess reading in a communicative manner. When assessing comprehension, the authors did not test if the readers have comprehended the text enough to fulfill the reading task. Instead, they assessed reading by the text-based drills such as the traditional format of questions, true/false, and translations. In addition, the notion also limited the use of authentic materials. While the authors included a considerable amount of authentic materials in the textbooks and workbooks, they mostly used them to introduce the knowledge instead of as a reflection of the real reading tasks.

The authors’ notion did not change as the readers moved to the higher levels. Figure 4.13 compared the reading activities in the three volumes. In general, all three volumes shared a similar distribution of reading activities: about 70% in reading comprehension training, 30% in “text-based reading comprehension assessment”, but no “task-based reading comprehension assessment” and very little “situated reading performance”. On the contrary, the “situated reading performance” activities decreased from volume 1 to volume 3 (5 in volume 1, 4 in volume 2, and 1 in volume 3). In addition, the amount of “comprehension skill training” increased from volume 1 to 3. In this category, while “orthography training” and “knowledge training” did not change much in all the three volumes, “grammar training” increased significantly from volume 1 to volume 3. From volume 3, a significant increase in “vocabulary training” was also observed. “Strategy training” also showed some incremental increase from volume 1 to volume 3. Although the total change was difficult to detect, a distinct trend became clear
during the coding process. This further reflects the authors’ notion that they are more likely to consider the reading to be a linguistic phenomenon. Although the authors also started to realize the importance of authentic materials, they mostly used the materials to supply cultural knowledge. They seem to think that with enough linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge, and maybe, some reading strategies, readers can comprehend the texts, and that is the ultimate goal of reading instruction.

New Practical Chinese Reader overall is still a very good textbook for Chinese L2 reading instruction. It specifically provides good training for students to improve in orthography, sentence structure and basic understanding of a passage, and also included a lot of authentic materials. Although the textbook stopped at comprehension (stage) and did not provide help to build up learners’ competence in authentic reading, these flaws can be fixed by the instructor when using these textbooks. The authentic materials included in the textbooks provided great building materials for the instructors to engage in imitating the social context for authentic reading.
Figure 4.13: Comparison of reading activities in the first three Volumes of *New Practical Chinese Readers*
4.5 Analysis of Integrated Chinese

As a widely used textbook in the United States, Integrated Chinese was included in my analysis. I started my analysis with the 2nd edition. However, after I already finished the analysis of Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 (2nd ed.), the third edition just began to become available. Specifically, Level 1 Part 1 and Level 1 Part 2 of the third edition were available and were analyzed. Given the progress that the third edition made above the second edition, I felt that it was not very meaningful to complete the analysis of the second edition since it would be replaced soon. Although I very much would like to analyze the higher level textbooks (Level 2 Part 1 and Level 2 Part 2), they were not available by the time this research was conducted (January 2009). As a result, I analyzed Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 (3rd ed.) and Level 1 Part 2 (3rd ed.). I also briefly included my analysis of Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 (2nd ed.), with a hope to reflect the development of the authors’ pedagogic concepts.

4.5.1 Introduction

The authors introduced this series of textbooks as a two-year course. In the Preface of the second edition, the authors specifically pointed out that the target learners should be at beginner and intermediate levels. The targeted learners have not been changed from the second edition to the third edition.

This series of textbooks integrate the four language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The publisher praised that this series of textbooks “set a new standard with its focus on the development and integration of the four language skills” (Publisher’s note in both the 2nd edition and the 3rd edition). The authors stated in the
second edition that students should learn all four language skills in an integrated way. In the Preface of the textbook (2nd ed.), the authors emphasized the “holistic” and “integrated” focus on the four language skills because “a healthy language program should be a well-balanced one” (p. xv).

In the Preface to the second edition, the authors claimed that the series was designed for the two functions of this series: to help students understand “how the Chinese language works grammatically”, and to let students understand “how to use Chinese in real life” (p. xv). Correspondingly, the Workbooks offer two types of exercises within each language skill. One is “traditional exercises (such as fill-in-the-blank, sentence completion, translation, etc.) to help students build a solid foundation”, and the other is “communication-oriented exercises to prepare students to face the real world” (p. xv).

The third edition claimed to keep both functions from the second edition. As the authors wrote, “in their feedback to us, many users of previous editions of IC (Integrated Chinese) noted that, more than many other Chinese language textbooks, IC was effective in developing students’ abilities to use the language. While making all the efforts to retain that merit in the new edition, we have endeavored to place language acquisition in a real-world context and make IC all the more conducive to active use of the language in the classroom and, more importantly, beyond it.” (p. xiv).

Corresponding to the claims of emphasis on communication, Integrated Chinese incorporates more communication-oriented exercises. Each lesson in the textbook of this new edition includes “a wealth of new, more communicative Language Practice exercises
to help teach **vocabulary and grammar**” (p. 1 in *Integrated Chinese 3rd Edition Transition Guide*). These language practice exercises are based on simulated real-life situations to replace the mechanical drills on sentence patterns in the earlier editions. Specifically, the authors have increased the number of interactive exercises and exercises that serve the purpose of training students’ ability in oral communication and discourse formation. The workbook has undergone a similar change and incorporates more distinctly communication-oriented new exercises to follow the current pedagogic approaches. In addition, the exercises in the third edition workbook are designed to cover the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal and presentational, and are labeled by these three communication modes.

Second, the new edition pays attention to bring relevancy to the students. It uses updated vocabulary items and expressions. In the *Preface to the Third Edition*, the authors explain that the third edition makes a special effort to reflect students’ life and updates some of the vocabulary items and expressions “in the hope of keeping pace with the evolution of contemporary Chinese and enhancing students’ ability to communicate” (p. xiv). The workbook uses exercises that “simulate daily life with topics and themes that are relevant and personal to the student” (p. vi, in *Preface*).

Third, the new edition has adopted a task-based teaching approach. The task-based teaching approach is reflected in the textbooks by the “learning objectives” and “relate and get ready” questions at the beginning of each lesson, and the “progress

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checklist” at the end of each lesson. This approach intends to “intensify students’ motivation and heighten their awareness of the learning objectives in each chapter” (p. xiv). The authors hope that such changes can enable students to learn Chinese “in a more efficient and pragmatic way and develop their language proficiency and problem-solving abilities in real-life situations” (p. xv). In addition, the workbooks also include task-based exercises to train the student to handle real life situations, because the authors believe that “the ultimate goal of learning any language is to be able to communicate in that language” (p. vi, in Preface to the Third Edition).

However, despite the statements I quoted in the previous paragraphs, this series of textbooks still serves for language learning and language use, and the authors believed that language use will not be possible until the students have a solid ground of language learning such as learning vocabulary and grammar. This is supported by the authors’ claim in the Preface to the Third Edition that “ever since its inception in 1997, IC has been a communication-oriented language textbook which also aims at laying a solid foundation in language form and accuracy for students. The third edition holds fast to that pedagogic philosophy.” (p. xiv). This fundamental pedagogic philosophy in terms of the goals has not been changed from the second to the third edition. The change between the two editions is the portion of different types of exercises. The new edition uses much more interactive exercises while the previous one used more mechanical drills. In addition, the authors only acknowledge the communication in speaking and listening. Reading is still equal to comprehension as the section to practice reading is labeled “reading comprehension” in the workbook, and as the reading comprehension section is always labeled “interpretive” mode of communication.
In the second edition, the authors agreed that authentic materials should be used even in the first year of language instruction. They defined real authentic materials as materials “written by native Chinese speakers for native Chinese speakers” (p. xvii). They claimed that authentic materials were “incorporated in the lessons when appropriate” (p. xvii), and that most of the pedagogical materials in the series are actually simulated authentic materials. However, as we will see later, the second edition incorporated only a very limited amount of authentic materials. For example, the whole Level 1 Part 1 (including textbook, workbook and character workbook) only includes four authentic items.

The new edition uses much more authentic materials. As the authors point out, another new change in the new edition is “the linguistically and thematically appropriate cultural information and authentic materials”. “Cultural highlights” section discusses a broader perspective on Chinese culture, and important cultural features and topics. In the meantime, more up-to-date language ingredients, such as authentic linguistic materials, new realia, and new illustrations, are introduced with a view towards reflecting cultural life in the dynamic and rapidly changing contemporary China” (p. xv). The authors believe that “language is a carrier of culture and a second/foreign language is acquired most efficiently in its native cultural setting” (p. xv). The workbooks also incorporate more authentic materials with a hope to serve as a bridge between the pedagogical materials used in classroom and the materials in the target language environments.

Currently, the third edition has textbooks, workbooks, character workbooks, audio CDs, and MP3 files. Per the coding protocol described at the beginning of textbook analysis, I included textbooks, workbooks and character workbooks. All the other
components were not coded. Since the character workbooks (3rd ed.) only provide training in the stroke order and character components, and do not provide any other drills like in the second edition, they were all coded into “orthography training”. If we count each part in each lesson as 1 reading exercise, each character workbook has twenty exercises in the subgroup “orthography training”. Therefore, the character workbooks were not coded separately but were mentioned in the results and discussion, to match New Practical Chinese Readers which also has similar exercises in the workbooks.

4.5.2 Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 (3rd ed.)

4.5.2.1 Coding

4.5.2.1.1 Textbook

In the second edition, textbooks include “dialogues and narratives”, “culture notes”, “language use” and “grammar explanations”, and “exercises”. The third edition keeps “dialogues and narratives” but each dialogue/narrative has its own language notes, vocabulary, and grammar and language practice. The “language use” section in the second edition is revised into “language notes” in the third edition. “Exercise” in the second edition is transformed into “language practice”. The third edition of the textbook also introduces the following new sections: “learning objectives”, “relate and get ready”, “how about you” (a personalized supplementary vocabulary), “culture highlights”, and “progress checklist”. Per the coding protocol, “dialogues and narratives” and “vocabulary” were excluded from the analysis. The “how about you” section functions as supplementary vocabulary and thus was also excluded. “Learning objectives”, “relate
and get ready”, “language note”, “culture highlights”, “English text”, and “progress checklist” were excluded in most cases because they are all written in English. Only the supplementary materials in these sections that are written in Chinese characters and require the students to read were included in the analysis.

The “grammar” section was included and coded into “grammar training”. “The functional expressions” that review the functional expressions in every five lessons were included and coded into “grammar training”. I also screened “language practice”. If a practice does not contain any character, such as Language Practice K in lesson 5, it was excluded from the analysis. If a practice indicates the grammar item in the instruction, such as “是------吗?” (is that ------?) in Language Practice C in lesson 1, it was coded into “grammar training”. Some practices were coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” because they ask the students to ask and/or answer questions. Some practices were coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks” because they provide several lines of Chinese sentences and leave blanks for students to fill in.

Level 1 Part 1 textbook includes authentic reading materials in each lesson. These authentic items appear in various sections or between two sections in the textbook, such as “text”, “vocabulary”, “grammar”, “cultural highlights”, and “language practice”. Some authentic items are isolated without any instruction or prescription. They are related to the topic of the lessons but are not an integral part of any section. In such a case, they were coded into “knowledge training”. Some materials have a question below. The students need to read the material and answer the question. In such cases, the materials were coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”.

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4.5.2.1.2 Workbook

The workbook Level 1 Part 1 has four sections for each dialogue or narrative of each lesson. “Listening comprehension and speaking exercises” sections were excluded from the analysis since they did not contain any Chinese characters. The “writing and grammar exercises” section was screened. Any exercise that asks the student to practice a grammatical point was coded into “grammar training”. One example is “rearrange the following words into a complete sentence”. “Answering the following questions in Chinese according to your own circumstances” was coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”. “Reading comprehension” section was included. Almost all exercises in this section were designed to assess the students’ comprehension through traditional format: true/false, multiple choice, questions-and-answers.

4.5.2.2 Results and Discussion

4.5.2.2.1 Textbook

Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 Textbook offers 152 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.14, all activities were coded into “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment”. There are no “situated reading performance” activities. The “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently (F = 98.5, P = 64.80%). It includes three subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “grammar training” (f = 76.5, p = 77.66%), “knowledge training” (f = 13, p = 13.20%) and “orthography training” (f = 9, p = 9.14%). “Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 53.5, P = 35.20%). In this volume, the category contains three subgroups (from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess
comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 34, p = 63.55%), “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks” (f = 19, p = 35.51%), and “assess comprehension by translation” (f = 0.5, p = 0.93%).

Level 1 Part 1 textbook includes some authentic reading materials (N = 40). Table 4.7 summarizes the authentic materials incorporated. The authors did not use authentic materials in reading communication. Rather, they used authentic materials as the stimulus to assess the reader’s comprehension, especially by questions-and-answers (n = 18.5). The rest authentic materials are used to enhance the students’ background knowledge (n = 13) or to train orthography (n = 8.5).

Compared to the third edition, Integrated Chinese Textbook Level 1 Part 1 (2nd edition) provides much fewer reading activities (F = 31). This volume of textbook focuses on “comprehension skill training” (F = 29, P =93.55%) and “comprehension assessment” (F = 2, P = 6.45%). In “comprehension skill training” category, “grammar training” appears most frequently (f = 27, p = 93.10%), followed by “orthography training” (f = 1, p = 3.45%) and “vocabulary training” (f = 1, p = 3.45%). There is no activity in “knowledge training” and “strategy training”. The “comprehension assessment” category includes two subgroups: “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 1) and “assess comprehension by miscellaneous functions” (f = 1).
Figure 4.14: Reading activities in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 Textbook*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business card, p.30</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>orthography training and questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hundred Surnames, p.36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover of the Hundred Surnames dictionary, p.36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law firm, p.52</td>
<td>2-2</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gate, p.61</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign by police station, p.70</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign by fire station, p.71</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign out of a store, p.72</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A date clipped from newspaper, p.74</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock, p.75</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Language practice</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>characters, p.92</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoice, p.117</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese chess, p.118</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahjong, p.119</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of drinks, p.125</td>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of drink, p.134</td>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>Language practice</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign on a shop, p.139</td>
<td>5-2</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea price, p.142</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink menu, p.143</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu, p.161</td>
<td>6-2</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling cards, p.170</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billboard, p.171</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store sign, p.171</td>
<td>6-2</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>store sign, p.197</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.7:** Authentic reading materials incorporated in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 Textbook*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sign outside a student cafeteria, p.206</td>
<td>8-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign on dorm, p.210</td>
<td>8-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor plan, p.218</td>
<td>8-2</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card, p.223</td>
<td>9-2</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currency (RMB), p.232, 234</td>
<td>9-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment counter, p.242</td>
<td>9-2</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign, p.251</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Learning objectives</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs, p.253</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subway map, p.254</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus ticket, p.256</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign at bus stop, p.263</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket agent ad., p.270</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card, p.271</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, the textbook level 1 part 1 (2nd edition) mainly uses scaffolding materials. It only offers two authentic or simulated authentic materials. Both materials appear in the text to assess the students’ comprehension of the text. Lesson 3 provides a calendar and asks the student to circle Little Gao’s birthday based on the comprehension of the dialogue. It was coded into “task-based comprehension assessment”. Lesson 10 provides a weather report and asks the student to answer a question. It was coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” in “text-based comprehension”.

4.5.2.2.2 Workbook

*Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 Workbook* offers 147 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.15, the majority of the activities were coded into “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment”. There is only one “situated reading performance” activity, which appears in reading comprehension exercise D in lesson 3 part 2. The students need to read and fill in a form.

“Comprehension assessment” appears most frequently (F = 78, P = 53.06%). In this volume, the category contains both “text-based comprehension assessment” (f = 75) and “task-based comprehension assessment” (f = 3). “Text-based comprehension assessment” includes all six subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess comprehension by true/false” (f = 28.5, p = 38.00% out of 75), “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 26, p = 34.67%), “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks” (f = 9, p = 12%), “assess comprehension by multiple choice” (f = 7.5, p = 10%), “assess comprehension by miscellaneous” (f = 3, p = 4%), and “assess comprehension by translation” (f = 1, p = 1.33%). Three activities assess
comprehension through tasks: to read a TV guide and locate certain programs, to order beverages from a beverage menu with a certain amount of money, and to give directions based on a subway map. All three activities use authentic items. The first two are included in the “reading comprehension” section while the third is in the “writing and grammar exercise” section.

The “comprehension skill training” category is the second largest category (F = 68, P = 46.26%). It includes three subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “read for grammar” (f = 56, p = 82.35%), “read for orthography” (f = 7, p = 10.29%) and “read for vocabulary” (f = 5, p = 7.35%).

Level 1 Part 1 workbook (3rd ed.) also includes some authentic reading materials (N = 19). Table 4.8 summarizes the authentic materials included. The large majority of authentic materials appeared in the “reading comprehension” section (n = 18) and only 1 appears in the “writing and grammar exercises” section. The authentic materials are used in the following ways: to assess comprehension by questions-and-answers (n = 12), to provide the students a chance to function in a task based on reading, as discussed earlier (n = 3), to check the students’ orthography abilities (n = 3), and to provide a chance for the students to perform (n = 1). Apparently, the authors used the authentic materials mainly as the stimuli to assess the reader’s comprehension.
Figure 4.15: Reading activities in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 Workbook*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency room sigh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business card</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Orthography training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business card</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business card</td>
<td>2-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>True/false</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Multiple-choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flier</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>3-2</td>
<td>Reading and comprehension</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heading clipped from newspaper</td>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV guide</td>
<td>4-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Locate certain programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverage menu</td>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Place an order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment book</td>
<td>6-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book title</td>
<td>7-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book title</td>
<td>7-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement</td>
<td>9-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store sale sign</td>
<td>9-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Locate items on sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket office</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subway map</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Writing and grammar</td>
<td>Give directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information board</td>
<td>10-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Identify transportation, orthography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.8:** Authentic materials incorporated in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 Workbook (3rd ed.)*
Workbook Level 1 Part 1 (2nd edition) provides 120 reading activities. “Comprehension assessment” appears most frequently (F = 74, P = 61.67%) and “comprehension skill training” the second most frequently (F = 46, P = 38.33%). No exercise provides the student a chance to perform in reality. The “comprehension assessment” activities are all text-based and there is also no “task-based comprehension assessment”.

“Text-base comprehension assessment” consists of five subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess comprehension by true/false questions” (f = 34.5, p = 46.62%), “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 28, p = 37.84%), “assess comprehension by multiple choice” (f = 8.5, p = 11.49%), “assess comprehension by fill-in blank” (f = 2, p = 2.70%), and “assess comprehension by miscellaneous function” (f = 1, p = 1.35%). There are no reading exercises in “assess comprehension by translation”. Similar to the third edition, “true/false” and “questions-and-answers” have higher frequency. In addition, the percentage of the five subgroups is similar in the third edition.

In the category of “comprehension skill training”, “grammar training” appears most frequently (f = 41, p = 89.13%), followed by “vocabulary training” (f = 4, p = 8.70%) and “orthography training” (f = 1, p = 2.17%). There is no exercise in the subgroup “knowledge training” or “strategy training”. Apparently, the three subgroups are kept the same in the second edition as in the third edition.

Most reading activities use scaffolding materials. There are only two authentic materials in the second edition workbook. Both authentic materials appear in the reading
comprehension exercises. Lesson 1 provides a business card and asks the students to circle all of the characters that they can recognize, and underline the characters denoting family names. It was coded into “orthography training”. Lesson 3 provides a calendar and asks the student to fill in the blanks in English based on the calendar. It was coded into “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks”. Both authentic materials are not used for reading performance.

4.5.2.2.3 Summary

*Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 (3rd ed.)* (including textbook, workbook and characters workbook) provides 319 reading activities. As mentioned earlier, the characters workbook was coded into “orthography training” and each lesson was counted as two activities. As shown in Figure 4.16, “situated reading performance” activities only appear occasionally (F = 1, p = 0.31%). The majority of exercises are “comprehension skill training” and “comprehension assessment”.

The “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently (F = 186.5, P= 58.46%). It contains four subgroups in this volume (presented from highest frequency to lowest frequency): “grammar training” (f = 133.5, p = 71.58%), “orthography training” (f = 36, p = 19.30%), “knowledge training” (f = 12, p = 6.43%) and “vocabulary training” (f = 7.5, p = 4.02%). There are no “strategy training” activities.
Figure 4.16: Reading activities in Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 (3rd ed.)
“Comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 131.5, P = 41.22%). “Task-based comprehension assessment” only appears occasionally (f = 3). The majority of activities belong to “text-based comprehension assessment” (f = 128.5). It has six subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “questions-and-answers” (f = 60, p = 46.69% out of 128.5), “true/false” (f = 28.5, p = 22.18%), “fill-in blanks” (f = 28, p = 21.79%), “multiple choice” (f = 7.5, p = 5.83%), “miscellaneous” (f = 3, p = 2.33%), and “translation” (f = 1.5, p = 1.17%).

*Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 (3rd ed.)* incorporates 59 authentic materials. Authentic materials in the textbook appear in various sections and most materials are not integrated into the sections where they appear. Authentic materials in the textbook are mainly used to assess the students’ comprehension (18.5 out of 40) or to enhance cultural knowledge (13 out of 40 in the textbook). Most authentic materials in the workbook appear in the “reading comprehension” section. They are mainly used as the stimuli to assess the students’ reading comprehension of the text (12 out of 19). Only one item is used for the students to read and perform. Three items are used to assess the students’ comprehension based on a task.

As shown in Figure 4.17 the second edition and third edition share some similarities by focusing on lower level comprehension skill training especially on orthography and grammar, and focusing on text-based comprehension assessment through traditional formats such as questions-and-answers, true/false, and multiple choice questions. However, the third edition makes progress in using more authentic materials, paying attention to enhancing the students’ background knowledge, and providing a few activities that assess the students’ comprehension and reading performance in tasks.
Figure 4.17: Comparison of reading activities in 3rd edition and 2nd edition in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1*
4.5.3  *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 (3rd ed.)*

4.5.3.1  Coding

4.5.3.1.1  Textbook

I used the third edition of *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2*. This volume has ten lessons, each lesson is composed of the following sections: learning objectives, relate and get ready, dialogue I, language notes, vocabulary, grammar, language practice, dialogue II, language notes, vocabulary, grammar, language practice, how about you, culture highlights, English text, and progress checklist. Per coding protocol, “dialogue”, “vocabulary”, and “how about you” (supplementary vocabulary) were excluded from the analysis. In addition, “learning objectives”, “relate and get ready”, “language notes”, “culture highlights”, “English text” and “progress checklists” were excluded from the analysis because they are written in English. The supplementary reading materials in those sections were included in the analysis if they contain Chinese characters.

This new edition uses a lot of illustrations and photos in the textbook. However, most illustrations and photos in this textbook do not have Chinese characters and thus were excluded from the analysis. Some have Chinese words or sentences beside or below to describe the illustration or photo. However, there are always pinyin with the characters and the students do not really need to read the Chinese characters. A few illustrations and photos contain a few characters. But the students do not really need to read them. Examples include dish in lesson 12, body part in lesson 14, etc.
Therefore, I included in my analysis “grammar”, “language practice”, “the functional expression” in “that’s how the Chinese say it!” after every five lessons, and the supplementary materials written in Chinese characters in all sections. “Grammar” section and “functional expressions” were coded into “grammar training”. In “language practice”, the exercises that only offer the visual aids and that are written in English were excluded. Most exercises practice the sentence structures and were coded into “grammar training”. This textbook has a new exercise called “recap and narrate”, which includes two parts: to work with a partner and recap the content of the dialogue by following the example questions, and to use the words and phrases given as prompts to form a narrative. Therefore, this exercise was split into two subgroups. The former part was coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” and the latter part was coded into “assess comprehension by miscellaneous function”.

The textbook uses many authentic reading materials (N = 40). Authentic materials appear in every lesson in the textbook. The textbook provides diverse types of items with a wide scope: menu, road signs, tickets, and so on. These authentic items are scattered in different sections: the “vocabulary” section (n = 18), the supplementary vocabulary section “how about you” (n = 4), the “culture highlights” section (n = 8), at the end of the lesson either before or after “progress checklist” (n = 5), the “language practice” section (n = 4), and the “grammar” section (n = 1). Some authentic items are isolated without any description or instruction. They are related to the topic of the lessons but are not an integral part of any section. In such a case, they were coded into “knowledge training”. Some materials have a question below, which reflects the authors’ notion of using authentic materials to assess the students’ reading comprehension by
questions-and-answers. In such cases, the materials were coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”.

4.5.3.1.2 Workbook

I screened every exercise in the workbook. Speaking exercises are mainly written in English and thus were excluded. There are only two exceptions. One is Speaking Exercise B in lesson 15 part 1. It provides a label of a prescription and asks the student to do a role play with a partner as a doctor and a patient. The doctor should give instructions based on the label provided. This exercise was coded into “situated reading performance”. Another one is Speaking Exercise C in lesson 17 part 1. It provides a floor plan of an apartment, and asks the student to talk about the rooms in the apartment with a partner. This exercise was coded into “assess comprehension by miscellaneous”.

The “reading comprehension” section is always labeled as interpretive mode. Different from Level 1 Part 1, the first exercise is “building words” which provides training in the vocabulary formation. It was coded into “vocabulary training” in “comprehension skill training”. In the reading comprehension section, there are many exercises designed to assess the students’ comprehension of the passage provided by true/false, multiple choice, or questions-and-answers. Some writing exercises were also included in this analysis if the students must first read to complete the exercise.

The Level 1 Part 2 workbook also incorporated many authentic materials (N = 39). Authentic materials appear in the following sections: reading comprehension exercises (n = 27), after writing exercises in part one of a lesson or after the storytelling exercise in part two of a lesson (n = 9), speaking exercises (n = 2) and writing exercise (n
Thirty materials instruct the students to answer question(s) and were coded into “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”. Only occasionally the exercises ask the students to take some actions, such as circle a specific program. One interesting point is, sometimes the exercises use “look at” \( f = 4 \) instead of “read”.

### 4.5.3.2 Results and Discussion

#### 4.5.3.2.1 Textbook

There are 156 reading activities in *Integrated Chinese Textbook Level 1 Part 2* (3rd ed.). As shown in Figure 4.18, this volume of textbook mainly focuses on “comprehension skill training” \( F = 114, P = 73.08\% \), and “comprehension assessment” \( F = 41, P = 26.28\% \). Only 1 reading material provides a chance for the students to read and perform in daily life \( F = 1, P = 0.64\% \).

Similar to textbook Level 1 Part 1, the “comprehension skill training” category appears most frequently and both textbooks do not contain “strategy training”. This textbook contains three subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “grammar training” \( f = 87, p = 76.32\% \), “knowledge training” \( f = 26, p = 22.81\% \), and “vocabulary training” \( f = 1, p = 0.88\% \). Both Level 1 Part 1 and Level 1 Part 2 textbooks contain three subgroups and the two subgroups with higher frequency are “grammar training” and “knowledge training”. The difference is: the third subgroup is “vocabulary training” in Level 1 Part 2 and the third one is “orthography training” in Level 1 Part 1.
Figure 4.18: Reading activities in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 Textbook (3rd. ed.)*
Similar to Level 1 Part 1, “comprehension assessment” is the second largest category (F = 41, P = 26.28%) and the most frequent subgroup is “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”. However, the category of “comprehension assessment” in Level 1 Part 2 only contains two subgroups: “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 31, p = 75.61%) and “assess comprehension by miscellaneous functions” (f = 10, p = 24.39%), while Level 1 Part 1 contains three subgroups: “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”, followed by “assess comprehension by fill-in blanks”, and “assess comprehension by translation”. Apparently, Level 1 Part 2 reduces translation and fill-in blanks, and tries to move students to a higher level language ability by narration, which is represented in “recap and narrate” exercises.

Similar to Level 1 Part 1, Level 1 Part 2 also incorporates many authentic materials (N = 40). Table 4.9 summarizes the authentic items in Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 Textbook (3rd ed.). In addition, the authentic items in this textbook also cover diverse genres: menus, street signs, tickets, and so on. This broadness of authentic items reflects the authors’ notions that language learning should be more connected to daily life. Moreover, these authentic items are mainly used to enhance the students’ knowledge (n = 22) and to assess the students’ comprehension of the materials by questions-and-answer (n = 17). However, in Level 1 Part 1, there are also some activities for “orthography training” and this subgroup disappears in Level 1 Part 2. Lesson 16 in Level 1 Part 2 provides the context and asks the student to make a decision based on the context and the reading of the map. Therefore, it was coded into “situated reading performance”.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weather forecast graph</td>
<td>11-1</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather forecast table</td>
<td>11-1</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather forecast</td>
<td>11-2</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs (cyber café)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign of dinning hall</td>
<td>12-2</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>In culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore name</td>
<td>13-1</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of a part of Beijing</td>
<td>13-2</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign for pedestrian</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Under “how about you”</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign for pedestrian</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>At the end of the lesson</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink menu</td>
<td>14-1</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store’s name</td>
<td>14-1</td>
<td>In language practice</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription instruction</td>
<td>15-1</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs in hospitals/clinics</td>
<td>15-2</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign of Tongren tang</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>In culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign of registration room in a hospital</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>In culture highlight</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinic signs</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Before progress checklist</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of Taipei</td>
<td>16-2</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs for restroom</td>
<td>17-1</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>17-2</td>
<td>Under grammar</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement of apartment for rent</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Under “how about you”</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign of intermediary companies</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>In culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement for apartment rent</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>At the end of the lesson</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign of tennis playground</td>
<td>18-1</td>
<td>In vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper headline</td>
<td>18-2</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCTV program list</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>In culture highlights</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A slogan</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>at the end of the lesson</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement of tour</td>
<td>19-1</td>
<td>Under vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket</td>
<td>19-1</td>
<td>In language practice</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket</td>
<td>19-2</td>
<td>Before vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket sale information</td>
<td>19-2</td>
<td>After vocabulary</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9: Authentic materials incorporated in Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 Textbook (3rd ed.)
Table 4.9 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store sale flyer</th>
<th>19-2</th>
<th>In language practice</th>
<th>Questions-and-answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sign of seats in air plane</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>In how about you</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of travel agencies</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>In culture highlights</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign of insurance purchase counter</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>At the end of the lesson</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding pass</td>
<td>20-1</td>
<td>Before vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs in airport</td>
<td>20-1</td>
<td>Before vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow chart for international departure</td>
<td>20-1</td>
<td>In language practice</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store name</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Under how about you</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store name</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>In culture highlight</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.3.2.2 Workbook

There are 152 reading activities in Integrated Chinese Workbook Level 1 Part 2 (3rd edition). As shown in Figure 4.19, this workbook mainly focuses on “comprehension assessment” (F = 98, P = 64.47%) and “comprehension skill training” (F = 51.5, P = 33.88%). “Situated reading performance” only occurs occasionally (F = 2.5, P = 1.64%). These reading performances are: reading comprehension exercise C in lesson 12 part 2 which asks the student to order dishes based on the context and a menu, speaking exercise B in lesson 15 part 1 which asks the student to act as a doctor and give instructions based on the label on the medicine, and reading comprehension exercise D in lesson 12 part 1 which asks the student to order from the menu based on the assumption that he is vegetarian. The third activity also asks the student to answer questions so it was split into two subgroups: “situated reading performance” and “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers”.

Similar to the Level 1 Part 1 Workbook, the category of “comprehension assessment” appears most frequently in this workbook (F = 98, P = 64.47%). In addition, it contains both “text-based assessment” and “task-based assessment”, but “text-based assessment” takes up the majority (f = 96.5) while “task-based assessment” only appears occasionally (f = 1.5). However, this workbook only contains five subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 54.5, p = 56.48% out of 96.5), “assess by true/false” (f = 33.5, p = 34.72%), “assess by multiple choice” (f = 4.5, p = 4.66%), “assess by miscellaneous” (f = 2, p = 2.07%), and “assess by fill-in blanks” (f = 2, p = 2.07%).
There is no reading activity in the subgroup “assess comprehension by translation”. Level 1 Part 1 workbook include all six subgroups, and the order of frequency is “true/false”, “questions-and-answers”, “fill-in blanks”, “multiple choice”, “miscellaneous” and “translation”.

Two reading comprehension exercises (lesson 14 part 2 exercise D and lesson 17 part 2 exercise D) ask the students to read and draw a picture based on the passage. These two exercises were coded into “task-based comprehension assessment”. The exercise in lesson 14 also asks the student to answer questions. Therefore, altogether this workbook has only 1.5 reading activities coded into “task-based comprehension assessment”.

Similar to Level 1 Part 1, the “comprehension skill training” category is the second largest category (F = 51.5, P = 33.88%) in this workbook. However, this workbook contains all five subgroups while Level 1 Part 1 workbook only contains three subgroups. In addition, in Level 1 Part 2, the order of frequency from high to low is: “vocabulary training” (f = 23.5, p = 45.63%), “orthography training” (f = 15.5, p = 30.10%), “grammar training” (f = 7, p = 13.59%), “knowledge training” (f = 4, p = 7.77%), and “strategy training” (f = 1, p = 1.94%). While in the Level 1 Part 1 workbook, the order of frequency from high to low is “grammar training”, “orthography training” and “vocabulary training”. It seems that “vocabulary training” has been increased and focused in Level 1 Part 2.
Figure 4.19: Reading activities in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 Workbook (3rd. ed.)*
The workbook Level 1 Part 2 (3rd edition) incorporates more authentic reading materials items ($N = 39$) than Level 1 Part 1 ($N = 19$). Table 4.10 summarizes the authentic items used. The workbook incorporates authentic materials for every part of each lesson, which indicates that authentic materials cover every topic in the textbook. The authentic items also cover diverse types, such as advertisements, labels on prescriptions, signs or notices, menus, TV guides, etc. However, authentic items are mainly used to assess comprehension by questions-and-answers ($n = 26$). The remaining items are used to enhance knowledge ($n = 4$), to check orthography ($n = 3$), to provide a chance for reading performance ($n = 2.5$), to practice strategy ($n = 1.5$), to fill in the blanks ($n = 1$) and to do miscellaneous task ($n = 1$).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic material</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weather forecast table</td>
<td>11-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather forecast tip</td>
<td>11-1</td>
<td>After writing exercises, isolated</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign of interview place</td>
<td>11-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather forecast</td>
<td>11-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>After storytelling, isolated</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu</td>
<td>12-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers, and situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu</td>
<td>12-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prices displayed</td>
<td>12-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice</td>
<td>12-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13-1</td>
<td>After writing exercise, isolated</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of campus</td>
<td>13-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of campus</td>
<td>13-2</td>
<td>Writing exercises</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu of a multi-course meal</td>
<td>14-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store</td>
<td>14-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement of apple</td>
<td>14-2</td>
<td>After storytelling, isolated</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction label on prescription</td>
<td>15-1</td>
<td>Speaking exercise</td>
<td>Situated reading performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10: Authentic materials incorporated in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 Workbook (3rd ed.)*
Table 4.10 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruction label on a prescription drug bottle</th>
<th>15-1</th>
<th>Reading comprehension</th>
<th>Strategy training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of a medicine</td>
<td>15-1</td>
<td>After writing exercise, isolated</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form for a patient to fill out</td>
<td>15-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Orthography training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listing of movies on shown</td>
<td>16-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store sign</td>
<td>16-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor plan</td>
<td>17-1</td>
<td>Speaking exercise</td>
<td>Miscellaneous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor plan</td>
<td>17-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“house for rent” ads</td>
<td>17-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice</td>
<td>17-2</td>
<td>After storytelling, isolated</td>
<td>Knowledge training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV guide</td>
<td>18-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV guide</td>
<td>18-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Orthography training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper ad from a travel agency</td>
<td>19-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice</td>
<td>19-1</td>
<td>After writing exercises, isolated</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu</td>
<td>19-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad</td>
<td>19-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad</td>
<td>19-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad in grocery store</td>
<td>19-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers, and strategy training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs of services offered by a travel agency</td>
<td>19-2</td>
<td>After storytelling, isolated</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice posted in an airport</td>
<td>20-1</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Questions-and-answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign on luggage pickup</td>
<td>20-1</td>
<td>After writing exercise, isolated</td>
<td>Knowledge training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>20-2</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>Orthography training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.3.2.3 Summary

If we treat Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 (3rd edition) as a whole, we should combine the textbook, workbook, and character workbook. As mentioned earlier, the character workbook only offers tracing but no other exercises. Each part in each lesson was counted as 1 reading activity and this character workbook has 20 reading exercises in the subgroup “orthography training”. This value is reflected in the number below.

As shown in Figure 4.20, this volume offers 328 reading activities. “Comprehension skill training” appears most frequently (F = 185.5, P = 56.55%), followed by “comprehension assessment” (F = 139, P = 42.38%), and then by “performance in real life” (F = 3.5, P = 1.07%). In the category “comprehension skill training”, “grammar training” appears most frequently (f = 94, p = 50.67%). Three subgroups appear with similar frequency: “orthography training” (f = 35.5, p = 19.14%), “knowledge training” (f = 30, p = 16.17%), and “vocabulary training” (f = 24.5, p = 13.21%). “Strategy training” only occurs occasionally (f = 1.5, p = 0.81%).

The category of “comprehension assessment” includes mainly “text-based assessment” reading activities (f = 137.5). “Task-based assessment” only occurs very occasionally (f = 1.5). The “text-based assessment” contains five subgroups (presented from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency): “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” (f = 85.5, p = 62.18% out of 137.5), “assess comprehension by true/false” (f = 33.5, p = 24.36%), “assess comprehension by miscellaneous” (f = 12, p = 8.73%), “assess comprehension by multiple choice” (f = 4.5, p = 3.27%) and “assess
comprehension by fill-in blanks” (f = 2, p = 1.45%). There is no subgroup “assess comprehension by translation”.

Therefore, we can say that Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 still treats reading as comprehension rather than as a social activity. The majority of reading materials are used to train the students’ abilities in reading comprehension factors, or to assess the students’ comprehension by traditional ways such as questions-and-answers, true/false, multiple choice, etc. Reading materials are only used in task-based assessment or performance occasionally.

Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 incorporates a large amount of authentic reading materials (N = 79). In the textbook, authentic materials appear in various sections: the vocabulary section, grammar, culture highlights, the supplementary vocabulary section, language practice, and the end of a lesson before or after the “progress checklist”. All these authentic materials are related to the topic of the lesson or related to the culture topics in the “culture highlights” section, but most materials are not an integral part of the sections where they appear. They are mainly used to provide cultural knowledge and to assess the students’ comprehension by questions-and-answers. Occasionally, the students need to take actions. In the workbook, authentic materials are mainly used to assess reading comprehension. In both textbook and workbook, the questions-and-answers format is the main format used to assess comprehension.
Figure 4.20: Reading activities in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 (3rd. ed.)*
Therefore, we can see that *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 2 (3rd ed.)* still focuses on language learning and language assessment. Communication-oriented exercises are not implemented into reading. Reading is equal to comprehension, and in most cases, the students are asked to read a material and then demonstrates their comprehension through text-based assessment.

### 4.5.4 Conclusion

*Integrated Chinese* Level 1 focuses on the reading comprehension skills training and comprehension assessment. It provides 647 reading activities. As shown in Figure 4.21, the majority of reading activities are “comprehension skill training” (F = 372, P = 57.50%) and “comprehension assessment” (F = 270.5, P = 41.81%). “Situated reading performance” only occurs occasionally (F = 4.5, P = 0.70%).

“Comprehension skill training” appears most often with a focus on lower level reading comprehension factors: orthography (f = 71.5, p = 19.22), vocabulary (f = 29.5, p = 7.93%) and grammar (f = 227.5, p = 61.16%). Higher level comprehension factors appear with comparatively low frequency: knowledge (f = 42, p = 11.29%) and strategy (f = 1.5, p = 0.40%). When assessing comprehensions the authors used more of the text-based assessment approaches (f = 266) such as “questions-and-answers” (f = 145.5, p = 54.70% out of 266), “true/false” (f = 62, p = 23.31%), “fill-in blanks” (f = 30, p = 11.28%) and “multiple choice” (f = 12, p = 4.51%). Translation rarely appears (f = 1.5, p = 0.56%). Narration in miscellaneous also appears (f = 15, p = 5.64%). The authors only occasionally assessed reading comprehension by the fulfillment of the task (f = 4.5).
Figure 4.21: Reading activities in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 (3rd ed.)*
*Integrated Chinese Level 1* incorporates 138 authentic reading items. While it will surely help the reading instruction, and it is clearly an improvement over *Character Text for Beginning Chinese*, these authentic materials were rarely used as they are in daily life. Most of these authentic materials are still used to train comprehension skill or to assess comprehension. Specifically, among the 138 authentic materials, 14.5 are used to check the students’ word recognition (orthography), 39 are used to enhance the students’ knowledge in the culture, topic and text, and 79.5 are used to assess the students’ comprehension of the materials, which is mainly done by questions-and-answers (n = 74.5). Only 3 materials are used to assess comprehension in a task and 4.5 materials are used to provide opportunities for the students to perform like in reality. Although the authors also started to realize the importance of authentic materials, they mostly used the materials to supply the cultural knowledge or assess reading comprehension. They seemed to think that with enough linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge, and maybe, some reading strategies, readers can comprehend the texts, and that is the ultimate goal of reading instruction.

Second, *Integrated Chinese* uses a lot of authentic materials. Compared with *New Practical Chinese Readers*, the new version of *Integrated Chinese* incorporates even more authentic reading materials. However, the authentic materials are not used as they would be in daily life. Most authentic materials are only weakly connected to the topic of the lesson, and are not connected to the communication function. For example, the boarding pass, flow chart, and signs are the authentic materials listed in lesson 20. They are only related to the topic of lesson 20, which has designed dialogues happened at an airport. The real functions of these authentic materials are not touched in the lesson.
The above observations, combined with the analysis of the preface (see 4.5.1 Introduction), provided some hints about the authors’ notion regarding reading and reading instruction. During the reading instruction, the authors still equated reading to comprehension. Moreover, in *Integrated Chinese*, the authors still considered that reading training to be a linguistic training as the low level reading factor training (such as grammar, orthography and vocabulary) accounted for the majority of the reading activities in *Integrated Chinese*. As a result of their conception of reading instruction, the authors did not assess reading in a communicative manner. When assessing comprehension, the authors did not test if the readers have comprehended the text enough to fulfill the reading task. Instead, they assessed reading by the text-based drills such as the traditional format of questions, true/false, and translations. In addition, the notion also limited the use of authentic materials. While the authors included considerable amount of the authentic materials in the textbooks and workbooks, they mostly used them to introduce the knowledge or do questions-and-answers instead of as a reflection of the real reading tasks.

Thirdly, the authors’ notion did not change as the readers moved to the higher levels. Figure 4.22 compared the reading activities in the two volumes. In general, both volumes shared similar distribution of reading activities: about 55% in reading comprehension training (58.46% in Level 1 Part 1 and 56.55% in Level 1 Part 2), about 42% in text-based reading comprehension assessment (41.22% in Level 1 Part 1 and 42.38% in Level 1 Part 2). In the category of “comprehension skill training”, “read for orthography” keeps a similar percentage in two volumes (19.30% in Level 1 Part 1 and 19.14% in Level 1 Part 2). However, “read for grammar” has been reduced from 71.58%
in Level 1 Part 1 to 50.67% in Level 1 Part 2, and both “read for knowledge” and “read for vocabulary” has been increased (from 6.43% in Level 1 Part 1 to 16.17% in Level 1 Part 2, and from 4.02% in Level 1 Part 1 to 13.21% in Level 1 Part 2). In the category of “text-based comprehension assessment”, “assess comprehension by true/false” keeps a similar percentage (22.18% in Level 1 Part 1 and 24.36% in Level 1 Part 2). However, “assess comprehension by questions-and-answers” increases from 46.69% in Level 1 Part 1 to 62.18% in Level 1 Part 2. One other difference is Part 2 has a few more task-based comprehension assessments or performance in real life activities.

Lastly, when compared with the 2nd edition, the 3rd edition used more authentic materials and more interactive drills. This demonstrated an evolution of the authors’ notion of reading instruction. Clearly, the author realized, as mentioned in the preface, the importance of training students to move beyond classroom instruction, and they made progress by using more authentic material and interactive drills. However, they are still not very clear about how to train student in this direction. As this is also the topic of this dissertation, I will start to introduce a communicative reading instruction approach that is function-based.
Figure 4.22: Comparison of reading activities in the two parts of level 1 of Integrated Chinese
4.6 Conclusion of Textbook Analysis

In summary, from the analysis of the three textbooks popularly used in the United State of America, we can see that:

1) Chinese reading instruction is still comprehension-oriented. The textbooks focus on comprehension skill training and comprehension assessment (see Figure 4.23). In comprehension skill training, the textbooks cover comprehension factors such as orthography, vocabulary, grammar, knowledge, and strategy. Among the five factors, orthography and grammar appear most frequently. Vocabulary is touched but not as much as orthography, which reflects a notion that in the beginning level, orthography is more important than vocabulary. But there is a tendency to provide training on knowledge and strategy. A lot of authentic materials are used as culture carries on in the most recent textbooks. The strategy instruction involved in the textbooks are mainly about guessing the meaning of words from the context. However, this might be a result of the fact that the textbooks I analyzed are at beginning levels.

2) There is very little task-based comprehension assessment. The textbooks still use traditional means of assessing the students’ reading comprehension, such as true/false, multiple choice, fill-in blanks, questions-and-answers, and translation. The large majority of the comprehension assessment stays at the level of text-based assessment. In other words, the students read the text and treat the text as the objective. It neglects the real function of language communication in daily life. There are also very few exercises designed for the students to perform in daily life.
3) There are clearly some improvements in the quality of the textbooks overtime. The recent textbooks incorporate more authentic materials (see Table 4.11) and use more flexible drills. This reflects that the educators started to realize the importance of teaching Chinese L2 reading in a more communicative manner. However, so far, it seems that the textbook authors did not have an approach yet, as they used most authentic materials only to enhance the students’ knowledge, or to be used as another type of text to assess the students’ comprehension of the material. The use of the authentic materials is far away from realistic.

In this dissertation, I will propose a new, improved Chinese L2 reading instruction approach based on the social function of reading. In reality, reading happens with a purpose and the reader will have to fulfill the task. By “performance-based reading instruction”, I would like to train students to read as they would in daily life. During the reading instruction, the students will be trained to be aware of the reading task, fulfill the reading task, and ultimately, perform well in daily life.
**Figure 4.23:** Coding of reading activities in the three textbooks
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textbook</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Comprehension Training</th>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Comprehension Assessment</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Orthography</td>
<td>Know-ledge</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Fill-in blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTBC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPCR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook v1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook v1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook v2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook v2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook v3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook v3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC level 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook level 1 part 1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook level 1 part 1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook level 1 part 2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook level 1 part 2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11. Distribution of Authentic Materials in Three Textbooks Analyzed
Chapter 5: Chinese L2 Learners’ Reading Performance

5.1 Introduction

As introduced in chapter 1, reading is a purposeful social activity and readers read to fulfill a task. A reading activity actually comprises of three steps: identifying the reading purpose, reading and comprehending, and performing to achieve the purpose. The tasks are diverse and common tasks include the acquisition of information, familiarization with content, and entertainment. However, this fundamental nature of reading has been overlooked in most reading instruction research. As introduced in Chapter 2, comprehension is considered the goal of reading during reading instruction. As a result, the most studied pedagogical approaches in both first language and second language reading instruction are decoding or comprehension oriented. The ultimate purpose of the reading instruction is to help students achieve comprehension of the text. For example, repeated reading and other derived procedures are developed to improve fluency and thus to facilitate comprehension (Dowhower, 1987; Herman, 1985; Kuhn and Stahl, 2003; Padak et al., 2002; Samuels, 1979; Samuels, 2002). Direct Explanation, Reciprocal Teaching, Transactional Strategy Instruction, and Collaborative Comprehension Instruction are also developed to improve reading strategy to achieve comprehension.
The same case exists in Chinese L2 reading instruction in the United States, if not worse. Because Chinese has little or no linguistic similarity with English and has a completely different orthography, Chinese L2 learners tend to struggle more with Chinese orthography. As a result, decoding and fluency instruction is the overwhelming part in Chinese L2 reading instruction. For example, character recognition is always a huge task of the reading instruction in the beginner level and lasts multiple years.

This situation was revealed by the textbook analysis in Chapter 4. Despite the obvious progress in the Chinese L2 reading textbooks, the current pedagogical approach still neglects the essential function of reading in a civilized society. Students are not trained with a goal to fulfill reading tasks as in reality but merely to deal with reading factors for comprehension. In comprehension skill training, the instruction focuses on the lower level factors, such as orthography, vocabulary, and grammar. In earlier textbooks, the training to enhance students’ knowledge and strategy application only takes a very small portion. Although the latest Chinese textbooks have realized the importance of knowledge and started to use a lot of authentic materials, they often use authentic materials to merely enhance the students’ knowledge (particularly the cultural knowledge) instead of constructing a social context for reading performance. When assessing reading comprehension, the textbooks are most limited to the text-based methods such as questions-and-answers, true/false, multiple choices, and fill-in blanks. The task-based reading assessment, i.e., the assessment to see if readers understand the text enough to fulfill the task, is still missing.

To offer more effective reading instruction in Chinese L2 context, we need to know what to teach and how to teach. Investigating the reading tasks and reading
performances by Chinese L2 learners in Chinese speaking communities will help answer these questions. In this chapter, I will describe and discuss an initial investigation aiming to explore the direction for future research and development in Chinese L2 reading instruction. Based on the results of the investigation, I will then propose a new Chinese L2 reading instruction approach, which will be presented in Chapter 6.

5.2 Study Purpose

The purpose in conducting this study was to characterize what Chinese L2 learners read and how they read in Chinese speaking communities. Their daily activities and reading behaviors were analyzed. I attempted to describe and interpret what is involved in their daily reading activities. This research was guided by the following research questions:

1. What materials do American Chinese L2 learners read in Chinese speaking communities?

2. How do American Chinese L2 learners read in Chinese speaking communities?

3. Why do they read those specific materials?

4. How important do they feel that particular reading task is to them?

Answering these research questions will help educators understand the authentic daily reading performances by Chinese L2 learners, and accept the concept that reading is a purposeful social activity. In addition, this study also aims to inspire Chinese L2 educators to include common reading performances in reading instruction to design effective Chinese L2 instruction. Ultimately, we can design our reading instruction to
train our Chinese L2 learners to succeed in reading tasks in Chinese speaking communities.

5.3 Research Methodology

5.3.1 Methods

Survey and one-on-one interview instruments were used to collect data for the analysis. According to Reichardt and Cook (1979), these qualitative research methods orient toward discovery and exploration, and lead to the generation of theory that is thoroughly grounded in the data. The survey is a questionnaire to understand the background of the subjects and the occurrence frequency of reading certain genres. The interview is structured to investigate an individual’s daily reading practices. Both instruments had been designed before the data collection. The survey, the interview questions, and recruitment letter can be found in the Appendices. The present study was exempted from IRB review on December 10th, 2008 under exemption category 2 with the Protocol Number 2008E0825.

Throughout the research design, collection, analysis and interpretation of the data, I believed that Chinese L2 learners’ reading behaviors could best be studied as communicative events which occurred naturally within their common settings: the social contexts of daily life. Social activity was chosen as an appropriate theoretical base because it allows researchers to obtain a complete analysis of human conduct.
5.3.1.1 Survey

The survey consists of nine questions. Questions 1-3 focus on the subject’s education background, major or study field, and the native language. Questions 4-6 focus on the subject’s general experiences of learning Chinese as a second language. Questions include the reasons to learn Chinese, for how long the subject has learned Chinese, how many times the subject has visited a Chinese speaking community, for what reasons, and for how long. Questions 7-9 focus on the subject’s current experience in a Chinese speaking community. Questions are the subject’s current location, and reason to be there and for how long, his/her own rating of the four skills in Chinese, and the frequency of reading various types of reading materials in Chinese in daily life, such as newspaper, magazine, book, letters/emails, etc.

The survey includes both short-answer items and checklist items and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Since the subjects must be Chinese L2 learners who were living in a Chinese speaking community when the research was conducted, surveys were collected through emails. The researcher emailed the survey as an attachment to the participant after getting his/her response of willingness to participate. The participant filled out the survey and emailed it back to the researcher. Fourteen American Chinese L2 learners who were living in a Chinese speaking community participated in the survey and all of them answered all the questions.

5.3.1.2 Interview

The interview was conducted by telephone as a follow-up to the survey. The purpose of this interview was to interpret and characterize Chinese L2 learners’ reading
performances in an authentic setting in Chinese speaking communities. Specifically, it investigated what materials Chinese L2 learners read in the previous day, under what circumstances, how they read, what they did after reading, how important they felt the reading was to their daily activities in general. The interview will help us understand Chinese L2 learners’ reading behaviors in natural social settings, and thus inspires educators to offer more effective instruction.

An interview protocol was designed inspired by the research by Sharon (1973-74). It was designed based on the participants’ activities in the day before the interview and the reading behaviors involved. During the interview, the participants were first asked to describe what they had done in the previous day. After knowing the activities in the previous day, the researcher asked about one activity after another to check if there was any reading activity involved. When getting an affirmative answer, the researcher went on for details on the reading behavior in one activity. Then questions were asked to help the participants recall their reading behaviors associated with these activities. The questions focused on what materials the participants had read, the contents of the reading materials, the functions of the reading, and the importance of such reading. For example, respondents who indicated that on the previous day they had a meal, worked or went shopping were asked what they had read during these general daily activities. Sometimes, the participants mentioned that there was no reading involved in one activity on that specific day. Then the researcher went on by asking about reading behaviors that may not have happened in that specific day, but were related to the themes of the activity discussed upon. Every bit of reading practice mentioned was analyzed to obtain a detailed and comprehensive description of the reading practices.
The research used semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The researcher believes that a more open, semi-structured interview method may provide a rich source of information on qualitative aspects of reading in reality. The first question, which was an open-ended one, would allow the participants to place their own frame around the experience. In other words, the participants had a chance to define what was meaningful or important, rather than simply respond to what the researcher felt important. The researcher only provided hints to help the participants recall backward from the evening to the morning, when the researcher felt the participants had difficulty in telling about all the activities at once.

Eight subjects participated in the interview after they had already completed the survey. Since they were all living in China, the interviews were conducted on the phone. By emails, I asked them their phone numbers and preferred time to be called. Then I initiated the phone call and audio-recorded the interview content on standard 60 minute audio-cassette tapes. The interviews were conducted in either English or Chinese, based on each participant’s preference. All eight participants in the interview preferred their evenings, which were the early mornings in the United States due to the time difference. All participants preferred this time period because at this time they were free after their daily class or daily work. Most participants participated in the interview from their own apartment or dorms in China. The duration of interviews varied from 10 minutes to 20 minutes based on the quantity of the activities provided by the participants. The interviews were transcribed before analysis. Once all materials had been gathered, formal analysis began. The researcher began to identify patterns and themes within the materials.
5.3.2 Role of the Researcher

As a researcher, I adopted the roles of listener, observer, and analyst. As I mentioned in the previous sections, the Chinese L2 readers’ reading behaviors had been overlooked. My role in this study is to reveal these behaviors in natural settings and let these behaviors speak for themselves. I tried to detach myself from the research. However, no data can be neutral, as many post-positivists argue that the act of writing up data for any research involves the process of interpretation, based on social construction and the writer’s assumption. To avoid including my own voice in the description, I wrote from the third-person perspective. Also, I provided a number of interview transcripts which can be read as simple expressions of experiences. By doing so, I am negotiating the tensions between honoring the voices of research participants and the demand for researcher’s interpretive work.

I identified myself as participating in the critical or post-modern paradigm. My perspective on reading is that reading is a broad social activity, always occurring in a natural setting with a certain purpose. In a qualitative study, the backgrounds of researchers are important because they figure into their decisions about empirical questions, their choice of participants and settings, and their interpretation of data (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The researcher in this study had extensive teaching experience in Chinese L2 reading classes in both China and the United States. She also had many years’ experience of learning English as a second language, and about 10 years’ experience of using English in the United States for study, work, and daily life. She read English in diverse settings, such as in the office, at home, in the supermarket, on the road, with various purposes, such as application, cooking, assembling a piece of
furniture, going shopping, driving, filing tax returns, etc. She also had children who were
at the age of starting to read. All these experiences guide her understanding of the
settings where she collected data and the kinds of daily activities she asked from the
participants.

5.3.3 Participants Recruitment and Protection

One vital question in the qualitative study is to determine who the appropriate
participants are. As mentioned earlier, my dissertation only includes a small
investigation as an initiative to propose new performance-based communicative approach
in Chinese L2 reading instruction. Chinese L2 learners who are living in a Chinese
speaking community can provide a picture of the reading tasks they face and their reading
performances in natural settings.

This study was limited to Chinese L2 learners who are American and who lived in
a Chinese speaking community during the investigation. They must be eighteen years of
age or older, preferably college students or graduate students. Additional qualification
for participation as a subject, such as Chinese L2 learners who were from the United
States, currently living in a Chinese speaking community, were included in the
recruitment letter.

Participant recruitment. The recruitment process started with the researcher’s
contact with former American students who were Chinese L2 learners through email.
Some students also helped circulate the recruitment letter to their friends who met the
qualification requirements to participate. The researcher also asked some friends in the
Chinese L2 education field to help locate some subjects. The rapport and trust between
the participants and the researcher was built up very quickly during the research due to a common friend network and shared interests. This good rapport was very helpful because the participants felt more comfortable and were willing to talk more about their own experiences.

Because the potential participants were away from the United States, the recruitment letter was sent out by email to them. In the email, the researcher explained the design of the study and asked for their voluntary participation. Individuals replied via email to participate in the study. The participants’ email responses were treated as their consent to participate in the study.

Participants filled out the survey first, and then participated in the interview. This order matches the normal qualitative research design in which the survey provides a general background while the interview provides a detailed description. However, some participants filled out the survey but did not follow up in the interview. Fourteen Chinese L2 learners participated in the survey but only eight of them also participated in the interview.

**Participant protection.** The current research follows the literacy practice research works and this type of research does not have any foreseeable risk to the subjects. The recruitment letter also included that “there is no potential risk or harm in the study. No personal information will be involved in the study and your confidentiality will be maintained”. The recruitment letter also explained that the participation is voluntary and the participant can decide to terminate his/her participation at anytime he/she feels uncomfortable. No participants discontinued their interviews. The findings
can benefit future Chinese second language learners as it will help develop an improved Chinese reading instruction. However, there was no incentive to participate in this study to the subjects. The recruitment letter mentioned that any internet cost or phone bill in connection with this study will be reimbursed. In fact, the researcher initiated the phone calls and no participants requested for reimbursement.

To respect the subjects’ privacy, the participants’ identifiers, which were their names and contact information in the emails, did not appear in the disseminated materials. A pseudonym was used for each participant and is used in the dissertation. The participants completed the survey questionnaire, and emailed it back as attachment to the researcher. These emails were saved in the researcher’s Ohio State University mailbox, which has been protected by OSU security professionals. The interview was conducted by phone and was recorded on the standard audio-cassette tapes. The tapes were kept in a safe place and only pseudo names were labeled. The data including the questionnaire and interview (tapes and transcription) were stored in a locked file cabinet, and only the researcher had access to the data.

5.3.4 Data collection

Data collection began in December of 2008, following final approval of exemption from IRB review at The Ohio States University, and ended at the end of March of 2009. The collection of interview data occurred after the researcher had collected the survey data from each individual participant. Once all data had been gathered, formal analysis began and the researcher started to identify patterns and themes within the data.
5.4 Data Analysis

5.4.1 Survey

Altogether I collected fourteen surveys. As shown in Table 5.1, the participants (in pseudonyms) have diverse educational background, major or study area. Five had completed first year Master study. Two had completed Master degree. The rest were college seniors or had completed Bachelor degree. Their major varied but Chinese, international relations and business dominated. Ten participants had a major or a double major in Chinese and another participant had a minor in Chinese. Among the fourteen participants, the native language of thirteen participants is English. The other one is a Chinese heritage American and her native languages are English and Mandarin.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Educational background</th>
<th>Major or study area</th>
<th>Native language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Betty</td>
<td>Master degree (M.A.) 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; year</td>
<td>Public Administration, journalism, Chinese</td>
<td>English, Mandarin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>International Affairs, Chinese Language and Culture, German Language and Literature</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>College 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; year completed</td>
<td>Chinese Language and Culture</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>M.A. 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; year</td>
<td>Chinese folk performance</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>M.A. 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; year</td>
<td>Chinese, the Labor Contract Law</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>M.A. 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; year</td>
<td>Chinese, International Relations</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward</td>
<td>College 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; year completed</td>
<td>International Relations, Chinese</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Real Estate, Chinese</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>College 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; year completed</td>
<td>Elementary Education, Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred</td>
<td>College 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; year completed</td>
<td>Business, specialization in Marketing</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>International Studies. Minor in Chinese.</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce</td>
<td>College 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; year completed</td>
<td>Professional writing and editing with a focus on foreign languages</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>M.A. 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; year</td>
<td>Economics, Chinese</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.1.** Educational backgrounds, majors and native languages of the survey participants
The participants had varied experiences of learning Chinese. In terms of the duration of learning Chinese, the answers are: 13 years (n = 1), 5-7 years (n = 3), 3-5 years (n = 5), 1-3 years (n = 3) and under 1 year (n = 2) (“n” refers to the number of participants choosing one answer). The participants studied Chinese for different purposes, and most of them had multiple reasons for learning Chinese. Twelve participants chose two or more reasons and only two chose one reason to study Chinese. One studied to get a job related to China, and the other did not specify. In summary, “to get a job related to China” was chosen 12 times, followed by “to communicate with my friends who speak Chinese” (n = 11), “to enjoy Chinese culture, such as songs, movies, music, etc” (n = 9), “others” (n = 5, 3 specified “travel/live”). “To fulfill the foreign language requirement for my college study” was chosen with the least frequency (n = 5). Clearly, career, communication, entertainment are more common purposes than to fulfill college foreign language requirement.

In terms of their experience of visiting China and the reasons for the trips, 5 participants only visited China once (during their current visit), while all other 9 participants visited China more than once. 4 participants visited China four times, 3 participants visited China three times, and 2 visited twice. Their reasons included study, work, travel, missionary work, etc.

Most participants currently stayed in China for study or for work. Only a few mentioned a travel or cultural interest. The participants have different levels in terms of the four language skills. In the survey, they were asked to self rate on a four level scale: novice, intermediate, advanced, and superior. As shown in Table 5.2, all participants
believed that their speaking and listening is better than their reading and writing (especially writing).

The last question in the survey is the frequency of occurrence of reading different written materials in daily life. As shown in Table 5.3 participants read diverse materials with various frequencies. Flyers/advertisements, books, letters/emails were read with higher frequency. Four participants also specified other types of genres they read in China such as text message, building signs, DVD subtitles, menus, study instruction. Interestingly, three participants mentioned text message, and one of them even rated it as “read every day”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>advanced</th>
<th>Superior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>3*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * the number refers to the number of participants chosen a certain level of proficiency. If a participant self rated between two proficiency levels, such as between superior and advanced levels, two 0.5 values were given to each proficiency level.

Table 5.2. Participants’ self-rated language level
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Every day</th>
<th>A few times a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters and emails</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memos or notes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogs, lists</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bills, receipt or invoice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directions, maps</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuals or instructions for medicines, recipes, or other products</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flyers, advertisement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms, such as job application, tax forms, etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other materials specified by the participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text messages</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building sign</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD subtitles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study instructions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.3:** Frequency of reading different materials by Chinese L2 learners in China
5.4.2 Interview

Altogether I interviewed eight participants. The basic information of the eight interview participants is summarized in Table 5.4 below. The names here are pseudo names. The interview was conducted on the phone, and then was transcribed into text for analysis. The researcher continually read transcripts to obtain a holistic sense of what was happening in the Chinese L2 learners’ reading performances in China. I categorized their reading performances based on the materials they read during their daily activities. I listed the categories according to the number of participants who read such materials from high to low (the number in the parenthesis after each category refers to the number of participants who read the materials in the previous day): menus (8), road signs (8), bills and receipts (7), business card (6), price tags/brands/instructions (6), tickets and schedules (6), flyers/brochures/store names (4), forms (4), online resources (3), subtitles (3), contracts (2), Emails (2), maps (2), novel (2), text message (2), and other types of materials. I will discuss and summarize the reading behaviors exhibited while reading these common materials. Quotation will be used when necessary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Years of Chinese learning in U.S</th>
<th>Years of Chinese learning in China</th>
<th>Length of living in China during current visit</th>
<th>Purpose of current visit in China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>1.5 years</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty (Chinese heritage learner)</td>
<td>12.75 year, with 5 years gap in between</td>
<td>0.33 year</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Study and work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>1 year 10 months</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>0.75 year</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Study and work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>3 years 11 months</td>
<td>2 years 7 months</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>Study and work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>0 month</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>1 year 7.5 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Study and work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.4.** Background information of interview participants
Menus. All participants ate at restaurants on the day before the interview. Whether they read a menu or not and how they would read was depended on their purposes and the contexts. In cases where they already knew what they would order, the participants did not read the menu. Sometimes the participants would read the menu to look for the dishes they liked or they were familiar with. If they were in a new restaurant, they would read the menu to find out what the restaurant had. If the restaurant had a variety of dishes, some participants might read the menu every time to try different dishes. Some participants said that the English menus in the restaurants did not help much. A few participants felt that it was not important to read the menu because they often ordered the same dishes they knew well. However, one participant said that reading a menu was more important in China than in the United States because of the opportunity that she had to order for other people.

Depending on the context, Anthony sometimes read a menu. If he went with his Chinese friends, he would let his friends order because they were more familiar with Chinese foods. If he and his Chinese friends went to Western restaurants, he would order the food. Anthony admitted that he did not understand many dish names in China. If he ordered Chinese food, he would select the same dishes almost every time. He said that it would be nicer if the menu had pictures. Some menus provided English names, but the translation was “not standard” and he still did not know what was in the dish.

Betty said she generally read the menu to order food. She hoped to understand the characters in the menu. She felt that reading a menu was helpful and she could repeat reading menus. She mentioned reading the handwritten menus hanging on the wall in some small restaurants.
Donald had lunch and dinner outside on the previous day. He did not read the menu because he already knew what to eat. Donald commented: “sometimes I read, of course I read”. If he went to a new restaurant, he definitely read the menu. If he read but could not understand, he would ask the waiter/waitress for that day’s specialty. When being asked if reading a menu was important for Americans living in China, Donald hesitated: “say important, it is not important. It is hard to say. It definitely is important”. He asserted that foreigners may have difficulties in ordering food for the first couple of times. Later they had no problem because they often ordered the same dishes. Donald observed that some foreigners, who were not familiar with the city of Chengdu, dared not go to new restaurants. They just found about five restaurants and only went to these restaurants.

Kevin said “as a foreigner, I don’t think it is very important”. After the first two or three times, he knew how to say most of the things he wanted to get. He also stated that during the first week, foreigners could generally order food and make people understand them. Thus, reading a menu and ordering is not that important. When he went to a new place, he would look at the menu and find out what the restaurant had.

James read menus in both small and big restaurants, and read the menu relatively carefully. The restaurants in Shanghai had English menus but the English menus were too simple. His colleagues only read English menu but soon could not bear it. Conversely, the Chinese menu included more dishes. James asserted that if people wanted to eat more options, they would read Chinese menus.
Jennifer went to lunch with a friend in a chain restaurant. Since she had been to that restaurant several times, she knew what food she liked and knew how to say the names. She just said the dish in Chinese and pointed to what she wanted. The menu in the restaurant had pictures so “at this restaurant, you can read the Chinese or you just point to what you want”. But Jennifer had to read the menu in the restaurants that had no pictures on the menu. Sometimes the menu reading was challenging. Under such a circumstance, she would ask because sometimes she did not recognize the characters.

Jennifer didn’t think reading the characters had been as important as she thought. She thought “it is helpful, but as long as you know what to say, you can still get by as a foreigner without reading the characters”. Later Jennifer said that she knew how a menu was organized, “this is the meat, this is the vegetable, (and this is) the rice, I got pretty good at menus now because they are ordered the same way”. She thought reading the menu was not important as long as a person knew the basics, “what is meat, what is vegetable, just like you go to America, what is the main course, what is the side dish, where are the drinks”. However, Jennifer felt that “it is actually more important here because when Chinese people go out to eat, they take a long time to order the food, and it is really important because they ask is this good, is that good. And sometimes you are ordering for a lot of people, so you just need to make sure what you order is good, and everybody likes this”. Based on this difference, later Jennifer concluded that “I learn to take my time and go to the waiter more than when I was in America. So I think, it is important to know how to read the menu in China”.

Lisa went to a restaurant for lunch. She ordered what she could understand. She said she could read, because “sort of I can understand”. She tried to read the menu, but
did not know much. So she usually ordered what she knew or what she could recognize. On the evening of that day, she ordered pizza from a Chinese company. The menu was in Chinese with no pinyin and no English, but with pictures. She read the characters of pizza in Chinese. She ordered the cheese, the pepperoni from Chinese. She was excited when she described her ordering experience because “I ordered a dinner in Chinese”. She emphasized that she did understand because of the characters.

Mark had lunch outside and ordered carry out for dinner. For lunch, he went to a restaurant close to his working place with his Chinese colleagues. He said there was no menu in the restaurant and they just pointed to what they would like to eat. He ordered dinner-to-go in a dumpling restaurant. This was his second or third time ordering in that restaurant. Mark said he read the menu every time because the restaurant had a variety of dishes and he could not remember the whole menu. The most important thing while reading the menu was to see if he could find his favorite dishes. On that specific day, he ordered Suantai rousi (shredded pork with garlic shoot), which was his favorite dish. While reading the menu, he saw suantai (garlic shoot) first. Mark also mentioned that if he could not recognize the name of a dish, he would not pay attention to it. Mark said that the menu was categorized into dumplings, cold dishes, hot dishes, and each part had a lot of dishes.

Road signs. All participants talked about their experiences reading road signs, including street names, street signs, and transportation signs. They stated that the purpose of this reading activity was mainly to get to their destination. If the participants were familiar with the places or transportation systems, they would not read, or would read very quickly. However, if they were unfamiliar with the places, such as when they
were visiting another city, they would read very carefully. When they could not recognize the characters in the sign, the participants read more carefully. The participants with lower proficiency in Chinese used some strategies, such as memorizing the destination, and only searching for the destination. Sometimes they would ask instead of reading.

Anthony took a taxi or the subway in Beijing everyday. When taking the subway, he read the signs of where the subway went. Previously there were only two subway lines in Beijing, but now Beijing had more lines. As a result, he needed to read the signs. The signs were written in both Chinese and English, but Chinese was written in a bigger font and he read Chinese only. Reading subway signs was quite easy and Anthony read quickly because he was quite familiar with Beijing. However, during his first time in China and his first time in another city, Anthony read the road signs tediously(?change another term). He used Shanghai as an example. He could not recognize some characters in Shanghai subways, and even he could recognize the place names, he did not know how he could commute from one place to another. Under such circumstances, he either asked the clerks in the subway, or called his friends for help. Anthony said in Beijing, he could read the sign quickly and knew where to get on and get off, but in Shanghai, he may stand there for a long time, read all the signs but still could not figure them out. He explained that some place names used rare characters. One example was, if not being in Beijing, he would not know the character阜 in阜成门(Fucheng Gate). Similarly, in Shanghai, Chongqing, or Fuzhou, there were many places he could not recognize. Anthony also talked about his experience of waiting for a train. During his
first time waiting for the train on the platform, he ran around to find the right platform. Now he is used to it and it is no longer a challenge.

Betty read the name of the community where she lived when she first arrived. That sign was on the outside door. If she went out to take a bus, she would read the signs on the bus stop. Betty often read signs during walking. When she had nothing to do, she would read the signs and other notes to see if she could understand.

Donald did not read the road signs because he was quite familiar with the places. However, when he first arrived in Shanghai, he did read the signs. If the place names were comparatively simple, he did not need to read carefully. But if he could not recognize the character, he would read very carefully. Donald mentioned that it was convenient in Shanghai because the road signs had pinyin in big font, which made it easier for foreigners to find the destination.

When he just arrived in Shanghai for the first time, James needed to read road signs everywhere. Now whenever he left the area that he was familiar with and that he lived and worked, he would read carefully due to unfamiliarity. He paid attention to where he was and which road he was on. He used this as a way to know Shanghai.

Jennifer took a bus on the day prior to the interview. She usually did not read the bus sign because she knew where she was going. “All I had to do was to listen to my stop”. She also did not read much on the road because she was really familiar with the place she went to. However, Jennifer mentioned that when she went to some unfamiliar parts of the city, she had to read the bus signs. For this sort of reading, she just read and searched for “Qingdao University” based on the suggestion her friends gave her. An
alternative way was to ask the bus assistant whether the bus went to the university or where the bus went. She said that usually she asked instead of reading because it was easier and took less time.

Jennifer went to Shanghai during the weekend before. She had to read and knew where she was going. “I had to read the subway signs, and all that stuff”. Jennifer and her friend had to read the different street signs because the map was written in Chinese. They read the street signs very carefully, “because a lot of street names are similar, so we have to make sure that we are reading the correct one and staying in the correct way”. Jennifer said the subway stops were all in Chinese. When they bought the subway tickets, they were reading the street names in Chinese. Jennifer concluded, “when I was traveling, I read a lot more carefully when I was reading things”.

Kevin paid attention “to street names, the street signs, restaurant signs and names, advertisement on the side, things like that” when he was walking on the street. However, when he was walking on a street that he passed by everyday, he did not read the signs.

Lisa went to work by subway and bus in Shanghai. At the beginning of the interview, she said that the subway signs stating where she was going were the only materials she really read on the day before the interview. Then she added reading bus sign since she also took a bus. Apparently, reading road signs was an important part of her daily routine. In the subway, she read where the subway was going, and looked for her destination 陆家嘴 (Lujiazui). She did not know other parts in the subway sign. Lisa also read the bus sign on that day. Since she took that bus everyday, she already
memorized the sign. If she already knew the sign, she knew which bus it was, and which characters the destination place had.

Mark talked about his experience of reading a note posted on the door of the building where he lived in Nanjing. He said the notice was written for him. The note wrote that somebody used too much water and should fix the problem as soon as possible. Mark said that he noticed and understood the note. He called and fixed the problem. He said that he saw the door everyday. If there was a note on it, he would notice and read it.

**Bills and receipts.** Seven participants discussed about reading bills and receipts. Most of the time, they would just pay the bill, but they would read bills and receipts briefly when necessary. They mentioned a few cases when they would read the bill, which included when they were eating in a new or expensive restaurant and when they felt that they may be overcharged. When they read, they would compare the total amount on the bill with the expected amount.

James generally did not read the bill. He only briefly read the bill in big restaurant or in hotel. Mark generally did not read the bill because he felt it was not necessary and he believed that the bill was correct. But he would read the bill when he felt that the price was higher than expected. In such a circumstance, he would read and check if anything was wrong.

Donald seldom read the bill. When he was eating outside, either his girlfriend would take care of the bill, or he would pay the amount the waitress/waiter asked when he was alone. It was not because he was unwilling to read, but rather he felt it was
useless to read. He knew what he ordered and the price. However, if his company would reimburse the cost, he would read receipt (发票, fapiao) very carefully. He specified that he would pay attention to the authenticity of the receipt.

Betty sometimes saw the bills, but most times just paid. Since most meals were very cheap, she felt unnecessary to check. She also mentioned that in some supermarkets, she would get a sale receipt (小票, xiaopiao) first which she needed to bring to the cashier to pay and bring back to the counter to obtain the goods. In that case, she would look at the sale receipt to check the price.

Kevin normally would just pay the bill when he knew the restaurant well and trusted the waiter/waitress, and he knew how much he should pay. But if he was eating in a new place, he would read the bill. Usually he would look for a menu on the wall or table to see if the prices were correct. Kevin sometimes read the receipt from a supermarket for language learning purposes. He said, “yes, sometimes I do read the receipt. Usually I read. It is definitely hard to read. What I do is just to look at it. On the bus home, I took out the receipt, and sometimes when I got home, I read it quickly, and see how many things I can identify. For the things I bought, I really know what it is in Chinese”. He felt such reading was important for him “just because there is lot of things either I am curious to know in Chinese, or maybe helpful in some point to just know how to say it”.

Only Anthony and Jennifer said they usually read bills. Anthony read the dinning bill after he was done. The bill was quite simple and he just read how much he spent. Jennifer read the bill “because sometimes they do charge you for things that you did not
order”. Her experience of being overcharged reinforced her habit of bill reading. In addition, her American friends, who had stayed in the same city for a while, always checked the bill because they felt that sometimes people tended to overcharge them. When checking the prices, she would remember the prices of the dishes she ordered and usually just checked “the end price to make sure it is right”. If the total did not seem to be right, then she looked the bill over in more detail.

**Business cards.** Six participants, Anthony, Betty, Donald, James, Kevin and Mark, said they had read business card in China. All these six participants work in China and use Chinese during work. Among them, Donald and James said that they often read business cards. Lisa also works in China, but she did not say she read business card in China. Her job was to teach English in a school.

Most of the six participants read the name, and/or title first when reading a business card. Anthony read the person’s title first, and then the name. During the interview, Mark first said that he read the title first. Later during the interview, he said he read the name, company name and title. James read the names and titles because “China is a country paying attention to titles and ways of addressing”. He said that he mainly read the last name but also paid attention to the first name. Donald first read the name, the title, and then the name of the company, their location, and finally the contact information. Kevin looked at the person’s last name, and some sort of title. Betty read the work unit, name, and title.

The participants mentioned four functions of reading business card. One is to address the person appropriately. Kevin said he read so that he can call them. The last
name and title were the first things he looked at. James read the business card to know how to address the person. He said if he read a business card and knew the person’s last name was Liu, he would see whether the person was Manager Liu or General Manager Liu, or Director Liu. By doing so, he knew how to address the person and felt more comfortable. Another function is for later contact, as mentioned by Anthony, Betty and James. Anthony felt it easy because he could read and understand the telephone number and email address without any problem. James made phone calls and sometimes wrote emails but seldom used the mailing address.

Reading business cards can also show respect to the other person and help build up their network. Mark would read the business card for a while before putting it into his pocket to show his respect. Donald felt that it was not polite to put the business card into his pocket right away. James gave one example of using business card to communicate and build up his network. On the day before the interview, he met a person and received a business card. That person’s first name used two rare characters that James could not recognize. So he asked the person about the two characters. That person said that even Chinese native speakers may not know these two characters, and then explained to James. The person seemed to be very happy that James asked such a question because he/she knew that James did read his/her business card carefully and really cared about the relationship. James said that after this conversation, their relationship has continued to grow. James concluded that if he could not recognize a person’s name, he will just ask since it is a good way to show his respect. Anthony also mentioned that names, especially the first names were one of the biggest difficulties he had in reading business cards. He was more comfortable with last names since he read *Baijiaxing (Hundreds*
Family Surnames) before. As for some people’s first names, he still had no chance to learn such a character during reading even though he read the newspapers everyday. Anthony did not know how to solve this problem but felt embarrassed for not knowing and having to ask the person to explain the characters.

Another function is to confirm the information about the business card holder. Betty said she generally had already known the persons’ names before they exchanged business cards. Thus she just read the card briefly. James also mentioned that in general, he already had an idea about who the person was and which company that person worked for. So sometimes, he read just to confirm.

The reading of business cards may happen differently based on the reader’s familiarity with the card holder and the purpose. James and Mark said that they read the business card very carefully. Betty read the business card very fast. Anthony said whether he read a business card or not depended on the context. If he went to a meeting with his boss, he did not need to read the business card but just put it in his pocket. Kevin mentioned that he only read the business card if the business card holder was talking with him for the first time. Sometimes he would read the business card later to see if he knew all the characters in the name and could identify the working place and location.

**Price tags, labels and other instructions.** Six participants talked about their reading behaviors during shopping. They normally just read the price tag. Some participants also read the brands on labels. One participant read to improve her Chinese. Anthony only read the price tags during shopping. Jennifer did not really read anything
during shopping except just “looking at the end price”. Lisa often went by picture, and sometimes read the characters for milk, yogurt, and different kinds of meat. Mark normally felt it was unnecessary to read the labels because he could know what the food was just by a look. He only read the label when he saw a package of food but could not tell what was inside. In addition, if he saw a drink for the first time, he may read to learn the flavor or type of the drink. Mark also purchased clothes in China and read both the price and the brand.

Betty read a lot of materials during shopping. She read the prices and brands, sometimes ingredients and nutrition table on the food, such as the oat meal. Sometimes she read for information, such as the taste of the food. But more often, she treated such reading as a way to improve her language. Sometimes she read the characters on the package “character by character” because it was a chance for her to practice Chinese. Sometimes she went to a supermarket, not really to buy things, but to see what the supermarket was selling and to read characters to improve her language. She believed that “it is important for foreigners” because “sometimes you heard about the characters but never read them. It is helpful”.

Betty also read the washing instruction of clothes during shopping to know if the clothes were washer safe. “People here are used to hand wash. I’m not used to that.” She sometimes asked the sales clerk and then read the instruction. If she bought a piece of clothing but could not understand the instruction, she sometimes had to look it up in a dictionary. But she thought this reading was not very important.
Kevin read prices and labels during shopping. “I definitely remember looking at the price because I remember how much it cost. I feel I usually just look at the numbers. Everything is in numbers”. Kevin read labels on the food to get the kinds he liked. He gave examples of buying peanut butter and chocolate mix. He said “yes, I read the brand. I get used to paying attention to the brand, for the most part, just name and brand”. This habit of reading the label came from his experience: “I bought one (peanut butter) that has low salt on it, it tasted horrible. I wasn’t paying attention to the label. So when I buy it next time, I make sure I do not buy that kind”. He read the brand of chocolate mix because he just wanted to get the kind he liked.

**Tickets and schedules.** Six participants talked about reading tickets in China. Most talked about air tickets, train tickets and long distance bus tickets. Two participants talked about tour tickets and basketball game schedules and tickets. They read tickets mainly to confirm the information to make sure they could get on board without any trouble. They read the price, departure, destination, and type of seats for train tickets, and read the name, passport number, visa number, and dates for air tickets. Normally they did not read very carefully.

Anthony only read if he went on vacation by himself or with non-Chinese friends. When taking train, he needed to read the train schedule, looking for information such as the type of train (if it is an express train), departure time, arrival time, etc. During his very first couple of times reading the schedule, Anthony could not understand the schedule even if he understood every character. Now he is acquainted with the schedule and knew what to look for. He also read the tickets, paying attention to the departure city, destination, time, price, and if it is on the sleeping car or just coach class.
During her recent visit in China, Betty often took long distance buses. She read the tickets and checked the departure, destination, and the prices. As she became more familiar with those, she might not read the ticket any more. She also bought air tickets and just read the price and dates. Some participants bought air tickets online. When picking up or receiving the tickets, Mark did not read the ticket very carefully. He only read to confirm his name, visa number, and passport number. James would read carefully to confirm if the information was all correct when he got the tickets, but he would just browse through other information.

The day before the interview, Donald went on a tour of Shanghai Jinmao Tower. He purchased the ticket and only read the price. He felt that it was not interesting to read the ticket. Kevin bought CBA (Chinese Basketball Association) tickets the week before the interview. He went to CBA main website and got the schedule. He looked at the schedule which included day, location and team. Then he looked for the Qingdao team, clicked it and went to the main page of the Qingdao team and bought ticket online.

**Advertisement, flyers, brochures and store names.** Four participants read advertisements, flyers, and brochures. They read these materials for multiple reasons including job related, personal interest, language training, and acquisition of information. Their reading behaviors and focus depended on the purposes.

James read some flyers and advertisements and some marketing materials when he was working on the day before the interview. When the reading materials were about his company, he would read carefully because he would like to learn how to describe his company from the material. When the materials were about other companies, he would
read briefly. James went out during the weekend. He read the store names (known or unknown) and advertisements. Since his major was marketing, he would like to read the store names, and would try to understand the relationship between the store name and the product the store was selling.

Donald got a brochure about the Shanghai Jinmao Tower during the tour. Donald read the brochure very carefully, because he worked in a real estate company and was very interested in business towers, housing, and industrial places. Donald also read a lot of advertisement on his way to work and on the way from the airport to his hotel during his vacation. “The advertisement was very interesting”. Most times he paid attention to the real estate advertisements which were quite simple, containing only the name, price, timeline, and some simple introduction of the local community. He did not need to read very carefully and could understand 99%. Donald also paid attention to the advertisements in the subway. He paid attention to the photos, the type of product and the function of the product.

Betty read flyers to improve her language skills. She went to the supermarket and read the sales flyers and advertisements. She gave an example of reading advertisements of discounts in that week. She read to see if she could understand. To her, this reading was like a small quiz. She read the known characters fast, and read the unfamiliar character slowly. On his way to work, Kevin always read restaurant signs and names, advertisements on the store, etc, to see if there is any change. Kevin normally read word by word since the signs were usually very short.
Forms. Four participants talked about reading and filling out forms, such as a customs form when entering China, registration form to university, application form of resident permit, forms on the first day of working, and bank forms. Participants with a higher level proficiency normally read and filled out the form in Chinese while participants with lower level proficiency normally read an English version or got somebody to help them.

Anthony went back to Beijing from vacation three days before the interview. He filled in a small, simple form to enter China, which asked for very common information, such as nationality, name, gender, birthday, etc. Anthony mentioned that such information could also be asked in other places. The form had both Chinese and English on it. The Chinese was written in bigger font while English was in small font below Chinese. Jennifer filled out the form in Chinese only for her names and birthday and used English for the remaining parts. Lisa filled out the custom form in November but she only read the English translation.

Another form mentioned was registration forms. Anthony and Lisa went through the process of applying for a resident permit at a local police station. The form was in Chinese. Anthony read and filled out a small form asking for his visa number, passport number, address, entry date, etc. Lisa did not read anything because some friends went with her and did everything for her. Jennifer filled out a form at the university when she registered. She had to write everything in Chinese. She did not do it on her own because “I don’t have much experience doing these sorts of forms”. Fortunately, one of the teachers helped her. Mark filled out some forms on his first day of work. The forms asked for his basic information such as education background, his previous job, etc.
Jennifer read the form in a bank to deposit or exchange money. Even though some of the people in the bank spoke English, she read the form because she wanted to sign the right form and do the right transaction. She claimed reading in the bank “is very helpful”. These forms were pretty much the same, asking for the passport number, name, how much money she was exchanging, the exchange rate, and then her signature.

**Online resources.** Three participants talked about their experience of reading online materials such as news websites, companies’ websites and blogs. James worked in a company and his responsibility was to locate/create business opportunities. He needed to call some Chinese companies and asked about recent events. He felt embarrassed if he was not familiar with such events. Therefore he read news about international companies online every morning before coming to work. Whenever a piece of news was related to China, he would read Chinese websites to see how they explained it. Another purpose to read Chinese websites was to learn how to express himself better in Chinese during his phone calls. If he only read the English websites, he had difficulty expressing himself in Chinese due to his limited translation ability.

James read other Chinese companies’ websites at his office in the morning. He read to understand the companies’ business plans. He often read carefully so that he could use some of the words from the website to impress the companies when he was calling them. He used the words and expressions from the companies’ websites as much as he could to show his knowledge about the companies. James had a database of the companies’ contact information, but he still confirmed the phone number with the companies’ websites before he called the companies. He said many companies listed sufficient information online such as telephone numbers, contact people, etc.
Mark also read online materials during his work. Sometimes the websites were written in Chinese. He mentioned that he was asked to read Hongkong media once. Kevin mostly read online English materials and only read Chinese websites for research. “Besides my research, I don’t go to the internet. I occasionally look for articles”. He also read two professors’ blog articles. The professors provided a topic list and Kevin just read the one relevant to his research. He usually read the first paragraph to see if the article was relevant. If not, he just ignored it. If it was relevant, “I guess I will copy and paste it into a new word document, either print it out or put it in wenlin (a software) and read it that way”. Wenlin saved him time because he could use the program rather than look things up in the dictionary. When necessary, he would use the pronunciation Wenlin provided and look an item up in a more reliable dictionary.

**Contracts.** Two participants read two types of contracts: business contracts and rental contracts. The reading purposes and the familiarity with the contents determined the participants’ reading behaviors. These two participants normally read briefly to confirm the known terms. Anthony read contracts for work. How he would read depended on his purpose. If he needed to answer some questions or to discuss with others, he read very carefully. If his boss asked him to read for potential reference, he just took a quick look. Anthony had no problem in understanding the contract, but his biggest problem was the slow speed. If the contact was very long and he read with great care, he spent a long time, which was boring. If he read a little faster, he might overlook some the meaning and might not understand the contract.

Anthony and Mark talked about reading rental contracts. Anthony rented an apartment from a Chinese landlord. The landlord wrote a very simple contact regulating
the length, price, and rules such as protecting furniture. “The landlord was a young man, and did not make trouble”. So Anthony briefly read the contract, could not see a big problem, and signed. Mark found his apartment through a commissioner. He read the final contract. He knew what the content would be, so he just read briefly and signed.

**Emails.** Two participants discussed reading emails. During his daily work, besides contracts and product descriptions, the next most frequent material Anthony read was email. Most of the emails were about working arrangements and how to deal with some company issues, and were not hard to read. In addition, emails normally were comparatively short and simple, so Anthony did not read with great care. He said he did not need to read very carefully and felt that he could grasp the content fully. “The emails are quite easy to read” and Anthony read Chinese emails the same way he read English emails.

Jennifer worked for a Chinese wedding company and got emails from her supervisor who did not speak English. She went through a process of looking words up in the dictionary “all the time” to seldom using a dictionary. When she first arrived in China, Jennifer used the dictionary “a lot”, “all the time”. Later, she did not look words up frequently. She said that “I don’t think it will happen, but the characters once you use it on a daily basis, so it’s just like the words you use in English on the daily basis, you just get to know them. You don’t think you would, but you do”.

**Maps.** Two participants talked about the experience of reading maps to get to the destinations, especially unfamiliar places. Donald used the map when he was not familiar with the place. James said he could read the map to get to his destination. He
claimed the ability to read a map was a must for foreigners. “Anybody who goes abroad needs to learn how to read maps. If a person could not use the map and could not follow the map, he will easily get lost and get in trouble”. James mentioned that his wife and parents-in-law did not know how to read maps correctly and often got lost. During their recent visit to him, they called him almost everyday to inform that they got lost because they read the map incorrectly. James was quite frustrated when it happened.

Subtitles. Three participants read TV subtitles. Anthony described reading subtitles on TV as the biggest challenge in his Chinese reading. At the very beginning of the interview, he said that if there was one thing he could not read and understand in China, it was the subtitles. He watched some European movies on TV and had to read the subtitle because the language used in the movie was neither English nor Chinese. There was nothing he could not understand in the subtitle, but he just could not keep up with it. So his problem was the speed of reading subtitles. Donald watched TV on the previous day. He did not read the subtitle unless the person on the news used a dialect or a minority ethnical language or had an accent. Lisa also mentioned that she sometimes watched movies and read the subtitles. However, due to her language level, she didn’t really understand them.

Kevin also read news headlines on TV or subtitles during breakfast or while waiting for his food in the restaurant. During his breakfast, he looked at TV occasionally and tried to see the headlines very quickly. The host talked about newspaper articles and put headlines on the screen to go through. Kevin only looked at the headlines on the screen. He looked very quickly and “not really paying attention to the program while making myself ready to go”. Kevin said such a reading was not very important and most
times he was listening. While he was waiting for his food in the restaurant, he read the news on TV because he could not hear very well. Obviously he was not going to know every character. He just tried to follow along. When the food came, he stopped reading.

**Text messages.** Jennifer read text messages every day because “it is how most people here to keep in touch. Some people don’t even call you, because it is cheaper to send the message here”. Text messages helped her learn more characters and more common Chinese sayings. She also responded in Chinese, which helped her a lot too. Jennifer emphasized the importance of text messaging. When asked what things were important to read for Americans, her only answer was “text message”. Mark also mentioned text messages during his interview.

**Novels.** James and Betty talked about reading novels. James had been reading a novel recently. He read for entertainment as well as to improve his Chinese language ability. Reading novels was not so tedious because the novel was interesting. He felt reading newspapers was boring. When he read novels, he used a pen to circle unknown characters. He would read a chapter or 10 pages and then stopped and reread the unknown characters. If a character appeared 2 to 3 times, he would look it up in the dictionary. If a character only appeared once and was not so important to the meaning, he would not look it up. He said that he could not bear to look up every character. He made guesses and could guess successfully about 70-80% of the time.

Betty also read novels at home for language practice. She read relatively slowly. For the unknown characters, she sometimes guessed and sometimes looked them up in a dictionary. Without looking them up in a dictionary, she could still understand, but did
not know the detail clearly. Sometimes she would tell her friends about the novel. Betty also talked about how she bought the novel from the supermarket. She saw different types of books there. The content of some novels was simple or interesting so that she bought one to improve her reading. She saw various types of books in the store, such as how to deal with failure, business, recipe, women’s health, history, entertainment, etc. Since these books were not categorized, she read the books to know what kind of book it is. She would read the covers and the names of the book very fast to learn about the content. Sometimes the book was wrapped so she turned to the back cover of the book and read the abstract or simple introduction of the content.

**Other materials.** Some participants also mentioned their reading experience of the following types of materials: (1) product description. Anthony read some product descriptions at work. The reading purpose determined his reading behavior. If he needed to present the product to others, he would read relatively carefully. He felt reading product descriptions was easier than reading contracts because contracts normally had several pages in length while product descriptions normally had only 2 to 3 paragraphs or even just a few sentences sometimes. Therefore, even if he had to read the product description very carefully, it was not a big deal. When presenting, Anthony mainly referred to the numbers for accuracy, but used his own words to summarize the general meaning of the product description because the audiences were not technical experts so he needed to present in a simple and easy-to-understand way.

(2) Betty worked in a TV station and read the scripts written by other colleagues. In general she read them very carefully. But the script was quite simple since it was written for kids. (3) Kevin read his interview script during his interview for his own
research. He read it to make sure he asked the questions correctly. In general, he looked at all the questions and stuck to exactly how the questions were written because these questions were written with his teacher’s help. Kevin also took notes during his interview and read the notes later for report writing. (4) Kevin read an article related to his domain on the newspaper and made a glossary of words for his boss. He read and added some words to the lists in his Excel documents. He read the article very carefully because “whenever at work, the main reason to read was to see if a word was appropriate to add to the glossary”. He had a pen and usually underlined characters unknown and relevant to the glossary. He spent a lot of time on it. For the unknown characters, he first guessed and saw if he could figure them out. Sometimes he also looked them up in the dictionary. (5) Jennifer read the washer panel to do laundry. The first time she used a washer in China, she read the panel and was really confused because it was different from American washers. She asked the dorm personnel to help. Later, laundry had become a routine and she just used the same washing cycle.

5.5 Results and Conclusions

Survey. The survey provides the following information: (1) Chinese L2 learners conduct reading performances in a Chinese speaking community, (2) Currently, Chinese L2 learners have diverse purposes for learning Chinese and most participants have multiple purposes. The common purposes include career development and desire to communicate with Chinese speaking friends. (3) The frequency of reading various types of materials in Chinese is different. Some genres are read more frequently than others.
**Interview.** Through the interview, we can see that reading is first of all a social activity, regardless of the diverse backgrounds and language proficiency levels of the participants. Readers read in social settings, such as working, shopping, meeting, researching, eating, etc. The participants read a wide range of materials. They read business cards, flyers, forms, road signs, and other materials we can meet in daily life.

Second, reading is a purposeful activity. Participants read with purposes. The purposes include addressing and interacting with other people, passing customs, registration, reaching a destination, confirming the information or price, operating a machine, improving language skills, purchasing, contacting people, getting familiar with the local environment, entertainment, etc. The reading purposes play an important role in reading. They decide if the participants are going to read, and how they will read. The participants read the materials based on their needs. If they feel it is not necessary, they will not read. There are usually two reasons that participates consider reading not necessary: 1) they are already familiar with the content of the reading material, and 2) the reading is not useful for them. Even for the same kind of reading material (such as road sign), the readers sometimes read it and sometime don’t read it.

The above results illuminate the gap between reading in reality and current reading instruction. The current Chinese L2 reading instruction considers comprehension as the ultimate goal and concentrates on training of comprehension factors (especially lower level language factors). Conversely, in reality, the ultimate goal is to fulfill the purpose of reading and comprehension is just an important factor for this goal. Thus, we need to improve our Chinese L2 reading instruction by shifting it from comprehension-oriented to performance-oriented.
Since Chinese L2 learners read based on their needs, we should consider readers’ needs when choosing reading materials in the new performance-oriented reading instruction. With the prediction that every Chinese learner would like to function successfully in authentic social context, we should choose the authentic materials and present them to students as they would in the authentic contexts. Specific consideration is also needed when students develop specific interests, such as business, politics and culture in China.

5.6 Validity, Reliability and Other Issues

My research used qualitative study methods. Both the survey and interview have a small number of participants. For an initiative research, the minimum sample size is acceptable. “The focus of qualitative research is on depth, the emphasis is rarely on sheer numbers of participants” (Jones, 2002, p. 465).

Nevertheless, with a larger number of participants and more data, the researcher can group the responses by variables such as language proficiency levels and language settings (such as working, studying, social interacting, purchasing, eating, etc). In this study, the participants were recruited based on availability. I planned to investigate more diverse samples but in the research, especially in the interview, most participants were from a higher proficiency level. The future research should include more learners at lower level.

As for the validity of the data, I recorded the interview and analyzed the data after transcribing all of the interview tapes. I did my best to be loyal to the original data. Sometimes the participants contradicted what they said previously, but I did not do a
member check which asks the participants to read the transcribed interview script and check their answers. Instead, I rephrased their words immediately in the interview so that the participants could have chances to reconsider what they just said. I feel that approach is more effective since the setting is still valid and the participants still had a fresh memory about what they just said. Some qualitative study researchers believe that member check is a good way to check the subjectivity of the researcher and ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, but I feel that this member check has both pros and cons. The participants may have forgotten what they said during the interview. A better designed member check might be playing the tape and presenting the transcription at the same time to help the participants recall the setting of the interview and check what they truly intended to express. Performance-based Chinese L2 Reading Instruction

As revealed by Chapter 1 and Chapter 5, reading is a purposeful social activity involving the interaction between the reader and text. Readers read to fulfill a task. However, as shown in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, current reading research and reading instruction has overlooked this social nature of reading. Instead, current reading theories are comprehension oriented and the prevailing pedagogical approaches aim to help students achieve comprehension. In the field of L2 reading, especially Chinese L2 instruction, the situation is worse. Due to the dramatic difference between Chinese and English orthography, many educators focus on the linguistic barrier and tend to treat reading as a linguistic behavior instead of a carrier of social communication. As a result, Chinese L2 reading instruction focuses on the lower level reading factors (such as orthography, vocabulary and grammar). There is rarely any task-based comprehension assessment, nor exercises that train students to perform reading in appropriate social
context after comprehension. The discrepancies between the nature of reading and current Chinese L2 reading instruction reduce the efficiency of reading instruction.

This study aims to fill the gap between the social nature of reading and the current reading instruction. In this chapter, I will propose a performance-based pedagogical approach for Chinese L2 reading instruction. First I will give a definition of performance and performance-based instruction. Then I will introduce performance-based reading instructional approach and describe how to implement it in the curriculum. At the end, I will discuss the benefits that this approach could bring. Specifically, I will focus on the effectiveness of this instruction by analyzing classroom observations, students’ homework assignments, and students’ feedback in course surveys and evaluations.
Chapter 6: Performance and Performance-based Instruction

As stated in Chapter 4 (section 4.2.1), performance is situated behavior in everyday life (Turner, 1987). Walker (2000) further identified the five elements of performance: place, time, script, participants, and audience. Performance-based instruction is the instructional approach that trains students to apply their previous learning in the authentic context (Wiggins, 1993). Wolf (1990) argued that the learner should not just be asked to follow the path of previous learning but should be engaged with a novel task that requires an extension, application, or transfer of previous learning. Stiggins (1997) envisioned that performance-based tasks require more complex analysis. In his definition, the term performance can only be used when the use of skills is embedded in more complex problem-solving situations. Demonstrating proficiency in isolated skills in an activity-oriented way does not constitute a performance even though such activities aim at the development of essential skills.

It has been well recognized that language and communication cannot be separated from the cultural context in which they occur (Walker & Noda, 2000). Walker and Noda (2000) further pointed out that “no one really learns a foreign language. Rather, we learn how to do particular things in a foreign language; and the more things we learn to do, the more expert we are in that language.” (p. 190). Therefore, in second language learning context, especially in East Asian language learning context where the target culture
shares little with the native culture, performance is an essential part of learning how to successfully integrate oneself in the culture and societies of the target language.

However, as reviewed previously, this aspect is almost completely neglected in Chinese L2 reading instruction. To better demonstrate what performance-based reading instruction is, I would like first to borrow, from Chinese L2 listening/speaking instruction, an example of greetings to demonstrate the differences between performance-based instruction and the conventional skill-based instruction.

Greeting is the first function appearing in the first lesson in many Chinese textbooks. I have provided the following four contexts and asked Chinese native speakers to create their greetings. These greetings, which are generated by the native speakers with provided context elements (place, time, script, participants, and audience), are considered to be authentic performance.

Context 1: Two teachers meet for the first time at a teacher’s development workshop. The workshop is about to start in a few minutes. They greet each other.

Place: in the lecture hall at the workshop.
Time: a few minutes before the workshop starts.
Participants: two teachers who meet for the first time.
Audience: other teachers attending the workshop.
Script:
您好，请问您贵姓？(What is your name?)
姓李，李伟。您贵姓？(My last name is Li, my full name is Li Wei, what is your name?)
姓吴，吴江。(My last name is Wu, my full name is Wu Jiang).
Context 2: Greeting at the beginning of the teacher’s development workshop between two acquaintances. They don’t expect that they would meet at the workshop.

Place: in the lecture hall at the workshop.
Time: just arrived in the early morning.
Participants: two teachers who know each other.
Audiences: other teachers attending the workshop.

Script:
李老师，早。(Good morning, Instructor Li.)
吴老师，早。你也来听讲座？(Good morning, Instructor Wu. You are also here for the lecture, right?)
对呀。(Right).

Context 3: Two teachers work at the same school and greet each other in front of the students.

Place: school hallway.
Time: during class break.
Participants: two teachers who work at the same school.
Audiences: students and other teachers around.

Script:
王老师好。(How do you do, Instructor Wang?)
吴老师好。下课了？(How do you do, Instructor Wu? Are you on break?)
对。下课了。(Yes, I am on break).

Context 4: Two teachers are friends. They see each other in a shopping mall and greet each other.

Place: in a shopping mall.
Time: weekends.
Participants: two teachers who are close friends.
Audiences: other shoppers around.

Script:
李伟，买东西呢。(Li Wei, you are shopping, right?)
对呀，你也来买东西？(Yes. Are you also here shopping too?)
Apparently, all the greetings occur in situated contexts. Greetings (1), (2) and (3) occur in formal contexts, so the teachers use formal greetings. Greeting (4) occurs in a shopping mall and the teachers use casual greetings. The context (place, time, participants and their relationship, and the audience) determines the way to greet.

In comparison to these authentic everyday greetings, many Chinese textbooks use “Nihao”, “Nihao” as the greeting exchange. The following are a few examples extracted from textbooks:

Example 1: 《快乐汉语》(Kuaile Hanyu). Unit One in the first volume of this textbook is “you and I”. The first lesson in Unit One is greeting. The textbook shows a drawing of a male and a female greeting each other outdoors. They shake hands and say “nihao” “nihao”. Except the script, this textbook does not provide a clear context for this greeting: occurrence place (what kind of setting, on campus or on the street, or in a park), occurrence time (when such a greeting occurs), the participants (who are these two people, and what is their relationship), and the audience.

Example 2: 《汉语乐园》(Chinese Paradise). The first lesson in Unit One in this textbook is greeting. The textbook provides a drawing with three students (based on their school bags and school uniforms) and a lady. The lady may be their teacher but the drawing does not explicitly convey this. The place may be the school gate but again it is not clear. Based on the drawing, we can see that one student greets the lady “nihao” and waves his hand at the same time. The lady also waves her hand and responds “nihao”. Apparently, this lesson does not provide clear context. Even if we add the context as greeting between a student and a teacher, most Chinese native speakers would not accept
such a greeting. The authentic script should be “laoshi hao”, “Wujiang (the student’s name which I add here), nihao”.

Example 3: Integrated Chinese (3rd ed.). Lesson one in Level One Part One is greetings. Dialogue one is exchanging greetings. A male and a female greet outside of a building. The male waves his hand. They greet: “nihao”, “nihao”. Again, this greeting is decontextualized. Other lines in this dialogue notate that these two persons meet for the first time because they ask about names. Still, we could not see where this greeting occurs, the exact time when such a greeting occurs, or the roles of these two people.

The greeting exchanges demonstrated in the examples above seldom occur among Chinese speakers in reality. These greetings are not authentic but manufactured by instructors. In fact, “nihao” is just one of the many terms that Chinese people use in their everyday greetings. It does not necessarily appear in all contexts. Moreover, “nihao” is usually not used alone. In most cases, Chinese native speakers add other components before or after “nihao” depending upon contexts, such as addressing terms.

In addition, these textbooks did not provide context when teaching greeting. Thus, this kind of instruction is not performance-based. This kind of instruction does not simulate a daily performance. Instead, it is more likely trying to introduce a linguistic item (“nihao” in this case). Thus, this kind of instruction is skill-based. Also most textbooks equate “nihao” as “hello” in English. This can mislead the students. In the United States, people can say “hello” or “hi” on the street to strangers when passing by. But in China, it is strange to say “nihao” in a similar context.
This skill-based training will lead to failure when students try to behave that way in everyday life. The movie *The Great Wall* (1986) provides a very good example of this. In the movie, two young men, Zaihua and Yida, tried to make friends with their two female classmates, Lili and Xiaojuan. During the break between classes, Zaihua greeted them “Nihao”. Lili, who was unwilling to talk with him, and felt offended by his attempt to date her best friend Xiaojuan, criticized that this greeting was Americanized.

Zaihua: 你好! (Hello.)
Lili: 你好个什么呀? 又不是美国人，见了生人还得你好你好的。 (Hello for what? You are not American, (Americans) have to say hello, hello when meeting strangers.)

As the summary of the above examples, we can see that performance-based instruction is different from the conventional skill-based instruction in the aspects of the learning goal, the instructional approach, and the role of the teacher. The goal of performance-based instruction is to train the students to apply learned knowledge in appropriate social context. The goal of the skill-based instruction is to make the students learn the skills. In the aspect of instructional approach, performance-based instruction trains the students by providing social context with emphasis on the students’ performance. The social context is simulated with authentic materials, and the performance should also simulate a real world scenario. The skill-based instruction teaches students by explaining the linguistic or cultural phenomenon. The students are asked to memorize the texts and facts and practice their learning by contrived school assignments. To better explain the grammar and other linguistic elements, more scaffolding materials are used. Authentic materials become an option, and sometimes are
avoided. In performance-based instruction, the teacher’s role is to model and facilitate the performance, while the teacher in skill-based instruction takes the role of transmitting information.

The performance-based instruction has many advantages over the skill-based instruction. What the students learn from performance-based instruction can be applied directly to a real world setting, but what the students learn from conventional skill-based instruction is not always transferable to a real social setting. In performance-based instruction, students are engaged more actively when trying to solve real-world problems. Students are learning actively in performance-based instruction, while students are learning passively in skill-based instruction.

At the end of this section, I would like to clarify that performance-based instruction does not completely discard conventional skill training. Rather it moves beyond the traditional language skill training. In addition, performance-based activities are not a mechanical “add-on” but rather an integrated part of existing lessons and units. That is, they are not simply plugged in from an external source but emerge from the ongoing class work.

6.1 Performance-based Reading Instruction

A performance-based reading instructional approach is to teach reading as it happens in appropriate social context. Its objective is not to develop word recognition and comprehension, but to develop the learners’ ability to handle various reading tasks. To do so, students are directed to read the text and fulfill the reading tasks in simulated authentic reading contexts. This requires a performance-based reading instruction to use
authentic material in the authentic way, and train students to fulfill the authentic tasks. The reading task must be the same as the reading happens in everyday life rather than manufactured for student consumption.

In fact, more and more Chinese reading textbooks have started to incorporate authentic materials. However, as revealed in Chapter 4, when incorporating authentic materials, most textbooks don’t include the relevant contexts and the reading tasks. In most cases, the reading task was developed differently from the authentic task. To better explain this phenomenon, I would like to use the example of the business card exchange activity.

Many recent Chinese textbooks have included business cards for students to read. In everyday life, people exchange business cards when they are greeting each other when they meet each other for the first time in formal settings. Chapter 5 also showed that Chinese L2 learners will have the chance to read business cards in China. Therefore, it is appropriate to include business cards in the lesson for greeting.

However, the manufactured textbook activities of reading these business cards deviate from the authentic ones. For example, *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 Textbook* (3rd ed) shows a business card on page 30 and asks the students to circle the person’s family name and answer a question about the location of the business card holder. *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 Workbook* (3rd ed) uses three business cards on page 22, and asks the students to “underline the characters denoting family names”. Page 23 on the same workbook uses two business cards and asks the students to “answer the questions in English”. One question is about family names and the other is to choose
which person is working in Beijing. Page 39 on the same workbook uses a business card and asks the students to answer true/false questions.

These reading activities are not performance based. Although the textbooks “incorporate” the authentic materials (business cards), they do not use them in the authentic contexts (during greetings). In addition, the task of reading these business cards is twisted. In these cases, the reading activities are designed to improve students’ reading comprehension skills, such as character recognition. When assessing if the students comprehend the business cards, they use the conventional text-based methods such as circling and questions/answers.

So, what is an authentic business card reading performance? Interestingly, *New Practical Chinese Reader Textbook* shows us an example. In Lesson 7, Volume 1, there is a dialogue involving reading a business card. The following is the detailed analysis of this reading performance.

Context: Two students, Ding Libo and Lin Na met Professor Zhang for the first time. During their greeting, Professor Zhang gave Ding Libo a business card. Ding Libo read the business card and addressed Professor Zhang.

Place: Based on the dialogue, the communication should occur on the campus of the Beijing Language and Culture University. The drawing at the beginning of the dialogue is the dining hall on campus.

Time: the day before the first day of semester.

Participants: two students, Ding Libo and Lin Na, and a professor working at the university, Professor Zhang Jieyuan.

Audiences: other teachers and students in the dining hall.

Script (the lines before and right after the business card reading in the dialogue):

Ding Libo: 请问，您是我们学院的老师吗? (Excuse me, are you a teacher in our institute?)
Prof. Zhang: 是，我是语言学院的老师。(Yes, I am a teacher in the Institute of Language and Culture.)

Ding Libo: 您贵姓? (What is your name?)

Prof. Zhang: 我姓张，我们认识一下，这是我的名片。(My last name is Zhang. Let’s get to know each other. This is my business card).

Ding Libo: 谢谢。 (看名片) 啊，您是张教授。我叫丁力波，她叫林娜。我们都是语言学院的学生。(Thank you. Reading the business card. Ah, you are Professor Zhang. My name is Ding Libo, and she is Lin Na. Both of us are students in the institute.)

This reading performance is authentic. The business card is a constituting component of a social context, which is provided by the dialogue. In the dialogue, Professor Zhang met Ding Libo and Lin Na for the first time. He gave them his business card. Ding Libo read the business card and correctly addressed Professor Zhang by saying “啊，您是张教授。” (Ah, you are Professor Zhang). However, I feel that this example is not intentionally designed for performance-based instruction, since other reading materials in the same lesson are all conventionally comprehension-based.

Performance-based reading instruction simulates the tasks as they are conducted in everyday life. As shown above, to address the other person appropriately after reading his/her business card is a reading performance. Thus, when teaching business card reading, performance-based reading instruction can provide a context involving business card reading, and train the students to initiate a conversation with the card holder. The following is an example:

Context: You attend an academic conference, and receive a business card from another attendee. It is the first time you meet him. Please read the business card and initiate a conversation with that person.

Place: at an academic conference.
Time: during the break.
Participants: you and another conference attendee.
Audience: other attendees in the conference.

Script: (read the name especially family name on the business card; You may also read the title) 王教授您好! (How do you do, Professor Wang).

The design of the instruction can change according to the reading task. In reality, the reading task can be diverse even when reading the same material. It will be best for the students if the instruction can cover a broad range of reading tasks and contexts. Still using the business card as the example, if two participants meet each other for the first time, they might pay more attention to the name and title of the other person so that they can address each other appropriately. In another case, where a person might need to contact someone he has met before, he will find the business card and read the contact information, such as telephone number or email address. When calling the card holder, he might still read the business card at the same time. Specifically he reads the name, title and other information to ensure that his memory is correct and he speaks to the other person appropriately. The following context is still performance-based business card instruction even though it is very different from the previous one.

Context: You are a law school student and are looking for a summer internship. You go through your business card collection to find people who you have met before, and working in similar fields. Please find the person who could help you and call him/her.

Place: in your dorm room.
Time: 10:00 AM in a week day.
Participants: yourself.
Audience: none.

Script: (read the names of the companies and find the one you are interested. Read the family name and the title of the card holder, and then read the office phone
In summary, the performance-based reading instruction is to conduct the reading activities as they happen in everyday life. The performance-based reading instruction requires the teacher to provide the authentic materials, present them as they would appear in everyday life, and construct a context simulating everyday life. The objective of the reading is to fulfill the task, which should also be the same as it is in real world. Because the way the reading task is conducted can vary depending on the social context, it is important for the teacher to provide the simulated contexts so that the students can practice in diverse tasks.

6.2 Implementation of performance-based reading instruction

The core of the performance-based reading instruction is to train the students to perform reading in appropriate social contexts. For this goal, we need to provide students the social context information, reading task, and the text. Authentic material is a must for performance-based reading instruction and should be used to construct the social context. In this section, I will discuss about how to implement performance-based reading instruction. I would like to note that, the implementation of performance-based reading instruction is a broad topic and requires many more future studies. Each instructor may have his/her own view point. In this dissertation, I would like to share my personal experience with performance-based reading instruction. Although by no means will this
dissertation include all the possible methods for implementing performance-based reading instruction, it is intended to be a starting point for further study in the field.

I would like to categorize my reading instruction into three phases. Phase I focuses on the comprehension, and comprehension should be achieved by the end of it. Phase II focuses on comprehension assessment by using task-based assessment method. Phase III moves beyond text comprehension and focuses on reading performance in everyday life. From this three-phase structure, we can clearly see that performance-based reading instruction is a further development over skill-based reading instruction. It moves further to assess comprehension by checking if the students can perform reading tasks and ultimately train students to perform in everyday life.

6.2.1 Phase I: Comprehension

As reviewed in Chapter 2, there are many reading-strategy instructional moves targeting at comprehension. Among them, I use reading aloud and questions-and-answering most frequently and often find them very efficient.

National Reading Panel (2000) reported the significant and positive impact of guided repeated oral reading procedures on word recognition, fluency, and comprehension across a range of grade levels in a variety of classroom settings. When I use the reading aloud approach, I do not suggest round robin reading in which students take turns to read the text aloud, or other simple repeated oral reading. Instead, I would rather make the reading aloud activity more like acting in the context by treating the text as the script for a skit. For example, if the text of the lesson is a dialogue, we can set up the context where the conversation will most likely happen and ask the students to take
the roles and act out in the context. When teaching the dialogues in lesson 3 and lesson 4 in *Character Text for Beginning Chinese*, which is about purchasing merchandise in a book store, I ask one student to act as the shopper and another student as the store clerk in the book store. The “clerk” stands behind a desk in the classroom, which is designed as the counter in the book store. The “shopper” stands in front of the counter. There are some stationery items displayed on the “counter”. The difference with this activity from the real performance is that the students are allowed to have the textbook in their hands to read the dialogue (the script could be projected onto the screen or the wall if the equipment is available). The “shopper” and the “clerk” will read his/her part of the script respectively. Very often students will add some body language that would happen in everyday life but has not been included in a textbook (such as pointing at a pen when asking the price).

This contextualized reading aloud has the following advantages over conventional reading aloud approaches. Conventional reading aloud is conducted without context, and thus only practices word recognition and fluency. In contextualized reading aloud, reading is designed to happen in contexts and thus can also trigger the learner’s schema. This will lower the knowledge barrier. According to the interactive model (section 2.1.3.2.2), the privilege in prior knowledge can lower the linguistic barrier and facilitate comprehension. An evidence is that the “shopper” automatically used his/her body language to point at the merchandise he/she is interested when reading “how much is this pen?” The body language is part of the students’ prior knowledge but not hinted in the text. The context of reading aloud helps the students incorporate this piece of prior...
knowledge. In comparison, when doing round robin reading aloud, no students use this kind of body language.

In phase I, I also use questioning and answering to reinforce comprehension. A lot of Chinese textbooks, including those analyzed in Chapter 4, use question/answer. However, most of them provide questions and ask the students to answer the questions. In performance-based reading instruction, the students also participate by generating and answering questions, rather than simply answering the questions posed by the teacher or the textbook. According to researchers (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002; Palinscar & Brown, 1984; Roehler & Duffy, 1984), the ability to generate questions is a useful comprehension strategy. This strategy can help the readers become metacognitive about their reading and can increase their comprehension. This question and answer approach is actually suggested by the Collaborative Comprehension Instruction (CCI, please see Chapter 2 for more details). CCI suggests the use of open-ended discussion and exchange of ideas can promote the reader’s engagement with the text and internalize their thinking and reasoning about text. I feel that, after the students read the text, they will gain some degree of understanding (perhaps with some mistakes) and they can ask questions based on their understanding. When other students answer the questions, they can discuss and collaborate to achieve the correct comprehension. The teacher’s role should be a facilitator to encourage such discussions and provide feedback.

6.2.2 Phase II: Interpretation

The focus of phase II is to assess students’ reading. Performance-based reading instruction suggests that the reading assessment method that is task-based. This kind of
assessment is not to check if the students understand a character, a word, a sentence, or a type of grammar structure. Instead, the task-based reading assessment is designed to see if the students understand the text enough so that they can perform in the associated tasks in everyday life. This makes the task-based reading assessment take different format from the text-based assessment. The latter usually takes the format of question/answers, filling-in-the-blanks, multiple choices, etc, and often tests on a particular sentence, word, or character in the text.

I would like to use an example to demonstrate task-based reading assessment. In the dialogue of lesson 7 in Character Text for Beginning Chinese, Mr. Bai asked Mr. Mao how to get to Mr. Gao’s house. Mr. Mao gave detailed directions. Since the reading text is a direction, the performance will be “get to the destination by following the directions”. To assess if the students understand the text well enough to perform successfully, I ask them to draw a map for Mr. Bai to get to Mr. Gao’s house. Below are the text giving directions and two sample maps drawn by students. As shown in the first map, the student misunderstood the location of Mr. Qiao’s house. Mr. Qian’s house is at the right side of the lake, but the student identified it as the small house in the east on the top of the hill. In class, this mistake was corrected in the discussion when the student demonstrated his map.

Text:

Mr. Mao: 高先生家住在城外，就在这条路的北边儿，一个小山上。(Mr. Gao lives in the suburb of the city. His house is at the north of this road, and on the top of a small hill).

Mr. Bai: 在那个山上有几所房子？(How many houses are there on the top of the hill?)
Mr. Mao: 那儿一共就有三所房子，西边儿有一所大房子，东边儿有一所小房子，中间的房子就是高先生家。南边儿山下是中山路。中山路前边儿有一个大公园。山后头有一个小湖。(There are three houses altogether: a big house in the west, a small house in the east, and Mr. Gao’s house is the middle one. Zhangshan Road is on the south at the bottom of the hill. There is a big park in front of Zhangshan Road. There is a small lake at the back of the hill).

Mr. Bai: 那个是北湖吗? (Is that the North Lake?)

Mr. Mao: 是北湖。湖的右边是钱先生家。湖的左边还有一个小公园。(Yes, that is the North Lake. Mr. Qian’s house is at the right side of the lake. There is a small park on the left side of the lake).
Figure 6.1: Example map 1 generated by a student according to lesson 7 in *Character Text for Beginning Chinese*
Figure 6.2: Example map 2 generated by a student according to lesson 7 in *Character Text for Beginning Chinese*
Another assessment method is to ask the students to summarize the content of the text in tasks. In everyday life, summarizing the reading text is often required as a real performance, as well as a strategy that good readers use during their reading (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). Reading a paper and then writing a review or making a presentation is clearly an authentic performance. To perform in this case, the reader must comprehend the reading material well enough to summarize it. From this point of view, assessing reading by summarization is a task-based assessment. In the performance-based reading instruction, the students are required to summarize on functions. For example, I ask the students to introduce the bus conductor and his family after reading Lesson 10 in Character Text for Beginning Chinese, introduce Miss Gao’s school after reading Lesson 13 in Character Text for Beginning Chinese, and integrate the content across several lessons for one theme, such as describing Mr. Bai continually as each lesson contains more information about him.

The reproduction of the text does not need to be in written format. But if time allows, I will ask students to write because reading and writing Chinese are reciprocal activities (Tan, et al., 2005). In addition, they will practice to integrate the content and represent their organization in a real written communication. When the reproduction is completed, the teacher will provide opportunities for students to share and do group correction. Reading aloud the reproduction, or questioning and answering based on the reproduction can be done, as described in Phase I. Comments or written corrections will be provided as well by the teacher. The teacher can also provide a model of the reproduction of the text, such as narration of the text. Such a narration can be read and discussed in class or the teacher can use it as dictation.
In summary, serving as the transition between Phase I and Phase III, the purpose of Phase II is to assess if the readers understand the text well enough so that they can perform well in everyday life. The key difference of this task-based assessment from the conventional text-based assessment is that, its ultimate goal is about performance, not the characters, words, or grammar. To do so, the instructor needs to understand what is the real performance of reading the text, what is the comprehension prerequisite of the performance, and then design efficient assessment methods.

6.2.3 Phase III: Reading Performance

After students have gained a solid foundation of the text comprehension from phase I and phase II, phase III will train students to perform reading in appropriate social context. Heap (1991) defined reading as a form of action that is successful in achieving its purposes (p. 11), and reading meets three cultural conditions: (1) something is read, (2) for some purpose, and (3) under certain circumstances. When designing performance training in this phase, four factors must be considered. They are 1) text theme, 2) authentic material, 3) purpose of reading, and 4) social surrounding.

6.2.3.1 Text Theme

Text theme is about what the reading text describes to students. Almost every lesson in current Chinese textbooks has a theme. The themes can be greeting, asking for or giving directions, shopping in a store, or dining in a restaurant. To design an effective performance-based reading instruction, the performance must be aligned with the text theme that the students comprehended in the previous phases. In everyday reading, people comprehend the text, and then perform accordingly. Thus, asking
students to perform some activities that are unrelated to the text is not reading by its definition. In addition, the textbooks aim to help the students gain the knowledge and skill for a future use. The future use, which is the performance in everyday life, should be connected with the skills to be trained. Since the skill training process is predetermined by themes, the performance should be related to the theme. It will not help students much if the text theme is about shopping in a store but students are asked to perform asking/giving directions. In fact, students will very likely become confused.

6.2.3.2 Authentic Material

“Reading is always reading of something” (Heap, 1991, p. 18). To train students to perform in appropriate social contexts, the use of authentic materials is a must. By its definition, an authentic material is a material written by competent native Chinese speakers for native Chinese speakers (Integrated Chinese 2nd edition, p. xvii). However, not all the materials fulfilling this definition will be good for performance-based Chinese L2 reading instruction. Authentic materials must be chosen carefully to maximize the efficiency of instruction.

First, the authentic materials must be related to the theme. As the constituting component of the context, authentic materials have a direct effect on the design of the reading performance. Although it seems very obvious, it is fairly easy to find improper authentic materials from current Chinese textbooks. An example of improper authentic materials can be found in Lesson 3 in Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1 (3rd ed.). In the section of “Grammar” for dialogue 1, the textbook lists a table of numbers so that students can learn how to say and to read numbers in Chinese. Below the list of numbers,
two pieces of authentic materials are incorporated. One material is a sign that provides a fire emergency phone number (119). Under this material, there is one question asking “what is the number to the fire station if you want to report a fire? Can you say it in Chinese?” (p. 71).

This authentic material here does not really fit the theme of the text. The theme of Lesson 3 is dates and time. The first dialogue is about taking someone out to eat on his birthday. The authentic material of fire station is used to practice phone numbers and obviously is irrelevant to the theme of the lesson. In fact, Chinese native speakers will read the phone number differently than mathematical numbers. They will read “119” as “yao yao jiu” if it is the phone number, but “yi bai yi shi jiu” if it is a mathematical number. Clearly, the authentic material that fits better in such a lesson will be a calendar, or a weekly schedule.

Second, the authentic materials should be useful. Because the objective of the performance-based reading instruction is to train students to perform reading in everyday life, the authentic materials that students will read should match with those the students will meet in everyday life. It is important for the instructor to use updated authentic materials, given the fact China is developing fast. An example of an out-of-date authentic material can be found on page 232, *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part I (3rd ed.)*. The authentic material is an image of a one cent bill. In fact, the one cent bill was issued in 1953. Due to its diminished value, people nowadays in China seldom use it. An image of a bill still in circulation, such as 100 RMB, would be more appropriate.
Third, the difficulty level of the authentic materials should match the students’ skill level. Too complex material will weaken students’ motivation for reading and reading efficiency. For example, Lesson 3 in *Integrated Chinese Level 1 Part 1* uses a sign on page 71. The sign reads: 民警向您提示: 请保管好自己的物品，谨防被盗 (the police officer reminds you: Please take good care of your belongings to prevent stealing) and 火警: 119 (fire emergency number: 119). This authentic material is too difficult for the students. At the time the sign is introduced to the students, they would have only learnt three of the characters (请, 好, 的) in this 22-character sign.

Interestingly, the authors seemed to understand that the sign is too difficult for the students and actually did not expect the students to comprehend it. Under the sign, there is a question (written in English) which asks the students “What’s the number to the fire station if you want to report a fire. Can you say it in Chinese?” To answer the question, the students do not need to read any Chinese characters in the material. Indeed, since the sign contains too many unlearnt characters, the students very likely would not be able to understand anything from it except the Arabic number 119. With the hint in the question that this sign includes a phone number, the students might be able to answer the question correctly. From this point of view, this sign did not trigger Chinese reading activities, and thus would be ineffective.

As mentioned earlier, the themes can be shopping in a stationery store, greeting, inquiring or giving directions from one place to another, etc. Different formats of authentic written materials that share a similar theme and that will occur in similar contexts can be introduced at this phase. For example, we can provide some authentic
receipts and price tags when the theme of the lesson is purchasing, provide business cards for the greeting lesson, provide train schedules or flight schedules when the lesson is about traveling, and provide menus when the lesson is about ordering in a restaurant. We can provide various forms when the theme is suitable, such as the form to apply for a library card when the theme is about the library and the use of a library, or the form to send a parcel in the post office.

### 6.2.3.3 Reading Purpose

Heap (1991) stated that “it is necessary to the concept of reading that there be a purpose when one reads, otherwise one would not read at all” (p. 18). To train the students to perform reading in everyday life, we must design the reading activities with authentic reading purposes that assimilate real-world experience or real-world application. Reading is not simply a set of skills but rather the application of the skills for specific purposes in specific contexts (Kirsch & Guthrie, 1984; Scribner & Cole, 1981). They believed that studying reading as a practice involves gaining a better understanding of the socially organized ways in which people use reading or writing to accomplish specific tasks. Barsalou (1999) remarked that “comprehension is grounded in perceptual simulations that prepare agents for situated action” (p. 577). Glenberg (1997) believed that “to a particular person, the meaning of an object, event, or sentence is what that person can do with the object, event, or sentence” (p. 3). When defining purpose,
Roger Fisher stated that “there is a fundamental human need for guiding ideals that give meaning to our actions”\(^3\).

People read for a variety of uses and functions (Greaney & Neuman, 1983; Heap, 1991; Scribner & Cole, 1981). Scholars (Hiebert, 1994; Newmann & Wehlage, 1993) proposed that authentic literacy tasks assimilate real-world experiences, provide a purpose for learning, and encourage students to take ownership of learning. Purpose refers to the cognitive awareness of the cause and effect linking in the action. In performance-based reading instruction, we should design activities involving reading authentic materials in proper tasks.

First, the reading purpose should be aligned with the theme of the lesson. Phase III should provide opportunity for the students to apply what they have learned in the lesson. For example, the theme of Integrated Chinese (3rd ed.) Lesson 6 is making appointments. Under such a theme, reading tasks such as making an appointment after reading one’s calendar or appointment book is relevant. Reading tasks such as reading a menu and deciding what to choose for dinner is not relevant.

Second, the reading purpose should assimilate real world actions. As discussed before, circling the family name, filling in the blanks, choosing the correct answer, and answering questions in English are not the purpose of reading a business card in the real world. People read a business card to communicate with the card holder, or to know a person better.

\(^3\) This quotation is from wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purpose.
Third, we have to consider that there could be multiple purposes when reading the same material depending on different reading contexts. Different reading purposes can determine different reading behaviors, even when reading the same material. In the previous section 6.2, I used some business cards as examples. According to Kaestle (1987), reading is a ubiquitous and multipurpose activity. Guthrie and Greaney (1991) proposed that the social context gives rise to a reader’s purpose for reading, which, in turn, determines how the reader reads the text. Sticht (1978) pointed out that the cognitive strategies and the behavior of the reader will vary with the reading materials and uses. From this point of view, we should provide the opportunities for students to practice with different reading purposes even for the same reading material by providing multiple reading contexts.

With the business card as the reading material, I would like to use two examples to explain how to incorporate multiple reading purposes in phase III. In the first example, the reader reads the business card to be able to initiate a conversation with the card holder. In the second example, the reader reads the business card to be able to provide his/her colleague some information about a travel agent. In the first context, the reader may just read the family name and title to address the card holder appropriately. In the second context, the reader read both the names and the contact information so that his/her colleague could contact the agent to plan a trip. Obviously, the different purposes determine how the readers read the materials.

Context 1: You receive a business card in a seminar, read the card and initiate a conversation with the card holder.

Place: in the seminar
Time: before the seminar begins
Participants: you and the card holder
Audiences: other attendees to the seminar
Script: read the business card (especially the name and title) and initiate a conversation:

啊，您就是王教授。自我介绍一下，我是李嘉。这是我的名片。(Ah, you are Professor Wang. Let me introduce myself. My name is Li Jia. Here is my business card).

(看名片) 啊，李教授，久仰久仰。(Read the business card) Ah, Professor Li, I have heard your name for a long time. Nice to meet you.)

Context 2: You work at an international business company in Shanghai. Your colleague, who just came from the United States, would like to plan a vacation trip. He asks your advice and information since you have been in Shanghai for quite a long time.

Place: in the international business company in Shanghai
Time: during lunch break in the office
Participants: you and your American colleague
Audiences: other colleagues
Script: when your colleague asks if you know a travel agent, you take out the agent business card, tell your colleague the name and contact information.

Your colleague: 你知不知道一些旅行社代理？(Do you know any travel agent?)

You: 知道。等一下（拿出名片夹，找到旅行社代理的名片），我常用中国青年旅行社，你可以找李华，他的电话号码是------(Yes, I know. Give me one second. Takes out the business card holder, finds the business card of a travel agent. I often use China Youth Travel Service. You can ask for Mr. Li Hua, his phone number is......)

Your colleague: 哪个李，哪个华？(which character is Li, and which character is Hua?)

You: 木子李，中华的华。(Li is composed of mu on the top and zi in the bottom, Hua is the one in the word zhonghua which means China).
6.2.3.4 Social Context

In Phase III, we should also train students to be aware of social context and perform accordingly. Reading is embedded in a wide range of activities that are woven into the fabric of society (Gee, 1992; Heap, 1991). Reading occurs in situated contexts and the contexts determine reading behaviors as reading is “not an isolated act, but occurs in the context of more general activities such as working, shopping, or traveling” (Sharon, 1973-74, p. 169). Guthrie and Kirsch (1984) recognized that reading, as a form of communication, is a complex activity that is affected by the various contexts in which it occurs. Smith (1995) suggested that social context guides reading practice by determining what and when a person reads. Context is viewed as a broad concept including words, deeds, things surroundings, purposes, values, intended courses of action and interaction (Gee, 1999).

As discussed earlier in this dissertation, in performance, we consider five elements: place, time, participants, audiences, and script. The variation in any element could change the reading behavior. Let’s take menu reading as an example. When reading the menu in an expensive restaurant, in most cases the customer will pay attention to the dish and the price as well. But when ordering in a cheap restaurant, the customer may not pay attention to the price. If the reader is the host, he will pay more attention to the ingredients of dishes so that he can select diverse dishes for everyone. When the reader is the guest, he may read more about the price to avoid ordering the expensive dishes.
In summary, Phase III is designed to train students to perform reading in everyday life. Among the various instructional factors, we need to pay attention to the text theme, selection of authentic materials, different reading purposes, and the social context. This phase will include the authentic materials that will occur in the related theme in real world situation and provide a chance for the students to read and perform.

At the end of the introduction of Phases I, II and III in performance-based reading instruction, I would like to emphasize that these phases are integrated organically. Although sometimes, some students did not achieve comprehension in Phase I, it is still appropriate to move on with Phase II and Phase III. As will be discussed in detail in the following section, the reading activities in Phase II and Phase III can reinforce the comprehension of the text. The three phases of reading activities in performance-based reading instruction facilitate the readers’ interaction with the texts in a “spiral” way: first reading and comprehending the text in the lesson, second demonstrating their understanding of the text provided by the lesson in tasks which require reorganization and integration of the text, and finally applying their knowledge and skills in authentic reading performance in real world contexts by handling authentic materials that are emerged from the theme of the lesson. With such a spiral pattern, students will revisit the text from different layers and angles to achieve real comprehension and, more importantly, perform in appropriate social context.

6.3 Examples of Performance-based Reading Instruction

In this section, I will provide performance-based reading instruction examples for Lesson 4 in Character Text for Beginning Chinese (1976). This lesson needs three
classes. Each class is 50 minutes long and covers one phase. Before each class, the students need to prepare for the class for about two hours.

The theme of Lesson 4 is about shopping at a bookstore. In the lesson, Mr. Bai came to a bookstore to buy some school supplies such as a notebook, pencil, pen, paper, ink, map, and dictionaries. Mr. Mao, the bookstore clerk, assisted Mr. Bai during his purchase. Below are the preparation items, class activities and homework assignments for this lesson.

Class 1.

Preparation items. During the preparation, the students should 1) study the new characters and vocabularies until they can understand the meaning and recognize the characters, 2) read the dialogue till fluency, and 3) generate five to ten questions about the dialogue and give their answers.

Class activities. The main purpose of the first class is to ensure students can comprehend the dialogue in the textbook.

The first activity is reading aloud by acting out in context, which will take about 25 minutes. Students will be called on or volunteer to act out the dialogue. Normally there are two rounds of acting out. After the first round, the instructor will ask some context questions, such as who are these people in the act, where the act is located, what is the intent of these people, etc. The purpose of these questions is to help students understand the context and situate themselves in the context better. After the students understand the context, they will perform the second round. Usually students will perform better in the second round.
The key of this reading aloud is to situate reading aloud in context and let students take action at the same time during their reading. An important task of the instructor is to set up the context. Besides asking the context questions, the instructor should better use some visual aids to set up the counter, the merchandise, and so on. For Lesson 4, the context includes: (1) Place: in the bookstore. (2) Time: any time when the store is open. (3) Participants: Mr. Bai, a student from the United States, and Mr. Mao, a sale clerk in the bookstore. (4) Audience: other shoppers and store clerks. (5) Script: the dialogue which starts from the point when the sale clerk, Mr. Mao, greeted and served the customer, Mr. Bai.

The teacher also has two other tasks. The first task is to assist students during the reading aloud portion. During the reading aloud portion, the “actor” sometimes cannot recognize some characters and cannot continue reading. When it happens, the instructor will ask other students to help out. When the actor makes an error during the reading, the instructor should not interrupt the reading aloud. Instead, the instructor should note down the error and correct it after the acting is over. In this way, the instructor can minimize the interruption, and keep students in the simulated context. The second task is to provide linguistic knowledge of the characters, such as the components of the characters, the similarities and differences between the new characters and characters learned in previous lessons. Normally this task is done at the end of the first activity in this class.

The second activity is questioning and answering, which will also take about 25 minutes. During this activity, students will generate and answer questions about the text, and the teacher will provide comments and feedback on the errors or places needing improvement. Table 6.1 includes some sample questions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>白先生现在在什么地方?</td>
<td>白先生现在在书店。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生现在在干什么?</td>
<td>白先生在书店买东西。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>毛先生是谁?</td>
<td>毛先生是卖东西的人。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生都买了什么?</td>
<td>一个本子, 六支铅笔, 一支钢笔, 一张中国地图, 五十张纸, 一本中文字典, 一本英文字典, 一本中英字典。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>一个本子多少钱?</td>
<td>六毛五分钱。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生买了几个本子，花了多少钱?</td>
<td>一个本子，六毛五分钱。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>文具店有墨水吗?</td>
<td>有，但是只有黑墨水和蓝墨水。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生买墨水了吗? 为什么?</td>
<td>没有。他要买红颜色的墨水。但是书店/文具店只有黑墨水和蓝墨水。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>文具店有笔吗? 有什么笔?</td>
<td>铅笔，钢笔，毛笔都有。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>一支铅笔多少钱?</td>
<td>九分钱。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生买了几枝铅笔? 花了多少钱?</td>
<td>他买了六支铅笔，花了五毛四分钱。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生买的钢笔多少钱一枝?</td>
<td>两块八毛钱。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生买毛笔吗? 为什么?</td>
<td>不买毛笔，因为他有毛笔。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>书店有地图吗? 什么样的地图?</td>
<td>中国地图，美国地图。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生买了什么样的地图? 多少钱一张?</td>
<td>中国地图，两块九毛七分钱一张。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生买了多少张纸? 一张纸多少钱?</td>
<td>五十张纸，一共四毛九分钱。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生买字典了吗? 什么样的字典?</td>
<td>他买了一本中文字典，一块八毛钱，一本英文字典，两块九毛钱，一本中英字典，四块七毛钱。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>白先生一共花了多少钱?</td>
<td>一共十六块九毛一分钱。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Table 6.1: Sample questions for *Character Text for Beginning Chinese* Lesson 4 |
**Homework Assignments** After class 1, the students are expected to be able to comprehend the text. The purpose of the homework assignment is to assess the comprehension. As introduced before, performance-based comprehension assessment focuses on if the students understand the text well enough to perform in everyday life tasks. The following are two examples of homework assignments.

1) Mr. Bai just arrives in China and needs to buy some stationery for his school study. He writes down a shopping list for the next day’s shopping. Assume that you are Mr. Bai, and this is the day before the shopping trip. Write down a shopping list based on the dialogue.

2) Reread the dialogue and help Mr. Bai write his diary entry on what he purchased today and the price.

**Class 2.**

**Preparation items.** During their 2-hour preparation before the class, students need to 1) review the characters, vocabulary and dialogue, 2) study the grammar and sentence pattern in the drills, and 3) finish the homework assignments from class 1.

**Class activity.** The main purpose of this class is to let students demonstrate their reading of the dialogue in tasks. This activity will take about 40 minutes. The students will demonstrate their homework assignments from class 1 to the whole class by either reading aloud or preferably through a document camera. The class will then discuss the assignment and provide feedback. During the discussion, the mistakes in the assignments will be corrected preferably by the peer students. The instructor will assist students during discussion. He/She will hint student, give examples, and cover the missed points.
First, the students will show their first homework assignment, which is to generate a shopping list for Mr. Bai. To do this assignment, the students must read the dialog and then summarize it. A place students need to notice is that a bottle of red ink should be listed in the shopping list, although Mr. Bai did not buy it. Not all the students can get the shopping list right the first time, but students will realize what they missed through the discussion and generate a correct one. Below are two examples of the shopping list:

Example 1:

买:
本子，一个
红墨水：1 ping (Student have not learned how to write “瓶” yet, but they learned Pinyin in speaking class)
铅笔：6 枝
钢笔：1 枝
中国地图：1 张
纸：50 张
中文字典：1 本
英文字典：1 本
中英字典：1 本

Example 2:

我要买:
本子 一个
红墨水 一瓶
铅笔 六枝
钢笔 一枝
中国地图 一张
纸 五十张
After all the students obtain a correct shopping list, students are asked to cross the items from the shopping list for Mr Bai after he made his purchase. This activity can reinforce the students’ comprehension and word reorganization. The request and an answer example from students are listed below:

Assume that you are Mr. Bai, and you have purchased some stationery in a bookstore. Look at your shopping list and cross out the things you have bought.

买:
本子，一个
红墨水：1（瓶）
铅笔：6枝
钢笔：1枝
中国地图：1张
纸：50张
中文字典：1本
英文字典：1本
中英字典：1本

Second, the students will show their second homework assignment which is a diary entry on the items purchased and the price. The following are two examples
Answer 1:

我在书店买了一个本子，六毛五分钱；一枝钢笔，两块八毛钱；六枝铅笔，五毛四分钱；五十张纸，四毛九分钱；一张中国地图，两块九毛七分钱；一本中文字典，一块八毛钱；一本英文字典，两块九毛钱；一本中英字典，四块七毛钱。他一共花了十六块九毛一分钱。他要买红墨水，可是书店只有蓝墨水和黑墨水，他没有买。

Answer 2:

我在书店买了一个本子，六毛五分钱；一枝钢笔，两块八毛钱；六枝铅笔，五毛四分钱；五十张纸，四毛九分钱；一张中国地图，两块九毛七分钱；一本中文字典，一块八毛钱；一本英文字典，两块九毛钱；一本中英字典，四块七毛钱。他一共花了十六块九毛一分钱。他要买红墨水，可是书店只有蓝墨水和黑墨水，他没有买。

After the students have demonstrated their homework assignments, the instructor will go over some important sentences in the drills for 10 minutes. For example, “numbers and measures” on page 36 focused on “有 (you, to have)”, and “要 (yao,
to want to have” . These sentences are very useful in the shopping context. The students will read the sentences quickly and apply the sentences in a quick pair activity: greeting and buying in a store.

**Homework assignments.**

The homework assignment from class 2 will be discussed in class 3, which focuses on the reading performance in appropriate social context. Thus, the homework needs to be well designed for this purpose. An example is: Before the semester starts, you went to buy some school supply. Write down the script between you and the store clerk during your school supply shopping.

**Class 3.**

**Preparation.** During their preparation, the students need to review the characters and vocabulary again so that they can write them correctly. They will also complete their homework assignments. In fact, the students will practice their writing when working on the assignments for this class.

**Class activity.** Class 3 is designed to train students to perform reading in appropriate social context. In the class, student will read some authentic materials that are related to the theme of the lesson and perform reading in contexts.

The first kind of class activity is to train students to read more authentic materials. The purpose of these activities is to bolster students’ reading competency in everyday life. The textbook, even the latest one, is usually published a few years earlier and the instructor needs to provide some updated materials for students. These authentic
materials need to be related to the theme of the lesson text. The following are a few examples for this kind of activities. Usually this kind of activity takes about 25 minutes.

**Activity 1.**

Students are provided some visual aids such as school supplies with a price tag on the items. These items are placed on the desk which simulates the counter in the store. Students are provided with the following additional contextual information and are asked to communicate after reading the visual aids.

**Context:** For Student A: You are in a bookstore to buy some school supplies. Select an item, read its price and talk with the store clerk. For Student B: You work as a store clerk. A customer comes and wants to buy something. Tell him the price.

The following is an example of the conversation script students generated.

Clerk: 先生，您要什么？ (How are you, Sir. What would you like?)
Customer: 我要买中文字典。你们有吗？ (I would like to buy a Chinese dictionary. Do you have any?)
Clerk: 有。您要哪本？ (Yes, we have some. Which one do you like?)
Customer: 这本。 (This one.)
Clerk: (看价钱) 这本三十八块钱五毛钱。 (Looking at the price. Thirty-eight yuan and five mao)
Customer: 好。我买一本。给您钱。 (Good. I will buy one. Here you are).

**Activity 2.**

The “sale ticket” is introduced to students as an authentic material. In some stores in China, the customers could not pay at the counter. The sale clerk normally writes a sale ticket with the items, quantity, unit price, and total amount. The customer needs to
bring the sale ticket to the cashier. After the customer pays the full amount, the cashier will stamp the sale ticket. Then the customer will, bring the stamped sale ticket back to the clerk to get his items. It will be beneficial to introduce the sale tickets to students, especially when they may go to China and encounter such a reading material. In this task, the instructor will provide a sale ticket to the students as the realia. The context is set up as follows.

**Context:** You are a customer in a store. After you tell the store clerk what you decide to buy, the sale clerk write a sale ticket for you to bring to the cashier. Read the sale ticket briefly to ensure that it has the things you want and the price is correct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>货品编号</th>
<th>品名</th>
<th>单位</th>
<th>数量</th>
<th>单价</th>
<th>金额</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>本子</td>
<td>个</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>6.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>铅笔</td>
<td>枝</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>钢笔</td>
<td>枝</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>中国地图</td>
<td>张</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>纸</td>
<td>张</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>中文字典</td>
<td>本</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>英文字典</td>
<td>本</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>中英字典</td>
<td>本</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>合计</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

收款员：
售货员：

An example of the script is provided as the following:

Customer: 给您票。(here is the ticket).

Cashier: 谢谢。十六块九毛一分钱。(Thanks. Sixteen yuan, nine mao, and one fen).

Customer: 这儿是二十。(Here is twenty).
Cashier: （盖章）找您三块九分钱。（Stamps the seal on the ticket). (Here is your change, three yuan, and nine fen).

Customer: 谢谢。（Thanks）(Then brings the stamped sale ticket to the clerk). 给您票。

Clerk: 谢谢。这是您买的东西。（Thanks. Here is the item you bought）.

**Activity 3. (25 minutes)**

After reading the new authentic materials, students will go through the homework assignment and perform it. A few students’ homework will be demonstrated to the entire class. Each script will be presented by document camera and two students will be assigned to act the script. After acting it out, the class will discuss what the customer has purchased and the price. Below are three samples of students’ homework assignments. I would like to note that 1) students created the scripts in forms of comic drawing. I encouraged students to do so since it is more vivid; 2) the scripts are in a different form from the text in terms of the quantity and price of the merchandise. However, the students used the vocabularies they learnt in the class as they were still limited in vocabularies. In fact, this assignment will reinforce their writing skills; and 3) students spontaneously utilized their linguistic knowledge such as “谢谢 (Thank you)” and “再见 (Bye bye)”, which they learned from previous classes.
Figure 6.3: Comic homework example 1.
Figure 6.4: Comic homework example 2
Figure 6.5: Comic homework example 3
6.4 Benefits of Performance-based Reading Instruction

The performance-based instruction has many potential benefits, and some of them are intertwined. Although a full and more convincing evaluation, such as quantitative statistical study, will be very desirable to prove the benefit of this new performance-based reading instruction approach, it requires too many resources and is beyond this dissertation. In this section, I will discuss the benefits of this instruction mainly from theoretical support from current research findings, preliminary class observations, and a course survey. Generally, the performance-based reading instruction can improve students’ comprehension, reading competency in everyday life, as well as students’ motivation and engagement.

6.4.1 Comprehension

Although performance-based reading instruction does not consider comprehension as the ultimate goal of reading and reading instruction, it can improve the comprehension of the text. Below I will discuss the elements of the performance-based reading instruction that have positive impacts on comprehension.

6.4.1.1 Reading Aloud in Context

Performance-based reading instruction asks students to take roles to read the text aloud, especially when the text is a dialogue. As discussed previously, this reading aloud in context can help students connect their prior knowledge with the text better. As shown in previous research, schema (prior knowledge) affects the reading process and reading comprehension. During reading, schema can influence information selection (Anderson
& Pearson, 1984; Symons & Pressley, 1993), information evaluation (Anderson & Pearson, 1984) and information extraction process (Symons & Pressley, 1993). Readers with rich prior knowledge about the topic often understand the text better than those with less knowledge (Chiesi, et al., 1979; Spilich, et al., 1979).

6.4.1.2 Strategy Use

In L2 reading instruction, researchers have recognized that there is a linguistic threshold that the readers must overcome before they can apply their reading strategies (Alderson, 1984). This threshold, however, varies from case to case. For the same reader, the threshold will be lower if he is reading a simple text, but will be much higher when he is reading a more complicated text. Similarly, the linguistic barrier will be lower if the reader has some prior knowledge about the text.

The traditional skill training instruction aims to improve students’ language skills to overcome the linguistic barrier. It focused on the linguistic training under the philosophy that if the students can understand the characters, words and grammar structures, they will comprehend the text, and the comprehension is the ultimate goal. In comparison, performance-based reading instruction also aims to lower the linguistic threshold but by introducing context to help students achieve comprehension. By situating reading in an authentic context, performance-based instruction helps students construct the connection between their real world experience and the text. The linguistic barrier is lower in this case, so that the students can apply more reading strategies while reading. During my experience with performance-based reading instruction, I have observed students used more word guessing strategies during reading. Moreover, in
Phase II and Phase III, after students have already established some comprehension about the text, they will revisit the text from a higher level. By then, they become more familiar with the text, and the linguistic barrier becomes even lower. Thus, they can release more resources and apply more reading strategies. They can pick up more linguistic knowledge during these phases. This process is similar with the “read to learn”. Naturally, the native speakers build up their reading skills, especially vocabulary, through extensive reading (National Reading Panel, 2000). Indeed, I observed that students can gain more linguistic knowledge with more ease during performance-based reading instruction.

In addition, the performance-based reading instruction incorporates many reading strategies. Previous research has identified that the most effective comprehension strategies include generating and answering questions, associating prior knowledge with the ideas in the text, guessing the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary based on context clues, summarizing, cooperative learning, etc (National Reading Panel, 2000). In Phase I of performance-based reading instruction, the students generate and answer questions, associate their prior knowledge about the context with the text, practice more vocabulary guessing strategies based on their understanding about the text theme (from context and prior knowledge). In Phase II, students summarize the text (an example is to generate a shopping list for Mr. Bai as described in the previous section). In addition, students work as a group and work cooperatively during questioning and answering in Phase I, sharing their summary in Phase II, and sharing the real world reading performance in Phase III.

I would like to include a real example that happened during my individual reading with two students. The students read the dialogue of Lesson 2 in *Character Text in*
Beginning Chinese. The theme of the dialogue is the first time meeting between Mr. Bai and Mr. Qian when they greet and talk about names, nationalities and language ability. One student could not recognize several characters in the dialogue during the reading aloud portion of the lesson. His reading was slowed down and he became very frustrated. I asked him to close the textbook, and started a similar conversation with him. Toward the end of our conversation, the student suddenly realized and said: “oh, that is the content of the dialogue. I should have known it”. This indicates that the context awakened his schema. After this conversation, I asked him to read the dialogue again and he solved all the problems he had before. This means that the conversation between me and him helped him understand the text and apply what he had already learned in speaking class.

Performance-based reading instruction can provide a better platform for the reading strategy instruction. Clearly, the L1 reading strategies are obtained during L1 reading, which is a social activity situated in the social context. Since the performance-based reading instruction will generate similar social contexts and reading purposes, students will be able to transfer their reading strategies more smoothly and naturally. To explain this, I would like to analyze and compare students’ reading process when they are assigned with a real world task and a text-based task, such as “fill-in-the-blanks”. In the performance-based reading instruction, the students will read with a real world purpose. In the conventional reading instruction, the reading purpose becomes “fill in the blanks”, etc. When dealing with authentic tasks, students will automatically refer to their experience about dealing with a similar reading task in their L1 language, including L1 reading strategies. When dealing with the fill-in-the-blank task, this automatic
connection between reading task and the real world experience (including reading strategies) is broken. Instead, students may apply text-based methods, such as matching sentences, vocabulary, and characters, to fulfill this kind of text-base task.

For example, to train students to perform in everyday life, I have set up a context in which the students need to introduce Mr. Bai based on the text they have studied in the past several lessons. To accomplish this reading task, students need to select information from several dialogues in the past few lessons. This performance will require them to use strategies such as selection and integration of information and skipped reading. The following is an example of one student’s introduction of Mr. Bai based on the information in the lessons 8 and 10.

白先生名字叫文山。他在远东大学念文学。他念中国文学和英国文学。白文山说中国话说得很好可是他觉得他说得太慢。现在他坐公共汽车到图书馆去。白文山和卖票员在谈话了。白先生说他家在美国。他家里有五个人。有父亲，母亲，一个弟弟，一个妹妹和他。他父亲是中学老师，母亲是小学老师。他弟弟在中学念书，妹妹在小学念书。

Clearly, to accomplish such a summary, students needed to read and comprehend the dialogues in the lessons, locate the information that is relevant to Mr. Bai, and finally integrate the information into a coherent text. In this process, the students used at least scanning and summarizing strategies.

For the purpose of comparison, I would like to generate an exercise aiming to help students practice the same strategies following the approach in the Chinese textbook.
Here, I adopt the format of fill-in-the-blank. The words in parenthesis are left blank for student to fill in. Clearly, a shortcoming of this fill-in-the-blank exercise is that, the students might just go back to the texts, find the related text by matching the vocabularies, characters or word, and fill in the blank by “copy-paste”. In that case, the students do not really need to read and comprehend the text, and will not practice the strategies as effective as in the previous example. To fill in the blanks in this activity, the students needed to read and comprehend the dialogue, locate the words and fill in the blanks. The students needed to use scanning strategy but no summarizing strategy.

白先生在 (远东大学) 念文学。他念中国文学和英国文学。白文山说中国话说得很好可是他觉得他说得太 (慢)。现在他坐 (公共汽车) 到图书馆去。白文山和 (卖票员) 在谈话。白先生说他家在 (美国)。他家里有五个人。有 (父亲, 母亲, 一个弟弟, 一个妹妹和他)。他父亲是 (中学老师), 母亲是 (小学老师)。他弟弟在 (中学) 念书，妹妹在 (小学) 念书。

I would like to emphasize that, comprehension strategy training is not the true purpose of the performance-based reading instruction. However, performance-based reading instruction can provide a platform for the reading strategy instruction. This argument also happens in the Collaborative Comprehension Instruction, a reading strategy instruction. Researchers actually found that, the most effective approach of strategy instruction is to teach for comprehension instead of the strategy. The same philosophy applies in performance-based reading instruction, with the difference that performance-based instruction moves beyond comprehension and aims at performance.
6.4.2 Reading Competency

Performance-based reading instruction also has positive effects on reading competency. Learning is a cognitive process. Bruning, Schraw, Norby and Ronning (2004) defined learning as the constructive process where knowledge is created and re-created on the basis of previous learning, and believed that long-term memory helps students access and use prior knowledge to create new knowledge. Bruner (1969) asserted that perception and problem-solving activities depend enormously on the retrieval of information from memory relevant in particular contexts for the solution of a particular problem.

Memory refers to the process by which the learners retain the knowledge (Kandel, 1989) or the storing and retrieval of information (Tulving, 1989). Human memory is considered as two parts: short-term memory (working memory) and long-term memory (Anderson, 1983a). Baddeley (1992) defined short-term memory as the brain system that provides temporary storage and manipulation of the information during a cognitive task, and long-term memory as the repository of all factual knowledge and information. Short-term memory stores information with limited capacity and material in the short-term memory decays unless it is refreshed by rehearsal (Craik, 1977).

Memory is involved in reading process. As reviewed in Chapter 2, current cognitive oriented reading theories have studied the role of memory during reading. For example, the limited capacity model refers to the limited capacity of working memory. Decoding involves the retrieval of orthographic knowledge from the long-term memory. Repeated reading can facilitate the working memory to be stored in long-term memory.
Performance-based reading instruction helps students retain information and knowledge into long-term memory, and to retrieve information and knowledge from long-term memory. Performance-based reading instruction does not request students to memorize the text, but it can help memory retention and retrieval. Consequently, students will improve their reading competence to handle real world reading tasks in the future.

6.4.2.1 Memory Retention

Researchers have identified four different ways to facilitate the information transfer from short-term memory to long-term memory. They are repetition, prolonged exposure, deep process, and multiple modules. In this section, I will specifically discuss how the performance-based reading instruction can better reinforce the memory retention through the latter three methods. The first method, repetition, is a long-existing method that can be traced back to repeated reading. It is already widely applied in conventional reading instruction so that the performance-based reading instruction does not necessarily show advantage in using of this method.

6.4.2.1.1 Prolonged Exposure

Performance-based reading instruction has a spiral structure during its three phases, and it can more efficiently help students retain memory by prolonged exposure. Chandler (1989) reported the benefit of a spiral curriculum that uses a sensitive retrieval method called relearning/savings approach. Each time the students are exposed to the same subject, the learning becomes more efficient. In performance-based reading instruction, students will interact with the text through three phases. All three phases have the same text theme, and students interact with the text in a spiral way from
different levels: text comprehension, task-based comprehension assessment, and reading performance. Compared to the conventional comprehension oriented reading instruction, the performance-based reading instruction can help the students revisit the text from multiple dimensions. It can help students learn different aspects of the language and retain more information.

In addition, researchers believed that prior exposure to the stimulus has profound effects on memory, attention and automaticity (Logan, 1990). Cabeza and Nyberg (1997) claimed that learners needed less neural activity when processing the same or similar stimulus following the prior exposure. In performance-based reading instruction, the text is situated in everyday life context that students are familiar with. Besides, the spiral structure of the performance-based reading instruction also provides students opportunities to expose to texts with similar themes from different levels. Thus, when processing the text, the students can free more neural activity for higher level tasks.

6.4.2.1.2 Depth of Processing

The depth of processing can aid long-term memory. The more students process a piece of to-be-learned information, the better their memory will be (Brunning et al., 2004; Chaffin & Herrmann, 1983; Craik, 1977). Brunning et al. (2004) identified three ways to engage in deeper processing: making connections to prior knowledge and the learning context, encouraging affective responses, and answering or generating questions about the to-be-learned information. In performance-based reading instruction, students perform reading always in contexts. For example, in Phase I, the students read aloud when acting out the script in context. This triggers their prior knowledge of the theme in
their own experience. They also generate and answer questions on their own in this phase. In Phase II and Phase III, students revisit the text by summarizing, demonstrating their reading in tasks, and applying the reading by handling authentic reading materials in contexts. All these activities deepen the readers’ interaction with the text.

### 6.4.2.1.3 Multiple Modules

Multiple modules in reading instruction refer to the different media that students receive stimulus besides the reading texts. The other medias includes auditory (especially verbal) and visual (especially pictorial) information. In recent years, researcher has (Mousavi, Low & Sweller, 1995) found that multiple modality presentation techniques could enlarge the working memory limits. Because performance-based reading instruction considers reading as a social activity that can involve speaking, listening, and writing, students will have the opportunity to practice in multiple modules. In Phase II, the students could write a shopping list, draw a map, or even draw comic about the same text theme. In phase III, student will perform the scripts they generated based on the reading text. These different modules facilitate the students to transfer knowledge from short-term memory into long-term memory.

In summary, in performance-based reading instruction, the students retain their reading knowledge and skills through prolonged exposure to similar texts, spiral reading activities, and multiple modules. The characters, words, sentences, grammars, texts with similar themes are repeated in different materials to accomplish various tasks in the three phases. The spiral reading activities extend and deepen the process. By connecting the
text to prior knowledge in contexts, performance-based reading frees more mental resources so that students can transfer strategies across the three phases.

6.4.2.2 Memory Retrieval

Performance-based reading instruction can help students more easily retrieve memories when they need them later in everyday life. In performance-base reading instruction, students learn the text in simulated social context so that their retained memory is closely associated with the social contexts and their performance. Thus, when they receive the stimuli of the similar context, they can automatically link to their relevant knowledge and retrieve it. In comparison, although students can retain some long-term memory through conventional reading instruction, the memory is decontextualized and is limited to fractural linguistic knowledge. When the students are in a real world context, they cannot transfer directly and automatically since there is no direct connection between linguistic knowledge and the context. It is like that a person who only memorizes the driving manuals will not be able to successfully drive a car on the road.

In addition, the types of knowledge retained in long-term memory by performance-based instruction and conventional reading instruction are different. Psychologists have distinguished different types of knowledge in memory: declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge (Anderson, 1983b; Squire, 1987; Woltz, 1988). Declarative knowledge is factual knowledge of “knowing what”, and procedural knowledge refers to how to perform certain activities. In addition to the above two, Bruning, et al. (2004) brought up another category of knowledge: conditional knowledge,
which refers to “knowing when and why to use declarative and procedural knowledge” (p. 37). As discussed in previous section, performance-based instruction focuses on the knowledge of what is learned in real world contexts, while conventional instruction focuses on memorization of facts and details in contrived school assignments or assessments. Obviously, performance-based reading instruction pays attention to procedural knowledge and conditional knowledge as well as declarative knowledge while the conventional reading instruction only considers declarative knowledge.

6.4.3 Motivation and Engagement

Performance-based reading instruction can promote students’ motivation and engagement in Chinese reading. Among the four language skills, Chinese reading and writing are commonly thought to be the biggest hurdles for American students. How to promote students’ motivation and interest in Chinese reading and writing is always a challenge. Motivation is very important during the learning process. Schiefele (1999) asserted that students read the materials more deeply, gain richer comprehension and engage more fully with the text when they are interested in what they read. Schunk and Pajares (2002) found that students’ self-efficacy for reading can be enhanced when they learn reading strategies and have opportunities to succeed in reading. By a meta-analysis of studies on reading motivations, Guthrie and Humenick (2004) found that students’ motivation for reading can be supported by practices including meaningful conceptual content, interesting texts (interesting topic, appealing format and relevance of textual material), and social collaboration during reading (social goals and collaborative activities).
Performance-based reading instruction can improve the students’ motivation. Motivation is described in terms of competence and efficacy beliefs, goals for reading, and social purposes of reading (Baker & Wigfield, 1999). Performance-based reading instruction focuses on students’ application of the learned knowledge and skill in the situations that are real and meaningful to them. The students have the opportunity to perform in simulated real world tasks after the previous two phases of reading activities. The authentic reading materials from real-world contexts make reading relevant and meaningful to the students’ future. The spiral structure increases the students’ mastery of the text and related themes, and further strengthens the students’ chance for success, which is also a very important factor for motivation. I have observed that students spontaneously started to generate longer texts and used unlearned characters when they were reproducing the text or generating new scripts.

Performance-based reading instruction can extend students’ engagement with the text. Among the various meanings of engagement, I prefer the one that engagement is “active, goal-directed, flexible, constructive, persistent, focused interactions with the social and physical environments” (Furrer & Skinner, 2003, p.149). Readers’ motivation in reading can determine their engagement with the text. Baker and Wigfield (1999) claimed that “engaged readers are motivated to read for different purposes, utilize knowledge gained from previous experience to generate new understandings, and participate in meaningful social interactions around reading” (p. 453). Engaged learners achieve because they want to understand, they possess intrinsic motivations for interacting with text, they use cognitive skills to understand, and they share knowledge
by talking with teachers and peers (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). McLaughlin and Allen (2002) asserted that engagement is a key factor in the comprehension process.

In performance-based reading instruction, students spend more time on interaction with the texts to accomplish the tasks in the three spiral phases. Students’ engagement with the texts is nurtured by reading for authentic purposes and responding in meaningful ways. In addition, students are learning by doing instead of by knowing. When they create their own products (the reproduction and production of the texts), and when they self-regulate the ability to demonstrate their reading occurrences in front of their audiences, they see their own achievement and progress.

A primary pilot survey was conducted with twelve Chinese L2 beginner level learners (Chinese 101). The learners were asked to create a comic book based on the dialogues in Character Text for Beginning Chinese. They can choose to create the comic books based on the content of the dialogues or based on their own creation. This comic book creation is treated as an activity in phase II because they are demonstrating their comprehension of the text in task. At the end of the course, students participated in a course survey that contained a section asking the students to evaluate the comic book assignment. Twelve students participated in the course survey. The comic book part includes two types of questions. The first type of questions asked the students to choose “yes” or “no” for three questions: “do you feel it is interesting”, “do you want to continue it in future lessons?”, and “do you feel it helpful?”. The second type of questions asked the students to reflect their opinions about how the assignment helped them on the following aspects: character recognition, character writing ability, grammar learning and application, sentence writing ability, comprehension of the dialogue in the textbook, and
increase motivation in reading and writing. A 7-point scale was used, including “strongly agree”, “agree”, “somewhat agree”, “no opinion”, “somewhat disagree”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree”.

When talking about their opinions about the comic book assignment, 12 participants answered that the comic book assignment is interesting, and 11 said they would like to continue in the future lessons, and 11 felt that comic book is helpful. When reflecting their opinions on the influences of the comic book assignment, these Chinese beginner learners showed positive opinion towards the comic book assignment. As shown in Figure 6.6, no participants chose the negative parts such as disagree somehow, disagree, and strongly disagree. The majority of students chose either “strongly agree” or “agree” in all questions. They believed that this assignment improved their language learning process including character recognition, character writing ability, grammar learning and application, sentence writing ability, and comprehension of the dialogue in the textbook. In addition, they also believed that this assignment increased their motivation in reading and writing.
Figure 6.6. Students’ evaluation on comic book assignment
6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I proposed a new performance-based reading instruction approach for the Chinese L2 reading field. This approach aims to train students to function reading successfully in real world contexts. In this approach, reading comprehension is no longer the destination of the reading activity, but rather a prerequisite to fulfill the reading task. The biggest difference of performance-based reading instruction from traditional comprehension-based reading instruction is treating reading as a social practice or a way to communicate in society, rather than only a cognitive process or a language skill.

The main distinguishing factor of performance-based reading instruction is to teach reading in appropriate social context. It uses authentic materials to construct the context, and trains students to fulfill the reading task. This performance-based reading instruction has three phases that are spirally arranged around the text theme. Specifically, Phase I directs the students to comprehend the text, Phase II assesses the students’ interpretation based on the need of the reading tasks, and Phase III trains students to handle authentic reading tasks in social contexts by taking actions. These three phases are organically integrated with the same theme.

This performance-based reading instruction is expected to have some advantages over the conventional comprehension-oriented reading instruction. It can 1) enhance students’ comprehension of the text, 2) improve students’ reading competence by training them to handle authentic reading tasks and by fostering their long-term memory of the
reading behaviors, and 3) motivate readers and extend their engagement. In the section 6.4, an example of performance-based reading instruction was provided.

### 6.6 Suggestions for Future Research

This dissertation is just the first step to propose a new performance-based reading instruction for Chinese L2 field. It has limitations and future research will be necessary. First, the textbook analysis in chapter 4 is limited to the beginner to intermediate level. Future analyses of textbooks could include more textbooks and advanced levels pending the availability. Similarly, the introduction of performance-based instructional approach is also limited to the beginner and intermediate level. Future study is needed on how to expand the approach to advanced level. The reading performance in higher level may be different from the lower level of language proficiency.

Second, the investigation on what and how Chinese L2 learners read in China is preliminary. Large scale investigation on real-world reading tasks is needed so we could discover what is being read—by whom, for how long, and for what reason, and further determine how reading fits into people’s patterns of daily activities. Qualitative study such as interview, survey and observation should be done to large amount of subjects. Quantitative methods should also be considered to sort out the patterns and the factors. In addition, investigation is also needed to survey Chinese reading demands in different contexts, such as school/education, working, leisure, to different levels of learners. These surveys can help us set up a more comprehensive and efficient performance-based reading instruction in Chinese. Moreover, investigation on what native speakers read will
be also beneficial since the goal of L2 reading instruction is to train learners to read like educated L1 readers (Nara, 2003, p.63).

Third, more studies on the implementation of this performance-based reading instruction will be very useful. This dissertation proposes a new instructional approach and describes the teaching philosophy. In terms of implementation, I proposed a three-phase structure, and some teaching techniques such as “reading aloud in context”, “generating questions and answers”, “functional summarization”, etc, based on my teaching experiences. While these approaches are very efficient, they are by no ways required or comprehensive, and new implementation approaches need to be designed and discovered through future studies.

Fourth, more investigation on the benefits of performance-based reading instruction will be a great addition to this dissertation. In this dissertation, the benefits of performance-based reading instruction are revealed by theoretical support, small scale observation, and a course survey. A large scale quantitative and qualitative study will be more convincing and will provide useful feedback to improve the performance-based reading instruction. An ANOVA statistical model could be used for this study by comparing the performance of two groups of students. One group (the control group) will be instructed with the conventional comprehension-based instruction while the other group (the experimental group) will be instructed with performance-base instruction. After a period of instruction (one semester, or a school year), the two groups may both take an exam to compare the students’ reading competencies. During the experiments, some qualitative studies by the means of survey, interview and classroom observation could also be used to reveal if there is any change in students’ reading competence.
APPENDICES
Appendix A: Questionnaire for Chinese Second Language in China

1. What is the highest grade or year or school you have completed?
   a college or university/1\textsuperscript{st} year completed
   b college or university/2\textsuperscript{nd} year completed
   c college or university/3\textsuperscript{rd} year completed
   d college or university/4\textsuperscript{th} year completed
   e college or university/5\textsuperscript{th} or higher year completed
   f graduate school/Master degree 1\textsuperscript{st} year completed
   g graduate school/Master degree 2\textsuperscript{nd} year completed
   h graduate school/Ph.D. degree uncompleted
   i graduate school/Ph.D. degree completed
   j other(Please specify____________________________________)

2. What is your major or study area?

3. When you were growing up, what language or languages were usually spoken in your home? (check all that apply.)
   a English
   b Spanish
   c Chinese Mandarin
   d Chinese dialect (Please specify______________________________)
   e Other (Please specify______________________________)
4. How long and where have you studied Chinese?
   a  In U.S. at ___________________(institute name) for ___years___months
   b  In P.R.China at______________(institute name) for ___years___months
   c  In Taiwan at_________________(institute name) for ___years___months
   d  In other place _____________________(location)for ___years__months

5. Why do you study Chinese? (check all that apply)?
   a  to fulfill the foreign language requirement for my college study
   b  to get a job related to China
   c  to communicate with my relatives who speak Chinese
   d  to communicate with my friends who speak Chinese
   e  to enjoy Chinese culture, such as songs, movies, music, etc.
   f  others (please specify)________________________________________

6. How many times have you been to China/Taiwan? For what reasons (check all that apply)?

   1st time: (location) ____________________________________________________
      (reason) Study, work, travel, visit relatives, visit friends, know culture, other___________________________________________________

   2nd time: (location) ____________________________________________________
      (reason) Study, work, travel, visit relatives, visit friends, know culture, other___________________________________________________

   3rd time: (location) ____________________________________________________
      (reason) Study, work, travel, visit relatives, visit friends, know culture, other___________________________________________________

   4th time: (location) ____________________________________________________
      (reason) Study, work, travel, visit relatives, visit friends, know culture, other___________________________________________________

7. Where are you now in China/Taiwan? _______________________________________

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How long have you been in China/Taiwan for this visit? _______ years _____ months

Why are you in China/Taiwan now? Study, work, travel, visit relatives, visit friends, cultural interest, other____________________________

Where do you live in China/Taiwan? Hotel, apartment, dorm, Chinese family, other_______

8. With regard to the Chinese language, how well do you function in the following four skills?

    A listening  novice  intermediate  advanced  superior
    B Speaking   novice  intermediate  advanced  superior
    C Reading    novice  intermediate  advanced  superior
    D Writing    novice  intermediate  advanced  superior
9. In your current visit in China/Taiwan, how often do you read the following genres in Chinese?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Every day</th>
<th>A few times a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Newspaper</td>
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<td>B. Magazines</td>
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<td>C. Books</td>
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<td>D. Letters and emails</td>
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<td>E. Memos or notes</td>
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<td>F. Catalogs, lists</td>
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<td>G. Bills, receipt or invoice</td>
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<td>H. Directions, maps,</td>
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<td>I. Manuals or instructions for medicines, recipes, or other products</td>
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<td>J. Flyers, advertisement</td>
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<td>K. Forms, such as job application, tax forms, etc.</td>
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<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
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<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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Appendix B: Interview Questions for Chinese Second Language Learners
1. What did you do yesterday? Could you please describe it in details? 
Questions followed are the questions designed to bring to mind any reading that has been done in the course of a single event. In general, the questions included:

2. During the course of doing such an event, did you read any materials?

3 What kinds of materials did you read? What was the content?

4. Where did you read the material?

5. How much time did it take for you to read the material?

6. How did you read the material? Did you read word by word, or you skipped some part.

7. What did you do after reading the material?

8. Did you feel that the material was hard to read?

9. How important was the reading for you?

**Below are sample questions for shopping.**

2. Oh, you bought a T-shirt. What brand of T-shirt did you buy? How did you know the brand? Did you read the tag or read the store name? Where did you read the brand? How much time did it take for you to read the brand? How did you read the brand? Did you read word by word, or you skipped some part? Why? What did you do after reading the brand? Did you feel that the brand tag was hard to read? How important was the reading for you?

3 How much did you pay for the clothes? How did you know the price? Did you read the price tag? Where did you read the brand? How much time did it take for you to read the
brand? How did you read the brand? Did you read word by word, or you skipped some part? Why? What did you do after reading the price tag? Did you feel that the price tag was hard to read? How important was the reading for you?

4 After you paid the clothes, did you read the receipt? Why or why not? How did you read the receipt? Where did you read the brand? How much time did it take for you to read the brand? Did you read word by word, or you skipped some part? Why? What did you do after reading the receipt? Did you feel that the receipt was hard to read? How important was the reading for you?

5 During the course of shopping, did you read anything else?
Appendix C: Participant Recruitment Letter
Dear Chinese Learners:

I am looking for 40 people who are 18 years of age or older, native English speakers raised in the United States, have completed at least one year of Chinese study in a Chinese program in a college or university in the United States, and now are living in China/Taiwan to participate in a study on Chinese reading practice.

The study will be composed of two parts. You will first answer a questionnaire about your background, Chinese study experience and your experience in reading written style Chinese. Then you will participate in an interview about what you had done, hour by hour, on the previous day, and what kinds of reading practice in Chinese you had done in connection with these daily activities. The interview will be tape recorded for research purposes. The tape will be safely stored by the researchers and the participants will not be identified in the tape. The whole process will be no more than 30 minutes. If you prefer, you can participate in more than one interview.

There is no potential risk or harm in the study. No personal information will be involved in the study and your confidentiality will be maintained. There is no incentive to participate in this study. But any internet cost or phone bill in connection with this study will be reimbursed. The participation is voluntary and you can decide to terminate your participation at anytime you feel uncomfortable.
The study will be conducted either on the internet or by phone. The researcher will initiate the contact. If you are willing to participate in this study, please contact us by email zhang.354@osu.edu (Key Personnel) or phone (440-220-2878). We greatly appreciate your assistance in this scientific study. Please contact us if you have any questions. Thank you and I hope you will find this study to be enjoyable.

Sincerely,

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Li, Q. P. (1998). *Duiwai hanyu yueduke de dingwei, dingliang, dingfa wenti (对外汉语阅读课的定位、定量、定法问题).* In G. D. Lü (Ed.), *Duiwai hanyu luncong(对外汉语论丛)* (pp. 64-75). Shanghai: Shanghai waiyu jiaoyu chubanshe (Shanghai Foreign Language Press).


