

JOANA D'ARC MARTINS PUPO

AN INVESTIGATION INTO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' BELIEFS ABOUT READING IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Orientador: Prof. Dr. José Erasmo Gruginski

Co-orientador: Prof. Michael Alan Watkins

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To my family, Zhé and my
friends, whose constant love
and support have given me
the confidence to undertake
this work.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL = English as a foreign language
ESL = English as a second language
L1 = First language
L2 = Second language
STDS = Students
TEFL = Teaching English as a foreign language

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to assess, in the light of some well-known theories of reading, beliefs about reading in general and, particularly, beliefs about L2 reading of EFL university students attending the first year of the “Licenciatura em Letras- Inglês” and “Inglês-Português” courses at the Universidade Federal do Paraná. The data was collected through a closed questionnaire with 21 Likert-scale items covering 5 areas of beliefs: reading in general, meaning and interpretation, L2 reading, reading strategies and, finally, the pedagogy of reading. The findings in this study led to the conclusion that these students still have ideas derived from exclusive bottom-up models of reading as well as ideas based on more current approaches to reading.

RESUMO

O objetivo desta dissertação é investigar, à luz de conhecidas teorias sobre leitura, as concepções de leitura em geral e, especificamente, de leitura em língua estrangeira dos alunos do 1^o ano dos cursos de Letras-Inglês e Inglês-Português da Universidade Federal do Paraná. As informações foram coletadas através de um questionário fechado contendo 21 idéias sobre leitura, abrangendo 5 categorias: leitura em geral, significado e interpretação, leitura em L2, estratégias de leitura e, finalmente, o ensino de leitura. Este estudo nos possibilitou constatar que tanto idéias derivadas de modelos de leitura exclusivamente ascendentes como idéias derivadas de modelos de leitura mais atuais estão presentes nas concepções desses alunos.

INTRODUCTION

THE CONTEXT OF THIS STUDY

There have been signs of a growing tendency in L2 teaching/learning research to focus on what actually happens in the classroom. (ALLWRIGHT & BAILEY, 1991; NUNAN, 1991; MOITA LOPES, 1996). It is being recognized that gaps between what teachers teach and what learners learn often occur because of lack of knowledge about the kind of experience learners bring with them to the language classroom. It is important to be acquainted with our students' goals, particular needs and beliefs, since successful classroom interaction is not guaranteed solely by careful planning. Co-operation is a crucial factor for the outcome of any learning/teaching process. Allwright and Bailey (1991) point out that learners have the power of veto over teachers' attempts to manage interaction in the classroom, even if they choose not to use this power.

Furthermore, it has been suggested (HORWITZ, 1987 , SCHOMMER, 1990) that when instructional practice fails to meet students' expectations, which are in turn built upon their beliefs, students' ultimate learning achievement can be limited.

As regards teachers' and students' beliefs about reading, some researchers (Carmagnani, 1995; Coracini, 1992; Kleiman, 1993) suggest that although the theory of reading has been developed significantly during the last 15 years and that changes (such as the use of authentic texts, concerns with the development of reading strategies and metacognitive knowledge) can already be noticed in the teaching of L2 reading, these changes are still superficial and have not been able to modify certain traditional beliefs about reading acquired at school.

One of the most relevant changes which occurred in the theory of reading in the last decades was the fact that the idea that reading was an exclusively bottom-up process in which the reader had to decode the text letter by letter, word by word, in order to understand the author's message, was replaced by the top-down view of reading as "a psycholinguistic guessing game" (Goodman, 1967). In line with

this view, reading was seen as a selective process in which minimal textual cues were used by the reader to make hypotheses which he tried to confirm during the reading process; later, it came to be recognised that reading was in fact an interactive activity in which both processes - bottom-up and top-down - were necessary for the construction of meaning within the relationship established by the reader and the text; more recently, however, based on the development of Discourse Analysis (the French School , PÊCHEUX, 1982) and of Critical Language Studies (FAIRCLOUGH, 1991), new reading approaches have come to regard efficient reading as not only an interactive process, but as critical reading. A consideration of the social conditions in which the text was produced _ the social position of the participants (author and reader) of this discourse event as well as the hidden intentions which underlie the text _ is central to critical reading practice. The main goal of reading, in this view, is to reveal the power relations and the ideological and discriminatory ideas inherent in social practices and social discourses.

THE AIM OF THIS STUDY

The pedagogy of second language reading has been in constant flux owing to the development of different language and reading theories and this has probably affected our students' views of reading. The aim of this research is therefore to assess, in the light of some well-known theories about reading, the beliefs about reading of EFL university students attending the first year of either the "Licenciatura em Letras-Ingês" or "Letras-Ingês/Português" courses at the Universidade Federal do Paraná. The study examined the following assumptions: a) students' beliefs about reading are highly influenced by ideas derived from the bottom-up and from the top-down reading models, and b) ideas derived from either the interactive models of reading or from the discourse analysis approach to reading cannot yet be frequently found amongst students' beliefs about reading.

As "it is reasonable to assume that their 'philosophy' dictates their approach to learning and choice of specific learning strategies" (ELLIS, 1995, p.479), it is hoped that this study will be a first step

towards a better understanding of how our students are approaching texts in the foreign language class.

THE STRUCTURE OF THIS STUDY

The structure of this thesis is as follows: chapter 1 provides an introduction to research into beliefs about learning and teaching including research into beliefs about L1 and L2 reading; chapter 2 reviews the theory of reading describing bottom-up, top-down and interactive reading models as well as discourse approaches to reading; chapter 3 describes the methodological procedures followed in the research; chapter 4 analyses the data obtained in this study; finally, chapter 5 presents the conclusion of this study and the implications of the results for further research and for the pedagogy of reading.

1 CHAPTER - RESEARCH INTO EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS

The main concern of this chapter is to give a brief overview of different research into beliefs about learning and teaching, of their relevance to any learning and teaching processes, and to extract those elements which may be salient to the present study.

1 .1 INTRODUCTION

The idea that learners' beliefs about the nature of knowledge and learning (epistemological beliefs) "play a subtle, yet critical role in learning" (SCHOMMER & WALKER, 1995, p.430) has recently been the focus of attention of many researchers. (RYAN, 1984; SCHOENFELD, 1983, 1985; SCHOMMER, 1990; WAGNER, SPRATT, GAL, & PARIS, 1989; amongst others).

Schommer & Walker (1995) point out the relevance of knowledge about learners' beliefs:

(...) if students believe that knowledge is best characterized as isolated bits of information, this may lead them to believe that recall of a list of definitions constitutes knowing. This standard of knowing could, in turn, encourage students to rely heavily on rehearsal strategies as their typical means of studying. This method of studying and standard for learning would subsequently lead to an impoverished understanding of the material to be learned. (SCHOMMER & WALKER, 1995, P.424)

In a previous study, SCHOMMER (1990), addressing the questions of students' beliefs about the nature of knowledge and how these beliefs affected comprehension, concluded that the nature of knowledge is too complex to be captured in a single dimension. The author says that a belief system is composed of several more or less independent dimensions. Based on evidence from the work of other researchers (PERRY, 1968; DWECK & LEGGETT, 1988; SCHOENFELD, 1983, 1985) she proposes five dimensions: i) the structure; ii) certainty; iii) source of knowledge; iv) the control of knowledge acquisition; and v) speed of knowledge acquisition. The first three dimensions were based on Perry's study (1968). He found

that many students enter college with the beliefs that knowledge is simple, certain and handed down by authority. The fourth dimension was derived from Dweck & Leggett's (1988) research on beliefs about the nature of intelligence. They found that some students have a predominant belief that intelligence is a fixed entity, while others believe it is incremental and as such can be improved. The last dimension is derived from the work of Schoenfeld (1983,1985) on high school students' geometrical proofs. He found that learners seem to believe that only the gifted can derive theorems or be creative in mathematics. He also suggested that some students seem to believe in quick, all-or-nothing learning. If the students could not solve a problem after 10-12 min, they assumed they would never get it.

SCHOMMER (1990) conducted two experiments: first, to assess students' beliefs about the nature of knowledge, she administered an epistemological questionnaire to undergraduates which resulted in 4 factors reflecting the degree of beliefs in *innate ability, simple knowledge, quick learning* and *certain knowledge*; second, to examine the relation between epistemological beliefs and aspects of comprehension, she asked students to read a passage in

which the concluding paragraph was removed. Then students rated their ability in understanding the passage and wrote a conclusion to it. Finally, students completed a test of mastery, and a test of overconfidence in test performance. Belief in '*quick learning*' predicted oversimplified conclusions, poor performance on the mastery test and overconfidence in test performance.

Amongst the conclusions of Schommer's study are: a) personal epistemology can be characterized as a system of more or less independent beliefs; b) these beliefs have distinct effects on comprehension and learning; c) epistemological beliefs are influenced by home and educational background. The author argues that:

Insight into epistemological beliefs may advance our understanding of human learning. Research in the past 20 years has emphasized the importance of schemata and metacognition on comprehension. However, schema theory cannot explain why some students fail to integrate information. The concept of metacognition does not explain why some students fail to monitor their comprehension. Some reasonable answers may be found in the study of epistemological beliefs. (SCHOMMER, 1990, p. 503.).

1.2 RESEARCH INTO LANGUAGE LEARNING BELIEFS

LEFFA (1991), on the assumption that learning is more successful if we know the students we are teaching, attempted to assess students' views of the learning of English as a foreign language, and language learning in general. He studied the concepts of 33 lower middle-class students attending the fifth grade in a state school in Greater Porto Alegre in relation to 4 basic areas, students' concepts of: a) language in general; b) speakers of the target language; c) the knowledge involved in learning a foreign language; and d) possible advantages of knowing a foreign language.

His data was collected in a free activity in which students were asked to write as many words as came into their minds after a prompt word was uttered. First of all, the words were very familiar to the students: 'Xuxa' and 'football'. At a later stage, the students were asked to write ten words that came into their minds when the words 'Portuguese', 'Star Wars', and 'English' were uttered. The assumption

behind the activity was that the words written by the children after they heard the word 'English' should reflect their concepts of the language or lack of concepts. Finally, students were asked to complete a four-page story in which there was a Brazilian character, Maria, and an English speaking character, Bill. Students were asked to describe Bill's appearance and personality on the first page. This was intended to assess students' stereotypes of typical English speaking people. On the second page students learned that Maria was going to start to learn English, and they were asked to write what Maria had to learn in order to be able to communicate with Bill. On the third page, students had to describe what Maria did when she could not understand what Bill said or what was written in a magazine. The purpose of this task was to assess students' concepts of strategy variables. On the last page of the story, students learned that Maria had gone through college, had a career and was now able to speak English very well. Students had, then, to describe what use English was to Maria.

In relation to the *language variable*, the students in the study viewed language as a set of words. For them, therefore, learning a language consisted of learning new words. As regards the *native*

speaker variable, students had no problems in providing Bill's physical description, but they avoided internal, psychological traits. In relation to *the learning strategy variable*, students provided different learning strategies, such as studying, going to a language centre, using a dictionary, using a book, etc. When referring to *the purpose variable*, most of the students said that Maria could be an English teacher, travel, or use her English for her college studies. Only three students said that she could read in English and only one mentioned that English could help her get a job.

The author concluded that students viewed English mainly as a subject on the curriculum and that learning English was no different from learning other school subjects. The main reason for them to study English was related to the school environment and authentic use of the language was shown to be right outside their experience. They also made a distinction between what they learn and the English character in the story learns. According to Leffa, "the concept of English as a school subject may be a very important part of the teacher's job to make the students aware that English is used by many

people in their community other than English teachers.” (LEFFA, 1991, p.65).

Another scholar who supports the importance of research into beliefs is HORWITZ (1987). She describes the development of BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory), an instrument to assess student beliefs about language learning, and the responses of one group of ESL students to this inventory. Her aim was to sensitize teachers to the types of beliefs students hold and to possible consequences of these beliefs for L2 learning and teaching.

The reasons she gives for assessing the beliefs of students and teachers about language learning are: a) to understand the nature of students beliefs and the effects of these beliefs on language learning strategies; b) to understand why teachers favour particular teaching practices; c) to determine where the beliefs of language teachers and their students might be in conflict.

In a free recall task, four groups of 25 language teachers with different cultural backgrounds expressed their beliefs about language learning, their opinions about other people’s beliefs about language learning and about their students’. 30-belief list was then compiled,

which classified students' beliefs into five major areas: i) foreign language aptitude; ii) the difficulty of language learning; iii) the nature of language learning; iv) learning and communication strategies; and v) motivation.

In relation to *foreign language aptitude*, HORWITZ found that those ESL students generally endorsed the concept of foreign language aptitude or special abilities for language learning. In relation to the *difficulty of language learning*, almost all the students believed that some languages are easier to learn than others and that English is of at least average difficulty. The author says that students' beliefs about the difficulty of learning a language are critical to the development of their expectations of and commitment to language learning. Concerning *the nature of language learning*, she found out that the students generally rejected the idea that learning English is mainly a matter of learning to translate from their native languages. They viewed cultural knowledge and the second language environment as factors which greatly facilitated language learning. This finding was consistent with the decision these students had made to study English in an English-speaking country, according to

Horwitz. As far as *learning and communication strategies* are concerned, students overwhelmingly endorsed the use of audio-tapes or cassettes and the importance of repeating and practising a lot. They also thought communicative learning activities were important to language learning. With regard to *motivation*, students mentioned instrumental as well as integrative reasons for their learning English: they stated that they wanted to learn to speak English very well associating this skill with better job opportunities, and that they would like to have English-speaking friends.

Horwitz emphasizes practical applications of studying students' beliefs about language learning: "Presumably, erroneous beliefs about language learning lead to less effective language learning strategies. From this point of view, knowledge of student belief systems may be particularly useful." (HORWITZ, 1987, p.126).

1.3 LANGUAGE LEARNING BELIEFS AND L2 TEACHING

Many approaches to second language teaching have attributed a central role to learners' beliefs (BIALYSTOK, 1978, NAIMAN et al., 1978, cited by RICHARDS & LOCKHART, 1994) suggesting that learners' beliefs can influence their attitude both towards the language itself and towards language learning in general, and consequently towards the learning of specific skills in a foreign language.

A current trend in second language teaching called "*Reflective Teaching*" includes teachers' and students' beliefs as significant dimensions of its practice. This approach moves away from an external "top-down" view of teaching towards the construction of an internal "bottom-up" view, emphasizing the importance of teacher-initiated research which allows teachers to collect data about their own classrooms, their students, and the roles played by students and themselves in their educational situation. Richards and Lockhart explain that "reflective teaching goes hand in hand with critical self-

examination and reflection as a basis for decision-making, planning, and action.” (1994, p.ix).

It is thus widely recognised that the knowledge of students’ and teachers’ beliefs about different aspects of learning and teaching is of great importance since what students and teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe. Furthermore, as HORWITZ points out,

ESL teachers often encounter student resistance to some of their instructional activities. Students want more opportunities for free conversation and complain about pattern drills while others distrust communicative approaches and insist that their every utterance be strictly corrected. Teachers are likely to find similar instances of student concern or dissatisfaction whenever instructional activities are inconsistent with students’ preconceived beliefs about language learning. When language classes fail to meet student expectations, students can lose confidence in the instructional approach and their ultimate achievement can be limited. (HORWITZ, 1987, p.119)

Another important dimension in this field of enquiry is what determines learners’ beliefs about language learning. In a study reported by ELLIS (1995), LITTLE, SINGLETON and SILVIUS (1984) found that learners’ previous experience of education in general and of language learning in particular played a central role in

shaping their attitudes towards language learning. LITTLE and SINGLETON (1990) concluded that their finding that students preferred to learn by production activities (repeating orally and writing) rather than receptive ones (listening and reading) reflected the nature of students' previous instructional experience.

Thus in addition to knowing what the students' beliefs are, the fact that they are influenced by the social context of learning _ that is, by their previous educational experiences either in their mother tongue or in the learning of a foreign language _ also has to be taken into account.

Learners' beliefs are built up gradually over time and consist of both subjective and objective dimensions. These beliefs derive from a variety of sources: previous educational experience, cognitive learning styles, cultural background and so on. According to Richards and Lockhart (1994), the most important beliefs for an understanding of what goes on in the EFL learning process are those concerning the nature of the English language; learners' beliefs about native speakers of English (which may influence the degree to which students wish to interact with English speakers), about language learning and effective

learning strategies, about themselves, about goals, and about the specific language skills.

As Richards and Lockhart state: “differences between teachers’ and learners’ beliefs can sometimes lead to a mismatch between their assumptions about what is useful to focus on in a language lesson.” (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p. 53). The authors give an example of a reading lesson where the teacher’s purpose is to develop extensive reading skills, while students believe that the activity is an opportunity for them to develop intensive reading skills improving their knowledge of vocabulary and idioms. They conclude that if learners’ beliefs are not in accordance with the teacher’s, there is a tendency among the students to undervalue the assigned activity.

In a study (Bondy, 1990) cited by the same authors, it was found that first grade children had very different understandings of the nature and purpose of reading, and that no single set of beliefs about reading was shared by all children. These children were classified into two distinct groups according to their reading abilities. The lower-ability reading group shared the following ideas about reading: “*Reading is saying words correctly.*”; “*Reading is schoolwork.*”;

“Reading is a source of status.” The higher-ability reading group conceived reading as *“a way to learn things”*, seeing written material as containing information; as *“a private pleasure”* and as *“a social activity”*. For this second group, reading had a personal meaning. (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p.58).

One important reason why students had such different views, in Bondy’s study, is because “ teachers unconsciously supported these different views of reading by the way they interacted with students during teaching.” (Richards & Lockhart, idem).

However, different cognitive styles, which are considered relatively stable characteristics of learners, can also influence students’ beliefs about language learning and language teaching. Students’ particular cognitive and physiological behaviours work as reliable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning process.

Another aspect of the learning process which may be directly or indirectly influenced by learners’ beliefs is students’ learning strategies. Therefore, in order to have a deeper understanding of our

students' learning behaviour we have to be able to analyse it in the light of their beliefs.

Learning strategies are defined by Oxford (1990, p.8; cited by Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p.63) as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, and more transferable to new situations."

According to STERN (1987, p.xii), the promotion of students' awareness and control over effective learning strategies should be viewed as one of the most relevant tasks of teaching in order to try to avoid a tendency of language learning pedagogy "to infantilize learners and to maintain them in a state of intellectual and emotional dependency on teachers, course materials, tightly organized 'methods', and gadgetry". This author adds that adult learners are active, task-oriented and approach their language learning and consequently their L2 reading learning "with certain assumptions and beliefs which have bearing on the way they tackle the new language".

1.4 RESEARCH INTO READING BELIEFS

DEVINE (1988) investigated the role of second language readers' conceptions, or 'models' of reading and their relation to reading performance. According to this author,

A 'model' might best be understood as a set of assumptions about what happens when a reader approaches a text, that is, the ways a reader derives meaning from printed material. For the individual reader, a model of reading can be regarded as the guiding principles by which that reader will process available textual information. (DEVINE, 1988, p.127).

In a study to uncover students' general attitudes about reading and notions about what constitutes effective reading, DEVINE (1984) interviewed 20 low-intermediate ESL readers from a variety of language backgrounds. They were then classified according to their answers as *sound-*, *word-*, or *meaning-centred* readers. In order to determine what influence, if any, the readers' models had on their reading performance, she compared their responses in the interview with their oral reading performances, and with evaluations of their recall and comprehension of a text. In the study, nineteen of the

twenty students were able to articulate their views about reading unambiguously enough to be classified into one of the categories above.

DEVINE found that ESL readers have theoretical orientations towards reading which they bring with them to the classroom reading activities. In addition, there was a significant correspondence between students' reading models and the type of information they focused on in oral reading. Finally, there was a further relationship between readers' internalized models and their success in comprehending written texts.

In a 1988 article, DEVINE describes the performance of two adult low intermediate ESL readers from the earlier research, who had the same language proficiency but quite different reading beliefs. One of them, Stanislav, who held a Ph.D. in chemistry, was classified as a *sound-centred reader* according to his answers in the oral reading interview. Stanislav claimed to be a skilful reader in German, Russian and Polish, however in the study, Stanislav understood very little of what he had read. The other student, Isabella, a high school graduate,

was classified as a *meaning-centred reader*. She proved to be more able to understand the text she had read.

DEVINE discusses two related ways in which internalized reading models may affect reading performance. The first is related to general language proficiency and reading ability. The author says that if, in accordance with some studies, limited proficiency in L2 severely restricts the ability to read in this language, then “readers’ theoretical orientations toward reading may determine the extent to which low second language proficiency restricts reading ability in the second language.” (DEVINE, 1988, p.136). This would explain the discrepancy between Stanislav and Isabella’s reading performances.

Another way in which readers’ beliefs may affect reading performance, according to DEVINE, is in relation to their ability to effectively combine ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ processing. As the author explains:

Specifically, a sound-centred model of reading could be regarded as a serious misconception about the role of knowledge-based schemata in successful reading. Sound-centred readers, such as Stanislav, might be characterized as “data-driven” in the extreme; it is not surprising then that their recall and understanding of what is read is so severely limited. On the other hand, meaning-centred readers can be seen as striking a successful balance between text-based and knowledge-

based processing; recall Isabella's willingness to make use of extra-textual information. (DEVINE, 1988, p.137).

GRIGOLETTO (1995), reflecting upon some implications of students' conceptions of reading and of the text itself, argues that the reading conditions of a text in the foreign language class determine the ways in which the text will be approached and understood. Drawing upon the theoretical foundations of the French School of Discourse Analysis, she claims that the educational background of teachers and students is reflected in their conceptions about text, reading , learning and teaching processes and that, at the same time, the particular characteristics of the classroom reading situation determine the interactive relations which occur amongst the participants of this discourse event: the students, the teacher and the text.

In a study of the effects of university students' 'institutionalized' conceptions of reading, CARMAGNANI (1995) concludes that, although there have been significant improvements in the research into the teaching of reading, few changes have in fact occurred in the EFL reading classroom. Ninety-two university students attending the first

and third semesters of the Letras-Ingês course answered a written questionnaire about various aspects of reading. The basic premise of her work was that the students' views of reading were, at least partially, influenced by the educational environment in which they had been studying.

In the first part of the study, students were asked to discuss the items of the questionnaire in small groups to ensure they understood them. They were subsequently asked to give individual answers to each belief of the questionnaire. CARMAGNANI (1995) says that the data was analysed qualitatively and accordingly does not provide the numerical data. Instead, she presents conclusions illustrated with examples taken from students' answers to the questions.

She found that these students still have a reading conception of reading which most researchers and teachers believed was outdated: that is, they tended to see language as a set of words, therefore language learning as the learning of new words, memorizing word lists and constantly using the dictionary. These findings thus confirmed those of LEFFA (1991). Reading, in the students' opinions, was also strongly related to pronouncing the words, and good reading was

detailed and slow. Students also had different views of reading in L1 and L2. As far as L2 reading is concerned, the focus changed from the reading activity itself to the language. They understood L2 reading as a decodification process in which *form* was the most important aspect. In relation to the use of simplified texts, students, who saw the teacher as an authority who knew what was best for them, agreed that graded materials were appropriate for language learning. They said that it was better to read a simplified text and understand it in detail than to read an authentic one and just have a global understanding of it. And, as Carmagnani points out, even though students mentioned reading purposes, lexical inferences, and reading for global understanding, they still did not mention non-verbal elements presented in texts.

Carmagnani believes that if teachers' and students' practices concerning L2 reading are limited exclusively to the linguistic aspects of texts or to strategies for dealing with them, we will not be able to broaden our students' views of reading. Based also on the Discourse Analysis perspective, she believes that reading involves processes of constructing meaning which are ideologically determined and that critical reading involves taking these processes into account.

According to GRIGOLETTO (1995), teachers and, consequently students still consider texts as autonomous units of meaning, constructed from cohesion and coherence. The cohesion and coherence themselves are seen as independent of the reader and of the conditions in which the texts are produced. This causes the students to be restricted to attempting to reproduce the meaning which they believe to be predetermined by the text.

Grigoletto shares Carmagnani's idea that if we limit ourselves only to the development of cognitive and linguistic aspects in the reading lesson, exclusively through strategy training , we will hinder the formation of the student as a real reader, who cannot have his social, historical, and ideological context ignored in the process of the construction of meaning during the act of reading (*ibid.*).

Grigoletto's article (1995) highlights the fact that the particular conditions of the foreign language reading classroom determine the ways in which texts are approached and comprehended by teachers and students and the way the elements involved in the discourse situation interact.

From one aspect, the educational background of the teachers and students, the subjects of the investigated discursal situation, is reflected in their conceptions about text, reading, teaching and learning. On the other hand, the characteristics of the classroom reading situation determine the interactive relations which occur amongst the participants of the discursal event: the students, the teacher, and the text.[my translation] (GRIGOLETTO, 1995, p. 85).

These ideas lead us to a crucial aspect of the teaching of reading, either in L_1 or L_2 : the unequal power relations in the reading lesson, pointed out by Grigoletto (1995), due to the particular conditions in which the reading activity takes place. In schools, the teacher is usually seen as the authority who has the linguistic competence to reveal the meaning of the text to the students: the teacher knows the right answers. The author of the text has the power to establish the right meaning through his text while the student-reader does not have any power to assign a personal meaning to the text because of the position he occupies in the educational hierarchy.

Grigoletto points out the pedagogical implications of the ideas described above, saying that if we want to help our students to develop 'critical awareness', it is necessary to help them to perceive that there are predictable meanings for a text and that this prediction comes from the particular conditions of the reading of the text. According to this

author, it is also important for the student to note that his particular reading of a text can have a small place in the class, that even our autonomous interpretation of the predictable meanings of a text is delusive, that the reading conditions within the classroom as part of the pedagogical activities necessarily influence the construction of meaning, and finally that there is an ideological imposition which is revealed through the hierarchical positions occupied by the teacher and the students in the educational system.

Summarizing the role of reading texts which has predominated in the classroom, Grigoletto says that:

To deal with texts in the classroom is to make explicit each reader's illusion that there is a single, right and good reading for a text. In the teaching situation, this right reading is, from either the teacher's or the students' points of view, the teacher's reading, which, when necessary, interprets the author. He is the legitimate interpreter, this legitimacy being conferred on him by the educational institution. [my translation] (Grigoletto, 1995, p. 91).

There seems to be a growing recognition that learners' beliefs about different aspects of the learning/teaching process, and about second language learning and L2 reading, are seminal to the development of appropriate instructional practices.

This chapter was intended to review some studies concerning beliefs in general, beliefs about knowledge, about learning, and particularly, beliefs about language learning and reading and their relevance to second language learning/teaching. Chapter 2 reviews distinct reading approaches which may have influenced students' reading beliefs through the instructional practice of reading..

2 CHAPTER - READING THEORY

This chapter is intended to review the theory of reading in the light of the influence it may have had on learners' beliefs about reading rather than attempting to be exhaustive in terms of its description. It is divided into two sections: the first section focuses on a number of aspects of theoretical cognitive reading models (bottom-up, top-down and interactive) which have been highly influential in the teaching of reading and possibly on our students' beliefs about second language reading; and; the second outlines some current approaches to reading derived from Critical Discourse Analysis whose ideas do not seem to have influenced the pedagogy of foreign language reading to a great extent as yet.

2 .1 COGNITIVE MODELS OF READING

First of all, it should be borne in mind that the models of reading which are to be described were primarily developed for the understanding of first language reading, only later being used as the basis for second language reading research. Some caution therefore is necessary when transferring these theories to the L2 reading situation. Secondly, these models were partial, each of them describing the reading process from a somewhat different perspective, with a different focus. None of them, therefore, gives a thorough description of the complex process that reading is.

In the next subsections, the following topics will be touched upon in varying degrees of detail: Gough's bottom-up model (1972), Goodman's top-down model (1976), Frank Smith's psycholinguistic approach to reading, the interactive model of Rumelhart (1977), and the interactive-compensatory reading model of Stanovich (1980).

2.1.1 Gough's Bottom-up Model

Based on the structuralistic idea that language was **form**, the bottom-up models considered the reading comprehension process as a pure decodification process where the text played a central role and the meaning was believed to be crystalized in the text. The meaning of a text was no more than the sum of its parts. The reader had to go from the graphemes to form words, from words to form sentences, from sentences to form paragraphs and from paragraphs to form texts. The reader's task was only to go through the text from the particular to the general. As language was believed to be primarily speech, the phoneme-grapheme relationship was overemphasized while reading problems were seen merely as decodification problems.

Second and first language acquisition theories influenced by behaviourism and structuralism saw the process of learning to read as a mechanical process where "students developed habitual (eventually automatic) recognition of the written symbols corresponding to familiar

(that is, spoken) language patterns .” (SILBERSTEIN, 1987, p.28). Furthermore, according to BRAGA & BUSNARDO (1993) conservative educational views reinforced the idea contained in the bottom-up model of reading, that the text was an authoritative and sacred entity and therefore what existed was a single possible meaning for a text which the reader passively had to understand.

One of the most important proponents of the bottom-up model of reading is undoubtedly Gough (1972), who proposed a letter-by-letter model of reading where “ all the letters in the visual field must be accounted for individually by the reader prior to the assignment of meaning to any string of letters.” (SAMUELS & KAMIL, 1988, p.24).

The aim of Gough’s model was to describe the sequence of events which occur in one second of reading in order to suggest the nature of the processes which link these events (KLEIMAN, 1989). Gough’s events start in the eye fixations and continue to saccade movements, iconic representation of visual percepts, letter identification (through a discrete, serial process), letter mapping with the abstract phonemic representation of words, and serial word by word search for the lexicon

entry. He then postulates processes of a less specified nature which include the storage of lexical entries in the primary memory , in which the comprehension device works by using phonemic, syntactic and semantic information from the lexical entries. After this, an unknown mechanism works on the primary memory and tries to discover the deep structure of the fragment, the grammatical relations; and if this succeeds, then the semantic interpretation is carried out. GOUGH & COSKY (1977) suggest that the reader automatically converts letters into phonological form, and then searches the lexicon for an entry headed by this form.

The bottom-up model emphasized the text as an independent object where the meaning lies and from which cues to comprehension are to be attended to by the reader in order to understand it. The reader is seen as a passive decoder who has to “plod” through the text, as DOWNING and LEONG show:

Gough thus sees the reader as essentially a “plodder” and not as a “guesser” or an “explorer”. The plodder literally plods through the text “letter by letter, word by word”, converting letters to a system of phonological representation, which in turn contacts what is previously learned. (DOWNING and LEONG, 1992, p. 204)

One of the biggest flaws of Gough's model is the fact that as a sequential processing model, it separates the low-level and the high-level processes and therefore does not accommodate the 'familiar word effect' _ the phenomenon that familiar words are named faster than letters, presented by CATTELL a hundred years ago (1886) _ or the other contributions of the context to the understanding of the texts, such as its fundamental role in solving meaning ambiguities.

There may be a possibility that the pedagogy of L₁ and L₂ reading and consequently students' conceptions about reading are still influenced by the bottom-up view of the reading process. This is one of the hypotheses investigated by this study.

2 .1 .2 The Top-Down Model

Diametrically opposed to the bottom-up approach, the so-called top-down model views the reading process as driven by higher-level conceptual processes rather than by lower-level input analysis. They see the fluent reader as being actively engaged in hypothesis-testing as

he proceeds through the text. During the reading process, readers start with hypotheses which they attempt to verify by processing the incoming data.

Goodman is one of the most prominent figures associated with the top-down model. His 1967 article, "Reading: a psycholinguistic guessing game" was the most striking transformation in the conceptual model of reading. It was his model which undoubtedly had the greatest impact on the conceptions of the teaching of reading (SAMUELS & KAMIL, 1988).

Cognitive psychology together with contemporary linguistics led to the new view of the reading comprehension process as "a psycholinguistic process in that it starts with a linguistic surface representation encoded by a writer and ends with meaning which the reader constructs". (GOODMAN, 1988, p.12).

In Goodman's words , the view of the reading comprehension process changed from: " Reading is a precise process. It involves exact, detailed, sequential perception and identification of letters, words, spelling patterns and large language units." to

Reading is a selective process. It involves partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected, or refined as reading progresses.

More simply stated, reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game. It involves an interaction between thought and language. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time (GOODMAN, 1976, p.497-498).

According to Goodman's point of view, during the reading process the reader reconstructs the message encoded by the writer using simultaneously , not sequentially, grapho-phonetic, syntactic and semantic information. Meaning is continuously constructed with readers (always focused on meaning) employing five basic processes which operate in an intrinsic sequence: i) *recognition-initiation* - during this stage , the brain recognizes a graphic display in the visual field as written language and initiates reading; ii) *prediction* - the brain anticipates and predicts while seeking order and significance in sensory inputs; iii) *confirmation* - the brain verifies its predictions , confirming or disconfirming its hypotheses based on subsequent input; iv) *correction* - if the brain finds inconsistencies it reprocesses

information; v) *termination* - the brain terminates the reading when it completes it or for various other reasons.(ibid).

Goodman, summarizing the premises of his model, recognizes in it the existence of a single reading process and his focus on the proficient reader although he says that his model is applicable to all levels of reading development (ibid.). However, there has been widespread recognition that reading differs for different purposes and that there is no one single reading process but rather many processes. It follows that there can be no single model for reading (DOWNING & LEONG, 1992). Consequently, Goodman's model might not account for students who are acquiring a second language and acquiring reading skills.

Goodman has explained that his model is not complete yet and that " no one yet claims a ' finished ' model of any language process" (ibid., p.11). More recently (id.,1991), he proposed a psycholinguistic transactional model of reading which considers it as a transaction between the reader and the text and , indirectly, between the reader and the author. These linguistic transactions refer to three different aspects: i) the process through which the author produces the text; ii) the

characteristics of the text itself; and finally, *iii*) the process by which the reader constructs the meaning of the text during the reading process. The meaning is not seen as predetermined but as a potential to evoke meaning.

In this new version of his reading model, Goodman emphasizes the contractual aspect of these transactions, referring to Grice's maxim that both parts involved in the communicative process should have the intention of collaborating in the process. That is, the author wants his text to be understood and the reader wants to understand it.

Goodman's idea that reading should be seen as the construction of meaning by the reader, and as such a transaction with the text itself as well as with its author, is shared by current reading approaches based on discourse theories of language.

The fact that Goodman's model inspired a wealth of research into how conceptual knowledge, inference and background knowledge affect reading (CARRELL, 1984) is one of its greatest contributions to the development of reading theory.

The idea that reading was a psycholinguistic process was also strongly supported by Frank Smith. Although he did not develop a model of reading, Smith described the linguistic and cognitive processes “ that any decent model of reading will need to take into account “ (SAMUELS & KAMIL, 1988, p.24). Smith provided two important arguments in favour of a top-down approach to reading, giving reasons why an efficient reader does not follow a word-by-word decodification process. First of all, there is a severe limit to the amount of information which human beings are able to receive, process and remember due to the limitation to six or seven items that can be held at one time in short-term memory (SMITH, 1978).

There is another reason why reading must depend on the eyes as little as possible. If we are too concerned with the print on the page in front of us, we will probably forget what we are reading as we read it. (SMITH, 1978, p.36)

Readers, therefore, instead of using all the information from the printed page, select the most productive cues. Secondly, according to Smith, more information comes from the reader than from the print. Readers are able to comprehend the text because they are able to link

what is brought by the text to what they already know in terms of their linguistic knowledge as well as their knowledge of the world. Therefore readers are moving **from meaning to words**.

The role of prior knowledge is emphasized by Smith who describes its role as follows:

What we have in our heads is a **theory** of what the world is like, a theory that is the basis of all our perceptions and understanding of the world, the root of all learning, the source of all hopes and fears, motives and expectancies, reasoning and creativity. And this theory is all we have. If we can make sense of the world at all, it is by interpreting our interactions with the world in the light of our theory. The theory is our shield against bewilderment. (SMITH, 1978, p.57)

Thus, in his view, the text does not carry the meaning by itself; rather it only provides directions for readers to construct the meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge. Prediction plays a central role in Smith's ideas about reading. He states that "comprehension depends upon prediction." (SMITH, 1978, p.78). As he understands prediction as a matter of asking questions, comprehension is thus having these questions answered.

An important warning given by DUBIN, ESKEY and GRABE (1986) is that although Smith and Goodman emphasize the minimum

use that the reader's brain makes of the visual cues required to convert printed text to information, it is clear that this only happens provided that the reader has already acquired some skill in converting printed language into meaning. Those authors agree that Goodman and Smith's ideas might sometimes be interpreted as if there were no skill involved in this conversion. Thus, as VAN DIJK and KINTSCH (1983, p.25) say " pure top-down models have never really existed , strictly speaking, because pure top-down processing is psychologically absurd".

The idea that skill in reading was dependent on the development of special subskills or strategies appeared during this period. Coursebooks based on the psycholinguistic view offered a wide range of activities designed to make students practise the various skills for comprehending. These activities included: skimming, scanning, drawing inferences and evaluating writers' points of view. There was also an emphasis on the development of vocabulary comprehension strategies: guessing the meaning of unknown words through the context, using morphological information as well as knowledge of cognates.

However, according to BRAGA & BUSNARDO (1993), the top-down view became a very extreme position and this led to a misconception of EFL reading. Teachers began to think that it was possible to interact with foreign texts with very limited language skills. They believed that by using pre-reading activities, teachers would help students to activate or even build the necessary schemata for the understanding of the EFL texts. Although this was partly true, it did not represent the whole picture. This practice soon turned out to be inadequate because it did not result in precise comprehension of the texts. But this kind of instructional reading practice might still be found and might have been influencing our learners' beliefs about reading. This is another hypothesis which this study tries to confirm.

One of the greatest contributions to the understanding of the reading process was the fact that the top-down model re-emphasized the affective, humanistic side of the process, bringing the reader to the centre of the process of text comprehension. This model also called attention to crucial aspects of written texts, such as discourse patterns, rhetorical conventions and the recognition of organizational patterns and relations, ideas which had hitherto been given little importance.

Meyer is one of the researchers who dealt with written text structures (MEYER 1975, 1977, 1980). This author believes that different types of rhetorical text organization represent different abstract schemata of ways writers organize their texts and readers understand them. She recognizes five types of rhetorical organization for expository texts (CARRELL, 1984):

i) *collection* _ a grouping or listing of concepts or ideas by association;

ii) *causation* _ ideas are grouped either chronologically or causally, 'cause-effect' and 'if-then' statements are typical of this text type;

iii) *response* _ it contains all characteristics of cause-effect and additionally the feature of overlapping content between propositions in problem and solution type;

iv) *comparison* _ it is organized on the basis of opposing viewpoints either alternative views giving equal weight to two sides (comparison) or adversative ones favouring one side or another (contrast);

v) *description* _ grouping by association in which one element of the association is subordinate to another. This type of text organization gives more information about the topic by presenting its particular attributes, specification or setting.

CARRELL (1984, p. 442) says that these five types are by no means exhaustive or definitive “ but Meyer’s research has shown that there is good support for the beliefs that these are significantly distinct types of prose.”.

Presenting the effects of top-down processing, VAN DIJK and KINTSCH (1983) mention the fact that the perception of letters is influenced by readers’ knowledge about words, that word recognition is influenced by the sentence context in which they are presented, and that sentence processing is also determined by the status of the sentence in a text. Context therefore plays a crucial role in the construction of meaning during the reading process.

Despite these contributions the top-down view of reading failed to explain reading more comprehensively because it relegated the importance of linguistic constraints on the interpretation of texts to second place.

2 .1 .3 Interactive Models

There is no single interactive model. Rather, according to GRABE (1988, p. 60), “interactive models include any model that minimally tries to account for more than serial processing and that does so assuming that any parallel or array processing will interact”.

The term “interactive” has been widely used in the literature on L2 reading with various meanings, which often leads to misunderstandings. It can refer to the process of combining information brought by the text with information the reader brings to the text. “Reading is thus viewed as a kind of dialogue between the reader and the text.”(GRABE, 1988, p.56). This perspective evolved out of Goodman’s and Smith’s research as well as the development of Schema Theory. (ANDERSON & SPIRO, 1977).

Another common meaning is related to “interactive” reading models, which began with RUMELHART (1977). It refers to the

relationship between lower-level and higher-level processes which work together interactively for successful comprehension of the text. In this case, the issue involves the interrelations between the graphic input in the text, the different levels of linguistic knowledge and the various cognitive activities.

The interactive perspective does not presuppose the primacy of top-down processes but posits that information provided from several knowledge sources such as orthographic, lexical, syntactic and semantic knowledge, as well as the reader's knowledge of the world, is processed simultaneously.

Interactive models share many characteristics with Goodman's: reading is not a linear process, it is dynamic in the interrelation of various components of the text, it is a predictive activity, it is based mainly on hypothesis formulation for which the reader must use his linguistic and conceptual knowledge.

Some theoreticians (ESKEY, 1973; COADY, 1979; CLARKE, 1979; CARRELL, 1988) began to question the validity of the psycholinguistic approach to L2 reading. WEBER (1984) considered the exclusive top-down model as "essentially a model of the fluent

reader". (cited by ESKEY & GRABE, 1988, p.225). Doubts concerning how and to what degree literate second language readers employ processing strategies, and how these skills interacted with higher-level strategies, were expressed.

Grabe says that there are some specific characteristics in foreign language reading which are not usually considered in the research of first language reading. He divides these factors into:

- i) L₂ acquisition and training background differences;*
- ii) language processing differences , and*
- iii) social context differences.*

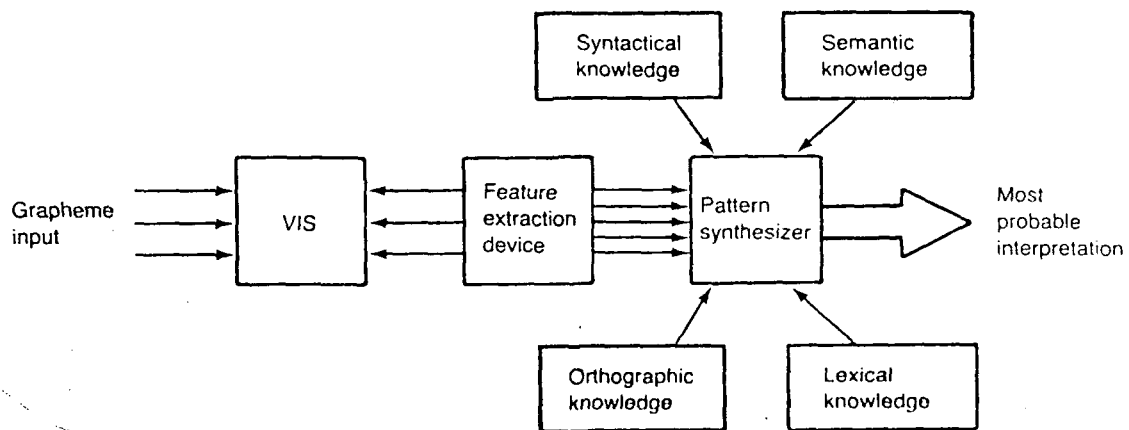
There is a unique set of factors which characterizes second language readers, according to GRABE (1988). Among these are: first, the fact that students may or may not be efficient readers in their mother tongue; second, little investigation has been carried out into the cultural value of reading in the students' native environment; third, it is not empirically proved, according to ALDERSON (1984), that readers readily transfer their first language reading abilities to their second language reading; finally, second language readers do not approach reading in L2 with the same knowledge of the language as native

speakers. Young native speakers have a good intuitive knowledge of the grammar of the language while second language students do not. However, adult second language students may have a better developed conceptual and factual knowledge of the world, which helps them to make elaborate logical inferences during reading. They are also better able to use metacognitive strategies facilitating learning in formal classroom contexts.

With a model based on language processing by computer and on Schema Theory (ANDERSON & SPIRO, 1977), RUMELHART (1977) is the main exponent of the interactive reading model, explaining how prior knowledge is organized in our memory and how it is used during the reading process.

Rumelhart's model has semantic, lexical and orthographic information exerting influence upon text processing. For him, these knowledge sources converge upon a pattern synthesizer, providing input simultaneously. (See Figure 1).

Figure 1 - RUMELHART'S INTERACTIVE MODEL OF READING



The existence of a 'message centre', a mechanism which accepts these sources of information, holds them together and redirects the information as required, is therefore necessary.

The message center is the communication center, while the knowledge sources specialize in various aspects of the reading process. The message center maintains a running list of hypotheses about the nature of the input string and each knowledge source scans the message center for the most relevant hypotheses. These are analyzed, confirmed or rejected, and new hypotheses are added. These are further tested and integrated with existing knowledge sources. (DOWNING & LEONG, 1992, p. 212)

It is through the existence of the separated knowledge sources and the message centre which allow these different sources to communicate and interact that Rumelhart can accommodate the idea that higher-order stages can and do influence the processing of lower-order stages.

Interactive models such as Rumelhart's can account for some well-known reading occurrences (SAMUELS & KAMIL, 1988). They can explain why more letters can be apprehended in a given unit of time if they spell a word than if they are used in a non-word (HUEY, 1908/1968 cited by SAMUELS & KAMIL op.cit.) as well as the fact that more letters can be apprehended in a nonsense letter string which conforms to rules of the studied language spelling than in a nonsense letter string which does not do so (MILLER, BRUNER & POSTMAN, cited by SAMUELS & KAMIL, op.cit). These observations support the idea that knowledge of lexical items and orthography contained in higher-order levels influences the perception of letters which occur earlier at lower-order levels during the information processing. (op. cit).

To give another example, this model can also account for syntactic effects on word perception. For instance, when an error in word recognition occurs, there is a strong tendency for the substituted word to be the same part of speech as the word for which it was substituted.

It is the interactive reading model which best explains at the same time the influences of semantic knowledge on word perception and the dependency upon the context in which the word is embedded for the perception of the syntax of this given word. Therefore, meaning is not achieved only from the particular text segment we are reading, but mainly from "its surrounding environment." (op.cit., p.29)

VAN DIJK and KINTSCH (1983) say that the complex nature of the interaction between top-down and bottom-up processes is clarified when we look at the contrast between good and poor readers.

One popular suggestion is that the good reader is more adroit at exploiting the regularities and redundancies inherent in language and does not bother much with laborious bottom-up decoding letter by letter or word by word.(...)

However, we immediately run into a paradox: Context effects are most pronounced in poor readers! If one looks at the occurrence of semantically appropriate substitution errors in reading, they are more likely to be found in poor readers than good readers (e.g. Kolars, 1975). The greatest facilitation of word recognition by meaningful context is observed with poor readers, not with good readers (e.g. Perfetti, Goldman, & Hogabom, 1979). Furthermore, it is simply not true that good readers take decoding lightly; they fixate almost every content

word (Just & Carpenter, 1980), (...). (VAN DIJK & KINTSCH, 1983, p. 23).

VAN DIJK and KINTSCH (ibid.) conclude that good readers have superior decoding skills which allow them to decode letters and words more rapidly and in so doing they do not normally need to resort to guessing strategies.

Stanovich's interactive-compensatory model of reading (1980) recognizes the value of the interactive models of reading and combines them with an assumption of compensatory processing. His model assumes that "any level can compensate for deficiencies at any other level." (STANOVICH, 1980, p.36)

According to STANOVICH, the bottom-up models lack feedback, because they do not have any mechanism which could allow for processing stages which occur later in the reading process to influence processing which occurs earlier. Without such a possibility, it is difficult to explain sentence-context effects as well as the role of prior knowledge of text topic as variables which facilitate word recognition and text comprehension. (SAMUELS & KAMIL, 1988).

As far as the top-down conceptualization of reading is concerned, Stanovich supports the criticism made by several authors that the top-down models as hypothesis-testing models require implausible assumptions about the relative speeds of the processes involved. SAMUELS & KAMIL (1988) summarize these ideas:

One of the problems for the top-down model is that for many texts, the reader has little knowledge of the topic and cannot generate predictions . A more serious problem is that even if a skilled reader can generate predictions, the amount of time necessary to generate a prediction may be greater than the amount of time the skilled reader needs simply to recognize the words. In other words, for the sake of efficiency, it is easier for a skilled reader to simply recognize words in a text than to try to generate predictions. Thus, while the top-down models may be able to explain beginning reading, with slow rates of word recognition, they do not accurately describe skilled reading behaviour. (SAMUELS & KAMIL, 1988, p.32)

Stanovich's interactive-compensatory model therefore attempts to incorporate the information about poor and good readers. If the reader is not good at an early print-analysis stage, he will try to compensate by using higher-level knowledge structures, while if the reader is good at word recognition and does not know much about the topic of the text , he will simply try to rely on bottom-up decoding.

As STANOVICH states:

Interactive models, (...) assume that a pattern is synthesized based on information provided simultaneously from several knowledge sources. The compensatory assumption states that a deficit in any knowledge results in heavier reliance on other knowledge sources, regardless of their level in the processing hierarchy. Thus, according to the interactive-compensatory model, the poor reader who has deficient word analysis skills might possibly show greater reliance on contextual factors. (STANOVICH, 1980, p. 63)

PATRICIA CARRELL, whose first works clearly emphasized the role of content knowledge, text structure knowledge, and knowledge of rhetorical organization for second language reading , more recently realized that overreliance either on text-bound processing (when students rely exclusively on the word-by-word decodification process) or on context-bound processing (when students make a lot of inferences without checking them against the available textual cues) may bring difficulties for text comprehension. (CARRELL, 1988).

She hypothesized five possible causes for this unidirectional processing (CARRELL, 1988): *i*) it might be a problem of schema availability. Students may not have the necessary background knowledge supposed by the text, which could be due to the fact that the necessary schema was a culture-specific one or a content-specific one.

Relevant studies which pointed out the effects of culturally biased content schemata were STEFFENSEN, JOAG-DEV, and ANDERSON (1979), JOHNSON (1981) and CARRELL (1981); *ii*) the second cause may be a matter of schema activation. The reader has the appropriate schema but she does not activate it because the text probably does not give clear, precise cues which would allow the reader to do that; *iii*) it could also be that the reader has skill deficiencies, either reading skill deficiencies or linguistic ones (if, for instance, the reader is not proficient enough in the target language); *iv*) the fourth hypothesized cause is related to student's misconceptions about reading. These misconceptions are seen as natural consequences of the artificiality of the classroom reading activities where students read texts for teachers' purposes and for evaluation by question/answer tests. It is widely accepted that students' conceptions about reading influence their reading behaviour. (DEVINE, 1988; WAGNER, SPRATT & GAL, 1989; SCHOMMER, 1990); *v*) finally, the last cause suggested by Carrell is concerned with students' individual differences in cognitive styles, leading consequently to different comprehension styles.

Current thinking converges on the acknowledgement of the importance of top-down processing in the reading process but there is also the recognition that it is not enough. Therefore, the interactive view of reading presupposes that lower-level processing skills are also central to efficient reading, and recognizes the need for extensive receptive vocabulary which has to be rapidly, accurately and automatically accessed. Furthermore, the fact that less-skilled readers follow a unidirectional reading process, overcompensating by guessing, or by reading in a slow text-bound, word-by-word manner, should bring changes in the way foreign language reading is taught, providing methods of instruction for rapid visual recognition, for extensive vocabulary development and for syntactic pattern recognition.

Although the most important insight for L2 reading pedagogy provided by the interactive models of reading is the need for both bottom-up and top-down knowledge processing, in practice, according to ESKEY, bottom-up processing has been deemphasised:

(...) in making the perfectly valid point that fluent reading is primarily a cognitive process, they tend to deemphasize the perceptual and decoding dimension of that process. The model they promote is an accurate model of the skilful, fluent reader, for whom perception and decoding have become automatic, but for the less proficient,

developing reader _ like most second language readers _ this model does not provide a true picture of the problems such readers must surmount. (ESKEY, 1988, p. 93)

As already pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, all the reading models previously discussed are partial, each of them trying to describe the reading process from a somewhat different perspective, with a different focus. Thus, as SINGER & RUDELLE suggest (1980, p. 450), they have to “be understood in relation to their purpose, what they are trying to explain, and judged on how adequately they accomplish this purpose. Then they should be evaluated in a broader context.”. GRABE would appear to be correct in saying that it is better to have partial models which can be tested than comprehensive ones which are difficult to test. (1988).

Interactive reading models have substantially deepened our understanding of the complex nature of the reading process. Nowadays, as GRABE (1991) says, there is agreement that *fluent* reading has to be:

i) *rapid* (“the reader needs to maintain a flow of information at a sufficient rate to make connections and inferences vital to comprehension”);

ii) *purposeful* (because reading in everyday life always has a purpose);

iii) *interactive* (in the sense that “ the reader makes use of information from his background knowledge as well as information from the printed page”, but also because the reader simultaneously uses various levels of information from the text);

iv) *comprehending* (because comprehension is always our aim in reading);

v) *flexible* (the fluent reader employs a range of different strategies according to his reading needs), and

vi) *gradually developing* (because fluent reading is the result of long-term work with gradual improvement).

Nonetheless, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the models of reading here described could not accomplish the enormous task of describing the entire process of reading and they did not intend to do so. As partial models, the cognitive models of reading

also have limitations which more current approaches have been trying to overcome.

The exclusively bottom-up reading model (GOUGH, 1972), as a serial-stage model, fails to account for the fact that higher-level processes can affect lower levels. The top-down model is questioned by many authors because of implausible assumptions about the relative speeds of the processes involved in hypothesis-testing. Interactive models, which take into account the importance of both processes (bottom-up and top-down) in reading, are criticised by researchers based on more current reading approaches, because, according to these approaches, interactive reading models do not account properly for the fact that reading, as a communicative activity, takes place between discourse participants.

A new insight into *interaction* seems to have emerged recently with Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, which will be discussed below.

2 .2 DISCOURSE APPROACHES TO READING

In this section, I will first present an overview of Discourse Analysis and its relation to some important aspects of reading. Second, I will outline Fairclough's ideas concerning the analysis of texts. Third, I will present Braga's views on critical reading (1995). Fourth, I will describe the contributions of Carmagnani (1995), Coracini (1995), and Grigoletto (1995) to the investigation of the interaction between the teacher and the students in the second language reading class. Finally, Moita Lopes' ideas will be outlined.

2 .2 .1 Discourse Analysis - An overview

The difficulty of establishing strict disciplinary distinctions within the field of discourse has already been recognized by some scholars. (McCARTHY, 1991; VAN DIJK & KINTSCH, 1983). Discourse Analysis arose out of a variety of disciplines, including linguistics, sociology, psychology and anthropology, and has built a

strong foundation in Descriptive and Applied Linguistics. All these disciplines have shared a common interest in language **in use**, how people actually use real language. Both spoken and written language are examined in naturally occurring contexts.

It was not until the 1970s, according to VAN DIJK and KINTSCH (1983) that modern linguists started looking beyond the sentence boundary. Chomsky's transformational generative grammar had hitherto dominated the field of linguistics, focusing on phonological, morphological, syntactic, and later semantic structures in isolated, context- and text-independent sentences.

Amongst the linguists who were interested in the study of discourse, English and German linguists developed works more closely related to the structuralist tradition which, according to VAN DIJK and KINTSCH, "had less respect for the boundaries of linguistics itself in general and of the sentence unit in particular. These concerns led to the development of text grammars but which were still similar to the generative model.

However a more independent paradigm for the study of discourse was soon developed, and more or less simultaneously with

this development American linguists had started producing grammatical analyses which were text- and context-dependent.

ZELLIG HARRIS published in 1952 an article entitled: 'Discourse Analysis'. Although at that time Harris was already interested in the distribution of linguistic elements in extended texts and the existing links between texts and the social situations in which they occurred, his work differs a lot from current discourse studies, according to McCARTHY. (1991).

There are many approaches to discourse analysis and an extensive variety of descriptive methods. American discourse analysis investigated the production and interpretation of everyday action through conversation (also called *conversational analysis*). Their work has been dominated by the ethnomethodological tradition and their aim was not to build structural models but to closely observe the behaviour of participants in talk and the patterns which recur over a wide range of natural data. (McCARTHY, *ibid*).

Another prominent trend in discourse analysis was the British approach, greatly influenced by the functional language approach of HALLIDAY (1973), who was inspired by the Prague School of

linguistics through the work of FIRTH and MALINOWSKY, which emphasized the social functions of language. At the same time, the analysis of spoken interaction through the work of SINCLAIR and COULTHARD (1975) has influenced the development of *text linguistics*, a science which is exclusively concerned with the analysis of written discourse.

2 .2 .2 Discourse-Based Text Analysis and Reading

Amongst text analysts' studies are the works of VAN DIJK and KINTSCH (1983), who proposed a model of strategic discourse processing, and of DE BEAUGRANDE and DRESSLER (1981), who see text interpretation as a set of procedures and approach text analysis emphasizing the mental activities involved in the interpretation process.

VAN DIJK and KINTSCH summarize their work as follows:

The theory assumes that a verbal input is decoded into a list of atomic propositions which are organized into larger units on the basis of some knowledge structure to form a coherent text base. From this text base a macrostructure is constructed which represents the most essential information in the text base. Not only the comprehender's knowledge, but also beliefs and goals play a crucial role in this

process. In parallel with this hierarchical textbase a situation model is elaborated, which integrates the comprehender's existing world knowledge with the information derived from the text that is being processed. Thus, the end product of comprehension is multilevel processing record, which includes memory traces of the actual linguistic input, of the meaning of the text both at a local and global level and of the effect the text had on the comprehender's world knowledge. (VAN DIJK & KINTSCH, 1983, p. x).

DE BEAUGRANDE and DRESSLER view text as a system, as a set of elements functioning together. They say that "a language is a VIRTUAL system of available options not yet in use," (DE BEAUGRANDE & DRESSLER, 1981, p. 35) whereas text is "an ACTUAL system in which options have been taken from their repertoires and utilized in a particular STRUCTURE (relationship between or among elements)." (loc.cit.).

In both theories, the traditional linguistic view of text as a structure is found. In contrast with this idea, HOEY (1983, 1991), who extended the work of WINTER (1977, 1978) in clause-relational analysis, argues against this rigid view of the structure of text. Hoey says that "text has some organization, but that this organization does not have the status of structure".(HOEY, 1991, p.13). A structural description of a text would, in his view, permit one to make predictive

statements about text organization, and he believes that prediction of syntactic elements may occur at the micro level , but not at the macro level.

WINTER's and HOEY's approaches to texts analysis emphasized the interpretative process involved in relating textual segments to one another through relationships during reading. This approach is called *the clause-relational approach* and addresses the reader's task of understanding the connections between the various components of a text. According to WINTER,

A clause relation is the cognitive process whereby the reader interprets the meaning of a clause, sentence, or groups of sentences in the context of one or more preceding clauses, sentences, or groups of sentences in the same text. (WINTER, 1977, cited by McCARTHY, 1994, p. 54)

The basic premise of clause-relational analysis is that all clauses or other stretches of language in any complete written text are interrelated and each of them is related to the message of the discourse. The meaning of all clauses is determined by these interrelations by a principle of co-relevance. (SHEPHERD, 1992).

Thus text is viewed as a semantic network in which units of discourse, seen as functional segments (not always co-extensive with sentences), are related to one another by a finite set of cognitive relations. These relations are divided into two broader categories: *matching relations* and *logical sequencing*. Matching relations include *general-particular*, *hypothetical-real*, *contrast* and *compatibility* textual patterns while logical sequence covers temporal and logical sequencing textual patterns. The latter incorporates , amongst others, relations of *cause-consequence*, *condition-consequence*, *evaluation-basis* and *instrument-achievement*.

SHEPHERD (1992) explains Hoey's ideas of the macropatterns:

These 'macropatterns' account for the hierarchical nature of discourse, and hence for the view of text as a web of semantic relations. They are used by the writer and reader to simplify the process of interpretation, by avoiding the need to process in as detailed or as complex a manner as the sum total of text propositions and writer orientation would involve. (SHEPHERD, 1992, p. 119).

It is important to reemphasize that, in this view, text is seen as dynamic, organized but not structured and the patterns are seen as something which may be provided, not obligatory. (HOEY, 1983).

These patterns are not rigid as the concept of structure, on the contrary, they are rather flexible:

One point to note about patterns is that they are of no fixed size in terms of number of sentences or paragraphs contained in them. Another point is that any given text may contain more than one of the common patterns, either following one another or embedded within one another. Thus a problem-solution pattern may contain general-specific patterns within individual segments, or a claim-counterclaim pattern when proposed solutions are being evaluated, (McCARTHY, 1991, p.159).

These patterns occur regularly in functional circumstances and become part of our cultural environment and as such part of our background knowledge.

SHEPHERD (1992) points out that:

The strength of the clause-relational approaches lies in their ability to account for the larger cognitive patterns organising wider stretches of text, including entire discourses, as well as the ways in which the micro elements of clauses and cohesion are integrated within descriptions of the wider patterns. (SHEPHERD, 1992, p.106).

The idea that this area of text analysis is crucial to any discourse-based approach to reading is supported by McCARTHY (1991). Emphasizing the influence of discourse analysis also upon the teaching of reading, McCARTHY (op.cit.) explains:

What we shall conclude about discourse and reading in fact follows consistently from what we have said in this chapter and in earlier ones: we cannot explain discourse patterning at the macro-level without paying due attention to the role of grammar and lexis; by the same token, we cannot foster good reading without considering global and local reading skills simultaneously. (McCARTHY, 1991, p.168).

For the general view of discourse as being manifested in macro-level patterns to which the local lexico-grammatical choices contribute heavily, the interactive model of reading recognizing the need for local and global decoding for an efficient reading process is the most valid.

Nevertheless, according to CORACINI (1995), in the interactive approach to reading the text is still of seminal importance, because it is in its literal reading that the reader will find the cues to the non-literal meanings. In this sense, in accordance with her view, this model only partially solves the problem created by the deemphasis of the text in the process of reading from the strictly top-down approach. She concludes that such a view seems to follow the traditional bottom-up approach in that it only adds , in a more or less stereotyped view of the components of communication, the reader's

data (his experiences and prior knowledge), and if it is the text which authorizes a certain number of readings (through authorized inferences) and makes other inferences impossible, then the text is still an authority, a guardian of the predetermined meanings. The reader, downgraded by the primacy of the text, still needs to efficiently apprehend those meanings.

2.2.3 Critical Discourse Reading Approaches

According to CALDAS-COULTHARD (1993), we can divide the body of discourse research into two groups based on the nature of their social orientation to language studies: non-critical and critical approaches. Non-critical discourse analysis simply describes discourse practices while the critical studies of language not only describe but also try to show how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies.

The increasing concern with language and society, influenced particularly by the work of HALLIDAY, has resulted in critical

discourse interpretation of text (oral or written) and the view of language as a social semiotic (CALDAS-COULTHARD, 1993).

During the 40's and 50's with the American descriptivists and during the 60's and 70's with the structuralists, according to CALDAS-COULTHARD (op.cit), the main concern of linguistics was the description of grammar, based on the idea that language was a self-contained system, with no attention to its historical and social aspects.

Thus, their object of study was an *idealised* view of language involving the dissociation of language from its social environment, and including detailed descriptions of language sound systems, the grammatical structures of words and sentences, as well as the formal aspects of meaning. Following the positivist and empiricist traditions, the scientific approach dominated their research. Recent and current studies in semiotics and critical discourse have been questioning the notion of *scientificity*, i.e. objective investigation, in language studies.

Critical discourse analysis has been concerned with what people do through language and how people identify themselves as subjects in social contexts through a linguistic code. In the first part of the century, language theories were exclusively based on the Saussurean notion of

langue, and now ' scholars go back to the Saussurean notion that signs not only have **values** (signs have a place in a system or structure), but also **signification**, that is, a relation of reference existing outside language. (CALDAS- COULTHARD, loc.cit.).

In the 80's, connections between language and society began to appear and Voloshinov's (1929) ideas gained renewed importance. For him, there is a close link between language study, semiotics, and the study of ideology. As a consequence, ideology may not be divorced from the material reality of signs, signs may not be divorced from the concrete forms of social intercourse as communications and the forms of communications may not be divorced from the material basis.

For Voloshinov, therefore, language and ideologies are not monolithic phenomena. Society, for him, is characterised by conflicts and people are constantly renegotiating their roles and relations within a community. (CALDAS-COULTHARD, op.cit.;p.52).

VOLOSHINOV laid down the basic principles for the critical studies of language in the late 20's, FIRTH suggested , around 1935, that language was a way of behaving and making others behave. But it

was only in the 80's that a critical orientation to language theories became better established.

Amongst the critical approaches to language studies, we find the work of NORMAN FAIRCLOUGH on language, power and ideology (1989,1992), which is closely linked to the French approach to discourse analysis developed by PÊCHEUX (1982) and particularly concerned with the contributions of the description of the discursal properties of language teaching/learning is the work of McCARTHY (1991) and McCARTHY AND CARTER (1994) amongst others.

FAIRCLOUGH, one of the most active proponents of critical language studies, sees the critical approach as an orientation towards language which associates linguistic text analysis with a social theory of the functioning of language in political and ideological processes. Critical discourse analysts criticise linguistics for not taking into consideration the political and ideological investments present in social conventions and practices.

The social theories of Foucault, Bourdieu, Althusser and Habermas as well as the linguistic theory of functional systemics have been the most important influences in the development of critical

discourse analysis. Fairclough himself explains some contributions of social theories which have explored the role of language in the exercise, maintenance and change of power:

I shall refer to just three such contributions. The first is work on the theory of ideology, which on the one hand has pointed to the increasing relative importance of ideology as a mechanism of power in modern society, as against the exercise of power through coercive means, and on the other hand has come to see language as a (or indeed the) major locus of ideology, and so of major significance with respect to power. The second is the influential work of Michel Foucault, which has ascribed a central role to discourse in the development of specifically modern forms of power. And the third is the equally influential work of Jürgen Habermas, whose 'theory of communicative action' highlights the way in which our currently distorted communication nevertheless foreshadows communication without such constraints. (FAIRCLOUGH, 1989, p.12-13).

The main concern of critical discourse analysis is therefore to relate the discourse process of text production and interpretation to social practice. It sees language as discourse and discourse as social practice determined by social structures. Thus, Fairclough sees language as " a form of social practice" (1989, p.22) and establishes the relationship between language and society as follows:

My view is that there is not an external relationship ' between ' language and society. Language is a part of society; linguistic phenomena **are** social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena **are** (in part) linguistic phenomena.

Linguistic phenomena are social in the sense that whenever people speak or listen or write or read, they do so in ways which are determined socially and have social effects.

(...) Social phenomena are linguistic, on the other hand, in the sense that the language activity which goes on in social contexts (as all language activity does) is not merely a reflection or expression of social processes and practices, it is a **part** of those processes and practices. (Fairclough, 1989, p.23).

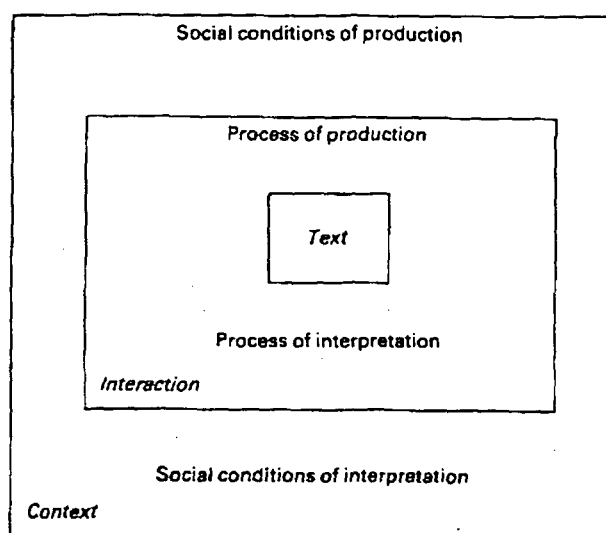
He also says that this relationship is not a symmetrical one, as if language and society were equal facets of a single whole, rather the whole is society and language is one element of it.

Fairclough uses the word *text* to refer to the product of the process of text production and *discourse* to refer to the whole process of social interaction of which a text is just a part. He includes under the heading of *discourse* (apart from the text itself) the process of production and the process of interpretation. By considering language as a socially conditioned process, Fairclough assumes that the text reflects in its formal and stylistic features the processes of production and presents 'cues' for its interpretation. The critical analyst's task is to investigate how texts arise, how and why they are produced and how the reader comes to read a particular text. However, his main concern should be to reveal and expose misrepresentation and discrimination in different types of discourse and by doing so, produce social change.

Any critical analysis of texts must include an analysis of the processes of production and interpretation, the relationship between texts and their immediate and more remote social conditions .

Critical discourse analysis posits three dimensions of discourse: the text, the interaction and its nature, and the social action. (See Fig. 2).

FIGURE 2 - FAIRCLOUGH'S DIMENSIONS OF DISCOURSE



From: Fairclough, Norman. *Language and Power*, 1989, p.25. Longman.

Corresponding to these dimensions, there are three stages of critical discourse analysis, the nature of 'analysis' differing in each of these stages. The first stage is **description** and is concerned with the formal properties of the text which can be in terms of its vocabulary,

grammar, cohesion, text structure or in terms of its 'illocutionary force'. The second stage is called **interpretation** and its concern is the relationship between the text and interaction. At this stage, conventions are examined through the analysis of the 'interactional genres'. According to Kress (1985), *genres* are formal conventional discourse types whose meanings and forms arise out of the conventionalised occasions of social interaction. Finally, the last stage, **explanation**, is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context _ with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects. It is during this stage that political and ideological uses will be specified and power relations and discriminatory values will be uncovered. Fairclough (op.cit) points out that in the description stage the text is seen as an 'object' whereas in the other stages

what one is analysing is much less determinate. In the case of interpretation, it is the cognitive processes of participants, and in the case of explanation, it is the relationships between transitory social events (interactions), and more durable social structures which shape and are shaped by these events. In both cases, the analyst is in the position of offering (in a broad sense) interpretations of complex and invisible relationships. (FAIRCLOUGH, 1989, p.27).

There are some Brazilian researchers working within the field of critical discourse analysis. Particularly concerned with the question of a critical reading practice are Orlandi (1988), Braga (1995), Coracini et alii. (1995), and Moita Lopes (1996) amongst others, with each researcher drawing upon different theories in accordance with her/his perspective.

According to Braga (1995, personal communication), being critical is a matter of having a political position which, as she says, is not something that can be taught. Furthermore, being a critical reader is not being naive , but attempting to discover what is behind the text.. She argues that critical reading lies within a broader conception of critical education where the notions of inquiry , resistance (Giroux, 1986) and struggle are aimed at social changes. Critical education recognizes the heterogeneity of human beings and acknowledges a dialectic relationship between the subject (who struggles and resists) and the social structure (against which the subject struggles). Resistance can only be understood in relation to the specific forms of domination and oppression.

The role of the school, according to BRAGA (personal communication) is, in these terms, to help students develop the abilities, concepts, and models of inquiring which are necessary for them to examine: i) their position in their social group situated within specific relations of domination and subordination, ii) the possibility of the development of a discourse free of culturally inherited distortions, iii) the possibility of the acquisition of more progressive dimensions of their own cultural history and, iv) the possibility of connecting critical knowledge and action (social change).

This critical reading approach assumes that there are three different conceptions of interpretation: a text-determined interpretation, a reader-determined interpretation and a semiotic interpretation which is determined by the reader but subordinated to certain limits imposed by the text. Therefore, critical reading recognizes the possibility that there is more than one reading for a text but at the same time it also recognizes the existence of interpretative limits. Braga (1995, personal communication) refers to these three kinds of reading respectively as: *preferential* reading, *negotiated* reading and *oppositional* reading. *Preferential reading* is the kind which is expected by the social system,

rigidly following the linguistic and discourse rules as well as the ideologies transmitted by the text. *Negotiated reading* is when the readers find themselves able to use their experience and other types of knowledge in constructing the meaning while still respecting the author's meaning, and while partly accepting the ideologies transmitted by the text. *Oppositional reading* is the reading that questions, in which there is a confrontation between the ideologies transmitted by the text and the reader's ideologies.

However, in order to question the ideology of a text, the reader has to be *literate* in a broader sense of the term. He has to know more than just the norms which characterize preferential reading - that is, more than the linguistic rules which govern the writing system. The reader has to ascribe a meaning to the text by attending to the explicitly said (e.g. through the observation of the grammar and vocabulary of the text), as well as attempt to retrieve the implicit information (through the use of inferences based on the linguistic data, semantic norms, and his prior knowledge). At the same time, the reader has to attend to selected features of the text according to his reading goal. In this case, discourse knowledge and knowledge of the situational uses of reading

are indispensable. Finally, a critical position has to be assumed. The analysis of the content of the text has to be carried out but simultaneously with a consideration of issues such as what the hidden purposes of the text are, why it is relevant, and so on.

Another scholar working within the field of critical discourse analysis is CORACINI (1995). Based on the French School of Discourse Analysis, she understands every act of reading as a discourse process where an author, who is the product of his social, economical and ideological background, interacts with a reader, who is similarly the product of his own social, economical and ideological position. Therefore, it is the historical and social context that determines the author's and the reader's behaviour, attitudes, choice of language and the construction of meaning itself.

From this point of view, it is not the text itself which determines the various readings, rather it is the reader him/herself who constructs the meaning. However, the reader, in this view, is not the idealistic notion of a single, coherent individual. The reader is a participant in a particular *discursive formation* (FOUCAULT, 1972) , and as such, a divided and heterogeneous individual ruled by his

unconscious.(CORACINI, *ibid.*). The author of the text cannot interfere in the process of interpretation, in which he just exists as an *image* (PÊCHEUX, 1969 , cited by CORACINI, 1995), the reader also being only an *image* present at the moment of writing. Thus, the reader can only imagine, from his interpretation, what the author's intentions were. This is why Coracini considers that reading exercises which ask for the main ideas of the texts and for the author's intentions are useless.

CORACINI (*id.*) points out that, in the educational environment, the way the texts are dealt with reveal theoretical positions which conceive the text as the place where *the* knowledge lies, with the result that it functions pedagogically as an object where *truth* is objectively written, showing *truth* as if it were timeless and definitive. It is this *truth* which has to be deciphered and passively assimilated by the reader.

In her view, the conception of reading as an interactive process between the reader and the text and the reader and the author, is rarely observed in foreign language reading classes. She adds that the discourse approach to reading is found even more rarely, which means

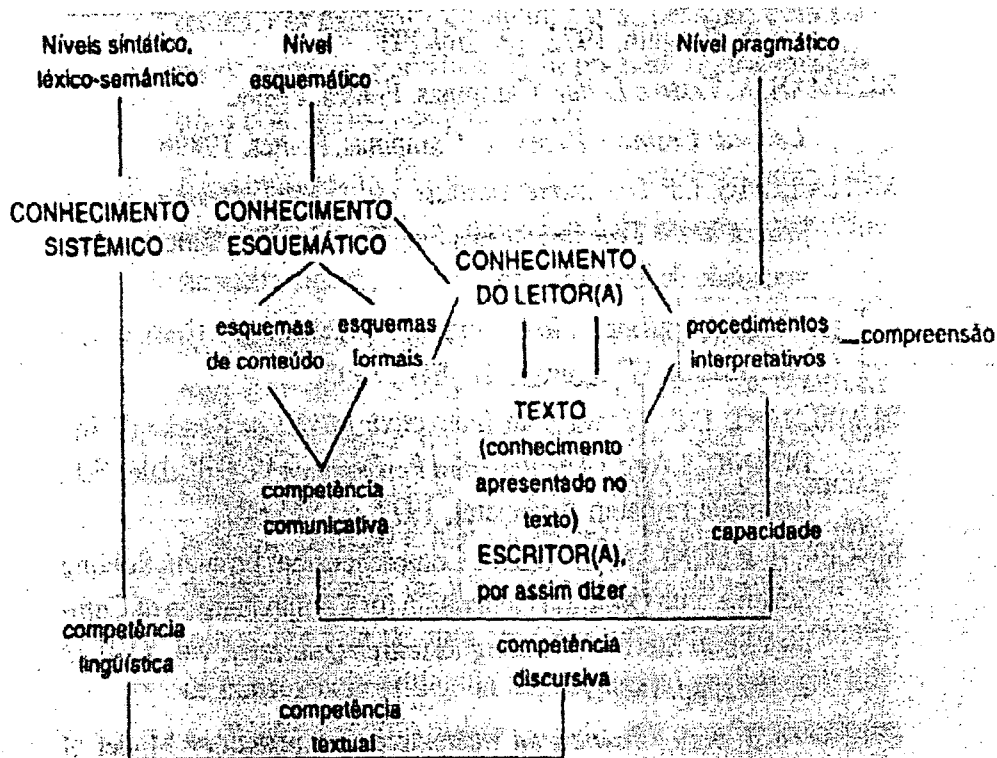
that the teacher's interpretation of the text and the interpretation given by the book are still treated as the only authorized sources of the meaning of the text.

MOITA LOPES (1996) also stresses the fact that well-known interactive reading models do not account for reading as a communicative act, and as such they do not consider that language is used in a communicative interaction between discourse participants.

The author suggests that these models be complemented by discourse analysis views which regard discourse as a negotiable unit reconstructed during the actual process of the negotiation of meaning between the participants: the author and the reader who are socially, politically, culturally and historically positioned.

Moita Lopes proposes a reading model derived from views of reading as an interactive activity. His model accounts for readers' linguistic competence as well as their discourse competence. Discourse is understood as a communicative process between the author and the reader in the negotiation of the meaning of the text. (See Fig. 3).

FIGURE 3 - MOITA LOPES' MODEL OF READING



From: Moita Lopes, Luiz Paulo da. *Oficina de Lingüística Aplicada - A Natureza Social e Educacional dos Processos de Ensino/ Aprendizagem de Línguas*. 1996, p.143. Mercado de Letras.

Moita Lopes' reading model draws mainly upon Widdowson's theory of language use (1983) and, particularly, upon his definitions of two types of language users' knowledge: *systemic knowledge* and *schematic knowledge*. Schematic knowledge includes what Carrell defines as *content schemata* – "knowledge relative to the content domain of the text" and *formal schemata* – "knowledge relative to the

formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different types of texts. ”
(CARRELL, 1983-87).

Reading, according to Moita Lopes, is “to be aware of being involved in an interaction with someone in a specific socio-historical moment and that the author, like any other interlocutor, uses language from a pre-established social position in social practice” (Moita Lopes, 1996, p.142).

He argues that a reading model which tries to involve not only the kinds of knowledge required by the readers but also the interpretive processes used in the negotiation of meaning within our society is much more relevant for reading teachers whose interests are not merely restricted to systemic, schematic and pragmatic issues, but rather concerned with issues related to the use of language in our society; that is, how readers and writers transfer their values, beliefs and political views to the construction of meaning.

Finally, his model, in accordance with Fairclough’s ideas (1989, 1992), suggests the primacy of the development of critical awareness concerning the ways language reflects social power relations through which readers and writers confront each other.

This chapter is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of research on reading. Instead, it has merely tried to describe some aspects of the bottom-up, top-down, and interactive reading approaches, whose influence on foreign language reading pedagogy and, consequently, on our learners' beliefs about reading is hypothesized in this study. It has also included a brief description of more recent approaches to reading research derived from Discourse and Critical Discourse Analysis. As far as these latter approaches are concerned, the hypothesis we work on is that their influence cannot yet be strongly felt in the second language reading classroom.

3 CHAPTER METHODOLOGY

3 .1 INTRODUCTION

In the final analysis, the extent to which one is prepared to accept or reject particular methods of inquiry and the studies utilising these methods will depend on one's view of the world, and the nature of knowledge. (Nunan, 1992, p.12).

The goal of this research and its theoretical underpinnings determined the methodology used to collect and analyse the data. A combination of two different research practices was used in this study. The data was collected and analysed in a quantitative as well as qualitative way and, at the same time, objective and subjective analyses were carried out.

Allwright and Bailey (1991, p.63) point out that the current 'objectivity' versus 'subjectivity' controversy amongst researchers is due to an assumption that 'objectivity' is something good while 'subjectivity' is not. These authors also conclude that "in research on human learning, especially in naturalistic and action research, both objectivity and subjectivity have their respective roles, and that in practice the two can be combined." (idem). A tentative combination of these two approaches was carried out in this study.

According to Nunan (1992), what makes quantitative research different from qualitative research is that the two approaches are underpinned by different ways of thinking about and understanding the world around us. It is a philosophical debate about the nature of knowledge and the status of assertions about the world.

If one does not assume reality as to be stable but rather dynamic, truth is, then, "a negotiable commodity contingent upon the historical context within which phenomena are observed and interpreted." (Nunan, idem) and knowledge is, therefore, tentative and dependent on context, rather than absolute. Thus it is in the light of this perspective that this study should be understood.

3 .2 METHOD

Two sets of data were gathered in order to assess university students' conceptions about reading in English as a foreign language. First of all, 16 students already attending either the "Licenciatura em Letras-Inglês" or the "Licenciatura em Letras-Inglês/Português" course at the Universidade Federal do Paraná were interviewed about their views on reading in general and reading in a foreign language. Although the interviews have brought to light important and interesting issues concerning students' beliefs about reading, the amount and kind of data would be enormously difficult to analyse objectively. Therefore, a closed questionnaire with 21 Likert-scale items was developed based on the ideas of reading revealed by these students during the interviews. The closed questionnaire allowed an increase in the number of subjects being investigated as well as provided conditions for a more objective analysis of the obtained data.

The students who were interviewed, 4 male and 12 female students, were attending the third semester of their courses and reacted positively toward the interviews which lasted for approximately 30' each.

The reading interview was designed to reveal information about the students' theoretical orientations toward reading _ their internalized reading models. As mentioned in chapter 1, from the readers' point of view the reading model represents the principles which guide them when they approach a written text, that is, the ways the readers construct meaning from printed material. It has already been suggested that the readers' assumptions about reading strongly influence their reading strategies and performance in general. (DEVINE, 1988).

The reading interview in this study consisted of 15 pre-prepared open questions (see Appendix 2) which served as a guideline for the researcher. Most of the questions were deliberately general, and even vague to some extent, to avoid tendentious questions. I believe that the way in which students understood the questions also revealed their views on the reading process.

All the reading interviews started with the interviewer asking students to read a very brief passage (165 words) (Appendix 1) in English which served as a tune-in activity. The students received no further instructions on which procedures they were to use to approach the text. Four of the students, for one reason or another, read the text aloud without any previous reading. Their behaviour may reveal these students' concern with reading as primarily being the transformation of graphic signs into oral language although, during the interviews, only one of them made this idea explicit while the others showed varied concepts about the nature of the reading process.

The interviews were conducted in Portuguese in order to avoid any misunderstandings due to language problems students might have had and due to their unfamiliarity with the abstraction of the topic which involves also cognitive and metacognitive processes. They were carried out individually and were all tape-recorded for later transcription and analysis.

The reading interviews permitted information to be collected on different aspects involved in the relationship between students and reading, such as:

- *students' self-image as readers*: 6 students considered themselves *good readers* ; 2 of them definitely did not think of themselves as *good readers* while the rest of the students gave the following answers: "I don't know."¹(2), "So, so."(2), "Yes and no."(1), "Depends."(1). And, finally, 2 students answered by asking the researcher the following questions: "What do you consider a good reader ?"; "Good, in what sense?".

- *students' self-image concerning their language proficiency*: "I have difficulties in English.", "My English is still poor compared to what I have to know to understand a text without any problems (...)."

- *some of students' reading strategies*: "I read quickly. It would be different if the text was in English. I would read it slowly then."; "I really have to translate a lot of things."; "In English, sometimes, I have to read a sentence once, go back, read the same sentence again and then read the second sentence again."; "I always read with the dictionary beside me.".

¹* All the quotations of students' words were translated into English by this author. For students' original sayings , refer to Appendix 3.

- *students' internalized reading models*: “ (...) reading is to carry out the mechanic activity of reading but it is also to understand the text.”

- *students' views on reading in L1 and L2*: “ Also because in English, apart from it being another language, we keep on trying to imagine the pronunciation of that word, how you would speak it, the intonation, we think about other things that we do not think about when reading in Portuguese.”; “ In Portuguese, I prefer silent reading. But, in English, for me to feel the text, I prefer reading aloud.”; “(...) reading texts in English and in Portuguese, it is not only the language that counts, there are a lot of cultural issues, a lot of implicit ways of looking at the world.”; “In Portuguese, I read quickly, in English I read slowly.”.

- *students' ideas about what good reading is and the characteristics of a good reader*: “A good reader reads slowly.”; “Good reading is understanding the author’s message.”; “Good reading is to notice the hidden purposes of the text, the reason why it has been written, who wrote it, to whom and to notice what the author wanted to say with it.”.

- *students' metacognitive awareness of the reading process:*

“(...) in English, one of the methods that is taught here, at the university, is *scanning*.”.

(For more details concerning students' answers during interviews, refer to Appendix 3)

3 .2 .1 The Questionnaire

3 .2 .1 .1 Subjects

The questionnaire (Appendix 4) was answered by 33 students attending the first year of either the “Licenciatura em Letras-Inglês” or the “Licenciatura em Letras-Inglês/Português” course at the Universidade Federal do Paraná. These students had already had two months' of classes at the university when they participated in the experiment.

3 .2 .1 .2 - Materials

Twenty-one beliefs about reading were selected from the interviews in an attempt to cover different and important aspects within the complex field of reading. These beliefs ranged over bottom-up, top-down, interactive ideas of reading, ideas related to critical discourse-based reading, the role of the reader, the text and the author in the reading activity, as well as ideas concerning the teaching and learning of reading in a formal, educational setting. The 21 reading beliefs can be divided into 5 (five) broader categories: beliefs about the pedagogy of reading _ items 1, 13, 21; beliefs about reading in general _ items 3, 11, 12; beliefs about L2 reading _ items 8, 9, 10, 14, 15; beliefs about reading strategies _ items 5, 6, 7, 17, 19; and finally, beliefs about 'meaning' and 'interpretation' _ items 2, 4, 16, 18, 20.

Choosing an effective research instrument, in the case of this research, proved to be a ' Catch-22 ' situation because, although the questionnaire proved to be a useful, objective research instrument which allowed the data to be collected from a greater number of students in a shorter period of time , I understand that it also suffered

from the limitation of not providing the reasons why students chose one answer rather than another, which would be crucial to a more comprehensive view of students' beliefs about reading.

Although all the beliefs, in the closed questionnaire reflect, in some way, some of the ideas which the students interviewed have about reading, it was sometimes not possible to keep students' own words as, out of the wider context of the interview, they often seemed ambiguous and, as such, not appropriate to be used in a research instrument of this kind. By saying this, I do not mean that the wording used to build the statements in the questionnaire is free from being ambiguous itself. However, in view of the fact that the range of possible meanings is limited, I feel there was a reasonable chance that students' interpretations of the beliefs were in accordance with my own.

Because of the innumerable important aspects involved in reading mentioned by the students during the interviews, and because of the complexity of the reading activity, it was difficult to select no more than 21 beliefs for the questionnaire. Thus, the selection of the beliefs was also influenced by the desire to check beliefs about reading which had already been identified as common amongst different student

populations (LEFFA, 1991; CARMAGNANI, 1995). It was also difficult to try to establish which of the aspects of reading was being dealt with in each individual belief.

Although each belief can be said to be mainly concerned with a specific aspect of the reading activity, the beliefs should not be seen as if they pertained to a single, separate, clear-cut category such as the teaching of reading, the role of the author, and so on. For instance, an belief such as number 13, which is linked to the idea that reading problems can be solved through reading techniques, is also related to the teaching of reading in a foreign language. The fact that all the beliefs are in a way interwoven has crucial consequences for the analysis of the data obtained in this research.

Therefore, besides proceeding with a quantitative analysis of the data, objectively counting the frequency of reading views amongst learners, a qualitative analysis of the data also seems necessary owing to the subjectivity inherent in learners' interpretation of the items of the questionnaire. Furthermore, in order to check the consistency of students' beliefs about reading as a group, the answers of 17 pairs of related beliefs are compared. For example, the analysis of the answers

obtained for belief number 1, which refers to the possibility of formal teaching of reading, is checked against the answers obtained in belief number 13, which refers to the teaching of reading techniques, and also number 21, which is related to the role of the teacher in the reading class. (For more details concerning these interrelations of beliefs, see tables 7-23, chapter 4.).

There are no clear-cut right and wrong answers to the beliefs of the questionnaire. It is not the purpose of this study to identify 'incorrect' learners' opinions; rather it seeks to describe specific beliefs.

3 .2 .1 .3 Procedures

Group administration was possible due to the fact that students answered the questionnaires during their EFL classes. First of all, they were introduced the researcher who, then, explained about the topic of her research very briefly in order to avoid any influence on students' answers. To lessen students' possible anxiety caused by the common

feeling, in experimental situations, of being analyzed, students were told that they would answer the questionnaires anonymously.

The students were asked to read the instructions which precede the reading questionnaire. Any extra clarification was given in Portuguese. Three days were necessary to meet all the students. However, each individual interview did not last for more than 20'.

3.2.1.4 Analysis of the Questionnaires

Although each belief of the questionnaire involves different issues within the field of reading, the analysis of the data, taking answers “concordo totalmente” (strongly agree) and “concordo” (agree) as reference, considers the following focuses of the beliefs central:

Belief number 1 focuses on the possibility of formal, instructional teaching of reading as text comprehension and reinforces the idea that it is only through the constant practice of reading that someone would become an efficient reader.

Belief number 2, opposed to the idea contained in beliefs 4, 18 and 20, defines good reading as the exclusive understanding of the author's predetermined meaning, a traditional bottom-up reading idea which seems to still have its strength.

Belief number 3 reveals the idea that reading is an interactive process which draws, simultaneously, upon the reader's prior knowledge as well as the textual cues.

Belief 4 is related to the more liberal educational idea _ which evolved from an extreme top-down view of reading _ that the meaning of a text is mainly determined by the readers.(Braga & Busnardo, 1993).

Belief 5 reflects the current idea that a fluent reader is flexible and employs different strategies for different reading purposes. (Grabe, 1991). This idea supports an interactive view of reading.

Belief 6 deals with the common belief that the strategy of translating the foreign text word by word would help students to understand it, a reading strategy which also implies a bottom-up view of reading.

Belief 7 carries the idea that someone who always looks up unknown words in the dictionary is an efficient reader. This frequently used reading strategy may imply that the reader is approaching the text in a more bottom-up view either because he believes that efficient reading has to account for each detail of the text in which every word were important or that he is using the text to learn more language.

Belief 8 compares the nature of L1 and L2 reading suggesting that when reading in a L2, the content of the text is not so important as the use of the text in order to learn L2 new words and new grammatical structures. In this view, the text should be used as a pretext for L2 learning, thus, the main aim of the reading activity which is to construct meaning is entirely neglected.

Belief 9 is related to the idea that it is necessary to know the pronunciation of the words of a L2 text to understand it well. Here the conception of reading as mainly oral reading is present.

Belief 10 shows a difference between L1 and L2 reading concerning the role of grammatical knowledge. The latter was viewed as a more bottom-up process than the process of L1 reading by the students interviewed in the first phase of this research who tended to

agree that it is necessary to know a lot of grammar to understand a text in the foreign language while they did not emphasize this aspect for L1 reading. This belief may have its origin in L2 instructional methods which have been overemphasizing the teaching of grammar and which have been using L2 texts in order to teach language.

Belief 11 carries the bottom-up idea that good reading is a detailed reading in which every word has to be taken into account. And it also refers to the common misconception that in order to thoroughly understand a text, one has to read it slowly.

Belief 12 is based on a critical and reflective view of reading which conceives efficient reading as that which approaches the text taking into account the conditions of its production. That is, the discourse participants' social positions, their intentions, and so on.

Belief 13 presents the idea that the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out more through the teaching of reading techniques than through the teaching of the language. The development of reading ability is seen more as a technical matter here.

Belief 14 deals with the idea that poor ability in reading in a foreign language is basically caused by lack of language knowledge

neglecting the fact that the development of reading skills are as important as language knowledge.

Belief 15 implicitly compares reading in L1 and L2 as far as the importance of the observation of text organization is concerned. Stating that the observation of the L2 text organization is not as important as knowing its vocabulary and grammar, this belief reinforces the idea that L2 reading is a more bottom-up process than L1 reading.

Belief 16 reflects a bottom-up idea of reading which considers the text as having a single meaning predetermined by its author which the reader _ viewed here as a 'passive' decoder _ has to apprehend.

Belief 17 assigns an important role to the reading aloud strategy in comprehension of a L2-text. Reading here is implicitly viewed as, primarily, a translation of graphic signs into sounds. This idea is closely related to the idea contained in belief 9.

In Belief 18, reading is conceived as the construction of meaning by the reader who is not totally free to understand the text, but limited by the linguistic textual features. Therefore, meaning is not crystallized in the text but is *potential meaning*: an idea which is opposed to those contained in beliefs 2, 4, and 16.

Belief 19 carries the idea that the reader's selection of information is not good reading.

Belief 20 supports the idea that the text can mean more than the author's intended meaning.

Belief 21 highlights the power relations in the reading classroom where the teacher is seen as an authority who is the most adequate source of knowledge concerning the meaning of the texts owing to his position in the educational hierarchy and to the fact he is viewed as the one who has the appropriate L2 competence for that.

Given the aim of this study, which is to assess the beliefs concerning different aspects involved in L1 and L2 reading of a group of EFL learners, the data obtained is analysed quantitatively, having the frequencies of students' beliefs counted, and qualitatively in the interpretation of the results.

The descriptive analysis of the data was carried out through grouping the answers together into two broader categories '*agree*' and '*disagree*'; that is, the students who answered '*strongly agree*' were grouped together with those who answered only '*agree*', while the students who answered '*strongly disagree*' were grouped together with

those who answered only *'disagree'*. Even when there was either overwhelming agreement or disagreement to specific items of the questionnaire, the amount of students who had either totally agreed or totally disagreed with those items was not significant in most of the cases. Therefore I believe that the procedure of grouping the answers did not result in the loss of important information.

The crosstabulation of answers in 17 pairs of related beliefs of the questionnaire was also carried out in order to check the consistency of learners' answers. The main aim of the crosstabulation of some beliefs is to assess learners' potential contradictory beliefs.

It was not the purpose of this research to assess each student's individual "model" (as defined on p.92 in this chapter) of reading, but to try to show that there is a tendency amongst students to favour certain views of reading to the detriment of others.

4 CHAPTER - RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4 .1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned at the end of chapter 3, the aim of this study is not to assess each student's individual reading model, but rather to demonstrate that EFL university students share certain beliefs about various aspects of reading in general and, particularly, of reading in a foreign language. The analysis of the results, therefore, be understood by taking into account the tendencies of the whole group's beliefs.

First, the analysis of the results of the frequencies of individual beliefs is presented and discussed. The analysis of the crosstabulation of 17 pairs of related beliefs of the questionnaire is then presented and discussed. Finally, a qualitative overall analysis of the results of this study is carried out in the last chapter.

4.2 RESULTS OF THE FREQUENCIES OF INDIVIDUAL BELIEFS

The tables below show the total of results including all the alternatives actually chosen by the students for each belief. The alternative *other* was not taken into account in the analysis of the results because on the few occasions when it was chosen by students, it was not followed by any justification, and did not therefore reveal any relevant data for this research. When analysing the results of students' answers, it is important to have in mind the wording of the beliefs in the questionnaire, because it was not possible to include in the tables exactly the same words used there. The slight occasional discrepancy between the values presented in the tables and the ones presented in the text is due to rounding off.

Table 1 - INFORMATION ABOUT BELIEFS RELATED TO READING IN GENERAL

<i>INFORMATION</i>	<i>NUMBERS</i>	<i>%</i>
<u>Belief 3 - Reading = dialogue between the text and the reader</u>		
Totally agree	15	45.5
Agree	18	54.5
<u>Belief 11 - Good Reading = detailed and slow</u>		
Agree	19	57.6
Disagree	12	36.4
Totally disagree	02	6.0
<u>Belief 12 - Good reading = critical and reflective</u>		
Totally agree	09	27.3
Agree	19	57.6
Disagree	05	15.1

As regards the beliefs about *reading in general*, the students unanimously agreed (33 stds - 100%) that *reading is a dialogue between the reader and the text in which the reader's previous knowledge is as important as the information from the text* (belief 3). In relation to the belief that *a good reader is someone who reads in detail and slowly* (belief 11), the majority of students (19 stds - 58%) agreed with it. 28 (85%) students agreed with belief 12 _ the idea that *a good reading of a text is to notice what the hidden purposes of the text are, why the text has been written, who wrote it, for whom it was written and to understand the author's intended meaning*. The results obtained from beliefs 3 and 12 seem to show that these students have a more interactive and critical view of reading, that is, in accordance with more current reading theories. However the results of belief 11, which carries a more bottom-up idea of reading, seem to contradict that. For more details concerning the analysis of the results of belief 11, the reader should refer to the crosstabulations of this belief in 4.3..

Table 2 - INFORMATION ABOUT BELIEFS RELATED TO 'MEANING' AND 'INTERPRETATION'.

<i>INFORMATION</i>	<i>NUMBERS</i>	<i>%</i>
<u>Belief 2 - Good reading = understanding the author's message</u>		
Agree		
Disagree	08	24.2
Totally disagree	22	66.7
	03	9.1
<u>Belief 4 - Existence of endless, possible interpretations</u>		
Totally agree	09	27.3
Agree	11	33.3
Disagree	09	27.3
Totally disagree	02	6.1
Other	02	6.0
<u>Belief 16 - Existence of a single meaning</u>		
Agree	03	9.1
Disagree	19	57.6
Totally disagree	11	33.3
<u>Belief 18 - Existence of various, but limited interpretations</u>		
Totally agree	04	12.1
Agree	21	63.6
Disagree	07	21.2
Totally disagree	01	3.1
<u>Belief 20 - Existence of more than the author's meaning</u>		
Totally agree	10	30.3
Agree	22	66.7
Disagree	01	3.0

As far as beliefs about '*meaning*' and '*interpretation*' are concerned, a vast majority of students disagreed (30 stds - 91%) with the idea (belief 16) that *the text has a single meaning which has to be assimilated by the reader in a good reading of it* and agreed (32 stds - 97%) with the belief (n^o20) that *a text can mean more than its author's intended meaning*.

With regard to belief 4 _ the idea that *there are as many interpretations for a text as the number of readers of this text* _ the majority of students (20 stds - 61%) agreed with that. 11 (33%) students disagreed with it while just 2 (6%) students chose the alternative *other*. However, neither of them justified their choices. For a more comprehensive analysis of the results of beliefs 4 and 18, the reader should refer to the crosstabulation of these beliefs.

Table 3 - INFORMATION ABOUT BELIEFS RELATED TO L2 READING

<i>INFORMATION</i>	<i>NUMBERS</i>	<i>%</i>
<u>Belief 8 - L2 text = a pretext for L2 learning</u>		
Totally agree	01	3.0
Agree	02	6.1
Disagree	17	51.5
Totally disagree	13	39.4
<u>Belief 9 - L2 reading = oral reading</u>		
Totally agree	01	3.0
Agree	15	45.5
Disagree	17	51.5
<u>Belief 10 - The greater importance of grammar for L2 reading</u>		
Totally agree	01	3.0
Agree	06	18.2
Disagree	22	66.7
Totally disagree	04	12.1
<u>Belief 14 - L2 reading problems = language problems</u>		
Totally agree	01	3.1
Agree	14	42.4
Disagree	17	51.5
Totally disagree	01	3.0
<u>Belief 15 - Observation of text organization for L2 reading</u>		
Totally agree	01	3.0
Agree	05	15.2
Disagree	20	60.6
Totally disagree	07	21.2

In relation to the beliefs about *L2 reading*, students overwhelmingly disagreed (30 stds - 91%) with the belief (n^o8) that *when reading in English, the content of the text is not so important; what is more important is to use the L2 text to learn vocabulary and grammar*. The majority of students (26 stds - 79%) also disagreed with the idea (belief 10) that *the knowledge of grammar is more important for L2 reading than for L1 reading* and disagreed (27 stds - 82%) that *in L2 reading, to observe the organization of the text is not so important as to know its vocabulary and grammar* (belief 15). According to these results, the respondents do not seem to have a more bottom-up idea in relation to L2 reading than in relation to L1 reading.

As regards the idea that *when someone is learning an L2, his reading problems are basically language problems* (belief 14), students' ideas were divided almost equally (15 stds - 46% agreed while 18 stds - 54% disagreed with it). As far as the belief (n^o9) that *it is necessary to know the pronunciation of the words from an L2 text in order to understand it well* is concerned, students also had divided opinions (16 stds- 48% agree while 17 stds - 52% disagree with that).

Table 4 - INFORMATION ABOUT BELIEFS RELATED TO READING STRATEGIES

<i>INFORMATION</i>	<i>NUMBERS</i>	<i>%</i>
<u>Belief 5 - Reading purpose = determinant for reading procedures</u>		
Totally agree	07	21.2
Agree	14	42.4
Disagree	11	33.4
Totally disagree	01	3.0
<u>Belief 6 - Translation facilitates L2 text comprehension</u>		
Totally agree	02	6.0
Agree	16	48.5
Disagree	09	27.3
Totally disagree	06	18.2
<u>Belief 7 - Frequent use of dictionary = strategy of efficient reader</u>		
Totally agree	04	12.1
Agree	14	42.4
Disagree	14	42.4
Totally disagree	01	3.1
<u>Belief 17 - Reading aloud facilitates L2 text comprehension</u>		
Totally agree	05	15.2
Agree	15	45.5
Disagree	11	33.3
Totally disagree	01	3.0
Other	01	3.0
<u>Belief 19 - Reader's selection of information = not good reading</u>		
Totally agree	06	18.2
Agree	17	51.5
Disagree	09	27.3
Totally disagree	01	3.0

As regards the beliefs about reading strategies, the majority of students agreed (21 stds - 64%) that *there is no single, best way of reading; the reader's reading purpose determines his reading procedures* (belief 5). However, they paradoxically agreed (23 stds - 70%) that *it is not good reading if one selects from a text only the information that interests him/her* (belief 19). For a more

comprehensive analysis of the results obtained from beliefs 5 and 19 , the reader should refer to crosstabulation table 11, 4.3., p.127.

Concerning the idea that *translation ensures a better comprehension of an L2 text* (belief 6), students had more or less divided opinions (18 stds - 55% agreed while 15 stds - 45% - disagreed). Belief 7, the idea that *an efficient reader is someone who always look up the meaning of unknown words in the dictionary*, presents exactly the same results as belief 6. That is, 18 (55%) students agreed while 15 (45%) disagreed with it. The majority of students (20 stds - 61%) also agreed that *in L2 reading, reading aloud helps one to understand the text* (belief 17).

Table 5 - INFORMATION ABOUT BELIEFS RELATED TO THE PEDAGOGY OF READING

INFORMATION	NUMBERS	%
<u>Belief 1 - The impossibility of Teaching Reading</u>		
Totally agree	06	18.2
Agree	13	39.4
Disagree	13	39.4
Other	01	3.0
<u>Belief 13 - Teaching of L2 Reading through Reading Techniques</u>		
Totally agree	02	6.0
Agree	12	36.4
Disagree	15	45.5
Totally disagree	04	12.1
<u>Belief 21 - The role of the Reading Teacher</u>		
Totally agree	02	6.1
Agree	10	30.3
Disagree	17	51.5
Totally disagree	04	12.1

In relation to *the pedagogy of reading*, the majority of students (19 stds - 57.6%) agreed that *it is impossible to teach reading as text comprehension* (belief 1) and disagreed (19 stds - 57.6%) with the belief (13) that *the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out more through the teaching of reading techniques than through the teaching of the language itself*. As regards the idea (belief 21) that *the teacher is the most appropriate person to decide upon the meaning of a text when there is disagreement about it*, the majority of students (21 stds - 63.6%) disagreed with that.

To summarize, the respondents' ideas about *reading in general* were that: *reading is a dialogue between the reader and the text in which the reader's previous knowledge is as important as the information from the text* (100%); *a good reading of a text is to notice the hidden purposes of the text, why the text has been written, who wrote it, to whom and to understand the author's intended meaning* (85%); and *good reading is detailed and slow* (58%). Their ideas about 'meaning' and 'interpretation' were: *a text has not got a single meaning* (91%); rather *it can mean more than its author's intended*

meaning (97%); thus it is not enough to understand the author's predetermined meaning to have read a text well (76%); there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text (76%); and also there are as many interpretations for a text as the number of readers of this text (61%). As regards their beliefs about L2 reading, students disagreed that when reading in English, the content of the text is not so important; what is more important is to use the L2 text to learn vocabulary and grammar (91%); that the knowledge of grammar is more important for L2 reading than for L1 reading (79%); they also disagreed that in L2 reading, to observe the organization of the text is not so important as to know its vocabulary and grammar (82%). However, as far as the ideas that when someone is learning an L2, his reading problems are basically language problems (46% agreed; 54% disagreed) and that it is necessary to know the pronunciation of the words from an L2 text in order to understand it well, students presented virtually divided opinions (48% agreed; 52% disagreed). In relation to the beliefs about reading strategies, a slight majority of students agreed that there is no single, best way of reading; the reader's reading purpose determines his reading procedures (64%) and paradoxically

that *it is not good reading if one selects from a text only the information that interests him/her* (70%). A slight majority of them also agreed that *in L2 reading, reading aloud helps to understand the text* (61%). But as regards the idea that *translation ensures a better comprehension of a L2 text* and that *an efficient reader is someone who always look up the meaning of unknown words in the dictionary*, students' ideas were divided almost equally (55% agreed and 45% disagreed with both beliefs). Finally, as regards the beliefs about *reading pedagogy*, most students (58%) agreed that *it is impossible to teach reading as text comprehension, that the teaching of L2 reading should not take place more through the teaching of reading strategies than through the teaching of the language itself*. The majority of them (64%) also agreed that *the teacher is not the right person to decide upon the meaning of a text when there is disagreement about it*. These findings are different from those of Grigoletto (1995) who found that students attending primary and secondary school saw the teacher as the authority who had the linguistic competence to reveal the meaning of the text to them. At least, in our university respondents' answers, we could find no support for this. As these students had already had two

months' classes at the university when the data was collected, it might be that they were already influenced by the discourse about reading and its practice at the university. Nevertheless, it is difficult to know if in practice the students act in accordance with this belief or if they submit themselves to the teacher's authority. Further research is necessary to check students' reading beliefs and their actual reading behaviour.

The respondents' main apparent contradictions are that they believe that *there is no single, best way of reading; the reader's reading purpose determines his reading procedures* and simultaneously believe that *good reading is detailed and slow, thus it is not good reading if one selects from a text only the information that interests him/her*. The crosstabulations of the beliefs were carried out in order to investigate where students' contradictions lie and to try to quantify them more precisely.

For further information about learners' reading beliefs, the reader should refer to tables 1-5 in section 4.2. as well as to the crosstabulations below.

4.3 RESULTS OF THE CROSSTABULATION OF LEARNERS' READING BELIEFS

In order to check the consistency of learners' reading beliefs as a group, contingency table analysis (crosstabulation) of 17 pairs of related beliefs was carried out (See tables 7-23). All these results are important for this study, not only those which had higher level of agreement or disagreement, therefore they are all discussed. The results are presented through the observed frequencies as well as their respective percentages.

The crosstabulations are presented in 2 x 2 contingency tables in which the results are grouped into two broader alternatives: *Agree*, *Disagree*. Table 6 shows the results of each individual belief already grouped into the two categories, while the crosstabulations of the beliefs are presented in separate tables followed by their analysis and discussion.

Table 6 - RESULTS OF LEARNERS' READING BELIEFS GROUPED INTO AGREE / DISAGREE

<i>BELIEFS</i>	<i>NUMBERS</i>	<i>PERCENTAGE</i>
<u>BELIEFS ABOUT READING IN GENERAL</u>		
Belief 3 - Reading = dialogue between reader and text		
Agree	33	100.0
Belief 11 - Good reading = detailed and slow		
Agree	19	57.6
Disagree	14	42.4
Belief 12 - Good reading = critical and reflective		
Agree	28	84.8
Disagree	5	15.2
<u>BELIEFS ABOUT 'MEANING' AND INTERPRETATION</u>		
Belief 2 - Good reading = understanding the author's message		
Agree	8	24.2
Disagree	21	75.8
Belief 4 - Endless, possible interpretations		
Agree	20	60.6
Disagree	11	33.3
Other	02	6.1
Belief 16 - A single meaning		
Agree	3	9.1
Disagree	30	90.9
Belief 18 - Various, but limited interpretations		
Agree	25	75.8
Disagree	8	24.2
Belief 20 - Text means more than its author's meaning		
Agree	32	96.9
Disagree	1	3.1
<u>BELIEFS ABOUT L2 READING</u>		
Belief 8 - L2 text = a pretext for L2 learning		
Agree	3	9.1
Disagree	30	90.9
Belief 9 - L2 reading = oral reading		
Agree	16	48.4
Disagree	17	51.6
Belief 10 - Importance of grammar for L2 reading		
Agree	7	21.2
Disagree	26	78.8
Belief 14 - L2 reading problems = language problems		
Agree	15	45.5
Disagree	18	54.5
Belief 15 - Importance of text organization for L2 reading		
Agree	6	18.2

Disagree	27	81.8
<u>BELIEFS ABOUT READING STRATEGIES</u>		
Belief 5 - Purpose = determinant for reading procedures		
Agree	21	63.6
Disagree	12	36.4
Belief 6 - Translation facilitates L2 text comprehension		
Agree	18	54.5
Disagree	15	45.5
Belief 7 - Use of dictionary = strategy of efficient reader		
Agree	18	54.5
Disagree	15	45.5
Belief 17 - Reading aloud facilitates L2 text comprehension		
Agree	20	60.6
Disagree	12	36.3
Other	01	3.1
Belief 19 - Reader's selection of information = not good reading		
Disagree	23	69.7
Agree	10	30.3
<u>BELIEFS ABOUT THE PEDAGOGY OF READING</u>		
Belief 1 - Impossibility of teaching reading		
Agree	19	57.6
Disagree	13	39.4
Other	01	3.0
Belief 13 - Teaching of L2 reading through reading techniques		
Agree	14	42.4
Disagree	19	57.6
Belief 21 - The role of the reading teacher		
Agree	12	36.4
Disagree	21	63.6

Table 7 - Crosstabulation - Belief 1 x Belief 13

<i>Belief 1 / Belief 13</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 19 (58%)	9 (47%)	10 (53%)
Disagree 13 (39%)	5 (38%)	8 (62%)

Table 7 compares students' beliefs in relation to *the possibility of teaching reading as text comprehension* (n^0 1) with their beliefs in

relation to the fact that *the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out through the teaching of reading techniques* (n^o 13). The idea behind this crosstabulation is that students who believe that it is not possible to teach reading as text comprehension would probably believe that the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out more through the teaching of the language than through the teaching of reading techniques. As table 6 shows, 19 students agreed that it is **not** possible to teach reading as text comprehension. Of them, 9 (47%, see table 7) also agreed that the teaching of L2 reading should be through the teaching of reading techniques while 10 (53%) of them disagreed with it. Amongst the 13 students who disagreed that it is impossible to teach reading, only 5 (38%, table 7) agreed that the teaching of reading should be carried out through teaching reading techniques while 8 (62%, table 7) disagreed with that. The majority of students from both groups did not believe that the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out more through the teaching of reading techniques than through the teaching of the second language. Therefore, there were no differences between the group who agreed that it is not possible to teach reading as text comprehension and the group who disagreed with that.

Although the investigation of the relationship between beliefs 1 and 13 did not add significant information to the results of the analysis of the individual beliefs, it pointed out the slight contradiction amongst the students of the group who agreed that it is **possible** to teach reading as text comprehension and, at the same time, disagreed that the teaching of reading should be carried out through the teaching of reading techniques. Unfortunately, the scope of the questionnaire did not allow us to discover how these students think that L2 reading should then be taught.

Table 8 - Crosstabulation - Belief 1 x Belief 21

<i>Belief 1 / Belief 21</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 19 (58%)	8 (42 %)	11 (58%)
Disagree 13 (39%)	3 (23 %)	10 (77 %)

Table 9 - Crosstabulation - Belief 18 x Belief 21

<i>Belief 18 / Belief 21</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 25 (76%)	9 (36%)	16 (64%)
Disagree 8 (24%)	3 (37%)	5 (63%)

Of the 19 students who agreed with *the impossibility of teaching reading*, 8 (42%) agreed that *when there is disagreement about the meaning of a text, the reading teacher is the right person to determine its meaning*. Almost half of them despite believing that it is impossible to teach reading, saw the teacher as someone who could determine the right meaning of a text. Nevertheless, the majority of them (11 - 58%) disagreed with this proposition. Of the 13 students who disagreed with the impossibility of teaching reading, only 3 (23%) agreed that the reading teacher was the right person to determine the meaning of the text when there was disagreement about it. A large majority (10 - 77%) disagreed with that. Thus most of these students, whether they believe or not in the possibility of instructional teaching of reading, did not see the reading teacher as an authority who has the power of deciding upon *the meaning of a text*. It is interesting to notice that those who believe that it is possible to teach reading as text comprehension are mostly those who disagreed that the reading teacher is the most appropriate person to decide upon the meaning of a text.

These results are consistent with the results of the crosstabulation of belief 18 x belief 21 (See table 9, p.124) in which, of the 25 students

who agreed that *there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text* (belief 18), 16 (64%) disagreed that *the teacher is the most appropriate person to determine the meaning of a text when there is disagreement about it*, and of the 8 (24%) students who disagreed with belief 18, 5 of them (63%) also disagreed with belief 21. Thus most of the students agreed that there are various interpretations for a text and therefore the teacher is not the authority to decide upon *the* meaning of a text.

Table 10 - Crosstabulation - Belief 13 x Belief 14

<i>Belief 13 / Belief 14</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 14 (42%)	7 (50%)	7 (50%)
Disagree 19 (58%)	8 (42%)	11(58%)

It was expected that students who agreed that the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out more through the teaching of reading techniques would disagree that L2 learners' reading problems are basically language problems and that those who disagreed that the teaching of L2 reading should be through reading techniques would agree that L2 learners' reading problems are basically language problems.

The crosstabulation of the belief (n^o 13) that *the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out more through reading techniques than through the teaching of the language* with the belief (n^o14) that *when someone is learning a L2, his problems are basically language problems* shows that the 14 students who agreed with belief 13 had divided opinions concerning belief 14, that is, 7 students (50%) agreed while 7 (50%) disagreed that L2 learners' reading problems are due to their language problems. Of the 19 who disagreed that the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out through reading techniques, 11 students (58%) also disagreed that L2 reading problems are basically language problems. On the surface, this group of students appears to show contradictory beliefs. However, this contradiction may be explained if students do not have a clear idea about what techniques to develop various reading strategies are.

Table 11 - Crosstabulation - Belief 5 x Belief 19

<i>Belief 5 / Belief 19</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 21 (64%)	14 (67%)	7 (33%)
Disagree 12 (36%)	9 (75%)	3 (25%)

Table 11 shows the relation between the belief (n^o 5) that *the purpose of the reading activity determines the procedures which are carried out during the actual reading* and the belief (n^o 19) that *when a reader selects only the information which interests him/her, he is not reading as they should have been*. The idea behind this crosstabulation is that students who agree that reading purposes determine reading procedures would disagree that the reader's selecting information does not constitute good reading.

In relation to belief n^o5, 21 students agreed with it while 12 disagreed. 14 (67%) of the students who agreed that reading purpose determines reading procedures paradoxically agreed that it is not good reading if a reader selects only the information which interests him/her. Of the 12 students who disagreed that reading purpose determines reading procedures, 9 (75%) also agreed that the reader who selects only the information which interests him/her is not performing a good reading. Table 11 shows that no matter if students believe or not that reading purpose determines reading procedures, a great majority of them believe that if the reader selects only the information which interests him/her, then he is not carrying out a good reading. It seems

that the students who do not believe that reading purposes determine reading procedures are more consistent in relation to belief 19. These students may believe that there is one single way of reading which is better than the others and probably selecting information is not part of this. However, the group who agreed with belief 5 but also agreed with belief 19 show contradictory beliefs in this case. If reading purpose determines reading procedures, then it is perfectly possible that good reading is taking place when a reader selects only the information which interests him/her.

Table 12 - Crosstabulation - Belief 7 x Belief 11

<i>Belief 7 / Belief 11</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 18 (55%)	10 (55 %)	8 (45 %)
Disagree 15 (45%)	9 (60 %)	6 (40 %)

Table 12 compares the belief (n^o 7) that *an efficient reader is someone who always looks up unknown words in the dictionary* and the belief (n^o11) that *good reading should be slow and detailed*. It was expected that students who agreed with belief 7 would also agree with belief 11 and that those who disagreed with belief 7 would also

disagree with belief 11. Of the 18 students who agreed with belief 7, 10 (55%) consistently agreed that good reading should be slow and detailed. Contrary to expectations, 8 (45%) students disagreed with this proportion. Of the 15 students who disagreed with belief 7, the majority _ 9 (60%) _ still agreed that reading should be slow and detailed. Therefore, most of the students, whether or not they believe that the frequent use of the dictionary is a strategy of the efficient reader, agreed that good reading should be detailed and slow. This crosstabulation pointed out an apparent important contradiction amongst the students who disagreed with belief 7. Despite disagreeing with the idea that an efficient reader is someone who always looks up unknown words in the dictionary, they still agreed that good reading should be detailed and slow.

Table 13 - Crosstabulation - Belief 6 x Belief 11

<i>Belief 6 / Belief 11</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 18 (55%)	14 (78%)	4 (22%)
Disagree 15 (45%)	5 (33%)	10 (67%)

Table 13 compares the belief (n^o6) that *translation ensures a better comprehension of an L2 text* with the belief (n^o11) that *good reading should be detailed and slow*. Of the 18 students who agreed with belief 6, 14 (78%) also agreed that good reading should be detailed and slow. Of the 15 students who disagreed with belief 6, 10 (67%) also disagreed with belief 11. This crosstabulation shows that there are two distinct groups of students according to these beliefs: the ones who neither believe that translation helps L2 reading comprehension nor that good reading is detailed and slow, and those who believe that translation ensures L2 text comprehension and that good reading should be detailed and slow (these students reveal a more bottom-up view of reading). Nevertheless, a possible explanation for the answers of the latter might be that, having already had two months' classes at the Letras course at the university, they are influenced by a practice of reading which has to be slower and more detailed than their previous reading experiences due to the complexity of theoretical and/or literary texts which students have now to deal with. Therefore, for them, detailed and slow reading would be the only way of reading a text critically and reflectively.

This crosstabulation was the only instance in which presented results were found in an expected direction.

Table 14 - Crosstabulation - Belief 5 x Belief 11

<i>Belief 5 / Belief 11</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 21 (64%)	13 (62%)	8 (38%)
Disagree 12 (36%)	6 (50%)	6 (50%)

This crosstabulation was intended to check if students who agree that reading purposes determine reading procedures, thereby agreeing that there is no single best way of reading , would agree that good reading is detailed and slow.

Of the 21 students who agreed that *there is no single best way of reading, reading purpose determines reading procedures*, 13 (62%) also agreed that *good reading is detailed and slow*. These students' beliefs seem to be inconsistent, because if good reading is always detailed and slow then reading purpose could not determine reading procedures. The group who disagreed (12 stds) that the reading purpose determines reading procedures had divided opinions (6 stds - 50% agreed and 6 stds -50% disagreed) about whether good reading should

be detailed and slow or not. They seem to believe that there is a way of reading which is the best, but they do not know whether it is detailed and slow or not.

Table 15 - Crosstabulation - Belief 11 x Belief 19

<i>Belief 11 / Belief 19</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 19 (58%)	14 (74%)	5 (26%)
Disagree 14 (42%)	9 (64%)	5 (36%)

Of 19 students who agreed that good reading should be detailed and slow, 14 (74%) also agreed that reader's selection of information is not good reading and of the 14 who disagreed with belief 11, 9 students (64%) still agreed that the selection of information is not good reading. The group who disagreed that a good reader is someone who reads in detail and slowly and agreed that a reader should not select only the information which is relevant to him/her seem to be contradicting themselves somewhat, since if one does not need to pay attention to all the details in a text to be carrying out a good reading, why can this reader **not** select only the information which is relevant to him/her ? This contradiction seems much more intriguing if we take into account

that in their reading classes, most of the time, students are asked to approach texts by selecting precise information instead of reading them intensively. On the other hand, it might be that students are still highly influenced by the reading practice of primary and secondary schools where L2 texts are usually used to the teaching of the L2 lexis and grammatical structures, reading in detail and slowly is thus a familiar practice for students.

To summarize, most students do not view reader's selection of information as good reading, and believe that good reading is detailed and slow.

Table 16 - Crosstabulation - Belief 14 x Belief 15

<i>Belief 14 / Belief 15</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 15 (45%)	3 (20%)	12 (80%)
Disagree 18 (55%)	3 (17%)	15 (83%)

The idea behind the crosstabulation of belief 14 x belief 15 is that someone who agrees that L2 reading problems are basically language problems probably also agrees that the observation of the organization of an L2 text is not as important as knowing its

vocabulary and grammar. Of the 15 students who agreed that *L2 reading problems are basically language problems*, only 3 (20%) agreed that *to observe L2 text organization is not so important* while 12 (80%) disagreed with that. Of the 18 students who disagreed that L2 reading problems are basically language problems, 15 (83%) also disagreed with belief 15. Even having divided opinions about belief 14, a great majority of these students believe that the observation of L2 text organization is as important as knowing its vocabulary and grammar. This finding contrasts with some researchers' idea that students' predominant idea of L2 reading is that of a more bottom-up process and that the priority in the L2 reading class is the learning of the language itself.

Table 17 - Crosstabulation - Belief 10 x Belief 15

<i>Belief 10 / Belief 15</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 7 (21%)	3 (43 %)	4 (57 %)
Disagree 26 (79%)	3 (12 %)	23 (88 %)

Table 17 compares belief n^o 10 which brings in the idea that *grammar knowledge is more important for L2 reading than for L1*

reading with belief n^o15 which concerns the idea that in L2 reading the observation of text organization is not as important as knowing L2 vocabulary and grammar.

The expected results were that students who agree with belief 10 would also agree with belief 15 and those who disagree with that would also disagree with belief 15, since someone who believes that grammar knowledge is more important for L2 reading then he would also agree that in L2 reading it is more important to know the vocabulary and grammar of a text than to observe its organization.

The 7 students who agreed with belief 10 had divided opinions in relation to belief 15 (3 agreed while 4 disagreed with it). Of the 26 students who disagreed with belief 10, 23 (88%) also disagreed with belief 15 as opposed to only 3 (12%) students who agreed with it. In this case, students' reading views are consistent. If the results of the group who agreed with belief 10 are compared with the results of the group who disagreed with it, it is clear that the latter have got stronger ideas. These results reinforce the idea (also checked in the last crosstabulation) that most students do not view L2 reading as a more bottom-up process than L1 reading.

Table 18 - Crosstabulation - Belief 2 x Belief 16

<i>Belief 2 / Belief 16</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 8 (24%)	1 (12%)	7 (88%)
Disagree 25 (76%)	2 (8%)	23 (92%)

This crosstabulation was intended to check if the students who agree that *it is enough to understand what the author's intended message was to have read a text well* also agree that *a text has a single meaning*, this meaning being the author's predetermined meaning.

Of the 8 students who agreed with belief 2, only 1 (12%) agreed with belief 16 while 7 (88%) disagreed with that. Of the 25 students who disagreed with belief 2, 23 (92%) also disagreed with belief 16 while just 2 (8%) agreed with it. There is no contradiction in the group who disagreed with belief 2. They believe that understanding the author's intended meaning is not enough to accomplish a good reading because a text can have more than one meaning. However, the group who agreed with belief 2 seem to have either fragmented or contradictory ideas about reading, since they believe that it is enough to

understand the author's message to carry out a good reading of a text but they disagree that a text has a single meaning.

Table 19 - Crosstabulation - Belief 4 x Belief 16

<i>Belief 4² / Belief 16</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 20 (61%)	1 (5%)	19 (95%)
Disagree 11 (33%)	2 (18%)	9 (82%)

Table 19 compares the belief (n^o 4) that *there are endless, possible interpretations for a text* with the idea (n^o 16) that *there is a single meaning for a text*. This crosstabulation was intended to check if students' beliefs were consistent. The students who agree with belief 4 are expected to disagree with belief 16 and vice-versa.

Of the 20 students who agreed that there are as many valid interpretations for a text as the number of readers for this text, only 1 (5%) of them paradoxically agreed that a text has a single meaning which has to be apprehended by the readers in order that they have a good understanding of it.

² The slight discrepancy in the results of belief 4 is due to the choice of 2 alternative *other* by the students

Of the 11 students who disagreed with belief 4, a great majority (9 stds - 82%) disagreed with belief 16, too. These students may believe that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text. Thus, whether or not students agree with belief 4, they overwhelmingly disagreed that a text has a single meaning.

Table 20 - Crosstabulation - Belief 4 x Belief 18

<i>Belief 4 / Belief 18</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 20 (61%)	13 (65%)	7 (35%)
Disagree 11 (33%)	10 (91%)	1 (9%)

Of the 20 students who agreed that *there are as many possible interpretations for a text as the number of readers for this text*, 13 (65%) also agreed that *there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text* while 7 (35%) of these students disagreed with this. Thus, the latter group actually believe that there are endless interpretations for a text. Of the 11 students who disagreed with the idea that there are endless, possible interpretations for a text, the vast majority (10 stds - 91%) agreed that the interpretations are various, but limited. Only 1 student (9%) neither agreed that there endless nor various

interpretations for a text. It can be concluded that this student believes there is a single meaning for a text. This crosstabulation shows that the majority of students agreed that there are endless interpretations for a text, and that they also agreed that there various, but limited interpretation for a text. The apparent inconsistent ideas of the group who agreed with belief 4 and , at the same time, agreed with belief 18 might be explained by the fact that the idea that there are as many possible interpretations for a text as the number of readers for this text comes before the idea that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text in the reading questionnaire. If the results of beliefs 4, 16 and 18 are individually analyzed, it can be concluded that students actually believe that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text.

Table 21 - Crosstabulation - Belief 16 x Belief 18

<i>Belief 16 / Belief 18</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 3 (9%)	3 (100%)	0
Disagree 30 (91%)	22 (73%)	8 (27%)

Table 21 compares the idea that *a text has a single meaning* (belief 16) with belief 18 which presents the idea that *there are various, but*

limited meanings for a text. The 3 students who agreed with belief 16 and also paradoxically agreed with belief 18 are being rather self-contradictory. Students overwhelmingly disagreed (30 stds) with belief 16, and of these students 22 (73%) agreed that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text. However, there are 8 students (27%) who disagreed that a text has a single meaning and also disagreed that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text. It is interesting to notice that the number of students of this group is practically the same number of the group (7 stds) from the last crosstabulation who agreed that there are as many interpretations for a text as the numbers of readers for this text and disagreed that the interpretations are various, but limited. Although revealing the contradiction mentioned above, the results of this crosstabulation seem to reinforce those of the individual beliefs that the vast majority of students consistently believe that that there is no single meaning for a text but that there are various, but limited, interpretations for it.

Table 22 - Crosstabulation - Belief 2 x Belief 18

<i>Belief 2 / Belief 18</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 8 (24%)	5 (63%)	3 (37%)
Disagree 25 (76%)	20 (80%)	5 (20%)

When the results of the belief (n^o2) that *good reading is understanding the author's predetermined meaning* are compared with the results obtained with the belief (n^o18) that *there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text*, on the surface there seems to be a contradiction within the group of students who agreed with belief 2 (8 students) and, at the same time, agreed (5 stds - 63%) with belief 18, that is, these students agreed that good reading is to understand the author's message but they also agreed that a text can have more than the author's intended meaning. This apparent contradiction may be explained through the hypothesis that students tend sometimes to separate, what BRAGA (1995) calls *preferential reading*, the reading they have to carry out in school and their everyday reading experiences in which they have more freedom of interpretation. Thus, they know that at school they are supposed to apprehend either the author's or the

teacher's interpretation or even the interpretation which comes with the coursebook if they want to succeed in the educational system, while, outside, reading is seen more as the construction of meanings by the reader. Of the majority of students who disagreed (25 students) that it is enough to understand the author's meaning to carry out a good reading, 20 (80%) consistently agreed that there are various, but limited, possible interpretations for a text. 5 (20%) students neither agreed that it is enough to understand the author's predetermined meaning nor that there are various interpretations for a text. These students may believe that in fact there are as many interpretations for a text as the number of readers of this text.

Table 23 - Crosstabulation - Belief 9 x Belief 17

<i>Belief 9 / Belief 17^{3*}</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Agree 16 (48%)	12 (69%)*	4 (25%)*
Disagree 17 (52%)	8 (47%)	9 (53%)

^{3*} The slight discrepancy in the figures here is due to the presence of an (1) alternative *other* chosen for belief 17. Thus the total of *agree* and *disagree* answers is 32.

Results of belief 9 show that students had divided opinions about whether *knowing the pronunciation of the words from an L2 text is necessary or not for understanding it better*. Of the 16 students who agreed with belief 9, 12 (75%) also agreed that *when reading in L2, reading aloud helps to have a better comprehension of the text* (belief 17). Of the 17 students who disagreed with belief 9, a slight majority (9 stds - 53%) also disagreed with belief 17. These answers show a group of students who believe that knowing the pronunciation of the words and reading aloud help to understand L2 texts, and another group who do not believe that these reading strategies help them to understand an L2 text better.

Even when the crosstabulations did not show the relationship between students' reading beliefs, they revealed important information about the reading beliefs of smaller groups of students who are often self-contradictory. There was a group of 7 students (21%) who agreed that it is enough to understand what the author's intended message was to have read a text well, but disagreed that a text has a single meaning. 5 students (15%) agreed that it is enough to understand the author's message while also agreeing that there are various, but limited,

interpretations for a text. 13 students (39%) agreed that there are as many possible interpretations for a text as the number of readers of this text and at the same time agreed that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text. 13 (39%) students agreed simultaneously that there is no single, best way of reading, that reading purposes determine reading procedures, and that good reading should be detailed and slow. 9 (27%) students disagreed that a good reader is someone who reads in detail and slowly, while agreeing that a reader should not select only the information which is relevant to him.

Other groups of students, who may be seen as at least apparently self-contradictory, are the following: a group of 10 students (30%) who believe that it is possible to teach reading as text comprehension while at the same time disagreeing that the teaching of L2 reading should be carried out more through the teaching of reading techniques than through the teaching of the language; 11 students (33%) who disagreed with the latter idea while disagreeing that problems in L2 reading are basically language problems; 9 students (27%) who disagreed that an efficient reader is someone who always looks up unknown words in the

dictionary while agreeing that good reading should be detailed and slow.

The analysis of the results of the individual beliefs as well as the crosstabulations showed that, most of the time, the respondents are consistent in their reading beliefs. However, some contradictions were found amongst small groups of students. The students also showed varying degrees of certainty as regards different categories of reading beliefs.

In relation to the beliefs about *reading in general*, students showed strong positions as far as the idea that reading is a dialogue between the reader and the text (beliefs 3) and the idea that good reading is critical and reflective (belief 12) are concerned. These beliefs received very high percentages of agreement, 100% and 85% respectively. However, students had almost equally divided ideas in relation to the belief that good reading is detailed and slow (belief 11), with a slight majority (58%) agreeing with it. As regards the category which refers to beliefs about '*meaning*' and '*interpretation*', students showed strong positions in relation to beliefs 16 and 20, which carry the idea that a text has a single meaning. On the other hand, the results of belief 2, which carries

the idea that the text has a single meaning which has to be assimilated by the reader in a good reading of it, and of beliefs 4 and 18, which present respectively the ideas that a text has as many interpretations as the number of its readers and that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text, showed students' less strong positions. Students also showed strong positions concerning beliefs 8, 10 and 15, related to the category of beliefs about *L2 reading*. These beliefs refer to the nature of differences between L1 and L2 reading defining the latter as a more bottom-up process. Students' answers concerning belief 9, which relates knowledge of pronunciation to L2 text comprehension, and belief 14, which deals with the nature of L2 learners' reading problems, revealed more or less divided opinions. As regards their beliefs about *reading strategies*, the respondents did not show strong positions. In this category, the highest percentages were between 55% and 70%. Finally, in relation to the beliefs about *the pedagogy of reading*, students did not show strong positions either, the highest percentages of agreement or disagreement being between 58% and 64%. While these students may have clearer ideas about the nature of

L1 and L2 reading, they seem to be less certain about the best ways to approach written texts.

The vast majority of students (91%) do **not** believe that a text has a single meaning; rather they believe that either there are various, but limited possible interpretations for a text (76%) or the number of possible interpretations for a text is the same as the number of readers for this text (61%). Thus good reading is for them (76% of the students) **not** only understanding the author's message, because a text can mean more than its author's intended meaning (97% of the students), but it has to be critical and reflective (85%). That is to say, the reader's task is to consider the conditions of the production of the text, taking into account who wrote the text, when, where, to whom and why, in order to find out its hidden purposes and to have a more comprehensive understanding of it.

However, although all the respondents seem to have a rather active image of the reader, who by using his prior knowledge, is in constant dialogue with the text, many (70%) disagree that readers can select whatever information interests them. Furthermore, as regards the idea

that good reading is detailed and slow, students still tend to agree with that although with a lower percentage (58%).

Nevertheless, as far as the nature of L2 reading is concerned, students do **not** seem to have a more bottom-up view of the L2 than of the L1 reading process, as had been expected. For instance, they think that grammar knowledge is no more important for L2 reading as it is for L1 reading (79%), and that the observation of the organization of the L2 text is no less important than knowing its vocabulary and grammar (82%). Most respondents (91%) do **not** also agree with the idea that L2 texts should be used as a pretext for the learning of the L2. They believe that the content of the L2 text is also important (91%). However, they are not sure whether L2 reading problems are basically due to language problems or not (45% agree / 55% disagree). This may show that students think of L2 reading problems as being caused by L1 reading problems as well as by L2 language problems.

5 CONCLUSION

The results of this study suggest that amongst these students' views of reading we can find conceptions which are derived from more recent approaches to reading, such as the idea that reading is a dialogue between the reader and the text in which the reader's previous experience is as important as the textual information. We also find the idea that a good reading of a text is critical reading, that is, taking into consideration the conditions of the production of the text, that is, being aware of who the writer is, when the text has been written, why it has been written as well as for whom it has been written; and at the same time understanding the author's intended meaning (*preferential reading*, BRAGA, 1995). In line with this view, students implicitly recognize the existence of the author's image of an ideal reader at the moment of his writing. The idea that a text has as many valid interpretations as the number of readers for this text and the idea that a

text has various, but limited, possible interpretations (ideas which are shared by discourse approaches to reading) also seem to be part of the respondents' system of beliefs about reading. However, the bottom-up conception that reading is a linear decoding process, in which the reader has to go from the smallest textual units (letters and words) to larger and larger units (phrases, clauses, etc) in order to reconstruct the author's message, is still widespread amongst these students.

The results also show that there is a small number of students who seem to have quite contradictory and confusing ideas about reading. The main contradictions are the following: 13 students agreed that there are endless possible interpretations for a text and simultaneously agreed that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text; 13 students also agreed that there is no single, best way of reading while agreeing that good reading should be detailed and slow; a group of 7 students agreed that it is enough to understand the author's intended meaning to read a text well but disagreed that a text has a single meaning; a group of 5 students agreed that there are various, but limited, interpretations for a text while also agreeing that it is enough to understand the author's message to read a text well; Finally, 21 students agreed that

reading purposes determine reading procedures, while 14 of these also agreed that selection of information by the readers is not good reading. Other contradictions (already mentioned in chapter 4) found in this study did not exceed 30% of students.

One possible explanation for these contradictions may be that instructional reading practice does not allow students to become aware of the complexity of the reading activity. Teachers of both L1 and L2 reading may not have been clear enough about the plurality of reading processes, and the existence of different genres which are to be read differently according to readers' different reading purposes. Some researchers (Carmagnani, 1995, Coracini, 1992, Kleiman, 1993) have already pointed out that although teachers and students talk about reading in terms different from those used in the past, in the classroom most texts have continued to be used mainly for the teaching of vocabulary and grammar instead of for the construction of meaning by the readers. The ambiguities present in the teaching of reading may influence students' beliefs about reading, which is why they still do not know if they should approach **all** texts at **all** times in the **same** way.

In spite of the fact that the development of cognitive theories of reading has already broadened our knowledge about the reading process and that we can already feel the influence of those theories in the instructional practice of reading, students' contradictory beliefs about reading suggest that the insights derived from those theories should be highlighted by teachers of reading during their reading lessons. Yet, although discourse analysis is not a method for teaching languages or for teaching reading, much can be learned from its view of language as discourse and from its central concern with exploring the fact that "meanings are not wholly stable, that they vary according to the context, purpose and audience for the communication and that the same forms of language can have different meanings in different contexts." (McCARTHY, 1994, p.xii). Furthermore, the emphasis which discourse analysis puts on the analysis of different text types, genres, clause relations and larger text patterns can be an invaluable contribution to the development of a pedagogy of either L1 or L2 reading which would help students to become aware of the complexity of reading.

5.1 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Several limitations must be acknowledged in this study. First of all, it was carried out with a small sample of EFL university students, which means that the results presented here are not to be generalized; on the contrary, they are to be seen as this group's specific reading beliefs. Each educational environment has its own characteristics and each individual student has also his own peculiarities uniquely and personally derived from his background. Therefore if teachers want to know what their EFL students actually think about reading, classroom research can be a useful tool to provide them with information which would be relevant to many aspects of their teaching, such as the design of the reading syllabus and the development of appropriate material.

The reading questionnaire was tentatively designed to identify just a small number of reading beliefs in L1 and L2, limited to a few aspects of the reading process. One of its main flaws is that it did not provide the reasons why students chose one answer rather than another, which would be crucial for a more comprehensive view of these students'

reading beliefs. The contradictions found in this study may indicate that these students do not have clear ideas about reading or that they did not answer the questionnaire with the necessary care. Furthermore, the questionnaire was not sensitive to the potential social and cultural differences amongst students and their possible influence upon students' reading beliefs. Further research is needed to explore these conditions and their relation to students' reading beliefs and, as ELLIS (1996, p.479) points out, "future research will need to find ways of ensuring that learners' verbal reports of their beliefs reflect their actual beliefs, and of investigating what effects different 'philosophies' have on learning outcome".

Unfortunately, it was not possible in this study to investigate students' beliefs about L2 learning as well, or these students' reading performance. Further research should be conducted in these two areas in order to provide us with clearer views of the relationship between students' reading beliefs and their beliefs about L2 learning as well as of the relationship between students' reading beliefs and the way in which they themselves approach text.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1 - TUNE-IN TEXT FOR THE INTERVIEW

HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT

“ People often complain that they never seem to get what they want. The simple reason is that they don't ask for it clearly enough. If you don't make a clear request, the other person won't know what you want. If you simply sigh heavily in front of the television, how will your partner know that you want him or her to turn it off ?

Another problem is that people often say 'yes' when they want to say 'no'. The trouble is that they want people to like them. They also worry too much about what others think of them. 'What will they think of me if I say I don't want to go to her party ? Of course we want others to like us, but it's important to realise that the world won't come to an end if someone disapproves of us. “

(taken from: *Blueprint Two, Workbook*, p.61, 154 words)

APPENDIX 2 - RESEARCH INSTRUMENT (READING INTERVIEW)

ROTEIRO PARA ENTREVISTA SOBRE LEITURA

01. O que é ler ?
02. Como você explicaria o que é ler para alguém de uma outra civilização, por exemplo, que não conhecesse essa atividade ?
03. Você se considera um bom leitor ?
04. O que faz com que você seja um bom leitor ?
05. Quais seriam as características de um bom leitor ?
06. Como você acha que um bom leitor lê ?
07. O que é uma boa leitura de um texto ?
08. Ler em português é diferente de ler em inglês ? Por que ? Teria alguma semelhança ? Qual ?
09. Qual a primeira coisa que você faz ao ler um texto ? Seria diferente se o texto fosse em inglês ? Como seria, então ?
10. O que você faz quando está lendo e encontra algo que não compreende ?
11. Como você ajudaria alguém com problemas de leitura ?
12. O que você gostaria de fazer melhor enquanto leitor ?
13. O que você acha importante considerar quando está lendo um texto?
14. Existe um jeito de ler melhor que outro ? Qual ?
15. Você acha possível ensinar uma pessoa a ler melhor ?

**APPENDIX 3 - TABLE OF ANSWERS OBTAINED DURING THE
READING INTERVIEWS**

Table of answers obtained during the reading interviews

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1. O que é ler para você ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . um meio de informação; . um meio de distração; . um passatempo; . significa compreender; . significa aprender outras experiências; . significa aprender palavras; . decodificar signos; . verificar o conteúdo do texto; . prazer; . aprender algo; . criticar, brigar com o texto; . um meio de aprender línguas e sobreviver; . realizar a atividade mecânica de leitura e compreender esse texto; . muitas coisas: prazer, trabalho, estudo; . entrar em contato com outros mundo; . ler é ler, captar as idéias do texto; . absorver idéias, conhecimento, cultura; . conscientizar-se da experiência de outro (autor); . buscar não só informações mas, "algo" a mais; . depende do que se lê: pode ser busca de informações ou de prazer.
2. Como você explicaria o que é ler para alguém de uma outra civilização, por exemplo, que não conhecesse essa atividade ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . a princípio decodificar sinais tentando "transmitir" uma idéia; . representação de uma outra realidade, comparando com signos daquela civilização; . fazendo relação com a coisa que está no mundo e o código. . mostrando que se pode transportar as histórias contadas oralmente por aquele povo para um código escrito através de símbolos; . começaria explicando o que é a escrita, que é um registro; . uma forma escrita com alguma informação; . uma "invenção" (não natural), um registro; . é como contar uma história só que através da escrita; . a pessoa teria que conhecer gráfico para perceber que a leitura é uma fonte de informação; . uma mensagem através de sinais, uma comunicação através de desenhos que seriam letras.
3. Você se considera um boa / bom leitor(a) ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Sim = seis; . Depende = um; . Não = um; . Não sei = dois;

4. O que faz com que você seja um 'mal/bom' leitor?
(Justificativas para as respostas da pergunta anterior)

5. Quais seriam as características de um bom leitor?

- . Mais ou menos = dois;
- . Sim e não = um;
- . Dois alunos responderam com perguntas: " _ O que você considera um bom leitor ? ". "Boa. em que sentido ? "

Justificativas para resposta "sim ":

- . me concentro;
- . gosto de ler;
- . leio bastante;
- . me interessa em ler;
- . a qualidade do que leio;
- . leio de tudo.

Justificativas para resposta "depende ":

- . quando eu quero eu sou uma boa leitora;
- . depende do texto;
- . depende da concentração;
- . depende do ambiente;
- . depende se eu gosto do texto;
- . depende se eu acho interessante.

Justificativas para resposta "não ":

- . não me aprofundo, só passo os olhos no texto;
- . não leio muito;
- . sou preguiçosa, se não entendo muito bem, passo adiante;

Justificativas para respostas "mais ou menos ", "normal ", etc:

- . sou curiosa;
- . a paixão pela leitura (+) mas sou preguiçosa (-);
- . não sou muito ignorante, penso sobre o que leio mas também, não sei muito para criticar;
- . minhas leituras são restritas a assuntos

específicos;

- . não termino as leituras que começo.
- . ter concentração;
- . gostar de ler;
- . entender o que lê;
- . sublinhar certas palavras;
- . memorizar;
- . ler pausadamente;
- . imaginar a história;
- . ter tempo para leitura;
- . ser atencioso;
- . compreender o que o autor tentou passar.
- . ler para extrair algo;
- . saber encontrar algo novo;
- . aprender a fazer relação entre aquilo que ele lê e aquilo que ele vive, e outros textos ou sua própria realidade;
- . aprender alguma coisa daquilo que lê;
- . tentar analisar o texto do ponto de vista do autor;
- . extrair alguma coisa de útil de qualquer coisa que lê;
- . entender o texto facilmente;
- . ter o hábito de ler;

6. Como você acha que um bom leitor lê ?

- . ter paixão pela leitura;
 - . captar a mensagem do texto;
 - . ler com olhos críticos usando seu conhecimento sobre as coisas;
 - . ler temas diversificados;
 - . querer sempre ir além nos assuntos;
 - . se recordar da leitura.
-
- . se concentra;
 - . lê pausadamente;
 - . sublinha certas palavras;
 - . lê com todas as vírgulas . com todos os pontos;
 - . fala como se estivesse vivendo aquele texto;
 - . vê o que o autor quer dizer no meio da linha;
 - . não pensa só no que está escrito;
 - . tenta colocar aquilo na vida;
 - . memoriza o que lê;
 - . depende do tipo de texto. dá uma olhada geral pra ver do que se trata. depois lê cuidadosamente. seleciona o que interessa. lê de diversas maneiras;
 - . lê sozinho, quieto num lugar bem iluminado, confortável;
 - . depende da pessoa (menciona ambiente físico);
 - . Não gosto de interromper e voltar, tentar ler o conjunto;
 - . É difícil falar sobre isso. lê um texto pelo menos duas vezes, procura palavras desconhecidas no dicionário;
 - . senta, abre o livro e lê;
 - . com concentração e saber opinar e por um ponto de vista em cima daquilo que lê;
 - . em um lugar silencioso. que tenha luz, se não entender tem que parar. ler mais uma vez, perguntar para alguém, ir atrás do essencial do livro;
 - . com atenção, com olhos críticos, somando o que você viu com o que você ouviu, dialogar com o texto; não ler e absorver tudo;
 - . ter concentração, um dicionário de termos (para os textos universitários), ir atrás das citações e referências feitas pelo autor;
 - . Dá primeiro uma olhada geral para saber os tópicos principais, depois faz uma leitura mais aprofundada procurando prestar bastante atenção no que lê, questionar alguma coisa vendo o que está por trás daquele texto;
 - . com interesse pelo que lê. precisa inferir que é que tem nas entrelinhas. não ficar numa leitura superficial. procurar compreender mais profundamente o texto. talvez fazer um resumo mental.

7. O que é uma boa leitura de um texto ?

- . ler pausadamente. sublinhar palavras-chaves;
- . tentar descobrir o que o autor tentou transmitir;
- . procurar o que está por trás do texto. procurar o porquê o texto foi escrito. com que finalidade. quem escreveu. para quem. ver o que o autor quis dizer.

8. Ler em português é diferente de ler em inglês ?
Por que ?

- . entender completamente o que está no texto, o que o autor queria que se entendesse e também, fazer uma análise própria, ver até o contexto que você tem;
 - . entender os fatores que estão ali.
 - . é a que consegue tirar alguma coisa daquele texto, não o que o autor quis dizer mas, alguma coisa para si mesmo;
 - . ler o texto duas vezes, procurar palavras no dicionário, tomar notas, e tirar um bom proveito da leitura;
 - . esgotar o texto, retirar tudo (estruturalmente, o conteúdo do texto);
 - . ter opinião sobre o que lê;
 - . entender o que o texto está tentando passar;
 - . tentar captar tudo o que o texto quer dizer, tentar compreender exatamente o que a pessoa quer dizer;
 - . ter uma compreensão boa do texto;
 - . dar uma olhada geral, se distanciar um pouquinho do texto, voltar naquilo, procurar com cuidado, questionar;
- . Sim = 11 respostas
 - . Não = 1 resposta
 - . Não sei = 1 resposta
 - . Em termos = 1 resposta
 - . Depende = 1 resposta.

Justificativas para as respostas:

- . Sim :
- . *Prá mim, sim. Porque eu tenho dificuldade em inglês;*
- . *Prá mim, é. tem muitas palavras que eu não conheço, tenho que ter mais concentração;*
- . *Em português, prefiro a leitura silenciosa; em inglês, prefiro ler em voz alta;*
- . *Pelo menos, no nosso caso, porque a gente está aprendendo (o inglês);*
- . *Tenho mais facilidade em captar as idéias em inglês*
(*aluna alfabetizada em inglês, bilingüe: ing/port*)
- . *A língua estrangeira exige mais, você vai mais ao dicionário;*
- . *A escrita é mais formal, o inglês formal não está muito ao meu alcance. em outra língua você fica tentando imaginar como é a pronúncia das palavras, pensa em outras coisas que não pensa em português;*
- . *Em inglês é mais difícil porque eu não tô num nível muito avançado. "Meu inglês ainda é pouco perto do que eu tenho que chegar para entender o texto sem problemas e depende do nível do texto também.*
- . *Não é só a língua, tem muita cultura, muita forma de ver o mundo implícita. O modo de pensar e os valores diferem bastante, no modo de escrever e no modo de organizar;*

8a. Tem alguma semelhança entre ler em português e ler em inglês? O que?

- . Na língua materna, você tem um conhecimento maior, é mais fácil; em inglês, tem estruturas que não significam palavra por palavra.
- . Não:
- . A magia é a mesma. Mas nos textos dissertativos, provavelmente não seria a mesma coisa pois eles carregam muito da cultura;
- . Depende:
- . Se você for inglês e ler em inglês ou se você for um português e lere em inglês, você tem que envolver muito mais o teu cérebro nisso. Tem que transportar isso para tua... buscar significados na tua língua;
- . Não sei:
- . É diferente linguisticamente porque são duas línguas diferentes, construções diferentes e a maneira de pensar também é diferente, mas o fato de ler é igual, o processo é o mesmo, independente da língua;
- . É e não é:
- . Tem que ter a mesma concentração, o mesmo esforço, mas em inglês por não conhecer o vocabulário ou a estrutura da frase, mas ao mesmo tempo os textos em inglês parecem ser mais objetivos;
- . Completamente diferente; (2);
- . Com certeza, no nosso caso.
- . Argumentos:
- . Prá gente que está aprendendo, depende do teu conhecimento da língua estrangeira.
- . O vocabulário é diferente.
- . É outra gramática, outra estrutura.
- . ler fora da tua língua materna envolve mais operações do teu cérebro, por causa do contexto social.
- . Depende, se você é inglês ou português.
- . Não.
- . A atenção tem que ser a mesma.
- . Tem muitas coisas semelhantes.
- . Nos dois, você extrai alguma coisa, uma mensagem.
- . O princípio é o mesmo: decodificar sinais, destrinchar o texto, talvez o que varie é que você não esteja acostumado às estruturas da língua que eles utilizam;
- . Tem mais semelhanças até do que diferenças;
- . Prá mim, estou lendo em português, estou pensando em inglês e vice-versa (aluna bilíngüe);
- . Na primeira leitura em que você faz em silêncio;
- . O processo é o mesmo, independente da língua;
- . Não deixa de ser uma leitura, vai ter aquele resultado final;
- . É basicamente a mesma coisa, fora a dificuldade das palavras (da língua);
- . Acho que tem, porque a gente consegue, né?
- . Tem muita coisa, a concentração;

9. Qual a primeira coisa que você faz ao ler um texto? Seria diferente se o texto fosse em inglês? Como seria, então?

10. O que você faz quando está lendo e encontra algo que não compreende?

11. Como você ajudaria alguém com problemas de leitura?

12. O que você gostaria de fazer melhor enquanto leitor?

13. O que você acha importante considerar quando está lendo um texto?

14. Existe um jeito de ler melhor quer outro?

- . Não, são duas coisas bem diferentes;
- . Fazer um resumo mental, compreender, criticar;
- . Olhar o título: não seria diferente.
- . Leio rápido. Seria diferente, leria devagar.
- . Vejo se o texto é longo ou curto, depois leio.
- . Não.
- . Dou uma folhada em todo o texto. Seria diferente. Em português, daria uma olhada geral mas chegaria mais direto; em inglês procuro gravuras, procuro palavras-chaves.
- . Localizo o meu objetivo. Vejo se gosto do tema.
- . Dou uma lida geral, superficial. Vejo se tem algumas palavras desconhecidas, depois releio. Seria diferente.
- . Pego um dicionário:
- . releio;
- . continuo lendo e vejo se consigo entender;
- . em relação à palavras, uso o dicionário, em relação ao assunto, pergunto para o professor.;
- . depende. Se preciso, procuro entender. Senão, passo adiante.
- . releio, pesquiso, pergunto.
- . uma palavra ou uma construção? Palavras = releio, uso o dicionário. a gramática.
- . Dando bastante material pra ler, inclusive em voz alta;
- . na pontuação ou na compreensão? só ler. Na pontuação, é um caso de gramática. Na compreensão, sublinhar as palavras-chaves.
- . Problemas de leitura, em que sentido? Não gosta de ler ou não lê bem? Motivo ou trabalho como um fonoaudiólogo.
- . Tem que atrair o leitor, mostrar as vantagens. Usar material relevante.
- . Trocar idéias.
- . Me concentrar mais;
- . ter mais calma, não ficar preocupada se eu vou ler certo ou errado;
- . ter mais tempo para ler (3)
- . ler autores diferentes, variar mais.
- . ver certas coisas, criticar mais, questionar o que leio, ver nas entrelinhas.
- . A mensagem do texto;
- . se o texto é 'legível', se não está apagado;
- . título, porque traz a idéia principal; ver a relação que existe entre o título e o texto;
- . o tipo de linguagem;
- . a seqüência do texto;
- . a maneira como o autor trabalha o texto; a intenção do autor e a linguagem que ele usa;
- . a formas, estilo, gênero;
- . o motivo pelo qual ele foi escrito, para quem, o que o autor pretende, o conteúdo.
- . Sim. Desconheço esses meios. Mas até a sua posição dos olhos.

15. Você acha que é possível ensinar uma pessoa a ler melhor? Como?

- . Deve ter. Não estudei sobre isso. Acho que tem um jeito que não precise tanto esforço.
- . Não, depende da pessoa. Grifar, separar as idéias principais.
- . Não, a leitura é uma só. Vai depender do texto e da tua bagagem cultural.
- . Não. Cada um tem o seu jeito. O que existem são leituras melhores. Cada pessoa determina o que é melhor para si (...) Encontra aquilo que ela precisa. (...) depende do que você quer com aquilo que você está lendo.
- . Existe. Não ler encolhido. Ler confortavelmente e com paz de espírito.
- . Sim, com a prática principalmente:
- . Sim, fazer a pessoa compreender a importância da leitura;
- . Sim, gravar aquele texto numa fita para pessoa ouvir.
- . Dar textos interessantes:
- . Sim, ensinar técnicas como: grifar, prestar atenção a palavras-chaves, motivar.
- . Em que sentido? Na leitura em si ou fazer com que ela amplie / Ler para os alunos sentirem a entonação, fazer os alunos lerem em voz alta, estimular a leitura oral. E para ampliar horizontes, motivar através de textos sobre assuntos que o aluno goste.
- . Sim, dar dicas, ensinar técnicas. Mas acho que a leitura, você só aprende mesmo com a experiência, quanto mais você ler.
- . Sim. Mostrar uma posição correta de ler: sentado, não deitado.
- . Não. Você não vai ensinar ela ler melhor o texto. Você vai ajudar. Ensinar dá uma coisa muito de cima pra baixo.
- . Não. Cada um tem a sua maneira de entrar em contato com o texto.

APPENDIX 4 - RESEARCH INSTRUMENT (QUESTIONNAIRE)

UNIVERSITY STUDENT'S BELIEFS ABOUT READING

A seguir encontra-se uma lista de idéias sobre leitura em geral e leitura em língua estrangeira retiradas de entrevistas com 16 alunos do curso de Letras- Inglês da UFPR.

A seguir, leia atentamente cada afirmação tendo em mente a leitura de textos em geral, artigos de revistas ou de jornal. Decida, então, se você:

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

Assinale com um X **apenas uma** das alternativas para cada afirmação.

NÃO HÁ RESPOSTAS CERTAS OU ERRADAS!

O que realmente interessa são suas opiniões. Em caso de dúvida, escolha a alternativa que mais reflete suas idéias.

A honestidade de suas respostas nos ajudará a melhor compreender o que os alunos pensam a respeito de leitura tanto na língua materna como na língua estrangeira.

Obrigado pela sua colaboração!

QUESTIONÁRIO

1 Não há como “ensinar” didaticamente a leitura enquanto compreensão de textos. Apenas a prática constante formará leitores eficientes.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

2 Para fazer uma boa leitura de um texto basta entender o que o autor do texto quis dizer.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

3 A leitura é um diálogo entre o texto e o leitor onde tanto as informações prévias à disposição do leitor quanto as informações trazidas pelo texto são importantes.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

4 Há tantas interpretações válidas de um texto quanto o número de leitores existentes para esse texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

5 Não há um modo de ler melhor que outro. A finalidade de nossa leitura é o que determina nossa maneira de ler.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

6 Traduzir mentalmente o que se lê de um texto em inglês para o português garante uma melhor compreensão desse texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

7 Um leitor eficiente é alguém que sempre procura o significado de palavras desconhecidas no dicionário.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

8 Quando leio em inglês, o conteúdo do texto não é tão importante. O que é mais importante é usar o texto para aprender vocabulário e gramática.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

9 É preciso conhecer a pronúncia das palavras de um texto em língua estrangeira, para uma boa leitura desse texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

10 O conhecimento da gramática é mais importante para a leitura em língua estrangeira do que para a leitura em língua materna.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

11 Um bom leitor é aquele que lê devagar, prestando atenção em todos os detalhes do texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

12 Perceber o que está por trás do texto, o porquê o texto foi escrito, quem o escreveu, para quem e ver o que o autor quis dizer é que é realmente fazer uma leitura do texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

13 O ensino de leitura em língua estrangeira deve ser feito mais através do ensino de técnicas de leitura do que através do ensino da língua (gramática, vocabulário, etc.).

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

14 Quando se está aprendendo uma língua estrangeira, os problemas de leitura são basicamente problemas de língua.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

15 Na leitura em língua estrangeira, observar a organização do texto não é tão importante quanto saber o vocabulário ou a gramática da língua.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

16 O texto tem um único significado que deve ser apreendido pelo leitor para a realização de uma boa leitura.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

17 Em língua estrangeira, ler em voz alta ajuda a compreender melhor o texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

18 Pode haver várias, porém limitadas interpretações para um mesmo texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

19 Selecionar só o que interessa não é fazer uma boa leitura de um texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

20 É possível que o texto signifique mais do que aquilo que seu autor quis dizer.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

21 Quando há discordância a respeito da interpretação de um texto, o(a) professor(a) é a pessoa mais indicada para determinar o significado desse texto.

- 1 () Concorda totalmente
 - 2 () Concorda
 - 3 () Discorda
 - 4 () Discorda totalmente
 - 5 () Outra. Qual?
-

**APPENDIX 5 - TERMINOLOGY TO DESIGNATE THE ITEMS OF
THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

TERMINOLOGY TO DESIGNATE THE ITEMS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Category 1: Beliefs about the pedagogy of reading

- Item n° 01- Impossibility of teaching reading;
- Item n° 13- Teaching of L2 reading through reading techniques;
- Item n° 21- The role of the reading teacher.

Category 2: Beliefs about reading in general

- Item n° 03- Reading = dialogue between reader and text;
- Item n° 11- Good reading = detailed and slow;
- Item n° 12- Good reading = critical and reflective.

Category 3: Beliefs about L2 reading

- Item n° 08- L2 text = a pretext for L2 learning;
- Item n° 09- L2 reading = oral reading;
- Item n° 10- Importance of grammar for L2 reading;
- Item n° 14- L2 reading problems = language problems;
- Item n° 15- Importance of text organisation for L2 reading.

Category 4: Beliefs about reading strategies

- Item n° 05- Purpose = determinant for reading procedures;
- Item n° 06- Translation facilitates L2 text comprehension;
- Item n° 07- Use of dictionary = strategy of efficient reader;
- Item n° 17- Reading aloud facilitates L2 text comprehension;
- Item n° 19- Reader's selection of text information = not good reading.

Category 5: Beliefs about “ meaning “ and “ interpretation ”

- Item n° 02- Good reading = enough to understand the author's message;
- Item n° 04- Endless, possible interpretations for a text;
- Item n° 16- A single meaning for a text;
- Item n° 18- Various, but limited interpretations for a text;
- Item n° 20- Text means more than the author's intended meaning.

APPENDIX 6 - RAW DATA

APPENDIX 6 -STUDENTS' ANSWERS OF THE READING QUESTIONNAIRE

STDS	N° 1	N° 2	N° 3	N° 4	N° 5	N° 6	N° 7	N° 8	N° 9	N° 10	N° 11	N° 12	N° 13	N° 14	N° 15	N° 16	N° 17	N° 18	N° 19	N° 20	N° 21
1	2	4	1	3	1	4	3	4	3	3	4	2	2	4	3	3	4	2	4	2	3
2	2	3	1	1	3	3	1	4	3	2	3	3	2	3	4	3	1	1	3	2	4
3	3	3	2	2	2	4	3	4	2	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	2	3	2	2	2
4	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	4
5	2	3	1	3	3	2	2	4	2	4	3	2	3	3	4	4	3	2	1	1	3
6	2	2	2	1	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	2	1	3
7	2	3	1	1	2	4	3	4	3	3	2	1	1	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3
8	1	3	1	2	2	2	3	4	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	4	1	2	1	1	3
9	3	3	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3
10	3	2	1	1	3	4	2	4	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	5	3	2	1	3
11	3	3	2	1	2	3	3	4	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	2	4
12	3	3	1	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3
13	3	2	1	2	1	3	2	4	3	3	2	1	4	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	4
14	3	3	1	2	2	2	3	4	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	2	2	3
15	1	3	1	3	4	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3
16	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	3	3	3	2	3	2	3
17	1	3	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	4	2	3	1	1	2
18	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	4	2	4	2	1	2	3	4	3	1	2	3	1	3
19	3	4	1	1	2	3	2	4	3	4	3	1	2	3	3	3	2	2	1	2	3
20	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	4	2	4	4	2	2	2	2	2
21	2	2	2	4	3	2	1	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2
22	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2
23	1	3	2	3	1	2	2	3	2	3	3	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	1
24	5	2	2	5	3	2	3	3	1	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	2
25	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	2
26	3	3	2	5	2	2	3	3	3	4	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	2	2	2	2
27	3	4	1	1	1	1	4	3	2	3	2	1	2	2	3	4	2	3	2	1	3
28	2	3	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2
29	1	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2
30	1	3	1	2	3	4	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	3	2	4	2	2	1	2	3
31	3	3	1	2	2	2	2	4	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	1	3	2	3
32	2	3	2	4	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	3
33	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	4	2	1	4	1	1	1	1	1

obs: 1 = Totally Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Disagree; 4 = Totally disagree; 5 = Other

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