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Book Buddies: Celebrating Shared Reading

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ABSTRACT

Book Buddies: Celebrating Shared Reading

John Leland Jessop

This thesis describes a project involving reading books with a partner, and writing about the experience in journals kept by each of the partnerships. There were two groups of participants partnered together: one comprised of 12-13 year-old English second language (ESL) learners, and the other, student teachers from a university ESL teaching methodology course. Before and after the project, the ESL participants' attitude toward reading was surveyed and their writing accuracy was measured throughout. They were comprised of two distinct sub-groups: (1) those who had attended an intensive ESL program in their previous school year, and (2) those who had had their additional exposure to English outside the classroom. The first group contained weaker writers who loved books, and who, by the end of the study, had improved their writing accuracy. The second contained stronger writers who did not like to read as much, but who significantly improved their attitude toward books. The journal entries showed that the ESL students were enthusiastic about the project and were able to find books that they liked. The student teachers gained an understanding of the journal

writing process and of the students they were about to teach during their

upcoming internship.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0   Introduction

This thesis examines a project involving ESL learners and student teachers reading books and writing about the experience in journals kept by each of the readers, and their reading partners, or buddies. There were two groups of participants working together: one comprised of teenage English second language (ESL) learners, and the other, student teachers from a university undergraduate ESL pedagogy course. Each partnership of student and student teacher read books and discussed them in their journal. Each group of participants was expected to benefit in their own way; the ESL learners would like books and reading better, and their writing would improve, while the student teachers would be introduced to journal writing and the types of students they were about to encounter in their upcoming secondary school internships.

1.1   The Bromley Book Buddy Project

The model for the ESL project described in this thesis was an experimental reading intervention program for learning-disabled English-first-language (L1) children (Bromley, Winters, & Schlimmer, 1994). It

was a book buddy project (BBP) in which graduate education students were paired with 8-9 year old students at risk of reading failure, and they read picture books together. The BBP lasted 10 weeks, and by the end, students who had been reading as much as two years below level -- that is, barely recognizing words -- were reading more fluently, had achieved grade level, and had developed a love of books. The researchers praised the advantages of reading with an adult partner, even at a distance.

Bromley's (Bromley et al., 1994) book buddy project ran during one of the students' thrice-weekly forty-five minute special sessions with their reading teacher. During this time, the participants could not have read an enormous amount of material, yet their reading skills improved dramatically. What may have been more important than practice was the quality of their reading experience. It is probable that for the first time in their lives, they had a real reason for reading. The students read for meaning. They read to communicate with their buddy; they read to write about their books to their buddy. It is also possible that before the project, they had just been inattentively turning pages but, with the extra attention the project gave them, they began reading for the first time. Nonetheless, for whatever reason, Bromley and her colleagues reported a significant positive change in the students' attitudes toward reading, as measured by the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990).

This program's success, combined with this researcher's love of books and penchant for using literature to teach English, raised the question of whether an L1 intervention program, in particular this one involving reading and writing, could be an effective language learning event in the Québec school system within its ESL curriculum. For the program to be a success for everyone involved, both the student teachers and the ESL students would have to benefit in some way from the reading and writing experience.

1.2   The rationale for using literature in ESL classes

The notion of using literature to teach language comes in and out of fashion. Some proponents of the communicative approach view reading literature as an important form of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1993b). Tomlinson (1986), in stating his reasons for using poetry in his ESL classes, could be speaking about literature in general. He says that the main objective of using poetry in language lessons is not to teach learners to write, or even appreciate poetry, but to find a means of involving the learners in using their language skills in an active and creative way, thus contributing to their communicative competence. As well, Fitzgerald (1995) has catalogued studies by Carrell, Lava, Saville-Troika, and Snow that show correlations between L2 oral and L2 reading proficiency.

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In calling for more literature in the ESL classroom, the writers and researchers after 1980 have not imagined anything resembling a traditional "body of knowledge" English literature course. On the contrary, they espouse various forms of language-based methods, mirroring the newer L1 English literature approach. Wolf, Carey, & Mieras (1996) studied student teachers and their very young charges in an L1 classroom. They described the student teachers discovering that their typically straightforward comprehension questions limited the children's response to literature. The children's insights, when the teachers focused on interpretation, were anything but limited. If in L1, young children's responses can evolve into an interaction with literature, it should be an inspiration for ESL teachers to push for interpretive responses as well.

1.3 The role of reading and writing in English Second Language - Language Arts in Québec.

The global objective of the English Second Language - Language Arts (ESL-LA) program as stated in the ESL-LA Committee Report is the following: Students will be able to use English as a means of satisfying certain needs for instruction and entertainment. The program is student-centred, focuses on the utilitarian aspects of language, addresses a range of potential needs, and foresees the use of English as a

vehicle for learning and for entertainment. The ESL-LA program functions as an addition to the regular secondary ESL curriculum. All of the comprehension and production objectives of ESL-LA are based on reading and writing (MEQ, 1991).

1.4 Book Buddy projects

BBPs involve reading books and sharing the experience through journal entries with a partner or buddy who is reading the same book. The

```
   ┌──────────────┐                      ┌─────────────────────────┐
   │   ESL-LA     │ ───────────────────▶ │ Better attitude to books│
   │ Reader-writer│                      │     Better writers      │
   └──────────────┘                      └─────────────────────────┘
       ▲      │
       │      ▼
  ┌────────┐  ┌──────────┐
  │ BOOKS  │  │ JOURNAL  │
  └────────┘  └──────────┘
       │           ▲
       ▼           │
   ┌──────────────┐                      ┌──────────────────────────────┐
   │Student Teacher│ ───────────────────▶│ Better understanding of journal│
   │ Reader-writer │                     │  processes and ESL learners   │
   └──────────────┘                      └──────────────────────────────┘
```
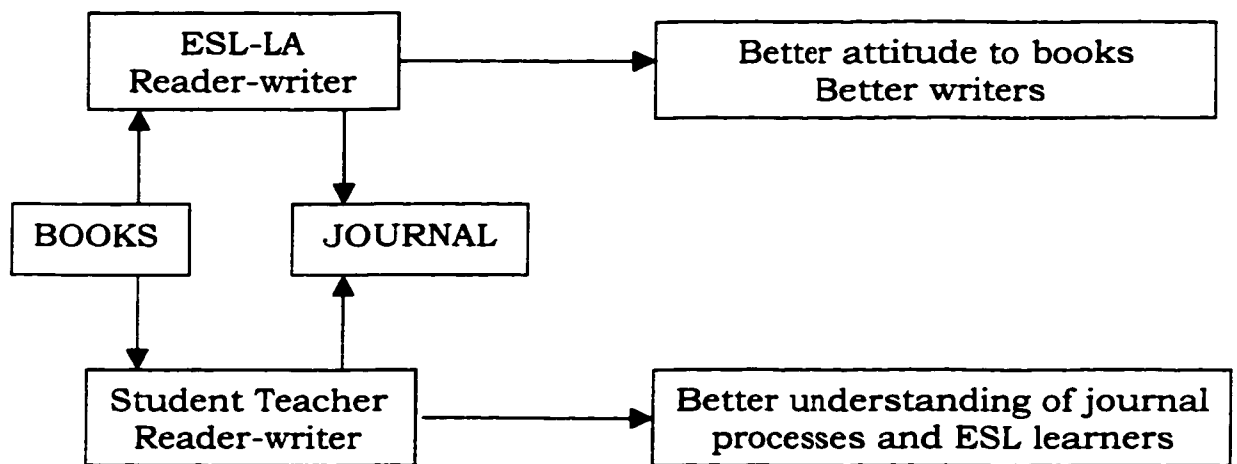
Figure 1. This Book Buddy Project.

entries typically contain exchanges of opinion and ideas rooted in the buddies' reading experiences. These journals have been written across

many different age groups. Bromley (1995) organized a peer group ESL buddy program to help settle a large wave of Kurdish immigrants into a New York school system. High school students have exchanged journals with primary students. Retired buddies have worked with school children of many ages. All programs report the same successes: improved reading and writing and a heightened interest in books. As shown in Figure 1, this BBP will involve undergraduate student teachers in the secondary focus section of their ESL teacher training, and secondary 1 (Grade 7) ESL-LA students reading and writing to each other about books. Also shown are the beneficial outcomes anticipated for both groups of participants.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

It has been hypothesised that reading as input for second language acquisition will be most effective when learners read for fun, forgetting which language is involved (Krashen, 1993b). Real, meaningful tasks combined with interesting material often accomplish this goal. How we read in our L1 and L2 is as important as what we read. Although language outputs include writing, speaking and involve general language competencies, it is reasonable to expect that any benefits derived from reading would appear in the readers' writings.

2.1 Input hypothesis

The input hypothesis claims that people acquire language through comprehensible input, that is, by understanding the gist or the message. Learners progress naturally from one level of competence to the next, slowly gaining knowledge and skill. Krashen (1985, 1988, 1993a) believes that reading provides rich comprehensible input. According to the Affective Filter Hypothesis, affective variables can block input. This block may be at its lowest when learners become so involved in the message that they temporarily forget they are using another language

(Krashen, 1985). The most effective input, therefore, is interesting input (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

2.2 Book-based language learning

Researchers tell us that we learn to read by reading. In his review of studies of free reading, Krashen (1988) argues that success in reading comprehension relates positively to the amount of free reading done. He believes that free reading is not only beneficial, since it provides another form of comprehensible input, but free reading may even be better than direct reading instruction (exercises) in both first and second language classrooms.

Saragi, Nation, and Meister's (1978) Clockwork Orange study showed readers learning vocabulary. The novel, A *Clockwork Orange*, contains 241 invented words. In the study, readers learned between forty-five and eighty-six of these words just by reading the novel. An L2 replication (Pitts, White, & Krashen, 1989) had successful results. In both cases, vocabulary tests administered before and after reading the novel showed a significant gain in knowledge of the invented language.

There is also evidence that one can learn more than words while reading. Students in a comprehension-based program in New Brunswick studied

a second language, English, by simultaneously reading and listening to tape-recorded books over an extended period of time (Lightbown, 1992). When tested for vocabulary recognition, picture description, oral imitation, and reading aloud, these students fared as well as, or better than, students in the regular ESL program even though practicing oral skills was not part of their experimental program. "Students in this [experimental] program have succeeded in learning at least as much English as those whose learning has been guided by a teacher in a more traditional program" (p. 362).

In two other studies, Hafiz and Tudor (1989, 1990) documented the use of graded readers in Pakistani ESL classes. Specifically, they studied the use of books as comprehensible input in a supplementary program. Putting Krashen's idea to the test, they set out to study the results of a reading program. The results bore out the theory. After extensive reading, the subjects gained in accuracy of expression and fluency.

Elley (1991) described book-based ESL programs in Fiji, Niue, and Singapore that yielded consistent results. A book flood, described as a rich diet of books, improved students' overall level of English. In instances where children were read to, they typically learned the meanings of unfamiliar words from context, and their competence spread to other skills: writing, speaking, and control of syntax.

Elley also measured the first language vocabulary acquisition of New Zealand school children who had listened to a large number of stories. He found that weaker students learned just as much as stronger ones, that the learning was relatively long-lasting, and that oral story reading was correlated significantly with vocabulary acquisition, whether or not the story was accompanied by teacher explanations of word meanings (Elley 1989). The gains shown by the groups that did not receive teacher explanations, although significant, were substantially lower than groups that did. Hence, the books do not appear to have been a total substitute for teacher help. This suggests that discussing the stories with others would provide the best results.

2.3   L1/L2 reading research

The debate over how people read has continued for as long as we have thought about our reading. In the *Dictionnaire Pédagogique* (1787), Nicolas Adam wrote "Hide from [children] all the ABCs and all the manuals of French and Latin; entertain them with whole words which they can understand and which they will retain with far more ease than all the printed letters and syllables." (reported in Manguel, 1996). Fries (1962) produced an overview of reading theory and reading teaching up to that time. In the nineteenth century, the teaching of reading moved from phonics instruction, through a whole-word recognition system, and

ended with what we now consider to be a sentence method of reading in which meaning was paramount and reading was silent. Fries (1962) describes the ideas of George Farnam, the main proponent of the sentence method popularized in the late nineteenth century. Farnam held three basic principles important: first, things are cognized as wholes (the whole being the sentence); second, one acquires knowledge of the parts of an object by first considering it as a whole; and finally, language is representative, and the thought expressed by it is the object of attention.

The twentieth century brought an emphasis on text-based, or bottom-up, reading processes, exemplified by the "Dick and Jane" readers, and once again, reading methodology progressed through the cycle to another version of the whole. Goodman (1968) began developing a reading theory that emphasised the importance of the conceptions the reader brings to the text, or top-down processing, that would culminate in the Whole Language approach. (See Goodman, 1986, for a description of whole language.)

Some reading researchers were not ready to ignore the older, bottom-up theories. They proposed a blend of the two processes (letter and word recognition, syntax recognition, inference, past experience in reading, past life experience) and their embodied schemata. Rummlehart (1977)

proposed an interactive approach in which the bottom-up and top-down models combine in a perceptual and cognitive process, and Kintch and van Dijk (1978) proposed an interactive model that favoured top-down processes involving reader memory, schemata, reading for gist, and culminated in readers creating their own texts, rooted in what they have read. In these models, top-down processes are not language-based, but rather tend to be based on life experience at all levels, from text encounters to buying bread at the corner store, while bottom up strategies are often language-based, rooted in signs, grammar, syntax, morphology, and phonology.

Further L1 reading theory and research will be discussed throughout this thesis in relation to L2 reading. Most models of L1 and L2 reading suggest that good L1 readers may become good L2 readers, but bad L1 readers will be bad L2 readers. The comparisons between L1 and L2 reading and the theories surrounding the similarities and differences are not simplified by the increasingly complex explanations of the reading process in general. They are further complicated by the idea of transferring reading skills from L1 to L2. In a cataloguing of L2 reading research, Fitzgerald (1995) cites the work of Carrell, Carson et al., and Saville-Troika that shows correlations between L1 and L2 reading proficiency.

In 1981, Cummins (in Eisterhold, 1990) published his interdependence hypothesis. It states that there is an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is common across languages, allowing the transfer of literary skills across languages. This implies that L2 literacy may be affected by L1 literacy. Cummins also suggested that the transfer does not occur until the language learner reaches a threshold, or minimum language ability in the L2 sufficient to perform cognitively demanding language use.

Both Alderson (1984) and Brumfit (1985) also suggest that there may be a language threshold, or minimum ability needed in the L2 before real L1-like interaction with the text can occur. Although vocabulary studies by Laufer (1989, 1992) offer arguments for how much of a text lexis needs to be comprehensible for reading comprehension (90%, which demands a 3,000-5,000 word vocabulary), she acknowledges that other forces are at work contributing to reading comprehension. And so, this degree of proficiency is difficult to define, and Brumfit believes that it changes with the type of reading task and the text being read.

Bossers (1991), reviewing perspectives on reading and research about the relations between L1 and L2 reading and L2 ability, summarises two guidelines proposed by Alderson: L2 reading ability is dependent on L1 reading ability; L2 reading ability depends on the knowledge of L2.

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Blending with these guidelines is the threshold theory: that a certain level of competence is needed in L2 before any reading strategies from L1 will transfer to L2. After calling for support for his case with studies by Clarke (1979), Hacquebord (1989), and Carrell (1991) (cited in Bossers, 1991), Bossers describes his own study which indicates "knowledge of the target language plays a dominant role initially, and that L1 reading ability becomes a prominent factor at a more advanced level" (p.96). In contrast, Bernhardt (1991) refuses to separate second language literacy into reading components and language components. She views literacy as an evolving, internally complete system unto itself, asserting that it "can be hypothesised that L2 reading is . . . a corollary process to interlanguage development" (p. 32). Koda (1994) found that, in American learners of Japanese, L1 and L2 "fuse in a complex interaction during sentence processing and that learners' L1 and L2 knowledge may coalesce in forming L2 sentence comprehension strategies" (p. 7). The transfer of skills from L1 to L2 will be discussed further in Section 2.6, which reviews research examining the complex interaction between reading and writing.

Conventional thought concerning reading in L2 is rooted in L1 (usually English) reading theory, and the research in L2 reading of any one time reflects the prevailing views of L1 reading (Fitzgerald, 1995). Furthermore, most innovation in L2 reading theory has come via L1, not

L2 research findings. Initially, pure bottom-up models were little explored in the L2 research community as the vast majority of researchers were examining schema-based and other "higher level" processing types (Fitzgerald, 1995). The reasons for this may lie not just in the theories themselves, but in the nature of second-language reading. Whereas in the L1, the typical emergent reader is young, has a knowledge of grammar and a large vocabulary, in the L2, the reader is typically older, often an adult, and has limited knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the new language. Most L2 readers can already read in their L1, so their reading is cross-linguistic (Koda, 1994). Furthermore, L2 readers' goals often involve reading very topic-specific texts.

A number of studies of top-down processing have shown that the effects of schemata are important in L2 reading. In research carried out by Steffensen and Joag-Dev (1984), subjects of different nationalities and religions showed marked superiority in reading material rooted in their own life experience. The researchers conclude that reading comprehension is a function of cultural background knowledge. Carrell, who holds an interactive view of reading, has also shown the importance of text schemata (Carrell, 1994). The reader requires a judicious mix of text-based and knowledge-based processes to extract meaning from the text and avoid comprehension difficulties (Fillmore, 1981, in Carrell,

1988). In an L1 study, Adams, Bell, & Perfetti (1995) found that children could substitute domain knowledge for reading skill and vice versa to achieve similar levels of comprehension. Thus, a poor reader does well reading familiar subject matter, and a good reader can use skill to understand what lies beyond present knowledge. Whether the topic was general or domain-specific made no difference to reading speed in either the skilled or less-skilled readers. Less skilled readers read both texts slowly, the skilled read both quickly. Adams et al. called this complementary nature of reading a trading relationship.

In a study comparing L1 and L2 readers reading texts of greater or less coherence, Horiba (1996) found that L1 readers used more high-level processes, inference and general knowledge associations than the L2 readers, who paid more attention to low level processes. The L1 readers used different strategies from one text to another, generating more elaborations for the low-coherence texts than for the high. The L2 readers however, did not change strategies when they changed texts. Horiba suggests that anaphoric relations as well as word- and sentence-level comprehension posed problems for the L2 readers in this study.

Current reading theories recognise a combination of processes, some automatic and some controlled. Automatization comes through practice; letter recognition, for example, becomes automatic for most children after

kindergarten. The more the various skills and activities involved in reading are automatized, the more quickly one reads. Coady's model of reading allows for flexibility, recognising that readers switch strategies in order to achieve different goals demanded by different texts, or to achieve better results (in Barnett, 1989). Readers with good strategies exchange those that do not work and try something else. That is, readers with a deficit in automatic word recognition might rely on contextual knowledge. In a study of young emergent L1 readers, Elster (1994) found that these readers were adding to their array of reading strategies, but never completely abandoning any old ones. His study highlights the myriad strategies that come into play throughout reading development, and suggests that we should view these strategies as being constantly recombined with new resources. Having a full arsenal of strategies does not ensure speed, but it can give a better chance of comprehension (see Block, 1986, regarding the transfer of L1 reading strategies to the L2). Nonetheless, the reader has to know how and when to change horses in mid-stream.

2.4 Development of automaticity in reading

Individual readers vary in the extent to which each of the many facets of reading are efficient (automatic), or controlled (costly in terms of attentional resources). Automaticity is not merely speeded up controlled

processing, but relates to changes in the way in which the underlying mechanisms operate (Segalowitz & Gatbonton, 1995). Thus, the type of change from controlled to automatic processing is qualitative, not quantitative. Furthermore, according to Perfetti's Verbal Efficiency Model (Perfetti, 1995), "Individual differences in reading comprehension are produced by individual differences in the efficient operation of local processes" (p.100). Verbal efficiency is a concept of product and cost -- outcome and processing resources. Lexical access, propositional encoding, and schema activation can range from automatic to resource costly. Accessing the wrong meaning, misunderstanding a concept, activating the wrong schema all derail the automatic reading process and demand conscious attention to fix the problem. Koda (1992) suggests that the working memory of weak readers is fully occupied with lower-level processing and does not have enough room left to effectively do the higher-level work.

Segalowitz (1986) suggests that, even in skilled bilinguals, a lowered reading speed in L2 may be a result of reduced efficiency in which lower levels of the cognitive process pass their information upwards. The bottom-up processes demand much of the reader's attentional resources and are the weak link, rather than the top-down ones. He reminds us that slowed reading interferes with the reader's thinking about what has been read.

Segalowitz and Hébert's (1990) study of English/French bilinguals in Montréal also found that for slow readers, the L2 presented a heavier processing load for working memory than it did for fast readers. The differences between English and French orthographies yielded differences, as well. French is quite regular, in that most graphemes have a unique pronunciation (the opposite is not true: from phoneme to grapheme the relationship is one-to-many); however English has a many-to-many grapheme-to-phoneme mapping. Homophone effects were not found in slower readers' L2 during the lexical decision task (word/non-word judgements), but were found in sentence tasks. Two options to explain the effect were offered: that the phonological codes are deficient, or that the cost of generating them results in the loss of other, non phonological, information in working memory. Either way, short-term, or working memory is overburdened, probably resulting in a crash of the reading processes, both automatic and controlled, leading to the interpretation that although letter recognition remains shared in the L1 and L2, the grapheme-phoneme relationship is being reworked.

The reading model used by Favreau and Segalowitz (1983) assumes that skilled reading involves more rapid, context-free word recognition than does less skilled reading. Less skilled readers will be more dependent on slower-acting contextual processes. With practice, readers become more and more automatic in their processes. In their study of reaction times

to word and non-word targets, Favreau and Segalowitz divided highly skilled bilinguals, reading in French and English within the normal monolingual rate of 200-300 wpm, into two groups: those whose reading speed varied less than ten percent and those whose reading speed varied more than ten percent from L1 to L2. They found a general tendency toward the more-than-ten-percent-difference subjects being less able to take advantage of semantic context than the equal-reading-rate subjects. These readers were not more dependent on controlled or strategic processing; rather, their word recognition skills were slower -- not as automatic as the equal-speed readers. In a study designed to investigate automaticity, Segalowitz, Segalowitz, & Wood (1998) measured the word recognition times of undergraduates taking an introductory French (L2) course. The participants performed a lexical-decision task, deciding whether the word was a real French word or a non-word. The French words included basic words outside the focus of instruction and words taken from specific classroom materials. The participants were tested several times over the course of their studies. The participants improved both their word-recognition times and became more automatic in their processing. What Segaowitz et al. found most interesting is that these L2 learners "demonstrated increased automaticity in basic words that were not the focus of their instruction. The fact that there was increased automaticity in processing these words ...may be attributed to the likely possibility that they were encountered frequently in the normal course of

events..."(p. 58). Automaticity improved in words that were used solely for meaning and communication, words that were not studied as part of the vocabulary lists for the course.

If reading automaticity is rooted in lexical skills, then those are the skills to develop, and they are best developed in context (Segalowitz & Gatbonton, 1995). Just knowing the words is not enough because readers need fluency of access to their vocabularies. This fluency of access is promoted by constant practising under conditions of genuine communication.

2.5 The reading/writing connection

Most L1 studies of free reading show gains in other areas of language ability as well. Free reading has been found effective for the development of oral/aural language ability, grammar test performance, and writing (Krashen, 1993a). Krashen suggests that it is impossible to learn all there is to know about writing by writing (we just don't do enough writing), so therefore, we must learn to write by reading. Even though writing has many positive effects and good writers may write more than poor writers, his position is that increasing the amount of writing does not always increase its quality.

Children may learn structures from their reading and use them in their writing. Chomsky (1972) suggested that children can learn complex language patterns from reading them in books. Eckhoff (1983) studied two groups of young writers, each having been exposed to a different basal reading text. "Comparison of the two groups showed strong differences, indicating that the writing of the children reflected features of the basal series they read" (p. 608). Their choice of linguistic structures, format, and style was moulded by what they read.

In an overview of research linking reading and writing, Stotsky (1983) found that correlational studies showed good readers to be good writers, better writers to read more than poorer writers, and better readers to produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers. Direct writing instruction and exercises had little effect on reading; direct reading instruction had no effect on writing. However, writing activities used specifically to improve reading comprehension or retention of information in instructional material were effective. Studies that used reading experiences in place of grammar study or additional writing practice found them as, or more beneficial for writing ability. Studies that used literary models found significant gains in writing. The research Stotsky surveyed suggested that reading experience may be as critical a factor in developing writing ability as writing instruction itself.

Eisterhold (1990), discussing both L1 and L2 theories of connections between reading and writing, points out that although L1 studies provide arguments for directional models of reading and writing, most of the transfer required instruction and therefore it was not automatic. They do, however, emphasise the input factor, that reading can help writing. On the other hand, non-directional models of reading and writing suggest an interactive relationship with a single cognitive proficiency. The idea here is that the two skills develop side by side, that constructing meaning in one skill will help in constructing meaning in the other. The final model Eisterhold discusses is the bi-directional hypothesis. Here, the relationship is not only interactive, but interdependent as well. The relationships are in flux through development of literacy. The focus on multiple relations suggests that the reading-writing relationship can be qualitatively different at different stages of development.

These L1 theories all assume a developed oral system on which to build literacy. In a L2 situation, there is often an established literate system waiting for language proficiency to develop in order to feed it. This brings us back to the threshold theories for L1-like text interaction to occur in L2 discussed earlier in this paper. Eisterhold (1990) discusses several studies that support or refute Cummins's interdependence hypothesis, a common underlying cognitive/academic which allows the transfer of literacy related skills. Though this may not necessarily be automatic,

there is evidence to support a transfer of literacy skills from the L1 to the L2.

Once reading begins, the L2 relationships seem similar to L1, with the added complexity of transfer from L1. There seem to be interrelated cognitive processes and separate language systems which can come together where similarities are recognised. The studies Eisterhold reviews indicate the close relationship of reading and writing, show that transfer is not automatic, and underlie the need for a teacher to spur the transfer of abilities.

Carson, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll, & Kuehn (1990) investigated the relationships between literacy skills in L1 and literacy development in L2. They found that reading skills transferred more easily to L2 than writing skills. L1 reading skills predicted L2 reading skills, but L1 writing skills did not predict L2 writing skills. In an L2 study, Janopoulos (1986) found a strong correlation between the amount of pleasure reading and writing proficiency among foreign students at Ohio State University, but his research design did not provide data to examine causation from one element to another. Day & Bamford (1998) review numerous free reading studies (many already cited in this paper) and found evidence supporting a link between free reading and gains in reading ability and affect, in vocabulary, and in linguistic competence including writing and spelling.

Peyton (1990) found improvements in the accurate use of some morphemes by certain subjects after they participated in a dialogue journal project. Her study focused on the order of acquisition and the group scores (percentage correct) as presented in her paper showed improvements in most of the morpheme categories. These gains, from a mean of 42% correct in the fall to a mean of 60% correct in the spring, were impressive.

Cumming (1994) suggests that many of the processes of writing in an L2 are comparable to those of writing in L1, and that L2 writing, like reading, has a literacy component and a language component. Further, writing instruction in L2 needs to be supplemented by reading activities that promote the development of students' L2 acquisition. Extensive reading and other purposeful uses of language appear necessary to facilitate the long-term development of effective writing performance.

Bromley (1989) suggests three reasons for connecting reading and writing in the classroom. The two skills develop simultaneously, they reinforce each other, and their communicative aspect spotlights the similarities between the reading and writing connection and the listening and speaking connection. Believing that reading and writing can build on oral communication skills, Bromley presents the buddy journal as a

natural way for students to integrate reading and writing in a purposeful and meaningful context.

2.6 Story maps and webs

Story maps and webs are graphic representations of all or part of a story. (See examples in Appendixes C and E) Maps, as described by Davis & McPherson (1989), can be more precise than webs, each map charting a different aspect of a story, or a different level of interpretation, or reflecting cause and effect, or compare and contrast analyses. Webs as used by Bromley (Bromley, 1989, 1995, Bromley et al. 1994) are more all encompassing. They contain whatever the book partners think are the most important elements of the story. A story web with its inclusion of drawings and graphics can help emergent writers to express those aspects of a story that they cannot yet communicate solely with standard writing.

2.7 Reader-response journals

A number of researchers have investigated journal writing in the ESL classroom. Early research focused on teacher-student journals and found that dialogue journals provided important opportunities for students and teachers to interact in a non-threatening way about topics

relevant to learning and to focus on interaction, not correctness. The journals gave students the chance to enhance their reading skills, and teachers the occasion to model correct grammar forms (Kreeft, Shuy, Staton, Reed, & Morroy, 1984). Holmes and Moulton (1997) found that dialogue journals promoted fluency not just in writing, but in thinking as well, and that through modelling, grammar structures could evolve naturally. Wells (1993) found that students writing in reading dialogue journals become conscious of themselves as readers as they write, and that through their journals, students make connections between what they know and what they learn while reading. Further, they become aware of their self-monitoring behaviours, making themselves better readers. The benefits of journal writing include communication between student and teacher, leading to individualised language and content learning, information for the teacher regarding lesson planning, genuine communication opportunities for the students, and additional opportunities for students to read. These benefits have been found to thrive in situations where the rationale is to promote communication between teachers and students, rather than to directly attempt to improve reading and writing (Peyton & Reed, 1990).

Literature-response journals in an L2 combine language learning with literary experience. As journal writing continues, reading skills grow; predictive responses may improve, for example. Hancock (1993) has

compiled some guidelines for literature-response journals. They include the following: feel free to write your innermost feelings, opinions, thoughts, likes, and dislikes; don't worry about accuracy; relate the book to your own experiences; ask questions while you read; don't hesitate to express confusion, surprise, wonder why?; make predictions; talk to the characters as you begin to know them; praise or criticise the book. This list encourages interaction on all levels. To be an effective means of expression, the journal must be produced in a trusting, risk-free, supportive environment.

2.8   The current study

The Book Buddy Project reported in this thesis reflects several aspects of Freeman and Goodman's (1993) model L1 literature program. In both programs, children read a variety of genres and choose their own books. This permits them to make real choices, to control materials, to construct meaning for themselves, and to write their own responses to literature. The student teachers followed the lead of the ESL-LA students in deciding what they would read and when. They selected stories and books from a collection that was expected to be of high interest for young readers. Although it was suggested earlier that a teacher can help students use their reading strategies across languages, the ultimate goal of this project is to facilitate automaticity. Even though automaticity is

rooted in the bottom-up aspects of reading, Segalowitz (1997) believes that reading for meaning leads to greater automaticity. This was a central facet of the BBP in this study; it demanded that the participants read for meaning.

The benefit of corresponding with an older audience was another important aspect of this project. Crowhurst (1992) found that sixth-grade students writing regularly with older partners discovered the joy of corresponding with another responsive person. They also improved their writing without direct instruction. They modelled and picked up strategies for beginning, ending, and taking up topics. The successful culmination of the buddy journal results in the students making the connection between reading and writing.

The view of reading as an interaction between reader and text lays the basis for valuing the reader's contribution to the event. In order to read effectively, the reader must have the fluent lexical access that comes through practice and reading for meaning. When reading and writing are experienced simultaneously in the L2, the two skills can grow in concert.

This project was evaluated not only from the ESL-LA students' point of view, but also from that of the ESL student teachers. The BBP must be of value to both the university teacher-training program and to the ESL-

LA program to be a full success. It needs to be reproducible while making minimum demands on the university faculty and ESL-LA teachers.

2.9   Research hypotheses

There were two hypotheses related to the ESL-LA students.

Hypothesis 1. Reading and writing for meaning with a book partner will lead to a more positive attitude to books and to reading on the part of ESL-LA students.

Hypothesis 2.   Reading and writing for meaning with a book partner will lead to a measurable increase in writing accuracy and fluency of the emergent ESL-LA writers.

The third hypothesis was formulated based on what the ESL student teachers could gain from the project.

Hypothesis 3.   The BBP will enhance student teachers' understanding of journal processes, and give them confidence in implementing journal activities in their own classrooms.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The aim of the Book Buddy Project was to put students in a position to write about what they read, to share their experience with written language. In January, 1998, the reading partnerships were formed with secondary school ESL learners and ESL student teachers. Each partnership chose and read one or more books during the project and wrote to each other in their journal about what they read. The secondary school students read at home and wrote in class; the student teachers did all their work outside of class time. The result was a multidimensional interaction of reading and writing in concert with the partner who was reading the same material and writing back.

3.1 Context

The study was conducted in a predominantly francophone multi-ethnic secondary school in greater Montréal. Francophone (French mother-tongue) students enter secondary school in Québec differing greatly in English language ability. The average student has a rudimentary knowledge of English learned exclusively in primary school. There,

students normally receive a maximum of two hours per week of ESL in grades four, five, and six. However, some students have more English language experience during their primary years than the ministère de l'Éducation du Québec (MEQ) recommends. Of these, some have participated in an intensive English program in grade five or six. Although there are a number of different models of intensive ESL, the most common is given in grade six, and offers the core subjects, taught in French, condensed into half the school year, with the other half dedicated to learning English. The intensive option is offered to francophone students who would benefit from increased exposure to English. They are often the better students, those capable of completing their other academic work in half the required time. This option is usually not open to students who are already bilingual. (See Lightbown & Spada, 1997, for more information about five-month/five-month ESL programs.)

Intensive ESL does not account for all of the additional exposure to English in the Montréal area. Some students in the French school system have one English- and one French-speaking parent; others have lived for a few years in English-speaking parts of Canada. Moreover, many secondary school students have neither a French nor an English background. (In Québec, the term for these people is "allophone".) Not only are they fluent in French, their school language, but often in

English and in their heritage language as well. Finally, for a number of reasons, anglophone (English-mother-tongue) parents may send their children to a French school. All of these students have in common a strong oral ability in English, and a lack of formal writing instruction.

The English Second Language -- Language Arts (ESL-LA) program was created for advanced ESL students, both those who have learned English in a classroom environment and those who have learned their English in a multicultural home or neighbourhood environment. It is intended for students who can achieve the objectives of the regular ESL program within less time than is recommended by the MEQ. Teachers from several school boards and private institutions worked with the MEQ to develop an advanced ESL program. There is no ministry-approved textbook; indeed, the courses themselves are unofficial, being run as a special project. Students read English articles, novels, and poetry, and in some cases, particularly in those schools that feature the instruction of several languages, read plays by Shakespeare in secondary five. Many secondary-school ESL-LA students write the secondary five (Grade 11) English second language ministry examination at the end of secondary three, although some schools have them write their secondary four and five MÉQ exams at the normal time. Whereas this examination demands little more than identifying main and supporting ideas in oral and written texts, ESL-LA objectives are more advanced. The ESL-LA program

recognises English as a vehicle to be used for learning and for entertainment. The terminal objectives involve solving problems, offering solutions, making decisions, recognising bias, and evaluating arguments.

The ESL-LA program contains intermediate objectives graded for difficulty. The BBP pushed the secondary one ESL-LA students past the basic intermediate objectives into the medium and difficult ones. Their writing about books included characters, plot, fictional situations, and relating this literary experience to their own lives. This task, which could have been arduous, was helped, indeed made interesting, by having an older and fluent English-speaking reading buddy.

3.2 Participants

There were two groups of participants in this study: thirty-two secondary ESL-LA students, and forty-three students training to become ESL teachers. As well, a group of eighteen secondary-one native speakers of English served as a comparison group.

3.2.1 ESL-LA Students

The ESL students were an intact ESL-LA secondary one class from a public high school on the island of Montréal. Their ages ranged from 13

to 14 years. Almost half of the thirty-two students had completed a grade-six intensive ESL program the previous year; the others were from multi-lingual homes or had lived in English-Canada or other parts of the world. One participating student was an Ontario anglophone living temporarily in Québec, but the data from this individual was not included in the analyses.

3.2.2 Student teachers

The student teachers in this study had completed most of the course work for their Bachelor of Education degree, specializing in teaching English as a second language. They had finished their primary school methodology training and practice teaching the previous fall, and were familiar with the principles of communicative language teaching and of co-operative learning. Most would graduate following completion of their secondary-school-focus methodology course and its related practice teaching. This course also focused on communicative methods, with an emphasis on teaching reading comprehension and writing. The BBP was integrated within it. Twenty of the forty-three student teachers were allophone, three were francophones, the rest (20) were anglophones. Their ages ranged from 23 to 50 years.

3.2.3 Native-speaker comparison group

Writing samples from a class of secondary one L1 English students in a private secondary school in Greater Montreal became available. These students were all native speakers of English, and they provided a basis of comparison of writing accuracy and fluency with the L2 writings.

3.3   Data Elicitation Materials

There have been many studies of extensive reading, and they show it to be effective for developing reading skills. However, since individual reading tests demand large amounts of class time that the secondary teacher would have been reluctant to give up, and since tools to measure reading ability validated for this population were not available, it was not practical to try to measure improvement in reading skills. The ESL-LA participants were surveyed for affect, and their writing was analyzed. The student teachers' reports to their professor revealed what they had learned. The following materials were used in this study.

3.3.1 Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

Bromley (Bromley et al., 1994) used the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS, see Appendix A) devised by McKenna & Kear (1990) to

measure the participants' changes in attitude towards books and reading. The ERAS is a general questionnaire about attitudes towards reading that gives a rough impression of feelings about reading and books. The survey contains 20 questions, each with a four-step response picture scale. (See Figure 2 for a sample question.) The respondents circle the picture of Garfield that best represents their feeling about the particular question. In this study, the ESL-LA students answered it twice. They filled it out in December, one month before the project began, and again in March just after the BBP ended.
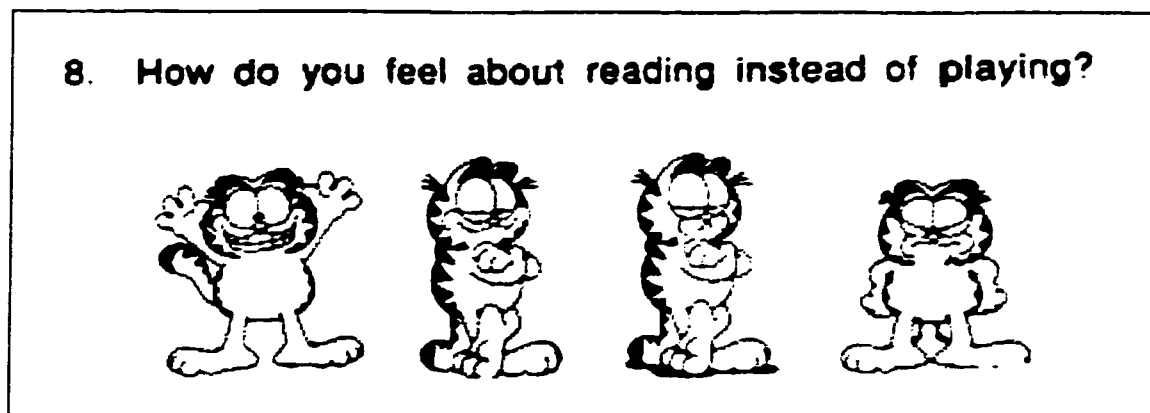

Figure 2. Sample question from the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990).

The responses to the survey questions are scored one point for the very upset Garfield, two points for the mildly upset cat, three points for the

slightly smiling, and four points for the happiest Garfield. The questions are not language specific; they examine attitudes toward reading in general. The first ten questions are about pleasure reading, the last ten about academic reading. There was no attempt to adapt this survey so that it would refer specifically to English, the students' L2

3.3.2 BBP Journals

The dialogue journals the partnerships wrote provided the bulk of the data; each of the ESL-LA students' journal entries about the books they were reading was analyzed for fluency, accuracy, and content, over the length of the project. The student teachers' entries were analyzed qualitatively. The researcher provided the journals, and transported them back and forth between the secondary school and the university.

3.3.3 ESL Student Teacher Reports

The ESL student teachers were required to write a report in which their professor asked them to address the following issues: their impressions of their buddy, the development of their journal relationship, the value of the process of individual interaction, their willingness to do another journal project, and their general impressions of the project. This end-of-project report to their professor was worth fifteen per cent of their

methodology course grade, and it provided the researcher with qualitative information about the process of journal writing and insights into the functioning of the partnerships. (See Appendix B for the assignment questions.)

3.4 Preparation and Procedure

3.4.1 Preparation

The researcher asked the secretary of the Québec provincial ESL teachers' association, La Société pour la Promotion de l'Enseignement d'Anglais (langue seconde) au Québec (SPEAQ) and the chair of the Grade Six Intensive Special Interest Group to refer him to an innovative, dedicated teacher able to recommend participants for the project. Both recommended the same person. This teacher was excited by the project and immediately volunteered her own secondary-one ESL-LA class. After the initial telephone contact, the researcher met twice with the secondary school teacher at the school. Thereafter, most of the communication was by email.

The researcher prepared an information package for the secondary school teacher and delivered it in mid-December. It introduced story maps and webbing and the rationale for the program. (See Appendix C.)

A letter to the school principal and another to the parents explaining the project were furnished at the same time. (See Appendix D.) The teacher bore the responsibility of introducing the project to the secondary school students.

An information package similar to the one given to the secondary school teacher was presented to the instructor of the secondary-level methodology course. However, it was the researcher who presented the project to the student teachers. During an orientation session at the beginning of the winter term, he provided an overview of the principles underlying the project for the student teachers, explained their roles, and suggested the original study (Bromley et al. 1994) as background reading. Journal articles that described various facets of their roles were also made available for the student teachers to photocopy and consult. These included Davis & McPherson (1989) on using story maps to enhance reading comprehension, Faust (1997) on a dialogical approach to literature instruction, Hancock (1993) on personal response in literature journals, and Wolf, Carey & Mieras (1996) on how teachers' questions can unintentionally limit student thinking. There were no restrictions put on the student teachers concerning what they were to write about in their dialogue journals. That they were to write about the books they were reading was paramount; nonetheless, they had the freedom to write about whatever they wanted. (See Appendix E for the

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student teacher handout that was distributed during the orientation session.)

So that each group had access to the same books, two identical libraries were created for this project, one for the secondary school, the other for the university. In consultation with the secondary school teacher, the researcher chose books to create a library that varied in subject matter, reading level, and target audience. The choice of books included stories and short novels written primarily for L1 teenage readers, books with a young adult focus, and adult fare. Other books were expressly written for teenage L2 readers. This diversity was necessary to accommodate the wide range of reading ability in this ESL-LA class. Most of the books were bought at new and used book stores. In addition, the Fiction Factory series, a collection of novelettes aimed at ESL learners, became available. Two ESL-LA students brought personal books they wanted to read (Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry; Different Seasons). Copies were found for the TESL buddies. The ESL-LA students exploited the full range of the selections, reading books ranging in difficulty from the relatively simple Fiction Factory Series to adult L1 short stories by Alice Monroe. (See Appendix F for a bibliography. All titles mentioned in this thesis are listed in this bibliography.)

The ESL-LA library was kept in the students' classroom at the secondary school; the student teachers' library was kept outside their methodology professor's office. A list of the partnerships indicating who had which book was pinned to the wall above the collection.

3.4.2 Procedure

The ESL-LA students were assigned numbers from one through thirty-two for the research project. The partnerships carried the number of the ESL-LA student. (See Table 1 for partnership descriptions.) To ensure anonymity, participants were asked to identify themselves using first names only in their journals. All participants mentioned individually in this thesis are referred to by pseudonym.

Because there were more (43) students in the TESL class than in the ESL-LA class, some student teachers wrote their journals in pairs. Thus, as shown in Table 1, twelve ESL-LA students had two book buddies, and twenty-one had one. The TESL student pairing was voluntary and self-directed. The researcher also had an ESL-LA buddy.

Although the project had been planned to last for seven weeks in January and February 1998, a severe ice storm disrupted the schedule.

Table 1.

Partnership Characteristics

ESL-LA and group number	Number of Buddies	Buddy's relationship to English
1	2	NNS/NNS
2	2	NNS/NNS
3	2	NNS/NS
4	R	NS
5	1	NS
6	1	NS
7	1	NNS
8	2	NS/NS
9	1	NS
10	2	NS/NS
11	1	NNS
12	2	NS/NS
13	2	NS/NNS
14	1	NS
15	1	NNS
16	2	NNS/NNS
17	1	NS
18	1	NS
19	1	NNS
20	2	NNS/NNS
21	1	NS
22	1	NNS
23	2	NNS/NS
24	1	NS
25	1	NS
26	1	NNS
27	2	NS/NS
28	1	NS
29	2	NNS/NNS
30	1	NS
31	1	NNS
32	1	NS

Note: R=researcher; NS= native speaker of English (anglophone);

NNS= non-native speaker of English (francophone or allophone).

The student teachers' information session was held as planned, but twelve students were absent, and the following day, the university closed for a week. The secondary school did not resume after-Christmas classes for another ten days. This put the project almost two weeks behind schedule. Then, because the end of term and examination dates for the secondary students remained unchanged, the project was delayed even further.

As can be seen in the Calendar (Table 2), the project finally began on Jan. 26 with the researcher handing out blank journals to student teachers. The student teachers assembled the journals using lined loose leaf paper and simple cardboard binders, and then wrote their first entries. They wrote a "blind hello"; the writers did not know to whom they were writing.

At the secondary school, the project had begun with the ESL-LA students filling out the ERAS (reading attitude survey) in the previous December. During the last week of January, the ESL-LA students were introduced to the BBP by their teacher, began to explore webbing, and chose their first books. (See Appendix C for ESL-LA hand-out.) In some cases, they had begun to read them by the time the journals, containing a greeting from the student teachers, arrived at their school. The ESL-LA students chose a journal at random, read it, and wrote back, introducing themselves to

Table 2.

Project Calendar.

Dec. 20	Pre-project ERAS
Jan. 7	Student-teacher orientation
Jan. 26	First student teacher entry
Jan. 27	ESL-LA -- chose book
Jan. 29	ESL-LA -- introduction to webs.
Feb. 2	First ESL-LA entry
Feb. 9	Second student-teacher entry
Feb. 11	Second ESL-LA entry
Feb. 12	Third student-teacher entry
Feb. 16	Third ESL-LA entry
Feb. 17	Fourth student-teacher entry
Feb. 18	Fourth ESL-LA entry
Feb. 19.	Fifth student-teacher entry
Feb. 27	Fifth ESL-LA entry
Feb. 28	ESL-LA winter break
Mar. 2	Last student-teacher entry
Mar. 6	Student teacher report due
Mar. 15	Post-project ERAS

Note. All dates refer to the winter of 1997-1998.

their partner using webs, drawings and telling what book they had chosen to read to begin the project. Those who had already begun to read began to write about their story.

The student teachers then began reading the books chosen by their buddies, and the journal exchanges continued about the shared reading. The first two weeks' exchanges were done as quickly as possible, coinciding with the class schedules of the two groups. During the last weeks of the project the exchanges were less frequent, as the student teachers were beginning their internships and the ESL-LA students had their winter break after their last entry. In order to make sure that the journal entries were progressing as they should, the researcher read several journals selected at random throughout the duration of the project. As a result, he reminded the student teachers that their buddies had a fifty-minute period in which to read their journal and write their reply. The student teachers who were doubled-up, in particular, were cautioned to not write too much and to write clearly so that their buddies could spend less time reading and therefore have more time to write responses. There were five ESL-LA entries and six student teacher entries during the project.

After the project, the ESL-LA students filled out the ERAS again. Once the student teachers had written their final goodbyes, the journals were collected, photocopied, and then returned to the ESL-LA students as a souvenir of their involvement in the project. The student teachers' reports were marked by their professor and then photocopied by the researcher for later analysis before being returned.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

The measures used in this project were both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative measures were the ERAS scores and the writing accuracy of the ESL-LA students' journal writing, using the T-unit and number and types of errors per T-unit as baseline measures. The sources of the qualitative data are the subject matter of journal entries of the ESL-LA students and the reports written by the TESL student teachers.

4.2 Exclusions

To be included in the data analysis, ESL-LA participants needed to have a mother tongue other than English, and to have written at least four out of the five possible journal entries. Of the 32 ESL-LA students in the class, three missed two of the five journal entries, and another student was an out-of-province native speaker of English who was spending a year in Québec in the French school system. After these four students were excluded, there remained 28 journals for analysis. Two of the 28 students did not complete the pre-project ERAS, and two others the post-project ERAS. Thus, twenty-four students' data are included in the

ERAS analysis and the four students who did not complete the relevant ERAS are not included in comparisons between attitude scores and other measures.

4.3 Quantitative analyses

4.3.1 Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS)

The ESL-LA teacher administered the survey before and after the Book Buddy Project (BBP). Because, inadvertently, the teacher did not distribute the last page of the survey, containing questions 16 through 20, to the students, only part one, the first ten questions concerning what McKenna and Kear (1990) called recreational reading, was scored. Since the intent of the BBP was pleasure reading and the second part of the survey dealt with attitudes towards academic reading, only peripheral data were lost. Each item in the survey was scored one point for unhappy (most negative attitude) through 4 points for happy (most positive attitude). The minimum possible score for the ten questions was 10, the maximum 40; the mid-score of 25 would suggest an indifferent attitude to reading. Of the 24 students who completed both surveys, the pre-project scores ranged from 15 to 33; the post-project scores ranged from 17 to 36. The teacher had told the students about the upcoming project before the survey was given, imparting a sense of expectation in

the students that may have elevated the pre-project scores. Nonetheless, the mean rose slightly from 27.08 in the pre-BBP to 27.71 in the post-BBP test, yielding a difference of 0.62.

With such a general survey, it was possible that the students who already liked to read had little room to show improvement. As well, the significant reading attitude improvements in Bromley's (Bromley, et al., 1994) study involved participants at risk of reading failure. Therefore, the ESL-LA participants were divided into two equal groups based on their pre-project ERAS scores: a lower-scoring, ATB1 (Attitude Before Group One -- n=12), and a higher-scoring, ATB2 (Attitude Before Group Two -- n=12). The lower-scoring group (28 or less out of 40) improved modestly with the second testing, the mean rising from 23.17 to 24.42. (+1.25). The mean of the higher-scoring group (29 and over) remained unchanged (31.00). (See Appendix G, Table G1 for ERAS results.)

Participant 25 complained of illness in the last entry. He told how he could not read his book and had missed his previous journal entry because he had been very sick. As well, his buddy put him in a position where he felt he had to answer a list of questions every time he got his journal. This individual's ERAS score dropped by 8 points. Without him, the lower ATB1 group would have made a significant gain in affect ($p=.045$). This participant failed to give information as to whether or not

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Table 3.

Background and Reading Attitude			
Participant	ATB		Intensive
	Score	Group	
25	27	1	-
1	27	1	Yes
4	33	2	Yes
5	33	2	Yes
9	28	1	Yes
10	27	1	Yes
11	29	2	Yes
16	*		Yes
17	30	2	Yes
19	30	2	Yes
20	28	1	Yes
28	33	2	Yes
32	33	2	Yes
2	(35)	2	No
3	32	2	No
6	15	1	No
7	18	1	No
8	*		No
12	19	1	No
13	29	2	No
14	24	1	No
21	29	2	No
22	22	1	No
24	31	2	No
27	20	1	No
29	23	1	No
30	(18)	1	No
31	30	2	No

Note. ATB= Pre-program ERAS score. Group 1, ATB1=28 and below; Group 2, ATB2=29 and above. * Did not participate in pre-ERAS. () Did not participate in post-ERAS.

he had been in the intensive option in grade six. He was therefore automatically excluded from the groupings discussed below.

The same data were grouped in another way in order to permit a comparison of the 12 ESL-LA students who had attended a primary school intensive ESL program in grade six with the 15 who had not. This comparison showed that, before the BBP, the students who had not been enrolled in the intensive program were less positive toward reading than the 12 students who had been. As shown in Table 3, even though their mean scores were generally lower, they still had representation in both the ATB1 and ATB2 groups. Thus, the two kinds of groupings do not contain the same participants.

Indeed, the intensive/non-intensive groupings show different general characteristics. The range of the non-intensive group scores is wider (18 – 35; mean: 24.64) than the range of the intensive group scores (27 to 33; mean: 30.09). The two groups differed significantly (p=.013) in their initial ERAS scores. (See Table G2.) These findings suggest that the intensive learner group is more homogeneous.

The students who had been enrolled in the intensive program showed a miniscule improvement in their attitude toward books; the mean score rose by 0.09 in the post-project ERAS. The students who had not taken
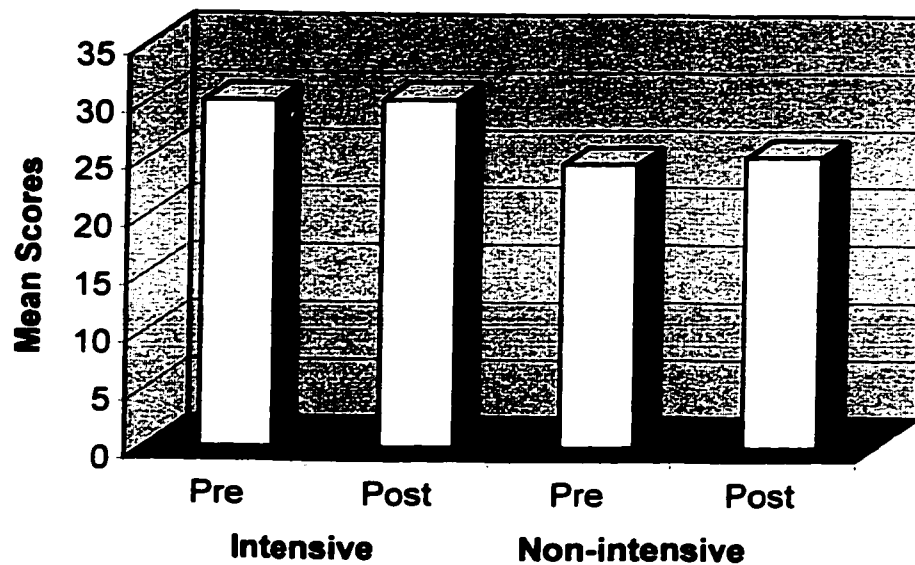
Figure 3. ERAS test scores.

intensive ESL showed a small, but significant gain in attitude toward reading (+1.83). Of the twelve who completed both pre and post surveys, ten improved. Based on the Wilcoxon signed ranks test results, this improvement in attitude towards reading and books by the ESL-LA students who had not taken the intensive English program in grade six is statistically significant (Z= 2.102, p=.036, n=15). (See Table G3.)

4.3.2   ESL-LA journal entry analysis

4.3.2.1   Errors per T-unit

A T-unit (Hunt, 1965) analysis was carried out on the ESL-LA students' journal entries. The T-unit is the smallest possible grammatically allowable unit to be punctuated as a sentence: a main clause plus whatever clauses or constructions are contained in it (Street, 1971). Polio's (1997) survey of L2 writing research examined the T-unit, and suggested general guidelines for its use as a yardstick. Her simplified definition of a T-unit as "an independent clause and its dependent clauses" was used in this study.

The length of error-free T-units and the number of errors per T-unit were tabulated for each student-entry in each journal. Although Larsen-Freeman (1983) suggested error-free T-unit length as a method of evaluation, Bardovi-Harlig and Bofman (1989) presented a compelling case for calculating the number of errors per T-unit. They suggested that merely counting error-free T-units fails to give an in-depth picture of what types of errors are made and how they are distributed, resulting in the loss of information about clusters of errors and error types.

In the manner of Bardovi-Harlig and Bofman (1989), the errors were divided into syntactic, morphological, and lexical categories. Syntactic errors involved word order, omission of a subject, verb, or complement, and sentence combining. Polio's (1997) guidelines for T-units direct raters to connect verbless noun phrases to either the following or proceeding T-unit, and count as an error. Bardovi-Harlig and Bofman (1989) counted stand-alone constituents as an error of syntax. Polio (1997) and Bardovi-Harlig and Bofman (1989) concerned themselves with college-level writers who had received formal instruction in writing in English: formal writing was being judged. However, the beginning L2 writers in this study who were appropriately informal and chatty in their journals, cannot be held to the same standards as L2 undergraduate candidates. Furthermore, the participants in this study had had little English writing instruction, if any. They wrote exactly as they spoke. They penned noun phrases, subjectless verb phrases, and adverbial phrases as sentences. Therefore, the guidelines were changed for this study. Stand-alone noun phrases and adverbials were added to the T-unit they referred to, but no error was counted.

Morphological errors include problems with nouns and verbs (-'s, -s, -ed), subject-verb agreement, determiners and prepositions, and derivational morphology (e.g. encourage instead of encouragement).

Lexical errors were word choice errors. For example, the lexical error category contains typical Francophone errors such as using *say* instead of *tell*, or *listen* instead of *watch* (TV). It is important to note that lexical errors were scored with the French Montréal milieu in mind. The researcher adjusted for lexical borrowing so that French words accepted in common English Montréal speech were not counted as errors. Indeed, many of these words, "depanneur" and "dep" for example, have since been listed in the recently published *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (Barber, 1998) as English words borrowed from French. Accordingly, as British usages were accepted in Polio's (1997) general guidelines for American raters, so in this study, usage found uniquely in English Montréal speech was accepted. Errors of spelling and capitalisation were not scored.

The journal T-unit analysis of writing accuracy that is presented below used the number of errors per T-unit for many of the same reasons as Bardovi-Harlig and Bofman (1989). Many T-units had multiple errors, and these errors could be classified. For this study it was thought that a finer difference could be measured, and frequency changes in error types could be traced.

4.3.2.2 T-unit Analysis

The T-unit analysis was carried out in the following way. The secondary-student-participants' journal entries were transcribed, and each journal entry was divided into T-units. The number of words was counted for each T-unit. The errors were then counted for each T-unit, and divided into syntactic, morphological, and lexical categories. In order to determine the error rate per journal entry expressed as the number of errors per T-unit, the total number of errors per entry was divided by the number of T-units in the journal entry. The same calculations were performed for each error category, giving the rate of error types per T-unit in each journal entry. The number of words per T-unit and the number of words per error-free T-unit were calculated as well. In this way, global and error-type ETU values were determined for each separate journal entry written by each ESL-LA student.

In the following pages, the error rate is called ETU (errors per T-unit) followed by the entry. The rate of combined errors in entry one is referred to as ETU1. To cite the frequency of error types, morpheme errors in the last entry, for example, the term ETUL would used. In Figure 4, Mathieu's (#6) first journal entry is transcribed line by line in column 8. The first column contains the T-unit number, one through

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
#Tu	W/T	NX	#E/T	SYN	MRF	LEX	
							february 2nd
							Hi
1	4	4					my name is Mathieu.
2	4	4					I like to reed
3	3	3					but it depends.
4	13		1		1		I dont like reading bookes when I receve them at my birth day
5	12		1		1		but if it is for a work at school it is okay.
6	10	10					I like school in general exept for french and math.
7	8	8					At school i am in the latin clases.
8	13	13					Theses clases are fun beacaus i learn the origins of the French lanquag.
9	6	6					I chose the book Black Lightning
AVG	8.11	6.86	0.22	0.00	0.22	0.00	

#TU = T-unit number for the entry. In this case there were 9.

W/T = Number of words per T-unit

NX = Number of words in T-units with no errors.

#E/T = Number of errors in the T-unit

SYN = Number of syntax errors in the T-unit

Morph = Number of morphological errors in the T-unit

LEX = Number of Lexical errors in the T-unit

AVG = Average of each column for the entry.

Figure 4. Sample journal entry Clarisworks spreadsheet analysis.

nine. The number of words in each of the nine T-units appears in the second column, and where appropriate in the third (error-free T-units). The errors are scored globally in column 4 (#E/T= number of errors in the T-unit), and then broken down in each error category, syntax, morphological, and lexical, in columns 5 through 7. These values are

totalled and averaged to give an overall average number of words per T-unit, a general ETU for the entry, and the ETU for each error type. These figures occupy the bottom row, marked average (AVG). In this example, there were two errors, both morphological. There were nine T-units. The average number of words per T-unit was 8.11; the average word-length of the error-free T-units was 6.86. The ETU for the nine-T-unit entry was 0.22, and the morphological ETU was 0.22 as well. Neither dates nor salutations (unless they were complete sentences and could be considered as part of the text) were counted. The values from the Clarisworks spreadsheets and the participant's number were transferred to a Systat spreadsheet for grouping and analysis.

In the first journal entry, students wrote about themselves: their likes, dislikes, hobbies, families. They were free to say anything they wished about their lives. Since this is a common ESL exercise, involving familiar subject matter, vocabulary, form, and syntax, it provided a baseline measure from which comparisons could be made as the learners began to expand, using their English in new ways. The second entry involved writing about the book they were reading, responding to specific questions from their buddy, and generally entering unfamiliar territory. It was anticipated that doing this would raise the level of difficulty and that the errors would increase. Then, as they wrote more journal entries, they would become more used to writing about these things, and become

better at it. Therefore, it is between the second and the last entry where improvements due to the project were predicted to be found. For this reason, the second and last journal entries were compared -- ETU2, errors per T-unit in the second entry, and ETUL, errors per T-unit in the last entry.
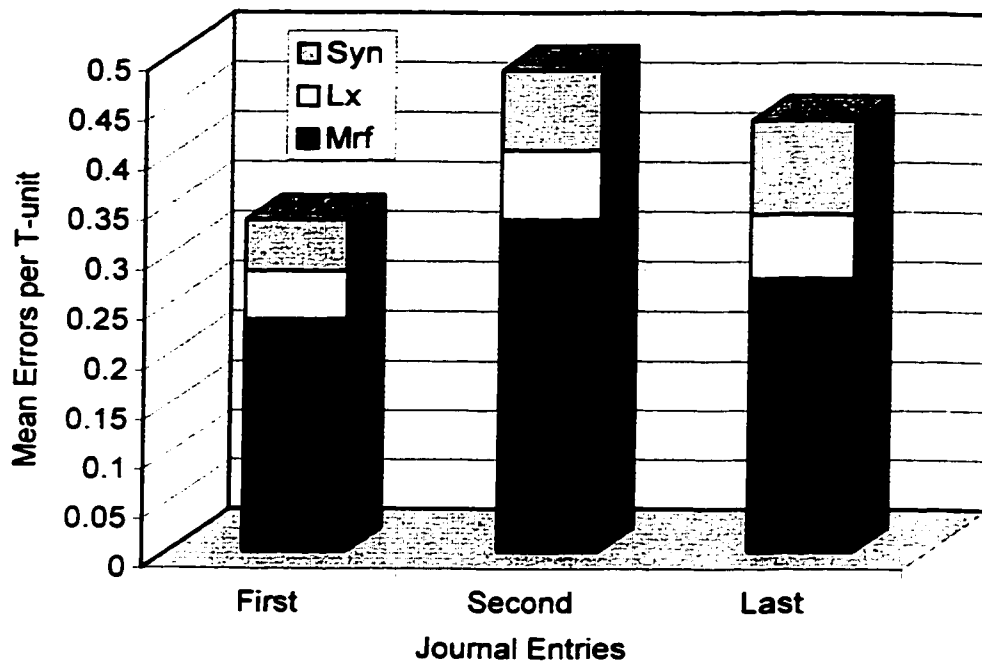

Figure 5. T-unit findings. Mean number of ETU for the first, second, and last ESL-LA journal entries showing error types.

As expected, the overall mean ETU of the first entry was lower than that of the second. Between the second and last entries, the overall mean ETU dropped slightly although it did not reach the level of the first entry.

(See Figure 5 and Table G4.) When the error categories were examined, it was found that the means of lexical and morphological ETU declined while the mean of syntax ETU rose slightly. None of these differences were significant.

The ESL-LA writers were grouped in several different ways to probe the changes in their writing. The first grouping, based on gender, showed no measurable differences between boys and girls in terms of ETU. Next, to see whether or not weaker and stronger writers benefited differently from their book buddy journal experience, students were divided into two groups of 14 students each (higher scores and lower scores) based on the accuracy (ETU) of their first journal entries. (See Figure 6 and Table G5.) The mean of the strong half of the class was 0.09 ETU. Their second entry mean was 0.15 ETU, with morphological errors comprising two thirds of the total (morphological, 0.10; syntax, 0.03; and lexical, 0.02 ETU). The strong group's last entry showed a rise in the overall error rate to 0.24 ETU, with morphological and lexical categories increasing and syntax falling slightly. None of the changes in the accuracy of the stronger writers were significant.

The mean of the weaker group's first entry was 0.58 ETU, or a little over an error per two T-units. Again, the morpheme errors accounted for two-thirds of the overall ETU. The mean ETU of this group's second entry
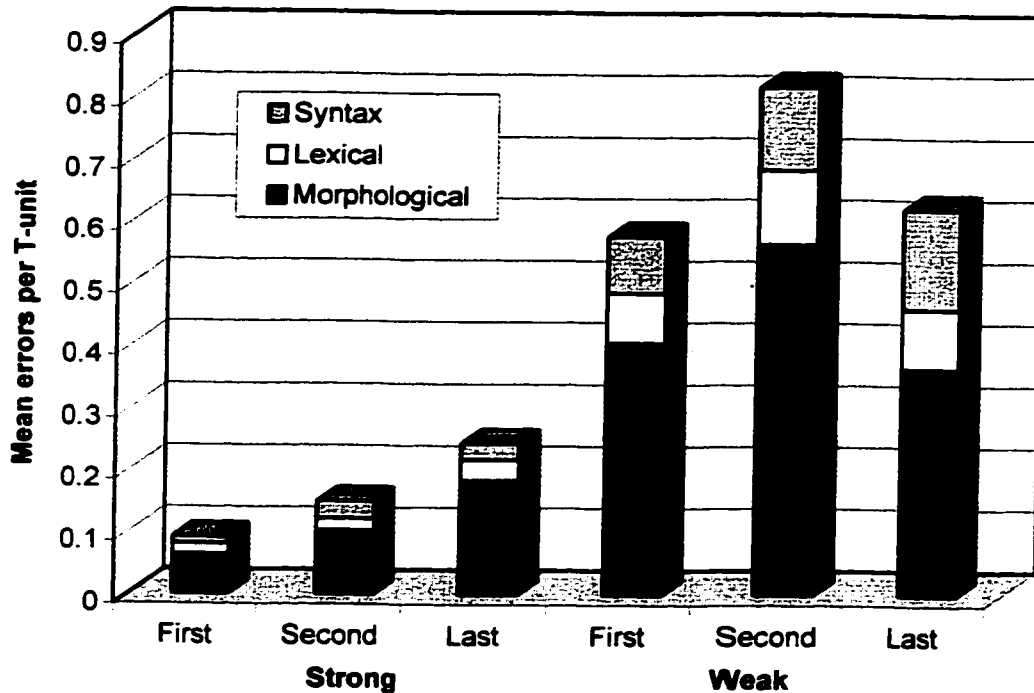
60

Figure 6. Error types and rates for the first, second, and last journal entries written by strong and weak writing groups.

rose to 0.84 with increases in each of the error categories. The last entry mean fell to 0.62 ETU. The morpheme category showed the most improvement, falling from 0.57 to 0.37 morpheme ETU), lower than even the first journal entry mean. There was minimal change in the other categories: lexical error means fell slightly (-.03), while syntax error means inched upwards (+.03). Despite the number and strength of the changes, because of the number of Wilcoxon tests performed, no statistical pre-post significance can be reported.

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Another difference between the students was participation in the intensive English program in grade six. The students who were not enrolled in the intensive program and who were found to be less positive toward reading than their intensive counterparts, were significantly (p=.016) more accurate in their writing. (See Table G2.) Their mean ETU1 was half that of the group that had completed the intensive English program. (See Figure 7 and Table G6.) Their writing accuracy as measured by improvement in the morpheme category improved slightly, but not significantly. Overall, errors rose slightly in this group.
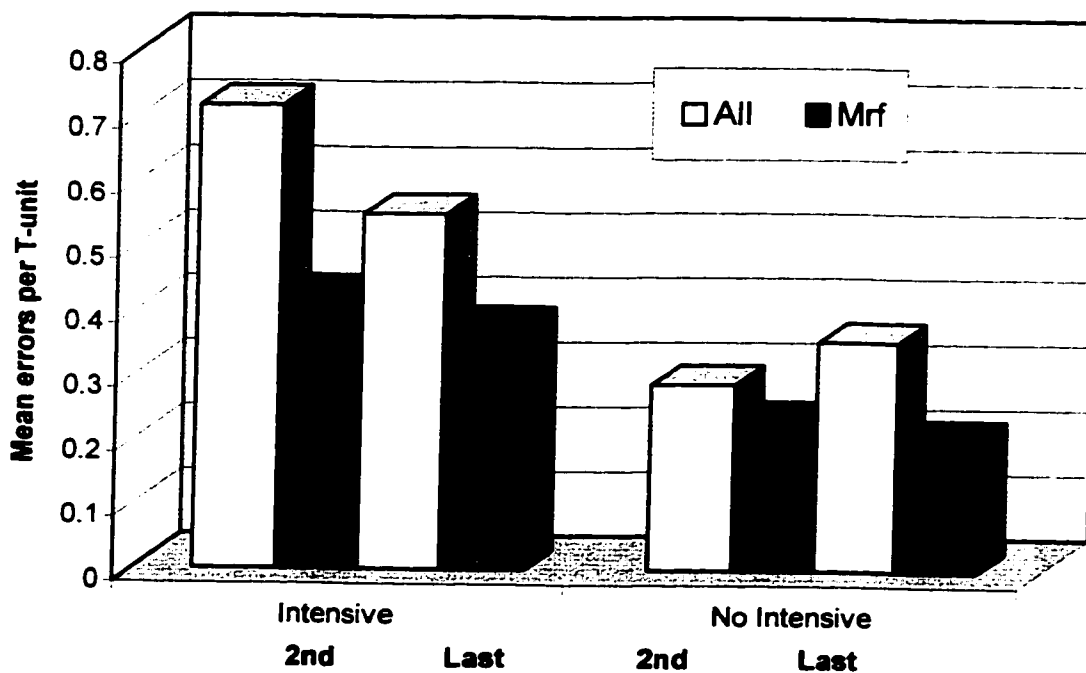

Figure 7. General and morpheme error rates for second and last journal entries based on attendance in the grade 6 intensive English program.

The students who had been in the intensive class improved their writing accuracy. The overall ETU mean dropped by 0.16. All error categories improved modestly, but none of the improvements were significant.

In order to explore differences in the writing of those who liked to read and those who did not, the ETU of the lower (ATB1) and higher (ATB2) ERAS groups were compared. There was no relationship between writing ability in English and liking to read. Each ATB group contained a balance of accurate and inaccurate writers. (See Table G7.) The ETU for ATB1 was slightly lower (0.48) than for ATB2 (0.52). ATB1's ETU rate dropped by 0.18; ATB2's by 0.02. There were differences in where the improvements were made. ATB1 improved only in morpheme errors, from 0.36 to 0.18 morpheme ETU. This improvement approached significance (p=.059). However, lexical and syntax errors rose slightly. The ATB2 group's slight change included a minute improvement in lexical as well as morpheme error rate.

When students were grouped according to writing accuracy, the before and after ERAS test means were almost the same for both strong and weak writing accuracy groups. (See Table G8.) The weak writers' pre-project ERAS mean score was 27.85, the post- mean was 27.07. The stronger writers' pre-attitude ERAS score was 26.23, the post-mean was 27.67.

Half of the students were in both weak categories or both strong categories. That is, their accuracy and affect were both either lower or higher. One test was performed on this group. The students who appeared in both low groups, low writing ability and low attitude toward reading, showed significant improvement in morphological errors (p=.043, n=7). Of course, the significance is questionable because of the extremely small sample size.

4.3.2.3 Word Count (Fluency)

The project does not concern itself with accuracy alone; changes in fluency were investigated as well. The fluency measure was the number of words per ESL-LA journal entry. There were many proper nouns (names of the characters, places, titles of chapters, and of the books themselves) in the entries. It is usual procedure to exclude these proper nouns from counts, but in this project, books were being discussed, and proper nouns were intrinsic to the discussions. This resulted in a higher representation of these words than would otherwise be the case and a possibly misrepresentative penalty if removed. Therefore, all proper nouns were included in totals reported here.

For a measure of lexical richness, the number of different word families and affixes (Bauer & Nation, 1993), (which will be referred to as lemmas)

per entry were counted as well. The lemma was defined as the base form of a word and all the variants that contain it. Items with a common base but containing different affixes were counted as the same lemma. The affixes counted as a lemma as well. Because these subjects were language learners, certain exceptions were made. In the manner of Lightbown, Meara, and Halter (1998), regular past tenses, for example, counted as separate lemmas. Whenever the number of lemmas in a journal entry is referred to, the value represents the number of different lemmas.
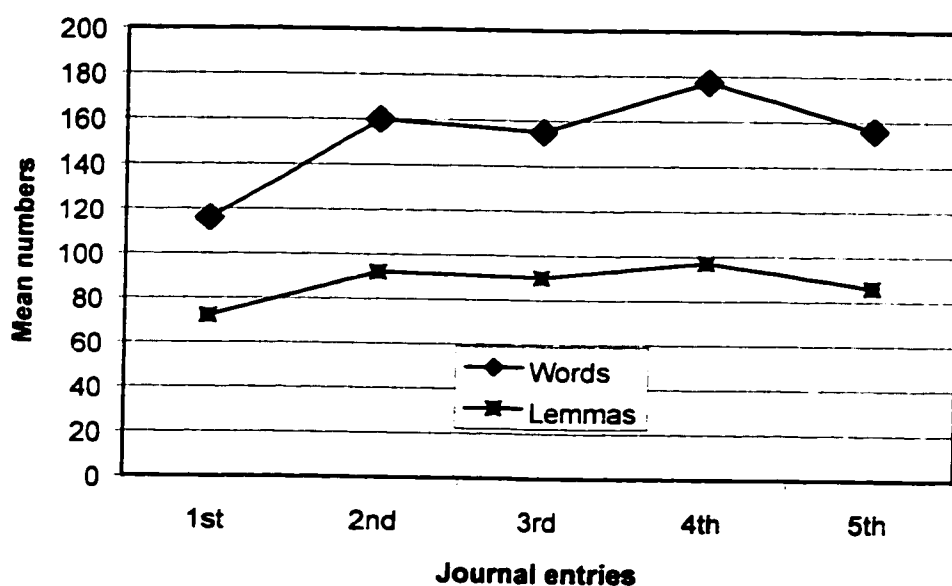

Figure 8. Mean number of words and lemmas for each journal entry.

As shown in Figure 8, the number of words and lemmas rose through entry four and then fell for the last entry, the goodbye. There was no

more discussion of the books at this point, nothing more to ask, so the goodbye took fewer words.
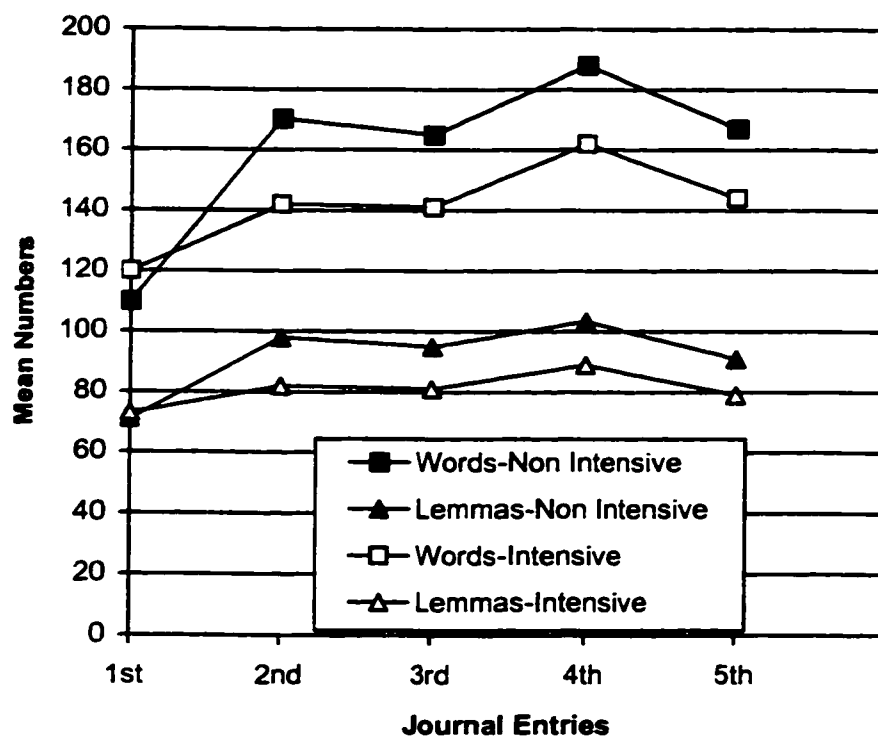

Figure 9. Mean numbers of words and lemmas in entries grouped by attendance in intensive grade 6 English classes.

As a general trend, the fewer errors the students made, the longer and richer their writing. In the first entry, the negative correlations between the numbers of words and lemmas and the ETU were significant. It seems that the ETU measure would be good predictor for richness and length of production. Throughout the project, the relationship between

the number of lemmas and ETU (p=.00) was closer than the relationship between the number of words and the ETU (p=.01). (See Table G11) The trend was that the lower the ETU, the longer and the richer the production.

The students who had not been in the Intensive Grade Six English wrote substantially more than the ESL-LA students who had been. As can be seen in Figure 9, even though their first entries tended to be shorter, the number of words in subsequent writings quickly surpassed what their intensive counterparts produced.

4.3.2.4 L1 Comparison

The writing of a small class (n=18) of secondary one native-speakers of English from the greater Montreal area was analyzed for comparison. The class wrote an *All About* Me essay very similar to the ESL-LA students' first journal entries. The papers were hand written. Not surprisingly, the native speakers were dramatically more accurate than the ESL-LA class. The native speakers made substantially fewer errors overall, and wrote a lot more. (See Table 4.)

The prevalence of the kinds of errors differed. When NSs made errors in their writing, syntax errors were the most frequent. In contrast,

Table 4.

Descriptive statistics: Mean number of words, error types, and error rates for English as L1 and L2.

	Native speakers n=18	Non-native Speakers n=28
Words	176.17	115.79
ETU-All	0.11	0.33
ETU-Morpheme	0.04	0.23
ETU-Lexical	0.01	0.05
ETU-Syntax	0.05	0.05
Words per Error-free T-unit	8.7	7.5

Note. Error category *All* includes the Morpheme, Lexical, and Syntax categories.

morpheme errors were more frequent in the NNS writing. The syntax error rate was virtually the same in the two classes. The native-speaker writers wrote more than the ESL-LA writers, a mean of 176 words for their self-description compared to 116 for the ESL-LA group.
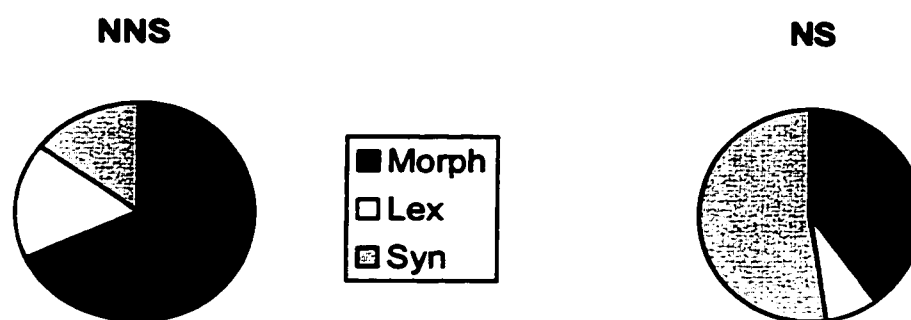
NNS   NS

■ Morph
□ Lex
▣ Syn

Figure 10. Error types expressed as a percentage of the whole in the writing samples of non-native and native speakers of English.

4.3.2.5   Subject Matter

The buddies did not confine their writing to discussing the book they were reading. They wrote about many different things of personal interest, from art and graffiti, to kite flying, to the snowboarder Russ Rebagliati's marijuana problems at the Olympics. The subject matter of the journal entries was rated by the researcher on a scale of 1 - 4. (1=a lot about self and little about the book; 2=half about the book; 3=mostly about the book; 4=extensive book-based discussion) The scale measures quantity of writing on or off the topic of the book. The definition of *About the book* included anything from direct discussion of plot and characters

to relating each others' lives to events and themes in the book. There was a positive relationship between the subject matter of journal entries and the improvement in writing accuracy. The more their writing was focused on the books they were reading, the more the students' ETU dropped between the second and the last entries.

4.3.2.6   Mother Tongue of Student Teacher Buddy

According to information from their university, fifteen of the student teachers were non-native speakers of English. When the buddy's mother tongue was taken into account, there were no significant differences in the ESL-LA students' changes in attitude towards reading (ERAS scores), or changes in writing accuracy (ETU). There were no indications that the mother tongue of the buddy was in any way an important factor in the outcomes of the project.

4.4.1 Qualitative Analysis: the Journals

The book buddy journals provided evidence that the ESL-LA students were enthusiastic about the project, developed relationships with their student-teacher buddies, and were able to find books that they liked. They showed that the student teacher entries had writing errors too, that

attitude towards reading and ability in English do not go hand in hand, and that invented spelling abounds.

The participants' enthusiasm about the project was evidenced both at the university where the student teachers rushed to see what their buddies had written and in the secondary school where the ESL-LA teacher reported that the students eagerly awaited each arrival of their journals. Typical examples from the ESL-LA students' journal writings follow. Joelle wrote "what I like about my english class is that we read books and that we do journal entry." Jules penned "I like to do the book Body." Joanne ended her journal with "That's probably the last time that I'm writing to you so I'm going to tell you that you were a fabulous book buddy and that I loved this project."

In all cases, including those where the ESL-LA students or the student teachers missed entries, the buddies showed a warming up to each other, a bonding. In her report to her professor, Mona wrote: "At first the relationship seemed rigid and formal, but it soon became informal and friendly...I found a new friend...that feeling was mutual." Her buddy, Jessica, wrote in the journal "it is fun to see that we have same intrists," and ended the journal with "it was very, very fun to correspond with you... I hope you will be a teacher, and I now you will be great."

Another ESL-LA student, Ari, wrote: "Well, at the bigening I thought it will be boring having a Book Buddy and rite every time... It's pretty cool!"

The relationship that developed between the buddies in partnership 17, Jules and Linda, is one of the more interesting ones. Even though the student teacher wrote very long and rambling notes and her professor criticized her for moralizing, they developed a closeness. The buddies connected on several levels. Even though Jules was one of the less accurate writers (ETU-Group 1), they read three books: two were on war and one was on race relations. This reflected the introductory ERAS result of 30, which put this student in the upper section of the class for attitude towards reading.

Linda felt that communication had been established when Jules wrote "Hi, Linda" instead of just "Hi", but she takes too little credit. Linda's second entry was filled with examples of how the two of them were alike. Linda wrote about topics from not liking to get up in the morning to comparing second language problems they both had, Jules with English, Linda with French. Linda then mentioned being in the military Reserves for several years. Jules, one suspects, puffed out his chest and bragged about his book buddy the soldier. He replied with his opinion of the book, that he liked it because it was a mix of reality and fiction, and he could relate to the emotions of the lead character -- the joy of finding

work and the horror of then being sent to war in the Falklands and having to kill. Like many of his ESL-LA classmates, Jules was careful not to give away the ending of the book until he was sure that his buddy had finished too. But he asked questions rooted in what he had just read: "do you see a killed person? if yes, what was your feeling?" Linda wrote back explaining that she had been in the reserves and had never gone to war.

Their next book was about the racial discrimination an East Indian family faced in England. The ESL-LA class had African, European, and Asian students. Jules had been living in a cultural mix for most of his life and had no difficulty expressing his interest in other cultures, religions, and languages. Although he thought that this book would be about war because it was called *Night Attack* (the night attacks were acts of racist vandalism), he wrote "I'm very lucky to find this book because in the past I just taked the bad book."

Then he found a book he didn't like. His objection was that it was not realistic. The book was *Christmas in Hell*, a story about the first Christmas during the First World War. The Germans and the English held a December 25th truce, ate, drank, and played soccer together. The next day the fighting resumed. He found this impossible to believe. Unfortunately, Linda's last entry responded to the final words of good-

bye and she did not explain that this, like the Falklands book, was based on true events. Jules had ended his journal entries with "I like to do the book body. . . I was enjoyed to talk with you." His buddy replied "At the beginning, you were worried about your English...don't worry, it's very good... it was fun doing this project with you." Jules' overall ERAS score inched up from 30 to 31. His ETU dropped from 1.18 to 0.80, the second best improvement in the ESL-LA class.

Partnership 22, Malka and Ari, wrote about only one book. Although Ari made fewer errors than Jules he was still in the weaker ETU group, and his ERAS performance was not strong. In fact, Ari had not finished his book by the end of the project. Yet he and his buddy managed to talk about both the Olympic hockey tournament and their book, *Rumble Fish*. Malka felt that sometimes they spent too much time on hockey and not enough on the book, but at the same time ". . . wanted him to feel free and to write about what he felt like writing."

Malka did not write nearly as much as Linda, but her entries were riddled with errors. Ari observantly found one and brought it to his buddy's attention. ". . . I was somewhat embarrassed," Malka wrote in her report to her professor, "yet once I thought about it I realized it was very good he had noticed." Their journal entries dealt with violence and fighting, topics of interest to a thirteen year-old boy. They asked each

other questions about the characters and the situations in the book. Ari: "Rusty-James looks tuff. . . What impression you have on Rusty-James?" Malka: ". . . he puts on a tough act . . . however he has a sensitive side, which he try to hide. Do you think he would have killed Biff. . .?" Ari: "He shouldn't fight every time. One day he will get killed. ...I think Rusty-James would have killed Biff." Ari also wrote that "at the beginning, I thought it will be boring having a Book Buddy and rite every time. It's pretty cool! I prefer doing that than the regular corses. It's my first time that I wrote to people." In Ari's case, improvements occurred in the syntactical (0.24 ETU to 0.07 ETU), but not in the morphological error categories. The overall ETU improved from 0.41 to 0.36. The ERAS score improved from a cold 22 to a lukewarm 28.

Partnership 25 exemplifies how questions can affect the student's perceptions. Each of Ralph's entries was a barrage of questions and the younger Arno answered each one faithfully, albeit briefly. The questions became less and less open-ended as the journal went on. Twice Arno wrote "I have to answer your questions." Given that the journals were read and the replies had to be written during the same period, answers had to be brief. Here is part of one of his entries.

No, I wont figth back because I ate war. Yes, they are saying that I am becoming an adult every days. No no one say that to me. I belive in war but I don't think it is a good thing. I don't know what tear-gas is.

They shot at him, but they missed him he pretended that he was dead and the tank went back. And then Marcus joind his brother. In my garden. Yes I liked the story.

Only after reading Ralph's entries do Arno's lists of seemingly disconnected sentences make sense. Nonetheless, they managed to tackle several thorny issues in apartheid South Africa. About their first book, *Slaughter in Soweto*, Arno wrote: "I think it's a good book because it's talking about people who don't have theire writes and they want to get it. . . .Our school conditions and theirs are very different", and he took the side of one of the two main characters. At the end of the project, Arno was sick for a week, but he still responded to a question about reading the book: "It was easy...two pages a day." Even though all references to the books were positive, the ERAS showed a drop of 8 points. This was possibly due to the lists of questions. But if this were the entire picture it would not explain his ETU dropping by 0.88 per T-unit (from 1.00 to 0.12), morphological improvements counting for the bulk of the improvement. Although answering a list of questions could have been unpleasant, it did give Arno a safe structure within which to write.

One way to elicit a glowing approval rating is to send your buddy a valentine. Gina, one of the strong ETU group 2, paired with the TESL

duo of Calvin and Tommy to form Partnership 27. She showed an ERAS gain of 3. When she wrote that she did not have a valentine, Calvin and Tommy drew a card in the journal and offered to be her valentines. Throughout the journal, there was good communication and discussion, and even though she wrote substantially longer entries than anyone else, Gina's errors remained minimal throughout. In his report to his professor, Calvin wrote "I have seen many ...compositions from thirteen-year-olds that are in English [first language] schools and it is rare that I find a student whose writing skills are as good as Gina's." In this partnership, it was the younger Gina who teased her older buddies. Calvin and Tommy, who were taking turns, began one entry with: "What's up Gina? It's my turn today..." She responded with: "Wuz up! Lets see who's turn it is. . . it's my turn I guess . . . because I don't have a partner. . ." They read *Mindy Wise*, a book about a teenage girl trying to fit in. They discussed the issues in the book as they related to themselves. Gina wrote "What you say about believing in your heart is very true. Some people just do what others do and don't have enough time to think before they react. That's exactly what hapened with Mindy and 'the Club'. She reacted before she thought about it." This partnership is the best example in this study of how strength in a second language does not guarantee a liking to read. This ESL-LA student was the most fluent and among the most accurate writers in the class and discussed complex issues, yet her initial ERAS score was 20, among the

lowest in the class. The after-project score was 23, not particularly avid, but better than before.

The second lowest attitude score, 19, was held by Robert, a very weak writer who was paired in partnership 12 with Anne and Sally. He showed a modest gain in attitude of one point, up to 20, but his writing gains were less apparent. His general ETU rose, although the morphological errors dropped from 1.0 ETU to 0.33. The partnership managed to discuss the books to a great extent. Anne asked what was positive in the central character's dismal life, and Robert replied "it's is attitude who positive." The two TESL buddies disagreed on the meaning of the ending of the first book, and Gerard wrote that both "had reason." Anne wrote that she was glad the second book was sci-fi, because she liked sci-fi even though she felt strange for doing so. Robert replied: "Anne y don't tink you are a strange girl because my little sister like Star Trek."

As can be seen above, invented spelling was plentiful in the journals. Most students had little or no formal instruction in writing in English and had few inhibitions about spelling. Communication, not accuracy, was the priority. The most ingenious of the inventive spellers was Marc-Paul. His teacher believes it was all due to laziness. He was a student with "discipline problems," lived in a foster home, and was supposed to

repeat his secondary 1. Insofar as spelling was concerned, every time he met a word, it was an adventure; each time was like the first time, as though he studiously avoided spelling a word the same way twice. His buddies did not try too hard to stick to the book he had chosen, although the little he did write about the book showed an ability to relate the events in the story to his own life: "I do agread about friend is important, because when im by me self i dont really have fun but with my friend i can talk because I like talking end wy cant make joke's! End friend is not only for making fun but they cant help you wen you have problem's." Marc-Paul's post ERAS was the lowest in his class, 15. Unfortunately, he was absent for the pre-project ERAS so there is no way of knowing if there was any change in his attitude to reading.

One set of correspondents, Bruce and Phillipe, spent almost all of the journal discussing art, drawing, and graffiti. On a personal relationship level, this was one of the more successful partnerships. Phillipe was a strong writer who scored the lowest (18) on the pre-project ERAS, yet read several of the simpler books at the self-described rate of 40 minutes each and left his TESL buddy behind. Bruce did not read the last book (and probably never finished the second-last), letting the journal slide into solely a discussion of a common joy of art and drawing. A friendship was forged, each showing the other drawing and shading techniques. There was no second ERAS score for this participant; the journal entries

contained no errors, until the last entry which contained two careless slips. The average length of error free T-units rose from 8.94 to 10.14.

Some ESL-LA students provided direct evidence of form and vocabulary acquisition. Number four, Christine, began to master possessives as modeled by her buddy; when she wrote about "Pernille's father boss" she managed one -'s and got the word order right. The "boss of" construction disappeared. It was a little step in the right direction. Those students who read the *Midwife's Apprentice* used many new words in their writing as they wrote about events in the middle ages. They took particular delight in using *dung*, a subject no doubt heretofore forbidden in their school writing.

4.4.2 TESL Reports

The BBP gave the TESL student teachers an advance look at the age group they would start to teach when the project ended. Their reports to their professor were handed in as they were starting their secondary school internship. In their reports, the student teachers wrote about their personal connections with their buddies, the positive and negative aspects of journals in and outside of this project, and the overall benefits of journal writing. After participating in the BBP, the entire TESL class had a positive attitude towards journal writing.

Most wrote that the project helped break down preconceptions. TESL students described the relationship between them and their buddies. Many wrote that they were surprised at the high level of language their correspondents used, and some were surprised by the sophistication of their buddy's ideas. Helen described a typical relationship when she wrote "we grew closer...our writing changed from more superficial to being more personal and emotive." Others voiced similar opinions. Lilly wrote "There was not any accented change in our relationship, but rather a constant closeness and developing friendship." Irene: "Initially, the entries simply related the facts... In later entries (the student) began to invest more personal opinions and ideas." Betty wrote that "...a positive connection was established . . . This sharing of information is a discovery process for both parties. You do have things in common with younger people and both parties can relate to each other. A bond of trust and understanding can be established. The students will be more willing to cooperate with you in the classroom. You also have a purpose to write, it is very motivating."

Rachel: "As our correspondence became more casual, (the student's) level of English made a marked decline." Notwithstanding, Clarice's ETU dropped from 1.06 to 0.8 for the next two entries; it went back up at the end to 1.07. Many ESL-LA students showed a rise in ETU for the last entry.

In their discussions of the benefits of journal writing, TESL student teachers wrote that the process opened lines of communication between students and teachers, that it was a quick way to get to know the students, and it improved relationships between students and teachers. They felt that it would aid in classroom management by freeing the student versus teacher model, that as a real reading and writing experience, it would develop communication skills, and it would help the students learn how to think by developing abstract and critical thought. They found it to be a valuable and necessary venue for self-expression.

The student teachers all showed an appreciation for using journal writing in the classroom. They showed enthusiasm and an awareness of some of the pitfalls of journal writing. Many were aware of the limited time frame of this project and as student teachers said they would not start a short-term journal project. But when time constraints no longer applied, it would be a different story. Sophia, for example, wrote "When I have my own class, I would definitely set up this type of activity." Every student teacher in the project expressed the desire to set up some form of journal writing activity for their students in the future.

On the negative side, several student teachers felt first hand the pain of not getting a reply. Even though their buddies were home sick, or in the

case of the last entry, probably taken out of school to start the winter break a day early, they felt the frustration of reading the book, writing a thoughtful entry, and getting no reply. This underlined for them the importance of making sure any journal writing system they initiate is reliable. They were sensitive to the vagaries of the weather during the BBP and forgiving of the hastily drawn up schedule during the first two weeks.

In general, the reports show that BBP gave the student teachers a valuable exposure to journal writing and a preview of the maturity, tastes, and abilities of the students they were about to teach during their secondary school internship.

4.5   Conclusion

Although shorter than planned, the project served its purpose. For the ESL-LA students, there were measurable changes in attitudes toward reading, and measurable improvements in writing. At the university, the student teachers gained first-hand knowledge about journal projects, something they could not have received from reading about them in books alone.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.0   Introduction

It was anticipated that the Book Buddy Project reported here would benefit all participants. The ESL-LA students would develop a more positive attitude towards reading and at the same time improve their writing skills. The student teachers, it was hoped, would experience the joys and sorrows of journal writing first-hand. The discussion of the findings related to attitude will be followed by a discussion of the ESL-LA students' writing, which will be in turn followed by benefits derived by the student teachers.

5.1   ERAS Results: Explanation

It was hypothesized that reading and writing for meaning with a book partner would lead to a more positive attitude toward books and reading on the part of the ESL-LA students.

In their journal entries, the ESL-LA students all wrote of the pleasures of the project.   It is difficult to separate their enthusiasm for the communication inherent in journal writing and their enthusiasm for

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reading. On the basic journal entry level, this project would appear to have been a success; in every case a positive pen-pal relationship flourished. However, no significant change was measured in the attitude toward reading of the ESL-LA class as a whole. The top of the ESL-LA class had little room for improvement; those scoring in the low half improved their attitude slightly, but not significantly. These results may be as much an artefact of the format of the survey as of the information content of the survey items.

The ERAS (Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, McKenna & Kear, 1990) seemed a good, general survey for the needs of this project. The ESL-LA teacher felt that for her particular class, a slightly immature one in comparison to other years, it was an appropriate survey; she thought the students would enjoy the Garfield pictures. However, unknown to the researcher, a critique of the survey was being published while the pre-testing was taking place. Smith and Ryan (1997) found that the survey with the Garfield pictures gave significantly lower results than the survey given with just a four-step Likert-type scale. Student ability was an important factor as well. When students were grouped for ability, above-average students showed no difference between the two attitude tests, while the average and below-average groups had significantly higher results with the Likert version. Smith and Ryan made two conjectures: first, that the average and below-average students felt insulted, while the

above average were amused; second, that average and below-average students were reluctant to say that they were upset, but not reluctant to choose a frowning Garfield. Their second seems more probable.

There are other conjectures. First, the Happy Garfield is extremely happy, ecstatic with his arms in the air and a huge smile. (See Figure 2 and Appendix A.) He may be too happy. Thanks to the invasive world of marketing, this sort of unbridled joy may now be associated only with a big-name brand rather than with the actual thing itself. It is the idea of Barbie, the concept of Barbie lifestyle, that brings the shrieks of joy at Christmas, not the actual doll; the swoosh, not the shoe is the product (Klein, 2000). Garfield™ is a brand in itself, and could well trigger brand-based thinking. Books, lacking both an instantly identifiable brand and a Michael Jordan, are hard-pressed to deliver this much of a jolt. Free from the images, a child may interpret the word labels of the Likert scale on a more personal level. So, even though the ESL-LA teacher thought the pictures were appropriate, they may have lowered all the scores slightly. Second, the four point scale combined with little pictoral difference between the two middle choices may have limited the responses; a simple six-point Likert scale might have allowed the participants to better express their feelings.

There are other factors to consider when discussing which students improved and which did not. The ESL-LA teacher administered the survey in the classroom. The students knew about the BBP a month before they filled out the survey. As a result, anticipatory excitement could have coloured the pre-program results. The first survey was given slowly, carefully, with much attention. The teacher read each question aloud and made sure the students understood everything. However, for the post-project survey, the students worked on their own. They worked silently, and it took about fifteen minutes of class time. Some students wondered why they were being given the same survey to do again, and although their teacher was advised to tell them that they were being given an opportunity to change their minds, it is felt that some post-scores are artificially low because they were annoyed at having to do it again, just as others in the pre-survey may be high due to anticipation. These two factors could negate any significant improvement in attitude toward reading as evidenced in the journal entries. The group that showed a significant improvement in reading attitude was composed of students who had not taken the intensive grade six English program. They liked reading significantly less than their intensive counterparts, but they did improve their attitude.

Only the group of students who were not part of an Intensive Grade Six English program showed a significant gain in attitude towards reading. It

may be that before entering the ESL-LA secondary school program, their schooling had not challenged their English language skills. Yet, the content of the non-intensive group was more varied than the intensive groups' which tended to be based more on the books they were reading.

Overall, the improvement in reading attitude was minimal. Even after a project that, on the basis of the journal entries, the ESL-LA students appeared to have enjoyed, the whole-class mean score was only 27. Considering that the lowest possible score was 10, the highest 40, the survey results suggested that they didn't really like to read. It may well be too late to make a difference in someone's attitude toward books with such a short program, once they have reached secondary school. These participants' initial attitudes toward books and reading were formed in concert with their growing ability to read in French, and their exposure to the Québec school system. After the first cycle of primary school these attitudes may have been established. A short project such as this one may not have been sufficient to make any lasting change later in life.

Nonetheless, even if the whole-class changes were not statically significant, the comments in the journal entries strongly suggest that all of the students not only liked reading, but also thoroughly enjoyed sharing their reading with another person.

5.2 Writing

It was hypothesised that reading and writing for meaning with a book partner would lead to a measurable increase in the writing accuracy and fluency of the emergent L2 participants.

Had this thesis been geared to finding significant statistical results, there would have been more participants and only one error analysis would have been performed. Even though the Wilcoxon test is a reputable one, the levels of significance that could have been reported in writing accuracy in this BBP would still have been tainted by the small sample size. Therefore, the researcher found it more interesting to examine all error types and describe the trends rather than aiming to prove one isolated significant difference.

5.2.1 Writing accuracy

Four students made no errors in their opening journal entries and three of them continued through their second entry without making an error. In comparison, others struggled, making at least one error per T-unit.. Bromley et al. (1994) studied weak students and reported anecdotal evidence of improved literate skills. The ESL-LA class was divided into strong and weak writing accuracy groups in order to describe the effects

of this journal writing process on participants both stronger and weaker. The weak group did improve their writing accuracy. Based on how the error rate changed by error type, it seems that the morpheme errors were more easily remedied than the lexical and syntax errors. The biggest improvement was in the weaker writers' morpheme errors, not in the other categories and not in the stronger writers.

The other division, not based on language ability, but on how they learned their English, was whether or not the students had taken the intensive grade 6 ESL program. Those who had, attended to business and improved their error rate slightly, but did not write very much more as the project continued. The non-intensive students wrote substantially more than the others, but even though their morpheme error rate fell slightly, they did not make statistically significant improvements. Though their error rate remained markedly lower than the intensive students', it actually rose a little in the last entry, driven up mostly by syntax-type errors. They were more accurate (fewer ETU) and more fluent (more words, more lemmas) writers than the students who attended the intensive course.

These results again may be due to the choice of ETU over the length of error-free T-units as a measure. The stronger writers increased their length of error-free T-units. Of the five writers who wrote a perfect entry

in their first and/or second entry, four increased the mean length of error-free T-units. The mean increase for the five is 0.56 words per T-unit. The ETU measure better reflects the kinds of errors weaker students make and facilitates finding the areas of change. The length of error-free T-unit measure seems more suited to writing samples with fewer errors. Indeed, Larsen-Freeman's (1983) championing of the error-free T-unit as a tool for analyzing writing ability was rooted in a college situation and the development of a reliable measure with which to evaluate advanced student writings.

As one would expect, the native-speaker writings were more accurate than the ESL-LA. Yet, the rate of syntax errors was similar, indicating that this type of error is not restricted to writing in an L2. It may be a cross-linguistic problem reflecting an overall writing problem of this particular age group, a developmental writing stage, or a task effect. A similar examination of work by both older writers and more experienced writers would help determine the nature of these syntax errors.

5.2.2. Writing fluency

The number of words the ESL-LA students wrote depended on many factors. First, the ESL-LA students did all their journal work in class. They read their buddy's entry and replied in a single fifty-minute period.

The amount of time they had to write was in part governed by how much their buddy wrote and how complicated their buddy's questions were. If the ESL-LA student were a slow reader, then there would be less time to write. The result could be less production, more mistakes, or a combination of the two. The content could be less well thought out as well. A rushed writer might tend to rely on safe, simple forms, new ideas taking too much time and effort.

The mean number of words was influenced by the purpose and style of the entry. The first entry was a personal description, and, as part of their life story, the ESL-LA students were encouraged to create a web. The webs did not count toward the number of words. The last entry was a goodbye. In the entries between the first and the last, the ESL-LA students asked questions and posed problems for their buddy. But in the goodbye, they did not, so there was less to write about. The mean number of words per entry bore this out. Differences in the number of words written by the intensive and non-intensive groups were apparent. The non-intensive students wrote less in the first entry, but after that they wrote considerably more than the students who had taken the intensive grade six English.

5.3   Student Teacher Benefits

It was hypothesized that the BBP would enhance the understanding of journal processes by the TESL students

At the beginning of the project, the student teachers tended to write long journal entries. Some paired student teachers often wrote over two pages per entry. This was a lot for their ESL-LA buddies to read and respond to. A few wrote in a gently condescending manner. Some handwriting was hard to read. The student teachers were told about this after the first entry and most attended more carefully to the needs of their buddies.

Since the student teachers" reports counted for part of their final grade for their methodology course, the possibility exists that they wrote what their professor wanted to read. However, in this case, the student-teacher reports were critical assessments of the BBP. No one wrote that they would do exactly the same thing when they had their own class. It would seem that most expressed their own ideas about how to do a journal project. The student-teacher reports seemed to be reasonably honest, and therefore, a valid source of information.

Their reports showed that they had become enthusiastic about using journal writing with their future students. In spite of discovering how much work teacher-centred journals can be, the TESL students were all anxious to use them. Many wrote that they wanted to do a short journal project during their upcoming internship. One stated that the teacher with whom she was serving her internship was against journal writing, but found it important to say that in her own classroom, journals would play an important part. The problem of absences was brought home to the TESL student teachers. Two complained of how they had read the book, and written their responses to their buddy, only to have their journals come back with no reply. They did not, however complain to their buddy, nor did any ESL-LA students complain to their TESL partners when an entry was missed. Experiencing first-hand this kind of disappointment should prime the student teachers to plan ahead and have strategies ready for when absences get in the way of their own journal projects, and they should be able to better prepare their students for this eventuality.

The TESL student teachers found it difficult to separate this project from their regular university assignments. That is, they kept asking for extensions, an impossibility when the buddies have specific class time scheduled for journal writing. When it was time for the journals to go to the secondary school, they went. They could not be held back because

someone had forgotten theirs at home. So, in this sense, the student teachers had a dry run in a situation with real deadlines.

Privacy was an important issue in this project. The problems of unwanted attention and accusations brought against teachers are discussed throughout their methodology classes. The researcher, both verbally and in writing, explained that the only communication between the ESL-LA students and the student teachers was to be through the journal, using first names only. In spite of these instructions, several student teachers gave their full names and e-mail addresses to their buddies. The ESL-LA teacher was upset by the student teachers' lapses of privacy protocol and felt that they should have been more aware that their job was to help the kids, not to love them; at the same time she was aware that the situation was partly rooted in a misplaced need to "bond." The privacy issues were re-stated, and no further breaches of protocol occurred. This privacy issue embodying the safety and wellbeing of the students should be the primary concern of any project that involves students interacting with people from outside the school. The student teachers had this point driven home.

5.4   Other findings

The close relationship between fluency, richness, and accuracy is not surprising. If L1 literary skills have transferred to L2, we could then be measuring the L2 competency component of L2 literacy in action. However, it was mentioned earlier that these ESL-LA students are fearless when it comes to mistakes and that communication at all costs is their goal. So reading speed may be a factor as well. The weaker readers would have less time to write, and therefore write less, showing a relationship between reading skills and writing skills.

This ESL-LA class proved to be composed of two distinct groups, those who took the intensive English option in primary school and those who attained their English competence in a multi-lingual environment at home and on the streets. The intensive students were more on-task, though not better in English. They liked reading more than the others, and they were enthusiastic about the project from the beginning. Throughout, the intensive students behaved like model learners; they worked industriously, followed directions well, and wrote about their books. The students who did not take the intensive option were not model students. Although they wrote more than the others, they wrote less about the books they were reading and more about life in general. They seemed to gather enthusiasm as the project unfolded.

Another instructive finding was that ESL-LA students who liked to read did not necessarily have the ability to write accurately in English. The complex interplay of L1 and L2 skills (Bossers, 1991) may help to explain this lack of relationship between the subjects' writing accuracy in their first entry and the pre-program ERAS scores. The students could love reading in general, in French in particular, write well in French, but be hampered by their L2 ability when they write in English. These results remind us that L2 emerging readers are different from their L1 counterparts, and their L1 selves.

Other than the small evidence from the journals noted in Chapter 4, a statistical finding that suggests possible vocabulary acquisition from the project is the drop in the lexical error rate among the participants who scored in the high half of the class in the pre ERAS. The more favourable attitude towards books and reading could have aided in learning new words from the reading material and the journals. The weak writers also gained slightly in this category. However, since the study was not designed to measure vocabulary acquisition, these findings must be considered as speculative.

It was thought that the use of story maps, or as some call them, story webs would benefit the participants. However, after the first entries, only one pair continued making webs. There seemed no need for them. The

ESL-LA students could understand what they were reading, or could formulate questions. Even the poorest writers were not afraid to make mistakes; they wrote boldly into uncharted territory. It is possible that with weaker reader/writers, webs could have made the difference between the success and failure of the project.

5.5 Further research

More research should be done to compare and describe the intensive and non-intensive dichotomy in ESL-LA classes in general. Each group's strengths and weaknesses should be explored so that the question of whether it is advisable or not to have two such seemingly dissimilar groups in the same class can be addressed. An analysis of their apparently separate needs would be of great help to secondary one ESL-LA teachers who are saddled with designing course plans to satisfy each group's needs and who are trying provide, often single-handedly, an environment where each group can contribute to the class and help the other.

Although it was impractical to test these participants reading skills and automatic word recognition skills before and after the project, it was hoped that through their enjoyment of reading, and their reading for meaning that the ESL-LA students improved their automatic word

recognition skills as a result of the BBP. A longer and larger BBP project could make more demands on the participants and include reading tests before and after to try to find a three-way relationship between amounts of improvement in reading skills, affect, and writing skills.

The relationship between error rate and amount and richness of production needs further examination to determine what underlying forces exist or if the relationship is one of cause and effect. Since different components of writing accuracy promise to be significant, a larger number of participants would allow a greater chance of success in detecting significant differences. Another consideration has to do with who improved their writing. In this case it was the weaker group. Therefore, this project should be tried with weaker English writer-readers, for instance a regular secondary one or two ESL class.

5.6 Conclusions

In this project, most ESL-LA students experienced literature rather than responding to a series of typical ESL one-dimensional reading-comprehension questions. Tomlinson (1998) suggests experiential reading "can help to create many of the conditions found to facilitate language acquisition (p. 183)." The BBP fell within his guidelines for helping learners to read literature experientially. The ESL-LA students

have a competence in English that should allow them to read and the various competences of the participants were mirrored in the range of books made available to them. The after-reading tasks were as rigorous as the individuals wished them to be. Although the participants were expected to write about the books they were reading, no one was forced to do so, and no minimum amount of writing was required. The student teachers, as instructed, discussed aesthetics, that is feelings about characters, actions, and events, or they wrote about similar experiences in their own lives.

In a perfect world, a project such as this would be easily set up and would almost run itself. Finding classes of high school students is easy. Few teachers would balk at a project like this one; the teacher who was recommended by SPEAQ as a source to locate a group of participants for this study jumped at the chance to involve her own students in the project. And university methodology professors would be hard pressed to find a better introduction to journal writing. Since this exploratory group of ESL-LA students were strong enough to eschew using story webs, in a replication of this study with participants of the same or higher level of English proficiency, the buddies could communicate effectively by email. Any privacy issues concerning electronic communication can easily be addressed with a special web site and individual password protection.

The graphic elements of the webs were the only reason that email was not considered for this project.

However, without a budget for two identical libraries, one at the high school and the other at the university, the project cannot be run. The books for this project were purchased by the researcher. Certain publisher's representatives had promised free loans of books, but when the time came to start the project neither the books, nor the representatives were anywhere to be found. Publishers, more and more conscious of the immediate bottom-line, proved to have little interest in investing in the future of either readers, or special projects. So, to be replicated, this project needs corporate sponsorship, or grant money. Judging from the short-term results of this study, it would be money well spent.

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Appendix A

Elementary Reading Attitude Test

1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?
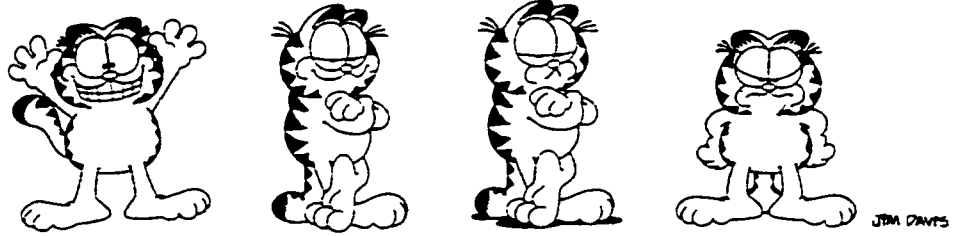
2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?
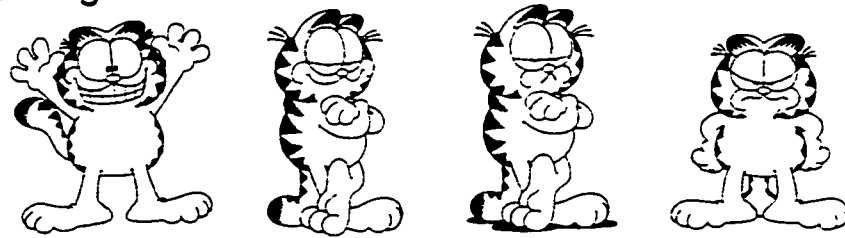
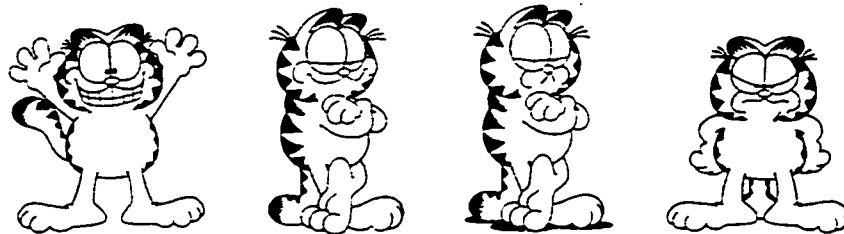3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?
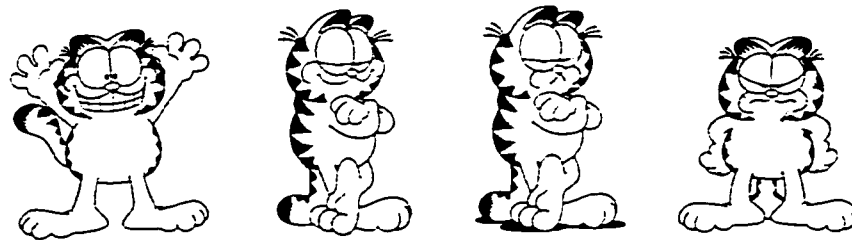
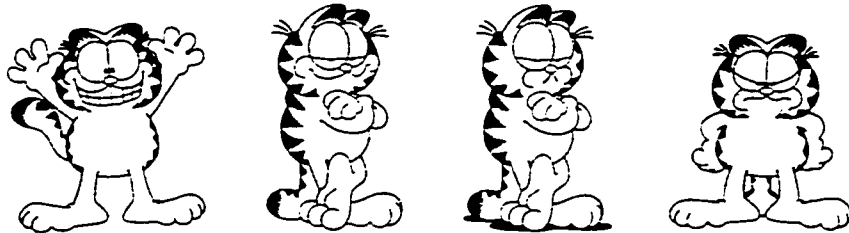4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?

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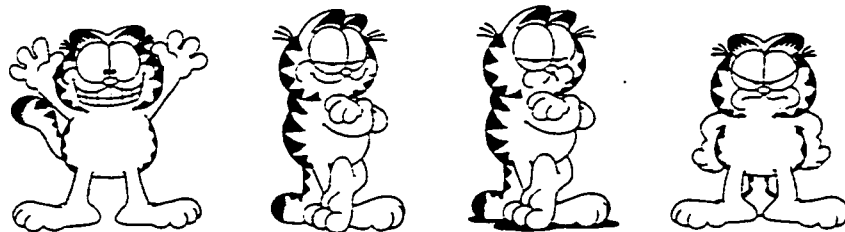
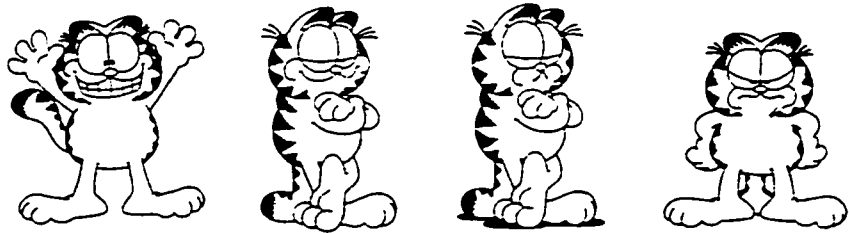5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?
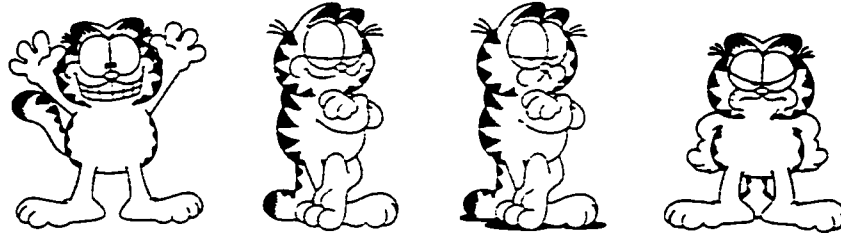
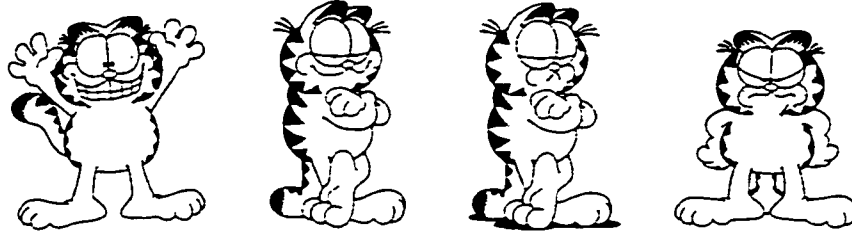6. How do you feel about starting a new book?
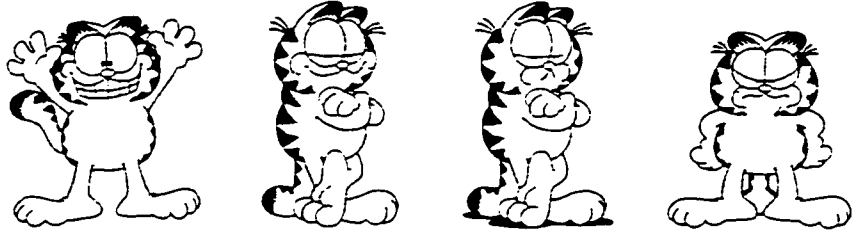

7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?

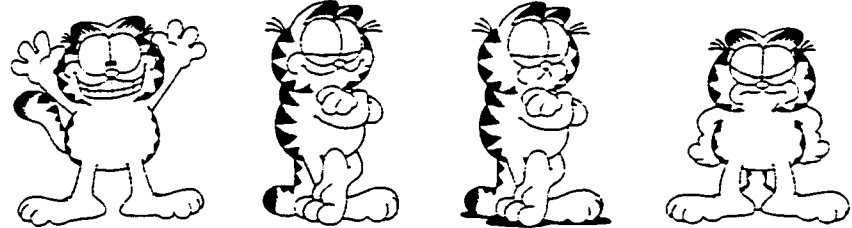8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?

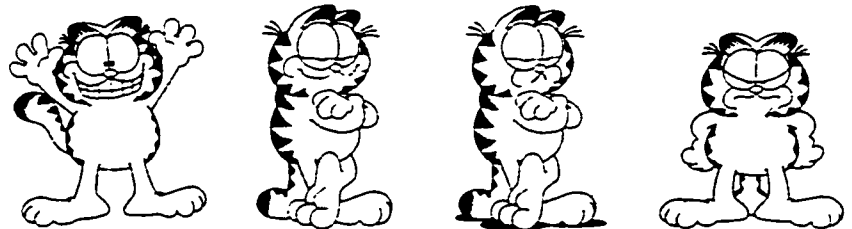9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?

10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?

11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?

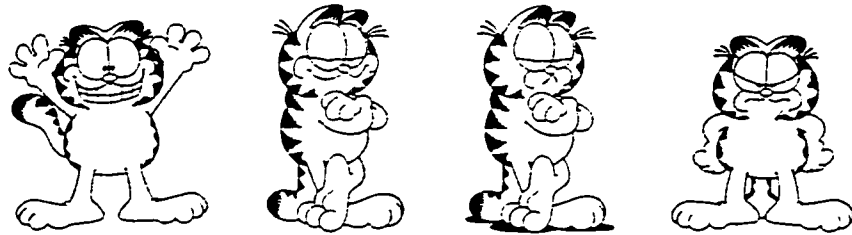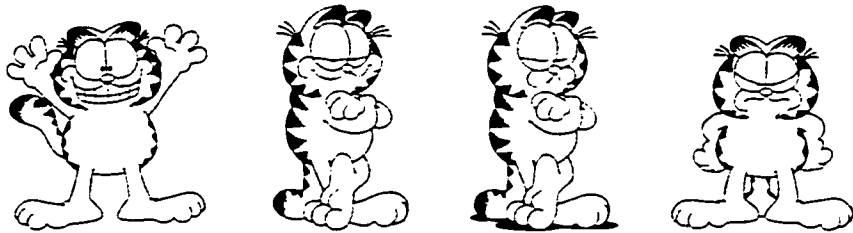12. How do you feel about doing reading workbook pages and worksheets?
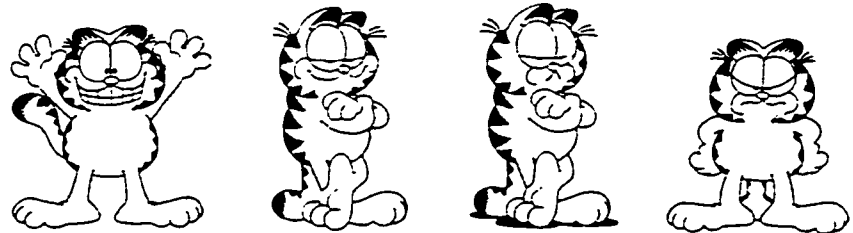
13. How do you feel about reading in school?

14. How do you feel about reading your school books?
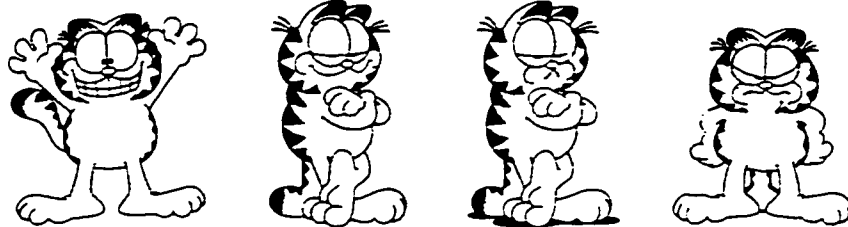
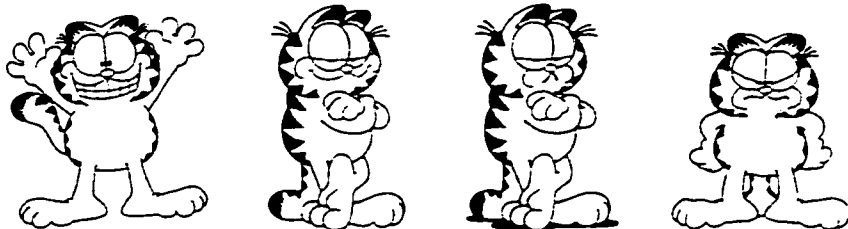15. How do you feel about learning from a book?

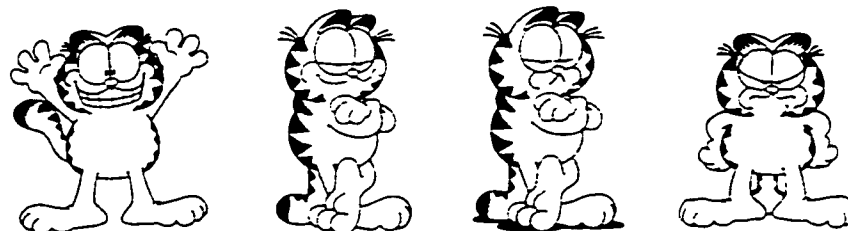16. How do you feel when it's time for reading class?

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17. How do you feel about the stories you read in reading class?

18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?

19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?

20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?
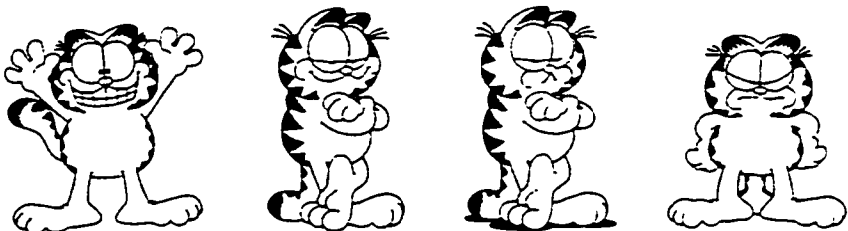
Appendix B

Student Teacher Assignment

Book Buddy Journal Assignment Discussion Questions

(a) What were your impressions of the student with whom you corresponded in terms of his/her English level, social maturity, interests, attitudes, etc.?

What, if anything, surprised you about the student?

(b) Did your relationship change over the brief period in which you corresponded? If so, how? What indicated to you that this change had taken place?

(c) Do you see any value in this process of individual interaction with students? List the reasons why or why not.

(d) While on your stage, or when you have your own class, would you try to set up a similar exchange with your students? If so, what modifications if any would you make to the format?

(e) Other impressions and ideas.

Appendix C

ESL-LA Teacher Hand out

The proposed research project draws its inspiration from a reading intervention project headed by Karen Bromley (Bromley, Winters, & Schlimmer, 1994) that was carried out with learning disabled English first language (L1) children. The general surface similarities between some methodologies for teaching learning disabled children and those for teaching English second language (ESL) raised the question whether a first language (L1) intervention program, in particular one involving reading, could be used in the Quebec school system in concert with its English as a second language curriculum.

The view of reading as an interaction between reader and text lays the basis for valuing the reader's contribution to the event. In order to read effectively, the reader must have the fluent lexical access that comes through practice and reading for meaning.

A dialogical approach calls for teachers and students to discuss what it means to read in an engaged and responsive way. It calls for discussions about why when where and for whom this kind of reading might be valuable (Faust, 1997). As such, the questions asked by the older partners are crucial to the success of this endeavor. Rather than asking what colour the car was, ask whether the character should have been driving. Response is not always about what children say about

literature, but can address how they approach and what they bring to the reading experience (Wolf, Carey & Mieras, 1996). There are no right answers. Students should be encouraged to question, to continually seek further interpretation rather than considering a point 'solved'. Mere fact-based discussions have no place here; the interplay of ideas is paramount and leads to a feeling of ownership of the text. Young readers need to experience the power that comes from creating challenging questions.

At the beginning of the project, students need to be introduced to story maps and the the idea of literary response and dialogue journals. Reader response journals are rooted in the following concepts:

- Taking the time to write down stuff while reading
- Not worrying about spelling and accuracy. Thoughts and feelings are the primary concern
- The freedom to write innermost feelings
- Relating the book to personal experiences and sharing similar personal moments
- Asking questions while reading, wondering why, indicating surprise or confusion
- Making predictions
- Talking to the characters

- Giving advice

- Expressing approval or disapproval of the characters' actions, values, or decisions made

- Praising or criticizing the book, the author, or the style

- There is no limit to what can be written. Be honest.

(Hancock, 1993)

A story map is a graphic representation of all or part of the elements of a story and the relationships between them. (See example that follows.) Maps, as described by Davis & McPherson (1989), can be more precise than webs, charting aspects of a story, different levels of interpretation, or reflecting cause--effect, compare--contrast. Webs as used by Bromley (Bromley et al. 1994) are more all encompassing. They contain whatever the partners think are the most important elements of the story. A story web with its inclusion of drawings and graphics may facilitate emergent writers to express those aspects of a story that they cannot yet communicate solely with standard writing.

To introduce the students to webs, the teacher creates a story map of her interests hobbies, family, job, etc. This information can form a letter of

introduction. Then, the students can web their lives and make it part of their hello letter to their buddy. As well, the class could collectively map the last thing they read.

The first story map sent to the TESL students based on a new book should be a partial map, accompanied by questions and a request to finish it. After that anything goes.

Aimee identifies important things about herself in a web
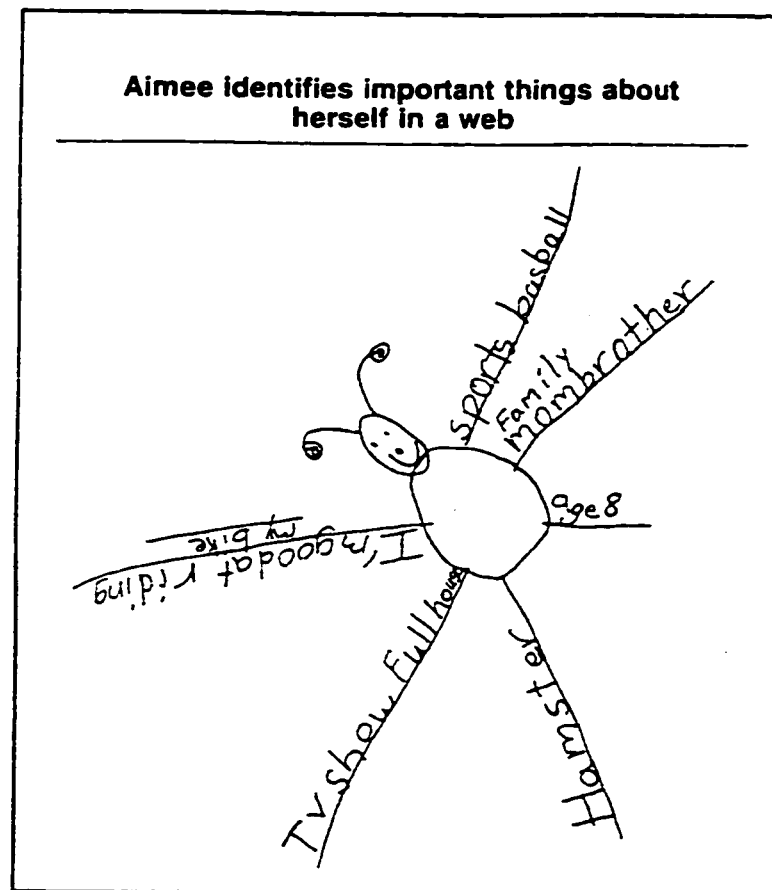
Example Story Web from Bromley et al. (1994).

References

Bromley, K., D. Winters, & K. Schlimmer (1994). Book buddies: Creating enthusiasm for literacy learning. *The Reading teacher. 47*, 392-400.

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Appendix D

Letters to the School Principal and Parents

M. XXXXXXXXX, Directeur
L'école Secondaire XXXXX
le 12 decembre, 1997.

Monsieur,

Le but de cette lettre est d'obtenir la permission nécessaire pour l'étude, The Book Buddy Project, ce qui implique la classe de Sécondaire 1 ESL-LA de XXXXX et de celle de TESL XXX Pédagogie de l'université XXXXX.

En même temps que ce projet contribuera à l'apprentissage des participants des deux groupes, il produira des données pour la thèse (maîtrise en linguistique appliquée) d'un de mes étudiants, John Jessop. Le projet comprendra l'écriture d'un journal et d'une analyse littéraire. Les étudiants du ESL-LA seront jumelés avec des étudiants de XXXXX et ils échangeront leurs journaux à propos des livres qu'ils liront. Le projet se déroulera pendant une période de 6 semaines (jan.-fev. 1998). Les livres seront fournis par le responsable du projet et par le Centre TESL de l'université Concordia.

L'hypothèse est que cette expérience augmentera le niveau de comprehension en lecture et de communication en écriture et on peut espérer qu'il incitera une passion pour la lecture en général. Les textes écrits dans le journal seront analysés pour une amélioration au niveau de la facilité d'expression, la syntaxe et le nombre d'idées par écriture. Les journaux seront le seul moyen de communication entre le deux groupes. Les étudiants seront identifiés par leur prénom seulement. L'identité des étudiants, de la commission scolaire et de l'école restera confidentielle dans la version finale de la thèse. Tout(e) étudiant(e) est libre de quitter le projet en tout temps, sans penalité.

Espérant le tout à votre entière satisfaction.

Prof. Joanna White, PhD.
TESL Centre
Concordia University.

*

Chers parents,

Cette lettre a pour but de vous informer du Book Buddy Program qui impliquera la participation de votre enfant. C'est un projet entre les étudiants du Sécondaire 1 ESL-LA et les étudiants (stagières) de la classe «Teaching English as a Second Language» à l'université XXXXXX.

En même temps que ce projet contribuera à l'apprentissage des participants des deux groupes, il produira des données pour la thèse (maîtrise en linguistique appliquée) d'un de mes étudiants. Le projet comprendra l'écriture d'un journal et un analyse littéraire. Les étudiants du ESL-LA seront jumelés avec des étudiants de XXXXX et ils échangeront leurs journaux à propos des livres qu'ils liront. Le projet se déroulera pendant une période de 6 semaines (jan.-fev. 1998). Les livres seront fournis par le responsable du projet et par le Centre TESL de l'université Concordia.

L'hypothèse est que cette exercice augmentera le niveau de comprehension en lecture et de communication en écriture et il est souhaitable qu'il incitera une passion pour la lecture en général. Les textes écrits dans le journal seront analysés pour une amélioration au niveau de la facilité d'expression, la syntaxe et le nombre d'idées par écriture. Les journaux seront le seul moyen de communication entre le deux groupes. Les étudiants seront identifiés par leur prénom seulement. L'identité des étudiants, de la commission scolaire et de l'école restera confidentielle dans la version finale de la thèse. Tout(e) étudiant(e) est libre de quitter le projet en tout temps, sans penalité.

Nous espérons que ce projet enrichera l'apprentissage de l'anglais pour votre enfant.

Prof. Joanna White, PhD.
TESL Centre
Concordia University.
848-2455.

Appendix E

Student-teacher handout

The research project draws its inspiration from a reading intervention project headed by Karen Bromley (Bromley, Winters, & Schlimmer, 1994) that was carried out with learning disabled English first language (L1) children. The general surface similarities between some methodologies for teaching learning disabled children and those for teaching English second language (ESL) raised the question whether a first language (L1) intervention program, in particular one involving reading, could be used in the Quebec school system in concert with its English as a second language curriculum.

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asking what colour the car was, ask whether the character should have been driving. Response is not always about what children say about literature, but can address how they approach and what they bring to the reading experience (Wolf, Carey & Mieras, 1996). There are no right answers. The ESL-LA students should be encouraged to question, to continually seek further interpretation rather than considering a point 'solved'. Mere fact-based discussions have no place here; the interplay of ideas is paramount and leads to a feeling of ownership of the text. Young readers need to experience the power that comes from creating challenging questions.

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- Making predictions

- Talking to the characters

- Giving advice

- Expressing approval or disapproval of the characters' actions, values, or decisions made

- Praising or criticizing the book, the author, or the style

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(Hancock, 1993)

A story map is a graphic representation of all or part of the elements of a story and the relationships between them. (See examples that follow.) Maps, as described by Davis & McPherson (1989), can be more precise than webs, charting aspects of a story, different levels of interpretation, or reflecting cause--effect, compare--contrast. Webs as used by Bromley (Bromley et al. 1994) are more all encompassing. They contain whatever the partners think are the most important elements of the story. A story web with its inclusion of drawings and graphics may facilitate emergent writers to express those aspects of a story that they cannot yet communicate solely with standard writing.

References

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Davis, Z., & M. McPherson. (1989). Story map instruction: a road map for reading comprehension. *The Reading Teacher, 43,* 232-240.

Faust, M. (1997). Beyond individual response: Toward a dialogical approach to literature instruction. in S. Stahl & D. Hayes (eds.) *Instructional models in reading.* New Jersey: Erlbaum.

Hancock, M. (1993). Exploring and extending personal response through literature journals. *The Reading Teacher, 46,* 466-474.

Wolf, S., A. Carey, & E. Mieras. (1996). "What is this literachurch stuff anyway?": Preservice teachers' growth in understanding children's literary response. *Reading Research Quarterly, 31,* 130-157.
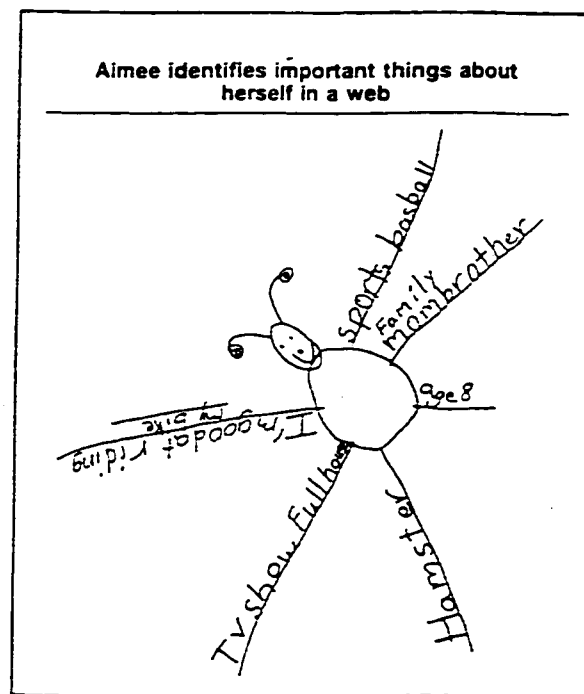
Example Story Web from Bromley et al. (1994

Appendix F

Book List

Alan (1995) *House of Horrors 6*

Alrerson (1983) *The Not Impossible Summer*

Alderson (1990) *Chapter One*

Arnothy (1956) *I am 15 & I don't want to die.*

Avi (1988) *Something Upstairs*

Bellingham (1989) *Curse of the Silver Box*

Chaikin (1979) *I Should Worry, I Should Care*

Cohen (1993) *The Beheaded freshman*

Colver (1980) *Florence Nightingale*

Compton (1991) *Daredevil Park*

Coville (1991) *My Teacher Fried my Brains*

Coville (1991) *My Teacher Glows in the Dark*

Crook (1992) *Riptide*

Cuevas (1986) *Some Friends of Mine*

Cushman (1995) *The Midwife's Apprentice*

Engle & Barnes (1995) *Strange Matter*

Fiction Factory (1992) *1- 24*

Foote (1980) *The Great Ringtail Garbage Caper*

Godfrey (1991) *Monsters in the School*

Grady (1982). *Modern Canadian Short Stories*

Halverson (1984) *Cowboys Don't Cry*

Haynes (1986) *The Great Mom Swap*

Hinton (1975) *Rumble fish*

Hunter (1990) *The Railroader*

Hurwitz (1981) *Baseball Feaver*

Ibbitson (1989) *The Wimp and the Jock*

Kaye (1991) *Mindy Wise*

Korman (1978) *This Can't be Happening...*

Leacock (1960) *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*

Leroe (1987) *The Peanut Butter Poltergeist*

Lowry (1981) *Anastasia Again*

Lowry (1984) *Taking Care of Terrific*

Lucas (1971) *Great Canadian Short Stories*

Martin (1998) *Abby and the Best Kid Ever (BSC)*

McLean (1997) *When We Were Young*

Morris (1997) *Real Kids Read Adventures #4*

Morris (1997) *Real Kids Real Adventures #5*

Munro (1982) *The Moons of Jupiter*

Pronzini (1981) *The Arbor House Treas. of Horror...*

Quenton (1996) *The Forbidden City of Luxor*

Robinson (1982) *Veronica the Show-off*

Warner (1992) *The Boxcar Children*

Weaver (1966).*Canadian Short Stories   1966*

Wells (1971) *Selected Short Stories*

Appendix G

Statistics

Table G1.

Descriptive Statistics: Mean Reading Attitude Survey Scores		
	Pretest	Post test
All	27.04	27.34
	$n = 26$	$n = 26$
High Attitude	31.08	31.00
	$n = 13$	$n = 12$
Low Attitude	22.77	24.42
	$n = 13$	$n = 12$
Intensive	30.09	30.25
	$n = 11$	$n = 12$
Non-Intensive	24.64	25.31
	$n = 14$	$n = 13$

Note. Lowest possible score is 10; highest is 40. Range = 30. Mid point = 25.

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Table G2.

	ERAS Pre-scores		ETU1	
Source	*df*	*F*	*df*	*F*
INT Y/N	1	7.299a	1	6.666a
Error	23	(25.049)	25	(0.083)

Note. a. Significant, as corrected for multiple tests (Bonferroni). Level of significance corrected to an alpha value of .025.

Table G3.

Wilcoxon signed ranks test: Reading attitude change in students who did not take intensive grade 6 ESL.

Rating scale item	No. of pairs	No. where ATA ranked higher	z
ATB/ATA	12	10	2.102*

$^*p < .05$.

Note: The procedure best suited for measuring significance of change in these participants is the Wilcoxon Matched-pair signed-ranks test. The groups are small ($N = 14$ app.), not allowing the supposition of normal distribution and the use of MANOVA repeated measure calculations. They therefore require a non parametric procedure (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991). Systat 5.2.1 for Macintosh performed all calculations.

Table G4.

Descriptive Statistics: Error rates (ETU) for journal entries.			
Entry	Error type	*M*	*SD*
First	All	.33	.31
Second	All	.50	.43
	Morpheme	.33	.30
	Syntax	.08	.09
	Lexical	.07	.11
Last	All	.43	.37
	Morpheme	.28	.22
	Syntax	.10	.15
	Lexical	.06	.09

$N = 28$

Note. Error type *All* includes Morpheme, Syntax, and Lexical errors.

Table G5.

Descriptive Statistics: Mean ETU scores for subjects grouped by initial writing accuracy.

	Weaker ($n = 14$)	Stronger ($n = 14$)
2nd entry error types		
All	.84	.15
Morpheme	.57	.10
Syntax	.13	.03
Lexical	.12	.02
Last entry error types		
All	.62	.24
Morpheme	.37	.18
Syntax	.16	.03
Lexical	.10	.03

Note. Error category *All* is the total of Morpheme, Syntax, and Lexical errors.

Table G6.

Descriptive Statistics: Mean error scores (ETU) for subjects grouped by attendance in Intensive Grade 6 ESL.

	Took Intensive ESL ($n = 12$)	Did not take Intensive ESL ($n = 15$)
1st Entry		
All	.49	.20
2nd Entry		
All	.72	.29
Morpheme	.42	.23
Syntax	.13	.03
Lexical	.13	.02
Last Entry		
All	.55	.35
Morpheme	.38	.20
Syntax	.10	.10
Lexical	.09	.05

Note. Error category *All* is the total of Morpheme, Syntax, and Lexical errors.

Table G7.

Descriptive Statistics: Mean ETU for subjects grouped by Pre-test ERAS scores.

	Error category	Low Attitude	High Attitude
		n = 13	n = 13
2nd Entry			
	All	.48	.52
	Morpheme	.36	.32
	Syntax	.07	.08
	Lexical	.05	.07
Last Entry			
	All	.33	.50
	Morpheme	.18	.36
	Syntax	.08	.08
	Lexical	.08	.05

Note. Error category All is the total of Morpheme, Syntax, and Lexical errors.

Table G8.

Descriptive Statistics: Mean Attitude Scores for subjects grouped by initial writing accuracy

	Weaker (mean ETU .577)	Stronger (mean ETU .088)
Pre $n=13$	27.846	26.231
Post $n=12$	27.071	27.667

Table G9.

Wilcoxon Signed RanksTest Result for participants classed in both low groups(ATB!, ETU1).

Rating scale item	No. of pairs	No. where MRFL ranked lower	z
MRF2/MRFL	7	6	-2.028*

*p < .05.

Table G10.

Wilcoxon Signed RanksTest Result for ATB1 (no #25).

Rating scale item	No. of pairs	No. where ATA ranked higher	z
ATB/ATA	10	8	2.002*

*p < .05.

Table G11.

Correlations between accuracy and fluency and richness in all journal entries

	ETU	Words	Lemmas
ETU	--	--	--
Words	-.25*	--	--
Lemmas	-.32**	.99**	--

Note. Significances are Bonferroni corrected.

*p = .01,   ** p < .001